

EWCV Newsletter April 2012

Shoe Distribution - by volunteer Kurt Petersen of Canada

How important are shoes to you? I remember shoes being very important to many people back in North America with closets filled with colourful and well-made shoes which were not only for protecting our feet and keeping them warm but also for style. Here in Uganda, having closets full of shoes for style is simply not an option, especially for children.

We have recently been blessed here at Eagles Wings Children's Village with boxes of wonderful shoes from an organization in the United States called Soles for Souls. After patiently waiting for the shoes to arrive, we praise God they have safely arrived in a container, with thanks to the Macris family. Joan (volunteer), Allan Kisakye (EWCV social worker), myself and some children got down to business and began sorting, sizing and fitting the 200+ pairs of shoes that we have received. As Joan and I sorted the shoes into respective sizes and genders, Allan traced children's feet on paper to help us find the appropriate size for each child.

Family 3 children were the first to receive these new, bright, colourful shoes and were jumping with excitement! The smiles and comments they made were truly joyful. To keep such a task of fitting and sizing manageable we took the children in small groups of 5 - 6 children at a time, it still wasn't an easy task but it was enjoyable and fulfilling. Families 1 and 2 have also now received and are looking very 'smart' (as they say here in Uganda).

In addition to the shoes, children have also received a pair of socks to keep their feet warm and dry and clean. Shoes and socks are extremely important in these parts of the world because as they walk around in their tough, strong bare feet, they're still susceptible to problems, like cuts, infections and jiggers. Jiggers can do the most damage to a person's feet, especially to a child. What are jiggers? Small larvae that most commonly live in dust-dirt floors, which is the case for most village homes. As a person walks or crawls around, these larvae attach to the skin and burrow inside, under the skin and make themselves at home, feeding on blood. They can also lay eggs, causing the problem to

worsen. If not removed, they continue growing and overtake that area of the body, which is most commonly the feet or even hands (if walking or crawling on hands. Recently, we had a first-hand look at how painful and disturbing jiggers are to children as we watched many children grouping together to remove them from each other. Using pins, razor blades and other sharp objects they cut into the skin to get at the jigger and pull it out. It's a painful process they carry out every few weeks that can produce blood, tears and screams - not a sight I wanted to see but it opened my eyes to the importance of preventing such a thing! As we look around and see others with closets full of shoes, let's think of how only one of those pairs of shoes can help prevent jiggers and save a child from a lot of pain, tears and embarrassment. Also it will improve the child's confidence and self-esteem.

Next on our list of shoe distribution and fitting is to the community students at Beth Pipe Primary School and Eagles Wings High School. This will be a huge blessing to many of these children and we give God the praise for blessing us with these shoes to help these children grow and achieve a bright future. Thanks again to "Soles for Souls USA". God bless, Kurt

**Recent Return Visit
by Canadian Board Member of EWCV
& Child Sponsor,
Jaimee Schmidt**

After spending 5 weeks in Uganda last year, returning to East Africa for a month this year was like coming home. I found the part of me that I had left behind last time. To say I love Africa would be an understatement. Part of me lives there; part of me always will. I love the people and everything they teach me, I love the children and walking down the road taking everything in. I love that I was able to make a return visit to Eagles Wings Children's Village. I was able to witness the joy of a child getting their very first letter from their sponsor, the excitement of the children getting new shoes, and the laughter as the children play together outside.

Last year when I was at EWCV, Ibra, the boy I sponsor in Family 3, drew me a picture and as he handed it to me said, this is for you, my Mom. This year when I was there one of the children came up to me and told me that Ibra wanted me to know I was his Mom.

How do I handle this responsibility given to me by this child I love? The cost of letting these children in, of loving them with all of yourself is that one must then return home and learn to function with the absence of that part of yourself that stayed behind. Loving these children is worth living a fractured existence. Each of them has the potential to become something great, and I'm glad I was able to witness a small part of that.

In some small way, I learned that each one of you that support EWCV in any variety of ways is part of the story too. You are part of helping that child reach their potential, giving them a future they never knew they had. For those people that sponsor James 1:27 says "Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world." Know that the child you sponsor prays for you, that they know your name and that they want to know more about you. For me, and I think for many people in developed countries, it is easy to become overwhelmed with the bombardment of organizations out there. Discouraging stories of corruption abound and a person wonders if they should give anything at all. Watching the evening news can make one wonder if there is anything good left in the world. After twice being to EWCV, I can tell you they are doing a good job. That money you sent? It's being used to send a child to school, to educate them so they can break free from the chains of poverty. It's being used to build housing and classrooms for the children. They have a vision and that vision is slowly being made a reality, one brick and one sponsored child at a time. And although it may seem far away and although you may never have met the people who you are helping, which can make it seem impersonal, it's personal to the grandmother who can't afford school fee's for her grandson who now has the opportunity of an education. And that goodness in the world? It's there. It's in the laughter of the children, in their infectious smiles, and their silly games.

