

# EWCV Newsletter November 2007

## *Greetings from EWCV Staff and Children in Uganda.*

The months have been passing by quickly and we are aware of winter taking over back home in the prairies of Canada. We don't forget the harsh winter conditions as we were reminded last February 2007 when we arrived at the Winnipeg Airport on the coldest day of the winter there – minus 47degrees. During our three-month stay in Canada, we saw the progression of the season from the coldest day to the warm spring winds bringing on the melting of the snow, the return of the ducks and geese, and the budding of the trees.

Here in Uganda where we live, just slightly south of the equator, we remain have constant temperatures of between 25 degrees to 30 degrees Celsius most of the year. It is the land of perpetual summer with the only major differences being the changes from three months of wet season to three months of dry season. Right now we are in the latter part of the wet season and the crops are growing quickly.

## *Construction of Family #2 Housing at the Property.*

Since our last newsletter in August, we have seen some good development in our construction of the children's housing at the property of EWCV. Good Lord willing, Family #2 should soon be moving from our home here in Soweto, Masaka to the property 25 km. from here at Lubumba Village. Their new housing is nearing completion, at least to the point where they can move in. There are still many things to do. Our construction foreman, Dan, is doing a fine job with his team of workers. Dan has given us the date of December 10th for moving day. This will mean that the rooms in our home which the 24 children occupy along with the staff and their three children will once again be empty.

We will have an empty nest until we are ready for the new children of Family #3 to join us. We already have three children for the new family being looked after in our hospitality center by Rev. Christopher and his wife, Harriet. We brought them into our care quickly as both of their parents had died and nobody was going to look after them. Our Eagles Wings home #2 is located within a five-minute walk from this hospitality center which is where we are also developing our carpentry workshop. Many of our volunteers and guests will be staying at the hospitality centre during the next few months.

## *Nursery Classroom/Church Building Enlarged*

By the beginning of last September, Dan brought in some of his workers to enlarge our church/nursery school building at the property. It was completed quickly so that it could accommodate the nursery class that is being run by Rachael Nansamba. The last term of the year began in the beginning of September. The other students of Family #2 are being taught in the Dining Hut by their teacher, Felly Namuli. It is amazing to see how well the children are developing even though Felly has the challenge of teaching several grades at once.

This present school year will end next month and then there will be two months of holidays with the next school year beginning in February 2008. By that time we will truly need to have a new temporary school built to accommodate Primary 1 to 4 levels. The nursery class will remain in the church building. The new building of three to four classrooms will need to be built out of Eucalyptus Poles, papyrus mats, and a thatched roof. This structure will have to provide for our needs until we can manage to finance the building of a new brick school of nine rooms. We have the architectural plans and the land available, but we will have to wait until the Lord provides for the purchase of the building materials and labor needed to build this new school. In the meantime, we will build a temporary structure and will need to hire another two teachers. We are wishing to provide education of our children as well as the many village children who aren't receiving schooling because the nearest school is a very long way off and no school buses are provided.

## *First Visitor/Friend who Originated in Gilbert Plains*

We had the pleasure of having my former classmate from Gilbert Plains Collegiate, Ernie Boyko, visit us here at our project. Ernie and his wife, Lorna, live in Ottawa, and he was hired as a statistics consultant by the Canadian Government to assist the Ugandans in Kampala with some of their work. After his work was completed, Ernie hired a driver to bring him to us so that he could tour our project. Our children always love to have visitors and entertained him royally. We are hoping that Ernie will return someday with Lorna for another visit. Ernie grew up north of Gilbert Plains on a farm but came into town to complete his high school education. We are always thankful when anyone from home takes the time to visit us even for a few hours.

## *CHOGM*

In one week, the Ugandan Government is hosting CHOGM – the Commonwealth Conference at Entebbe/Kampala which includes government leaders from around the world as well as her Majesty the Queen. This country has been trying its level best to improve its infrastructure as much as possible for this visit by many dignitaries. How wonderful it would be to have some of the Canadian Dignitaries come to EWCV for a visit, but I don't think that we stand much chance of being put into their busy itinerary.

## *Water Crisis*

We are still facing a water crisis at the property as the Lukaya Town water pumps break down or the electric power goes out and the pumps can't operate. When that happens, a man brings five jerry cans full of water at a time on his bicycle for the children and he makes five trips each day from the bore hole. We are also trying to conserve water by using rain barrels connected to rain gutters/eaves troughs. The construction site hires a truck to haul 40 jerry cans of water from the bore hole per trip. This past week the water was running, but on Sunday it was off again.

We have researched the digging of a well and found out that it is much more expensive than we were originally told. It will cost us \$17,000 CAD including the solar pumping system along with proper casings. The first need is to have the geological/physiological surveying done. We have compared costs with several different drilling companies and have sought references from our friends at Compassion International who have hired companies to do this in the past. Once again we will wait for the Lord to provide before we can move forward on this project. What a difference it will be to be able, someday, to rely on a secure water supply for the children and staff.

