

Grandmother-To-Grandmother Campaign—Ottawa Area Network Newsletter #1, January 3, 2007

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INTRODUCTION

Dear Grands and friends

This first newsletter for the Ottawa Area Network is longer than subsequent ones will be since it includes an introduction to all of our groups in the region. But it provides a great overview and some good ideas for fundraising and awareness activities. Thanks to all for sharing.

Please continue to update the calendar of important dates and use the Network list to inform others so that we can support each other in our events and activities.

Best

Peggy Edwards: pedwards@thechelseagroup.net; 613-730-0378

CALENDAR of IMPORTANT DATES AND ACTIVITIES

January 18, 2007 Meeting with Stephen Lewis

- Stephen Lewis will be speaking at Carleton University on January 18, 2007. He will be able to meet with Ottawa area Grandmother groups. This will be an informal meeting open to members of all groups and lasting about an hour.
- Exact time and meeting location to be confirmed but it appears that the meeting will occur between 3:30 and 5:30 pm.

February 9, 2007 Black History Month Tribute to the Grandmothers' Movement

- Library and Archives Canada, 6:00-9:00 pm
- Black History Ottawa will host this event to raise awareness about AIDS orphans and the grandmother's role as well as the Grandmother-to Grandmother movement in the Ottawa area.

- Hoping that Ottawa area groups will have an exhibit (table).
- SLF will be represented and the film from the Toronto Granny Gathering will be shown.
- African and Caribbean networks and media will be strongly represented as well.

February 9, 2007 Goulbourn Grans Fund-Raising Dinner

- Lion's Hall in Stittsville (Main Street)
- Contact Bev or Helen for more information

February 13 Meeting with Mary Anna Beer

- Mary Anna is the SLF Grandmother to Grandmother Campaign Advisor
- She is a very motivational speaker and can answer as lot of questions about the Foundation and the situation in Africa. She has met with groups in BC and other provinces and can give us ideas for advocacy and fundraising.
- It will also be a chance to meet the other groups and do some networking.
- The meeting will be at All Saints Catholic High School Library at 7:00 pm. Address is 5115 Kanata Avenue, Kanata - the Library is on the second floor.
- All members of Ottawa Area groups are invited to attend.

March 2, 2007 Fundraising Concert

- Sponsored by The Capital Grannies (details to follow)

May 07 (date TBD) Wakefield Grannies Fundraising Event to coincide with Earth Day

June 07 (date TBD) Deep River Grannies strawberry luncheon

End of August/beginning of September 07 (date TBD) Wakefield Grannies Annual Concert

September 9, 2007 Grandparents Day March on Parliament Hill

- It is proposed that all of the groups cooperate on this one and we plan to increase the number of participants and media coverage this year.

December 1, 2007 World AIDS Day

- Check out www.giveaday.ca for a great fundraising idea

NEWS AND INFORMATION FROM SLF

- All the group reps/coordinators should be on Julie's list to receive the SLF newsletters, bulletins and updates. If you send her the individual names of those in your group who want to get the newsletters and other info from SLF, she will send them directly to the people on that list. This avoids email overload for those who do not want to get this information and you do not need to send them on. The bulletins

are very good and provide descriptions of how the projects are working in Africa from the groups themselves. The December Grassroots newsletter is also available on the SLF website.

- As of December 1, SLF has provided funds to more than 150 projects in 14 countries across sub-Saharan Africa. For more information, see the “What We Do” section of the web site. They have maintained their commitment to send at least 90% of contributions to directly support communities in Africa.
- A new series of SLF public service announcements (PSAs) will feature women, grandmothers, orphans and Canadian efforts to respond to the pandemic.

Contact at SLF is Julie Coultas--campaign@stephenlewisfoundation.org; (416) 533-9292 Ext. 234

