

positively



AFRICA

August 2008

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positively AFRICA newsletters are distributed twice a year to members. If you would like to become a member, a yearly membership is only \$5.00! Please contact Peggy Frank or attend our upcoming AGM to become a member.



If you received this newsletter by post, and could receive it by email, please send your email address to info@positivelyafrica.org and we will save more money for our projects in Africa.



Newsletter team: Janeen Sam, Peggy Frank and Samuel Godfrey. Kudos to Janeen for her excellent volunteer work to create this newsletter! Thanks to Robert Kheyi in Kenya for his article and to Travis Wilson for designing the template for this newsletter!



Check out our new website!
www.positivelyafrica.org



Greetings from the Chair

positively AFRICA continues to be privileged to work with an incredible dedicated collaboration of people, here in North America and in Africa. I am honoured to be positively AFRICA's volunteer Chairperson and Executive Director. As I reflect on what has been accomplished in less than two years, I sigh a contented sigh. Yet when I think about some of the dreams we are not able to respond to my sigh deflates. I struggle to try harder, to do more. I am frustrated by my health and the limitations of the 24-hour day.

I know we can't meet all the needs of all the communities of people we are impressed by in Africa but we make a substantial difference to the people and communities we do reach. This brings an engulfing happiness to me.

There are programs on the ground that weren't there a year ago.

- Children accessing care through the OsoPET Child sponsor program where amazing supporters have taken on medical costs for each child for a year
- positive women in Kibera are eating more nutritious food (see article by Robert Kheyi)
- care givers in Lesotho are able to access time saving comfort products for their disabled charges thanks to a growing relationship between Phelisanong and the Community Access Team at Garth Homer
- to its huge relief, a hospital in Zimbabwe has x-ray film, essential supplies and continues to operate in spite of overwhelming national shortages
- vulnerable girl students at Bokoro Secondary School are grateful to Calgary donors because they have a dormitory - "the first time to see a beautiful and attractive dormitory in Butha-Buthe district" - according to one happy student
- and so much more.

Enormous gratitude to those donors who continue to believe that positively AFRICA is able to help. Your support is essential.

Appreciation and enduring admiration to our partners, our friends in Africa, who do the work and the day-by-day caring. You make the project!

This year, we, thankfully, received funding for an intern to go to Rwanda to work with two of our African projects - WEACTx and Umuhuza. This opportunity was spearheaded by our Victoria partner, VIDEA. We see WEACTx and Umuhuza moving towards sustainability and greater dignity for the beneficiaries. Sad tears flowed when I read about the death of a student, a young female advocate at WEACTx. This young Rwandan sought support to continue on in school. Friends in eastern Canada organized a BBQ party for her benefit. She no longer needs help, but her mother, who is very sick with AIDS, and her siblings, who are too young to look after themselves need our support.

The world changes and the people working on the projects develop new skills, and see more that needs to be done. positively AFRICA partners need support to reach out, to step up. Our hope is that the groups we work with in Africa will grow and evolve to a point of sustainability. But is hope enough?

Like our African partner organizations, positively AFRICA is evolving. The organization has a smashing new website (thanks to Samuel Godfrey for creating it), a set of policies and procedures guiding how we decide who to fund and how to fund them (thanks to our hard working board), we have

clear financial records (thanks to Laura at Knowledge Solutions) and a very successful fundraising campaign (thanks especially to Peter and Sonia).

We continue to attract the highest caliber of volunteers - I could fill this newsletter with their names! Yet, we could do more if we had a trained and capable person managing the organization. It isn't that I feel I've done a bad job, but it is no longer possible for me to do the work of Executive Director and Chairperson. The organization is growing (over 35 projects in 6 countries, directly assisting over 50,000 people) and my health is too fragile. The volunteer Executive Director position is a wonderfully gratifying and important job ideal for someone who can donate a lot of time, is experienced in organizational management and has international humanitarian goals. There is support, through a full complement of volunteers and the Board of positively AFRICA. If you are interested in taking on this role, or know someone who may be, please contact me directly.

