



Swazi Kids

HELPING KIDS IN SWAZILAND. AFRICA.

Winter 2012

Swazi Kids Newsletter



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A Time of Growth

On the threshold of spring in Canada, it is hard not to think about the promise of growth, renewal, and hope. Although Swazi Kids has been operating since 2001, the efforts of 2011 and the opportunities of 2012 are something of a florescence. Our primary goal, the funding of elementary and high school students, continues apace and has borne considerable fruit in the form of our first cohort of post-secondary students. Our infrastructure projects have expanded into two new arenas, both of critical value: the construction of playgrounds for orphaned children and the construction of community centers with our partners from Gone Rural. In both cases, our modest efforts provide value beyond the obvious, creating better communities within which Swazi kids live and grow. This year marks our entry into the world of microfinance, providing skills and value to Swazi women to sow a better future. We are also embarking on an important mission: to raise funds for a new orphanage. Thanks to all of our community in Swaziland and beyond who make our world a better place.



Community Center Opened for Women of Gone Rural

On December 1, 2011 Swazi Kids President Pam Carlson, Thula Carlson, and fellow travellers Karin Olsen-Burgess, Jeanah and Venee Gunn attended the grand opening celebration of our first community center for the Gone Rural women of Lamghabi region.

Gone Rural is a women's cooperative of 731 women in 13 communities in Swaziland (www.goneruralswazi.com). Widely recognized around the world for its mandates of social responsibility and economic empowerment, the Gone Rural cooperative allows Swazi women to market their traditional, sustainable manufacturing practices of weaving and ceramic-making. The local chiefs and community leaders were in attendance. All the women who weave and have worked with Gone Rural came with their children.

Longwinded speeches were made in two languages, followed by a formal ribbon cutting ceremony. Then the best part of all was the women praying, singing and

dancing in their traditional ways and entering their new space for the first time.

There was nary a dry eye in the house as the women methodically, soberly and beautifully danced in unison, blessing the inside of their new shared and special space. It was agreed upon that it would be used for all forms of celebratory and functional community use, but that no funerals would be held within its' walls. Pam writes: "I felt proud that day of the work we had accomplished. Special thanks goes out once again to: the Turveys, the Riviere Foundation and Nancy Grange, all of whom had a financial hand in this structure."





Nhlanhla Dalmini recently graduated from high school and we are hopeful to place him in engineering by Aug '12, with ongoing support from the Whittemore family

Updates on Progress in 2011

Swazi Kids continues to focus and expand its original vision of supporting children so that they can attend school.

In 2011 we also continued expanding our efforts to improve the lives of children by improving the infrastructure of their communities and the health and well being of their parents.

High School Graduates

Five students graduated from high school in 2011, all of them boys, for a change. We have tentative placements for two of them already. The sponsoring family for Nhlanhla Dlamini are Lyle and Annette Whittemore of Columbus, Ohio. They have offered to continue on in post secondary, helping this very capable boy. We are hopeful that he can gain entry into an engineering program on one of the rare government scholarships. Nhlanhala is brother to King (sponsored by the Bogden's) and Themba (sponsored by Heidi Newton.) These three siblings have no parents and would most definitely be long out of schooling if it weren't for the support of these three families.

Another Jungle Gym in 2011

A home for about 40 most unfortunate children was identified on the outer margins of Mbabane as the location of our second effort at building playground equipment for disadvantaged children. The children there are largely HIV positive and mostly abandoned by parents who are still alive. Some are handicapped and all were very under-stimulated. We invested in them in the form of an elaborate jungle gym set, 4 large pieces, more advanced than last year's installation at the Manzini Half-way House. A little celebration was held with KFC take out food all around (a real treat in SD) and thanks from the governor of the home and local social workers.



Scrap Book, Volume 2

Another scrap book was produced by Pam Carlson highlighting the 12 Swazi adoptees now in Canada. It was circulated to the families as a way of keeping everyone in touch and gift copies were given to important people in the Swazi government. It was hoped that this might further encourage their government to proceed without haste in the re-opening of the inter-country adoption program, now scheduled to finally commence, spring 2012.



