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# SECOND SATURDAY NET

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## Greetings!

This newsletter is for African Heritage families who are interested in getting to know one another and open to learning something about themselves in the process. The idea of providing a monthly or bi-monthly information exchange and resource guide grew out of an ongoing conversation with some of the folks who helped create the Second Saturday School. From Fall of 1993 to Spring of 1996, we held educational play sessions at Loudon Nelson Community Center one morning a month, throughout the school year. Those lively and heart warming gatherings were designed for six to nine year olds, but family members of all ages seemed to enjoy participating. During the 1996-97 school year we held three bimonthly sessions and a science field trip to Natural Bridges and the Long Marine Lab. Since then, we've been working to devise a plan for reviving the program. Second Saturday began as an initiative of the African American Council of Santa Cruz and evolved into a three year experiment in promoting identity development and achievement among African American youth. This issue comes to you free of charge, but any contributions will help us to expand our readership and will be greatly appreciated--*Welcome to The Net!* ❖

Second Saturday Field Trip April 1997



Long Marine Lab Santa Cruz, California

Photo Courtesy of Aviva Longinotti

1996-97 Planning Group Members: Nubra Floyd, Adrienne Harrell, Madlyn Norman-Terrance, Allison Sampson Anthony and Edwin "Ashanti" Williams

## Letters From Zimbabwe

Carolyn Martin-Shaw

*Excerpted from a letter written soon after Carolyn and her husband Bill Shaw arrived in Harare, Zimbabwe last July for what will now be a two year stay...*

### BEAUTY QUEENS

When Bill and I went downtown for the first time, I noticed that most of the young women were wearing extensions--down to the middle of their backs, short braids, black, brown, blonde. There were quite a few wigs and weaves. Some had their hair pressed and curled. Some had freezes and waves. But extensions rule the day. It is winter time, and the young women who work in the offices were wearing suits and sweaters. Teenagers out of their school uniforms can be seen in jeans and slacks, but there is quite a difference between the informality of White women and the dressiness of middle-class Blacks.

The newspapers are filled with stories of government corruption--there are more papers and more criticism of the government than when we were here before. There have also been a fair number of stories about beauty contests--*Miss Zimbabwe, Miss Lucky 7, Miss Face of Zimbabwe, Miss M-Net* Bulawayo is the second largest city in Zimbabwe, and the young woman who won the *Miss Bulawayo* contest had won 17 previous contests. The girls are stunning! None of them wear extensions. Rather they have relaxed hair that's usually shoulder length. Most want to be models and would say becoming a "supermodel" was their ultimate professional goal.

When prize-winning novelist, Tsitsi Dangaremba was in town recently, she was interviewed in all the papers. Articles mentioned that she was "dreadlocked" as a way of talking about how unconventional she was. There are quite a few young men around town with dreadlocks, but an actor with locks said in a recent interview that they are associated with the "criminal element in Zimbabwe."

One of the leading feminist in the country wears locks and is a dead-ringer for Alice Walker. Bill and I saw her in person, when we were attending an event at the Zimbabwe International Bookfair. I also went to see some videos on gender at the Alliance Francaise. During the break, they showed music videos from South Africa, and a young man with locks and cap was the dj. The last song he played was about how Africans need to stop trying to be American. After the song, he said, "It's time to get back to our roots!" I was the only one who seemed to think it was a funny thing for him to say. ❖

# Memories of Avondale

by Koren Fatimah Clark

In 1983 the honest air of Africa sang my name, as the dusty streets hugged my legs. My mother didn't have to worry about child care, as I raced willfully through the local town to the pool or jumped to the rope with a new found friend. I was now a fortunate, proud, pretty, smart American girl. I did not see the connection between my warm reception and my American-ness, until I gravitated toward an African girl in my 4th grade class. Matilda looked much like me but stood about a foot taller than me. She and I had an immediate connection. So when the school bell sounded for lunch, I followed her. As she moved, I moved into the comfortable blanket of a lively group of Shona girls. They laughed with deep sighs of relief, as they sashayed away from the school house and into their own circle. Their mouths danced, as sweet sounds of freedom swirled from their lips. Before my tongue could vibrate in responding tones of familiar though forgotten wisdom, Matilda informed me that I did not speak Shona. The sharpness of her English words pierced through the circle, and the beautiful wordless sounds of the school girls suddenly stopped. There was an alien in our midst. I looked around. The alien was me.

