

# NYLSTROOM SCRAPBOOK

August 2008

Dear friends

Although I feel bad about Les's fall – and how awkward it is for him to do things, it has been a real treat to spend some time at home and have time to do some things that were long overdue – like clean out over 10 000 items from my computer's email "inbox!"

For my birthday, I got a card from Gloria that said, "Do something for YOURSELF, Do something FUN." One hour later the phone rang. It was our good friends the Beckleys who have relatives visiting from the USA. They wanted to know if we would like to go with them to a game farm near us where cheetahs and wild dogs are bred. Seeing as I have never seen a wild dog, and I LOVE being in the bush, I agreed on the spot! A jewel of a day – great company, interesting and people-loving guide, and beautiful nature.

At the DeWildt Shingwedzi Nature Reserve, Cheetahs who used to be people's pets or who somehow were rescued as orphaned cubs are used to breed cheetahs which are sold to zoos or taught to hunt and released back into the wild. One cheetah was a fussy eater because as a cub she was fed a leg of lamb every day! I always thought of cheetahs with fear, but in the whole world, there have only ever been two recorded human fatalities due to cheetahs – both of which took place in zoos when a member of the public somehow managed to sneak into the cage.

Cheetahs are built for speed. They don't have a clavicle, which would impede their movement. Their tail is flat, which acts as a rudder. Their paws have special ridges on the bottom for traction, and many other details which show what a wonderful Creator we have. For example, those black "tear drops" coming down from the eyes serve as built-in sunglasses!

Wild dogs are especially interesting. There is no known human death due to wild dogs. They kill by confusing their prey with their frenzied barking (which they use to communicate with each other). It is the most amazing sound – it sounds kind of like chickens when a fox is in the chicken run. LOUD too. They knew our game viewing vehicle had their food in it, so WE were the prey and they ran circles around us, barking incessantly.

They are very social animals and believe in making sure the puppies have top priority in getting food. Even in the wild, they are very successful at raising their young to adulthood – very few die. At the reserve, the puppies ate along side the adults. (They feed them ordinary dog food!) After a few minutes the puppies were hungry again so they approached the mother with whiney yaps. This caused her to regurgitate her food, and they lapped it up. They were quite messy about it. In the wild, the older dogs, perhaps too old to hunt, come and lick up the left-overs. If the puppies are still hungry, the mother approaches another dog in the pack, male or female, and licks it on the mouth, causing them to regurgitate food for the puppies. It is wonderful how the whole pack is committed to feeding the babes. Wouldn't it be just too wonderful if the whole church was feeding on the word so that each one had something to give to the spiritual babes so that very few of them died?

With all the problems in Zimbabwe, one thing that still works is the postal service. I never realized until a few years ago how much African people treasure receiving letters. We can visit people personally and teach and have not one person give feedback on the lessons. But we get LOTS of feedback on the lessons we send by letter! Postage is very expensive and I tell the ladies I do not expect them to answer, but sometimes they send letters via people they know who are crossing the border and sometimes they enclose letters together from women of other churches. Today I received a letter with NO postage on it – the lady wrote across the top: "Pay Forward." The postage due was one BILLION Zim dollars and we had to pay about one US dollar to receive it. These letters are truly labors of love as it is so difficult it is for them to compose a letter in English. I only wish my Zulu was as good as their English! (I have spent literally hundreds of hours trying to learn Zulu - but have very little to show for it.)

"Dear Madam" (they are SO courteous always!) "I am thanking god for this opportunity to write to you. Very very happy to here that you are still think other women's in Africa. We are always praying to meeting again all of us strong. We all receive the letter from you but our country is hard to get anything which will prevent our life. We are going to vote again on the 27th June 2008 because our country is know poor. Even mealie-meal we are starving no transport again. But we are praying and spraying the gospel all over the world." (Praying and spraying – how many of us do that, when we have all our needs met and more!) "...we must help each other to teach more lesson. Can't you post more lesson about hard time we receive in life. ... God have mercy to your family and other Christian in South Africa including Mr Maydell. Good new when we meet. Good lesson again. Good lyfe again. With mercy love and grace, Memory Mbiba and ladies of church of Christ. Mangwande. (Memory is the one with the bow in her hair who is distributing a box of clothing. This picture was taken in March 2006 – notice the good crop!)

My heart is warmed by Memory's faith and love and by the memories of Mangwande and the neighboring village of Mankunzane - the place where the oxen pulled us out of the mud – where they baptized someone in a hole in the ground they had dug to get drinking water - where Les ran into the phone wires that were hidden in tree branches and broke the phone pole and the sisters came running out and crying and throwing their arms around me. Les and I SO MUCH MISS seeing our brethren. It WILL be good news when we meet – in this life or the next – but we are praying night and day for Zimbabwe, primarily for their sake, but also so that we can meet again in this life! We hope and pray that by the time we return from the USA, it will be possible to again travel to Zimbabwe. (We are, as you can imagine, extremely excited about our trip to the USA!)

My heart is also warmed by the emails we receive from many of you, and especially by your prayers. Please pray that Les's arm heals completely and that healing will also come to Zimbabwe.

With love, Linda (and Les) Maydell



Cheetah at nature reserve



"tear drop" sunglasses



Sound like a chicken



committed to their young



distribute clothing 3/06