



NAME *Namhla*

AGE *Six*

FAVORITE COLOR

blue

FAVORITE FOOD

pizza!

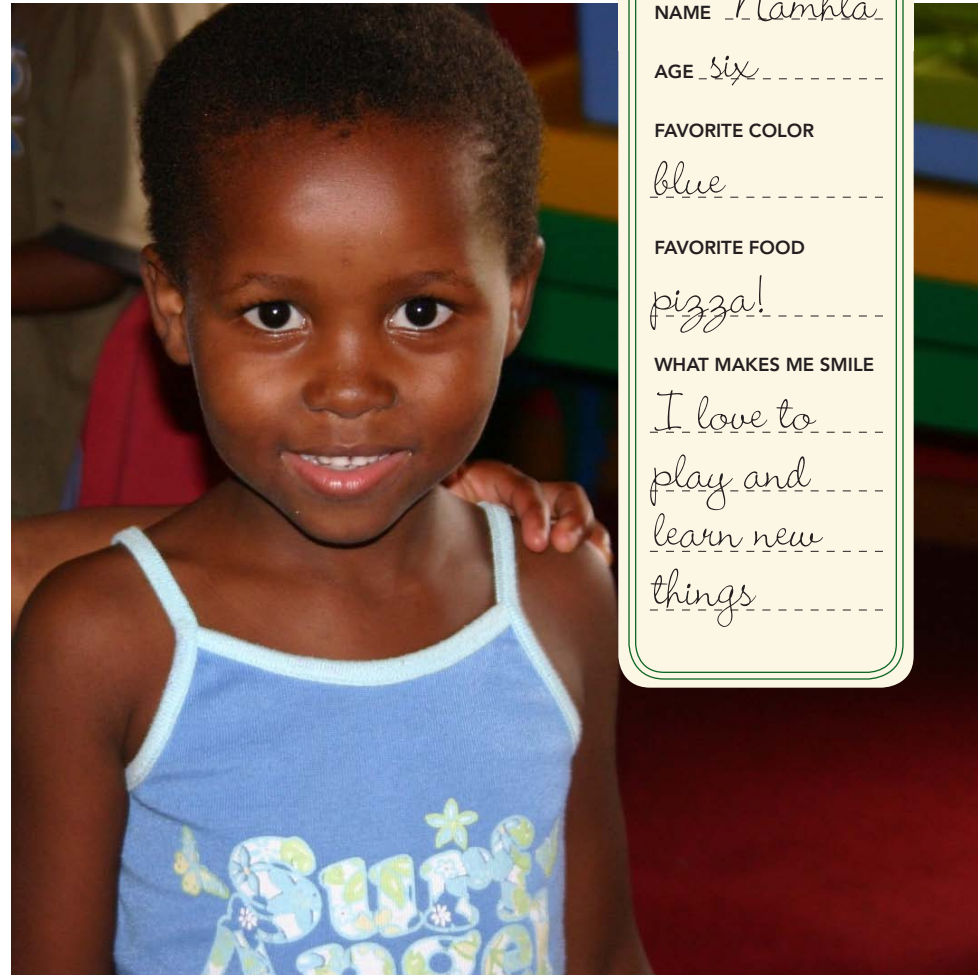
WHAT MAKES ME SMILE

I love to play and learn new things

get to know:

Namhla

Namhla came to us two years ago along with two cousins and is now six years old. She recently qualified to go to Komga Primary School, the best school in our area. She is the first of our children to qualify for this prestigious school and we are so proud of her! Thank you for giving her — and all of our kids — a future filled with opportunity and hope!



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Our Board of Directors serves a crucial advisory role for Open Arms and we are grateful for their service and commitment. The 2008-2009 Board is made up of:

BOB SOLIS
Litchfield Park, Arizona

SALLIE SOLIS
Litchfield Park, Arizona

MARK PETERSON
Scottsdale, Arizona

JEFF TOWERY
Boise, Idaho

TIM CHERVENAK
Spokane, Washington

DAVE NELSON
Sarasota, Florida

DAVE HORAN
Edina, Minnesota

TED FREESE
St. Louis Park, Minnesota

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Open Arms is a 501 (c)(3) organization and any tax deductible donations can be sent to the US address at right.

open arms news

VOLUME I
ISSUE I
MARCH
2009

A LETTER FROM BOBO

Friends,

I hope you enjoy the inaugural edition of *open arms news*. With our rapid growth, we thought it best to send you a newsletter twice a year to let you know what's going on at Open Arms. Because the kids call me "Bobo," I thought we'd name this section appropriately!

Much is going on these days at Open Arms. Most importantly, we have begun additional construction on the first of six additional cottages. With the great demand for homes for orphaned children, we are so happy to be expanding to give more children a place of love and security. Many thanks to all of you who donated to the Long Walk effort this past fall. Thanks to you, we met our fundraising goal and will be able to offer a home to 50 more children in the next year or two.

