

April 16th 2018

Dear Friends of Zimbabwe,

It is with much gratitude that I offer this third and final field report of our visit to Mhondoro. Thank you for all you are doing to help us help them, both as financial contributions, and your own active efforts to make a difference. Your generous encouraging words are precious thoughts that keep us going when things get tough.

Here is the short version for those of you on the run:

- ❖ **APRIL HOLIDAY GIRL GUIDES 3-DAY CAMP A SUCCESS!** - 235 Girls Attending - up from 74!
- ❖ **UNIVERSITY SPONSORSHIP** - A Bit More is Required to Get Lillian Registered
- ❖ **LIBRARY UPDATE** - New Books are now merging into the Library Re-Org
- ❖ **MARIMBAS AT THE COMMUNITY CENTER** - Broken Marimbas are Being Replaced!
- ❖ **REPAIRS NEEDED - SMALL TO LARGE** - Termites, Chairs and Hut Roofs All Require Attention
- ❖ **HOW YOU CAN HELP!** What can you do that can make a difference?

#### **APRIL HOLIDAY GIRL GUIDES 3- DAY CAMP A SUCCESS!**

The girls came in droves from all directions. They had a 2-hour walk to get there and we just hoped the weather would hold. We had a head-count on Wednesday of 210, so bought supplies for that. By the time they all arrived Friday afternoon, we were housing 235! Previous camps averaged 75 so we had to step up quickly, with many Nhimbe staff volunteering who normally do not attend the camp.



From the youngest members shown above, to the oldest coming from the Community College, they all had their gear (bedroll, etc). Patricia went early in the day to assist with the truck. The local Councilor also wanted to help and so offered her vehicle. The nearby butcher gave a free kg of beef. A farmer sold us 4 buckets of *natches* (tangerines) for only \$3. Clearly, the local residents are in favor of the camping idea, the expansion into the new school areas, and the MMC purpose.

This increase in girls means making more MMC (Mhandara Monthly Care) start-up packages, which typically last 3 years. To bring all 162 new girls on board means much more stitching for the seamstresses, which is a great boon to their employment. There were 43 meters of flannel donated by the 3 sources (US and Canada), which helped with expenses in a real way, since we hadn't realized we would need petrol for the truck or snacks on the previous week's meeting day.



We'll also distribute buckets, underwear and soap in batches of 15 girls, and so these services will be delivered over several months. [Click here to see the 15 girls receiving their packages at camp.](#) The girls must attend weekly meetings to participate in full, primarily because this is not just a physical body thing. The mentoring of the girls' is critical to their emotional and mental wellbeing. This is a tender age and we are so happy to be able to support their growth in a way that is appropriate for modern times.

**CHECK OUT THESE VIDEOS!**

[MMC Camp Singing #1](#) [MMC Camp Singing #2](#) [MMC Camp Cooking](#)

These girls do the cooking and cleanup for the entire camp, supervised by staff. They also stay up for hours around a camp fire singing loudly to celebrate freedom. The solar lighting made a huge difference at the camp, particularly helping the newbies acclimatize to their new surroundings. We are so grateful for your help with that! The leaders remind the girls to take their "life pills" and not to forget just because they are at camp. That was very touching. They were told to not be shy, if they have HIV and are on ARVs, or TB etc., they must take their medicine.

## UNIVERSITY SPONSORSHIP

Intervention in the girls' lives is needed on a massive scale, so we are doing what we can in our neck of the woods. We would like to add Lillian into our team during camp time, as she is well-versed in being a young woman, and is skilled in public speaking too. [See Lillian in action here!](#)

We appreciate whatever you are able to do to assist her in finishing her fourth year at the University. She has the potential to be a key player both at the camps, and also as her life leads her to help others where she lives in town. She is a volunteer counselor and offers her heart and positive thinking on a regular basis. Even \$50 can help! Thank you for the assistance, as a bit more is needed to reach the \$800 mark!

## MARIMBAS AT THE COMMUNITY CENTER

We are so happy about the great news that came just as I was packing for this trip. Cosmas' daughter Tsitsi started an organization called Humwe which is serving some of the children in the Nhimbe villages, and she received a grant from Kutsinhira's ZCDP for a set of marimbas because the Nhimbe set that was being used was in sad disrepair. We had built the set for Nhimbe starting in 2000 during the second trip and gradually had added more marimbas and repairs over the years, but its been far less than adequate for some time.

Part of my luggage was filled with an extended set of mallets from Kutsinhira, and the second day in Zimbabwe found me meeting with the marimba and mbira teachers who were key to organizing the new set being built. We all agreed on what was needed, and then later, Matilda (Humwe's overseer) and I met with the builder, Jacob, in Harare to verify construction details. My main concerns revolved around removable resonators, and protection for the cellophane buzzers. He wanted to wait a couple of weeks until a store he wanted to use was relocated, since they had the best prices. The goal is to build a full set, unless it's too expensive, then instead a set that is short one soprano.

This is very exciting! We have suffered long enough! Seriously, trying to play on marimbas, which are damaged and out of tune, is painful. Once this set is built and up and running, we will use the existing keys and repurpose them to make a simple set without legs or resonators for the preschool.

