

THE BEAT

Gumboots Newsletter

• December 2012 •

Gumboots
www.gumboots.org.za



2012 has been a full and fulfilling year and Gumboots would like to thank all our donors and volunteers for their generous support. Every contribution **MAKES A DIFFERENCE**. We wish you all a peaceful and happy time with your families over the festive season.

Travel Safely, Go Well, Hamba Kahle.

To receive our newsletter or become a donor, email jenny@gumboots.org.za or phone 082 928 8806. From the new year you will be able to visit our soon-to-be designed website: www.gumboots.org.za.

SIGIYA SONKE

END-OF-YEAR EVENT

This year the event was held in the large space on the ground floor of the Dance Warehouse. It was an outstanding evening thanks to the hard work and support from the Tshwane Dance Theatre (where Jack's son Zenzele is training). Megan, one of their dancers, has been coaching the children on Saturday mornings, helping with choreography and putting together this annual end-of-year event – we are all very grateful for all that she and Esther have done for the group. It was followed by a wonderful meal upstairs for 150 people, cooked and supervised by Beauty and her crew – congratulations and thanks to everyone!



Hooray -
standing ovation
for the group

Megan, Esther & Laura
(from TDT) with Jack



Trees for Africa



Tree planting on both
sides of the Warehouse

Gumboots SA bought eight indigenous Karee and Wild Olive trees for the pavement outside the Warehouse. This was supplemented with eight trees donated by Avis and supplied by Food & Trees for Africa. Now that the fence and security is in place, it is easier to make sure the area is clean and tidy.

Food garden

Thanks to Beauty, there are now some mothers and grannies helping twice a week in the garden. Hopefully with all the summer rain, the garden will again thrive.

Cleaning up

Our goal is to ultimately purchase the Warehouse to create a fully resourced community centre. One of the challenges has been the squatters who have lived in the back rooms and on the ground floor for many years. This is naturally a socially sensitive issue. Of the original 11 families, only 3 remain and we hope that by the end of the year all will have vacated. Substantial council arrears have accrued over the years, and will involve negotiations before transfer can take place. But we are hopeful of big plans in the not too distant future.

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RATANG BANA

Growing day by day...

Thanks to generous donations, the Ratang Bana Centre has taken on a new look and is bringing Ingrid, the project manager, closer to her dream. She recognises that, through the initial support of Gumboots (UK, SA and Kidlinks US), enough critical mass has been generated to attract other outside support. Many thanks to all those involved.

Last month the following was donated by Eskom: new fencing around perimeter with secure gates; a large sign; shade cloth to cover the veggies; water-storage container; generator; printer; children's playground equipment; shelving and books for the library; and a second container that will ultimately become a kitchen. With the support of Deloitte, the ground adjacent to Ratang Bana has also been levelled for the Phase Two food garden. The area will be grassed and house the playground equipment and ultimately 50 food tunnels.

Tree planting day

On a blustery spring day, we met to support Ingrid in tree-planting ceremonies. Assisted by Food & Trees for Africa, Avis donated 16 indigenous *Rhus lancea*. It was a wonderful day – the kids riding around on new scooters, climbing on the playground equipment, Lymon the caretaker doing his wonderful gardening, while Ingrid rallied her gogos and children to sing and welcome the arrival and planting of the trees. They are being watered with an ingenious water-wise system... and are all flourishing.



Proudly announcing... Ratang Bana, for the future of children!



Ingrid with donated soccer kit

GRATITUDE FOR WHAT THE YEAR HAS PRODUCED

In the new year Sigiya Sonke dance group will perform for Ingrid's children and gogos on a stage built outside the office and library. There is much to celebrate at Ratang Bana this year with all the growth and positive energy that has been inspired by Ingrid. She says: "There is a time for a door to be open... this is my season, the door for my entry is open and no one can close that door. And in just this one year, miracles have happened – it is a dream come true. I am so very grateful to all."



Thriving veggies - thanks to Lymon and the shade cloth

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LERATONG

“MY LIFE IN ALEX” ARTWORK

A few months ago a project, “My life in Alex”, inspired the Top Group at Leratong to paint some lovely, colourful pictures. They were taken to London by one of our UK trustees who will scan a few, create cards and sell them as a fundraiser. Two of the paintings were done by the boys who have been chosen for the new Phetoho Education project (see following page) – providing assistance to selected children to attend better schools. Itumeleng and Lindokuhle’s beautiful work is shown here.

Itumeleng's
work of art



Lindokuhle's
firemen!



Graduation

Matric class of 2024!



The event this year was attended by the Top Group (as well as all their families, teachers and friends) – and we were privileged to enjoy two wonderful plays, “Goldilocks and the 3 Bears” and “The Nativity Story”. Music and dance entertained us while we waited for the 40 graduates to don their gowns and mortarboards and process into the hall. The photo above tells it all – it was a moving ceremony with parents ululating as if their child was graduating from university. They will all be moving on to primary schools in Alex.