Like a missionary who had just found a new cause, Matilda took me by the hand and led me to another group of students who would come to define me. In that group there were three White girls--one who was playful and had two long powerful pony-tails, one who was an intense red-head, and one who was a sensual young woman in a little girl's body. There was also a cute little colored girl, and one sweet wide-eyed girl, who was Black. As I moved from the circle where the Shona girls had gathered on the bright green grass to the quiet concrete corner where these girls were congregated, my African friend, Matilda moved away and was lost to me forever. The girl with the pony-tails, who was English, turned to me and promptly asked, "Do you believe in the Devil?" Suddenly I was entering some kind of heavy theological discussion, but, before I even had a chance to answer, the red head (who was from Italy) spoke with assurance, "Yes, there is a devil," and then went on to quote her mother's gospel. The English girl, Elizabeth and I developed quite a connection, and she often took tea at the home of the Italian girl, Louise. They made their teas

sound like something very special, so I asked to be invited. Even though Louise seemed to be intrigued by the fact that I was from America, she was reluctant to grant my request, and, when I finally did get to go to her house for tea, she warned me that I might have to be stuffed under her bed, if her mother should come home early. She said one time her parents came in unexpectedly, and Hazel (the Black African girl) had to be stuffed into her closet, until they left again. I concluded from all this that she was not really allowed to have Black people come to her house.

Elizabeth, on the other hand, had a sister who was Colored, and they lived with a Black man, who would apparently beat their mother sometimes, when he came home in the evening. I remember being with her, when he came home one day. We were playing with dolls in her room, when she suddenly yelled, "Everybody hide!" and her little sister and her older brother both ran to her side, as if they were hoping for protection. Nevertheless, Hazel and I often went to Elizabeth's house in the daytime after school to play dolls, ride bikes or swim in the swimming pool, and we had loads of fun! Hazel was a Shona girl and came from the suburbs, which were more like African villages. I never went to her home, but Elizabeth said she had been there and told me stories about Hazel's family having to use newspaper for toilet paper. Elizabeth and Hazel were quite close, but while Hazel longed to be a part of Elizabeth's fortunate world, Elizabeth's great fantasy was that *she* would one day be living in England again.

After concluding the discussion about the devil, she suddenly announced, "In 1987, I'm going back to England!" "That's a long time," said Hazel. "It may not even come." The little Colored girl looked up from her book and said, "Well, I'm going to America." I had forgotten she was there. Her hair was bound up and hung in two strong braids to her shoulders but apologized by not swinging freely like Elizabeth's. At one glance she was Black. At another glance she was White. Then, her skin settled in a light brown glow. She added, "My mom says when I go to America, I'll be rid of all the Black people." "Where in America?" I asked. "Oregon," she replied with satisfaction in her voice. "That's ridiculous," Elizabeth said. Louise was silent. "Yeah," I said, "What if in America they think *you're* Black and maybe want to get rid of you?" Then I looked again into Hazel's face and saw the large permanent smile that was her way of making amends. Our fifth grade conversation faded into the wind overcome by the sound of the school bell. These girls were to become my first "best friends," by the time I left Africa. ❖



Avondale Primary School – Jan 2000  
Harare Zimbabwe



Avondale Girls at Poolside – Jan 2000

Photos by Mic Podorson

# Interview with Fred "Sport" Beatty

In January of this year, Michael and I visited Carolyn and Bill in Harare, and the four of us spent a weekend at the Shosalozza Safari lodge located about two hours outside the city, near a place called Eiffel Flats. The lodge is owned and operated by the Beattie family. Their son Fred, Jr. (more commonly known as "Sport") shared with us his vision of establishing an educational trust and nature conservancy there and not only provided us with a wealth of information, during game drives, but also arranged an informal tour of a working gold mine located nearby. After hearing him speak Shona with some of local people, I asked him to teach me some words of greeting.

**Sport:** *First of all there are three tenses--Good morning is man gwa na nee. Good afternoon is ma ska tee. Good evening is ma nay roo. It feels like it's lunchtime--you don't have to look at the clock--it just feels like it's afternoon, so I would say to you "Ma ska tee," and you would return to say, "Ma ska tee" and then I would say "Ma swera say?" which means "How is your day?" or "How are you feeling?," and you would say "Da swera cana ma swera wo," which means "I'm fine if you're fine." Even if you aren't fine, you'd say "I'm fine if you're fine," and I would say, "Da swera!"*

**Nubra:** *Let's say the whole thing the morning way:*

**Sport:** *Man gwa na nee!*

**Nubra:** *Man gwa na nee!*

**Sport:** *Ma mooka say?*

**Nubra:** *Da mooka cana ma mooka wo...*

**Sport:** *Da mooka!*

**Nubra:** *And that was the formal way?*

**Sport:** *Yes, but, if you bump into your friend, you could very casually say to him, "Moo ree bo eri?" or "Are you well?"--you lift the sound of the "bo" to make it like a question... "eri" fits in well with "moo ree bo"...*

**Nubra:** *Moo ree bo?*



**Zimbabwean Park Ranger Sport Beattie**

*Photo by Mic Podorson*

**Sport:** *Yes--and in Chilalalapa you'd say, "Can ja nee!"*

**Nubra:** *"Can ja nee?"*

**Sport:** *Or "Bo can ja no? ...Chilalapa is a dialect of Shona--well it's a mixture of all sorts of language--that you can speak to almost any Black person and they will respond...*

