



# Swift Academy

Nurturing and Nourishing Children with Special Needs.

A PROJECT OF *Barnswallows* 087-138-NPO / PBO 930037045

011 475 2318 • 082 851 9386 • [rene@barnswallows.org](mailto:rene@barnswallows.org)

[www.barnswallows.org](http://www.barnswallows.org)



# Autumn 2015

## NEWSLETTER

CHANGING SOCIETY ONE BABY AT A TIME



## Who we are...

For the past five years since November 2009, Barnswallows has had 39 abandoned/neglected babies go through its doors, of which most were children with special needs, like HIV, Fetal alcohol syndrome, cerebral palsy, sensory problems, malnourishment, etc, in need of specialized care. This project was started at the Home of Director René Testa in Weltevredenpark on the West Rand.

Our first satellite Home, Swallows Nest, opened its doors to their first babies in Benoni at the Home of Charmaine and Kent McQueen (Project Managers) in the middle of 2014, and has seen 9 babies safely adopted into permanent families, or placed in alternative care after providing a temporary place of safety for them for a time.

Both our Homes operate under the same 'green' principles, follow the same protocol of providing an enriching environment with specialized medical, combined with alternative, therapies and operate in a homely environment, where



We are in the  
business of  
changing lives

children are given individual attention and stimulation.

## New Beginnings for Swallows Nest

Swallows Nest became the beneficiary of a project that Carte Blanche embarked on for one of their programs. The project involved making Swallows Nest energy efficient in view of the electricity challenges that South Africans are facing with load-shedding.

Carte Blanche, Ellie's, Mass Build and Ascention Properties put their heads and skills together and renovated an outbuilding making it into a 5 star baby house. The new baby house was installed with a UPS system which allows the baby house to function with electricity when the lights go out.

Carte Blanche will be viewing the program on Swallows Nest in the near future.



## Our New Five Star Baby House!

Swallows Nest's new member of staff.



Swallows Nest is delighted to welcome Michelle Taylor to our team. She holds the position of Personal Assistant to Charmaine McQueen.

## Our Sponsors





## Our Babies

South Africa ***“is experiencing the highest burden of HIV in the world, with over 5.7 million people currently infected. Parents are dying and leaving behind orphaned children. There are an estimated 3.7 million orphans in South Africa, about half of whom have lost one or both parents to AIDS; and 150,000 children are believed to be living in child-headed households.”***

**UNICEF**

Almost every baby we take care of has been exposed to HIV or is HIV positive. Our specific work involves rehabilitating babies. We do this through a number of therapies, strengthening the immune system with natural supplements. We rely on the government medical system to provide medication where it is needed.

***“In South Africa, 11.9 million children (64% of all children) live in income poverty. Black children constitute a disproportionately large share of the total number of children living in poverty.”*** UNICEF

Every baby that we take care of has been affected by poverty. Many of our babies come to us malnourished, some even having kwashiorkor.

Swallows Nest provides excellent nutrition for our babies. We grow some of the vegetables needed and keep babies' meals to wholesome, healthy fresh foods, in order to promote optimal health.

### FAST FACTS

# 64%

64% of all children in South Africa live in income poverty

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

See the UNICEF website

<http://www.unicef.org/>

## Reaching Out

Swallows Nest together with other charities from the Benoni Alliance ran a blanket drive into the area of Etwatwa in April this year. We were able to make sure many families could stay warm this winter.





### Our latest Project: SWIFT ACADEMY Weltevredenpark Roodepoort

Swift Academy opened its doors in April, to a group of learners with special needs. It has proven to be a great challenge not only working with these children from day to day, but working together with the parents as a team on a specific protocol with each child entering our doors, starting with a detox program, GFCF diet and specific interventions aimed at helping them to overcome developmental delays, and become a part of mainstream society in a meaningful way. Dr Jana and Gizella are our therapists taking care of the learners.



### JUST HEALTH presentation 16 May

At Barnswallows West Rand we have regular presentations on healthy living, to educate parents and the public on a healthy lifestyle. On this picture René Testa, Director of Barnswallows, and lifestyle consultant for The Natural Way, is teaching the ladies on the basics of changing over to a healthier lifestyle. Our next presentation is on **20<sup>th</sup> June** on the topic:

*Gentle Detox* (including the benefits of probiotics and making your own kombucha). If you are interested in joining us for an informative session, and tasting of delicious food, email René on [rene@barnswallowbabies.org](mailto:rene@barnswallowbabies.org). Free scobies for every attendee to enable you to start your own kombucha culture.

## FUNDRAISING INITIATIVE – WE NEED YOUR HELP!

# GOLF DAY 7 AUGUST at EAGLE CANYON GOLF COURSE

Lots of opportunities to help us: we need donations in the form of prizes for golfers, sponsoring a hole, or even be the main sponsor of the day! Inbox René on [rene@barnswallowbabies.org](mailto:rene@barnswallowbabies.org) for the full invite. We need volunteers on the 7<sup>th</sup> to help with various tasks and appreciate your assistance.

## Thank You from the Barnswallows Team

Taking care of children with special needs is a huge challenge, but we can confidently say that despite challenges with staff turnover, financial strain and emotionally draining circumstances, God has provided for us over these 6 years, in ways that we cannot explain, and for which we thank Him continually.

If you have been part of this trajectory in however small a way, we want to express our deepest gratitude, and pray that God will bless you abundantly! Please consider a regular donation into our account:

### Barnswallows

FNB 62379559027

Clearwater 251141

SWIFT code FIRZAJJ

## WE VALUE YOUR INVOLVEMENT WITH BARNSWALLOWS!

**NURTURING AND NOURISHING CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS**