Photos clockwise from top left: 1) gogo jumps for joy at grand opening of her new community center, 2) employee and senior student mentor Joseph Aryee cuddles a hopeful adoptee, halfway house, 3) Thula Carlson shows the Deputy Prime Minister of Swaziland photos of her life in Canada, 4) faithful sponsor and photographer Karin Olsson-Burgess with senior students, Innocent (L) and Sifiso (R), 5) Ncamiso Nkabule, graduates 2013, sponsor the Newton family, 6) Phindile (2nd year nursing) and her brother Dumiso (sponsors the Wheeler and Bulycz families), 7) Pam and Thula Carlson with Innocent, pre-med student.



Joy Ndwandwe

The Joy Ndwandwe Project

With complete funding by the Riviere Foundation, Swazi Kids was able to provide cultural mentoring to over the 800 women of Gone Rural. A series of daylong workshops was delivered in various regions around the country with a focus on the wisdom of their beloved past King Sobhuza II.



New Initiatives in 2012

This year we are embarking on several bold initiatives including a micro-financing program, another community center for Gone Rural, and a new orphanage. Donations can be directed to specific projects. Follow the blog at swazikids.wordpress.com for progress updates.



SCHEDULED START on GONE RURAL COMMUNITY CENTER #2

The value of the Gone Rural community center seems immeasurable to these communities. Not only does it support and enhance one of the most successful Swazi enterprises, it provides a common space for community events, from celebrations to health education. This building will be essentially identical to the building completed in 2011 at Lamghabi, but for the next group of women about 5 km further up the Tea Road. We are scheduled to break ground, spring 2012. Only 11 more to go...

BUILD TRIP OCT. 2012

Helping contribute to the construction of the above community center, about 12 Canadians will be going together to Swaziland to work for a week on the structure.

MICRO FINANCE:

This is a HUGE development, we have a benefactor willing to fully support a trial year of the WORTH program, as put together by PACT (www.pactworld.org/cs/worth). WORTH teaches literacy and numeracy, as well as trains the women in business development. Using their own small monthly contributions, over time the women self finance each other in small business loans. Without an intermediary bank, interest is re-paid and the women have complete control over their own "village banking." This program has a 20-year track record and has been so successful that new groups spring up and are supported by experienced women, such that it is not only sustainable but growing in the absence of further support from outside. We intend to work with 20 groups of 25 women each, empowering 500 budding businesswomen in our very first year! This is intended to launch in June 2012.

PRE-LAUNCH TRIP late April-early May '12

Pam Carlson and two Swazi Kid supporters will travel to Swaziland this spring with prime focus on meeting with our training project-manager for the WORTH program as well as the "empowerment workers" who will be on the ground with our 500 women from Gone Rural.

FUNDRAISER: 2ND COMMUNITY CENTER

Join us on June 1, 2012 at 6 pm at UBC Boathouse, Richmond, BC. Catered dinner, cash bar, music, live and silent auction, power point presentation of achievements, current and upcoming events in the Society, gorgeous venue. Tickets are \$150 each. Pay by cheque payable to "Swazi Kids" 280 Kalamalka Lakeview Dr, Vernon, BC V1H 1G1 or go to www.swazikids.org, click on "donate" and use the Pay Pal button for "fundraiser." Tax receipts will be issued for the portion of ticket sales, live and silent auction sales that exceeds normal retail values. If using Pay Pal, please send us a quick email (swazikids@shaw.ca) to alert us and to put you on the attendee list.

FUNDRAISING FOR A SAFE -BABY HOME

We have befriended and supported a tireless couple who have devoted their lives completely to saving the lives of forgotten, abandoned, often hiv positive and sometimes dying babies in a remote corner of Swaziland. For political reasons, they have to find new and permanent accommodations. We intend to raise \$25,000 USD to build a new baby home that will house 30 babies and toddlers. A good start to the funds has been identified and committed. Land has been offered by a local chief and steps are being taken. The intended start date for this project is fall 2012.