**Nubra:** *Anywhere in the whole country?*

**Sport:** *Yes. Even in South Africa--even in some parts of Zambia. Chilalalapa was designed for the mines of South Africa, because they had a lot of migrant workers coming from Malawi, Zambia, Zimbabwe, so they devised a language they could teach the workers before they went into the mines. It's just a mixture of everyone's language....*

**Nubra:** *Who designed it--who made it up--the mine owners?*

**Sport:** *Yes, but then it cultured itself from there and everyone --even the White people began to speak it...*

**Nubra:** *How long ago did they start it--like a life time ago?*

**Fred:** *I would say maybe a hundred years--and obviously it changes, and people have added words...*

For more information on **Shosalozza Safari Lodge** write:  
**Sport Beattie - P O Box 146 - Eiffel Flats - Zimbabwe.**



**Gold Mine Eiffel Flats, Zimbabwe-Jan 2000**

*Photo by Mic Podorson*



**Bill and Carolyn Martin Shaw, Nubra Floyd, Mine Manager Frank Cremer and Michael Podorson**

*Photo by Sport Beattie*

## Q & A

Dear Mrs. Floyd

My name is Phaniel Joseph Linje. I am a boy of 17 and I live in Zimbabwe. I saw you once when you visited our high school in Harare, with your colleagues. You asked our class so many things about Zimbabwe, and we did too about United States.

I was happy, honestly you made my day. I enjoyed talking to you and your colleagues from America. You showed love to us by visiting our school and I will never forget that and I thank you very much for that.

The main purpose of my letter is that I want to know more about your university. This year (2000) I am in the fourth year at a high school and I am doing eight subjects which are English Language, Accounts, Mathematics, Integrated Science, Geography, Art, Shona and History. I would also like to know about the courses you offer at your university.

Do you enroll students from Africa? If so what sort of qualifications do you need for one to be enrolled at your university. With subjects I am doing what courses would suit me and how many years would one take to complete your course(s)?

Mrs. Floyd this is not an application letter but I am only asking for your help. If there is any chance that I might get a vacancy at your university please let me know by using the above mentioned address.

If you can offer scholarships to overseas students please I really need your help to have one. My parents cannot afford much that is why I am looking for help and only from you.

I know this may sound insane because we're strangers but I need your help Mrs. Floyd. If I am not in a position to qualify for a university vacancy I can as well start from high school and then to the university. If it is possible that I may come to United States for my courses or studies I will not misuse the opportunity.

I know this is a big requisition but if you can help, please help because the future is now in my hands and its about time to make it a success but only with your help Mrs. Floyd.

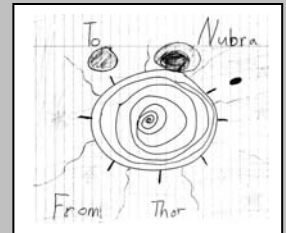
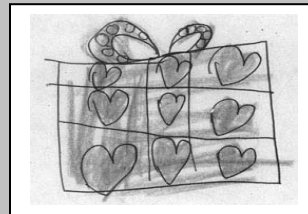
I am looking forward to hear from you and I am counting on you. I have enclosed a photograph of mine so that you can see who I am. I will send more in the next reply.

Please I am asking you to reply me because I do not want to feel desperate. I believe my plea will meet your considerations.

Goodbye for now and may GOD BLESS YOU.

Yours Sincerely,  
Phaniel Joseph Linje

\* Sorry for a long letter.



Art by **Kat & Thor Anderson**

*Greetings Mr. Linje!*

*Thank you for your letter of January 31st and the very nice photo you enclosed. It was so good to hear from one of the students we had talked with during our visit to Highfield, and I would be happy to provide you with information about my university. I'm currently teaching at California State University's Monterey Bay campus, which is a relatively new school and still has many openings. I am enclosing information from our annual catalog that may give you some sense of the school and our overall program of study. There are two programs that may be appropriate for someone with your background. One is called Management and Internationall Entrepreneurship and is for students interested in business or applied economics. The other one, which is called Global Learning, would be more suitable for students who hope to make a contribution in the areas of social policy or international services.*

*Please let me know if you would like to have more information about one or both of these programs. All of our programs assume four years of study for completion of an undergraduate degree. As a public institution, we have little in the way of financial assistance for students from other countries, but it may be possible to identify some private sources of funding for you, once you are able to qualify for admission. If you would like me to work with you on an application for the 2001-2002 school year, it would be helpful to have a copy of your school records (including national examination scores), so that I can talk more specifically with the admissions staff about your preparation for college level work. I look forward to hearing from you again, and, in the meantime, wish you all the best!*

*Nubra Elaine Floyd, PhD*

*Feb 24<sup>th</sup> - 2000*

## Little Boy Fishing

by  
**Marisa Marshall**



*This issue edited by Nubra Floyd and Tina Virrey with advice on spelling Shona words from Miriam Gondo – June 2000*