I know this is a tall order. That is why we are also actively searching

for 'angel investors' - people who can step forward and offer a large, multi-year contributions so we can hire someone. We are on the cusp of making positively AFRICA a sustainable charity, but we need financial support for operations. Again, if this is you or if you know a potential 'angel investor' please call me right away!

If you are not already a monthly donor, I hope you will become one. This enables us to provide more stable and secure funding to our project partners in Africa. You can download the form from our website. Thank you!

With love, peg frank.

250 519 0040 or pegfrank@telus.net

Acronyms

VIDEA: Victoria International Development and Education Association

WEACTx: Women's Equity to Access for Care and Treatment (Tx)

NGO: non-governmental organization

PLWHA: People Living with HIV or AIDS

ARV: antiretroviral drugs

Umuhuza means 'together as one'

Upcoming Events

Africa at the Movies

Saturday Sept 20 7:30 - 10 p.m. Young Auditorium Rm 216. Camosun College

An evening of beautiful and powerful short films by or about Africans.

\$20 or by donation

Annual General Meeting

Thursday, September 25 7:00pm, Camosun College (Lansdowne),

Wilna Thomas Cultural Centre (WT 234)

Eclectic Art Auction

Saturday Oct 18 - 6:30 - 9:30pm (note new start time)

Superb creations by artists, both world-renowned and undiscovered.

Queenswood Chapel, 2494 Arbutus Rd.

Food and Refreshments. \$20 admission

The People of positively Africa

In the last newsletter you read a little about some of our volunteers and board members. Here is an introduction to more wonderful people who help positively AFRICA.



Sonia Bianchi

Sonia joined the positively AFRICA Board of Directors in January 2008 as the Kenya Country coordinator and member of the Fundraising Committee.

She graduated in 2007 with her BA in Political Science and History and has experience working for various non profit groups in Victoria, including The Land Conservancy. Sonia currently works for the Together Against Poverty Society in Victoria. Sonia intends to pursue a masters degree in international development and humanitarian aid in the future.

Sonia is a warm and intelligent person - we are honoured to have her on the Board! She brings enthusiasm and creativity to everything she does.

Jessie is responsible for the oversight of positively AFRICA's engagement in South African projects. In addition, she maintains the historical records for the organization. Jessie has traveled extensively, including time in South Africa in 2004. Jessie is a retired nursing professor with extensive experience in national organizations, as well as local and provincial boards and committees.

She has worked with small and emerging groups and brings this expertise to positively Africa. Jessie is a dynamo who brings true thoughtfulness to her work - a treasure!



Jessie Mantle

Support positively AFRICA and win a full dinner for two at
Camille's

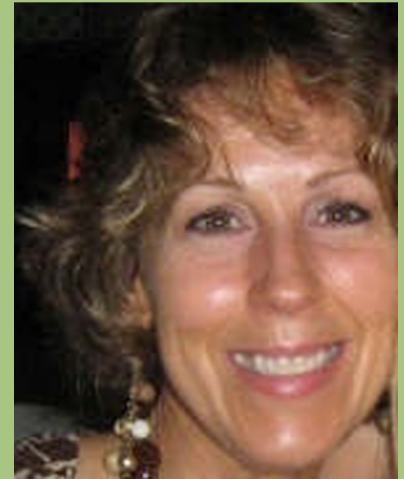
One of the finest restaurants on the island! Only 200 tickets sold - great odds to win.

Raffle drawn on Sept. 25, 2008. 100% of proceeds donated to African-led projects.

\$25 each or 3 for \$50

Call Samuel

250 882 5292 to reserve.



Sharon Elizabeth Burkmar

Sharon has always felt a deep connection to Africa. As a small child she had vivid dreams of dancing and chanting barefoot with indigenous African people around a blazing fire. Later she spent countless hours gazing at the photos of African people in National Geographic magazines.

