



Youth TODAY

APRIL 2006

A newsletter for friends of Girls & Boys Town

Scaling new heights for Girls & Boys Town

When four friends decided to fulfil their mountaineering dreams, they opted to include Girls & Boys Town in their valiant efforts. But their decision was based on more than a wish to support our work. It was also taken in recognition of the personal struggles that our youth face as they try to overcome their past and fulfil their own potential and dreams.

It was a passion for hiking that took four friends on a trek to Mount Everest Base Camp – and a climb up Mera Peak – late last year. Clyde Foster, Gary Salgado and August Zerwick, all in their forties – as well as Andries Bester, 27 – had spent eight months planning their trip. It was the realisation of Foster's dream to 'see Everest with his own eyes'.

Prior to the Everest trek, the group had summited Mount Kilimanjaro – which Salgado had dreamed of doing since the age of eight.

Foster and Salgado – who have been close friends for almost 30 years – have hiked in the Drakensberg together for almost as long.

Nepal exchange

Far from being content to simply 'do their bit' for a charity at home, the enterprising team established contact with an organisation in Kathmandu – the Nepal Children's Organisation – that does similar work to Girls & Boys Town. They gave a gift of 50 white caps to the Nepali children on behalf of Girls & Boys Town South Africa.

Some 2 500 photographs were taken during the team's trip. They also climbed Kala Patar peak on their way to the Everest Base Camp. On the second leg of their expedition, they ascended Mera Peak and were on the Mera glacier for three days – the first time they'd had any experience on ice. Bester successfully summited Mera Peak – at 6 500m – while the others got close to the top.



Avid climbers and good friends – Clyde Foster, Gary Salgado, August Zerwick and Andries Bester, who found an innovative way to support Girls & Boys Town.



We made it! Raising the flag for Girls & Boys Town on Mount Everest.

'Realising my dream of seeing Everest – and doing so in the company of special friends – has been a privilege,' says Foster. 'To wait half a lifetime to realise a special goal has made me appreciate my successes and failures, as well as friends, family and the achievement itself.'

* As part of their efforts, the team is also sharing their experiences with our youth, hoping to impart valuable lessons about goal-setting, overcoming obstacles and achieving dreams. Girls & Boys Towns thanks the group for their support and vision.



Debit orders: safe and reliable

If you're one of our supporters who has been affected by postal problems – such as cheques going astray – please consider changing to a debit order. It's the most reliable and safe way to ensure that your gifts reach the intended beneficiary – and we'd be most grateful for your monthly generosity.

We apologise again for any inconvenience you may have experienced through frustrating postal problems.

If you'd like to give by debit order, please use the envelope enclosed with this newsletter, which includes a section for this purpose. You're also welcome to call our Head Office for more details, on (011) 482 2655 or e-mail ds@gbtown.org.za

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Vision

Successful youth; our strength,
our future.

Mission

Creating opportunities for youth
to succeed.

Values

Responsibility in caring.

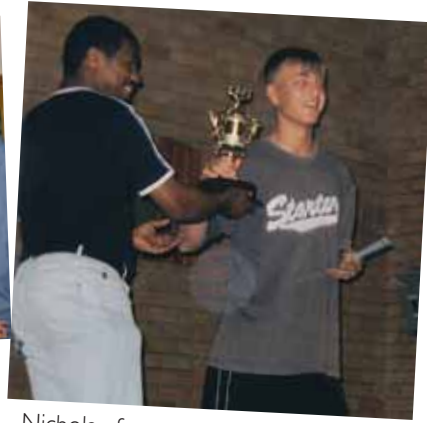
Out and about with our youth



More recognition for our Macassar boys ... young Kevin and 'JP' were both proud recipients of awards from their school at a special prizegiving event.



Remember your Matric Dance? Here, Jason and his partner, Joyce prepare for their big night – but not before a good luck hug from Glenwood Family Home Family Teacher Anne-Marie and her husband Brian Horsefield.



Nicholas, from our Macassar centre, was thrilled to receive an award for Best Academic Performance.



Our boys have a heart ... our Glenwood Family Home boys visited the children's ward at a local hospital to cheer up the little patients.



Boys from our Glenwood Family Home lent a hand to help Habitat for Humanity build homes for underprivileged families.

Our programmes continue to impress

Girls & Boys Town offers two excellent programmes – *Common Sense Parenting* and *The Well-Managed Classroom* – and both continue to be an invaluable asset to those who have completed either programme.

When you consider that we've been in the field of youth behaviour management since the 1950s, it's no wonder that our programmes – which were devised in association with Girls and Boys Town USA – are effective. *The Well-Managed Classroom* benefits educators – and ultimately, the learners.

Transforming our schools from corridors of defiance to centres of learning is part of our mission – and we're proud to share our expertise with

educators from both private and State schools.

As one pre-school educator remarked, 'This is not a model for school – it's a model for life.'

Our *Common Sense Parenting* programme is as successful and we've had wonderfully positive feedback from participants.