FUNDRAISING

- One of the members of the One World Grannies put together a list of ideas culled from other groups (please let Peggy know if you want a copy sent to you)
- For other innovative ideas, visit the “Share Ideas” section of the SLF web site (www.stephenlewisfoundation.org/you_shareideas.cfm). Some really good ones described there! A book that has been recommended is "1001 Fundraising Ideas and Strategies for Charity and Other Not-for-Profit Groups in Canada" by Jim Hawkins.
- **Gigi Climbing Kili:** Congratulations to Dunrobin resident Gisele Lalonde Mansfield on her amazing fundraising efforts to date. Gisele has now been joined by greatgrandmother Liza Badham of Fitzroy Harbour on her quest to reach the summit of Kilimanjaro. This means a doubling of their goal—to raise \$38,680. To date Gisele and friends have raised \$21,022.71. Way to go girl! Visit her web site at www.gigiclimbskili.com. Gisele and Liza were featured recently in an article by Don Butler in the *Ottawa Citizen* (see www.canada.com/ottawacitizen/news/city/story.html?id=2ade48d6-2d60-4c59-a995-bde8d7eee80e)
- Congratulations and thanks to all those who helped to make the Green Door event such a success. At last count, the tally of funds included \$2590 ticket sales, \$775 for the Silent Auction and \$528 for the bar—for a grand total of \$3893. Ron Farmer, owner of the Green Door donated all food and the venue—lets show our thanks by supporting his restaurant year round!

AWARENESS AND ADVOCACY (and sometimes fundraising as well)

- RED (products) is a consumer advocacy idea created by Bono and Bobby Shriver to raise awareness and money for The AIDS Global Fund. A percentage of each RED

product sold helps women and children affected by HIV/AIDS in Africa by helping to provide antiretroviral drugs. Products include the red IPOD, converse shoes, a new line of GAP clothes and a Motorola cell phone (all great gifts for teens and young adults!!) Visit www.joinred.com/manifesto.asp for a full explanation and click on products to learn more specifics.

- The morning after the CBC aired “Stephen Lewis: The Man Who Couldn’t Sleep” on The Nature of Things with David Suzuki, Julie received over 40 messages from women looking to join Granny groups across Canada. Copies of the program are available for sale but it is expensive so we are hoping one group may get it and share with others... Any volunteers? Alternatively some people were going to tape a re-run of the show. Please let others know if you did this and have a copy.
- Largely due to the influence of Stephen Lewis (who was supported by many Canadian grandmother petitions), The UN has announced the creation of a new, independent, international agency for women. This could be an unparalleled step forward in the march against the pandemic and human rights violations against women provided that it is given the leadership and resources necessary to perform the job. Stay tuned and keep your voices strong.
- On World AIDS day the Canadian government announced its funding package for HIV/AIDS. Lots of good stuff there (e.g., prevention and a focus on women) but alas no specific mention of older caregivers (grandmothers) and their specific need for support as well as a recognition of their role. For more information, visit www.acdicida.gc.ca/CIDAWEB/acdicida.nsf/En/MIC-12184813-J7Q
- Thanks to Judy Cutler (a member of the One World Grannies) and Michelle Taylor, CARP, Canada's Association for the Fifty-Plus, accepted an article written by Peggy on the Granny movement and have posted it on their web site. Check it out at <http://www.carp.ca>. CARP has more than 400,000 members and their web site gets some 350,000 unique visits per month.
- Don’t forget to share the “Toronto statement” from the Gathering. It is a powerful document. As reported by one of the project leaders in Malawi “We translated the Toronto Statement in our local language and are planning to get both versions publicized through the press and directly sent to Heads of missions and responsible government departments. A week after the Gathering which was on Malawi Television and National radio, the President arranged to provide food parcels and other items to the grandparents in the southern part of the country. The Toronto Statement has since been received by the Minister responsible for Women and Child Development and we do not know what may happen after that. I hope it will be taken further to the next sitting of Parliament”.

NETWORKING

- **Kiswahili Beds Without Breakfast (BWOB)** is an exciting way to network and raise funds. Hosts (any member of a granny group) offer a bed (maximum of three nights but you choose) and self serve tea or coffee and travellers (any member of a granny group and their companion) make a per diem donation rate based on about 1/3 motel or B&B rate to the SLF which is forwarded by the host granny group. Visit www.gggg.ca for more information. Register with Jean Robertson at intheworks@rogers.com. This is a win-win-win. BWOB will raise money for the SLF year after year. We'll get to know other grannies nation-wide. We'll be able to secure very reasonable rates on accommodation in many cities, towns and rural areas; thereby making travel more affordable and therefore more available to ourselves.
- The Grandmothers Campaign Listserv created by Mary Partridge provides a cyber space for sharing ideas all across the country (and ultimately around the world). Any member of any group can join so please let your members know about it. To become a member of the listserv:

Send an email to Mary Partridge at: marypartridge@rogers.com and indicate "Subscribe to listserv" in the subject line. In the body of the email include your name, your email address (i.e., the one you want to add to the listserv), the Grandmothers' group you belong to, your city and a contact telephone number. Once she gets your Mary will send you an invitation and instructions for joining the group by email.
- The Deep River Grannies have a new web site (www.drgrannies.ca) and are willing to use it to post ongoing information for the area network. Contact Gail Open for more information. The Wakefield Grannies web site also contains a lot of useful information (see www.thegrannies.org)

ABOUT THE OTTAWA AREA GROUPS

Capital Grannies for Grannies

The Capital Grannies are a group of 15 Ottawa grandmothers. We became part of the Stephen Lewis Foundation's Grandmothers for Grandmothers initiative in spring 2006, and a few of us also attended the Grandmothers Gathering meeting of grandmothers in Toronto in August. We meet monthly in members' homes.

