

# THE BEAT

DECEMBER 2017

[www.gumboots.org.za](http://www.gumboots.org.za)

# Gumboots



**T**hank you to all our donors and supporters. Wishing you all a safe and happy festive season. If you would like any information, please call Jenny Prangley on 082 928 8806 or visit [www.gumboots.org.za](http://www.gumboots.org.za).

## Leratong Pre-school

### PEGGY, RECOVERING FROM SURGERY



*Peggy and her granddaughter, Tintswalo, with flowers from Gumboots*

After a very worrying illness, Peggy is now back at the Kadey Home and regaining her strength. With tears in her eyes, she said that she would never have made it without the support of her young Kadey family. All the children, especially Thato, have been incredibly caring ... they sang prayers at her bedside in hospital, they massage her and help her to wash, and they pop in every morning before school to see if she is ok, She was very emotional as she sang their praises.

### A NEW FACELIFT FOR THE SCHOOL

The school is looking fresh with a new coat of paint and new classroom floor tiles, and the outside yard is soon to be grassed. There is also a new highly qualified teacher, Makabelo Lebele, who has given a new lift to the standard, and the school is discussing opening a Grade R class under her direction. All the teachers are currently attending a two-year training programme on Saturdays and there is a noticeable change in teaching techniques and discipline.



*Beautiful, shiny, new, tiled floor*



*Joy, excitement and elation!*

### SANTA SHOEBOX CELEBRATION

This is one of my most favourite days of the year ... when Santa Shoebox comes to the school! Each class sang Christmas songs and listened to the Santa Shoebox story while they waited in anticipation for the handing out of the personalised shoeboxes, all beautifully decorated and filled with clothing, toys, sweets, toiletries and games. The older groups were noisy and ecstatic as they ripped open their boxes; the younger groups were very quiet and rather overwhelmed by it all. Dimakatso, the teacher of the oldest group, wants them to put together their own boxes next year to give to those that are even less fortunate!



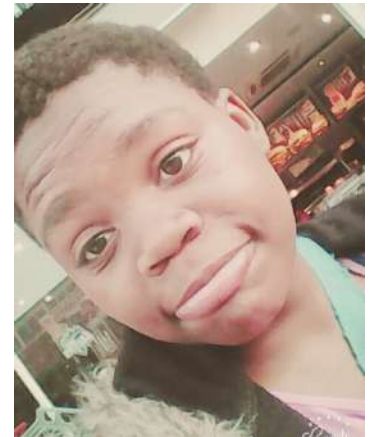


## Sigiya Sonke



Excited dancers at the ballet

### THE DANCERS SUFFER A TRAGEDY



An earlier shot of Bongeka

Things are never easy in Alex. One of the recent tragedies that has affected the group is that one of their own – Bongeka Khumalo – died recently of a drug overdose. Only 14 years old, it seems that she was encouraged by her sibling to experiment. Beauty and the children attended the funeral, which was shared with that of her grandmother who had died a few days before.

This is a powerful reminder of the dangers facing young people in Alex daily.

### SIGIYA SONKE GOES TO THE BALLET

In October, some of the dancers were fortunate to see behind the scenes of Joburg Ballet's *Snow White* – an opportunity to get a glimpse of what the life of a professional dancer is like. Later in the month, the entire group of 50 were taken to see the ballet. Jack, the group's director, says that since word of the theatre outing has spread, more kids are showing up at classes. He even notices how the children are trying hard to point their feet! Thank you to the generous sponsors in the UK, Switzerland, USA and SA for making this possible, with special mention to Susan Hunt and Karoly Csernus. Thanks also to the initiative of UK Trustee Vivien Hunt and to the support of the Joburg Ballet for the discounted tickets.

### NEW COSTUMES FOR THE DANCERS

With the generous funding from the UK Gumboots team, we were able to buy new costumes for the dancers. One of the trustees is also sourcing more ballet shoes for the group.

Until a better dancing space has been found, we have added a new screed floor in the yard of Jack and Beauty's home that will enable them to rehearse more easily and safely.

Bright and cheerful and rearing to go





## Ratang Bana

### A NEW HELPFUL SPACE AT THE CENTRE

The Choma Cafe, meaning "friend/chum", is housed in a new container that was recently added to the Ratang Bana village. It provides online support for young people from ages 15-21 with problems, and is also a bridge programme for HIV support and financial/employment issues. Alice Mabala, a final-year social worker, is employed on weekdays to support the children.



*Alice and two of the students*



### ANOTHER ACCOLADE FOR INGRID

In August Ingrid was runner up for the Community Builder of the Year award in recognition of her outstanding commitment in serving the people of Gauteng. We salute her and applaud all that she does. In spite of health problems, Ingrid is always there for the 450 children under the Ratang Bana umbrella. "We try our best to save mankind", she says.

*Proudly displaying her certificate*

### THE CENTRE BECOMES MOBILE

Liza Lightfoot of Kidlinks, Gumboots' USA partner, has been suggesting a mobile kitchen for the Centre ... give Ingrid an idea and she will make it happen! A new fully equipped mobile kitchen is now up and running. It will soon be serving soup and bread at the Centre, as well as to the community outside. Ingrid plans to take it into industrial areas to feed those in need, during tough times.