For more information on these and other programmes, contact our Training and Resource Centre on (021) 689 5636 or e-mail trainingwesterncape@wol.co.za



Trainer Mark Abrahams with staff who successfully completed Common Sense Parenting in the Western Cape

You said it ...

We welcome your views and suggestions – so please write to us. Loyal supporter, Terence Bowker, brightened our day when he took the time to write this positive letter to us ...

Over many years you have been kind enough to let me know how you have been getting on. It has been my pleasure to learn that you were surmounting stiff challenges and achieving enviable goals for yourselves.

My visit to Boys Town, Magaliesburg remains etched in my memory. The citizens I met then were, without exception, the most exceptional

young people. Their openness and positive attitude made a very deep impression on me.

I was away from the country for more than half the year last year and have recently returned to find many months' mail piled up, waiting to be opened and attended to. This is a chore one can put off until one's conscience eventually gets the upper hand, as it now has.

Of all the envelopes dropped into my post box, none has ever contained more of a surprise and honour than the one that arrived enclosing my own Honorary Citizenship of Girls & Boys Towns. I feel greatly privileged to be invited to join your community. Thank you. May good fortune follow you always.





Proudly displaying the certificates they were awarded for successfully completing a course.



All for one and one for all ... the young ladies at our Alpha Family Home.

Our girls continue to blossom

It's been an action-packed year at our Alpha Family Home in Claremont, Cape Town.

The home recently celebrated its first anniversary and all the girls – and staff – received roses to mark this special occasion. In addition to the day-to-day responsibilities of school, sports, homework and chores, our girls also successfully completed a course in HIV/Aids awareness.



Teacher, Lydia Januarie, couldn't contain her joy at being given beautiful flowers to commemorate Alpha's first birthday. The girls received roses, too, which were presented by the boys from our Dingle Family Home.



Winners, all!

Girls & Boys Town Tongaat hosted its annual awards function recently and various presentations were made for achievement and effort.

Social worker at the Tongaat centre, Zebounisa Bhorat, summed up the event perfectly when she said, 'These are the kids who give you the energy for the next 10 years.' She is thrilled with the youngsters' progress.

Kisa Dlamini, CEO of Remant Alton Transport Logistics and guest of honour, addressed the crowd insightfully when he spoke about people – especially children – needing three types of wealth: material, emotional and spiritual wealth.

'Material wealth gives us a means of survival; emotional wealth shows us love and teaches us how to love and care; and spiritual wealth gives us direction in life.'

Mayor of the eThekweni Municipality, Obed Mlaba, also attended the function. He said he was impressed with the work being done by Girls & Boys Town.

But the highlight of the day was seeing the children accept their awards with humility, gratitude and pride. Well done to all the award winners!



Message from Joe Araujo



When others give up ... we give hope

Having to part ways with our Magaliesburg Principal, Frieda du Bruyn, because of ill health at the young age of 44, is a sad loss. But it is more tragic when one couples it with the circumstances of the youngsters who have recently joined us.

Coming into care – even going to boarding school – is a frightening experience for most children. They invariably go into what we call "freeze mode".

On the one hand, they look back at their circumstances and find it hopeless. On the other, they meet new yet friendly people who promise them the world: 'You can be whoever you want to be!' Are we for real?!

Their future is scary: 'How did I get here and why?' – and having being told for most of their lives that they are 'good-for-nothing', such a future is all but a vision ... and a hopeless one at that!

That's when I tell them about the thousands of people – you and friends like you – who are waiting for them to take that first step. Because they have a choice – they have a future. They have us and they have you to back them. We'll always be there for them and they can always come back 'home'!

So the next time you wonder what you do for society, consider the potential of your investment ... imagine the possibilities for these youngsters – and for the future of South Africa. Thanks again for your loyal support.

Joe Araujo

Joe Araujo
Executive Director



Sibonello accepts the Award for Technology from Godfrey Pillay, chairman of Girls & Boys Town's Regional Committee.



Kisa Dlamini shakes hands with Ian, who received a trophy for excellent Academic Progress.



Inkosiathi was delighted to accept the Most Effective Leader Award from sponsor and past principal, Thakur Morar.



Ricardo was presented the Most Enthusiastic Student (Academics) Award by Mackey Moodley, Child and Youth Care Worker at Girls & Boys Town Tongaat.



Lyanda won the Sportsman of the Year Award and accepted his trophy from Kisa Dlamini.



Timothy accepted the Arts and Culture Award on behalf of his brother Cassidy, from trophy sponsor Mr Sahadeo.



The Professor Balkisson Shield for Outstanding Fellowship was presented to Ian by Mayor Obed Mlaba. Ian excelled academically and in sport at our Tongaat Centre.

Farewell to Frieda

It was with heavy hearts that we said goodbye to Frieda du Bruyn, who was medically boarded after spending 11 special years with Girls & Boys Town.



Frieda started her career at Girls & Boys Town as a social worker at our Magaliesburg Centre. She then became Vice-Principal.