POST SECONDARY STUDENT SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

This program continues in 2012. We are currently supporting 12 students, with 6 new high school graduates from 2011 for whom we must also find placements. A few **headliners** on the list: 2nd year nursing student, 2nd year electrical engineering, 2nd yr B. Comm., 2nd year office administrators (2), pre-med student (hoping for admission in 2013 into South Africa) and 1st year engineering student.

ELEMENTARY AND HIGHSCHOOL PROGRAM:

This program remains the mainstay of our efforts and continues in 2012 with approximately 60 students from 4 different schools making their way to graduation year by year. This is possible with the support of our longstanding "education sponsors."



Pam and crew stop at the fruit stand to stock up on fresh produce for the children of the Manzini half way house.



Joseph BBQ's chicken for our students.



Gogo Victoria rests during the celebration and opening of the new community center.

Sponsorship Summary for 2011

High School Graduates:	5
Total Sponsored High School Students:	41
Total Sponsored Elementary Students:	21

Featured Board Members

SALLY FISHER: after 10 years as a committed board member and donor, Sally has decided to hand over her job. We do hope that she and her husband, Keith Hamilton our lawyer, will continue, however, as dedicated sponsors. This year, Sally and Keith along with Bruce Carlson, donated funds enough to completely pay the full time salary for a teacher for 30 students at a new school onsite at New Life Homes (www.africanleadershippartners.org). Thank you so much Sally and Keith.

Sally will be missed. In her place, we are excited to introduce **Laura Cutshall**. Laura is an adoptive mother of two children from Lesotho. Additionally, Laura manages the “Lesotho side” of Swazi Kids’ operations.

JOHN McINTYRE: joined us a little over a year ago. In addition to John’s business like approach, he brings good humour to the board and a generous cheque to the



Sally Fisher

Laura Cutshall

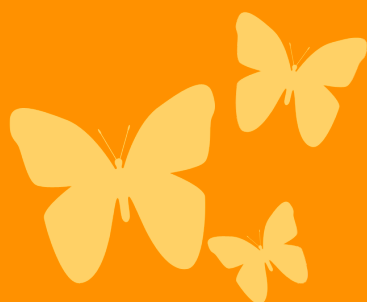


John McIntyre

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Swazi Kids Needs You



Our ongoing efforts to improve the lives of children in Swaziland require significant funds. We thank all of you who so generously donate to our projects. Donations to specific projects are welcomed:

- Community Center #2
- Elementary Student (\$200/year)
- High School Student (\$500/year)
- School Uniform (\$80)
- Baby Home
- Medical/dental care for orphans

Send a cheque payable to Swazi Kids or visit www.swazikids.org to donate online.

swazikids@shaw.ca

Swazi Kids Society
280 Kalamalka Lakeview Dr
Vernon, BC V1H 1G1 Canada

Ways to Help at Swazi Kids 2012

If you wish to make a contribution, tear off or print out this page and include with your cheque. Make cheques payable to: Swazi Kids Society. Post to the address at the bottom of this page.

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

Use my contribution as you see fit in any Swazi Kids work _____

Contribute to Building projects 2012 _____

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

Sponsor _____ **secondary student(s) @ 500 each =** _____

Provide uniform(s) for needy students \$80 each= _____

I would like to contribute to orphan care _____

Medical care for orphans and vulnerable children _____

Total _____

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

Please post to:

Swazi Kids
280 Kal Lakeview Dr.
Vernon, BC
V1H 1G1
Canada

For further information either email
Pam Carlson at swazikids@shaw.ca
or phone 250-541-0122

OR using Pay Pal, go to www.swazikids.org, click on “donate,” you will find options on how much to donate there. Please send a brief email to swazikids@shaw.ca to alert us to the donation, as well please indicate in the email either that you leave the use of the funds up to us, or if you would like it directed specifically, please indicate this.