

# LIFEmatters

foundation

## From the LMF Coordinator



I wrote this article at the end of last year to reflect on the year that had passed, but also to capture a vision for 2011. I can't believe we find ourselves here already!

On page 3 you will find LMF's 2010 Highlights. This list fills me with gratitude, and makes me so proud of the LMF team that has made it all happen! I am hoping that the Lord will continue to provide for more of our projects and their respective leaders so that they can be sustained through the next year, and we can continue to see young lives steered in a different direction. A good example of this, is one of our 10 year old literacy students at Lourier Primary School who said, "I want to learn how to read so I can become a real man". This path is the one LifeMatters will clear for him as we carry out our Little Stars Literacy project into 2011.

In 2010 we had two Southern Suburbs schools ask us to facilitate literacy training with their foundation phase learners. Our aim has therefore been to raise the funds to replicate this model as soon as possible. This past week we have been in negotiation with Common Good, who share our vision for literacy training in schools, and who we are now

proudly partnering with to expand literacy training into inner-city schools as well as provide opportunity for members of our churches to minister in these schools.

Our counselling team has also reached new levels of success with the group and play therapy at Lourier Primary last year. Their planning meeting this year included rave reports from the teachers related to visible behavioral improvements in the children who have been in their therapeutic care. We are hoping to replicate this model of intervention in schools where there is similar need. Department social workers manage to visit their allocated schools once or twice a year. We have had a team at Lourier for 2 terms now, going in twice weekly, to counsel individuals and groups. This added value is priceless, and the fruit eternal, so we trust for sustainability with this project and honour Shannon who continues to remain a loyal volunteer heading up the team!

The spiritual development of children is something that few schools acknowledge and see the need for, but the few good ones who will brave this uncharted territory, we hope to partner with this year providing discipleship groups, camps,

speakers, break-time Christian clubs, teenage awareness weeks etc.

Staff enrichment and support is another facet of LifeMatters that we are hoping to grow. This year Sweet Valley Primary have asked us to aid them in this endeavour. Our staff need pit stops to be refreshed at as they run the challenging race that is educating, loving, disciplining and developing our children.

Our lifeskills classes remain intact, but desperately require more enthusiastic volunteers to help us create safe spaces where children can talk and be taught about the issues of the day during allocated lesson time. Jeni Proffitt's numeracy and visual and motor integration programme, likewise, requires volunteers if we are to see this much needed intervention replicated and growing into other schools!

LifeMatters knows how to be serious, but boy do we know how to have fun, and our soccer team and kiddies corner last year at the MBC Soccer tournament as well as the MBC Christmas market definitely proved that we could show kids a good time. Our highly successful Midsummer Masquerade Ball also proved

that we can entertain adults whilst raising funds, so we'll definitely be dancing up a storm again soon in 2011!

Looking back over the success of our events and projects it is clear that we are growing. To this end, I am proud to announce that in accordance with our goals, vision and prayers from last year, we have been enabled (by the generous members of Meadowridge Baptist Church) to employ a full time member to our team this year! Social Worker and legendary LMF volunteer, Leanne McNair, will be managing the operational side of LMF.

Our Little Stars Literacy Project Leader, Liz Oosthuyzen has also been employed part time (thanks to Claremont Rotary) to develop a replicable model for this project and Lauren Sterrenberg will be with us for more hours in the week! What a team! This has been my greatest faith builder so far this year...and if this is what we've managed to accomplish in mere three weeks with the Lord at our helm, I can hardly wait to witness what the rest of 2011 holds ☺

- Kam

## Lourier teacher support & remedial teaching

Jane Wood

Very recently, Dr Seege of Stellenbosch University, organized a donation of 250 school bags to the school. These were given out to Grade 7 and 8s as a high school bag for them in the New Year.

It was a privilege being asked by the Lourier staff to run another Pamper Parlor, converting the Support Room into a Beauty Room and having friends and a neighbour giving facials and mini back massages to all the female staff. Downstairs in the staff room I ran a café all afternoon. Medical rep. companies were very generous to me, giving wonderful goodie bags to everyone.

Two children from Grade 4, after two and a half years in Support, have improved to such an extent that their reading age has exceeded their chronological age. Such an achievement for them (and me!)



Our Masquerade fundraiser is probably the most obvious way that I have ever witnessed the provision of the Lord. We saw miracle after miracle as every need (those that we were aware of and unaware of) was met. We were blessed time and again in the most unusual ways, from people randomly donating their resources (it happened at least twice that I can think of when we didn't even ask) to freely offering advice at the most opportune times, and the uniquely gifted volunteers that offered to help us. The Ball was a success and glory must go to God for that.

