



# Sewpportive Friends

A stitch of compassion goes a long way.

November 2019  
Volume 10



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

## Simple ideas....

We all make decisions that change our path in life: college, career, marriage, family, retirement... What pushes us to make each of these decisions? Knowledge, love, fear, planning, nature, or purpose? Often our decisions result from many factors, or sometimes a **simple**, determined thought that comes from deep within.

Recalling some good and not-so-good decisions I have made, my life experiences all are part of what should have happened in my life. All being necessary to be where I am today both physically and spiritually.

Good or not, all these decisions were necessary for me to embrace the path that I have walked to be here, to be part of the Sewpportive Friends mission. Never in a million years did I think making washable, feminine pads would be part of my story. How incredibly wonderful these past few years have been learning, providing, meeting new friends, and embracing the unexpected changes in life from a **simple idea**.

Listen to your simple ideas as they might just be part of your purpose – the next chapter in your story.

Thank you for joining us on this journey.

*Julie*



Entebbe, Uganda

*Written by Margie Bower*

This picture of the buttress tree was taken at the botanical garden in Entebbe, Uganda during our trip in June. Looking at the above-ground roots of this enormous tree made me think of all of you. Our roots spread far and wide, but we still join together to give each other strength to grow and be strong. Without our supporters and volunteers, we wouldn't have the strength that we do to continue and expand our work with the menstrual hygiene crisis in Africa. Our visits may feel too short, but our roots are running deep...thanks to all of you.

## 2019 Activities



### MAY

- Volunteers sewing and packing for June/July trip

### JUNE

- Depart for Uganda
- Meeting with Hamza Businge, Ray of Choice Africa
- Sewing class at St. Monica's School with Sister Rosemary and friends, Gulu
- Volunteers cutting and sewing

### JULY

- Visit with Pepsi and our friends, Chisuma Sewing Group
- Provide sewing supplies to Ndlovu Secondary School (Victoria Falls area)
- Provided supplies to Sibongile Sibanda's church group in Filabusi along with three schools in the Filabusi area.
- Sianyanga Primary School visit
- White Waters Secondary School visit and delivery of sewing supplies



*Sianyanga Primary School*

### AUGUST

- Volunteers cutting, sewing, snapping, and packing

### SEPTEMBER

- Meeting with Lucien, Director of Ethandweni Children's Home, Matopos
- Window Covering Association of America (WCAA) provided finished pads
- Volunteers cutting, sewing, snapping, packing

### OCTOBER

- Production and preparation for November mission trip
- Received sewn pads from WCAA Volunteers
- Coleen Ryan and Volunteers from Waldorf School at Moraine Farm cut and trace for November trip

### NOVEMBER

- Mission trip to Zimbabwe

### MARCH 2020

- Mission trip to Uganda

### JULY/AUGUST 2020

- Mission trip to Zimbabwe

Preparing and organizing for delivery of pad kits and supplies is a project that happens throughout the year. Communication with our friends and new communities in Africa occurs almost every day. Keeping everyone up-to-date on the activities sometimes takes a little longer than we hope. So, please feel free to reach out anytime if you have questions or just want to hear what's going on. We'd love to hear from you!



### November 2019

A group of 7 Sewpportive Friends will arrive in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe in November. We will spend 3 nights in Matopos where we will be visiting Ethandweni Children's Home where

we will teach the girls how to sew and provide Wash Pad kits. It is our first time [visiting] [UP1] Ethandweni. We are very excited to meet new friends!

Matopos is a beautiful area painted with rock formations that looked sculpted by hand yet are naturally formed. During our downtime, we will hike, safari and enjoy the local foods.

White Waters Secondary School will be our next visit in this area. Our friends always welcome us with songs, dancing, poetry, and we enjoy some outdoor fun and games. It is always a special time.

From Matopos we will stop by Sianyanga where we will visit our school friends and deliver supplies. We will chat with the girls and mothers how their production is progressing. From photos they have sent over the past months, they are sewing professional quality pads!

We will spend the next few days enjoying the amazing wildlife, sunsets and starlit skies in Hwange National Park. We will sleep at tented camps where the sounds of some nocturnal animals (jackal, lion, hippo, hyena, etc.) may sooth us to sleep.

We will end our trip in Victoria Falls. Here we will visit with the ladies of Chisuma village. We will provide sewing supplies and enjoy time catching up with their activities.

We will enjoy a walk at Victoria Falls and a sunset cruise on the Zambezi River. Lots of activities to end our journey before departing to the USA and start preparing for our next trip in March 2020.

## Volunteer Activities

On September 30, 2019, I had the pleasure of joining a meeting of the local chapter of the Window Covering Association of America where the women in the group



volunteered their time to making the pads and inserts for us to take on the November trip to Zimbabwe. Jayna Manzelli and friends welcomed me and went right to work quickly learning the pattern and expertly sewing the pads. We talked about the adventures of the Sewpportive Friends team as they travel in Zimbabwe and Uganda and discuss the reality of the feminine hygiene crisis and how their work is really making a difference. Be it cutting, tracing, sewing, snapping or adding Velcro, many hands make light work. Thanks again to these amazing volunteers!

*Margie*

We warmly welcome new friends to help in any way possible. With everyone's busy lives, volunteering should be flexible, convenient and fun. There are many opportunities to volunteer in the comfort of your home. Please reach out and we will be happy to discuss the many options.



**We are very grateful for your continued support. Thank you!**