Everything is now in the builder's hands to keep things moving. We are thrilled to have the benefit of these marimbas as well. Our plan would be to start making the marimbas available again to the MMC girls. They used to take co-ed lessons, and I would observe them shying away from their potential role in the group, once a fellow would show up or take control. Our goal would be to help the girls know this instrument for themselves without thinking about whether a boy is present or not!

## LIBRARY UPDATE

We were able to spend more time than usual at the library and with the librarian, Gabriella, hired during the 2016 trip. She is so grateful for the opportunities being opened up to the community.

A very gifted young woman, she was quite interested in suggestions on how to organize the books. With limited space, and predefined book shelf height, we talked mainly about making sure the spines were facing outward so one could see the books available, and also, organizing based on the height of the reader, so the youngest books lower to the ground, and adults up high.





The table above was piled with the new books we received. 6 boxes arrived, but the 7<sup>th</sup> one was still coming. She had a large job to integrate everything. We now have over 2,600 books in the library! (My last number of 700 was a mis-read.) Tremendous thanks to our postage and book donors...Yay!

We also brought all the preschool books into the annex and then talked about using the front covers of books as a type of advertisement to invite a reader to be interested.

## REPAIRS NEEDED - SMALL TO LARGE

We have many repairs required. I know this isn't an interesting subject. I know that people don't tend to think about maintenance of facilities and equipment until things break, and yet, most of us acquiesce and change the oil in our cars. In any case, I'm the voice that needs to speak up and say that we must ask for some help to accomplish some repair goals, estimated at just over \$1,600:

- ✓ The pruners for the landscaping work are totally broken. The scissor part of it crosses over to the opposite side and is not repairable. We are looking at \$55 or so to replace these. These are needed to maintain a reasonably tidy playground and garden/orchard area.
- ✓ We replaced the thatch on some of the buildings this last year, but the library hut and a couple others also need rethatching. The thatch typically lasts 15 years and so it's somewhat like needing 3-tab. They are harvesting the special grass now, so we need to place our order. This would come to \$1,460, for thatch, labor, and vehicle hauling of gum poles and grasses.
- ✓ Termite damage is in all buildings. Not the most interesting picture below, but to give you an idea, this pile of dirt was swept up from the edges of the library, after a couple hours of the termites doing their business. Just imagine what happens overnight! We have a serious problem with these critters. We would like to use diesel instead of chemicals and so expect

that will cost \$60. We have seen all building suffer the termite attack, to the point of the floor being totally cracked and the door not opening because of the problem.

- ✓ The chairs in the library are few and there are a couple needing repaired. For \$15 we can make those repairs.
- ✓ There are 3 beams needing repair in the toilet roof. Total cost is \$38.



Any amount is helpful in these repairs. Please let us know if you can relate, want to assist, and can find something in your budget. Thank you so much! *Tatenda Chaizvo!*

## HOW YOU CAN HELP!

Sharing the story, however you can, is a big help! Donations are of course part of the fuel that makes the car run, but passing on the word is also a way of investing in the outcome. We thank you all for anyway you reach out to us, and to them through us. Here are some ideas:

- ✓ Definitely consider a monthly contribution using a bank draft, paypal, or credit card. Having such pledges helps us budget for the year. Call 541-259-HOPE with questions!
- ✓ We have the Mwoyochena ku Zimbabwe CDs that can be sold at your next performance as it helps raise awareness and appreciation of the music and culture too. Or, you can order one for yourself and family at <http://www.ancient-ways.org/store/for-sale/cds/>
- ✓ When you buy from amazon.com, check out smile.amazon.com which donates to your chosen charity on each purchase. Please consider picking Ancient Ways (Scio OR) as your preference. We receive a check from Amazon generated by a percentage.
- ✓ Oregon Bottle Drop serves the I-5 corridor. When you return your bottles through this service by setting up an account, you can donate your bottle refunds to Ancient Ways by using their online donating site. This is a charitable deduction too!
- ✓ Invite us to share at your next group meeting, for your church, NGO, or band. I'd be happy to come and offer the latest from our particular window into Zimbabwe. We also have multiple performing groups which are always delighted to share the music at your next private party or community event. Thank you for including us in your lives!
- ✓ Write [windgatherer@ancient-ways.org](mailto:windgatherer@ancient-ways.org) to talk about any fundraising ideas. Thank you!



- ✓ If you haven't sponsored a preschool child, we continue to work towards having all the children who are attending, be sponsored. I have a lovely picture for your refrigerator!

Thanks to your help, we were able to increase the monthly stipend the staff receives during this trip, and everyone was so very happy to be recognized for their efforts.

Started in 2002, we continue to operate a model preschool recognized by the Ministry of Education.



- ✓ We have many crafts purchased from the village artists so that we can share with you!

Definitely come to Monmouth, OR, Aug 10-12<sup>th</sup> this summer and enjoy the Zimbabwe Music Festival - Zimfest. [www.zimfest.org](http://www.zimfest.org)

If you are unable to come, do reach out to me and we can connect some other way.



**THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED INTEREST AND SUPPORT OF THE WORK IN ZIMBABWE!**

We can only keep the fire burning with your great intentions helping us! I have thoroughly enjoyed sharing these updates and appreciate you listening and replying. All the best!

Gratefully, Jaiaen

On behalf of the team in Zimbabwe, the beneficiaries, all of you, and the future