*Nicole Snowball, marketing coordinator*

## Little Stars Literacy programme, Lourier Primary

I have really had the most wonderful time helping out at LifeMatters. It has been such an eye-opening opportunity for me, and I feel very privileged to have been given the chance to work with these children. Their enthusiasm and keenness to learn is truly inspirational and is something that has really touched me. It is so rewarding to see their progress and it has been so special for me to form relationships with them, as well as with other volunteers from the LMF team.

*Jess Pollock, facilitator*

Thank you for reading with me and helping with puzzles and the alphabet

*Savoy, learner*

Thank you for teaching me. Thank you for giving.

*Kim, learner*

Many a Thursday, Jayden is fetched from the Grade 1 classroom and comes into Little Stars looking downcast, sometimes even angry or rejected. One day, he even by-passed the room, kicked a can around in the gutter and sat down sulking nearby. A little sympathy, a hug and a fun reading lesson later, Jayden always leaves us a cheery child with a big smile. He is my little "starfish"! He makes it all worthwhile. Reading may be down the road a bit yet, but for Jayden, the one-on-one affirmation turns his day around every time!

*Jenny McGowan, facilitator*

Thank you teacher Liz for helping me.

*Kiyaam, learner*

Thank you Miss Liz for doing puzzles and books

*Deventé, learner*

Thank you for reading and playing with me

*Juanita, learner*

We saw God's amazing grace and provision at Little Stars this year. I can hardly believe that at the beginning of 2010 there was no literacy project at Lourier Primary. By the end of the year we had set up a literacy room with over 100 books ranging from level 1-5. We were seeing 37 learners twice a week and had 12 volunteers. Out of the 37 learners five of them improved to such an extent that we won't need to see them again in 2011.

We saw amazing provision from various resources. Claremont Rotary with the help of Lester Cameron donated a cheque of R 30,000 to the project. Ruth Cameron and Berenice Louw also from Claremont Rotary gave every Grade 1 pupil a book of their own to take home over Christmas. Many of them have few or no books at home and were so happy to receive beautiful, brand new books with their names carefully imprinted on the cover! The sense of pride that the children had in owning these will instill a love and respect of books, that can never be taught.

This year we will be moving into a bigger room and will be expanding the project to see each Grade 2 learner for an hour twice a week. We will be needing to expand our resources and volunteer base in order to do this but after seeing so much provision last year we have faith 2011 will be even greater.

*To advertise your community event in our newsletter, please email [lauren@lifemattersfoundation.org](mailto:lauren@lifemattersfoundation.org)*

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## 2010 at a glance...

Looking back, these are some highlights and achievements over the past year...

- A dedicated full-time volunteer team
- A R50 000 donation towards a professional presentation for LMF.
- The donation of the MBC 2010 thank offering!
- The establishment of a dedicated counselling cabin for our team at Zwaanswyk Primary in conjunction with the Round Table Charity, and another one soon to follow at Lourier Primary School
- LMF's first Fundraiser!
- Another successful year partnering with Rotary Newlands during the Pick 'n Pay/Argus Cycle Tour
- Our Pathfinders Camp, where the majority of learners experienced a real encounter with God, and the discipleship group that was birthed from that as a follow up, thanks to Marvin Ngongo!
- The support and strengthening of partnerships with NPOs, churches and local businesses
- The Sweet Valley Primary School's Teenage Awareness Week and all our brilliant speakers
- The launch of our Little Stars literacy programme at Lourier Primary under the careful guidance of Liz Oosthuizen
- The launch of Jenni Proffitt's much needed numeracy and VMI programme as a future LMF service
- The launch of a powerful counselling team at Lourier under Shannon Stewart
- Our growing intern programme with UCT, SACAP and Cornerstone interns
- Our internal weekly prayer meetings where we grew witnessing together from week to week. The Lord faithfully answering our prayers!

Soccer fever had hit South Africa in a big way, and LMF was no exception. With the 100 Goals Cup coming up at Meadowridge Baptist Church we decided to have a place for parents to leave their kids while the soccer tournament was being played at BHS. The opportunity allowed us to bond with our community and create an awareness about the organisation. Many people gave of their time and resources to make the event successful. Being able to be a part of it and witnessing that kind of community spirit was an absolute privilege.

