

field report #3

April 16th 2026

GREETINGS FROM OREGON!

Home again! (It's always a blink of an eye, and I'm back in my own bed.) I'm so grateful to be on the ground here in the green foothills of the Cascades. My Zimbabwe visit was such a huge blessing with the natural pace of the bush, the underlying genuinely kind spirit of the people emphasizing unity and peace, and the face-to-face time to experience each other.

We sorted out so many things which were difficult to nail down using texting and the phone over the years. Much gratitude for the learning going on! Everyone was so supportive, and we gave it our all, since time was short...more time, more time, more time.



~~~ *INSIDE* ~~~

- ◆ **Crafts**
- ◆ **Stopping in to See Wini**
- ◆ **MMC April 2026 Campout**
- ◆ **Back in the States**

The largest challenge has been the fuel prices. (Yes! They go up everywhere in the world!) When I arrived there at the beginning of March, petrol blend (not the diesel) was \$1.71 (note that this is *per liter*), and when I left it was on the rise, leaving \$2.19 in the dust. The price seems a little less consistent from station to station, but no ridiculous searching for the best deal like we have done in previous years.

That is about a 30% increase, which means that we unexpectedly blew through our budget for transport for the month in 2 weeks. *\$2.20 per liter equates to around \$8.30 per gallon of gas!* (I hear it's because of the high taxes placed on fuel.)

Eeeek! Clearly, I wasn't prepared for this expense. We were being frugal, but being in the bush, going anywhere is a trek. We also purchased propane fuel for the camp stove we use while I'm there. That runs \$1.50 a liter.

## TRAVEL

[Leaving the rural area I'm always amazed at the variety along the way](#), like here with the children keeping control of the *mombe* (cows) and *madhongi* (donkeys).

Many of the videos I've shared of the travel have been the rather rough roads we face, but [here is the super highway that goes from S. Africa to the capital city](#), and it's pretty decent. We stop at a main store along the way, and we are elated that there is a *chimbuzi* (restroom). It's sometimes a long way between good ones, (there is a luxury in running water, sitting down, and available paper) and even though this only had running water, we were all happy.

The normalcy of car problems also comes with the territory. Here, Tichaona and Kudawashe examine the fuse, since one doesn't want to be driving a car not working perfectly...the police require bribes if you get stopped.



The horn wouldn't honk consistently, as every time we would hit a bump (which was very often) it would stop working. So, cleverly, Ticha took the fuse and bent the little metal prongs outward a bit, and *voila*, it held!

## CRAFTS

There are always unique opportunities to find crafts in the village setting. [In this video, I came across one of our embroidery team, Roseline Mukuze, and we chat about Laura Gillette](#), a helper that came for a visit in the earlier part of the 2000's.

Wow! Roseline is sure doing well...she hasn't changed a bit. The women completed many embroidery blocks that we made into fantastic totes and t-shirts over the years. We also provided Paul and Peter Hayes with embroidery blocks so they could make and auction quilts to raise money for multiple non-profits.

It turns out that Roseline is also a village representative from Muchiriri village. Each of our six villages has two representatives who keep track of things for the headman. Things, such as, who will get the next well, for example.

We started doing a family survey on my first trip in 2000, and we continue to update it with the latest. People pass on, babies are born, and folks move in and out. The reps are responsible for keeping it updated so that we know how big is big.

And, several people brought me some very nice smaller *hosho* (rattles)! I'm *really sweet* on *hosho* and am very happy to have some to share. I think I'm going to keep Tichaona's pair for myself, since I have an odd belief that the good sweat that one pours into their *hosho* over time might be transferable...give me some of that rhythm!

Winfileda Sikelela, our MMC seamstress, is also a tailor, so we unexpectedly have some Zimbabwean fabric clothes. Here, [they try on a couple of wrap skirts](#).

**CRAFTS —continued**

We further found that Joseph Zvenyika, another Chikonamombe (male impala), is a very creative soul, being both a hut thatcher and an artist, so I've brought back some of his crafts, including his mixed metal bracelets and keychains ... lovely!

We also stopped in at the central [market in Harare where traffic is crazy compacted](#), for us to fill in a few items to bring back. I wondered if we would get stuck in there.

We were able to attend MyLinda's Mallets of Mass Percussion on April 11 and were gratefully able to share some of our wares. If you have an event with a small marketplace, we would be happy to join you! Call or write with your event details...we love to share the story of Nhimbe for Progress!



