

German embassy brings joy to the Place of Blessing

Thulani Magazi

Happiness was evident on the faces of more than 40 children from the Place of Blessing Aftercare in Nyanga, when the German Consul General, Joerg Werner Marquardt, visited the centre to assess equipment bought with a R13 000 donation which the embassy made to the centre.

Mr Marquardt was accompanied by vice-consul Katrin Simon and other German delegates.

The embassy donated the money towards the end of last month with the hope that the centre would buy some sporting equipment to improve its image and ensure that there were enough resources to keep the children busy after school.

The centre was established in the early 1970s to provide learners with alternatives after school hours. It looks after children who have been abandoned and those with serious family problems. Every day, children aged 6 to 14 from around Nyanga come to the centre to engage in various activities in a bid to protect them from

crime. The centre also assists those children who have been sexually abused in their court cases.

Florian Kraemer, director of management at the centre, said the money has been used to buy a range of sporting material including soccer balls, table tennis and uniforms for the centre's two traditional dance and music groups. As a sign of appreciation, children sang and danced for the delegation.

Nosidima Holo, founder of the centre, said they were thrilled with the generosity shown by the German embassy. Although the donation was the first from the embassy, she said they generally received a lot of support from the Germans. This includes funding for the centre's daily operations and construction of additional facilities.

Mrs Holo said the centre was addressing several issues that affect young people – from crime to abuse in their homes and in society.

She said a number of children from within the neighbourhood were neglected by their parents, who spend most of their time con-



Happy bunch: It was a day to remember for children at the Place of Blessing in Nyanga when the German consul general visited the centre to see what has been done with the money the embassy donated.

suming alcohol.

Mrs Holo said children whose parents were alcoholics were at risk of being abused. "By coming here, these children are saved from a lot of bad things that are

happening in the area," she said.

The 69-year-old pensioner said they also looked after children who have lost their parents and she has personally adopted two children.

"Our aim is to establish an orphanage," she said.

Mr Marquardt said he was impressed with the project.

"It's a solid project, well run," he said. "The money that we have donated here is money well spent."

He praised Mrs Holo and said she had a "huge heart and is offering the children a best therapy".

Mr Marquardt said the amount was "modest", however, it has gone a long way in changing the children's lives.

The embassy is also supporting other initiatives in the Eastern and the Northern Cape. "We would love to support this project again, but we are working on a limited budget and there are other projects all over the place. Maybe in a couple of years time we will come back," he said.

Mr Kraemer said from the outside world the centre appeared to be an entertainment place, but there was serious business taking place and he called on parents to attend meetings.

"We would love to have parents at our meetings, but because the majority of them are drinking, it's extremely difficult to get them to attend parents' meetings," he said.

DEPARTMENT OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND HOUSING

OBJECTIONS AGAINST PROPOSAL

Notice is hereby given that the Provincial Government of the Western Cape (Department of Local Government and Housing) received an application to incorporate Farm 483/4 Kuils River into the Stellingdale Village, which site is being developed by Visual International. The intention is to forge a partnership...

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