



**SUITCASES for AFRICA**

**News Letter**

*Spring/Summer 2011*



## Our Renewed Focus on Hunger

### Table of Contents

Page 2-4

.....Emergency Relief  
Food arrives to  
ease hunger crisis

Page 5....

Hunger`s Toll

Page 6, 7

. ....Three new  
Feeding Programs  
Open

Page 8, 9

..... Launching  
``The Empty Bowl  
Campaign``

Pages 10, 11

... The story of  
Isabella`s Well

Page 12

....Mwirembe Well  
Completed

Pages 13

.....St Joseph`s Home  
Medical Fund

Page 14-23

... .Many Canadians  
to Thank!

Page 24 .....

HOW YOU CAN HELP

## As Food Prices Soar Worldwide



**New Projects Bring New Hope.  
Your Donations at Work!**

## Breaking News!

### EMERGENCY FOOD RELIEF for EMALINDI & SHANYINYA

At this moment in time we are receiving devastating reports from some of our communities of starvation as a result of the soaring cost of food world wide. Costs have tripled within weeks. Coupled with a long dry spell and an ensuing failed crop, hunger is impacting hard on the people we assist. This month Fr. Paul buried some of his parishioners who starved to death and fears many more. He also witnessed the quarrel of two brothers over a 2 kg. bag of cornmeal which ended in the death of one of them. We have wired emergency food funds for 52 households(approx. 400 people) in Emalindi. We also wired funds for Shanyinya following reports from David that another 62 households there were facing imminent starvation. A total of over 1,000 people will be sustained in this crisis. Long term we will focus on setting up more permanent solutions for food sustainability projects such as more Poultry Projects. Our administrator David has been hard at work delivering the 6&1/2 tons of maize and beans for distribution. The story is told in more photos on our website. Visit [www.suitcasesforafrica.com](http://www.suitcasesforafrica.com)



Arrival of a truck carrying maize and beans for hunger victims in Shanyinya.

Following are a few photos of the distribution.



## The Faces of Hunger



This grandmother could not believe someone so far away in Canada cared enough to feed her. She sends her thanks to all.



This elderly man had not eaten for a week when the relief food arrived.



This man has survived for the last 3 months on unripe wild fruit as his sole diet.



## SFA Food Relief brings Respite from Hunger



The deacon's wife helps distribute relief food so families can prepare "githeri", a Kenyan staple made of a mixture of maize and beans.



These three orphans head home with their week's supply of relief food.

# Focus on Hunger as Food Prices Soar Worldwide



According to the United Nations 2010 statistics, Sub Saharan Africa has the highest prevalence of hunger. One in three are malnourished and hungry. It has certainly been the experience of our teams working in poor rural communities in western Kenya .We work with those who are often not guaranteed to have one meal a day. People who are chronically hungry do not have the energy they need to live active lives. This makes it hard to study, work or fight off diseases and opportunistic infections. Hunger is particularly harmful for women and children.

Malnourished children do not develop physically healthy bodies and mentally they develop more slowly. Hungry mothers often give birth to weak babies who are at great risk for death and disability. We have learned from health co-ordinator Sr. Agnes Khati of the high incidence of complications during delivery for these malnourished mothers. The many resulting disabled children are then placed in overcrowded and underfunded institutions. It is a downward spiral of cascading crises. It is for this reason SFA very often begins work in a new community with the setting up of a feeding program for orphans and vulnerable children and their community caregivers. Once the nutritional boost is in place we try to fund a self sustaining project to bring in food and funds for their future. In the past these projects have included poultry projects, farming plots and a woman's sewing co operative. Please see back issues on our website at [suitcasesforafrica.com](http://suitcasesforafrica.com)

In this issue we will introduce our three new community feeding programs and our plan to assist St Joseph's Home for Disabled Children in Malava.