The purpose of our group is threefold:

- to raise funds for African grandmothers raising their grandchildren and other orphaned children
- to advocate for more assistance for these grandmothers
- to raise awareness of AIDS, particularly as it affects people in Africa.

To achieve these goals, we

- held two garage sales, enabling us to forward \$2,000 to the SLF,
- participated in a demonstration on Parliament Hill on Grandparents' Day,
- were involved in awareness-raising at the One World film festival in October 2006,
- participated in the dinner at the Green Door on November 27, 2006,
- are organizing an informal meeting with Stephen Lewis in January 2007, in cooperation with other Ottawa-area grandmothers groups,
- are planning a fundraising concert on March 2, 2007 (details to follow),
- have provided speakers to local community groups to share information about the grandmothers campaign, and
- we are making cards to sell to raise both awareness of and money for the grandmothers in Africa.

We look forward to continuing to work independently and in cooperation with other Granny groups to support grandmothers in Africa who have become the main caregivers of children orphaned by AIDS.

Contacts for the Capital Grannies:

Sue Bryant, 613 235-5023; ksuebryant@rogers.com

Jenny Wilson, 613-613 730-4818; jawilson@magma.ca

Group email: capitalgrannies@yahoo.com

Grands and Friends

Twelve members of Grands & Friends met on Tuesday, November 14 for a pot luck dinner and meeting. It was agreed that we would use cards designed by Stephanie Brousseau as a fundraiser for the Stephen Lewis Foundation for at least the months of November and December. These cards indicate that "in lieu of a gift a donation has been made in your name to the Stephen Lewis Foundation". We will meet again in early February. Many members participated in the Green Door Restaurant Dinner. We also look forward to Mary Anna Beers visit in February and her input regarding how to fundraise and raise awareness.

Contact for Grands and Friends

Patti Koeslag, 613-271-4254 ext. 224 (W); koeslags@sympatico.ca

Grassroots Grannies

This new group started with a number of old friends who have been cycling together for years. When they heard about the situation of grandmothers and orphans in Africa they decided to make this their cause. Brenda Rooney attended their first meeting to give them some suggestions on getting started.

The group includes many wonderful gardeners and they will have a fund raiser in the Spring with a garden tour (in Kanata) and plant sale. More details will follow from their co-ordinator.

Contact for Grassroots Grannies
Sue Cousineau 819-827-1244; suecousi@magma.ca

One World Grannies (Ottawa)

We are a newly formed group with 24 members who are all Ottawa residents. Our founding members –Mary Jane Sterne and Peggy Edwards-- attended the Granny Gathering hosted by the Stephen Lewis Foundation in Toronto in August 2006 and were inspired to start a group back home. We meet bi-monthly in members' homes and communicate primarily by email.

The purpose of our group is to:

- raise funds for African grandmothers caring for their grandchildren and other orphaned and vulnerable children
- advocate for more assistance for these grandmothers and for increased support for people infected and affected by HIV/AIDS in Africa
- raise awareness about the situation in Africa, particularly as it concerns grandmothers, women and children
- spread the word about the Grandmother-to-Grandmother campaign and encourage the formation of other groups, joint networking and fund-raising.

Activities:

- We just had our second meeting this week, which featured Wendy Lawrence--a guest speaker with many years experience working with CIDA in African development and gender equity. We also talked about what fund raising activities we want to take on.
- To date, we have focussed on supporting the activities of other groups. We are now pursuing a couple of fund-raising ideas.
- In terms of awareness, some of our members have written and published an article in 55-Plus magazine, and an extensive article on the web site of the Canadian Association of Retired Persons.