*Inside the fully equipped mobile kitchen*



### A CHILD IN DESPERATE NEED

Mbali Ndlovu, a young 12-year-old girl, is in need of support. Her journey began with her abusive and alcoholic parents who abandoned her (her father is now very unwell in Zimbabwe), and has ended with her granny where she shares a tiny shack with an aunt and three other children. Due to lack of finances and the complicated schooling system, Mbali has been out of school for the last two years. Her 7-year-old sister has also missed a year. It feels imperative that we find a way to help this sweet, articulate and desperate girl.

Update: since writing this one week ago there have been dramatic changes ... her granny has tragically died of an asthma attack. We have also managed to get both sisters into an Alex school next year, with Gumboots support for transport and uniforms. But their troubles are far from over.

*Mbali, a brave little girl who doesn't deserve her lot*





## Phetoho Education



*Nomsa, flying high*

### NOMSA MUGWAI'S JOURNEY CONTINUES

Gumboots has reason to be proud of Nomsa, who is currently working for the Gauteng Emergency Services. She is doing very well and now says, "My journey continues ... I am wanting to upgrade my maths and science next year and will then apply for a degree in 2019. All Department of Health employees are sponsored for further studies. So I thought why not challenge myself a bit more further!" She continues, "I am forever grateful for what Gumboots did to my life." Well done for all your hard work, Nomsa.

### FIFI MOYO

Our 2nd-year-engineering student, Fifi, has had a tough year of ups and downs with his accommodation and studies. Half way through the year, with no accommodation, he was fortunate to move into a cottage belonging to one of the Gumboots supporters and is now able to get to and from his lectures at Wits. He has risen to the challenge and has worked really hard and hopefully his results will reflect that so that he can continue next year.

### ANOTHER SUCCESS STORY



*Always cheerful and grateful*



*Work in progress on the Play Africa backdrop*

Zinhle Kolle has recently submitted her final thesis for her degree in Entertainment Technology. The topic was on Scenic Painting Techniques on Recycled Theatre Sets. She's had a rough ride ... at the end of last year when submitting her thesis (with a similar topic on painting large murals), she was told to redo the whole year with a focus on Recycled Set Construction. This November, a week before the deadline, it was changed once more to the above topic. These are some of the challenges facing this bright and talented student. Zinhle has just found out that she has passed her final year, so she can now move on to greener painting pastures. This year she successfully painted a backdrop of Joburg's skyline for Play Africa's children's theatre and is currently painting seven murals for an up-market restaurant near Pretoria.



## Newslinks Abroad

### USA

It has been a busy fundraising year for Kidlinks back in Madison, Wisconsin. Starting with their Annual Plant Sale in spring, the Garage Sale in summer, and recently the Harvest Fundraiser hosted by a Kidlinks board member, Joe Bartol. Loyal donors turned out to bid on auction items and everything was sold, including a trip for four to South Africa for R40 500!

Their long-term goal is to set up a scholarship fund to help motivated students with their education costs so this money will be a great start towards that fund. In addition, Kidlinks is working with the University of Wisconsin to arrange a student internship programme to South Africa. It is hoped that they will select the first student to work with Ingrid at Ratang Bana sometime in 2018.

*Joe, proud winner of the South African food basket and apron at the Kidlinks silent auction!*



### UK



*Drumming and enthusiasm from the dancers*

From Angela Dyer, one of our UK trustees: "While in South Africa recently I spent time with Jack, Beauty and some of the Sigiya Sonke children. Though still full of energy and commitment, the group is having a hard time. Without a base of their own, and no longer able to use the church premises, they have to dance in Jack and Beauty's tiny backyard in the cramped streets of Alex. Gumboots SA is working with the Kadey Trust to try to find a permanent home with space and facilities.

"On a more positive note we presented them with a set of new drums and costumes which brought smiles to their faces. These were

purchased with money raised through the UK 2016 Big Give Christmas Challenge. Thank you to all our donors, particularly The Mosse Charitable Settlement."

This year's Christmas Craft Fair in Birmingham was once more a huge success thanks to the amazing work and generosity of trustees Angela Dyer and Karen Beard. Added to that the 2017 Christmas Challenge has just exceeded its fundraising target by reaching a whopping £7 547! Thank you to all those who raised the social media profile to ensure we met our ambitious target. This will fully fund our Phetoho project!

### THE CAITLIN FUND

Vuyelwa Mtolo has just completed her postgraduate diploma in Media Studies and has been chosen out of 20 young people across the country for a position with the *Natal Witness*. This is a one-year internship with a small salary but with excellent training and opportunities to experience hands-on journalism. She may still decide to continue her teaching diploma in 2019. Congratulations Vuyelwa and thanks to the Caitlin Fund for helping her reach this point in her career!

Kamvelihle Mkhize is completing her first-year diploma in Agriculture and Animal Husbandry. Her mid-year results were excellent and she has chosen her course wisely. If all goes well in the next two years, she will certainly be highly employable. There are sufficient funds to continue assisting these two young women, but decisions need to be made regarding funding for future students. A small fundraising group in London has started working on ideas.