



Youth

SINCE 1958

TODAY

NOVEMBER 2016

A newsletter for friends of Girls and Boys Town

58 years of celebration – as we help youth to shine.



Creative

Arbor Week

celebration

plants a seed

With guidance from representatives of the Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens, our youth explore the importance of greening and the value of indigenous plant species.

Girls & Boys Town celebrated Arbor Week 2016 with an educational tree planting collaboration.

This memorable day sprung roots as a result of our local Learning Support Centre team investing in a relationship building exercise with the Kirstenbosch National Botanical Gardens. Under the expert guidance of the Kirstenbosch representatives, our youth seized the day by digging holes and planting trees with some gusto.

There was some practical instruction needed in the safe handling of garden tools and the basic techniques of tree planting. But the real insight that was passed onto our boys

was a realisation of the need to re-green many of our country's urban and rural areas, while focusing on sustainability and the value of our own indigenous trees and plants. The seed of understanding was certainly planted!

Each year, Arbor Week is celebrated nationally in the first week of September. Traditionally, a tree of the year has been nominated for special attention or, as in recent years, several tree species. The selected trees for 2016 are the Common Wild Fig, the Common Bush-Cherry, and the Bead-Bean Tree.

Our tree-planting day added more beauty to an already appealing and healing environment.

National Arbor Week is an opportune time to call on all South Africans to plant indigenous trees as a practical and symbolic gesture of sustainable environmental management.

Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries website

Our Vision

Youth, families and communities; South Africa's strength and future.

Our Mission

Creating opportunities for youth to grow and develop into responsible citizens, able to contribute to family and community life in the spirit of peace, dignity, tolerance, equality and solidarity with others.

Benefits of a bequest to Girls & Boys Town

A bequest in a Will to Girls and Boys Town, a registered Public Benefit Organisation in terms of Section 18A of the Income Tax Act (Act 58 of 1962) is deducted from the value of your estate, which may be subject to estate duty. Your bequest to Girls & Boys Town will consequently be entirely free from estate duty and will reduce the portion of your estate which is subject to Estate Duty.



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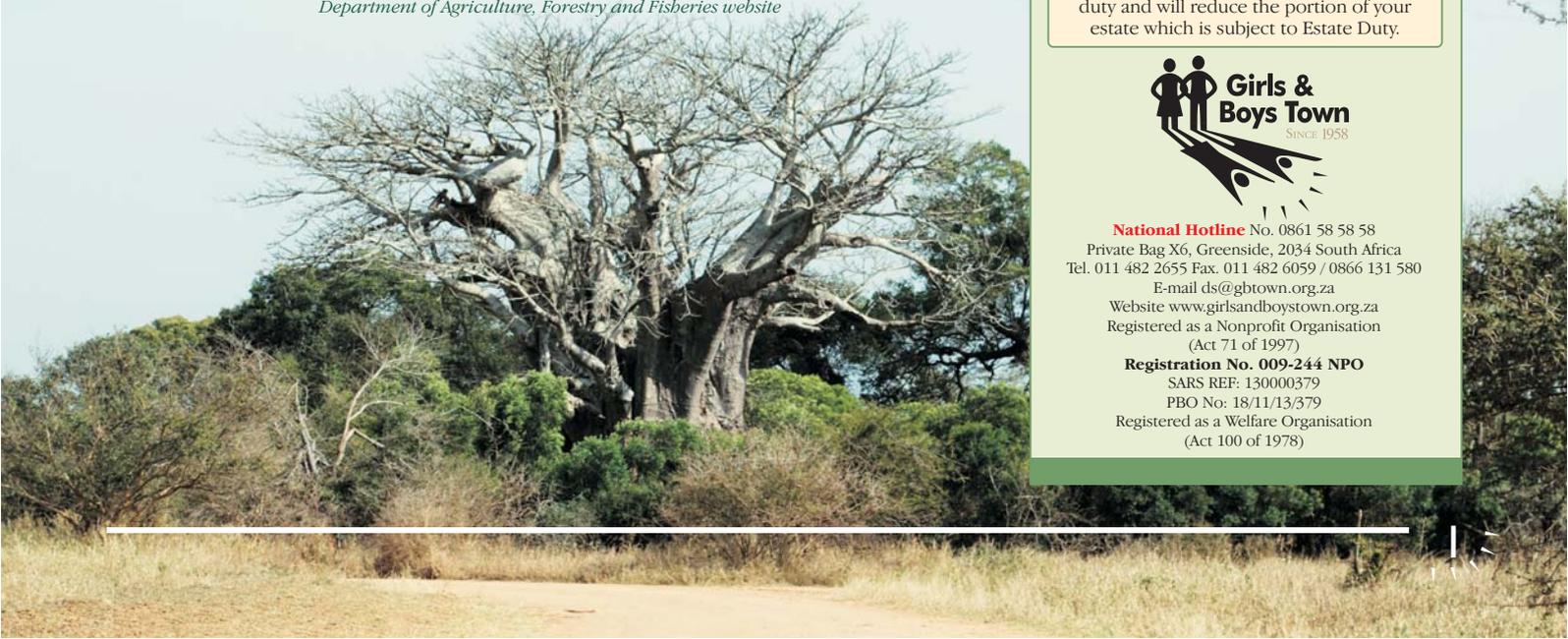
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It really is a joy to watch and experience our youth as they shift from a self-focus, to one where they begin to deepen their appreciation of their responsibilities to others who are less fortunate than themselves — as well as recognising and valuing the need to care for and preserve our environments.

