

Swazi Kids Society 2008 Newsletter



School boys head off for their day

Welcome to anyone new to our growing little charity and welcome back to the regulars. **2007** was an incredibly busy year with four trips to Swaziland.

APRIL '07 I (Pam Carlson) went with the main goal of attempting to get scholarships for two of our brilliant students to attend Waterford College, (a member of United World Colleges.) Although unsuccessful for both girls in this bid, the trip still netted many other pluses. All of your donated school fees/funds were hand delivered to every school principal. A bicycle was purchased to help one girl shorten her 4



hrs of walking daily to and from school. Satisfactory medical help was finally found for student, Angel, who has suffered seizure like episodes for the past 2 yrs; leaving us relieved and her condition apparently in remission. Many children were supplied with a delivery of great new clothing. Six girls were taken "to town" for a weekend away from the village, always an amazing highlight for the lucky chosen ones. A huge shop was done for Matjana Elementary School, supplying every last shoeless child with black leather school shoes! And last, but not least, I came home inspired to adopt an orphaned Swazi child. Once home, Bruce and I talked at length and decided as a couple and as a family that we have the energy and desire to bring one more into our lives!

JULY '07 Saw another trip during which, I was thrilled to locate and find space available in a great boarding school of high academic standards for the two students mentioned above (Angel and Phindile.) We installed a pump on one of our previously drilled wells, delivered bags and bags of clothing and a good supply of fresh fruit, vegetables and frozen meat to a children's halfway house. Pre-arrangements were made for two girls in our program, who have just completed grade 12, to enter into Nazarene Nursing College, pending receipt of adequate grades.

NOVEMBER '07 Back again, much more work done, as this trip was longer than most. The highlights being:

- another smaller water project was viewed, for which Swazi Kids committed required funds to complete
- routine visits with several heads of our schools were completed, checking on students progress
- orphaned children were sourced out and health status checked for possible future adoptions
- a large load of toys was purchased and delivered to one of the children's halfway houses
- a large delivery of used clothing was made, also to the halfway house
- meetings with senior Social Welfare Dept officials about future larger projects
- visited SOS Children's Village to discuss a future building project we may fund and build in '09
- several months supply of beans was purchased and delivered to Matjana Elementary to augment their dwindling food supply, as otherwise provided by World Food Program
- older students who live away from home through Swazi Kids were visited and funds supplied to complete their school year: rent, groceries, toiletries, transportation etc.



The Year 2007 by the Numbers

- 39 elementary students were sponsored to stay in school
- 33 secondary students also were kept in schools
- 1 aspiring electrician received a scholarship



to attend Swaziland College of Technology

- 1 drilled well was commissioned with the installation of an electric pump
- 1 small water project was completed with funds for piping, taps, tanks etc.
- 50 kg bags of beans were delivered to Matjana elementary to help feed the children
- 7 children were hiv tested and given physicals for potential future adoptions
- 8 hockey bags full of clothing were distributed amongst our needy
- new clothes were supplied to a lucky few-
- 32 pairs of school shoes and 15 uniforms were purchased for needy students at Matjana
- 2 students were given entry exams and interviews to Waterford College
- 2 students were placed at St.Michael's High School, boarding school

Forecasts for 2008

Eight University Bursaries/Scholarships:

- 2 very lucky high school graduates are going onto university out of Swaziland: one in social work in Tanzania and the other is taking bachelor of commerce at a university in South Africa.
- 2 other students await their high school grades, if high enough, they will both be attending nursing college in Swaziland.
- 4 more university students are receiving partial bursaries for studies in the following: early childhood education, two in information technology, and one taking a third year in electronics.



Elementary Students: will hold at around 40 students.
Secondary Students: should hold at around 30-35 students.
Another water project has been quoted on and we hopefully await funding from Rotary Int'l.

A Safe House for Children is in the early planning stages. Larger and ongoing funding is going to be required for this to come to fruition, as staffing and food must be supplied on a continual basis. This new project was spawned out of the deeper realization that abandoned and innocent children are being abused, when they are held for any period

of time in Ward 8, at one of the government hospitals. Ward 8 offers little more than a cot in a wash up room and also houses a group of homeless and handicapped adults. Our relationship with the Social Welfare Dept. in Swaziland has grown this year and we feel confidence in entering into a working relationship with the department for this worthwhile endeavor.

Ways You Can Help

Sponsorship of Elementary Students is \$200/yr, this includes: tuition, books, stationery, school uniform (as needed,) and contribution to the school's building fund. For education sponsors, there is a "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 \$100 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 2009, similar in concept to 2006's. Details available upon request.

Accepted Forms of Payment

At this time we receive payment by **cheques payable to Swazi Kids**. We accept once yearly payment for elementary and secondary student sponsors, donations are due February-March 2008. 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 your education donations.

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 Information

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