NEW GROWTH IN THE FOOD GARDEN

The garden at the lower school has had a new look, thanks to Peggy and a wonderful Zimbabwe gardener... new grass, a flourishing herb garden, thriving veggies, including an abundance of tomato plants growing under the grapevines. It's a wonderful sight.

Peggy and Moss & Vivette Hadey in the new garden



Peggy's Christmas message: "Thank you Gumboots (International and SA) for making things happen for the whole community so affected by sickness, crime, hunger and joblessness. I am so grateful that you put a smile on all the children's faces (particularly the Kadey family). By changing just ONE life in Leratong, joy is spread to the families and way beyond into the wider community."



Phetoho Education

The standard of education in many of our state schools is abysmal, and in our own small way, Gumboots has resolved to focus much of our effort and support on education. Over the last few years we have provided assistance to eight children enabling them to attend good schools, and we are now expanding this initiative into a stand-alone project wherein we increase and continue to grow the number of children we support. We are happy to announce that **Phetoho Education** (meaning "change" in Sotho) is now up and running and will be supporting FIVE CHILDREN FOR THE 2013 ACADEMIC YEAR.

The mission of the fund is to support and educate disadvantaged children so that they matriculate with good grades, striving towards academic excellence; and by so doing ensuring entry into tertiary institutions.

We have funds to pay for school fees, uniforms, books / stationery, transport, extra tuition and extra-curricular activities. At this stage the fund supports primary and secondary learners and does not extend to tertiary level. It was not an easy task to choose children from the three projects – there were many heartbreaking stories of family situations where we would have liked to have helped out. But after extensive interviews and dialogue, the committee chose the following children who will be attending the United Church School (UCS) in Yeoville next year: from Leratong: Itumeleng Selulu and Lindokuhle Yende (Grade 1); from Sigiya Sonke: Nolo Khoza (Grade 3), Pinkie Meyers (Grade 5) and Paballo Letsoela (Grade 7).

We met the children, mothers and caregivers in one of the Leratong classrooms for a joyous morning getting to know everyone, filling out application forms, having tea... and going off to buy all the uniforms.

Moss Kadey provided the start-up funding and we now have enough to support these children for two years. Further fundraising is needed on an ongoing basis for these five and others who we hope to enrol on an annual basis. Thank you to everyone who has helped the fund to grow.



The Fund children with their families



The Famous Five line up in school blazers



The United Church School

Previous education support – prior to the establishment of Phetoho, through individual sponsorship, we sent seven children (past and present) to UCS and one to Sparrow School. Thanks to the support of Urban Nest, we have also accommodated one student in res at the Tshwane University of Technology. Our grateful thanks – and our congratulations to these students.

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Gumboots SA news links

THE CAITLIN FUND

Over 3 years ago Margz Green set up the Caitlin Fund in memory of her beloved daughter Caitlin who died in 2009. The fund operates under the umbrella of Gumboots UK and supports the education of disadvantaged young girls in South Africa. It has enabled Vuyelwa Mtolo to remain at Alexandria High, Pietermaritzburg. Her mother died over a year ago and without the help of the fund she would not have been able to afford the taxi fares to school, get extra lessons, play and excel in sports activities, go away on school trips and do leadership courses. In a recent email Vuyelwa wrote to Margz: *"Yes, I went on two leadership camps last year, had loads of fun and learnt a lot. I'm proud to say that I am part of the matric counsel 2012 who managed to bring about change to Alex's leadership system. Tomorrow I'm chairing the meeting of the counsel."* Vuyelwa has been accepted at Rhodes and Bloemfontein universities and is aiming for four As for matric. This is a remarkable achievement and without the fund her life would have been very different. The fund will continue to support her at university from 2013 onwards.



Vuyelwa and her mum

REACHING GREAT HEIGHTS FOR GUMBOOTS

In September this year Sebenzile Dlamini, a social worker from Ixopo, KwaZulu-Natal, climbed Kilimanjaro to raise money for Gumboots. Having worked in London for the past 10 years, before returning home she decided to give something back to her country. She joined three African women called "3 Thirtyseven" who took on the challenge of climbing Kilimanjaro as a fundraiser for a charity in their home countries. Sebenzile chose Gumboots because of our focus on education and support of local communities, and our promise of continued transparency on the use of funding. She had never done anything like this before and it has been a pivotal and life-changing experience. *"Throughout my spiritual life I have been 'climbing in the flat terrain' because it feels safe, it involves no challenges, strains or hardship. In the wilderness, away from own comfort and luxury I learnt to push myself beyond limits. I came to know that nothing is impossible in life, it's all about the mentality."* She raised £1 039 (including gift aid) – well done Sebenzile and a huge Gumboots collective beat of thanks.



Sebenzile "on top of the world"

STOP PRESS

The **BIG GIVE CHALLENGE** has just taken place in the UK... over three days, in a total of just 32 minutes, £ 6 726 was raised! Congratulations and thank you for all the hard work and generous donations that contributed towards this amount. A learning centre has been planned for children in Alex.



Gumboots is grateful for all the hard work and support from our partners **KIDLINKS WORLD INC** based in Madison, Wisconsin, USA.