

# Report from Makang'wa

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June 2012.

It is quite some time since I have sent out a Report. Life has been incredibly busy here however there are good things to report.... many good things.

**A**t the present time we are waiting for the arrival of the bus for the Prince of Peace School at Mvumi Makulu. This will be of great assistance to the operation of the new school. It has been obtained at half cost through a good friend at Rotary, Arusha. Presently children from Mvumi Mission and Makang'wa have great difficulty getting to and from school. Instead of three large busses each day there are now only two, and they are 'jam packed'! Each day there is no guarantee of transport!

**T**his year we commenced a **Micro Finance Program** here in Makang'wa Village. Presently it relates only to Grape and Tomato growers. We have 14 Grape Growers and 8 Tomato Farmers involved in the initial program. The 'loan' is set to the basic cost of the herbicides and pesticides necessary for the production of a good harvest. One of our men, under oversight, is responsible for the program. It was well received and has further strengthened our relationship with the community. This last week two growers returned their loan, and added a 20ltr bucket of tomatoes as a 'thank you'! This has now been extended to 'home improvements'! This last wet season had some exceptionally heavy rains. Many 'traditional' houses collapsed or were severely damaged. Now houses can be repaired or rebuilt with brick or cement block. It is a 'revolving fund'.

**W**e have completed the **sunflower harvest**. It is a large task to harvest and beat out the seeds manually. Then of course it must be winnowed before being stored in sacks for processing. The maize and sorghum harvest is also completed – all done by hand! In the midst of all of this activity the Grape Teams ( three vineyards) pruned the vines and are busy caring for them during for this growing season. All appears to be most promising. We have also received an additional 1,250 grape cuttings from the Grape Research Center. These include cuttings of three varieties new to our work which is very pleasing.

**P**rince of Peace English Medium Preschool and Primary School is bustling alone. This year we have 212 children enrolled. A few days ago I was at the Preschool and there children were singing, 'Row, row, row your boat gently down the stream. Merrily, merrily, merrily, merrily, life is just a dream'. I ask what 'merrily' meant. "It is a girl's name!" Well, if you live here you might understand that reply. When I gave the true meaning there were smiles all around. "Yes," I said, "It is a very happy song!" Now they were in the spirit of the song. **'Merrily, merrily, merrily, merrily.....'**



**T**hrough the generous gift of a friend of Amani we have been able to proceed with the construction of the Administration Block at the Primary School plus a safe and clean Sand Pit (roofed) for the Kindergarten and Preschool children. We are so very blessed. The Administration Building is a major project. It is designed for 'the school which will be there' in five years time. Presently we have reached Standard Three. Year by year this will grow until we reach Standard Seven, with a full complement of Staff. The approval of the design by the Regional Education Authorities was a necessary step in our application for Certification.

**S**outhport Rotary Club, south east of Brisbane, Australia has invited us to participate in a Literacy Program promoted by the Club. Kits containing writing materials plus eight English Readers are presented to teachers for use with the children and even for use in homes where there is an adult who can read and speak English. They are called Gogo Books, produced in South Africa. In South Africa 'Gogo' means Grandmother. Here it is the name of the local tribe! Every time the Southport Rotary has a Guest Speaker a Literacy Kit is presented to a teacher here in this region. The name of the Guest Speaker is printed on the Kit. We take a photograph and then, instead of the Speaker receiving a Rotary glass or mug or 'whatever' they receive a photograph of a teacher receiving the kit bearing their name. This is a very positive thing and is very welcome with teachers here.

**O**ur Amani Secretary, Dinna Menda is to be married this coming Saturday. Happily she is not leaving us! Dinna is one of the most capable and faithful people you would ever want to meet. Last late afternoon and into the night the Amani Center hosted her 'Sending Off' by her parents. This a most important pre marriage custom here, done with great ceremony. It is also the time when the family and friends of the Bride offer their gifts. I am so very proud of our Amani workers. They basically arranged and conducted the proceedings – and cooked a mountain of food. All was done through personal donations! We really do have an 'Amani family', and do they know how to be HAPPY! I am (or was) regarded as Dinna's Guardian! Her parents are poor and live at some distance away. She surprised me by the presentation of a 'cake' and a NEW SUIT. Now it is 'powder blue with a darker blue stripe running through', with a 'shine' to it. Maybe when I visit Australia and Billings I should wear it to some 'fun' occasion. Here a local man could wear it and appear to be very well dressed!

**D**o continue to support the Student Sponsorship Program. Presently two young women at the Mtumba Teacher Training College are in need of \$320.00 each to complete their fees prior to Graduation. This is an urgent need. In this region our trained local young adults are producing the best results of any of the schools! They see themselves as part of the Amani Family, an important part of the 'Amani Tree' which the Lord has planted. Please support them.

**T**his morning, June 21<sup>st</sup>, the morning after the Send Off commenced with a frantic phone call. A man who had attempted suicide was discovered in the hills just off of our land. He had attempted to cut his throat. Our vehicle rushed to get the police and then rushed the man to the hospital, about nine kilometers away. He did not survive. Then we heard that there is an elephant in the hills behind the Amani Center! It is a bull elephant and has obviously wandered a long way 'off course'. Almost every year a small group will pass to the east of us, heading towards the large Game reserve way to the south. I heard a little later today that this same elephant 'threw' a woman to one side when he surprised her as she was gathering firewood. In the bush they are very difficult to see when they are standing still. She has survived with severe bruising. I hope he does not like grapes! I expect there will be no walks around the hill until we hear that he has 'moved on'.

Thank you for persevering with this! It is long. Thank you for your prayers and wonderful support for the work here. It is LIFE for us. We do pray for you. I look forward to seeing many, many of you when in Australia and the USA later this year. It seems that I shall be in Australia late July through August.

Every blessing.

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