This edition is filled with such inspirational, growth orientated and developmental stories, where Nurture, is one of GBT's SHINE™ Goals (S-ignificance, H-ome, I-ndependence, N-urture, E-ducation).

Modern research is showing more and more how the voluntary act of Generosity (a GBT Nurture goal) releases feel good chemicals in the brain that enhances an individual's sense of well-being, general sense of upliftment and self-esteem. They experience lower levels of depression and improved moods, lower levels of day-to-day stress, a sense of greater inner peace and an experience of better social supports.

It seems clear that our youth are beginning to understand that generosity begins at home — and then needs to continue beyond that. Generosity, giving back, empathy and appreciation are responsibilities, and critical factors in establishing and maintaining healthy relationships with ourselves, others — and the environment.

We, along with you as our supporters and partners, are focused on helping our young people to Nurture - to develop the sensitivity to care for self and others — helping others to Shine™ too.

It might also be heart-warming for you to know that as a further demonstration of our youth's acts of appreciation and gratitude, they have included the following into each mealtime prayer: We thank our generous donors for their love, support and this wonderful meal.

Thank you for all that you do for our young people, families and communities, since without your loyal support and commitment none of this would be possible.

We at GBT wish you all blessed, safe, joyous and family centered summer holidays.

Lee Loynes
LEE LOYNES
Chief Executive Officer



Creativity is taking flight! Our new Skills Centre creates the perfect opportunity for our youngsters to learn a new skill and be creative. Here are two of our boys making kites out of bamboo during their Technology period.



During a recent dam-fishing expedition, our boys learnt the catch-and-release aspect of the sport.

New experiences, learning, and serving allow our youth to shine ...

Sometimes the best way to learn is to roll up your sleeves and get stuck right in! That is exactly what our learners at one of our Learning Support Centres have been doing. There has been no shortage of fun either and the people they have met and the things they have learnt along the way will always stay with them.



It is all hands on deck! Our youth spent some of the day on the beach helping the "trekkers" get their nets in. They left with a huge insight into how tough life can be for some people but also with a new-found appreciation for the ocean as a source for many. Most importantly they learnt how offering up their own time to help others is a very rewarding act of generosity.



Learning and having a whole lot of fun at the same time! The classroom recently got a few new additions - rescue birds and some non-poisonous snakes and spiders. Our youngsters have been feeding and taking care of their new "friends," learning lots about responsibility in the process!

Girls model their own creativity

Some of our girls celebrated Heritage Day with a display of creativity. Taking over the sewing room, they showed their skills in dressmaking by producing their own outfits — and modelling the results with pride.