Outside of construction, the most important thing at Open Arms is that we recently started a new school year! It is an exciting time of year for us because we know that education will be one of the keys to our children's success. Of

our 30 children, ten are of school-age and attend local schools. We assist them with their homework daily and do our best to make sure they succeed. Because many of our kids did not attend school prior to coming to Open Arms, this "extra" tutoring work is so important. Thank you for making it possible! In addition, our younger children attend our own preschool program five mornings a week. Our preschool is led by **IONA BOUCHER** and we are so blessed to have the leadership of this talented lady. Our kids have fun each day and learn their numbers, letters and basic English skills. It is wonderful to see their enthusiasm for learning! We are

also thrilled to have **RITA MONTGOMERY** on board as our Executive Director. Rita hails from Wisconsin and has brought an incredible amount of enthusiasm and love to the home.

As we begin a new year, I am as grateful as ever to God for blessing this project with you, our friends and generous donors. You are the lifeblood of our organization. Thank you for giving our kids the greatest gift of all — hope. Gratefully,

Bob Solis



IONA BOUCHER



RITA MONTGOMERY





LOCAL WORKERS DIG THE FOUNDATIONS BY HAND AS THEY BEGIN CONSTRUCTION ON THE FIRST THREE COTTAGES

Ground is broken! Due to the success of **A LONG WALK FOR CHILDREN**, we are set to start construction on three of the six cottages that will be built over the next two years. Each cottage will house 6-8 children in addition to a housemother. When all six cottages are complete, we will be able to provide a home filled with love to 50 additional children. We are so grateful to all our donors who have made this growth possible. On behalf of the current and future residents of Open Arms, we thank you from the bottom of our hearts!



A LONG WALK FOR CHILDREN BOOK IS AVAILABLE

Followers of Bob Solis' walk across South Africa know that he kept a daily blog sharing his experience. This blog has now been made into a beautiful 120-page commemorative book entitled "A Long Walk for Children" and is available, at cost, for \$40.00. This price includes shipping.

 If you are interested in purchasing a copy, please send an e-mail to Ted Freese at ted@openarmshome.com. Books will be shipped by March 31.

THANK YOU AGAIN, ROTARY!


Members of the local East London Sunrise Rotary recently came out to plant four fruit trees at Open Arms. In the photo, **JOHN ROBERTS**, past President and his wife **MARY** help our gardener **LETA** plant an avocado tree. Many thanks to Rotarians in the U.S. and South Africa for their help in so many ways. Special thanks to the Sun City, Arizona club that Bob Solis calls "home" and the East London Sunrise Club for their help with the Walk effort and their plans to help us expand our garden. They not only plant trees, but do an even better job of planting hope for our kids!



wish list

CURRENT NEEDS

As our numbers grow, so too do our needs. Many people ask if there are particular items or projects that need to be funded. To that end, here is a partial list of some of our more pressing needs. Please don't hesitate to call Bob or Ted if you have any other questions about these or any other needs.

 **INSTALL A FENCE**
\$35,000.00

An electrified fence and gate to protect the property

 **PAVE THE DRIVEWAY**
\$20,000.00

Our current drive-way is dirt and needs constant grading

 **BUILD A STORAGE FACILITY**
\$10,000.00

For tools, yard equipment, clothing and supplies

 **FURNISH A NEW COTTAGE**
\$7,500.00

 **EQUIP A NEW LAUNDRY ROOM**
\$7,500.00

did you know?

Every day, 1,700 people contract HIV in South Africa. **MOST OF THESE PEOPLE ARE UNDER 25 YEARS OF AGE.**

By 2010 it is estimated that there will be **100,000 ORPHANS IN THE EASTERN CAPE PROVINCE.**

In three years, **WE HOPE TO GROW TO 80 RESIDENTS AT OPEN ARMS.**

THE UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME RECENTLY ADDED OPEN ARMS TO ITS LIST OF PLACEMENTS for students interested in international service projects. We have had two wonderful students, **KASSIE BARBEE** and **SARAH FURMAN**, already join us and expect more in the months and years ahead. **BOB SAYS "GO IRISH!"**



1 US DOLLAR
EQUALS
10 SOUTH
AFRICAN
RAND

Our current operating budget is \$198,000.

A LOCAL POLICEMAN IS VOLUNTEERING TWO NIGHTS A WEEK AT OPEN ARMS TO TEACH OUR OLDER CHILDREN KARATE? We are thrilled that our kids can learn fitness, discipline and respect through this activity!



OPEN ARMS BEGAN ON MARCH 16, 2006 WHEN OUR FIRST CHILD, SIFUNDO ARRIVED. THIS PHOTO WAS TAKEN TEN MINUTES AFTER HE ARRIVED.