## Our Three New Feeding Programs Up & Running!

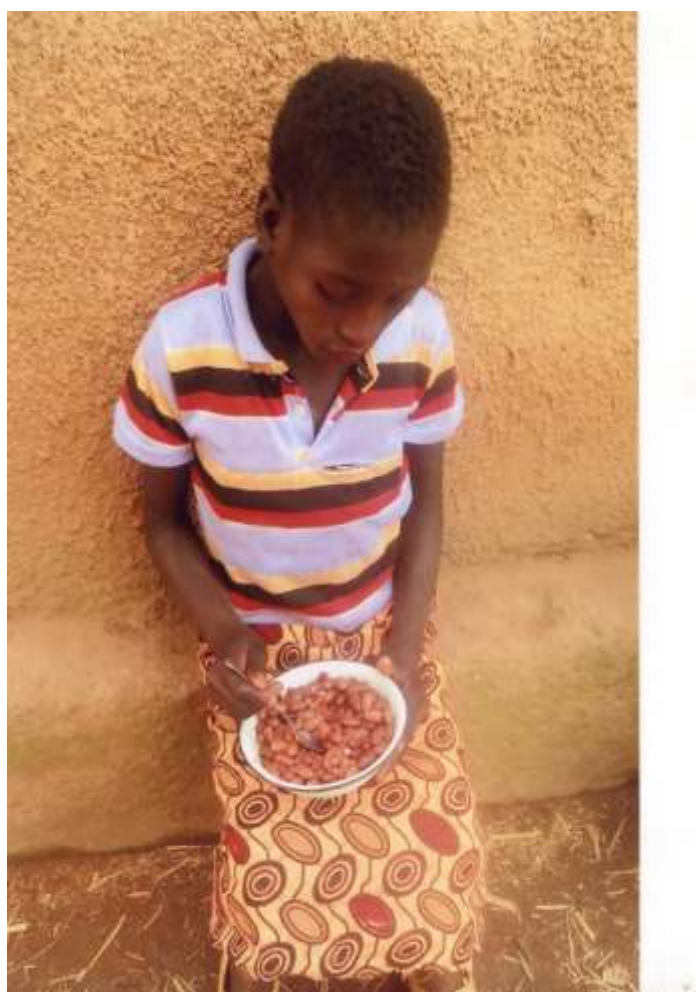


### Chevoso , Shamberere & Shitochi Communities

There is a new sense of hope as SFA Feeding Programs began operating here in January. Monthly Support Days lift their spirits and ease their hunger. Our Administrator Susan and Sr. Agnes Khati set up the distribution of food staples such as flour, maize, and beans. Each community then celebrates together with songs and moral support for each other. A special treat of bread and juice is enjoyed by all. At this event the group receives health and nutrition advice. All children and their caregivers also receive deworming medications to combat illness by parasites often contracted from contaminated drinking water.

*“If we are going to stop wars on this earth we are going to have to make war on hunger our number one priority”*

David W. Brooks  
Member of the Presidential Commission on World Hunger



Introducing  
**Peter Paul Aluka,**  
A student studying Disaster Management, twenty three year old Paul, is now working with SFA as a part time assistant to Sr. Agnes and Susan in the running of our new educational sponsorship program for children. He helps with the school visits, purchases food & serves the nutritious daily meal for the children. Paul also does field work associated with our three new feeding programs. In the photo above Paul serves fresh fruit to these young children after a main meal of beans.



Suitcases for Africa is Launching the .....

# "EMPTY BOWL CAMPAIGN"



We have two goals

- Emergency Food Relief
- Long Term Food Sustainability

Thank you for joining us in the fight against hunger!



# Upcoming Event

## SUITCASES FOR AFRICA

*Presents its 1<sup>st</sup> annual*

### Empty Bowls Shopping Event

Come help raise funds for food to feed the many starving children that Suitcases For Africa fights to save.

You shop and the children have a chance to thrive.

A raffle will be held with great items to be won.

We will also be accepting donations of English story books (elementary school age) and empty bottles for our bottle drive.  
No donation is too small.

