

KVODU

n°4

newsletter from the **Vlakteplaas skool** De Rust - South Africa

Recognition...

It was our honour some months ago to receive the chairperson, Prof. Mayatula, and members of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Education at our school.

Subsequent I received the following message:

Dear Jans

I must again repeat that I was blown away by the enthusiasm and passion by which you are driving the Vlakteplaas UCC Primary School project. I regard it as a "Free Private Farm School". It is free in the sense that you are providing everything for the learners. It is a "Private Farm School" because the facilities are as good as any private school in the country. To crown it all, this service is provided to the poorest of the poor, the farm school community.

Keep up the good work. As I promised, I will share this experience with Mrs. Naledi Pandor MP, the Hon. National Minister for Education.

*Regards,
Prof. Shepherd M Mayatula MP*



Jans & Prof. Shepherd Mayatula MP

And now, on invitation by the Hon. Minister Naledi Pandor, I will be her guest in Parliament on 29th May for her annual Budget Speech, and for lunch afterwards.

Yes, in but three odd years our once forgotten Vlakteplaas UCC Primêr has attained National recognition. And for this I thank our wonderful teachers and support staff; our diligent children; and above all each and every one of our donors and friends. We are achieving the impossible because of your loyalty, your unstinting support and your belief in creating a better future for our children.

I salute you all !
Jans Rautenbach - OULAP

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Thank you Ms Diana

At the end of school year 2006 Diana Wicomb retired. Her life's work was Vlakteplaas UCC Primêr. Her father was also head of Vlakteplaas school and the Wicomb family used to live in a little house near the school, which was on the road to Oulap. This house recently collapsed and together with Ms Diana leaving to go to her elderly father in Oudtshoorn this will be the end of an era at Vlakteplaas.



Ms Diana never married and the school and the children meant the world to her. In her time at the school she experienced all the different changes the school went through: the old classrooms in the church, the sandwiches with peanut butter and jam, the old fashioned blackboards, the first and second new wings, the computers and the Kombuis with healthy hot meals.

The children and their parents owe Ms Diana a great deal and we all sincerely hope that she can enjoy her retirement in a good health for many, many years to come! Thank you Ms Diana.

10 little eyes salute the world!

Five girls have already been attending Vlakeplaas UCC Prímer school for some time. Due to an eye disease they are almost blind but nevertheless they love to go to school and they are amazingly good at finding their way through life. Jans Rautenbach searched for funding for an operation for them as an operation could give the girls a better sight, not perfect sight, but very much better. He succeeded with the help of friends, Oulap guests and other benefactors and in March 2007 they all got a new lens in one eye and the second operation for the other eye will take place next June.



Shoes make all the difference

Do you remember the school children and their Ajax Amsterdam sport wear, but no shoes?

Despite several applications world-wide it did not seem possible to find funding for shoes. However, a Dutch couple living in South Africa heard of this problem and on their second visit to Oulap they brought 30 pairs of shoes with them. There is a now girls' school soccer team and a boys' school soccer team and training already started.

Thank you Frank and Anja!



Two new houses

The block consists of two separate houses. Early in January the Snel family received the keys of the first part of the block.

Andries and his wife Ellna together with their three daughters will live there. Andries is the caretaker of the school: he opens and closes the building, cleans the classrooms and the playground and takes care of the school and the surroundings as if it was his own house: no trespassers are allowed! His wife Ellna works in the school kitchen every morning.

The Dutch writer Yvonne Keuls, including friends and faithful readers contributed 50% of the necessary amount towards the two houses and the Dutch foundation KarooCare doubled the amount with the help of IMPULSIS.



IMPULSIS is the Dutch joint programme of Edukans, ICCO and Kerk in Actie for supporting private initiatives in development organisation in their work for organizations abroad. IMPULSIS not only doubles the funds that the foundations themselves raise, but they also support by advising, opening their network and organising trainings. The second house will be used by the sexton of the church who will be appointed very soon.



*Torsten & Lotta Blomquist
Jonas & Helene Domeij*
Our very first bursariedonators from Stockholm



Paul Whitney & Viv Norman
Directors of the Karoocare Charitable Trust from London

News from Great Britain

Martin and Marjorie Scott from London visited Vlakteplaas for seven days and during their visit Marjorie taught the children to speak English.

The children enjoyed it very much and found it great fun too! Thank you Martin and Marjorie!



Brian Thompson the new Mayor of Helmsey in Yorkshire visited Vlakteplaas UCC Prîmer and he was so impressed with the new school, the kitchen, the children and their families that he promised that the Helmsey community would look for funds in 2007 for Vlakteplaas.

Kombuis News

Alida and Ellna start working in the Kombuis every morning at 06h00, cook and serve substantial meals by 09h30, wash dishes, and clean kitchen by 12h30, and then start preparing the next morning's vegetables and meats. Their day ends at 15h00.

Tiger Food Brands, the largest food corporation in South Africa, now monthly donates groceries (non-perishable goods) and toiletries for our school - and delivers it at our doorstep in this remote valley! We had to built a special storeroom for the Tiger consignments.

Only fresh vegetables, fruit and meat will need to be purchased. KarooCare the Netherlands promised to pay 50% of the fresh food and meat. Who will take care of the other 50%?



We are one of the few rural schools that daily provide healthy cooked meals to each scholar - so essential for the well-being of children who often lack balanced, nutritious food.



Ellna Snel & Alida Kammies



Khanya a new world for Vlakteplaas children

It is called the Khanya Kamer. This ultra modern 35 computer laboratory is serviced and controlled by the Khanya Institute of the Western Cape Education Authorities. They also familiarised our teachers with the system so that they again, could utilise this fabulous new teaching tool for our children to the full.



KUDU

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