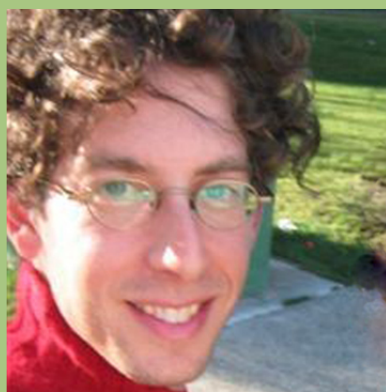
For the past 16 years she has worked in fundraising, organizational and community development, education and human resources management. Her non-profit experience has been in strengthening community engagement by building collaborative partnerships, event management and working with families.

As news of the devastating effects of HIV/AIDS pandemic in Africa became louder through voices such as Stephen Lewis, her call to action became stronger, especially towards the HIV/AIDS orphans of sub-Saharan Africa. In the fall of 2006, after reading about their four-month tour of four African countries, she met Peggy and Peter and quickly

learned about positively AFRICA.

Sharon brings enormous experience, skill and warmth to positively AFRICA - we are very fortunate to have her with us.

positively AFRICA bids a grateful adieu to Jennifer Freeman. Jen worked as our administrative assistant and is now pursuing new opportunities in California. We are very happy that she will continue to volunteer with us!



Samuel Godfrey

We are pleased to have recently hired Samuel to work two days a week as our Coordinator. He brings a range of skills and experience and is a terrific fit with our organization. Samuel has an undergraduate degree in African Studies from the University of Toronto and a law degree from Osgoode Hall, York University. Samuel has worked in Ghana, for several non-profits in Toronto and currently volunteers with VIDEA and Farmers Without Borders.

He is also the Director of the Islands Organic Producers Association, and, together with his partner, is raising a beautiful two year old boy. Samuel says he is honoured to work with such a well-intentioned group and is determined to make a valuable contribution to the organization.

Project Updates



Women benefiting from the nutrition project in Kibera

Kibera Nutrition Support Project

by Robert Kheyi, Nairobi, Kenya

For Robert's unedited report, visit our website.

five years of work, our non-discriminatory practices, and our openness to partnerships and collaborations with other institutions working in Kibera.

This project of the Kibera Community Youth Programme (KCYP) is funded by positively Africa. KCYP's Robert Kheyi met Peggy through the work of Maia Green.

Peggy was very happy to hear that many PLWHA in the Kibera slum get anti-retroviral drugs and medicines either from government hospitals (located a few kilometers from the outskirts of Kibera) or from the NGOs that operate in Kibera. She also appreciated our campaigns to (a) reduce the stigma and discrimination towards PLWHA, (b) to increase awareness of the benefits of voluntary counseling and testing, (c) reduce cross-generational relationships and (d) sex education. Peggy lauded our

"a visitor might have gotten the impression that the owner ran a chemist with the sight of the many bottles of medicines in the traditional single room houses"

Through our discussion, one question kept on coming up "were drugs effective in retarding the effects of HIV/AIDS for the people using them?" Not always. Two reasons were found to reduce effectiveness: first, sometimes the drugs were being sold for cash, and second, the drugs are too powerful to be taken on an empty stomach and many families lack nutritious

food. In many homes, a visitor might have gotten the impression that the owner ran a chemist with the sight of the many bottles of medicines in the traditional single room [Kibera] houses.

"How can we compliment the existing efforts to ensure the hungry and the impoverished that are HIV positive take their medication regularly and don't sell the drugs?"

We pondered. KCYP requested support to start providing nutritional food to the most impoverished PLWHA who are on ARVs. positively Africa sees this as a valued humanitarian project and



One of the youth group at the food shelf

has provided continued monetary and moral support.

The Kibera nutrition project is the first project to stop providing “free food” to the needy people of Kibera while addressing the issue of lack of nutritious food to PLWHA. The project also tackles the issue of incessant stigma and discrimination.

The project works to enhance the self-esteem of its beneficiaries with a long-term objective of making the beneficiaries more self reliant.