Contacts One World Grannies:
Peggy Edwards 613 730-0378; pedwards@thechelseagroup.net
Mary Jane Sterne 613 738-2194; mjsterne@rogers.com

Northwestern Grannies (Ottawa)

The Northwestern Grannies have some 20 members from their church although they are open to new members who are not affiliated with the church. They sponsored a reading of

the Christmas Carol by John Hueston to raise funds. They are working on raising awareness and have signed petitions related to getting antiretroviral drugs to Africa and to nominating Stephen Lewis for the Nobel peace prize.

Interestingly, a young church member—Madeline age 8—held a bikathon last summer with friends and raised \$500 for the SLF Granny program. She plans to do it again this year. Congratulations Madeline!

Contact:

Marion Reid 613-722-0274; mkreid@magma.ca

Unitarian Go Go Grannies

Our group is the Unitarian Go Go Grannies and we are located at the First Unitarian Church of Ottawa at 30 Cleary Avenue, Ottawa. The group was started by five church members and two women from the community who wished to join us. Now there are a total of 15 members.

We are just starting up but we wish to both fund raise for the SLF and also contact African grannies through the SLF.

We are very open and receptive to new members who are not affiliated or linked to the church in any way. The next meeting of our group is January 11th at 12.00 noon at First Unitarian.

We are discussing fundraising through pie making at First Unitarian in the Fall 07, which has been a huge success in purchasing a Steinway for our Music program.

Contact: Pat Hill 613-569-0369; craibhill@rogers.com

Lanark County Grannies

Lanark County Grannies is a small, loosely-knit group of Grannies and friends. Our goal is primarily to raise awareness about the Grannies among our family, friends and community. While Perth and environs are at the centre, the group encompasses those with connections to Lanark County who may not be able to attend meetings or be physically active – working or volunteering abroad or living elsewhere. Therefore, we have both an actual group that meets every six weeks or so, and a virtual group

Activities:

- Inaugural meeting August 25, 2006 Established real and virtual groups
- Sept 25 – May Chazan - guest speaker for a “Show and Tell” about her work with women’s groups and her research with HIV/AIDS and Grannies in South Africa. Showed video from SLF.

- Created small stocking stuffer bookmarks (200) and donation cards (\$1 or 6 for \$5) promoting the Granny movement.
- Nov 23 – Our first public fund raising and awareness activity was a film night sponsored by our local Library. We spoke before the film and sold our stocking stuffer bookmarks (created by one of our very artistic members) and donation cards, as well as suggesting people make donations to SLF as gifts in someone's name for Christmas and birthdays.
- To have the Great Grannies Garage sale in the spring as a major fund raiser.
- Maintain contact with other area groups to promote regional or national initiatives. We love the BWB idea and have encouraged visitors to the Perth area to contact us through the Listserv.

LC Grannies welcome new members

Contacts for the Lanark Grannies:

Sharon Swanson 613 267 4763 ; sharons@superaje.com

Annie Creighton (Virtual coordinator) ttgakentcreighton@hotmail.com

Deep River Grannies

Our Deep River Grannies group came into existence this past April 2006, when four of us got together after hearing of the Grandmothers to Grandmothers campaign. We are located in Deep River, beside the beautiful Ottawa River, about 2 hours drive west of Ottawa.

Activities

We held our first fundraiser, a strawberry luncheon, in June, and raised \$3000 for the Foundation. It was a lot of fun both for us and reportedly, for the people who attended.

During the strawberry luncheon project, many people told us they would like to be involved in our efforts, so in September we had an information/organizing meeting, and our numbers have now increased to around 30 people. We have two main objectives in our work - to raise awareness and to raise money.

Since September we have largely focused on awareness. We have prepared displays and taken them to several events here in Deep River and also to the Film Conference in Ottawa. As a result of the contacts made at these events, a number of people in the surrounding communities of Petawawa, Pembroke and Westmeath have expressed an interest in starting granny groups and would like us to come and talk with them about it.

In terms of fund raising, this past weekend we had a booth at the local Rotary Club craft fair and made \$1200 selling Grannybirds and other things we had made. In addition, The

Deep River Community Church also donated around \$650 to the Foundation, through us - their 10% the proceeds of their annual Ten Thousand Villages craft sale.

We are working on several other plans for the future. Possibilities include a Musica Viva concert here in the spring, another strawberry luncheon in June, a sponsored portion of the annual Deep River Cross-river swim in August, and my favourite a concert of African music, and dance scheduled for the spring of 2008 We have already lined up a couple of groups to be involved and the local music people are very enthusiastic- maybe we could even turn it into a weekend Africa-fest. Anyone interested?

