

# Nsobe Community School Newsletter December 2020

Dear Nsobe Community School friends and Teacher Aid Supporters

Thank you for your continued support of Nsobe Community School through Teacher Aid, enabling us to keep on educating and offering hope and care to our community's children. As we are adding Grade 12 in January 2021 our school is now complete with a full Primary and Secondary school and 450 pupils. We are very excited and proud to have our first Secondary School leavers in 2021, and have great hopes for their futures.



Our community has been very blessed to remain Covid-19 free to date, Zambia was not hard hit by the first wave of COVID-19, although greatly affected by the economic impact and by school closure. We were able to open Nsobe Community School fully in our third term and end the school year on a high note. The second wave of Covid is now hitting Zambia, our general population do not heed the importance of mask wearing, sanitization and social distancing and thus it is spreading more rapidly and our deaths are on the increase. We should have opened school for our new academic year on the 18<sup>th</sup> of January, but by Presidential declaration all schools must stay closed until at least the 1<sup>st</sup> of February.

Sadly School closure from March to September 2020 had dire effects for many children within our community, resulting in a number of teen pregnancies within our school as a direct consequence of children not being able to access the daily care, meals, mental stimulation and support of their teachers. As soon as school was allowed to reopen fully in September we held guidance lessons and a number of talks and meetings with both students and parents about child protection, valuing children, sex education, cultural mind-sets and harmful belief systems and the importance of education. It was encouraging for our teachers to have a very positive parental interaction in which recommitment from many mothers has been made to honour issues discussed, and to partner together in making a change. Through Teacher Aid fundraising and the Gower Yomp in particular, our first Safe House will be ready in Feb 2021 which will offer a protected and nurturing environment to 12 vulnerable secondary school girls whose home backgrounds are unable to support them or keep them safe. We are hoping to build further Safe Houses so that we can ensure that more of our critically vulnerable girl children are able to finish school and control their own futures.



seeing the amazing diversity of beautiful Zambia with incredible Waterfalls and massive Lake Bangweula.

Our Grade 6's went on an informative industry tour of Ndola, learning how different products are made and what job opportunities exist. Our Grade 3's also managed their annual exposure and fun learning trip to the city, a first time for many. As always our students had to fund raise themselves in order to make these tours possible.

Our third term was a catch up of academics and back to busy school life in the new normal. Our students were in a much stronger position than most rural students due to the teaching support that continued through Covid School Closure. A wonderful overnight campout was held for the upper Primary children where students (and teachers!) had to do many mental, physical and team building challenges, and our teachers had a precious opportunity to interact, listen to, guide and disciple the children outside of the classroom. They had such fun no one wanted to go home. Thanks to our school bus donated by Teacher Aid Trustee Mike Papadacos, many of our students were able to go on exposure field trips learning through doing, seeing and experiencing. Our Grade 9's ventured on a journey of a lifetime to Luapula province, highlights were







Mike overseeing projector installation

In November Teacher Aid Trustees Maggie Beecher and Mike Papadacos were able to visit Nsoke Community School in order to help set up the Audio Visual Room from a Wales For Africa Grant. Mike worked incredibly hard installing the solar system, and wiring and connecting a TV and projector, and donated laptops giving our primary children access to computer learning and enabling them to watch educational programmes to improve their English and expose them to the big world out there. Mike also

help in getting sick children to the clinic, teachers to

meetings, fetching exam papers and generally accessing and buying of resources needed for the smooth running of the school. Maggie helped out in the classrooms, took geography lessons, worked on child sponsorship and grants and commissioned the building of the Safe House. It was valuable time spent involved in daily school life and getting to know students and staff and also giving child protection and career guidance talks. They came with bulging suitcases full of resources for the school and wonderful donations from sponsors for the children.



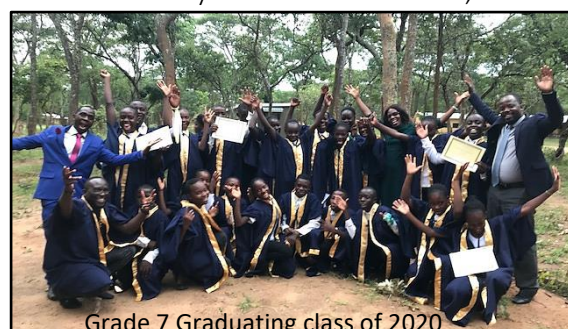
Maggie teaching reading



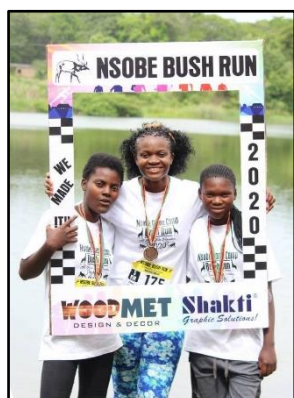
Nsoke Community School is not only about academics, we also want our children to be able to shine outside the classroom and to be able to appreciate those with different gifts. We held a talent show full of entertaining and wonderful dancing, singing, miming and even a hilarious eating competition. A huge effort was made by students and staff in our annual Art and Craft day showcasing a diverse range of artist talent, drama and dancing.

Our new school hall, built by funds from the Beit Trust was completed in time to hold the end of year national exams. We are finally an exam centre and our students can for the first time write from Nsoke instead of being registered under different schools. Due to Covid closure and disruption of learning, national exams were only written in December, we are waiting expectantly for the results. We are

proud to announce that all our Grade 9 external students who wrote earlier in the year passed with flying colours. Another highlight of the term was a wonderfully moving Grade 7 graduation ceremony, where our 5<sup>th</sup> class of primary school leavers were celebrated and parents entertained by creative productions by the upper primary classes. We are also most grateful for the nearly completed Grade 11 and 12 classroom block, 2 classrooms donated by Diaconie PKN Drunen and Wilde Ganzen and 2 by our Cuala Irish Friends.



Grade 7 Graduating class of 2020



Nsoke Game Camp held a Bush Run promoting community health and fitness, "a Race for Education", with 21km, 10km and 5km events and 175 participants which was a wonderful success and a great fundraiser and showcase for the school and camp. Competitors came from all over Zambia and Nsoke Students shone as we claimed the Men's, Women's and under 16 girl's 5km categories. With grateful thanks to all the event sponsors.

We are excited about what 2021 holds and have many new projects through Teacher Aid to sink our teeth into, from Safe Houses to building Vocational Classrooms offering income generating skills in carpentry and sewing for our students.

A huge thank you to Maggie Beecher and all our Teacher Aid trustees and donors who make it possible for Nsoke Community School to continue to educate, feed and care for the children of our community. Please spread the word and help us to grow our child sponsorship and Teacher Support fund through Teacher Aid.

With gratitude and best wishes, Fiona

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Rapt faces enjoying watching the new Audio Visual room TV