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THE UTHANDO PROJECT *Newsletter*

November 2009

Season's Greetings to All Dollmakers and Friends,

For the Uthando Project it has been a steady, generous and expansive year for dollmakers and those who work with children. Virtually every day sees another packet or huge bag of dolls arrive.

We are now at the grand total of 22,500 dolls having been sent through Perth, WA over four and a half years. Keep in mind that dolls independently arrive in Durban for TREE from all over the world.

Mehreen Docrat reports that over 200 dolls have made their own way to TREE this year. Don't you like the image of dolls managing their own transport to get to the children of KwaZulu-Natal?

Note; If you are sending dolls from Australia it is cheaper to send them to us in Perth for inclusion in a container.



Mehreen has sent us this stunning photo of one of the young Zulu girl performers at their 25th Anniversary symposium. She is holding a Uthando doll given to her. Beautiful.

PINKY'S VISIT TO PERTH, DECEMBER.

Before we look at the accomplishments of 2009, here is a lovely invitation. You are probably aware that some funds raised through Uthando are applied to freight, (Perth to Durban) but the greatest proportion (80%) is given to the Rob Smetherham Bereavement Services for Children, (now called Dlananathi). Our commitment here is \$27,000 AUD annually. This enabled Dlananathi in 2008 to engage a dynamic, young Zulu psychologist within their Training Sector. We are so excited to announce that this special person, Pinky Majola, is coming to Perth very soon and that you are welcome to meet her on **Friday 18th December.**

PINKY'S PARTY. 2 Healey Place, Gooseberry Hill, WA. Come for morning tea at 11am and please bring a plate to share for lunch. Finish 2pm. We will ask Pinky if she will talk about her life and work with Dlananathi. Please RSVP Isabella Cowin,

9458 4750, icowin@bigpond.net.au

This is a golden opportunity to see more deeply the power of our links as individuals and communities in our partnership with Dlananathi who inspire compassionate relationships with children within KZN communities and organisations. Dlananathi means "Let's play together and be well." Their new website is www.dlananathi.org.za, filled with positive images (many dolls!) and touches base with them in a way not possible before.

TREE'S FAMILY GROUPS OF DOLLS / NEW INPUT.

During this year we have sent lots of Family Groups of dolls for the Family Play Facilitators at TREE to use with remote or needy families preparing younger children for interaction at school and bringing expressive play into their precious lives. There was a realisation that these children must feel bereft when the Family of Dolls is taken away from them at the end of a session. Although we are finding out more about this wonderful TREE project, we are now packing, as well, smaller HOME FAMILY groups of 5 dolls which can be left with the family. Each Home Family set would have an adult doll, several children and a baby doll and is bundle wrapped in a large, but light, Play Wrap. The idea is that the Play Wrap could be many things to many children, eg sarong, cape, tent, sheet, mat. If you have BRIGHT, LIGHTWEIGHT FABRIC, HEMMED, APPROX 1 METRE SQUARE OR LONGER, PLEASE INCLUDE WITH YOUR DOLL DELIVERY.

Likewise, especially for dolls for infants and up to 3yrs, each doll is packed with a DOLL WRAP to add nurturing play potential. Size of DOLL WRAP, 50 x 30cms. Any cuddly material, knitted or crocheted.

In the larger Family Play Set of dolls we include a CHILD WRAP of easily tied fabric to go around a child to hold a doll on their back, 80 - 100 x 40cms.

These sizes are mentioned as a guide, but also to encourage generous donors of fabric to help our volunteers by having materials already cut, or better, hemmed ready to send.

SUCCESS WITH DOLLMAKING KITS.

We have sold over 1000 kits in the past 5 months. These do a great job. They encourage dollmakers of all backgrounds, especially beginners, to make a doll, either to keep or to send to KZN. Nearly all the ingredients are from donations. At \$5 each, the income is valuable towards our pledge to Dlananathi. So it is win-win for everyone. Some schools or afterschool care or holiday care groups buy them for each student as they contain EVERYTHING needed to make a Uthando doll, including a pattern which can be traced and reused. This means that donations of needles, laces, ricrac, beads, are all used.

GREETING CARDS; NEW DESIGNS.

We have created a new set of Uthando Originals greeting cards, Friendship Series. Brilliantly photographed by Lynne Tognolini. A pack of 5 different cards costs **\$10 plus P&P \$2.**

Please order through our Treasurer, Bill Mackintosh, 410 Mavis Cleaver Crt, Wootliff Way, Bentley WA 6102. Make cheques to Uthando Project Inc or email Bill for direct banking.

billmack@comswest.net.au

If you can think of ways of fundraising with these cards, please contact me, Georgia Efford, georgia1@inet.net.au



This one is called Monkey Fun



Enjoy "Old Timers"

How about "Playmates"?

The fifth card shows "togetherness."

DOLLMAKING POSTERS.



