

July 15, 2009

Hello, Friends.

It is winter here now and the mornings and evenings are very cold. We recently had a donation of nice, big blankets and we are giving them out daily. Just last week, a lady came here to tell me that her children had bumped a candle over and burned all the bedding in their home. We were lucky to have blankets to share with them. We also purchased warm track suits and sweatshirts for 40 children at the beginning of the month. They were delivered just in time because we had a very cold snap and a few days of rain. Cold and wet is no fun!

The cold weather has not affected our amazing vegetable garden. We have been blessed with a bumper crop of vegetables and each week we harvest beets, onions, cabbage, spinach and more. Although the tomato season is over, our teens already have plans to replant again in the spring. Adam and his team are very proud of their garden.

Since it is hunting season, we will be able to collect bags of donated meat from the safari organizations this week. Most of our families only eat meat once a month and they are always eager to share in this generous contribution. Also, in another wonderful donation, boxes and boxes of Pediasure arrived from Abbott several weeks ago. We have been serving it at the crèche (day care facility) and as part of the feeding scheme for our families in need. The children love their milkshakes in every flavor and we are so grateful for this important supplement.

Our first crèche opened at the beginning of June. The day before we opened, some municipal officers drove around the village announcing our opening day with a megaphone. There were more than 300 families waiting for us at 7AM and the program was completely full in less than an hour. We enrolled 70 little children five years old and younger. The youngest is a little boy named Lesiba, a tiny 15 month old who we all love to cuddle because he is so responsive to our love. We have received some wonderful resources such as books, crayons, paper and toys. The children enjoy playing on a nice jungle gym and a see-saw. We even have scooters to race around our "formula one" track, which is a small area encircled with old car tires buried in the sand. It is not surprising that we have a long waiting list for the next crèche.

It is our aim to have the crèche become a self-sustaining business within three years. We have applied for government funding for salaries and a portion of our food costs. In South Africa, we know these things take time but we hope our application will ultimately be successful. In the meantime, we are funding the salaries for a staff of eight and working out the monthly food budget.

We have received so much gratitude from schools, hospitals and other children's facilities for the health and educational supplies and the toys from the last shipment. We took some of the small fluffy toys to the cancer ward of a hospital in Johannesburg and our local hospice received clothing, bedding and infant supplies. When people ask where these things come from, they are amazed to hear about our

friends in the United States. They are overwhelmed that people from so far away care about Lesideng in South Africa. You are all heroes here.

The outreach feeding scheme from the soup kitchen continues to grow. Children from the entire area around Lesideng are being fed each day. They receive fruit and a hot meal prepared by some of the mothers. A young man named Sam helps to run the feeding scheme. He is very good with the children, even teaching them to wash their hands before the meal is served.

On the medical front, we have had some challenges and big expenses. Little Praisie had successful hernia surgery in Pretoria, but she still needs special care for her cerebral palsy. With physical therapy, she can now lift and turn her head and has gained flexibility in her arms and legs. The flu has been really bad here (I was flattened myself for three weeks) and we still have many illnesses related to poor sanitation. The clinic continues to be very under-stocked and sadly we have not been able to help everyone. Old Lucas, who had an LSK sponsored shoe business, lost his battle with AIDS and the flu. In all, we helped six families with funerals this month. One family lost a mother one week and their granny the following week, leaving five orphans. We are providing them with food parcels.

The Kamatsogo beading project is doing very well with your support. The workers saw pictures of the party hosted by Joan and her friends where you sold the pillow covers, aprons, jewelry and key chains that they crafted. The team of ladies and one gentleman send their special love to you, Joan.

Our first LSK sponsored student, Hendrik Lefoka, graduated yesterday from college. He has a diploma in criminal justice, which opens doors in many government departments. He already found a job at the local social service department doing community work. We are all so thrilled and proud of him!

We have also begun working on plans for special skills development. It is our hope that with specialized training, some of our young people could find employment in the tourist orientated game lodges in the area. The possible classes will include: field guiding, cooking, sewing and computer skills. A young man named April just completed a three month computer competency course. He intends to continue his training and then train others. Some people from our church are willing to volunteer their time, energy and personal skills to start this project. This will go a long way toward our goal of sustainability.

We are still hoping to visit the U.S. for the auction fundraiser on November 7<sup>th</sup>. We continue to be hopeful that the funding for our tickets will be donated again this year. The Lord has provided for us each year and we pray that He will do the same again this year.

We love and appreciate you all and send our very best wishes. God Bless.

Terri and Hamish