Bags of Hope brings bags of fun

Bags of Hope, a NGO that collects handbags to give to women in need, paid a special visit to Girls and Boys Town recently. These bags are filled with all the essentials a girl could need as well as a few special luxuries like a scarf, lip gloss and a treat to eat. Each of the girls were given one of these bags while the boys received their own toiletry bag also filled with goodies.

Our youngsters decided they could not accept these gifts without giving something back in return, and so they baked up a storm, presenting delicious biscuits and muffins to share over tea. The girls then put on a modelling show to entertain the team at Bags of Hope. We are so proud of how our youth responded to the generosity from Bags of Hope, taking it upon themselves to show their appreciation and to make our guests feel so welcome. Well done girls and boys for making the most of a wonderful experience!

A very special thank you to Bags of Hope for the lovely afternoon and for spoiling our youth!



(Above) The girls strutting their stuff for the Bags of Hope team.



(Left) The Bags of Hope team explain the goals of their organisation.

Serving the community



Eager and ready to help! Even cleaning can be fun when it is spent helping others alongside your friends!

Boys from one of our Family Homes spent the last two weekends helping out their local community. They set out for a Revelation Church with cleaning products in tow along with a good attitude and left it again looking spick and span! Next up was the Uthandweni Children's Home where the boys washed the dishes and helped out with the babies in the nursery. They then got on their hands and knees and polished all the primary children's school shoes and finally ended their day off playing a fun game of soccer with the kids. What a service! Well done boys, we are so proud of you!

A movie night gives this girl food for thought!

A recent movie night spent watching *Miracles from Heaven* has challenged our girls to hold on to their faith and to appreciate everything that they do have. Knowing that they are a part of something greater has encouraged them to always have hope, even in life's hard times. Here is a special letter from one of our girls who was impacted by the movie's message ...

A 'paradigm shift' through a movie

It is amazing how a single movie can change one's outlook on life, change the way you think or even the way you ought to respond to any situation.

For some time, I have not been a full-on Christian or been very much faithful. I always wondered why I had to go through so much until I watched "Miracles from Heaven".

I did not understand the 'concept' of miracles. I thought maybe one had to go to church every Sunday to be blessed with one. The truth is miracles are everywhere. They really are ... we just have to be faithful. I once heard that a person without faith is like a house with no foundation. Nothing will ever be good enough for you. You'll probably be bitter.

Imagine if life itself was all fine and smooth with no problems. Wouldn't that be boring. Our problems do not have to be bad. They can also act as a motivator and stimulator.

(For by the grace you have been saved through faith - and this is not from yourselves; it is the gift of God - Ephesians 2:8)

Small gestures make a big difference on Mandela Day

What counts in life is not the mere fact that we have lived. It is what difference we have made to the lives of others that will determine the significance of the life we lead. — Nelson Mandela

In July this year, a fire brought devastation to the Lakehaven Children's Home in Durban. The girls at one of our Family Homes decided they wanted to get involved and, in the spirit of Mandela Day, they reached out to these children and collected clothes, shoes, toys and even their favourite belongings to donate.

Their time spent at the Lakehaven Children's Home impacted them dearly, so much so that one of our girls wrote a letter sharing her experience with us ...



What an experience!

Picture this, you and your friend were playing soccer just an hour ago. Later you see him lighting up on fire, screaming for help and you just standing there knowing you can't do anything to help. A few minutes later, your friend is dead. Just like that.

Yesterday, the girls and I and Marni Rooksona went to the Rivers Church to commemorate the eight boys that died in a fire at the Lakehaven/Zarnani Child and Youth Care Centre. No one knows what or who caused the fire, investigations are being continued. I was not there; I didn't see it, but I can imagine the pain that the rest of the children were feeling. Seeing them crying like that, yoh ...

As Pastor John Jennings read or briefly explained each of the boy's personalities, I kept asking myself so many questions, questions that no one could answer. Indeed, it was a tragedy that touched everyone's heart.