Last year, one of my Ugandan friends came up to me, touched me on the shoulder, and looked me in the eyes and said "Jaimee, Thank you for your heart." So I want to say the same to you, because I know that's what my friend would tell you if you could meet her. Thank you for your heart. Thank you for loving Uganda.

Gifts, Gifts, and more Gifts for the Children by Ja Ja Bill

On Saturday, March 17th, the Macris family came over to present the children of family #3 (who had been baptized several months ago) with Bibles donated by their friends, John & Elaine Dimoulis - a big thank you from the children. This was the first of several gifts which the children of EWCV received from the Macris family on behalf of others who had made donations. This was a vision of Maria Macris to give Bibles to the children of EWCV. These Bibles had come in boxes in the large container shipped from the USA. Along with the Bibles came clothing, shoes, toy, trucks, material, wagons, teddy bears, and storage bins from our friend, Sophia Syrros of Toronto, Canada. Thanks, Sophia, for your generosity and love for our children.

The gift distribution continued on March 28th when an organization called Star Times set up some tents in our front yard. They wanted to present our family #3 with some gifts of food and scholastic materials. They invited the Mayor of Masaka and our local representative of the President of Uganda, the LC5 Chairman, to attend and make speeches. We were all featured on television and in the radio and newspapers. Many people have now heard of EWCV as we were on National TV. Our children had the opportunity to sing many songs to entertain them. Everyone was given a soda to cap off the day. The food donation came at a time when we were short of food for the children due to a shortage that month. It was God's perfect timing. Many thanks go out to Star Times and their organizers. Well Done!

The following Thursday, the Macris Family drove to the property with us to distribute gift bags to the children at the Primary School. Besides bringing over 212 pairs of shoes (featured in the first article by Kurt), in the Macris container from the USA, the family worked together back in Chicago to put together 300 gift bags for our children. Inside the bags were a note pad, pen, small rubber ball, blow up ball, small car for boys and necklace for girls, and a teddy bear. The children had already done some decorating by coloring the pictures of Jesus on the front of the bags. These gift bags were given the day before the Easter weekend. Many people who know the Macris's in the USA had made donations towards purchasing the items for the bags. The children were so excited and went back to their homes with an extra bounce in their step. Thank you, Macris's and all those who made donations for the children's gifts.

On Easter Sunday, we hired a coaster van to take Family #3 children and staff to the property for church and to eat together with the other children of Families 1 & 2. Full Bibles were handed out in church to the children of Families 1 & 2 who had been baptized. The church had been nicely decorated with bright colored curtains surrounding the inside walls of the church along with balloons. Each family sang a song reflecting the Resurrection of Christ and these songs added to the Easter Sunday message given by Tatta Moses of Family #3. After the meal, all the children of Families 1, 2, & 3 were given the gift bags from the Macris family. These children were all wearing their new shoes donated by Soles for Souls of the USA along with the new socks we provided for the along with the new socks we provided for the children. Pictured below are Families 1, 2, and together.



**BENEFIT CONCERT
FOR EWCV HOUSING FOR FAMILY #3 CHILDREN**

Incomparably talented guitarist, PHIL KEAGGY, will play in concert at BUHLER HALL (MCI campus), GRETNA, MB, SATURDAY, MAY 26th @ 7:30 pm. Seats for this concert are FREE of charge; a

free-will offering will be taken, with all proceeds to Eagles Wings Children's Village. All donations tax deductible.

Contact Information:

Eagles Wings Children's Village
C/O Pat Bates
#300-404 Desalaberry Street
Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada
R2L 2G3

Website

www.eagleswingschildrensvillage.com

For Financial Information:

Contact Pat Bates: 204-254-5309
Email: pmbates@shaw.ca

For Child/Staff/General information:

Please contact Francie Humby:
204-257-2483
Email: f_humby@hotmail.com

Donations

- .. UK - contact Love in Action; Email: alan@ugandamail.com
- .. USA - contact Real Partners Uganda; 523 Lafayette Blvd.,
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- .. Europe - contact Hellenic Ministries; Lydias 12, 11527, Athens,
Greece; Phone: +30.210.77.79.845
or Email: marina.karavas@hotmail.com

**Please indicate that your donation is
for Eagles Wings Children's Village in Uganda. **