



It was a miracle on July 17 when we launched the library with 100 new books and the children borrowed 88 books that day, says Ruth Tosin Oladosu (in 'A story from Nigeria').

### **The Grail Centre Trust gets a Commendation in the Enviropaedia Eco-Logic Awards 2012**

By Joan Daries

Over 300 entries were received from all over South Africa for the 2012 Eco-Logic Awards, so The Grail Centre Trust is honoured that we made it into the semi-finals. The judges were so impressed with the standard of entries that they decided that the organisations that made it to the semi-final stage would be given Commendations.

The Grail Centre Trust is committed to environmental sustainability and we are actively seeking to save electricity and water. At The Grail Centre, we also encourage recycling by asking guests to separate their waste so that glass, paper, metal and plastics can be recycled.

### **Surina Koorts, an entrepreneur at heart**

By Surina Koorts (attended Small Business Course, 2011)



*I always had a desire to start my own business and when I heard about the course at Mthimkhulu Village I immediately enrolled.*

*Here we learned that being your own boss was not the easiest but could be the most satisfying. We were equipped with lots of skills and trained in the wider aspect of running your own business.*

*The Entrepreneurs Course was the turning point and with all the things we were taught I realized that I could do this!*

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*We were trained in bookkeeping, pricing, marketing, HRM, we also did a HIV course which meant the world to me, but the thing that finally made me change my mind was the computer analysis. Here, in an illustration, I saw how I was moulded through the years in a responsible person without developing and practising my personality and skills. I was 50 years old (young) and that I was working for a living doing what was expected of me BUT I always had the one or other side line buying or selling something. That was it! So with God's grace and a lot of important and emotional decisions to make, I resigned from the SAPS after 19 years and started the Chil'o factory in the Strand.*

*It has taken me 16 years to discover my purpose in life, something that brings true meaning and joy for my existence. For all these years I have been complaining and moaning but little did I know that God had set before me a door to my success and the key to open it was in my hands. Today I am the director of my own company an ice cream business. In due course I was blessed and I owe such blessing and huge responsibility to my Creator who has also entrusted me with an assignment of creating jobs for those that are in need.*

#### **Mthimkhulu had reason to celebrate**

By Hazel Apollis

**"Each of us has a spark in life inside us, and our highest endeavour ought to be to set off that spark in one another."** This was the quote that was highlighted and the theme for the event held on 06 December 2012, where we

had our different beneficiaries and stakeholders present. Mthimkhulu Community Development held a three-fold event to celebrate the work we do and our beneficiaries – a graduation ceremony of our change agents on leadership training 2012, a showcase of the various projects of the programme & finally the launch of our jobs & small business centre for the community.

The celebrations started off by awarding our emerging leadership with certificates for their participation in the Change Agent leadership training of the Community Development programme. 38 Change agents from the Overberg district successfully completed the leadership training during 2012. Thobekile, the senior trainer, highlighted some of the successes of the change agents during this year – Caledon started a vegetable garden to grow the ingredients for their soup kitchen and as well as used it as an income generating initiative to help the project grow. The Mount Pleasant change agents managed to advocate for a growing shebeens in the residential area, to be closed down. Hawston's women support group for mothers that have children addicted to TIK and other drugs, have grown and restored the value of their womanhood - giving them back their self-esteem – through the various work they do with these women.



38 Change agents from the Overberg district successfully completed the leadership training during 2012.

The showcasing of different projects of the Mthimkhulu Community Development Programme, allowed for the guests to see the work done during 2012, also highlighting success stories of all the 7 different projects. During this exhibition guests also had the opportunity to interact with beneficiaries from the different projects, to hear their stories and how being part of the various projects impacted on their lives.

The highlight of the day was launch of the Jobs & small business centre when Doreen Februarie (Director of the programme) & Sally Timmel (a Board member) cut the

ribbon to formally open the centre – a centre for the community to utilise. This centre is established for all people, especially youth to use for CV development, research for employment and study opportunities, but also to provide career guidance and work preparedness training to the youth. Our small business centre will be a hub for emerging entrepreneurs to use for business networking, office space and researching as well; Mthimkhulu will also provide small business training and mentoring at the centre. The centres will both be in full operation as of January 2013.