## *Energy Efficient Stove Project*

As part of the Eagles Wings Extension Program through which we are assisting students/widows/families with various things, we have been reaching out to Lubumba Village to help the villagers improve their lives however we can. We recently hired a young man, Rhemi, to come and train villagers, as well as some of our EWCV staff, on how to make energy efficient stoves of the permanent type as well as smaller ones that are portable. They are made mainly from clay/mud mixed with straw with banana stems used for blocking up the holes. The dimensions have to be accurate for the stoves to be effective. He trained a team of fifteen villagers by demonstrating how to do the job and then split them into smaller teams which he supervised as they went about constructing other models. This project was carried on for one week. By the end of that time, a number of stoves had been made and the teams planned how to continue helping other villagers to have such stoves.

The stoves are built to be energy efficient, with intense heat for quicker cooking time to save on the amount of fire wood consumed which means less work for the women and children hauling wood. They are also designed to be smokeless, thus enhancing the health of the women as they cook their food. The stoves are waiting now for a drying period of one month until they can be used. Whenever the teams build a stove, that person prepares a meal for the workers and then they all eat together. This eating together has become quite a social event in their neighborhoods. The teams are wishing to have twenty such stoves made by Christmas time in Lubumba Village.

## *Cows/Elephant Grass/Chicken House*

We are thankful for the promise of funding for the purchase of a dairy cow. Our Farm Manager, John Ogwal, has planted at least one acre of elephant grass that will be used for feeding the cow. John is also in the process now of clearing a small area so that we can build a corral to keep several cows to provide milk daily for our children. We will increase the herd as people commit to the funding to purchase further cows at a cost of \$1000 per cow.

Sponsors of our children have been sending gifts of money up to \$40 per child with which we will purchase, not only Christmas gifts for the children, but also a chicken coop for each family. When the two buildings are completed, then we will purchase small chicks for the children to raise for their meat and eggs. We will have to vaccinate the chicks as some of the last chickens brought to the property all died from some disease. They weren't vaccinated.

## *Canadian Volunteers*

We praise God for all the volunteers we have had to date as each one has brought his/her own special gifts to share with staff and the children. Our two Manitoban young ladies, Ashley Penner and Susy Loewen, have truly been a blessing with the many things with which they have assisted us. They have helped to look after the small children with sand box play, singing, reading stories with a translator helping, and taking the children for walks. They have helped with the washing by hand of the children's' clothes, wringing out the clothes by hand, and hanging the clothes on the line. They have helped to peel matooke and cassava. They have helped us in the kitchen by setting the table, cleaning up, food preparation, and washing dishes. They have been taught by Rev. Christopher some basic phrases and vocabulary in the Luganda language for working with children and directing them.

## *Praise Items*

Sister Vicki McTaggart has had her heart surgery at St. Boniface Hospital in Winnipeg in the latter part of October. She is doing well now as she does her healing at home. Jack and their families have been providing great support for her. I spoke with her on the phone last night and she was sounding quite cheerful and very appreciative of everyone's prayers.

Our little girl, Jackie, has had great success with the work the doctors have done with her foot. She can now walk on the bottom of her foot. It's truly a miracle. We give the glory to God! We will now wait for three months to see about whether they can do further work on her leg to straighten it.

Congratulations to our granddaughter Felicia and Riley on the birth of their little girl, Holly Joan, born October 11, 2007. This makes our son, Mike, a grandpa. What does that make us?

We praise God for the support and encouragement we have received this past year from our many generous donors, from our Canadian and Ugandan Board Members and from our bookkeeper, Pat Bates, who does her work for us voluntarily.

Once again, if you are unable to open this newsletter, please let us know so that we can resend it in another form. Please check our website which our friend in Canada, Celesta Thiessen, has maintained for us at her own expense. We are grateful for her commitment to keep doing this work. If you missed our past “Newsletters”, they are there for you to view in the website.

We are not including pictures with this newsletter as some people have problems receiving pictures. If you wish for us to email you copies of pictures showing our recent construction site for housing for Family #2, of Ann and myself with the monkeys, of the energy efficient stoves project, of the new church, of the EWCV staff, or of the EWCV Ugandan Board Members, please just make the request by email. You can also review the pictures on our Photo Gallery on the website.

If some of you don't receive a Christmas Newsletter from us, please know that we send our Christmas greetings. May the good Lord bring many blessings your way as we remember that “Jesus is the Reason for the Season”. May His light shine upon you and your family during the year ahead as we keep our eyes upon Him and His word for strength, guidance, and wisdom. We thank you for your continued prayers to help us move along with this project of EWCV.