Our two new A1 (big!) posters, which are really the equivalent of a pattern book with background information of the Project, are proving very popular with schools and dollmakers who can knit or sew. For schools these posters can be used in conjunction with our online or hard copy, Dollmaker's Workbook, which is rich in patterns for dolls and dolls' clothes. With school holidays being close, these posters would inspire many younger people to make some dolls as a holiday activity. Please order your copies through our Treasurer as previously mentioned. \$5 each poster plus P&P \$2.

One poster is for general sewing and knitting of Uthando dolls, the other is for experienced knitters who would like to knit a wide variety of South African animals fabulously designed by Kay Daw.

You may have already noticed that all our fundraising activities are designed to result in

- more dolls for KZN
- more confident dollmaking
- greater awareness of the vital nature of Play for all children, including making brown dolls for children of other cultures as a contribution to world Peace.

DECEMBER 1ST WORLD AIDS DAY.

When we absorb, intellectually and emotionally, that in KZN over 40% of women attending post natal clinics are HIV+ and the serious effects this has on a whole society, not just their families, we know that AIDS awareness and standing shoulder to shoulder with all those affected, enriches the making of our dolls with deeper human values. You may receive this email on World Aids Day, Dec 1st. If so, share your thoughts about the future of all children with someone else. You may choose to Google something about AIDS in Africa to advance your knowledge. Georgia has been invited to address a gathering of the United Nations Human Rights Committee at the WA AIDS Council on this day. This presents our Project to others engaged in work with similar principles.

FOLLOW UP FROM "DIFFICULT TRUTHS" WORKSHOPS WITH RACHEL AND SIBONGILE.

Many of the participants in our two workshops for organisations working with

children at risk, in Fremantle and Midland, WA , have initiated inspired actions within their own areas. Lynne Jones strengthens our partnership with Soroptimists International in Fremantle. Special mention is made of Lady Gowrie Childcare Centre in Belmont, Meerilinga Community Centre in Kardinya and through the Dept for Communities in Highgate. Other dollmaking groups have formed as well, and others have volunteered for public childrens' activities. You will love this application by Meerilinga of inviting mothers of new babies, where the mothers are finding adjustment difficult, to come once a week for eight weeks with 4 sessions of dollmaking followed by 4 weeks of baby massage. You can picture the healing possibilities for mother – baby relationships from this. Sue Belton of Meerilinga has provided the written form of the workshop structures to be available for others to use in similar circumstances.

UTHANDO DOLLMAKING IN SCHOOLS;

Lynne Tognolini, Schools Liaison reports-

“Once again, both primary and secondary schools have participated in the Uthando Project this year. The enthusiasm, compassion and commitment demonstrated by teachers and students has resulted in beautiful, strong creative dolls for the children in KwaZulu-natal.

Each class approached the project in different ways, ensuring maximum benefit for makers and recipients; some used it as a valuable link to other learning areas of the curriculum.

Thank you to the extended school community of parents, grandparents and friends who have been instrumental in ensuring the dolls will be durable enough for play and assisting with sewing where and when required!

Congratulations to the following school: All Saints College Senior School (2nd time), Applecross SHS, Gooseberry Hill PS (4th time), Mt Lawley SHS, Sacred Heart PS, Highgate, Southlake PS (4 classes), South Thornlie PS, Spearwood Alternative PS (4th time), Willeton PS (2 classes), Highview College, Maryborough, Vic.

We also hear of schools in England and USA who have sent dolls. Extra thanks to them.

Uthando thanks all the students who, hopefully, find reward in the knowledge that the loving, caring thoughts and actions which accompany their doll will be received and enjoyed by another child.”

Dolls arrive from everywhere

Dr Julie Stone brings over all the dolls made in Victoria, with great relish. Thank you all.

Redhatters and a church groups in Geraldton have sent character rich dolls. Thank you especially to Judy Macintosh, our travelling ambassador. Really I feel overcome with the consistent supplies from highly committed dollmakers who send bagfuls of cuddly characters. Equally, thanks go to every dollmaker. Each Friday, at our Gooseberry Hill gathering of Uthando volunteers, all the new little arrivals are welcomed and appreciated for the loving details and differences that show up. Life is not boring.

Experience now shows us that it costs just under \$2 to send each doll. This underlines the real value in supporting our fundraising projects and of the sweet donors who simply send a cheque.

RECENT EVENTS.

Because our gorgeous stall attracts adults and children (everyone wants to play!), we receive wonderful invitations to participate in public events. The City of Melville Textile and Fibre Arts Expo, the Childrens' Fiesta, Mt Hawthorn Community Festival, Kalamunda Zigzag Community Festival are some of the exciting events which are magnets for more dolls, more funds and setting up speaking engagements with other organisations.

WEBSITES.

Our own website now has many sections updated. www.uthandoproject.org. Do look at the brand new www.dlalanathi.org.za. It is so exciting and reinforces our purpose and resolve.

All for now, with love and deep gratitude,

Georgia Efford and Team.

PS In a few day;s please check out further Articles on our website.

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[Uthando Project Website](http://www.uthandoproject.org)