

FROM ROTARY CLUB OF PORT ALFRED, DISTRICT 9320

(Find us between Port Elizabeth and East London on the eastern seaboard of South Africa).

We are a small seaside holiday resort, very full in season, fairly quiet out of season. Our Club has 42 members, 10 of them women. As Africa has many needs, our projects are mostly to provide basics for the needy.

CURRENT PROJECT : SUPPLYING WATER TANKS TO RURAL SCHOOLS AND OTHERS

Water is a basic necessity and many communities do not have access to clean water. So with the help of matching grants we are in the process of supplying 100 (our initial aim) metal water tanks, mostly to schools especially in the rural areas where many schools are tin shacks and the children have to bring water to school or dip in a nearby pond. The tanks are installed with pipes leading from gutters round the roofs of the buildings which of course fill up when the rain comes. Sometimes we find the biggest problem is to fit straight guttering to very un-straight buildings!

Here is a letter of thanks we received from a school at a little fishing village about 60 kms from Port Alfred. The headmaster had heard about the water tank project and had written asking us if he could possibly be included as he was rather far away:

“To whom it may concern

On 26 August Hamburg Primary school wrote a letter requesting a help of a water tank. We did not think that it would so soon be answered.

How we wish that everybody on earth would believe that GOD exists and is everywhere. He sees all what his people do to others especially to the very needy ones.

In all this a word of THANKS to you, from where you have taken for this tank, something will be replaced.

GOD BLESS

Yours faithfully W W Marambana (Principal)”



LITERACY

Another major project is to improve literacy in schools, both in the local language Xhosa and in English. We have a pilot scheme going in four township schools, Dambuza, Mtyobo, Nomzamo and Kuyasa. The books are soft-covered, with different grades of reading skills required and all the pictures are outlined so that they can be coloured in. The books are being distributed as funds allow, and we go around regularly getting the classes to read to us. The teachers pick the three best readers, and we give them Rotary Literacy Certificates which they are very proud of. The books are designed and printed at very special rates and cost about R7 per book (NZD1,02) which we finance with donations from overseas. We are very pleased with the improvement in reading skills which we are seeing.



TREE OF JOY

Annual event at our shopping mall. Here's how it works: the Rotary Club of Port Alfred asks local charities to identify people who are needy, not only financially but also in need of some Christmas cheer – people without families to spoil them, people down on their luck, children who have little to look forward to as Christmas approaches. These adults and children are invited to write down their “wishes” and these are hung on cards on the tree. Members of the public are then invited to choose a “wish” and buy the requested item, bringing it back to the Rotarians on duty at the Tree of Joy. The gifts are then wrapped and delivered by the Rotarians just before Christmas.

This is not a fundraising effort in any way, it's a service by Rotary to distribute gifts from individual members of the public.



SOCIALS

We regularly have evening socials, daytime family outings on a Sunday , a Rotary Family Weekend away once a year and “Bottle ‘n Bite” bring and share suppers at Rotarians’ homes. Our regular meetings are on Tuesdays and when there is a 5th Tuesday in the month, we have a theme evening.

We also have a “Fellowship Gong” for which a Rotarian is drawn every two weeks or so, and that Rotarian invites about 6 Rotarian couples (not close friends) to his/her house for drinks, barbecue, Sunday lunch, whatever. In this way we get to know each other better.







