



JAN 2010

On the 3rd of March we are off to Germany again! We have to be home for 2 months in order to legally extend our sending contract (it's a government thing). That means we will be doing a lot of presentations all over Germany until the 6th of May. The diary for that time is filling up quickly and we are looking forward to see many old - and hopefully just as many new - faces during this trip. Actually, it was never our intention to be in Germany so often. Many think it's a pure luxury. But for us it means to be somewhat uprooted every single time and also reminded of the fact that the most important people (family, close friends) cannot be substituted in our new home country. It takes a while for our hearts to "arrive", be it in Germany or South Africa...

# MISSION

The new year has begun and we are already back into South African everyday life. And because it fits so well, we'll start 2010 with a new newsletter design, that you will hopefully like (never mind telling us if that's not the case :)). Like we mentioned before, we spent an unexpected Christmas in Germany because Marco's father had a stroke. He is doing very well again and is overcoming some last challenges (like writing) in a residential rehabilitation. It was good to be with the family, especially for Naomi - she enjoyed being spoilt by the grandparents but really hated all the snow and the cold!

## Surprises For The New Year

**M**any schools, churches and just random people had **incredible events** going on before or during Christmas to raise funds for Sibongile and the Wakkerstroom school. A 4th grade elementary class did a sponsored run in the freezing cold and those 20 kids raised a spectacular amount of 3000 Euros for both projects! All these donations make the start into a new year so much easier; we might even be able to raise the meager salaries of the Sibongile care givers by a minimal amount.

**Personally**, we have also received an amazing and surprising gift for Christmas. A person, whom we vaguely know and who has been travelling in South Africa before, gave us a voucher for 7 nights, incl. breakfast in a 4-star guesthouse in the Eastern Cape! We were so overwhelmed, yet doubted that we were able to take that holiday this year, because of time restraint.

But then we realized: if God blesses us with such an amazing substitute for the Christmas holidays we missed out on, then we cannot just let that opportunity pass by. So the holidays are booked for the 22nd of February to the 1st of March. When the "giver" heard that we hadn't arranged a rental car for that week (we did try to be frugal here), he simply booked one for us online - an "authoritarian decision" which was a must (that's what he called it). Wow! How can we say no to that?

The third surprise (well, we kind of guessed it) was the big ultrasound scan we had last Tuesday. We are expecting a **baby boy!** We are over the moon, Naomi is completely indifferent (except that she can say "braathaa" now, but of course in German) and Spalke Junior seems to be really healthy. Due date is still the 15th of June, so only 138 days to go :)

The little guy can play in the World Cup with this foot!

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marcojustinenaomibaby

99 Villa D'Algarve  
Baden Powell Drive  
Muizenberg 7945  
South Africa  
Home: 0027 21 788 1355  
Mobile: 0027 82 795 8077  
marco@spalke.com