Doreen ended the day by using the phrase: **“umntu ngumntu ngabantu”** meaning we are people because of other people and that we should embrace this!

### **A story from Nigeria**

By Ruth Tosin Oladosu

*Training for Transformation (TfT) had an everlasting impact on my life. I am the founder of an NGO called Stop the Abuse of Rights (STAR). It was founded in 2009 after I was selected as a correspondent for World Pulse Voices of our Future. Our work was basically to train children in the Prevention of Child Sexual Abuse. The training is organized for children in churches, schools and social gatherings.*

*Fortunately, I was selected as a participant for TfT 2011. The visa application process with the South African embassy in Nigeria was discouraging but I persisted, knowing that there is light at the end of the dark tunnel. It was no surprise that at the end of my first phase training I was injected with ‘transformionycin’ in Kleinmond. I was burning with a new vision, courage and never-say-die spirit, to do more. The acquired knowledge inspired me, it filled my whole existence and I was hell bent on returning to Nigeria to make a difference.*

*We worked vigorously on the registration of our organization. The former name, Stop the Abuse of Rights (STAR), was changed to Society for the Transformation of Women and Children (STWC).*

*The first change was to instill the lessons learned into our organization’s projects. It was not easy working with the needs of the people, carrying them along and listening to them before taking any action. This is new as we are used to drafting our plans and implementing it at the community level. The communities are never invited to the planning meetings. Now it is the other way round, they must participate from the beginning to the end of each project.*

*This ‘step down’ training made it easier for all the workers in our organization. Our project activities increased and improved, we began to work with women and children in 4 communities at the riverine area. I have caught the TfTvirus. I have become more and more eager to help my people to transform their existence and community.*

*TfT facilitates our organizational transformative efforts in the community where we work and we have been able to extend our work to Ibeshe, Imore and Okun riversides in Lagos. The experience makes our work more effective. Now we can say 'we are doing it how it ought to be done.'*

*During a Needs Analysis with 100 children that we have been working with on the prevention of child sexual abuse community we distributed our questionnaire in order to actually understand the needs of the children and it was found that 68% of the children wanted story books. We met with the board members and decided to start a Transformation Library. It was a miracle on July 17 when we launched the library with 100 new books and the children borrowed 88 books that day. As at August 15, we have 404 new books in the Children Transformation Library.*

*Working with women has become more exciting too. In July we had a community meeting with 150 women present! We were able to conduct a Needs Analysis with each of the woman present. It took time and the relationship became more trusting and it became easier to work with them. The meeting made us move into 3 more communities in the riverside and for the first time we believe that we are successful and our work has become result oriented and has more impact.*

*The meeting with women was the birth of our Tailoring programme. Presently, we have 5 students in the section, 3 sewing machines as well as materials. Our first group of women has attended classes for a month. The classes are free and we have been able to start our tie and dye clothing line too!*

*Transformation indeed! Oh, the cooking bag! We were introduced to the Cooking bag during the 3rd phase of our Diploma 2011 training. It is another miracle happening to us now; we began the production of our cooking early this year. TfT should be a prerequisite for any world changing venture. It is one of the paths to follow, if we are ever going to do it right in the social developmental work. It is life and world changing.*

*Nigeria shall forever have representation on TfT. TfT is what is needed to rebuild the wall of honesty that has broken down in our nation. The transformation agenda going on in Nigeria is a mock of what we learned in TfT. The true transformation must be experienced by Nigerians and this can be achieved if Nigerians create opportunities to attend such life transformative training presented by TfT.*

### **A chance to re-introduce the annual family holiday for our children**

The economic downturn of the past few years has been tough on families. For many children, the dream of an annual family holiday is just that – just a dream!

For this reason, the Grail Centre wants to make family holidays affordable again. We are offering a 15% reduction in our tariffs for the first week and last week of the summer school holidays. We also provide special offers for winter holidays. Parents are encouraged to contact us to arrange their special family holiday. For bookings, contact: 028 2713410 or [grailadm@mweb.co.za](mailto:grailadm@mweb.co.za)



### **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION**

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