



August 2012

Dear Friend of Siyakhulisa,

It's been a while since we updated you on Siyakhulisa news so there is much to tell but I shall try to be brief.

### Pamela Hastings' Visit

Starting with what happened first since our January newsletter, Pamela Hastings' visit in February was a resounding success. She helped out at William Oates School for 2 weeks and the kids adored her and benefited hugely. I don't think Somersetters have ever before met such an energetic, friendly and delightfully happy young girl. She became known as the girl with the permanent smile and dancing eyes. Since her return to Canada Pamela has been working on achieving charitable status for Siyakhulisa in Canada, no easy task, but Pamela is not one to be beaten so we look forward to good news on this front. Thanks Pamela for all you did and are still doing. We feel so much richer for just knowing you.



### Alice- our Canadian Wonder

Meanwhile Alice Rawecki, our "Coordinator of Educational Support in Canada for South Africa", has been up to her tricks and has achieved wonders. Alice had a birthday celebration this year and in her invitation she requested no personal gifts, but rather that a donation be made to the Siyakhulisa Trust which would in turn be used to facilitate education for individual learners in South Africa. There was an overwhelming contribution at this event and Alice gathered together an amazing sum which converted to close on R34 000. Wow, what an achievement!



This included the income from a garage sale that Alice and friend, Kristine Ericson, held. Thank you Kristine!

The Trustees made a unanimous decision there and then that this money will be assigned to a new scholarship called "The Alice Rawecki Scholarship" and Alice is already in the process of selecting a deserving student to attend Gill College for his/her high school years. We'll reveal the name of this lucky learner in the next newsletter.

### Our bursary recipients.

Just as expected all four of our learners floundered in the first term. We knew it was not going to be easy adjusting to a very different academic environment with exceptionally high standards. The demands on them were great but Hadlyn-Claude, Meagan and Bathandwa weathered the storm and have passed both the first and second quarters.

Their marks are still slightly below the average in the class however these hard-working youngsters can only improve. Justin, from the Children's Home, who had spent a few years on the street, has found the transition to be more of a challenge. Perhaps we made the mistake of pushing him too early and expecting too much. However Justin has the ability to catch up if he applies himself and we're not giving up on him yet.

### The Dr Alan Russell Scholarship

Those of you who have been with us from the start will know that Dr Alan Russell is really the founder of Siyakhulisa Abantwana. Without his efforts to find donors in Canada we would not have a trust fund. In view of this we co-Trustees felt it fitting that a scholarship be established in his name. At the same time the perfect candidate appeared. A young girl in Grade 8 who is top of her class at her present high school and wishes to become a doctor. Thanks to Dr Alan Russell she will complete her remaining 4 high school years at Gill College, giving her a better shot at achieving her ambitions. Her name is Rickeen Martins and I'll see that I have a photo of her in the next newsletter.



### Our University Student – Niki Jansen

Niki's situation became rather an alarming one which we are now fighting on a political level but probably won't get much joy. Being a foster child Niki was receiving a foster grant last year, his first year at university, which he used to pay for transport to get to his lectures and for textbooks. One would assume this grant would be available to him until he has completed his degree but low and behold, our government, in its wisdom, terminated his grant at the end of last year - because he turns 21 this year! But wait, you are not going to believe this: If he was still in high school, struggling to pass and with no hope of getting to university, he would still be receiving the grant, 21 or not! Now how's that for discouraging our youth to better themselves and aim for tertiary education? Niki would have had to give up his studies if we did not step in and help. Siyakhulisa is sponsoring his transport and textbooks now to the tune of R1000 a month and have committed to continue this next year to see him through his final year.



### Sue-Ann Schwartz

We were approached by Sue-Ann, a born and bred Somerset Easter, in February for assistance as she is halfway through her studies as a Foundation Phase teacher and was going to have to discontinue her studies for financial reasons. We agreed to assist her by paying for the modules she still needs to do before qualifying. We are hoping that Sue-Ann will be able to secure a teaching post in Somerset East so that our local children can benefit from having a dedicated and well-qualified teacher.

### Mary Coetzee Children's Home

There are 14 children in the foster home at present and the wonderful news is that they are being well cared for with funds from an American family who come to Somerset East every winter on a hunting trip. These kind people got stuck into one of the houses this winter and did repairs to the building and the furniture so that this house can be in full use again. They are also making a monthly contribution to cover a salary for a third care-worker to look after the children. So it's all good news at the Home and I'm thrilled to report that the vibe is a happy one - Thanks to Denise Hope and her co-workers at Child Welfare who run the Home.

### More thank you's

Finally we would like to express our sincere thanks to all our donors. I hope that you will see from this newsletter that we are finding good homes for all your donations in our pledge to improve the lives of young people through education. A special mention to Kristine Ericson who, at great expense, has shipped out from Canada 3 boxes of beautiful children's books with another 3 boxes due to arrive any day now. These will be shared between William Oates School and Child Welfare who will start a library section in one of their rooms for the use of the children from the Home.

Thanks also to Di Turpin from Cape Town who visited Somerset East in July with her car packed to the roof with bags of second-hand clothing for the children at the Home. The young girls, especially, are going to enjoy strutting around this Summer in some stunning numbers. Thanks also to Di's friends who contributed clothing towards this good cause.

Any donations are most welcome, no matter how small. As you can tell from this newsletter, we have made serious commitments to a number of learners and students over the next 5 years and we would not like to let them down. Debit orders of just R50-R100 a month from a sufficient number of donors, can make all the difference to maintaining a viable trust fund.

Here are our bank details for your convenience:

**ABSA Bank**

**Somerset East Branch Code: 334418**

**61 Nojoli St, Somerset East, Eastern Cape, South Africa**

**SWIFT Code: ABSAZAJJ**

**Name of Savings Account: Siyakhulisa Trust**

**Account No: 9197835105**

We look forward to hearing from you.

Stay safe wherever you are.

Warm regards

Lynne Brown

On behalf of Dr Alan Russell, Rosalee Bradfield and Alice Rawecki

**PS: Please visit [www.siyakhulisa.com](http://www.siyakhulisa.com) for past news and newsletters.**