Food is sold at 60% of normal price to the project beneficiaries. In cases where there is no money to purchase the food, we write a credit note to the beneficiaries so that they remember to repay once they get some money. With this approach, we are slowly conquering the dependency attitude.

The project was intended to serve the entire Kibera slum. However, after simple research and inquiries we realized that there are thousands of PLWHA in Kibera. We have narrowed our support to one



Kibera residents in nutrition project

particular village, Makina, for our initial year of operation. In this village, over 100 PLWHAs who have come out publicly and are on drugs. 25 were recruited based on needs. These include widows, single mothers, abandoned wives, or those abandoned or coming from large families. We received requests for consideration of 7 more people from other villages, bringing the total to 32 women. Of the 32 beneficiaries, 5 are suppliers of the food we purchase for project.

The cardinal goal in the long run is that each beneficiary shall have activities that regularly bring her income. Business was seen as the best option to get income. Five women came out strongly as suppliers as they had done business before or were running small businesses. Other women are receiving business training.

The Kibera nutritional project is currently finalizing a partnership with Comprehensive Care Clinic based at Kenyatta National Hospital. This partnership will see our beneficiaries benefiting from the professional treatment of severe opportunistic diseases, regular CD4 cell count counseling and advice at a fee of just over \$6 (Can). We have already registered one beneficiary with them.



Microfinance and Umahuza

In July, positively AFRICA brought together fourteen enthusiastic participants for a think-tank meeting in Victoria to learn about and discuss microfinance. Umahuza, a positively AFRICA supported organization in Rwanda, has presented us with a number of proposed small business ventures that needed an injection of start-up capital. If the members could develop their business plans a bit further, they could potentially qualify for micro-credit.

Thanks to Sabine Laubental and Joan Schwartzberger for their "introduction to microfinance" presentation. Various micro-credit models were presented including individual, cooperatives, group models, Village Bank model, and the Grameen model. One of those attending, Toni Dertlievz, volunteered to research models of relevance to Rwanda and prepare a package for our intern, Logan Broeckeaert, to take to Rwanda.

Logan is also helping set-up a youth group. The focus is health issues, educational opportunities and business development.



Lesotho - Bokoro Orphan Housing Project

Background - When Peggy and Peter visited Lesotho in 2006, they 'M'e Mary Grace, principal of Bokoro Secondary School. Standing in front of the principals office, listening to the harmonious voices of the school choir, Mary Grace told them that she lamented her inability to look after orphaned and vulnerable children at the school, especially the girls.

These children walked long distances, headed households, many laboured in their foster homes - and all were undernourished. "If I had a dormitory at the school, I could feed them and make sure that they had time to study and I know they would have better grades." Peter and Peggy promised to try to find supporters who would help her students. They connected Bokoro with two wonderful local folks, Rick and Aleda, who were willing and able to take this project on.

Below is an interview with Aleda Boyes.

PF - You and Rick are two positively AFRICA friends that have really "taken on" a project. In fact, you are two of the best friends positively AFRICA could have because you are two of the best friends our Bokoro Orphan Housing Project could have. Thanks for agreeing to this interview. When did you first get involved in the Bokoro Orphan Housing Project?

AB - Rick and I talked about positively AFRICA and the Bokoro Orphan Project for a few months before we really moved into action. We created a presentation and started fundraising in the latter part of 2006 for events in early 2007.

PF - Why did you choose this project?
AB - We wanted something rural, important to an African community and a tangible connection that could become an ongoing relationship and commitment. I had attended an evening with Stephen Lewis and was inspired with his thoughts on what you call "dirt floor projects". Rick and I felt a need to "give back".