The Deep River grannies have a new web site and are willing to post information from other groups. Check it out at www.drgrannies.ca

Contact for Deep River Grannies
Gail Orpen 1-613-584-9404; colin.orpen@sympatico.ca
Web site: www.drgrannies.ca

Mississippi Grannies

There are 10 members in our group which was formed out of our Ladies Relaxed Reading Group and inspired by International Aids conference in Toronto.

Activities:

- Registered with the Stephen Lewis Foundation
- Have screened their Grandmothers Gathering video as a group.
- Fundraising bake sale Dec. 2nd at Mill St. Gallery- 79 Mill St. Almonte- 10:30-4pm (over 30 bakers).

New members welcome

Contacts:

Pat Vetter 613-256-2055; pfvetter@magma.ca
Lesley Todd 613-256-4666; ladylesley60@hotmail.com

Wakefield Grannies 1

On a visit to Quebec in 2004, Rose Letwaba, a South African nurse, spoke about her work to a small audience in the Wakefield United Church. In her role at the health clinic in Alexandra Township on the outskirts of Johannesburg, Rose saw a whole generation of South Africans lost to AIDS, and grieving mothers left to carry the burden of raising their grandchildren to be healthy, educated and socially responsible adults. While in Wakefield, Rose described a group of 40 such grannies that were meeting at her clinic for sewing classes, gardening and moral support.

Spontaneously Norma Geggie brought together a group of 11 local women--Carol Faulkner, Linda Gorke, Annick Hardie, Nicole Féraud-Lewis, Barbara Layer, Margo

Lemelin, Cordula Podehl, Marilee Rhody, Brenda Rooney and Micheline Sabourin-- to help provide financial and emotional support to Rose's group. The Wakefield Grannies have since been joined by three groups of young people in nearby areas and the Wakefield Grannies, Chapter Two who fundraise for a cause that also has become theirs.

In March 2006, when the Stephen Lewis Foundation launched its Grandmothers to Grandmothers Campaign, the Wakefield Grannies were thrilled that so many more women could participate in helping grandmothers all over Africa. They strongly support the Stephen Lewis Foundation Campaign and are pleased to be a part of it.

Activities

We are committed to organize two main fundraising events a year. This year we will have one in May to coincide with Earth Day and our annual concert at the end of August/beginning of September 07. The date is not set yet. We participate in many other mini-fundraising events such as selling items at various events (Wakefield Grannies cards, donated articles, food stuff, perennial plants), we are supported by many local businesses, community groups and individuals young and old.

Besides our main events, we participate in many other mini-fundraising events such as selling items at various venues (Wakefield Grannies cards, donated articles, food stuff, perennial plants). Many local businesses, community groups and individuals young and old support us.

Some tangible examples are as follows:

- A quilting group offered us their lovely creations and together with the Grannies organized a very successful home sale by invitation at one of the Grannies' home.
- We printed two types of cards for resale.
- On an ongoing basis, we buy wholesale, keep frozen and resell samosas, meat pies and cookies.
- In the fall, we dug up and divided perennial plants and with the Wakefield Grannies 2, sold them at the farmer's market in Wakefield
- With the Wakefield Grannies 2, we collected and resold used CDs

We maintain an Internet site and respond to all information requests. The information given is meant as a first-level orientation to help people get started. It can be re-routing them to the SLF or the Ottawa network, personal encouragement and information on starting a group or on Wakefield Grannies' activities. The two most frequent types of information requests are on starting a Granny group (from all over the country but that is lessening as regional groups are strengthening) and request for our Outreach committee to go do a presentation.

Five Grannies in our group are involved in the Outreach Committee. They have received over fifteen requests for public speaking, and have given approximately 10 presentations,

in addition to a workshop at the SLF conference in August. They also have organized a public meeting with The African Grannies who visited Wakefield after the conference.

“We are always giving careful thought to publicity and communication with the community and public at large, which has resulted in solid support for the Wakefield Grannies and the African Grandmother/children plight as well. We think of publicity as a precious tool,” said Brenda Rooney, one of the Grannies responsible for communication.