WHEN: Saturday May 28<sup>th</sup> 2011, 11am to 4pm

WHERE: St George's Church, 23 Perrault Avenue  
Ste-Anne-de-Bellevue, H9X 2C6

For more information feel free to contact  
TaraLee at (514) 505-0942  
or email  
tl.gooding@yahoo.ca

# The Story of Isabella's Well

Isabella Shisiliboti's story is one of sadness to all of us at SFA. It is a very typical story of the great tragedy now unfolding across sub Saharan Africa due to the AIDS Pandemic. SFA honours her memory with a new well in Shanyinya.



We met ten year old Isabella last summer on our visits to Mukumu Children's Home. Isabella had been abandoned at the hospital nearby due to the high cost of her medical care and the graveness of her illness. It was impossible for her grandmother to manage. Isabella's mother and father both died in quick succession when she was two years old, followed by the loss of her brother. The virus had been transmitted to all three

siblings. Grace and the children at Mukumu Home became her family in the last few months of her life. Though only given a week to live at that point in time, with care, and medication, her health improved. She became a much loved part of their lives. At the time, the children were falling ill with cholera and typhus due to an unclean water source. Thanks to funds raised by St. Edmund & St. Georges churches to assist us, the Mukumu /Likhule Well was completed to improve that situation. Unfortunately, Isabella fell ill before the well's completion and in her weakened state was unable to recover. She passed away in early January, 2011.

We hoped to build a well to honor the life of this brave little girl. Fortunately a donor came forward. We are very grateful to the employees of **AIR CANADA VACATIONS Co.** Through their efforts this well is now a reality. David Eshihuula oversaw the work and chose the location. The well is located in Shanyinya.

*In David's words..." It is a stone's throw away from Isabella's final resting place. It will impact the community here greatly as they know the great difficulties Isabella and her family lived". Isabella's grandmother and her one remaining brother are living there still. It is called Isabella's Well and all who draw water there will be asked to say a prayer in memory of Isabella and all children who suffer from the hardship of AIDS. "*



## The Shanyinya Community Celebrates the Gift of Water as Isabella's Well Opens.



Air Canada Vacations has changed the lives of the 447 people who will benefit from this well.

## Thank-you Air Canada Vacations !

*“Never doubt a small group of thoughtful  
committed people can change the world.  
Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has”*

**Margaret Mead**

## Mwirembe Well

**Joy in Emalindi. It is now Completed and Operational.**



Two young boys show their delight as they enjoy their first taste of clean water from the new well. Fr. Paul sends his heart-felt thanks in the letter below. Many thanks to the anonymous donor company who made this well possible.

\*New Article by David Eshihuula entitled: The Well Diggers-You Make it Happen  
David introduces the men and their work. To read it please visit  
[www.suitcasesforafrica.com](http://www.suitcasesforafrica.com) click on: DAVID'S CORNER

*" I hereby thank-you for your continuous and wonderful link with Emalindi Community. You have a wonderful love and compassion for the suffering in this parish which has thus led you to help us have clean water. We have won the battle for safe drinking water! Thank you and may God bless you abundantly"*

*Yours Faithfully,*

*Fr. Paul Ndasiganwa Shakimi.*



## St. Joseph's Home for Disabled Children



The children living in this home are suffering from a wide range of disabilities such as epilepsy, paralysis and intellectual handicaps. The staff members are caring and gentle with these children but living conditions are very difficult. On the left Sr. Josephata is seen feeding the children in her "dining room" which is a circle of benches under a tree. Our driver John pitches in to help feed a young girl. Many need assistance. There is great need here.

As we left our visit with the children last July they were preparing for their afternoon nap on the grass outdoors ... much more preferable to sleeping in the hot tin shacks of the boys and the broken beds of the girls.

In January 2011, thanks to the generosity of Alveda Pharma in Toronto, we began funding some much needed medications to treat epilepsy and other medications for the coming year. The fund will also allow for the purchase over time, of much needed equipment for both occupational and physiotherapy, learning materials, and wheelchairs.

**THANK YOU ALVEDA PHARMA**



## How Canadians are Helping in their Own Way

SFA would not be able to realise the wonderful projects taking place without the help of many Canadians who are finding ways to get involved. We thank them for sharing their ideas and their time and talents in many simple and creative ways. We are proud to introduce some of them to you today on the following pages. THANK YOU!

