

# Sewpportive Friends

A stitch of compassion goes a long way

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Volume 3



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*Join us in our journey, as we help encourage women in rural Africa by providing them with handmade, reusable feminine hygiene products.*

## ZIMBABWE, July 2017

The time is ticking away quickly! In just a matter of weeks we are off to Zimbabwe. The majority of our luggage is packed; we are bringing the handmade kits created by you, our many incredible volunteers and generous contributors.

Over the past 11 months, we have received monetary donations allowing us to produce and meet our goal of 300 Wash Pad Kits. Along the way, we have added a number of new faces to our production team. Our sewing group and production team includes Fonda, Carol, Cheri, Michelle, Diana, Sally, Joanna, Jeanne, Sarah, Ben, Nelle, Merrill, Bryant, Bege, Donna, Jenn V, Emily, Ellen, Kathlee, Andrea, Lindsey, Suzanne, Kathy, Denise, Christine, Jenn O, Franny, and Julie.

Thank you from the bottom of our hearts for your compassion, kindness, and support!

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*We make a living by what we get. We make a life by what we give.* Sir Winston Churchill

## Simple ways to help THE LOCAL ECONOMY

While our focus is providing feminine hygiene kits and teaching local girls and women to sew, we are always interested and open to other ways we can better the communities we sponsor.

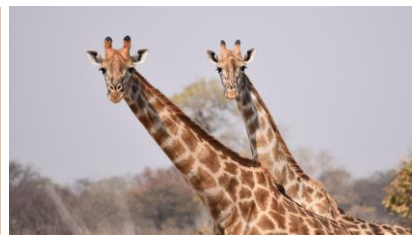
This July, we are meeting with fabric suppliers in Victoria Falls to evaluate our options about purchasing sewing class materials locally. We will strive to find high quality fabric and materials similar to what we use when the pads are sewn in the U.S. By purchasing our materials in Zimbabwe, we will be supporting the local economy and know that each dollar donated is going further, because it will be re-invested back into the community.

## THE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION

At the end of March, Julie and Diana went to The Freedom Project at Wellesley College for a discussion of the human rights situation in Zimbabwe. Shingirai Taodzera, a political scientist, international development specialist, and PhD candidate in international development at the University of Ottawa was the invited speaker. Taodzera provided an overview of the country's

Sewpportive Friends is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit and grassroots organization. Contributions are tax deductible and receipts are delivered for each gift.

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## Sewpportive Star

We'd like to introduce and thank Carol Chilton a shining Sewpportive Star. Carol started the first day Julie said, "Mom, I'm going to make feminine hygiene pads for the rural communities we will be visiting in Zimbabwe." Her response was "I'd love to help. What can I do?"

Carol has been our lead pad insert producer, in addition to tracing, cutting and sewing. She has sewn close to **2,000 pad inserts!** She also carries the "Quality Control" title and inspects every sewn item to insure we are providing high quality kits to the women and girls.

Carol's dedication is inspiring and contagious. Wherever her travels bring her, on vacation or to the grocery store, she shares the Sewpportive Friends story.

Thank you Carol for your continued love, support and helping hands. We are so grateful for all you do!

political, economic and human rights conditions under the current government led by Robert Mugabe.

The talk provided purpose for why our work is imperative in this region. Zimbabwe has a 60-75% poverty rate and food shortages are a constant worry in the rural areas. In addition, the lack of trained medical staff remains a significant problem. According to the World Health Organization, during 2000-2010 Zimbabwe had fewer than two doctors for every 10,000 people.

Sewpportive Friends is dedicated to health, education and gender equality for young women in rural Africa. We plan to provide the tools and hope, so they may have a successful, brighter future.

## Stone Age Rock Art

With our current focus on helping communities in Zimbabwe, we thought it would be fun to share interesting facts we came across during our travels.

This landlocked country is located in the southern hemisphere; bordering South Africa, Botswana, Zambia and Mozambique. It is the size of the state of Montana. Zimbabwe is a beautiful country, rich in history, culture, art, flora and fauna that you cannot find outside of this region of the world.

During our last trip, we visited the unique area of Matobo Hills which is located just south of Zimbabwe's second largest city, Bulawayo. The landscape is made up of massive rock



formations and kopjes that cover over 1,200 square miles. Hidden in the crevices and caves of these formations is the evidence, history and story of the "San" people; the bushman paintings. Some say this area is the origin of man.

"The San artists used special pigments and natural minerals that have survived the onslaught of climate and time." This region has the highest concentration of rock art in all of Southern Africa. There are over 15,000 sights and some of these paintings are over 13,000 years old.

### Amazing!



*Find the cause that touches your heart. Then, lend a helping hand, give a donation, or help raise awareness.*

*Thank you for your kindness and support.*