*Nicole Snowball, marketing coordinator*



## Sweet Valley Homework Club & Breakaway

Before homework club I was doing ok, but when I came I'm getting way better grades. They have really helped me in life. They discipline me when they need to. They help me so much. They encourage me to study with Smarties. They encourage me not to lie. They encourage me not to be cheeky. They encourage me not to lie to girls. They help other people. They make me study. I love talking to them. They encourage me to do my best. They are very kind. They help me with my work. They reward me when I do well in tests. When I finish my work they make me do worksheets. My goal is to pass my tests.

*Jarryd, learner*

They made differences in my life because I used to get a lot of homework offences but now I don't get any. It helps me to write my tests and I pass them. The homework club teachers give Smarties when we pass our tests.

*Emmanuel, learner*

It has been a privilege to work with LMF at Sweet Valley doing homework Club and Breakaway. During this time it has given me the opportunity to build relationships with the children to such an extent that they start opening up to share about themselves and ask us questions. We look forward to continuing this work that God has blessed us with!

*Sonika Gerber, facilitator*

It's been wonderful to see the amount of un-churched children at Breakaway, and to be able to talk to some of the girls about their problems at home and then to pray with them

*Nicky Rosenthal, facilitator*

## FISH Club, Westcott Primary

FISH is the best ever because you talk about God and I love God <i>Riaan, learner</i>	I like FISH because we get to make things to give to someone else. And when we get treats from you!!! <i>Zoë, learner</i>
I enjoyed everything about FISH especially learning about how to pray. <i>Sabrina, learner</i>	I enjoyed the dancing and singing and learning more and more about God and Jesus <i>Amber, learner</i>
I enjoyed FISH because we learnt about God. I enjoyed singing and praying. FISH makes it easier to understand God <i>Hannah, learner</i>	In FISH I like to learn about God and how He made the world <i>Kayla, learner</i>

## Counselling, Lourier Primary

Counselling is often regarded as a somewhat demanding occupation; for some clients, one cannot even be fully certain whether the interventions are even working. Nevertheless, as counsellors, we push forward with clients, hoping that our interventions assist in bringing the change they so desperately need, and praying that whatever change occurs during our sessions continues and stays with them even when we, the counsellors,

are long gone. Herein lies my greatest struggle as a counsellor: although God is able to see the hearts of His people change, I am not always able to see that, or feel that with the people I counsel. This challenges me as a counsellor, and as a person, as I long to know those things that I cannot see and I long to know how God is planning on working in a client's life. This was my greatest challenge, trusting in all these things that I could

not and still cannot see. With this being said however, during my last week of counselling at Lourier Primary, I was blessed with the greatest gift of all, the knowledge and reassurance that I was indeed making a difference in the school. As I was counselling grade 2s last term, communication was done much less with words and more through playing games. Therefore trying to decipher whether I was making an impact on that child or not, was

difficult. However, when one of the grade 2 teachers approached me and explained how she had noticed a huge change in some of the children that have received counselling I felt such a deep sense of joy. I realised then and there that although I could not always see what was happening in the heart's of the kids, it does not mean that a difference was not being made. All I needed was a little faith!  
*Shannon Stewart, coordinator*

## Somerset West schools ministry

It's been great running a Christian cell group at the Academy of Natural Learning high school with a group of over 20 teenagers who voluntarily gave up an hour of their time to find out more about who Jesus is. Most of the students weren't even Christians, some of them were Atheists and two were Muslims. Yet we had such a good time exploring God's love and mercy.

We also started up drama classes at Tereo LRP for teenagers who have no primary school education. The students came to life in the drama classes, and barriers such as shyness just crumbled as we all laughed together during acting classes. The students also started to realise that God gives each person on earth a special talent.

*Jennifer Witts, coordinator*

## Pathfinders Camp *Nikki Snowball*

LMF took the grade eights of Lourier Primary to Camp Faraway in Noordhoek in order to build in to the children's lives, both emotionally and spiritually. The most memorable thing for me was witnessing the Holy Spirit moving in the hearts of the children one evening as we worshipped together. Children that had been hardened by their life circumstances were freed spiritually, and most children gave their lives to the Lord that night. That camp also opened up the opportunity for LMF to minister to the children more openly and freely and deal directly with their struggles.

Any comments, queries or suggestions? Please contact the Editor: Lauren Sterrenberg  
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LMF volunteers can now receive supervision from our social workers. Contact Judy:  
judy@lifemattersfoundation.org

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