

Dear dollmaking friends,

The Uthando Project is going ahead in leaps and bounds, thanks to so many of you providing more dolls for the children in KwaZulu-Natal. Here are some affirming comments from Rachel Rozenthals-Thresher, CEO of Rob Smetherham Bereavement Services for Children (ROBS) who arranged the Training the Trainers dollmaking and psycho-social workshops with Dr Julie Stone, Irene Gill and me in April this year.

.....our times together were so precious, and as you say reflecting on them brings me great joy as well. I am honoured by your commitment and passion (and Julie's and Irene's) to travel to KZN to serve us, teach us, love us and make dolls. At our meeting with TREE in April I was so struck by the thoughtful care that goes into helping make the dolls appropriate for children particularly in terms of weight, touch, softness, style of design and clothing. Your attention to detail from the children's perspective is so beautiful and so necessary. I know it brings each child a uniquely precious experience. Please keep doing what you are doing. I am also touched by how much what is given is as much a gift to the doll maker as to the child receiving the doll. That is to me as good a definition of love as one can get! "

Thanks to you

I can't thank you each enough for the precious gift of your visit. It was such a delight to host you. Thanks for your love and support for us, the women you trained, our beautiful country and of course the creativity of the dolls. You have helped many celebrate their creativity in a way that has strengthened their belief in themselves and their relationships with children. WOW! That is some achievement. I know that we helped with that too but it was our mutual love and commitment that resulted in a really meaningful interaction with those participating. Well done to us!

For myself I have made a few dolls since you left and have taught the rest of our staff too, with much success. Mary Anne has her doll as a delightful companion on her desk. Kathy whom you all met via email made dolls for her two sons - and promised to share the skills with her friends. Nomvula and Thembeke (our trainee social workers) also made dolls and they are sharing their skills with families they are working with in the community - more about that in the soon to follow official UTHANDO update.

"At home Liam loves his doll. My mother in law made him a Zulu warrior as well (large doll size) and the two are trusty companions for play. The large doll I made for Rebecca is now her favourite bed-time companion and it makes me feel so special that, of all the things she has, she keeps this doll closest to her. Through her experience I am constantly reminded of the value of not only the doll but the doll made by a mother or other significant adult, it has a meaning and significance and support to the child way beyond its physical form."

Now to immediate business.

MAJOR FUNDRAISING DAY

DOLL AUCTION, UWA, SEPTEMBER, SUNDAY 23RD 2 - 4.30PM

We need dolls for the different aspects of this event.

1. ART DOLLS. Original dolls made by artists and top dollmakers in W.A. suitable for either the vocal auction or the silent auction. We are promoting the theme of "FAMILY" which can be interpreted in many ways, eg mother and child, grannie and grandchildren, human or animal, etc. In any 3D media. We welcome single dolls donated as well.
2. Typical Uthando dolls suitable to sell at \$20 each so

that Aussie kids can play with an African style doll and deepen their awareness of other children's lives.

3. Uthando dolls which can be sponsored, \$10, with a personal card, to go to KZN.

Also a group of primary, secondary, public and private schools have been invited to mount a display of their dolls before they go to Africa. This will reveal the originality and generosity of children expressing the principle of "A Child gives to a Child". ACTION; please let me know if you would like to send in doll/s for any of these 3 categories. If you are a member of a group, you might like to set a target number of dolls from your group and set the ball rolling!

Dolls to be delivered before Sunday September 16th to Calico and Ivy, 1 Glyde St, Mosman Park, Deborah Mickle, 88 Dalgety St, East Fremantle 9339 0484.

Note new email deborah.mickle@bigpond.com

Georgia Efford, 2 Healey Place, Gooseberry Hill 6076 ph 9293 2363 preferably Fridays. Posted dolls also to this address.

WHY ARE WE FUNDRAISING?

Given that our local costs of running Uthando Project are already covered by many generous individuals being self sufficient and that some funds are needed for freight and handling the dolls to TREE (Training and Resources in Early Education) in KZN, our main drive is to support work in KZN which brings children and their carers closer through play.

It sounds so simple, but in the drastic family fragmentation that has occurred through poverty and HIV/AIDS often children are brought up by adults not of their family, or even by other children. This is a serious Africa wide situation, not experienced on this scale before in humanity's history.

You will be thrilled to know that preliminary meetings and a proposal from ROBS for ROBS and TREE to work together towards a goal of deeper understanding of the carer/child relationship. TREE trains hundreds of women in early childhood education, (in fact have just won a National Award for this) and the impact of their partnership with ROBS' training will manifest in their teaching curriculum. The proposal covers 3 stages taking probably until mid 2008. We now await the costing for this programme. The income from our Auction Day is intended to meet these needs. Our target is \$15,000.

It makes the whole organisation of the Auction Day easier if we know in advance who will be providing the dolls for auction, sale or sponsorship. So please let us know.

Those with ART DOLLS for Auction, contact me, georgial@iinet.net.au, 9293 2363

Those with African Uthando style dolls please contact

Joy Whitfield. jwhitfi@iinet.net.au 9291 6403

In the meantime there are the following workshops/dollmaking days which you might like to enrol in. They are separate from our regular meetings. Contact Joy for info.

- June 28th, Kalamunda Learning Centre
- July 1st, Hovea Ashram, 805 Margaret Rd, Hovea, \$30
- July, starting a course of Uthando Project dollmaking at Kalamunda Learning Centre with Irene Gill. Dates to be advised.

Irene is also working with the Hills Community Support Centre in Mundaring and the Community Learning Centre in Cottesloe.

We now have printed the Schools Information Folder, not just for schools, but for groups as well. Includes many patterns, background information and photos. Optional donation \$10 to cover cost.

Our Website is definitely in action, although the Information for Schools is still on its way. Please check it out at www.uthandoproject.org and don't forget to click on the Gallery where there are new photos of animal dolls and the Zulu dollmakers from our workshops in KwaZulu-Natal.

As always, there is such a feeling of generosity, grace, creativity and love within this project of ours. We can all thank each other. Looking forward to hearing from you,
Georgia and team

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