

The Global Gallop

A publication by The Federation of Horses in Education and Therapy International AISBL

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benefits**

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January Issue 2023



SAVING SARDA

SOUTH AFRICAN RIDING FOR THE DISABLED ASSOCIATION - SARDA CAPE TOWN

Images and article submitted by Steven Lukey - SARDA Brand Ambassador.

The Power of the Mass, the Question, and the Gift of Giving

The July 2022 Edition of the Global Gallop featured SARDA's efforts to save this 50-Year-Old Non-Profit Organization through its audacious Lighting Up Africa Project- a Journey from Cairo to Cape Town. This article seeks your support through the "Power of the Mass" to Save SARDA

Why Should I help You- "That is the Question"

Raising funds and seeking sustainable solutions to challenges is not an easy task, more so when faced with the blunt question, "Why should I help you?". On my recent travels through Africa, the Middle East and Europe, I was indeed asked this question and was somewhat taken aback by the way it was asked.

SARDA's incredible Journey in 2022, of which I have been privileged to be part of, has provided many answers to the above difficult question, and equally raises more questions about the mysteries as to why certain people give and others don't, what causes do people respond to, or perhaps what mood they may be in at the time of approach.

Walking and driving through the streets of Cape Town I am often confronted by people trying to survive, seeking food or money in



Images: SARDA visits Egypt

exchange for waving you into a parking bay, selling you a magazine, begging for food or trying to wash your windscreen. Each of these encounters raises different emotions which in turn, depending on one's mood and circumstances may yield generous gifts and sympathy or alternatively an irritable turn of the head, a wave of the hand or a shy smile.



Image credit: SARDA



Image credit: SARDA



Image: Legends and Heroes Day at Kenilworth Racecourse- Seated from Left: Belinda Sampson (SARDA Founder, Andrew Sampson first SARDA Rider, Debbie Spence (Founder member Joy Findlay's daughter) Standing from Left: Steven Lukey (SARDA Brand Ambassador) Prof Thuli Madonsela (Guest Speaker), Bee Lukey (SARDA Honorary Secretary) Ian Plaatjies (COO SABC), Dawn Goodley (SARDA Chairperson), Cheryl Borchardt, Bibi Aisha, Pru Allen (Volunteers) and Pippa Richardson (SARDA Management Committee)

From Cape Town Legends and Heroes to Egypt and Back.

SARDA's 50th Anniversary preparations started with a phenomenal fundraising event on 23 July 2022 whereby the Founders of SARDA, and over 400 hundred people from all walks of the community came together to celebrate and support SARDA's incredible investment in humanity.

This 7-hour action-packed ceremony was a true display of equity, inclusion and diversity, comprising music, art, dance, racing, three extraordinary speeches including a Foreword by HRH Princess Anne, and live streaming support from several countries around the world. The music and dance performance by pupils and teachers of Bel Porto Special Needs School was a highlight, leaving not a single dry eye in the house.

Princesses, Presidents, Professors and People.

HRH Princess Anne acknowledged SARDA's life changing impact of its activities. President Gisela Rhodes of HETI's



BUCKINGHAM PALACE

A warm welcome and many thanks to all of you South African Legends and Heroes here today supporting SARDA, as it moves towards it's 50th anniversary in 2023. What a truly remarkable milestone you have achieved.

Since joining Riding for the Disabled Association as Patron in 1971 and President in 1985, I have been privileged to champion its work and visit RDA centers around the world. Some 28 years ago, I visited SARDA in Cape Town, and was impressed at the beauty of its setting, and the flourishing, well-run organization and what it had achieved. You have clearly continued this approach as you reach this anniversary. I am though aware that SARDA is now facing a challenge to the continued use of the land and facilities. This is a concern and the reason for holding this awareness raising and support generating event. It is vital that we are able to sustain SARDA's future and continue the benefit it has brought to thousands.

During my visits to RDA centers over many years, I have seen at first-hand, the life-changing impact of our activities. This has been brought about by the unique connection between the environment, participants, horses and volunteers that united, bring psychological and physical benefits to as many disabled people as possible. One of the great strengths of our RDA community is our ability to have a national influence on the world of disability's therapy and sport, while maintaining a local network that reaches deep into the heart of our rural and urban communities.

I welcome SARDA's ambitious efforts and intentions to raise funds to cement its future. Your intention to make even more of a difference to communities through Lighting up Africa at large, through a long ride awareness campaign, is indeed an example of innovative thinking and ambition. SARDA's longevity is due to all of you. Together you have set an example of excellence, discipline, integrity, respecting everyone and encouraging inclusion in society. We must all look to strengthen our RDA Groups and find new ways for people to benefit – with education, schools and horses at the heart of everything we do.

