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Water Walk 2013 - Anything is Possible!

Dear friends of positively AFRICA:

It's that time of year again! We're gearing up for another fun fundraising event - our annual Water Walk will take place on **Saturday, May 11th** at the University of Victoria (UVIC). This year, our pA/VIDEA Water Walk event will be held in collaboration with the UVIC African Awareness Club.

In today's economic climate, we have chosen to focus our attention on four health care programs in our two projects in Kenya (two pediatric programs and two adult programs). These projects involve clean, safe drinking water. Clean water for drinking, cooking and hygiene is essential for health and well-being.

Without you, our work with our African partners would not be possible. There are many ways to support our work with our African partners:

1. Become a monthly donor, which helps us plan on a yearly basis
2. Check our website for donating options that suit you best
3. Join us in our annual Water Walk Fundraiser – information below

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WATER WALK 2013 continued from p. 1

We are fortunate to have safe, clean water at our disposal - but it's something we often take for granted. The women of Africa carry up to 20 litres of water while trekking up to 10 km to collect water for their families.

The Water Walk provides a simulated experience of what these women go through. Help us raise funds for clean, safe and accessible water for our orphanage and community projects in Kenya! Grab your friends and family and create a team of up to 10 people. Each team will carry a bucket of 10 litres of water to symbolize the efforts made by rural Kenyan women to collect water.

Water Walk 2013 will take place at UVIC on Saturday, May 11th, with the option of completing either a 4 km or an 8 km walk. All walks are very accessible - they will involve walking around the campus ring road, as well as a stroll through the 'Old Finnerty Gardens' inside the ring road. Registration begins at 11 a.m. and the Water Walk officially kicks off at 12 noon.

You can participate in Water Walk 2013 in number of ways:

WALK: Form a team of up to 10 people to participate in the Water Walk. Together, teams will carry their water and walk 4km or 8 km around UVIC.

Early Bird Registration is \$20/adult or \$10/student (by May 1st, 2013) After May 1st, it's \$25/adult or \$15/student. Participants are encouraged to get pledges, and prizes will be given out for top fundraisers!

DONATE: Pledge to someone you know who is participating in the Water Walk! Donate the sum of your choice to positively AFRICA. (Tax receipts provided by VIDEA for donations of \$20 or more).

VOLUNTEER: Help out on the day of the Water Walk by becoming a positively AFRICA volunteer! For more information on the Water Walk or positively AFRICA or for registration forms, please visit www.positivelyafrica.org (look under "Events") or e-mail waterwalkvictoria@gmail.com.

With teamwork and community support, we can do so much more than we ever imagined. Please join us in our endeavours!

With much appreciation for your ongoing support,

Joan Schwanzenberger
positively AFRICA, Fundraising Coordinator

Water Walk at a Glance

When? Saturday, May 11, 2013

11:00 am - Registration

12:00 noon - Water Walk begins!

1:30 pm - Getting' Higher Choir sings teams back to village

Location: "pA VILLAGE"

University of Victoria – Fountain in front of Main Library



Nissi Update

Nissi has seen many changes recently, some of which were witnessed by Rohan Stritch, our VIDEA emissary on the ground who visited Nissi in fall 2012. In 2011, pA purchased a computer for Johnson and, with his usual diligence, he has secured the financial support via the Internet of another aid organization. With funding, they bought land and built rent-free accommodation for the orphanage's children. They're hoping to complete a new school building in the near future.

In early 2013, pA was able to support Nissi in moving to a self-sustaining farming plan. By shifting one third of their farmland to growing produce, which can be sold at the market, they can fund subsequent seasonal plantings of beans, maize and potatoes. This is exciting for pA, as project self-sustainability continues to be our goal.

Health care is our financial priority, as Nissi depends on pA for the quarterly family health care costs. We're pleased to report that the children's health has seen a marked improvement as a result of this support. Johnson's dedication and enthusiasm continues to be an inspiring model for us all!

Osopet Update

As you know, we continue to support the community of Osopet in Kenya with their pediatric and health programs for those whose health is compromised. As explained in the last newsletter, we have been asked to help with water storage tanks in the outlying communities.

Garth Homer's Community Access Team (CAT) program donated four tanks recently, as well as support for the health programs. Pia Carroll and her cooking class at Edward Milne Secondary had special lunch days and an auction to raise money as well, and they were able to purchase a water tank and several goats for Osopet. Pastor Peter sent us the following note recently, which is encouraging and also reminds us that there is work we can still do to help:

"We are able to give out all the four goats to the needy families of Osopet. We still need two more goats for the two still in need families in Osopet. We were able to deliver one tank to the Oleleshua 5th Community. The number of tanks now delivered to Osopet communities in need is five tanks. We are still in need of seven more tanks."



Soweto Junior Update

Our friends at Soweto Junior school now have their own website, created by our colleague from VIDEA, Rohan Stritch. The school, situated in Kibera, Kenya, educates 150 students and provides a nourishing daily meal, cooked on an open fire. Soweto Junior provides positively AFRICA with fair trade goods. The handcrafts are made by mothers who cannot afford the school fees.

