



## Lily of the Valley Children's Village Makaphutu Children's Village December/January E-news

### **LILY OF THE VALLEY CHILDREN'S VILLAGE**

Congratulations to Warren and Sungmin on the birth of baby Noah on the 23<sup>rd</sup> December. Proud and excited parents and little Noah are all doing well.

The children were once again treated to an amazing Christmas party at The Duck n Deck Animal Farm. Despite the rain the children had a wonderful time, feeding the animals, playing on the jumping castle and riding ponies. They were also overjoyed to meet Father Christmas and receive some wonderful Christmas presents.

Many of our older children enjoyed Holiday Camps, they had great fun taking part in activities such as swimming in the river, making rafts, flying down a zip line, going through an obstacle course, mudslides etc. These were Christian based camps where the children made numerous new friends and learned much about Jesus. Our volunteers also ran a holiday program. The children had fun watching movies, baking, reading, makeup lessons, soccer matches, swimming and trips to the local game reserve. Thank you everyone for making the holidays a fun and exciting time for our little ones.

Christmas Day was family time, the children and their Housemums had a lovely meal together and enthusiastically opened presents and shared a special time together.

Our Social Worker, Phume Tsehle, has worked really hard to reconcile and reunite our children with their extended families and foster families. As a result we said a sad farewell to several of our children: Tumi, Amanda and sisters Nosipho and Thulile have all been placed with members of their extended family and Thandeka has been fostered. Many of these children have been part of our Lily family for many years (Thandeka came to us in 2001, when she was just six weeks old). It is very hard and sad to say good bye but we know they will enjoy their new families. Phume will keep in touch with these children to ensure they are happy and settled in their new homes.

No sooner had we said goodbye to these little ones, we welcomed four new children to our Lily family, they have settled into their new homes and are enjoying attending school and pre-school.

We welcome Sphindile Tshambi as our psychologist. Sphi will be working with our children alongside Phume and identifying children in need of support in a proactive manner. This will complement the excellent support groups that Phume has already begun.

We had a fun evening bringing in the New Year. The children enjoyed a braai (barbecue) and afterwards watched a fireworks display, which they all really enjoyed!!!

January was a busy month as we prepared children for school. We have 87 children going to school this year. 17 little ones started Grade 1 at our new Lilyvale School. 55 are at the local Primary School and we now have 15 children in high school.

We are sad to report the death of Housemother Anica Zuma, after a short illness. Anica had been the Carer at House 17 for four years and was much loved by 'her' boys. Anica started as a relief Housemother in December 2005 and was then appointed as a permanent Housemother in July 2006.

### **LILY COMMUNITY PROJECTS**

**Farming** -The projects staff all enjoyed a much deserved break over the December holidays with a skeleton team staying on to keep the farming operations going. The hard work that the tunnels team have put in over the past few months have borne fruit – literally. The three tunnels that are currently in production have yielded a harvest of over 1

ton of tomatoes in a single week! We have been blessed with new markets to supply which has meant that not a single kg has gone to waste.

Our dream of being a part of the Shongweni Farmers Market has now too become a reality. This Market takes place in Hillcrest every Saturday morning. Being a very popular event it is usually very difficult to get a stall so we were very surprised and overjoyed when we were able to start just a week after applying!! Besides the fresh tomatoes and peppers we are also selling sun dried tomatoes, tomato pesto, tomato jam, tomato chutney, pasta sauce, tomato paste and bottled tomatoes! As we have become known sales have steadily increased. The motivation for being at the market is more than just selling produce but also an opportunity to tell people about the work at Lily.

**Lilyvale School** We are very excited at the opening of our new school, thanks to some hard work by the contractors during the holidays the new classrooms were ready on time.

Jonathan & Ethel Tanyanyiwa and their son Adiel, after enjoying some time with family back in Zimbabwe, arrived travel weary but eager to move into their new home at Lily. Our school officially opened at the start of the school year and the children love their new classroom, facilities and their teacher. Jonathan's enthusiasm, commitment and high standards in education are going to set a sound foundation in the education of our children. We have now also introduced a wonderful Bible curriculum, incorporating the catechism and key memory verses. It is lovely to see the children learning scripture and learning the key aspects of our faith.

### **MAKAPHUTU CHILDREN'S VILLAGE**

We bid a sad farewell to a number of our children at the end of 2009. Thembelihle and Siyabonga are being reconciled back home to their father. Thembelihle has completed her Matric this year and we are all confident that she will do well. Both of these children have been at Makaphutu for 6 years and will be sorely missed. Another two siblings that are leaving us are Brian and Xoli, they will be returning to their mother. We pray that they will do well and enjoy being a family again.

We also bid farewell to Jonathan, Ethel and Adiel Tanyanyiwa, who are leaving us to the head up the new Lilyvale School. To the Lily we say that they are receiving some real gems in Jonathan and Ethel and we know that they will be a blessing and will help the school prosper. We welcome Monique Gwala who replaces Jonathan in heading up the day care program. As our Creche has become known in the community so the numbers have increased from 44 children in 2009 to 68 this year. One attribute that is already evident with Monique is her incredible organisational skills.

December also saw several year-end parties,

- The Little Hills Crèche had an exciting Christmas party with wonderful presents and lots of good food. We also held a Graduation Day, with all 19 of the Grade R children graduating to big school next year. Children, staff and parents had a wonderful day.
- We enjoyed a Christmas party for the older children at Makaphutu, we also had fun at the Awards Evening which was touched with sadness as we also said goodbye to those leaving our family.
- We hosted a Christmas party for 520 children from various children's homes and community organisations, which was sponsored by First National Bank. Everyone had loads of fun, especially when it was present time. This was a huge undertaking and we thank the sponsors for their generosity.

2010 !! Big year for us here in South Africa, with the Soccer World Cup happening this year. This event is on everyone's lips and there is quite a buzz as the stadiums are nearing completion and some already hosting soccer matches. Exciting year ahead as we all prepare for this Global event.

The children have settled down nicely after the Christmas holidays. Many of them have started in new schools as they have progressed to a higher level of education. We have one little girl starting 'big school', 4 moving from Junior to Senior Primary and 3 taking the big step to High School, these children particularly will have to adjust to the heavier load which comes with the move to High School.

**Community Work** - During the holiday period we were blessed with many gifts and food hampers for the community. We received in total 650 gifts and around 120 food hampers for distribution from various organisations. To all the donors we say thank you for your donations and heart for the disadvantaged communities.

### **The Lily and Makaphutu Team**