Looking ahead, as President of RDA and in recognition of the importance and continuity of SARDA in Africa, I encourage more support for SARDA. Your record speaks for itself which is what will assist you on your path to achieve independence, and that it will enable you to continue your priceless work for the next 50 years. To all of you and your volunteers, staff, schools and supporters who are embarking on a new chapter in your history, I would like to encourage you and say thank you for everything you do, to sustain and promote RDA in Africa, and to inspire others to do the same.

Image: Letter from HRH Princess Anne

support, including joining SARDA in Egypt to promote SARDA's Lighting Up Africa project, embellished the essence of SARDA's work. World renowned Professor Madonsela's incredible speech on Ubuntu, Equity and Justice magnified the significance of SARDA's work and influence on humanity, and Chairperson Dawn Goodley's

speech on the power of people and volunteerism were equally met with standing ovations.



Image: Dawn Goodley delivers HRH Princess Anne's address.



Image: African diva, Sylvia Mduyvelwa sings praises to Prof. Madonsela



Image: Mr. Ian Plaatjies, COO of the SABC

Mr. Ian Plaatjies C.O.O. of South Africa's largest Broadcaster re-affirmed his organization's support for SARDA, which included sponsorship and the attendance and participation of two live radio broadcasts at the event.

Directors and Captains of Industry representing twenty-two different avenues of service filled the venue, and generous contributions from Headline Sponsors, Econorisk, Eurolux, Emirates Airlines and the support of many local sponsors and businesses that provided valuable donations and auction items, concluded the proof, that the power of the mass when focused, can make a significant difference to a World in Turmoil.

2022 also saw the completion of yet another fantastic Country Side Challenge event with hundreds of students, teachers and parents gracing SARDA's grounds and receiving their well-deserved certificates and awards. SARDA's amazing volunteers including internationals from Germany, Kenya and Uganda added a young and refreshing dynamism and inspirational leadership, passion and the promise of continued success.

SARDA Visits Dubai

The generosity of my dear friend Sultan Mansoori and an equal giant, Boutros Boutros (Senior Vice President, Corporate Communications, Marketing and Brand at Emirates Group) supported and welcomed SARDA to their shores, and their hospitality, kindness, direction and continued support looking into 2023 is promising and exciting.

SARDA also had the opportunity to visit and make acquaintance with



Image: Images of the Country Side Challenge and our inspirational international volunteers from Germany, Uganda and Kenya

two Special Needs riding schools. The warm engagement of the management and staff at the Equestrian Association for people of determination and at the Al Marmoom Equine Therapy Initiative, also reflected the common bond that unites such therapy initiatives around the World.

Germany – The Power of the Mass understood

I guess that when I initiated the concept of doing an Epic Horse Ride through Africa to Save SARDA, through the prospect of attracting World interest to participate in a Crowd Fund, the conundrum of numbers was already embedded in my mind.

The scale of disability highlighted in the United Nations statistics of over one billion people Worldwide, although providing compelling numbers as a basis for a crowd fund, provided no clear insight as to why particular people or nations would invest in a cause in other countries, given the circumstances in their own countries.



Image: SARDA was hosted at the Emirates Group Head office by Boutros Boutros and Sultan Al Bin Saeed Mansoori.



Image: Visit to the Equestrian Association for people of determination and the Al Marmoom Equine Therapy Initiative

SARDA's visit to Germany started to crystalize my thoughts, and whilst we had already achieved World attention, we were still not able to attract sufficient funds to Save and Sustain SARDA.

In Warendorf (North Rhine Westphalia), we were honoured to meet with Ina El Kobbia, Head of the Deutsches Kuratorium für Therapeutisches Reiten.

Ina explained their organisation's transformation from initially being reliant on fundraising, to becoming a self-sustainable enterprise through the provision of professional services.

Germany and Dubai whilst being diametrically opposed in certain metrics, have a common thread in that they have rapidly been able to build incredible institutions by uniting people and attracting human and financial capital.

I was astonished to learn from Ina, that they had around Six Hundred Thousand Members, and I asked the question if **each member donated 1 Euro for 3 years to SARDA (not a big ask)**, would the power of this mass alone not solve SARDA's threat to its land, and also be an incredible investment to scale up operations for the disabled in the rest of Africa? – Yes, it would Light Up Africa.

Ina's introduction to the German Olympic Riding Training Facility, the Military Sport School of excellence and the German State Stud, encapsulated the quality and excellence of the institutions that they have been able to build and sustain.