### Thank you to Marc Belair & Craig Domanski of Valacta, in Ste. Anne de Bellevue

Many thanks go out to this great local company in Ste. Anne de Bellevue who came to our rescue with the offer of free storage space in their warehouse. Over the last three years we have been able to accumulate library books, clothes, and medical supplies destined for our Kenyan projects. It also allows us space to sort and pack.





## St Edmund School Holds Grey Cup Fundraiser



Many thanks go out to St. Edmund School for hosting a Grey Cup Fundraiser recently to support both The Montreal Children's Hospital and Suitcases for Africa. Special thanks to student Matthew Soles and his Dad former Alouette player Mike Soles and his wife Catherine for choosing SFA as one of the beneficiaries. The event was a three time winner as the school's students enjoyed the cup visit, Canadian children at the MCH benefitted and orphans in Kenya were assisted by this wonderful event which raised \$300.00 for each charity.

## An Enjoyable Evening at the Family Pasta Supper



We would like thank all who came out to join us for our first Family Pasta Supper. We enjoyed the chance to visit with all of you and share Emanuela's delicious Pasta al Forno! We also thank all those who donated the many great items in our silent auction and the volunteers who cooked, baked, washed dishes and served. Our thanks go to the Saputo Family for the donation of cheese and to Old Orchard Pub in Pointe Claire Village for their assistance. Special thanks to Beaurepaire United Church for the use of their hall and kitchen for the occasion. Best news of all....the event raised over \$3,000.00 to help fund our projects in 2011.

## *The Kenyan Bedcover Winner !*

Charlotte Marcella, on the right, was pleased to present Ingrid Oner with her beautiful bed cover that was hand made in Kenya by the women in our Sewing Project. Ingrid took part in our contest and was thrilled to accept her beautiful prize!

*Congratulations Ingrid!*





## Herzlihah Students Donate School Supplies



"I found out about the Suitcases for Africa program when I was in grade 7 and then I didn't do anything with it again. This year I remembered about the program and I thought it would be great to get students from grade 7 to learn about what is going on in Africa and what better way to do it then through Suitcases for Africa.

I got the two homerooms together in the library at my school and Wendy Buchanan came and told the students all about what they do. The students were amazed at all the projects that they had going and wanted to get involved immediately. I decided along with the teachers for that grade that the students would take a ziploc bag and fill it up with any school supplies they had to send to kids in Africa. Wendy told the students that the kids in Africa love getting letters and really love stickers. When the students brought me their Ziploc bags, I was amazed at how much stuff they brought in and was so proud of them!! I really hope the kids in Africa enjoy the stuff from the kids all the way in Canada and I am so thankful that Wendy was able to do this with my school!!"

by Stephanie Marni

## Wyman United Church, Hudson

*Many thanks go out to all those who organized and supported the Lenten Lunch held at this beautiful 100 yr. old church in Hudson. The event raised \$406.00 in funds (a record breaker for Wyman!) to help SFA projects. These much appreciated funds will go toward increasing food sustainability projects in the battle against hunger this year. Following a talk by Darlene Anderson during the service, everyone stayed and enjoyed homemade soup and dessert. Many thanks go out to the wonderful cooks and also for the good company of all who attended.*

### Lenten Lunch



## The Comfort Teddies Are Back!

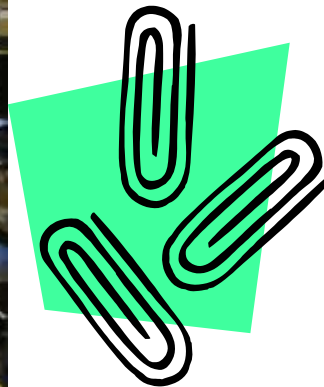
Many thanks to Laure & Friends once again for knitting a new contingent of loveable bears who will soon make their journey to Kenya to meet a new set of orphans who will love them so much. Here are the women, pictured below, busy working on their sewing machines as they wintered in Florida. The bears come in a little drawstring bag making it even more exciting for the children as they open them up to see what is inside.