Without the sales of the fair trade jewelry and other crafts, some children would be unable to attend school and the meal program would suffer. If you are interested in looking at these items or in hosting a craft party in your home or business, please contact sabine@positivelyafrica.org.

To learn more about Soweto Junior, its history and mission, visit <http://sowetojunior.wordpress.com>

News from VIDEA



A busy spring is upon us! This past month has seen us busily interviewing some amazing young people from across Canada for 20 CIDA-funded internships in southern Africa. This has been such an inspiring process that makes us so hopeful, talking with so many young people who see international development as central to their lives and futures.

Starting in April for 6 months, these young people will be undertaking human rights-based development work at the Women's Legal Aid Centre and Equality for Growth in Tanzania, Women for Change and the Justice for Women and Orphan's Project in Zambia, Ukulapha in South Africa and Women First, Uganda Rural Fund and African Hearts in Uganda.

In other news, we recently heard - with some considerable trepidation - of the merging of the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), into the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT). VIDEA has had a partnership relationship with CIDA for 34 of our 35 years and it is with sadness that we will see this Canadian institution disappear. Our hope is that, as the new entity takes shape, a strong emphasis on poverty reduction as the guiding value for Canadian overseas aid is maintained.

This year is VIDEA's 35th year and we hope that as the year progresses that you will enjoy seeing and taking part in some of the activities that we have planned to mark this occasion. VIDEA now works with partners in eight southern African countries within our International Programme: Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, Zambia, Malawi, Zimbabwe, South Africa, and Lesotho - working with organizations who have a strong focus on human rights-based development and who have, or are developing, a strong gender-focus to their work.

Part of this work is coordinated by some of the fabulous committees that make up VIDEA, including positively AFRICA, Women's Hope Education and Training (WHEAT), and Ukulapha, as well as two VIDEA chapters outside Victoria, one based in Nelson and another in Kelowna.

Alongside this international programme, we also currently deliver a research programme, public engagement programme, indigenous knowledge programme and education programme. There will be more information on the work of these programmes in future newsletters, but be sure to log onto www.vida.ca in the meantime for more information.

Gender Equity Seminar

VIDEA, in collaboration with the B.C. Council for International Cooperation (BCCIC) Learning Circles, presented a seminar in March on the second Istanbul Principle: Embodying gender equality and equity while promoting women and girls' rights.

positively AFRICA committee members Sabine Laubental and Su Russell attended the seminar. They explored ways of incorporating gender equity in the context of pA projects. We hope that our study of these issues will assure a greater awareness by pA committee members and our African partners of this often minimized topic.

Cross Canada Cocktail Parties

The following letter is written by Peggy Frank, positively AFRICA founder:

I'm missing friends at positively AFRICA this year. But, not wanting to be idle, I'm involved in a massive art project - creating a seven-foot cocktail glass made from thousands of empty pill bottles! While I work I think about my second chance at life, the daily pill burdens, and, the irony of nomenclatures in the medical jargon - cocktail indeed! I'm hoping this massive project will affect others in Canada. My friend and long-time HIV and pA supporter, Cathy Carolsfeld will join me as we slowly make our way across Canada with the sculpture, stopping to share with HIV communities along the way. I'm honoured to be one of 16 finalists in Canada's largest Sculpture Competition. See www.kingsbraegarden.com to learn more about this show.



The piece entitled "This is No Cocktail Party" relates to my dependence on pills since my HIV diagnosis in 1987. At times, I'm sick of popping, but know that I was given life, and the pill burden is a whole lot easier than it was when I started the 'cocktail' with 49 prescribed HIV medications a day! I took about the same number of supplements and drugs to combat opportunistic infections at that time. My life circulated around the alarm clock, having an empty stomach or making sure there was food there to protect my stomach from the full force of the drugs. Now I take four pills a day and about 12 supplements. I can travel and sleep through the night, and sometimes slip the pills in at dinner without anyone noticing.

But not all the news here in Canada is positive. We've criminalized HIV infection in a way that increases stigma and has incarcerated over 150 people. It's often especially tough for women, who have limited power to control the spread of sexually transmitted infections. As we travel, Cathy and I want to hear about life, including intimacy, from HIV positive people across this country.

We're fortunate to have a copy of an award-winning film, Positive Women Exposing Injustice, to initiate dialogue. We'll show the film in Victoria at the end of April. Watch my blog for updates: www.peggyfrank.blogspot.ca. To learn more about the film go to www.positivewomenthemovie.org.

One of the most exciting things for me is that I've been able to involve the Osope women beaders in the project. They made me a huge number of red ribbons to adorn the cocktail glass and this has meant income to several women - money for school fees, uniforms and food. The trip will be fun but is unfunded, so we rely on local initiatives, generous donors and billets for our overnight stays.

The Victoria community of people living with HIV are strong supporters of the initiative and are organizing the Victoria event. I'm not worried about funds. We've had a couple of amazing accommodation offers and a few cash donations. I'm approaching the COOP gas program for help with fuel. Please encourage your friends across the country to come join us as we make our way from Toast to Toast!

With love to you all and a request that you stay committed to our African friends in whatever way you can,

Peggy Frank

For more information, contact pegfrank@telus.net or call her at 250-891-6345.