



# PIETERMARITZBURG AGENCY FOR COMMUNITY SOCIAL ACTION

eNewsletter No. 1

21 November 2012

## CONTENTS:

- 1. From the Director's Desk
- 2. News
- 3. Events & Invitations
- 4. Feature/ Debate
- 5. Your Letters/ Write to us!

**Address:**  
 170 Hoosen Haffejee (Berg)  
 Street, Pietermaritzburg 3200,  
 South Africa

P O Box 2338 Pietermaritzburg  
 3200, South Africa

**Tel:** +27 - (0)33 - 342 0052

**Fax:** +27 - (0)33 - 342 0303

**Email:** [admin@pacsa.org.za](mailto:admin@pacsa.org.za)

[www.pacsa.org.za](http://www.pacsa.org.za)

## Dear PACSA Friends

Welcome to our first edition of the PACSA eNewsletter. We are thrilled to bring you a monthly update on the latest happenings that PACSA has been involved in with our community partners. You will also be informed of key upcoming events that you might like to attend, or follow on our [website](#) or on [Facebook](#).

### The Editor

#### 1. From the Director's Desk

It feels sad to make the following announcement in the first of our new-look newsletters, but it is also an exciting place to be – both for me and PACSA, because it is based on a deep confidence in the strength of PACSA at this stage.

After much deep thought and prayer, and quite a few tears, I have resigned from the directorship of PACSA. I feel the time has come to hand over PACSA to new leadership. I have been with PACSA for 10 years and I believe my specific leadership tasks here are done now. I am excited about the strong position that PACSA is in, with good financial prospects, an excellent staff and solid next level leadership.

I have every confidence in the capable leadership of Mervyn Abrahams, current Deputy Director, Programmes, to take over the reigns as Acting Director from January to March 2013, and in the competent admin and finance leadership of Nareshnie Maharaj, who will support Mervyn. A systematic search process is to begin in November, and you will be kept abreast of developments along the way.

I would like to thank the PACSA staff, Council and community partners, as well as the many members who have engaged with me during good times and hard times, for everything I have learnt from you on my leadership journey. I am sure our paths will continue to cross, though in different ways, as I will continue to be driven by my faith to live and work as an activist for justice in our country. I would love to stay in touch, so I would really appreciate it if you could simply change my email address in your address book to [danielagennrich8@gmail.com](mailto:danielagennrich8@gmail.com).

#### 2. News

##### PACSA's Submission to NERSA on ESKOM's 2012 Application for Tariff Increases

PACSA opposes a 16% increase to ESKOM and requests that NERSA rejects Eskom's application. We base our objection on the grounds that:

1. With an increase of over 20% for each of the past three years electricity has already become unaffordable for many domestic consumers. A 16% increase for the next five years will push consumers, already battling with increased costs of essential services, into deeper poverty.
2. Such an increase will reverse developmental gains made since 1995 and introduce further inequities in access to electricity between rich and poor and deepen socio-economic inequality.
3. Electricity is a public resource for the benefit of all citizens - it is derived mainly from coal, which is taken out of the earth by labour. All South African's have a claim on national resources and all should derive the benefits.

Read PACSA's full submission and recommendations by downloading the PDF document here:

[www.pacsa.org.za](http://www.pacsa.org.za)

##### Thursday in Black

PACSA has adopted the **Thursday in Black** campaign. The idea behind this campaign is to invite people to wear black on Thursdays and a button promoting the campaign. This is one way in which we are able to raise awareness in society (and the sectors in which we work) of the extent of violence on women and children, and play a role in saying NO! We shall wear black on Thursday until there is no more rape and violence against women. Read more on:

[www.pacsa.org.za](http://www.pacsa.org.za)

##### Launch of the Food Price Barometer Report 2012

PACSA has launched its 2012 Food Price Barometer Report - part of an ongoing monitoring of rising food prices. Download the full report here or read articles from the The Witness and Maritzburg Sun.  
[www.pacsa.org.za](http://www.pacsa.org.za)

### **Sheba Bokamoso - look to the future**

PACSA has just returned from another wonderful soccer tournament with 60 youth including custodians and coaches from our community partners from uMgungundlovu District. This tournament was called "Sheba Bokamosa" (looking to the future), which has its roots in the 2010 PACSA mini World Cup tournament. Read more:  
[www.pacsa.org.za](http://www.pacsa.org.za)

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## **3. Events and Invitations**

### **PACSA Film Festival**

The PACSA Film Festival 2012 was met with great excitement this year, and screened 5 brilliant multi-award-winning films provided by the TCFF. These movies provided a space for communities to reflect on the current situation in our country. PACSA received a number of comments from viewers, who expressed their gratitude for this programme and said that it has been an eye opener, providing different perspectives on various issues. Other community members have asked PACSA if they, the communities, can organise regular screenings of these films. The success this year was to take the festival to communities right where they are, holding the festival over 3 days in Dambuza, Mpophomeni and the PMB CBD. The numbers of viewers grew from last year, and hopefully will continue to grow further in the future. The festival will be held before school exams in the future and with a longer lead time for advertising. We look forward to seeing you next year!

More about this years movies:

1. **Roadmap to Apartheid:** First-time directors take a detailed look at the apartheid analogy commonly used to describe the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.
2. **We are together:** Filmed over three years and spanning two continents, We Are Together is the story of an orphanage, unlike one you have ever seen before.
3. **The Mothers' House:** The Mothers House is a record of four years in the life of Miche, a charming, precocious yet troubled teenage girl from Bonteheuwel, Cape Town, in post-Apartheid South Africa.
4. **Bastardy:** "It's double jeopardy when you're black and you're homosexual mate - and you're a bloody thief and a thespian too..." Jack Charles.

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## **4. Features/ Debate**

**Here is something from uMama wePACSA, Joan Kerchhoff, to get us thinking and talking:**

"In apartheid days we were very aware of the economic inequality that existed, and a number of NGOs, churches and individuals came up with the idea of self-tax as a way of giving and sharing. People wrote books and articles to support the idea of those earning well to tax themselves as a way of being more in community than is possible in a society divided between rich and poor.

Today, economic inequality still divides. There is a huge wage gap. Some analysts believe that inequality is one of the underlying factors causing the tragic massacre at Marikana. Perhaps some of the ideas of the past could be re-introduced, although I am under no illusion that such efforts will change a system that needs radical restructuring. There are many people who already give generously e.g. to the Community Chest or Gift of the Givers. Self-tax requires a managed fund to use the money for those in dire need, not so much as handouts as for support and encouragement. And, overall, a lifestyle change among the wealthy (of whatever colour) could go a long way towards easing tensions in a violent society such as ours."

Joan Kerchhoff

WHAT DO YOU THINK? Write in (see below).

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### **4. Your Letters - Write to us!**

Things are changing rapidly in our society currently, and many new uncertainties and challenges come up daily. We would love to open up a space for people to write in and **share your thoughts, your concerns, and your ideas for how we can live and work in ways that take seriously the plight of those on the margins and the poorest in our city, our country and our world.**

Or simply **tell us your story to inspire or challenge us to action.**

We look forward to hearing from you.

[danielag@pacsadirectors.org.za](mailto:danielag@pacsadirectors.org.za)

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