



COLLINS CONNECTION

April-May 2007

Hello, The Salesian Family

The Collins Takkies are well trained in pothole negotiation and have remained on an even keel while they await the outcomes of the court hearing about the occupation of our intended site for the Skills Centre. Business Partners are now finalising their response and the hearing should take place within the next two weeks. We are also congratulating ourselves on the acquisition of the virtue of patience that, according to Shakespeare, 'sits on a monument smiling at grief'...did you ever!!

Having brushed up and patched the stubbed toes areas from their pothole encounter last month the famous pair are now wallowing in a combination of mud, compost and mulch...all in a good cause of course! They are even calling themselves experts in the finer details of permaculture gardening.

The training for this at St Francis Sales in Lawley went off very successfully on 22nd and 23rd of April. There were 11 trainees and Ryan Dickey, the trainer, was very pleased with their eagerness to learn and with their hard work. Victor Qhadi has been made project manager after his training in permaculture design. He and we are very proud.

On the 5th and 6th of May a greenhouse that will serve all the permaculture sites for our network partners Ekukhanyeni and for Don Bosco site in Lawley and Finetwon was erected. And the trainees were given demonstrations on how to propagate seeds. The greenhouse can hold 10 000 organic seedlings and so in the end all the plants will be reared free for the gardens. We once again thank Ekukhanyeni for their intervention and partnership.

All the participants of the training workshop received their training certificates on 6th May after the Mass at St Francis of Sales. There was much applause and cheering! The certificates were presented from Ekukhanyeni by Ryan Dickey who designed the course.

We have also been busy learning how to deal with people who faint, break their bones, drown and have fits and choke on anything from sweets to chicken bones! This First Aid training course was held at All Saints Parish. There were ten participants two of which came from the Laura Vicuna Centre in Finetown. Our Takkies now feel safe and in very good hands. It was good to see our trainer, Andrew, from Smart Solutions: He is tick fever free! We look forward to receiving our certificates.

We are very excited! We were invited to the Don Bosco Computer Centre to participate in a celebration for the graduation of another 9 students. Of the sixteen who have completed their course this year 6 have already found employment. Do

you know how to line dance? Our feet won't stand still... There are nine new hopefuls starting their course tomorrow. We gave them a lot of encouragement and educated them in our newly learned skills of pothole negotiation. We expect another seven to join up soon. We thank Val Drift for her enthusiastic management and training at the centre.

The SDB and the FMA Provincial Councils are meeting soon to adopt the new Constitution for Don Bosco Educational Projects and also to discuss how the partnership will function. We wish them well in their endeavours to find the best way of working together. We have a feeling that we will be on the run again soon!

We enjoyed a trip to Boksburg, east of Johannesburg, to St Anthony's Skills Centre. This centre caters for approximately nineteen hundred students at a time. We interviewed Harlod Taylor; the skills training manager regarding the complicated procedures we need to follow for accreditation of our centre's curriculum and to ensure that we achieve the required standards. Liza Rossi accompanied us because rumour has it that it is easier to be accredited by the SETA (Sector Education Training Authority) associated with agriculture and to then apply for accreditation for the construction skills. We were also given a contact number for Brother Redmond of PAX Training Centre in the Northern Province who is willing to help us with the nitty-gritty and all the shortcuts. We have many helpful friends. We wonder if there is any help the sole repair department.

We have spruced up our image and are now officially members of ECOC (Ennerdale Chamber of Commerce). We look forward to our first meeting as members. We will benefit from this decision because we will hear first hand what the business community require in terms of skills and marketing outlets. We may also find more valuable network partners.

We have welcomed Mr Anthony Reeves, the Vice Chairman of ECOC to our Steering Committee. He has already been of assistance to us in providing information regarding the status of the land moratorium and how the city Council operates regarding this. Land is currently being auctioned off in neighbouring areas so perhaps Ennerdale will be next. Our takkies are already lined up at the starting post for the auction races lest the court hearing goes against Business Partners.

Hot off the Press: We have taken to deck chairs in the winter sun. We bask in the great joy that the favourable court hearing outcome has provided. Business Partners have been granted an eviction order to reclaim Erf 4623! Who said all good things come to those who wait, and wait and wait..? We agree! We thank God, our trusty Fr Declan, Don Bosco, Maria Mazzarello and the rest of heaven. We thank you all for your long prayer for us! Want some champagne?

Our next task is to get the land transfer done and to acquire zoning permission to build the centre in the area we have chosen. May all potholes rest in peace!

We are also working on a viable curriculum programme and a discussion paper has been prepared for our next meeting.

If you are interested in some photos of permaculture gardening procedures, please visit the website www.salesians.org and go into the newsletter page. You will see us there.

Overheard from my window: “Did you know that there is a new kind of brick being manufactured?” It may happen in South Africa as well. It evidently does not need any mortar. It comes with its own bonding agent. Bernie is investigating the prospects of using these for our Centre. Yes, we know, she’s a little out of kilter with the norm. Try working and walking with her! Prepare for sore toes and headaches!” Yes well, you never know!



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