## Focus on A Great Local Business Partner

In 2006 Mike Simpson opened The Business Box - a small print shop in the heart of Beaurepaire Village. Since that time the business has grown significantly yet remains in the small office at 442 Beaconsfield Boulevard in Beaurepaire. Businesses come to print their business cards, flyers, posters and other promotional materials. Local artists come to make cards from their art work. The Business Box specializes in colour as well as black and white Xerox copies, while providing services such as mailbox rentals, a FedEx counter and fax services. Quality work and friendly customer service keeps people coming back. The Business Box looks forward to helping everyone with their business *needs*.

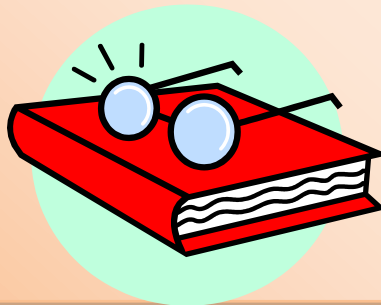


Pictured above is the owner of the Business Box Mike Simpson along with employee Kelly Fraser.

We at SUITCASES FOR AFRICA would like to acknowledge the outstanding personal service we have received over the years each time we have presented Mike & Kelly with yet another rush job. Their expertise and knowledge has been invaluable to us. Their advice resulted in our fabulous calendars, publicity flyers, various tickets & posters and much, much, more. It is a treat to know our questions will be addressed and solutions found. Thank you Mike & Kelly - we value our partnership and appreciate the care & attention you always provide to us.

## "Thank you to "Clinique Oeil pour Oeil"

We would like to thank optometrist Lynn Landry and her colleagues at the clinic for their thoughtfulness and dedication. They have been asking their clients purchasing new glasses if they would like to donate their old glasses to help Kenyan's who may need glasses they could never hope to afford. Lynn and her team have been working on their coffee breaks and lunch hours to clean, repair and write the prescription for the lenses on each pair. It will help match them to those who will receive them. We will take them with us this summer knowing they will be a very welcome gift of better sight for those so fortunate to receive them.



*"Yesterday is gone. Tomorrow has not come.  
We only have Today....Let us begin."*

*Mother Teresa*

## 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Christmas Park Comedy Night

This important fundraiser was the 4th annual event hosted by Christmas Park School Parent Committee for Suitcases for Africa.

**Over the previous 3 years these comedy nights have raised over \$5,000 for our projects in Kenya.** The school has a special connection to SFA as one of the earliest supporters of our educational support programs for orphans. As the school once attended by the 3 sons of the late Dr. Ebi Kimanani & Dr. Tim Johns, they have a heart-felt connection. We thank them for their continuous support.

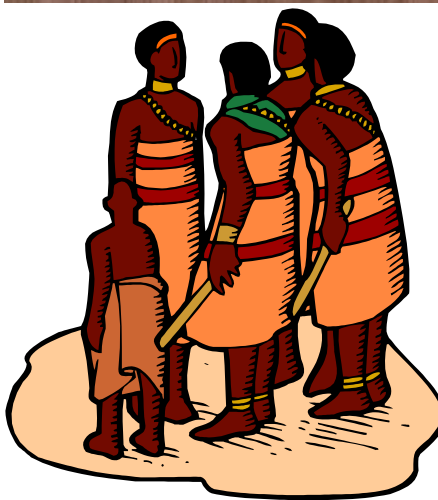


**Joey Elias and friends** left everyone laughing for a good cause. The evening was full of good energy and we broke a new record! Close to \$3,000.00 was raised this year!

**DEFINITELY  
SOMETHING TO  
SMILE ABOUT !**



# How You Can Help



- Join us in raising funds and awareness with your own ideas or events.
- Sponsor a project with your school, church, company, family, or friends.
- Make a donation to support our projects. A tax receipt will be issued for all donations of \$25.00 or more.

*Asante Sana    Thank you*