The generous and spontaneous responses from the community are illustrated by the following:

- A local coffee house donated 10% of a month’s coffee sale revenue and has offered their space for large meeting
- Local children have baked and sold cookies for us, asked for donations in lieu of presents at birthday parties, have built and sold bird houses, have created and sold jewelry etc.
- A local bookstore has donated 10% of a day’s sale revenue, organized a children’s reading with one of the Grannies and donated some CDs
- A local graphic artist has donated her time to create brochure and posters for the Grannies
- A local theatre group has organized a play-reading at a local bar which has offered the venue free of charge
- A local Gift Shop has created a Granny bracelet and a percentage of the sale goes to the Wakefield Grannies
- Several businesses have funded advertisement in our local paper for various events
- A local nursery school has offered to share with us the funds they raise towards their operation
- The technological firm PMC-Sierra donated a laptop for use by the Outreach Committee

Contacts for the Wakefield Grannies 1:

Nicole Féraud –Lewis 819-459-2438; nifle@sympatico.ca

Brenda Rooney (819) 456-3522; brenda@rooneyproductions.com

mail@thegrannies.org "Kindly write Wakefield Grannies in the Subject Box"

Web site: www.thegrannies.org

Wakefield Grannies 2

The active grannies in Wakefield have spawned a second group. As described above, they cooperate on activities with the original group as well as undertaking activities on their own. They are open to new members from the area.

Contact for the Wakefield Grannies 2:

Ilse Turnsen: 819-459-3453; ilse.turnsen <ilseturnsen@yahoo.ca>

Goulbourn Grans (Stittsville)

In October 2006, 15 enthusiastic grans and one very enthusiastic grandfather met to form a group in the Goulbourn/Kanata area. Bev Coote and her husband Dick were behind the idea to form a group and continue to play a lead role.

After a lively discussion it was decided to hold a fundraiser on February 9 at the Lion's Hall in Stittsville (Main Street). It will be a dinner with dishes supplied a variety of local restaurants. There will be entertainment (African music) and a silent auction. Contact Bev or Helen for more information.

The group is also planning to contact local schools to work on raising awareness. They are open to new members.

Contacts for Goulbourn Grans

Bev Coote 613-838-2900; dcoote@compmore.net

Helen MacFarlane 613-836-7802; helenmac@cyberus.ca

Amazing Grannies (Morrisburg)

This group has taken the approach of running some innovative fundraising events before formalizing their membership. One successful event (raised over \$5000) was held in November at the legion hall. Twenty-six people each hosted a unique table for tea and goodies for 7 friends who each paid \$15.00 to attend. Entertainment was provided including skits (with men in drag), a silent auction and a performance by Mario Pronovost who has written an original song for the SLF Grannies movement (see box below). Gail will gladly share instructions on organizing this easy and inexpensive type of event. Other ideas include a "literal fashion show"; for example, a box pleated skirt is made from boxes and worn by a male model, and a vintage fashion show.

Contact:

Gail McCooye 613-543-0945 gail.mccooye@sympatico.ca

Mario Pronovost is a talented local musician who has written and recorded a special song entitled "Africa's My Home" dedicated to the SLF Grandmother's Campaign. He is available to perform at fundraisers and the CD is available for sale. Go to www.productionstabouret.com/flash_en/index.htm for a preview. You can reach Mario at studio@mariopronovost.com; 613-652-2805.

A LETTER FROM NORMA

Norma Geggie from the Wakefield Grannies wrote the following letter (abridged here) to some of the kids who continue to support their group.

Hello Marley and Emma, James and Sam,

I had a good conversation with Rose today. She told me that 25 of the gogos had been on a special 24-hour outing--a sort of respite. They went to a resort in the mountains, surrounded by trees, and they were able to hear the birds singing--a real change from the crowded conditions in which they live. They had hoped that more could go, but some had health problems etc. Anyhow, Rose said they couldn't stop singing. They remarked that now they knew what heaven was like--they had a bed to themselves, had meals prepared for them, and were in a different world.

Also, this coming week, they are finally going shopping for clothes for the children for their anticipated Christmas outings. It seems that some organisations in Johannesburg arrange Christmas parties for the kids from Alex, and they usually don't have any clothes to wear. I think they take tremendous care of their clothes, their school uniforms always look so neat, and I think they must change out of them as soon as they get home from school.

I was calling Rose especially to remind her that a couple of women from Alberta who contacted us are going to be delivering suitcases to her next weekend. We got busy and arranged for about 70 scarves for the gogos to be delivered to them. We then asked them if they would shop for colouring books, pencils, paper, and all sorts of things for 200 kids and we would send them money. They, however, decided that they would do the shopping and cover the costs themselves amongst their friends. They are taking two separate suitcases, which they will leave with Rose. She will be delivering these to Alex on Dec. 8 when she has a gathering of them all --no doubt out under the trees where they usually gather--so we will try to imagine what that occasion will be like.

We hope you are all doing well.

With love from Norma and the grannies.