

March 8, 2007

Dear Friends of Zimbabwe,

Greetings from the soil here! We have been here for over a week, having left on the 21st of February. We, is my godfather John and myself. You have heard about this man over the years, as without his financial support covering my living expenses, I would not be able to donate my time as I do. He is 86 years young and an adventurous, easy going soul.

Helen Six, a registered nurse, was intending to also be part of the team this trip but at the very last minute her father, who is in his late 90's, had some medical issues come up. After midnight, the morning we were leaving at 4:30, we began repacking to redistribute the priority items. She found out that she needed to remain behind. Some of the things we were going to bring had to wait for another trip.

Upon arriving, one of our suitcases was lost but then was found after a week. It was a challenge as it carried many personal items, but gratefully was not gone forever. Then after being here for a day or two, I received word that my father-in-law passed away. It was like the ground was moving beneath my feet and I was just hoping it was not indicative of the unfolding trip's temperament.

When things come in 3's I look for messages and decided we had better get fluid and flexible so that we adapt to the upcoming month. After these first unexpected things, everything has been going along smoothly. We still are having the regular challenges of phone circuits unable to manage calls, hyperinflation affecting anything one buys and the general confusion - its hard for people to think clearly when life is so stressed here and there is no food.

ECONOMY

When we arrived we heard that the street rate of exchange was about 6,300 zim dollars to 1 us dollar. A week before it had been 5,000 and now 10 days later we hear it is 8,000. This is really in actuality the equivalent of 8 million instead of 8 thousand because just last August they had to remove 3 zeroes. When it reached 1 million it was getting too confusing and people were making too many mistakes so everyone turned in their old money and they started over, issuing 1's, 10's etc up to 10,000. As many of you know on my first trip to here early in 2000, the bank rate was 38 to 1 and the street rate was 42 and we thought that 4 zim dollar difference was a big deal.

We have integrated this evolution over the years to accommodate this situation, always trying to comprehend the impact on the average villager who doesn't get to town often. In town, the people can't afford to take the bus to their jobs because their wage may not change so how do they eat. School fees everywhere continue to rise and many children simply do not go to school. The bank rate of exchange is around 250 to 1 and hasn't changed for months. How does the average person get their mind around this and survive day to day? The stress itself is enough to kill a person, let alone finding food.

PROJECTS OVERVIEW

In Zimbabwe, Ancient Ways is working with 3 humanitarian projects in 3 parts of the country. We have nurtured Nhimbe for Progress since its inception in late 1999 seeing serious substantial and continuous growth beginning in 2001. Nhimbe is the research and development station where we learn what works and what doesn't. The 2nd project, Jangano, was started in late 2005 in an entirely different area utilizing the Nhimbe model. Jangano has benefited from our experience, having an older sibling,

and has moved right along. We are also watching a 3rd project called Umgami Wami, a Ndebele word meaning friendship, unfold in the Bulawayo region of the country. Here we are exploring working with the educational and health needs of orphans where one or both parents have passed on, primarily due to AIDS. Nhimbe and Jangano are working with Shona people and Umgami Wami with the Ndebele. Although there are some similar customs, many are different, as are the languages.

Our first few days took us to Bulawayo to look at the Umgami Wami project definition there. Spurred on by Lola Broomberg, a Eugene Oregon resident, performer and teacher, who grew up in Zimbabwe, and generously hosted by her parents in Bulawayo, we found a great hunger for assistance with the orphans. We met the mayor of Bulawayo, the AIDS Council there, as well as made contact with individuals working in these areas. Our focus is the children, their education and their health. Hopefully we will be able to update you more in the next Field Report as things develop.

MHONDORO

We left Bulawayo, and its wind and rain (possibly from the effects of Cyclone Jacob in Mozambique), to find the Nhimbe project area dry to the bone. Very little rain has fallen there during the whole summer season which should normally be wet. People are again concerned that the drought conditions will mean no food. Fortunately we have seen and heard that the school children in our schools in both regions are receiving their lunches of porridge at school. Maybe the government is providing the food?

We, members of Nhimbe, Jangano and the Planning staff, enjoyed time together in training, some in attendance for 3 days. We explored current needs and issues, suggesting solutions and alternative thinking about “problems”, as well as sharing a hierarchical organizational chart to facilitate better communication and clarify questions about how all the pieces fit together. After discussions, analogies and metaphors, everyone tapped into the big picture. When we are younger we may look at that younger sibling and feel like we don’t want to share our toys but as we get older we see that another person in the family strengthens the whole. Everyone concluded that the experience gained in all regions of the country is enhancing the overall efforts! All Zimbabweans are telling the same story, have the same basic needs, and Spirit sees them all first as humans, brothers and sisters, all needing assistance.

