



# GECKO TODAY

March, 2010, Volume 1 Issue 1

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### Our First Newsletter!

March is already here! Where does the time go to? Please celebrate with us as we put out our first newsletter.

The Zimbabwe Gecko Society has been in existence since Jan 2009 and time has just flown. It has been a truly exciting year, allowing us to pursue our vision of enabling Zimbabwean widows and orphans to become self-supporting members of the society they live in. We accomplished this through a number of exciting fundraising activities, mission trips, and by providing funding to several projects in Zimbabwe.

The situation in Zimbabwe remains critical:

- Zimbabwe is the poorest country in the world.
- 95% of the people are unemployed.
- Starvation is rampant.
- 1.8 million people are infected with HIV-AIDS.
- Zimbabwe has the highest number of orphans proportionate to the population than anywhere else in the world.
- One doctor has put it this way: "Put simply, people are dying of AIDS before they can die of starvation."

We thank-you for your support of the widows and orphans in Zimbabwe. May God bless you for your acts of kindness and generosity.

The Zimbabwe Gecko Directors



Norton Project



Children from Jairos Jiri

### Our Mission

To share God's love by providing the following support in Zimbabwe:

- Relief to Widows and to Orphans
- Medical assistance through relief packages and the provision of medical expertise
- Similar and related services as determined by the membership



## Calendar of Events

### 2010 Fundraising Dinner

10<sup>th</sup> April 2010

Surrey Golf  
Course  
1770 64<sup>th</sup> Ave  
Surrey

\$25 ticket  
Cash Bar

Gifts Baskets  
Silent Auction  
Entertainment

### Garage Sale

Saturday, May  
15th  
8am—2pm

White Rock  
Baptist Church  
1657 140th St..  
Surrey

### 2009 Fundraising Dinner

Our first event as a society was in March 2009 and what a grand event it was. Friends, family and the community came together and gave us great encouragement with their support.

We enjoyed a delicious meal and were entertained by Marimba players, drummers, an African fashion show, belly dancing.

Our local businesses donated so much - food, drinks, discounts,, silent auction items, teddy bears and more. And then our guests supported us through a 50/50 draw, silent auction, wine boards, and donations.

\$12,000 was raised, thanks to you, our supporters.



### Promoting our Society

Throughout the year, we had many opportunities to promote our society. Our president, Susan Janetti, spoke at numerous churches, senior homes, and clubs.

In July we were thrilled to participate in the African Peace Festival as the sponsored project. We enjoyed meeting the many people who stopped by our table during the event.

If you are interested in having Susan speak to your organization, please contact her to arrange a time.

### Family Picnic

In August, Roy and Alison Strang hosted our BBQ in their lovely garden.

We had a lovely day out in the garden with perfect weather, games and music. The African Braai was enjoyed by all.

Through our various draws and donations, \$3,000 was raised

To purchase tickets for our upcoming dinner, please contact:

- Susan or Frank Janetti · (604) 531-3654 · [oneagleswings@telus.net](mailto:oneagleswings@telus.net)
- Sanna Lavalley · 604-715-9422 · [sales@surreygolf.com](mailto:sales@surreygolf.com)
- Annette Simbabure · 604-535-3924 · [tribaltrends@telus.net](mailto:tribaltrends@telus.net)
- Joyce Black · 604-531-1878 · [jbbeach@telus.net](mailto:jbbeach@telus.net)



## Our Projects

Saffron Waldon

~

Jairos Jiri

~

Centre for Total Transformation (CTT)

~

Hands of Mercy

~

Thy Kingdom Come Welfare Organization

## Mission Trip Report

In March, 2009, Langton, one of our directors, set off for Zimbabwe to bring food aid to Jairos Jiri, seeds and tools to support several agriculture projects, and to prepare for a medical mission scheduled for May.

Later that month, Susan and Frank also went to Zimbabwe to explore programs that already supported widows and orphans but were needing a hand due to the crisis in the country

During their time in Zimbabwe they were able to experience some of the many challenges of life - the lack of electricity, the lack of fresh running water, the empty shelves in the stores, hyper inflation and more. They gained a new appreciation for how easy our day to day lives are here in North America – there is so much we take for granted.

Susan, Frank and Langton were fortunate that they went into the country with US dollars. In February 2009 the ever tumbling Zim dollar finally crashed leaving the country now dealing in US dollars and the South African Rand. Only the very rich had access to these foreign currencies - the rest were left poorer than before.

Each of our directors funded their own travel and accommodation needs, so we were able to focus the funds we had raised to provide much needed food assistance. Your support helped thousands of children avert starvation and ensured programs could continue to run.



Children unloading food supplies (Jairos Jiri)



Orphans receiving a meal  
Saffron Waldron Project

## Sponsored Projects

- The Saffron Waldon Project supports small business initiatives such as goats, chickens and other worthwhile agriculture projects. This project is led by Fortune Gorejena of the Church of the Nazarene (Avondale).
- Jairos Jiri in Rusape is a residential home for orphaned children with disabilities - mental, visual and hearing. This Project is led by Rev. Webster Simbabwe of the Anglican church.
- The Centre for Total Transformation (CTT) has feeding programs for orphans and other vulnerable children. The Zimbabwe training centre for women supports small business ventures, agricultural projects and bee-keeping. CTT is led by Joy Chidavaenzi.
- The Hands of Mercy Children's Village has feeding programs and this project is led by Keith and Kathy Duvenage.
- Thy Kingdom Come Welfare Organization supports feeding programs for orphans, shelter for the homeless, basic care for the elderly, and widows. The organization also assists those affected by AIDS with food and palliative care. This project is led by Pastor Martin and Ivy Bernard.



## Zimbabwe Gecko Society

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## DOWN IN THE DUMPS IN MORE WAYS THAN ONE

People actually live day to day in this dump area. Tired and depressed, often ill. WHY? It is their only means of survival. By living at the dump people are able to get the "best" garbage as soon as the truck arrives. A piece of plastic, an old dress or shoe -pieces can be taken from each item and turned into something to sell. Orphans live here - seven and eight year olds scrounging in the dirt. Scrounging for something to eat or sell to eat.

These people rejoice when they know Martin and Ivy are taking in a meal. \$30 a month provides a weekly meal to the people that live here.

You make a huge difference and the people say 'Thank you Canada'.

Rafangora Children's Home



Kathryn Van Pelt  
Ocean Park Liquor Store



Houses built from garbage  
Dump Ministry - Christlike Ministries

## BIRTHDAY PARTIES

There is much desperation and starvation in Zimbabwe. However we decided to spoil a group of children and give them their very first birthday party (some of them are 12 years old).

What fun we had- games, prizes, cookies, chips, juice, and a birthday cake with candles. We sang Happy Birthday at least 10 times.

We blew bubbles, played with balloons, ran races and were just plain silly. Each child received a teddy bear donated by Ocean Park Liquor Store, organized by Kathryn Van Pelt. A truly great day was enjoyed by all and will be remembered forever.

Until next time.....