PF - How were you able to raise so much money [over \$30,000] in a little more than a year?
AB - Most of our friends and work contacts were reluctant to give to large organizations. There is a perception that too little of the contributions are received at the site of these projects. We trusted Peggy and Peter, and positively AFRICA used none of the funds raised to cover their costs, so it was more attractive to people. Help Lesotho*, another Canadian NGO, was on the ground and agreed to supervise the spending and provide financial guidance and project oversight. We saw our job as arranging events that would attract donors. The first event was an office gathering when Rick changed jobs; the second a hockey tournament; the third a golf tournament; and an upcoming fundraiser is a wedding where the couple has requested donations to a choice of two charities (Bokoro is



*Girls standing in front of the new dormitory**

one of those charities). We could not have done so well if the donors had not trusted Rick's commitment to the project and been so amazingly generous.

PF - Is there anything that you have gained from this involvement with African orphans?

AB - Rick and I are so appreciative of the education and experience available to our children. There is such a huge amount of work to do and so many orphans in Africa - it is gratifying to do at least something to add to this little community that might be sustained by a school.

PF - Thank you so much Leda. positively AFRICA is very grateful to you and your friends who have donated so



*Boroko dormitory**

generously to the lives of children you have not met. I hope that one day it will be you and Rick standing on the front steps of the principals office watching the children sing proudly in front of their new dormitory. The dormitory will house 50 girls each year thus benefiting hundreds, and their families, over the decades.

*Photos credit to Help Lesotho. For more information, visit www.helplesotho.ca.

positively AFRICA would like to thank friends and family of **Peggy Magwood** and **Louise LaCouvee** for their generosity at times of great loss. The legacy of these two women lives on in the African projects, as they wished. p. 6

Please continue to support positively AFRICA!

Thank you for your donations to date! We know there are many competing and worthwhile causes you could support. And yet, we are deeply confident in the wisdom of asking you to give generously to positively AFRICA.

We spend your donations more carefully than our own income! positively AFRICA effectively supports over thirty African-led projects helping those infected or affected by HIV/AIDS.

Ways to give

1. One Time

Send positively AFRICA a cheque!

2. Monthly

Your best option to provide stable funding, allowing African-led initiatives we support to budget, plan long-term, and therefore achieve better results. It also reduces the amount of volunteer energy we have to expend on fundraisers. Fill out the form on the following page.

3. Forever (Planned Giving)

We have learned that one of the only ways for an organization like ours to build up assets and develop a long-term focus is for supporters to bequest positively AFRICA in their wills. We believe this is a wonderful way to know that your amazing spirit will be felt long after you are gone. There is a link on our website (on the 'donate' page) where you can access independent information about this form of giving.

4. Core Support

As stated in the report on page 1, Peggy cannot continue as ED and Chair. We are looking for multi-year commitments to enable us to hire a full-time Executive Director and implement a sustainable operating plan.

Bokoro High school
P.O. Box 227
Botha - Bothe 400

07th May 2008

Dear friends

Its my pleasure to once again have this chance to of chatting with you, and having opportunity of passing my thank to you.

Thank you for being so good and kind to my school, you played the best role of saving us, protecting us from different kinds of crime, because you helped us with our fees and many others, because of you we are good kids because we have been taught to have good manners by our teachers.

Once again we are very pleased with our boarding (dormitory) which you have built for us, as our country is now improving because children are able to be sponsored and do their studies, thank you for everything you did for us and may God bless you.

All from your friend
Ishabey Molatua.

A recent letter from an orphan girl, Ms. Molatua, living in the new dormitory and attending the Bokoro school.

Other ways to give:

1. Attend one of our enjoyable fundraising event or buy a raffle ticket!
2. Make a donation to positively AFRICA as gift to someone else. Many of us continually search for ways to give meaningful gifts, rather than more "stuff" to our family and friends. Give a card to a friend or family member telling them that you love them and you have made a donation to positively AFRICA in their name. We create cards with our African photographs and leave you to write about the details of your gift and the occasion, be it a birthday, a special event or an anniversary.
3. Buy a gift! We have many unique and beautiful goods for sale. Earrings, dolls, knapsacks and bags of all sorts made by African people connected to the projects we support. Please attend an event or check out the website to find out more about this.