We have the following jobs on the ground running the programs and services. Everyone is on a part-time basis currently and is a Zimbabwean. We primarily fund these positions with sales of their exports. After we purchase the items in Zimbabwe we send them to the US and sell them at each opportunity, using the moment of sale to share the story.

Nhimbe for Progress – Meaning “Working Together for Progress”

Project Director – Cosmas Magaya

Project Manager - Managing the activities of 7 rural villages.

Educational Manager & Librarian – Managing the over 430 children’s sponsorships

Librarian Assistant – Assists the manager w/ the Shona, English and text books.

Tutor – Holds sessions every weekend with all grades.

Fabrics – Prepares each child’s fabric package - 8 schools all different fabrics.

Preschool Manager and Lead Teacher –Manages the preschool of over 75 children.

Preschool Teachers 1 and 2 – Run classes for the youngest children.

Preschool Cook - Cooking and cleaning for a meal each school day.

Building and Security Manager – Oversees huts, toilets, wells, tsofso stoves

3 guards – Alternates night time shifts at the Community Center

Groundskeeper – Manages the 3 stands and 4 buildings of the Community Center
Community Center Assistant – Assists the Groundskeeper
Nhimbe Office Groundskeeper – Cares for the Nhimbe office grounds
Inventory Control Clerk – Manages the in/out flow of supplies for Nhimbe
Village Health Worker – Provides basic first aid for villagers and preschoolers

Jangano – Meaning “Helping One Another”

Project Directors – Fradreck Mujuru and Fungai Mujuru

Project Manager – Managing the activities of the 6 rural villages and 121 kids

Umgami Wami – Meaning “Friendship”

Project Director – in definition

Regional Operations – “Looking out for the Whole”

Planning Director – Oversees finances and budgeting

Executive Assistant

Health Director

DONHODZO HEALTH CENTRE

We prepared the application for the Donhodzo Health Centre, to currently operate out of 2 rooms at the Nhimbe Community Center. That paperwork was submitted in December and we are awaiting the reply from the Ministry of Health. As we walked the path of the governmental registration process we realized that although physically housed by Nhimbe, the projected growth of the Centre and the professional development of our nurse belongs outside of the Nhimbe project, as both serve a far greater region – that of all of Zimbabwe.

Donhodzo is really a legal framework with in which to operate medically. The staff will actually be paid by the other projects: the Senior Nurse, as part of the Regional Operations team, the Health Station Aide as a Nhimbe Village Health Worker, and the Pharmacy as the Nhimbe Inventory Control Clerk. These positions are already in place and so the workers will be volunteers at the Donhodzo.

The Donhodzo Health Manager is the Senior Nurse, Fredreck Muchiriri, whom we found last year that has the heart, mind and vision for integrated medical care. Fredreck’s whole being expanded to consider alternatives during his training as he faced the limitations of prescribing drugs, primarily in the mental health wards. He has been reading each and every new physics book he can get his hands on and is daily palpating his spiritual path and purpose on the planet.

Training has been donated on his behalf by Dr. Leslie Feinberg in the US (see www.nmt.md) as well as plane fare by all of you – we are currently working on his visa with an appointment this morning. I hope to accompany him as the one inviting him to visit the states. Once returning from that training, projected for June 10 to October 10, he will be in a position to assist all of the projects. He will visit each of the project areas and give particular attention to the children, as well as manage the Donhodzo Health Centre. During his absence the Nhimbe Health Station will continue with the basics of bandaging to prevent infection.

DEWEDZO and JANGANO

Mary Cairns from Seattle joined us in time to go to Dewedzo and retrieve the letters and pictures of the Jangano children. She had been working with an Mbira retreat and was very well rested to come into

our schedule. We don't take each day casually as there is so much to accomplish. Mary is a professional photographer and took many pictures to help us with telling the story. We also saw the hut and 2 toilets that were built last year. We returned from Jangano and readied ourselves to leave for Mhondoro. Today we will also be joined by Aimee Naissoy and Julie Ishahara when we return to the Nhimbe project for the next 10 days, as they are visiting Zimbabwe at this time.

UNTIL NEXT TIME

Stay tuned for more updates as we continue to work on your behalf here. Children are being sponsored to go to school, families are being given opportunities of all sorts that otherwise would not exist, and everyone is learning a great deal about being human, being of service, and being grateful for all that Spirit makes available.

Thank you for all that you do on our behalf. We work very hard to achieve lofty goals and are blessed with many helpers on the "other side" that want to see us continue (angels, ancestors, ...), as well as all of you on the other side of the world. Many of you raise funds and personally donate money, without which we would have nothing to offer. We help organize, administer and guide this work here. The people on the ground are so very happy and proud to be managing their projects and send their appreciation your way, saying "keep it up!". Small gestures on your end have the potential of tremendous results here.

Bless you and those dear to you,

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