



## COLLINS CONNECTION

September 2007

Hello, The Salesian Family

We, your faithful and 'Tacky' informants, have had our first experience of real crisis management! We got a phone call around 16h00 on a Thursday afternoon to say the builders who were busy demolishing the building on the famous Erf 4623 had been arrested and were in jail! Our esteemed Pastor Peter, the rock on which we have bumped our heads and scuffed our soles for the past year, laid a charge of trespassing and had two constables arrest our friends Joseph and Basil. The constables evidently would not believe the builders when they said they were under legal instruction! We however, being accustomed to rocky roads and hard bumps, managed to produce proof of the eviction order and title deeds. The prisoners were released at nine the same night. We are now educated in another aspect of life; from within! The matter is being dealt with and the builders have recourse to the process of law. We are now able to proceed with the next process; the zoning consent application. We hope that this will be finalised by the end of this year. This will mean that we can start building in February. We detect many hand clasps. We hope this is an indication of prayer and not of anxiety!?

We are pleased to tell you that we are going to be in the movies! No, our autographs are not free! We had the pleasure of hosting a film crew from Spain. They were commissioned by Red deporte, our donor agent who operates from Madrid. David, Carmelo and Alexandra were very enthusiastic and professional in their task of filming and interviewing all of our project family. We went to Ennerdale to watch the young people, (there are five thousand young and registered soccer players in the Ennerdale region) play their club matches and do their soccer skills exercises. We noted that there are many young girls playing the game. Anthony Reeves, the Chairman of the Deep South Soccer Association and also a member of our steering committee, was very helpful in supplying information and material for the production. We visited Jacksonsdrift and interviewed Sister Mary. The little ones were very keen to ensure that they were captured on camera. They played soccer, netball and rugby in the most inventive fashion!

Ryan Dickey, in spite of being very ill, provided valuable information about permaculture and the project at Lawley. Victor Qhali and Mr Sam took the crew on a garden tour and expounded on the merits of companion planting.

Fr Dino Miotto, Fr Robert Gore, Br Sean, Sr Consuelo, Sr Lidia were also interviewed and added interest and value to many other aspects of how the Salesians operate and how their mission lives and moves and has being in today's context. We thank them and all who have contributed to make the documentary a success. We thank Sandy Dowling and the Cape Town staff for hosting the visitors for a week. It is good to feel that we are connected in this special way. Very good for the sole!

We enjoyed the songs and the professional soccer match with both sides dressed in uniform and a new, shiny, red soccer ball in a rocky bit of vacant land outside the Laura Vicuña grounds under the Telkom Tower! The children excelled in enthusiastic support and the film crew were very happy with the material. The whistle went hoarse! The passing taxi drivers hooted and we got applause from a few awe stuck passers bye. Who needs Bafana-Bafana?



**Film Crew with Sr Margaret Sweeney: from left: Alexandra; Sr Margaret; David and Carmelo**

Bernie wrote a film script for the occasion and after a few hundred takes we were very pleased and proud of our efforts. We even learned some movie language like, 'fade-in,' 'fade-out', 'cut' and 'that's a wrap!' We were all suitably wrapped...in dust!

Permaculture fever has taken real root! Trees and Food for Africa, an NPO who work hard to teach the benefits of greening and of permaculture gardening for the home, for the sustainable production of food for schools and similar institutions, held a permaculture event at Bosco Youth Centre. The event was sponsored by Woolworths Trust who runs the 'Eduplant Programme' in conjunction with Food and Trees for Africa. About three hundred children who had been working on their permaculture gardens at their various schools gathered to receive awards and to learn more about this environmentally sound way of producing food. The gardens in schools have various benefits: it enables local school communities to engage in active



**Eduplant project display at Bosco**

learning, to supply food for their feeding schemes, to provide employment to school communities and to generate income from recycled products, vegetables and plants. Bosco Youth Centre now has a newly established garden and will take suitable measures to ensure that it grows and develops. To this end we will network with them and see how we can assist and support the new programme. We have an

enthusiastic candidate from our current permaculture training project in Lawley who wants to join the Bosco Community as a volunteer and who can supply the

knowledge and skills to others in the area. We love the good earth and the people who care for her!

We are very pleased to announce that of thirty seven students who completed the computer course at the Don Bosco Computer Centre, thirty one have found employment. Eight more students completed the course at the end of August. We wish them well. Val Drift, our computer trainer, will attend a training course early next year. This will qualify her as a recognised and certified training facilitator. This will ensure our successful registration with the national skills authority and will also ensure that our students have a recognised certificate when they complete our courses in the future. We thank the staff at our Cape Town office for supplying us with a very user friendly training manual which meets the unit standards required for accreditation by the SETA.

We once again thank our network partners, Ekukhanyeni, for their assistance in supplying us with a water filter at the Laura Vicuna Centre. This will ensure that the children drink pure water. Liza Rossi has also supplied us with another batch of glyco nutrients for the mal-nourished children. She came armed with a donation of soft toys for the end of year Christmas party. Is there any possibility of new Takkies in the pack?

Veronica Bergström and friends collected a huge truck load of goods that has taken Sr Margaret Sweeny a week to sort out! Some of the stuff will be sold as it cannot be used by the project beneficiaries. Thank you once again for your generous spirit and hard work for us!

We enjoyed a visit to our architect, Glen Brydges, who spent some time revising the budget for the project and who has agreed to manage the zoning consent process. We are grateful and relieved! Thank you Glen! You are a saviour of soles!

The Collins Trust has donated the ensuing year's operation funds. They continue to work hard for us and have some funds available for building. Thank you! We will one day, change our Takkies for gumboots (Wellingtons) in the interests of building!

A proposal for funding for two workshops/classrooms and an ablution block has been submitted to the EU through Sandy Dowling and Yolanda Tim at the SPDO. Thank you! We appreciate your efforts very much.

Lesedi Trust has indicated that they will be willing to consider another donation for us. More candles and prayer please...

Please visit the website for the latest photos.

Overheard from our window: "When you perm a culture you produce a variety of wavy, healthy and happy people!" On that optimistic note, we wave you goodbye until next time!

Yours solely and sincerely

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Bernie Mullen and her Takkies

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