Frieda then spent time at our Randfontein-Kagiso centre as the Principal, before – because of family commitments – returning to Magaliesburg as Principal.

On hearing of her impending 'early retirement' and illness, many boys from both our Kagiso and Magaliesburg Centres expressed their concern and wanted to visit her personally.

This alone is testament to the affection and respect that the boys have for Frieda. We will miss her skills and caring, and wish her improved health in the future.

Public policies

1. Girls & Boys Town South Africa is a private, registered non-profit organisation in terms of the Non-profit Organisation's Act (Act 71 of 1997) – Registration No 009-244 NPO.
2. Girls & Boys Town is registered as a 'Public Benefit Organisation' in terms of Section 18A of the Income Tax Act (Act 58 of 1962). Donations to Girls & Boys Town are tax-deductible in the hands of the donor – up to 5% of taxable income. No duty is charged on bequests made to it in Wills (SARS ref 8/11/13/379).
3. All donations received are used for the sole benefit and care of the youth of Girls & Boys Town.
4. Only staff in the employ of Girls & Boys Town are permitted to raise funds for the organisation – unless otherwise specifically authorised.
5. The names of Girls & Boys Town donors are never sold or divulged to other organisations.
6. The stories of youth published in our reports are true but their names may have been altered to protect their identity.
7. Youth are admitted to Girls & Boys Town regardless of race, colour or religion.
8. The Girls & Boys Town books of account are audited annually and its financial statements are available on request or can be viewed at the office of the Director of Non-profit Organisations.
9. Girls & Boys Town does not receive funding from Community Chests in South Africa.

In a boy's words ...

True testament to the difference that Girls & Boys Town makes in young lives can be found in the letters they write.

The principal at our Kagiso home was moved by this letter from one of the children, Thato, and chose to share it here:

'I would like to say thanks to you and the staff for showing me the right way and for changing my life. My life was messed up but thanks for giving me a lot of chances to improve myself.'

'When I came to Boys Town I was a small boy and you took me as your son. I wish that the Lord can bless you with his blessings.'

'Even when I used to bunk school, you told me that you wanted to see me have a better life and be someone in the world. I needed your voice telling me what is wrong and what is right.'

Our Magaliesburg centre also received a warm-hearted letter from one of the boys who left after

completing his matric last year. Hannes (pictured right) is now employed at a hospital and recently wrote this letter:

'Two years ago I went to Boys Town not really knowing what to expect. I was really surprised at how they helped me and for all the things they do for the boys.'

'I just want to say thank you for everything you did for me; you were really great to me. You can overcome problems if you work at it. Thank you again for everything you've done for me.'



We're reaching into the Eastern Cape

State policy trends may have hampered our plan to put down roots in the Eastern Cape by opening a Girls & Boys Town Family Home in Miramar, but it didn't dampen our will to help youth and parents in those communities.

So far, we've trained parents via our *Common Sense Parenting* programme, and have trained and offered support to volunteers who work with HIV/Aids-affected and infected youngsters and families in the Motherwell community.

Now, we're moving into the Eastern Cape with

our community outreach programmes, to make a real difference in a region that is the most neglected and deprived of all.

Thanks to your ongoing support, we plan to recruit a part-time Social Worker to offer short-term counselling to youth and families. Boys and girls from the Eastern Cape who need admission to our facilities will be screened and placed where they stand to benefit most.

More families from throughout the Eastern Cape region will be able to complete our *Common Sense Parenting* programme while the *Well Managed Classroom and Administrative Intervention* programmes will be offered to educators in the most troubled schools.

Despite the setbacks we've experienced in our efforts to put down roots in the Eastern Cape, we're still determined to serve communities where there's a need for our help with troubled children and families. After all, as Father Flanagan once put it: 'The work will continue, because it's God's work, not mine!'

20 years 'of privilege'



Regional Development Officer Kowsie Govinden presents a Long Service award to Vera Mervyn-Smith.

Development Officer at our KwaZulu-Natal Regional Centre, Vera Mervyn-Smith – who recently celebrated 20 years of service to Girls & Boys Town – was filled with praise when she received her special award.

'It's a privilege to work here and I feel that God's work is accomplished every day in the lives of the children whom Girls & Boys Town helps. It's also so rewarding to talk to our supporters and share the successes that they make possible,' said an elated Vera.

A lasting legacy

The caring and support of many friends over the years has brought great blessings and many opportunities for the youngsters at Girls & Boys Town.

After taking care of your family's needs, perhaps you'd like to consider extending this caring – even beyond your lifetime – and ensuring a place in the world for one of our girls or boys.

The most meaningful and personal way to do this is by leaving a bequest – an outright gift of money, ceding an endowment or insurance policy or a percentage or residue of your estate.

Remember all bequests to Girls & Boys Town are exempt from estate duty and donations tax.

For a **FREE** copy of our **new** brochure – 'Where there's a Will, there's a Way' – and alternative ways to continue your caring – call us on (011) 482-2655 or write to us at Private Bag X61, Auckland Park, 2006 or go to our website: www.girlsandboystown.org.za