This morning when I woke up, I thanked God for giving me the opportunity of living another day, after all we never know what's next. I promised myself to love and care for everyone while I still have the opportunity to. As I was told, life is a chance, don't waste it. I thank and am proud for us going to the service for it has strengthened me and made me a better and stronger person. The day shall not be forgotten and may their precious and innocent souls rest in peace.

Ambition affirmed by pristine beauty

Wow, sir! I am now more sure than ever that I want to be in the hospitality industry!"

These were the words uttered by a very awe-struck Hugh, from one of our Cape family homes, after he had taken a stroll through the beautiful wilderness near Touws River.

And his companion Zane followed up with awe of a different kind: "Die plek is gevaarlik, Meneer!"

We are very proud of Hugh and Zane — their progress at Girls and Boys Town has been exemplary. And excitement and wonder were their rewards when they recently visited the breathtaking Aquila Private Game Reserve — an experience that was kindly donated by the reserve.

On their excursion, the boys were accompanied by one of our Senior Youth Care Workers, who takes up the story:

Not only were we blessed by the drive through the gorgeous Breede River Valley area but we were greeted with a warm smile and a cold sparkling grape drink upon arrival at the reserve. Treated like royalty!

An hour after enjoying a scrumptious buffet



A donated excursion into the world of game lodges recently gave two of our boys a real opportunity to consider their future careers!

style breakfast we were seated and ready for the game viewing experience. The Big 5 was on the itinerary and soon most were spotted.

Returning to the homestead was just as exciting, the mouthwatering aromas of a buffet lunch awaited us. We were home....

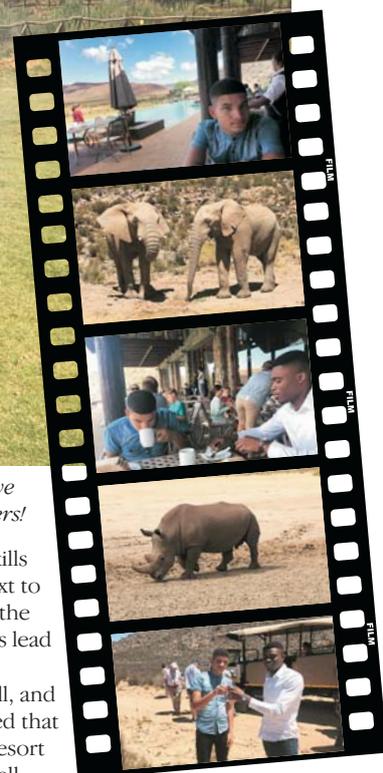
The views from our table spoke of serenity and accomplishment and we were three very happy chaps!

Hugh, whose aim is to enrol for tertiary studies in the hospitality industry, was certainly affirmed by this experience.

Zane had a chance to practise his

conversation skills when he sat next to a pretty girl on the game drive. This led to her parents engaging as well, and it was discovered that the father is a resort manager at a well known spa. After learning the purpose for our visit, he kindly offered his contact details to set up a similar arrangement in the future. This day definitely paid off. Well done boys!

We give huge thanks for this opportunity — well deserved by the boys and much appreciated by the Senior Youth Care Worker too!



The great, surprise kitchen take-over!

Bright and early one Saturday morning, a group of boys at the Magalies Girls and Boys Town sent our kitchen staff out for the day and got to work on breakfast themselves! The next group of boys took over for lunch and the same was done for dinner. This continued for the whole weekend as the boys prepared themselves for the coming weeks where they would be responsible for assisting with breakfast, lunch boxes and dinner.

The kitchen takeover caused great excitement and it was amazing to see the camaraderie and teamwork that developed out of this experience.

The boys experienced first hand how much work the moms in the kitchen do, realising that it is all just for them! Thank you boys for showing such a wonderful gesture of appreciation towards your kitchen moms.



BY ANY NAME, OUR GIRLS AND BOYS ARE REAL!
 All the youth you'll see in our newsletters are real Girls and Boys Town family! But as a measure of protecting their privacy, names are changed as a policy. We trust you'll understand. Thank you.