

Swazi Kids Newsletter 2007

The Society for the Education of Children in Southern Africa

The Year 2006 in Review

This past year was huge, so big, I think we are still reeling just a bit from it all.

Education: At the schools, it was business as usual with total numbers of students supported up from 59 in 2005 to 75 in 2006. At the secondary level, we had a record 34 kids in high schools in the KaPhunga area. At our strongest school, Lavundlammanti, where entrance is only for the best students, our enrolment went from two to eight. At Matjana, our main elementary school, we provided funding for 41, up from 36 the year before. We are also supporting several older students to live away from home because their schooling is just too far, with: rent, food, clothing, lamp oil, toiletries and bus fare to visit family on weekends.

Fundraising: 2006 marked our first real attempt at a larger fundraising project. Bruce and Pam committed the charity to provide funds to another charity within Swaziland called New Life Homes. The promise was an ambitious \$20,000 USD for the cost of all building materials for a new home to be built at their property in Kamfishane, Swaziland. This farm is now four separate, loving, permanent homes to children orphaned by the aids crisis currently ravaging Swaziland. In total with the leadership of this amazing American couple, MaryJean and Peter Kopp, they have settled into real-life-long homes, over 30 children who had absolutely no place to go. The farm is also a real working operation, with the production of free-range eggs, broiler chickens, pork, beef and garden vegetables. All for market in Swaziland. We raised the capital through a series of initiatives including: large donations from individual donors, a fabulous night of jazz music and dinner in Vancouver and a sponsor in Ontario converting his 50th birthday into a fundraiser for Swazi Kids. With such a simple concept he raised: \$4,000 cash for the building, \$5000 for a water well and two new student sponsors. Thank you Pat Harrison!



At Matjana, children run with firewood, for the school's cook pot, (food by the World Food Program.) These boys wear new clothing provided by sponsors in Swazi Kids. Photo credit Benji Carlson



Canadian building crew New Life Homes, Kamfishane, Swaziland

Building: Then we gathered a group of keen Canadian sponsors, eleven of us in total, and we traveled to Swaziland in June '06. Together with a group of men from the Seattle area and some local Swazi labourers, we lived on the farm for two weeks and completed the first leg of this new home. The trip and building were outstanding in everyway. Production was high, cooperation was excellent and food has never tasted better out of our tiny little kitchen. The darling children, the fun and the camaraderie will not be forgotten.

Drilling for Water

By way of the incredible generosity of two individual donors and the

grade 7 boys of St George's school in Vancouver (thank you Alex Mascott!) suddenly, just weeks before the above building trip we had funding in place for



Jeremy offers help with grouting

three separate wells. As the building was going up in Kamfishane, we managed to get three wells down and producing water of high quality and quantity. The first was placed at Matjana Elementary School to service the surrounding villagers and the teachers who live in very basic housing. The second in a more remote area called Mkhaya, where drought is common and malaria high. The third was also near Mkhaya, but offered a bonus as we directly aided the conservation efforts of friend Ted Reilly. By providing a functioning well, in an area without even surface water, it was easy to convince a small band of squatting villagers to move a few km away. In so doing, this move freed up land offered by the King of Swaziland to Big Game Parks and effectively added another 30% of precious ideal black rhino habitat to their park.

Other Initiatives



Pam visits homestead of Colile, who became pregnant in grade 10. Now she is home here caring for her son.



The cook at Matjana, photo credit Benji Carlson

Funds were provided to a very worthy woman we have come to know to allow her to begin her own **small farming operation**. Thus providing not only desperately needed income immediately, but allowing this woman to be at home with her six children and likely will offer a sustainable future for generations to come.

Three of our students received **eye examinations** and two had prescription glasses provided in June '06. We are still pursuing a **medical answer** to a chronic problem that plagues one of our older girls. With doctors appointments and testing ongoing.

As always, **clothing** was hand carried and delivered from sponsors to their students. In many cases, particularly our recently orphaned children, these articles would be the only new or used things they would receive all year.

Forecast for 2007

Education: will remain our foundation at Swazi Kids, and in 2007 we expect to keep at least as many kids in the classrooms as in 2006.

Foundation: We are in the preliminary stages with a sponsor, who is also a stock broker, of creating a trust fund within Swazi Kids. Additionally, there is a potential benefactor who is willing to kick off this new branch with a very generous donation. Thank you Nancy Grange and her donor!

Post secondary education: in Swaziland presents an entirely new set of challenges. First the availability of certain higher level degrees, such as anything more medical than nursing, is not found within Swaziland. Second, the Swazi gov't each year offers scholarships to a tiny percentage of its best students for courses that are offered. This, however, is subject to change or as in '06 completely cancelled, often with no notice, students are suddenly cut from funding, creating such chaos at times, that entire post secondary institutions are shut down and students and teachers alike are demonstrating. With this in mind, we are trying to be creative about getting more education for these advancing students and perhaps in a few special cases, entrance into universities abroad.

