



Thembalithsha News

Hope through education, training and healthcare

September 2007

Thembalithsha



Thanks, expansion, glamour, renovations, empowerment, babies and new premises are all included in this month's newsletter. Things are ever changing at Thembalithsha and it is important that we remain ready to move and grow with the ever increasing needs of those we serve.

Having just returned from a very exhausting Aids conference in Johannesburg I am very mindful of the desperate need of those infected people in our country. We become very blasé about statistics and so often have a "will never happen to me" attitude however when one considers that we have over 5,000,000 people in our country who are infected with HIV then we have to realize that it has happened to all of us, we are all involved. When we look at the number of children in our country who fall into the classification of an OVC, orphan or vulnerable child, when we look at the number of homeless, jobless, seemingly hopeless people then we realize that we all have a responsibility to make a difference.

At this time of the year when people are starting to plan their end of year holidays and end of year functions I would ask you to consider the plight of others less fortunate than yourselves and to consider what you can do to support the work we do.

Thanks to all of you for your interest, your prayers and your support.

Kind regards,
Chris Hinrichsen
Managing Director



ThembaCare Athlone

(TCA):

ThembaCare Athlone (TCA): September has been a wonderful month at ThembaCare with 8 babies being discharged back into the care of their families and foster care. Two of our babies are currently in hospital and we continue praying for their recovery. This month we also said farewell to one of our volunteers Paula Scott from the U.K. and thank you to her for giving so tirelessly of herself in the care of our precious babies, we will miss her. We would like to thank the pupils of Turfhall Primary School in Penlyn Estate for the wonderful gift packets they made for our babies. It is obvious that a lot of care and thought went into the preparation of these gifts which we will give to our babies to take home with them when discharged from ThembaCare.



ThembaCare Grabouw (TCG)

We have realized that nothing stays the same and without forward momentum we are in fact going nowhere. With our number of patients in the community growing we have had to reassess how to continue delivering a comprehensive service to the people of Grabouw. After much deliberation we have decided to have Palliative Care trained carers on the ground in the different areas. These carers will be patient advocates, friends, educators and most importantly an extension of ThembaCare in the communities, enabling us to continue being proactive in the fight against unnecessary loss of life, fear and hopelessness. We will be able to expand our help to the Grabouw Day Clinic working alongside the ARV clinic and the TB room. For us to achieve this dream we have to employ and train up five new carers, this is truly a step of faith and one we humbly submit to God. Sr. Joyce Van Der Berg will be heading up this new division, she and her team will work out of our converted garage which will also be our support groups meeting room etc etc. Role on the new building! This will bring the number of full time employees at ThembaCare Grabouw up to eighteen, WOW! Marline Mariz will remain with the In Patient unit and continue the vital service offered by ThembaCare of transporting our ill patients to the Day Clinic and getting patients to Tygerberg Hospital or Hottentot Holland Hospital for appointments when there is no room on the ambulance. Pumesa will assist Marline but be able to start more support groups. Little Anati and her mom were discharged out of the In Patient Unit earlier this month, after 9 months. Last week we heard that her father died in hospital in Transkei a day after they arrived back home. We truly ask Gods help and provision for them and look forward to their safe return to Grabouw.



School Of Hope

Elegance and excitement, glamour and celebration were the order of the day on the occasion of the Grade Ten Ball on the 14th September. The learners who have made it to the last term of Grade Ten were rewarded for their efforts with a day off school to prepare for their celebrity status and red-carpet treatment in anticipation of the night ahead. Guests and learners were treated to a scrumptious meal with a local flavour (brijani) , two excellent guest speakers (Abra Barbier, news journalist with the SABC, and child activist and rap artist Ryan "Brown" Dalton) and a DJ who rocked us into midnight. All this to demonstrate our appreciation for the effort of our special Grade tens who have made it so far in spite of the many challenges they have faced to get there. Thanks to all who donated their time and efforts, caterers, organisers and staff.



Graceland Pre-school

Graceland has had a wonderful month, with many international and local visitors who came to love and spoil the children. One of these visitors was from two classes from the Elshadai School in Durbanville. They spent two days at the school, and ran the day programmes for the teachers. Along with their exciting and fun activities, they also made a huge donation of toys which the children will be able to play with for months to come. What made this visit extra special was that the children of Elshadai were able to reach out to children less fortunate than themselves. The plans for the renovations of the new school are coming along very well, and we have already had many generous donations to make our needs list shorter. With the help of many volunteers, including student teams from the Every Nation Stellenbosch church, who will be working on the school every Saturday in October as well as a two week mission in Nov/Dec, we should be moved in and ready to start well before the start of the new school year.



Themba Training

At the beginning of this month we started a very exciting new venture, a beadwork and small business project in Phillipi East. What is especially rewarding in the case of some of the candidates at the new project is that they had lost hope due to being HIV positive, and since we started we have seen a lot of improvement in the ladies self-esteem, and belief that they can improve their business and income streams through the knowledge gained on the course as well as apply this practically with the beadwork sales. Many own small fruit and veg businesses or sell cooked meat on the side of the road to survive, and the plan is for them to also improve on their existing businesses, therefore the beadwork production will hopefully bring a new income boost into their households. Beadwork has already been sent to Europe and sold locally, and the goal is by the end of October to complete the micro MBA training, and to raise the level of production of beadwork, small cushions and clothing to enable us to take large orders from corporates, churches and tourists both locally and internationally.



International Volunteers

A warm welcome to Rebekka Heller and Maila Podewils from Germany, who have joined us for long term volunteering in ThembaCare Bridgetown. Rebekka Heller is here for 1 year, and Maila, a social worker student has committed to work with us for 5 months. The biggest challenge for Thembalitsha is finding volunteers who can help us for longer periods of time than just a few weeks, because we find the depth of experience and skills transfer is far more effective. If you know anyone who would like to volunteer with us for a 4 to 6 month process, please contact Gerrida Lange on gerridalange@yahoo.co.uk or refer to our website for more information.



Bosom

Buddies

Our buddies have all been super busy this month ensuring we get to bless dozens of delicious babies and their grateful mothers. Last month we blessed 177 mothers with our beautiful diaper bags chock-a-block with infant clothing and mommy and baby necessities. This month we should squeeze in a couple more! Due to the increase in volume we now employ Monica from Khayalitsha as well as Nodolly from Grabouw to sew for us. Nodolly had her first day on Tuesday the 19th when she joined several volunteers to sew up our gorgeous fleecy baby blankets. With Cape Town's unpredictable weather, we are sure to need them for a good 2 months still. Our clothing stock is running a little low but we are trusting that mothers in our community will be doing a big spring clean and throwing out all those sweet little baby clothes in our direction. Remember we don't only take brand new clothing but are every grateful to receive gently used baby clothing as well.

One of our greatest challenges we now face, is finding bigger premises. We have outgrown our little granny flat and we are excited about the expansion and all the new challenges and blessings that accompany this growth. October month will bring about some serious searching for the right spot for Bosom Buddies to operate out of. Possibly even a picture of this new 100 square meters wonderful space BB will then occupy. We remain optimistic and expectant!

Pics is of Nodolly at our sewing day, Merenza sewing, and one of our little babies wearing a hat knitted by Oumie. Oumie is a our chief knitter and supplies over a hundred hats a month and many little cardigans.

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