



Newsletter No 9

December 2008

Hello Everyone

Another year is almost over and I hope it has been a good one for you all. It has been a steady one for the charity which I feel is well established now with a wider circle of people having heard of us and some unexpected and very welcome offers of support. One young man, James Overton, having heard about my charity decided to get himself sponsored by having his dreadlocks cut off and he is donating the money to One Life. In Wales one of our sponsors and his friend have decided to do a marathon run in La Rochelle, France in order to raise money for the charity. These are two wonderful gestures which help in a big way in supporting the children in South Africa.

One Life has now been operational for five years and a registered charity for four and a half years. Since the onset £79,048 has been sent out to S. Africa for School Fees/Uniform, shack repair, mattresses, blankets, medication, transport, clothing etc. Next year we should top £100,000 and that will, I feel sure, be a reason to celebrate. We have done some shack repair and provided mattresses and blankets for families in dire need but with limited funding it is impossible to reach everyone. Many accidents happen due to the use of candles for lighting, and open fires for cooking. Many children's wards in the hospitals are filled with children suffering from burns due to knocking over candles and setting themselves on fire. We need funding for the installation of electricity and to purchase two ring cookers and pots and pans in order to prevent these accidents happening and to bring some of what we just take for granted into the lives of the carers and the children in their care. Winters are intolerable for many without access to heating, hot drinks, baths or adequate bedding and often not even a mattress to sleep on. Many shacks are full of holes with doors hanging off and I cannot imagine what it must be like to live without warmth, light and hot water.

If there is any way you could help us help these children and their carers receive the basics for survival I would be very grateful. Maybe you could do a small fund raiser for e.g. a car boot sale or similar, that would be wonderful or donate a small sum of money remembering that all small amounts put together make one big amount so no donation is too small. Many people in the UK

do so many things to raise money for Children in Need. Millions of pounds are raised and this is wonderful but our children in South Africa have lost just about everything and they need help too so please keep them in your thoughts and help if you can. New sponsors are always needed in order to put children through school. Maybe your neighbour or a member of your family would be interested. This costs £50 per year and can be paid by standing order either monthly or yearly. I can be contacted at any time (see contact details) at the bottom of the last page.

St Anne's Church, Highams Park continues to support One Life whole heartedly. Jacqui from the church joined me on the sponsored walk this year and raised a wonderful £400. Many of the parishioners also sponsored me on the walk. Penny and David Rolfe will be holding another Ploughman's Supper /Charity Auction on March 21st next year and earlier this year they held a Supper/Musical Evening to raise money for One Life. These acts of caring and support are invaluable in keeping the charity in a position to make a difference in the lives of the children.

Our computer in Kwazulu has been out of service for almost six weeks and should be replaced by a new one any day now. This has been a very frustrating time for myself and Nancy's daughter Khanya who does all the emailing from Africa. A virus totally destroyed all data, photos I have been waiting for etc and now we have to start from scratch. I apologise yet again for the delay in up to date photos for those of you who have only ever received one photo of the child you sponsor. Please continue to be patient.

#### FUND RAISING EVENTS AND DONATED MONIES

In July £500 was donated by Debbie Smith the proprietor of The Prince Of Wales Public House, Basildon.

On September 28th £130 was raised from the sale of Greeting cards/African Jewellery /Artefacts and Bric-a Brac. This was held in St Anne's Church Hall after the morning service.

Our Sponsored walk was held on October 11<sup>th</sup>, a beautiful warm sunny day. We were down in numbers but still raised a magnificent £1,938.

Also in October we received an unexpected donation of £700.

On November 6<sup>th</sup> the N. E. London Trefoil Guild donated £145.

November 18<sup>th</sup> was the date for James Overton of Wickford to have his dreadlocks removed. Sponsorship for this event raised £300 with another £100 pledged.

On November 25<sup>th</sup> £84.75 was raised for the purchase of blankets by Stefan Keeley aged 8 who was a fundraiser at Chase Lane Primary School's Christmas Bazaar.

An unexpected donation of £50 was received from a Miss Christine Foster of Walthamstow following an article published earlier in the year in the Guardian newspaper.

My grateful thanks to everyone for their support

## FUTURE EVENTS FOR THE COMING YEAR

March 21<sup>st</sup> Ploughman's Supper/Charity Auction – St Anne's Church Hall.

