



## TWINS COME OF AGE BY HELPING SOUTH AFRICAN CHILDREN Greenhill School siblings mobilize donors with Karing 4 Kliptown

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SPECIAL CONTRIBUTOR

**J**ack and Emma Yurich set out to raise \$10,000 for Kliptown, an impoverished suburb of Soweto in South Africa.

A year of halva bake sales, GoFundMe donations, and a tennis tournament later, the twins had raised almost triple that amount.

It all started with the pursuit of a long-term philanthropic project for the Greenhill School eighth-graders' B'nai Mitzvah, a Jewish coming of age celebration. When their mother Joanne, originally from South Africa, returned from a trip to Kliptown in 2016, they found their cause.

Touched by the township's poor living conditions, where 70% of the 44,000 population is unemployed, the twins established Karing 4 Kliptown in 2017.

"It ties into our roots," said Emma, now 14.

After raising awareness of their cause via GoFundMe, Jack planned a tennis tournament that raised \$1,000, and the twins sold their mom's homemade halva sweets weekly. With another \$16,700 donations in lieu of B'nai Mitzvah gifts, they vastly surpassed their goal.

"You need the support of your community and your friends and family to be able to reach your goals," Joanne said. "And you rely on them to make it all come together."

They partnered with a Kliptown preschool where \$27,392 would supply students with



**LEFT: The Yurich family and others celebrate at Future Angels Day Care in Kliptown, South Africa. TO RIGHT: Jack and Emma Yurich with preschoolers Nkosana Kalipa and Precious Scott. BOTTOM: Crowds surround the van during soccer ball distribution, and Jonathan Yurich helps pump soccer balls. (PHOTOS: KARING 4 KLIPTOWN)**

three pairs of shoes, a necessity for the many barefooted children roaming the streets, along with two sets of clothing, a tricycle, toys, costumes, playground turf, and teachers' scarves and shoes.

Recognizing that expanding

opportunities for Kliptown children to play their favorite sport would lift spirits, the sports-loving family planned to distribute soccer balls. Purchasing the clothing and shoes in the correct sizes and transporting 175 soccer balls proved challenging,

the twins said.

In July 2019, the family of seven was welcomed to Kliptown by preschoolers who held signs and sang in Zulu. Driving through Kliptown, the Yuriches tirelessly pumped and distributed soccer balls to meet the growing demand.

Kliptown's children must often do without access to adequate nutrition, education, health services, or safety measures, the twins said. One of the Kliptown preschoolers drowned in a nearby river before their arrival.

Despite the hardships, the infectious happy children appreciated most when the family held them, grabbed their hands, or played with them, the twins said.

"It just kind've made me think about how grateful I am to have everything I have," Jack said.

The twins are sponsoring schooling for five students and hope to continue doing so in the future.

A younger set of Yurich twins, Mathew and Jonathan, plan on supporting Kliptown when their B'nai Mitzvah time comes.

Joanne explained that her boys were inspired by seeing "the smiles on these kids' faces when they handed them soccer balls and realizing that they're so overwhelmed with thanks for one soccer ball, yet they (the twins) have a room full of toys that they sometimes don't even play with."

She suggested other parents can instill a love of giving in their children by finding activities the family can consistently be engaged in together.