Boarding School: There is an international level boarding school, called **Waterford College** in Swaziland. It is a member of the **United World Colleges**, one of twelve dotted around the world. Early discussions have begun with Waterford's admissions and they are interested in meeting with two of our most gifted students. These two girls, Phindile Matsebula and Angel Nkambule have compelling stories of survival and brilliance and fit the profile of the local students Waterford likes to help. Even with a donation by Waterford of the entire tuition for these girls, the remaining costs for boarding, uniforms, books, travel and other hard costs, add up to about \$5,000 per student per year. It is our goal to get these girls into this school and to raise the necessary funds to support them while they are there. Pam is traveling back to Swaziland in April '07 for entrance interviews and meetings at Waterford College.



Five of our favourite older students went to town for a weekend. Angel 2nd from left, Phindile in red vest.

Ways You Can Help

Sponsorship of Elementary Students is \$200 per year, this includes: tuition, books, stationery, school uniform, contribution to school's building fund. For education sponsors there is the "soft" expectation that the sponsor will follow along in an ongoing manner, year to year with their assigned student(s.)

Sponsorship of Secondary Students most students are \$400 per year (Lavundlammanti Students are \$500/yr plus bus fare of \$200/yr) Includes everything listed for elementary school.

Scholarship Fund New for this year, the scholarship fund is provided for those interested in knowing that all of their contribution benefited a child/children's education, without the ongoing expectation of following along with a particular student. Any amount of \$100 or more will be gratefully received and 100% of it will be applied to help out with associated expenses for these students.

School Uniforms are critical to a student's attendance. Often they are handed down so many times they are in tatters. This is a source of real embarrassment to the students, as it is such an obvious mark of poverty upon them. If your budget does not permit any of the above options, we are happy to accept \$50 for each uniform purchased.

Building, Water Wells and Water Projects We have a list of water projects waiting for funding. An entire well costs \$5,000 Cdn, a reservoir costs approximately \$10,000. If these are way beyond your means, but water still interests you, we accept any amount \$50 and over that will go into a pooled "water fund." Once the \$5,000 mark has been reached the well will go in. Another building is planned for 2008, similar in concept to 2006's. Details to follow.

Accepted Forms of Payment

At this time we receive payment by cheques made out to **Swazi Kids**. We accept once yearly payment for elementary and secondary student sponsors, donations are due January-March of 2007. However, cheques for any of our other funding options are happily accepted throughout the year.

What You Can Expect

For new education sponsors, we make every effort for you to receive a letter from and recent photo of your sponsored child/children at some point within that year. In subsequent years, we find we are usually able to get letters from the elementary students, but as the older students spread out to different high schools, this follow up is harder to achieve and thus is not promised.

You will also receive a tax receipt for any donation \$50 or more. And you can also rest assured that at least 97% of your donation, goes directly to the children. (scholarship funds 100%) Our only costs at Swazi Kids are: postage, printer ink and stationery. No one here receives a salary, travel or perks of any kind from this charity.

Charity Number: 88361 5205 RR0001

We are a registered charity with the federal government with a board of directors, annual meetings, an accountant and a lawyer on the board and open-to-the-public annual financial reports. Contact us if you wish to know more.

Contact Info:

Swazi Kids
19757 24th Ave
Langley, BC
V2Z 1Y6

email: swazikids@shaw

phone: 604-533-3800

website: coming in 2007 (we are in search of a volunteer with these skills)

contact persons: Pam or Bruce Carlson



Ways to Help at Swazi Kids

If you wish to make a contribution, tear off this page and include with your cheque.

I wish to help out in the following way(s) Please tick the appropriate box/boxes and fill in blanks

Contribute to scholarship fund in the amount of (\$100 or more) _____

Sponsor _____ elementary student(s) @ \$200 each = _____

Sponsor _____ secondary student(s) @ \$400 each = _____

My secondary student(s) is/are at Lavundlammanti High School, tuition =\$500 each, plus bus fare= \$200 each

Total _____ students @ \$700 each = _____

Provide _____ uniform(s) for needy students \$50 each= _____

I would like to contribute to a pooled water fund in the amount of _____

I am interested in being involved in the drilling of a well, a larger water project or contributing to building projects, please have someone at Swazi Kids contact me. My contact info is: name _____

phone # _____ email _____

*Please make cheques payable to: **Swazi Kids***

*Please post to: Swazi Kids
19757 24th Ave
Langley, BC
V2Z 1Y6
Canada*

*For further information either email
Pam Carlson at swazikids@shaw.ca
or phone 604-533-3800*