One Life's Annual Sponsored Walk to be held at a date to be arranged in September next year.

## AFRICA NEWS

In November £13,685 was sent out to Africa for School Fees/Uniform, for the purchase of two hot water urns for the two feeding centres and to help families in need. Also in November £800 was sent out to Africa to give the children a Christmas party and a small gift each. Christmas for the children we sponsor does not happen in their dwelling places. The only Christmas they know is a lunch at the Thandukuphila Centre comprising of the usual rice and veg, in addition they get crisps and an ice lolly and maybe a few sweets. The crèche children usually receive a donated second hand toy and maybe a few six to seven year olds receive a toy. The teenagers may receive deodorant, toothpaste, face flannel and soap but only if there is funding or if this is donated. They have, however, once again, a man who gets dressed up as Father Christmas and the children find this very exciting. Their other Father Christmas dies from the AIDS Virus. One Life has just sent out £800 to help with Christmas for the children who come to the centre. Hopefully that will be enough to buy a small gift each for each of them. The children have no expectation of Christmas as our children know it so any small gift is received with great joy and excitement and gratitude.

Just lately Nancy has been feeling much better; it has taken a long time. Just as we were celebrating her return to health she was jumped on by two gunmen after leaving the bank with money for transport and medications etc. I spoke to Nancy on the phone just shortly afterwards and she was very traumatised and shaky and I just pray this terrible experience has not set her back again.

The 19 year old brother of one of the children sponsored here in the UK was shot and died returning home from his first job. There seems to be so much random shooting and attacks which is very sad in a nation which is still suffering so much death and sickness and deprivation through the AIDS Virus.

Unfortunately One Life can no longer support Hope Project. This fills me with great sadness as I have many African friends attached to Hope Project and many people in need who I care about and have supported in the past. There have been big changes at Hope Project with support withdrawn by their accountant and Franz Ballack himself, the initial founder of the project. Also I have been unable to receive feedback or receipts or any documentation since my return for South Africa at the end of April this year. Taking all this into account I am no longer happy to send precious money so badly needed to a project I no longer have confidence in.

Sister Emmanuel will be 85 next April and in November this year she celebrated 60 years of being a nun. This was her Diamond Jubilee and a well deserved celebration party was held in her honour.

Our two young people in college will start their third year next year. Gugu Sithole one of the young people has been quite ill throughout her time at college and underwent a heart transplant which sadly failed after three months and now she survives with an artificial heart. Her will to survive and finish college and live her life is what also helps to keep her going. Our thanks go to Rev Jude Bullock of St Anne's Parish Church who gave this young lady the wonderful opportunity of higher education.

Our other young person, Sakhile, is in university in Pretoria doing electrical engineering. He managed to get a grant, which, with the money donated for him by a sponsor in the UK enabled him this wonderful opportunity. He has worked so hard and done so well despite the heartbreak of losing both his parents in the same week that he has now been granted a full scholarship and no longer needs our help educationally. There are five children in this family and for Sakhile to eventually be well qualified and employed will help to change the lives of the whole family. This is how important higher education is for these children and yet we have only been able to help two of them and another girl starts a nursing course in January providing her end of year results are good enough. One Life is supporting this girl through college and unless we get more support in this area of higher education sadly she may be the last as funding is needed in so many other areas.

Khanya, Nancy's daughter has at last found employment and she started work on December 1<sup>st</sup> after a whole year of trying to get a job. She is being employed, although only part-time at the moment, at Zululand University where she qualified a year ago. She will be counselling young HIV students or bereaved students or in other areas of their need. I am still hoping to bring Khanya over here to the UK for two to three weeks next year in which case I will not return to South Africa in this coming year.

Once again One Life has had a blessed year and received good support from unexpected quarters. This is what enables a small charity like this to continue with the work it is striving to do. I am invited at times to attend group functions and to talk about the work One Life does and this is a great opportunity to raise people's awareness to the stark truth of how life really is for some of our most vulnerable children.

I want to thank you all for your continued and vital support. It really is true that without you One Life would be unable to continue and that would be a sad day for all the children we help. I know that circumstances permitting you will continue caring and supporting the children so it just leaves me to wish you all A Very Happy Christmas 2008 and A Happy and Healthy New Year.

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