



Phedišang's Newsletter - Hands On October 2007

WHO WE ARE

Phedišang is an organization that contributes to the care of orphans and vulnerable children (OVC's) by providing meals, health monitoring and access to available government funding. We endeavour to provide the nurturing and support that a child's own family would give it.

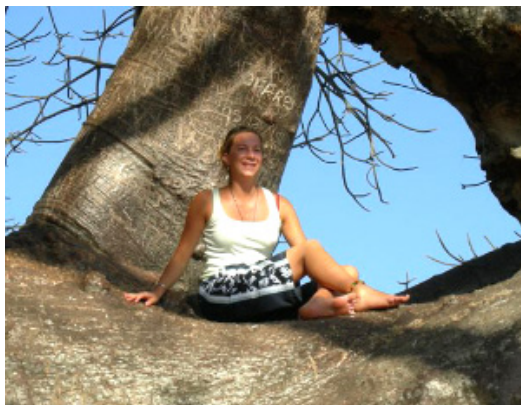
WHAT WE DO

- Provide the OVC's with 2 meals a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year
- Monitor their health - liaise with healthcare professionals and provides
- Obtain available government grants. Phedišang uses existing infrastructure to provide its services.
- It does not spend money on buildings and vehicles, but rather on caring for orphans. Administrative costs are borne by the McLean Trust.

R100 feeds one child for an entire month.

NEWS

Donations from Local Farmers



Phedišang volunteer, Michaela Leiss from Germany, made contact with local commercial farmers in the Hoedspruit area and asked them to donate excess produce to the Phedišang project. All farmers approached are more than happy to share their excess produce with Phedišang whenever possible. This month we were able to get oranges and tomatoes and we're looking forward to more donations in the future. Most of the farmers in the area produce citrus including oranges and grapefruits as well as mangos and litchis in summer. Their donations are greatly appreciated and we look forward to strengthening ties with the local commercial farming community.

HIV Testing

Andrew Kanarek, a volunteer from the United States participated in an HIV workshop to introduce the idea of testing to the kids. In order to make this effective, it was important to have the facilitators understand what it was like to be tested. The idea of a staff testing day was, at first, not well received – stigma of HIV is still very prevalent. After some discussion and reassurances, some of the staff decided to participate. On 3 October, a mobile clinic was set up at the Sekororo office and both volunteers and staff



office and both volunteers and staff got tested for HIV. Other staff who had refused to get tested were there to support the initiative and their fellow staff members. Workshops to educate the kids at the centres were started and follow-up workshops will be planned for the coming months.

Administrative Improvements

Christy Hotard, has just finished her first year with Phedišang and is eagerly involved in creating sustainable systems while continuing to spend time at the centres with the kids. Christy has been working with the staff to improve the reports as well as teach them valuable computer skills. She has started monthly meetings so the two hubs can share information and work together. Meetings for the cooks and carers were also established. This has helped to improve processes for both hubs and create a forum for the staff to address any issues and problems that may arise. In addition to all this, Christy travels to Johannesburg from time to time to work in that office on various projects including funding proposals, editing the website, databases and strategic planning.

Roedean School Visit

Phedišang has formed a link with Roedean School (S.A.) in Johannesburg. The first lengthy learner contact was a community service residential trip in August. 9 girls and 2 teachers stayed in the nearby (Catholic) London mission for 5 nights and did many activities with the Phedišang children. It was a big success all round, and at the end of this Newsletter is an article written by some of the girls in response to their experiences over the weekend.

ACTIVITIES

Life Skills Workshops

Corinna Muschner, a volunteer through the GSAYA organization, arrived in late July and dived right into the work. She immediately started creating life skills workshops discussing goals and how to reach them. She has also organised separate girl and boy groups at the centres to address certain issues. She works with the staff to facilitate the workshops in Sepedi and ensure the kids understand the topics.

Sports

Michaela Leiss and Nina Meyer-Seipp, also from Germany were able to introduce new sports activities at all of the centres. Last year Michaela taught the kids Fireball, a fun game similar to Dodgeball. This year, the women came armed with a new game called Airball. All of the kids at the centres have thoroughly enjoyed the new addition to the repertoire of outside games.

A competition has been set-up between all 6 centres for the end of October. Each centre has a team for Netball, Soccer and Airball and will compete for the top 2 places.



World Map Murals

Christy has huge plans for the next year – she has set herself a goal of painting a world map wall mural at each of the Phedišang centres. Peace Corps has provided a step-by-step guide for the process and she is hoping to create these with the help of other volunteers and the older children at the centres. In order to do this, we need just a few materials. Roedean School has donated a projector, which we will use to trace the map on the wall. We have already sourced some donors to buy the paints needed to start the project. Please let us know if you are interested in helping out with this specific venture.

HELP WANTED

Phedišang can always use outside input or initiatives for fundraising ideas. Please let us know if you are interested or have any thoughts that can help the project.

Phedišang accepts and greatly appreciates all donations of goods, clothing, books, games, toys and computers. Phedišang collects, sorts and transports all such donations within South Africa.

VOLUNTEERS

All volunteers that dedicate time out of their lives to come and work for Phedišang contribute in their own ways to improving the project. We are very grateful for their time and dedication.

ROEDEAN SCHOOL VISIT ARTICLE

Phedišang: 2-7 August 2007

The thought of driving for seven hours to a place that we only knew was somewhere in rural Limpopo did not seem too appealing for the nine Roedeans who signed up for the residential project to Phedišang.

When we finally arrived at The London Mission where we were going to be staying, we were given a brief tour of the mission. We saw the "long-drops", the outdoor showers and the rooms we were going to be sleeping in. Needless to say that a lot of our reservations were overcome – the arrangement seemed rather civilized. It was certainly very different to what we are accustomed to but not quite as bad as what we had imagined.



The Roedeans brought art and activity boxes that we made for the children at Phedišang. A buddy system had been set up in advance so that each Roedean girl was paired up with a girl from Phedišang who could speak a fair amount of English. Communication was a challenge. Imagine – Roedeans English and Phedišang Sepedi.... Throughout the five days we interacted a great deal with our buddies. We learnt about their lives and visited their homes where we were warmly welcomed.



The aim of the project was to learn more about other people living in our country and to experience a different way of life. We were all out of our individual comfort zones and ultimately this only added to our memories of the experience. We learnt that even though we come from different places, have had

different experiences and speak different languages, we are all ultimately just South African teenagers and we face many of the same challenges growing up.

The nine of us who went to Phedišang are honoured to have been part of such a worthwhile project and are truly proud to have been able to initiate what we hope will be a long-lasting relationship between Roedeans and Phedišang.

- Kimberley Wiid and Alicia Swart

Other Roedeans in attendance for the weekend:

Li-Ming Pan, Jordyn Gracey, Lisa Maxton, Sandra-Lee Bradfield, Jandri Van Zyl, Tenille Werners, Malebo Mahube

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

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