

# Friends of Umgeni Newsletter



July 2017

Dear Friends

*On behalf of our Chairman and committee, I wish to express our gratitude and appreciation to everyone who has so generously donated either their time or money to Friends of Umgeni this past year, enabling us once again to bring joy to the patients. A special thank you goes out to the Fuchs Foundation, Hulamin and Mr Price, who have supported our efforts this past year.*

**I**t has been an amazing year!! As a committee, we are extremely pleased with the progress we have made in a number of areas, which was very evident in the projects we were able to undertake and the enjoyment they brought to the patients. As you are aware, last year started off on a challenging note, but as the year progressed, everybody, including the hospital staff, all worked together and the end results were more than pleasing.



Once again we were delighted and sincerely grateful to HULAMIN for their very generous donation of an additional 8 Madiba Buggies each costing approximately R12,000. Unfortunately with the budget constraints that government institutions have at present, these bedridden patients with severe deformities, would not have this wonderful opportunity of being able to sit up and experience everyday things that the rest of us take for granted. A very BIG thank you to Mr Doug Seager and his team for organizing these very specialized wheelchairs which are giving these patients a chance to eat sitting in an upright position and to enjoy getting out in the sunshine!

Friends of Umgeni were delighted to be able to sponsor another wonderful day at the Royal Show which was enjoyed by 20 patients this year. They were divided into groups of 3, each having a staff member to accompany them. Every year, a few of the patients work tirelessly on their crafts, which are then entered in the craft competition. This year they received 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> prizes. The judges were quite strict with the criteria, and considering that the patients are intellectually impaired, they were still able (with the assistance of the Occupational Therapy Dept) to achieve these awards. Well done to all the competitors!! Another highlight in their day, was interacting with the farm animals which they find therapeutic. A big thank you to the staff members who made this day possible. The comments at the end of a wonderful day were....We cant wait for next year! .....We love candy floss!.....Do we have to leave now!.....Please lets stay a bit longer.

Two of the craft market items submitted by patients



Our biggest achievement this past year has been the completion of our upgrades of Ward 2A and 2B which our committee have been working on for the past year. Our members willingly offered their talents in a number of areas, resulting in a beautifully decorated ward. The look on the faces of the patients as they were wheeled back into their new “home” was amazing. Many are bedridden, and having the ceilings full of mobiles, holds their attention. A very big thank you to Eugen and Rita for the hours of work they put into painting these mobiles and wall murals and to Dawn for kindly offering to sew the curtains. This coming year we look forward to continuing with the upgrades of Ward 4A and 4B. We are sincerley grateful to all our donors, both big and small, for helping us to make these changes possible.



**Before**



**After**



**Before**



After

During the past year we have sponsored various functions for the patients including their annual Christmas party when all the patients received goodie bags and tasty snacks. For the patients who are confined to bed, some of our committee members, wearing Christmas hats, took cakes, custard and cool drinks to each ward, making sure that each and every patient enjoyed the Christmas spirit. Thank you to all the listeners of EAST COAST RADIO for their contributions to “Toys for Joy” which helps Friends of Umgeni tremendously to bring joy to our patients.

Easter was a special event, celebrated in the recreational hall, decorated with Easter bunnies and huge painted eggs (made by Eugen) where members of various local churches led the patients in songs of praise to the Lord and Bible readings. A special mention goes to Diane (from ward 6) who accompanied them beautifully on the piano. The highlight of the event was the Easter egg hunt at the close of the service



*A big thank you to Joan, who has tirelessly continued with collecting plastic bottles to enable Friends of Umgeni to receive free “enviro friendly” benches which are now being used by all the wards and outside areas.*



*A special thank you to **Fairfield Dairies** for their continuous donations of yoghurt and dairy products. Once again Joan and her husband Billy have dedicated every other Wednesday morning to these collections, which requires endless patience as they wait in queues to be called to the Fairfield loading bays. There they have to carry full crates to their bakkie, a task which they do over and over until all the donations are packed and ready to go. From there they head home, to carry out the sorting by dates, and then the last leg of their journey takes place as they drop off the various deliveries to Umgeni and other charities where the patients are able to enjoy their hard work! Many thanks to Joan and Billy for there dedication to those less fortunate.*

**2017 has been a busy and very productive year, for which we are most grateful and blessed, however we are continually striving to do all we can, to make the lives of the patients more pleasant. Obviously our hands are tied without funding, so once again we are appealing to you, our kind supportors, to please continue with your generous donations. Regardless of the amount, every cent received is put to good use and monitored carefully by our committee of dedicated volunteers.**

If you feel you can assist with any of the above, please contact me on 082 459 2743 so we can arrange to meet with you. Any help is greatly appreciated! Perhaps you would like to consider being on our committee, which consists mostly of retired volunteers and one or two staff members? You don't have to be an expert in anything, but rather a willing person with a passion to help those less fortunate!

*God bless you  
Kind regards  
Bev Habermann  
(FOU committee member)  
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**Because someone cared,  
someone did something,  
a child smiled and was  
reassured**

**Fundraising No: 3291002-091-NPO**

**Bank details: FNB Howick – Branch Code 220725 – Account No 6263 041 7815**

**Please use your name as a reference and send your deposit/donation details to the above email address**