The question remained, why would the Germans help SARDA and how could one



Image: SARDA's, Bee Lukey with Head of DKTHR, Ina El Kobbia

unlock this partnership?

As SARDA journeyed South to the elegant German town of Memmingen, the revelation that Germany was already a special part of SARDA's family touched me profoundly.

We were hosted by Birgit and Ulli Miller of the Dr Hans Fischer Foundation. The Miller Family have a very special place in SARDA's heart, in that not only did their talented daughter volunteer at SARDA, they have consistently and continuously donated to the wellbeing of SARDA.



Image: Birgit, Steve, Bee and Ulli

Whilst earlier in the year the Covid Pandemic prevented me from visiting the Millers, I felt that it was imperative to make the effort to embrace such amazing people that I had never met in person before, yet were so willing and eager to assist in the continuity and growth of SARDA.

This visit to Memmingam was uplifting in so many ways in that we were all able to share time, friendship, comradery and to experience culture and cuisine in new places.

The culmination of this engagement brought home that the symbiotic trait of giving, lies deep in the heart of humanity and manifests itself across a broad range of emotions. It is indeed gratifying to give. The simple act of kindness of a child's smile embroiders the essence, that receiving is a gift of giving, no matter what the measure

The Cairo Crescendo – Unity in Diversity

The end of an incredible journey to Egypt in October 2022, was the beginning of another new friendship and an enhanced understanding of human endeavour.

During our travels and engagements, I learned and experienced the great power of connectivity. Over a lifetime, one often wonders whether certain unexpected outcomes are perhaps due to coincidence, fate, destiny, synergy, faith, karma or positive resonance with the universe, whatever one's belief.

When President Eng. Hesham Hatab of the Egyptian Olympic Committee invited



Image: President Hatab and Steve Lukey

SARDA to Egypt, and President Gisela Rhodes from HETI flew into Cairo from North America to join us, it was not difficult for me to believe that somehow “the Ultimate Observer” had a hand in this. How crazy was this- SARDA found Sultan Mansoori through a mutual friend that I was helping, Sultan contacted a mutual friend he had in Egypt, Boutros Boutros at Emirates Group is of Egyptian origin, Gisela who is German introduced SARDA to Ina in Warendorf, who also happens to be of Egyptian Origin, the Millers' daughter from Germany visited and trained at SARDA in Cape Town and it was also discovered that President Hatab's son is a miracle



Image: The Egyptian Olympic Committee office, Cairo, Egypt



Image credit: Steven Lukey

cancer survivor who has established an amazing prosthetic business. Whilst so many more links can be mentioned in my story, I will leave these for another day, save to say – Wow, This Really Did Happen.

Cairo is a Mega City with close on 22 million people living cheek by jowl in the Greater Cairo Metropole. If you have never been before, you will be excused for experiencing a culture shock if you arrive unprepared and without a clear itinerary, guide or friend.

Needless to say, we were treated like Royalty and the friendliness, kindness and enthusiastic participation by President Hatab and his team, has led to the start of establishing a Riding for People of Determination Centre in Egypt, and whilst I am writing this article, a delegation from Egypt has arranged to come to SARDA for training, and to develop an event that will hopefully see the start of the long ride to Light Up Africa.

If you can face the Great Pyramids of Giza and start to count each building block, you will feel and understand the power of the mass and the sweat, blood, patience, tenacity and determination it takes to build a true and sustainable legacy.

**To support SARDA'S crowd
fund visit:
www.sarda.co.za**

UBUNTU – Join SARDA's Crowd Fund Live and Grow Your Impact on Humanity

As our journey through 2022 that seemed surreal, comes to an end; it was your belief and support that made it all happen.

The question of “why I should help you” has been answered, as in giving there is receiving, in seeking you will find and in knocking, even the most unexpected doors will be opened.

SARDA invites you all to visit us, stay with us, work with us and experience and see what we do. Come and plant your country's flag in our Legends Garden and be proud to be part of a Living Legacy that brings Joy to the World. Become part of SARDA's Crowd.

I thank all the fantastic people I have met during this SARDA adventure of a Lifetime into the soul of humanity. Thank You to all you special people across, Ireland, England, Scotland, Wales, Germany, Egypt, Dubai, Turkey, Guatemala, Argentina, Japan, Italy, Finland, Uganda, Kenya, Ethiopia, Botswana, Namibia and the entire South African Community that supports SARDA's cause. You are all Legends and Heroes whose Love and Generosity are heartfelt by the thousands of children you have assisted for 50 Years. May the next 50 Years be equally prosperous.