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THE BEAT

Gumboots

Newsletter

Gumboots
www.gumboots.org.za



December 2011

Christmas is a time for gratitude... the season to give thanks. And so as another year comes to a close, the Gumboots Foundation would like to say a big THANK YOU to all our donors who have so generously given support and funds that have helped to make the lives of the children a little bit easier. The Gumboots teams in the UK and USA have also worked tirelessly to find ways to support the projects. On behalf of Peggy at Leratong, Ingrid at Ratang Bana, and Jack at Sigiya Sonke, we say *Siyabonga, Ke a leboha, Enkosi, Dankie, Thank you*. May the festive season be joyful and peaceful for you all.

If you would like to become a donor or receive the newsletter, please email john@gumboots.org.za or visit our new UK website www.gumboots.org.uk.

Ratang Bana



Kgeto enjoying his chicken and rice.

Gwen's feeding scheme

This wonderful idea that was initiated by Gwen has been going for about 5 months and continues to provide cooked meals to Ingrid's orphans and vulnerable children



Ingrid's superpowered gogos at their Christmas treat.

Christmas celebrations

This year the Ratang Bana children celebrated Christmas with a party at the Eastbank Hall sponsored by Deloitte and

twice a week. Her driver, Aaron, delivers the food to Ingrid's office where the children collect their marked containers.

One of the young children to benefit is Kgeto Dibakoane who only a short time ago was not given long to live. This brave little 9-year-old boy moved in to live with his aunt and cousins when his mother died. He was on TB treatment and taking ARVs when he had a stroke that paralysed his face. He is now able to talk and attend school, and he also walks to the office with friends to fetch his much-needed wholesome meals that are helping him to get well. When we visited Kgeto in his tiny shack, he said *"I'm happy to receive the food especially meat. Im eating chicken, rice, carrots and mayonnaise."* Today was not a food collection day, so Kgeto continued, *"Today we only ate bread. I worry if I die what will the family eat?"*

The Siximba Family

A sad family situation was helped in September by the generosity of Gumboots supporters. The Siximba granny lost her son in July and only two months later her daughter passed away. They then had no money for her funeral. What this meant was that the State would be responsible for the burial, but that would mean waiting for up to a year for the paperwork to be sorted out. What the family needed was R3 000 and word was put out to the Gumboots supporters for help.

Within a few days, well over that amount had been pledged. The daughter could have the funeral that the family wanted and there was money over for the remaining grandchildren. Ingrid was able to buy them mattresses, blankets and clothes. Thank you so much to those who dug into their pockets

the church. There were jumping castles, clowns, food and entertainment from the Sigiya Sonke dancers – it is really wonderful when there is cross-support between the Gumboots projects. Ingrid was able to give the dancers small toiletry gifts as a thank you. She is also giving Jack's children who are orphans the opportunity to collect vegetable parcels from her once a week.

There are also Christmas celebrations for the gogos, who are meeting for "High-Tea Parties" at Cresta Centre. The plan is for a cultural exchange between the mlunga grannies and the Alex gogos to share ideas and learn from each other about ways to respond to the challenges they are facing. Ingrid says, *"They are grannies with super power. They are on ARVs, they are playing soccer and they are also taking care of all their grandchildren."*



Ingrid and the children are looking forward to moving into their new space.

Progress at the new site

The wheels of bureaucracy turn slowly, but we are happy to report that we are now moving forward with the new site plans on the East Bank of Alex. We are now set to create a lovely new space for office, learning centre and food garden. A new mobile home has been donated by one of the churches and will be delivered in the new year. And, Liza

...to those who dug into their pockets yet again to help out.

Leratong



Peggy and teachers hand out birthday cake to the children.

Peggy's birthday

Peggy celebrated her birthday last month and we visited her at Leratong with flowers, cake and a commemorative photo of her late daughter, Sheena, which Gumboots had framed and inscribed for her. Peggy was very moved by the gesture and thanks everyone for the thoughtful and tangible memory of Sheena.



Big smiles as children at Leratong receive donated Christmas gifts.

Gratitude

Lightfoot and her team of landscape gardeners from Madison, Wisconsin, will be working in January to prepare the ground for the food garden.

We are still in need of computers, desks and work stations for the mobile home/office.



Dimakatso outside her very welcoming and colourful classroom.

The tireless teachers

The six amazing teachers have been at Leratong for more than 10 years. They enthusiastically continue to do their astounding work in very difficult circumstances. Peggy says, *"I am so proud of them all, as well as our wonderful cook Winnie in the kitchen. Thank you for another good year."*

Dimakatso is one of the teachers to be congratulated. Her inspiring classroom walls are filled with colourful and educational decorations for the children. Peggy told us that *"Dimakatso is a dynamite with the children, and involves them in special activities like drama"*.

Thank you to all the dedicated teachers. And thank you to all the Gumboots donors – in particular Brita UK – as it is only because of their generosity that we are able to contribute towards the teachers' salaries.

The IJK Gumboots website has had a new

Peggy's main message this year is one of GRATITUDE. She is so thankful for what Gumboots is doing, not only for Leratong, but also for Sigiya Sonke and Ratang Bana, our other projects. In Peggy's words, "*What you all give becomes a seed that grows and flourishes and blossoms so that in the end many people benefit from the fruits.*

Hundreds of people are reaping the rewards from Gumboots in the form of hampers, support, food, clothing. I am so very very grateful. Thank you."

Sigiya Sonke



Jack and Beauty are like parents to the group.

Plans for 2012

In the past, Jack has focused on the dancers learning to perform for events/dance performances. His new challenge for 2012 is going to be teaching new children, from 5 years old, to dance. It will be run like a proper dance studio with different classes each day, open from Monday to Saturday: drumming, contemporary, ballet, tap and traditional. The group is very lucky to be getting the services of the Tshwane Dance Theatre (TDT) to coach them in ballet from the beginning of the year. TDT would also like to invite 1 or 2 of the more promising dancers to join in their professional performances, as well as assist the group in

THE UK GUMBOOTS WEBSITE HAS HAD A NEW facelift and is being launched this week. Click on the link to view information and pictures. www.gumboots.org.uk

Also, follow us on Facebook for up-to-date fundraising news and events. [Gumboots Facebook page.](#)

The SA newsletter has also had an IT facelift to make it more accessible and cost effective. We will also be updating the SA website in the new year.



Sigiya Sonke performing at the Turbine Hall.

Christmas entertainment

The Sigiya Sonke dancers performed at the old Turbine Hall for McKinseys Christmas party. The apt theme was "Sophiatown" so the dancers performed the Township Jive and Pantsula. Contributions from this event will enable the group to have their own Christmas party at the Warehouse. This year the kids are organising the event – watch this space!

The Warehouse

Once more the wheels are grinding too slowly to finalise the sale of the Warehouse. The difficulty is finding alternative accommodation for the squatters who have been living at the warehouse for many years

their own performances. Another lucky happening is that a professional teacher from Nadia Katz Studio is coming to coach the group in tap dancing next year. There repertoire is expanding...

Jack's Christmas message: *"This past year for me it was great because we worked smoothly as a team with stable, dedicated dancers. Some of them have formed a task team to help run the organisation, so this makes my job lighter. I want to thank everyone who has supported the group. We want more and more of a relationship with Gumboots in the future – we are prepared to work HARD!"*

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We are pursuing every avenue to resolve this so that hopefully in the new year we can move forward with this exciting project.