**Stopping in to See Wini for MMC**

We decided it was time to visit Wini as she is preparing 16 batches of MMC kits (15 start-up kits per batch means 240 girls will benefit over the next few months). Currently, our enrollment is at 120 girls with more adding in daily. [Coming into her home is so familiar](#). I have spent many hours and sleepovers here during the years of visiting, and today Wini's living room is loaded! She works on many at a time, with organized batch processing, and the pictures speak for themselves!



## **Stopping in to See Wini for MMC—continued**

Here she is using her new snap machine... very exciting after many years just using safety pins. It does take longer but makes a nicer product.

Overlocking makes sure the edges don't ravel. Then she builds the holders, while explaining how Cosmas helped her get started going to tailoring school when she was 15. Each holder is sewn and overlocked at the same time with this incredible machine, which she bought with the money she saved from sewing, much of it because of MMC.

She has built this operation over the years, and now with three machines, I'm super impressed. She says she normally gets the machines serviced once a month.



After a big two days in town we head back to the villages and are greeted with an incredible sunset...it even looks like a “spirit orb” greeting us in the field!

***Your prayers and kind thoughts were felt and created a wave of goodness supporting it all!***



## **Mhandara Monthly Care April 2026 Campout!**

Our goal is to let the maturing girls camp three times a year. The ideal time is as they leave school for their month-long break. We bring them together for another 2.5-day event. These camps are splendid opportunities to peer bond, explore the land, and learn new things. Each camp has the girls gathering firewood and delivering it to an elder, as well as studying with a teacher. This time we had a guest teacher from the nearby Rumuka secondary school. She specializes in counseling, and we enjoyed her teaching about their bodies, boys, and how to stay focused on one's school work at this tender age.



Registration shows over 130 girls attending, with 60 or so coming for the first time. All records are kept on the original paper we as children used “back in the day” ... I recall an “Indian chief” tablet and pencils... they use the same paper here. For 26 years I’ve been working to bridge from that newsprint type of paper to automation (since my background in the 70’s was computers), but it’s just inching along. It seems to make it more difficult to introduce computerizing the records...this is a big aha I have come to after all these years.

The energy from the girls was sooooo uplifting that I wanted to transport you there. [We arrive shortly after a few of the first girls](#) . [Here they continue arriving](#) and are singing a favorite song, “We are happy to be together.”

Food prep starts early so that they can get the girls eating before night falls. First, we go to a neighbor to buy 12 chickens “huku”. The price has just increased from \$6 to \$7 each, because their feed has just increased due to fuel costs. [At least we journeyed just around the corner to pick up the chickens](#). And, of course, [the girls help unload](#).

This is serious sadza-making (similar to polenta)! Both Mercy and Sekai, shown here, are part of the team that cooks for the preschool. We are blessed that all the preschool staff help with the MMC Teen Care Camp. [Mercy and Sekai also are part of the clean-up crew!](#) Funerals and memorials are often huge gatherings of family and friends, so familiar territory.



## **Mhandara Monthly Care April 2026 Campout! - continued**

The girls were making so much music, I don't quite know where to start, so will just share it all:

- We are friends, and we have come together, as friends with open hearts and smiling!
- Nhimbe is only number 1 (always on top). Nhimbe has gone to the other schools too. Rukuma, Matanha, etc.!
- Kids should be kids. (In Shona, but also, a little Ndebele) They should behave like kids and not copy adults!
- Mr. Magaya is our father and should be respected. Amaromo Jaiaen is our aunt and should be respected!
- King Jesus is good! Talk to us King Jesus, we are here. We've come here, be with us.
- Where ever there is fame, there is Nhimbe!
- Give me fire! The grass is burning. The grass is burnt.
- We, as Nhimbe, have come with a good message. Be free. Be united. Turn around!
- What should we do for Jaiaen? We are appreciating you. Should we carry you on our backs appreciating you?
- We want to say thank you Amaromo for the job you are doing! Don't take steps backwards or turn away! Keep going forward for the job you are doing!
- Parents, teachers, and students, and everyone who has come, we welcome you! We are happy together.
- Thanking you with the love of Christ for a job well done. The mercies and grace of God made us come together. It's you who has the love of God in you that has brought us here. We thank you – you have done a great job!

The girls are very grateful to not only come together in a setting outside of the home, since this is uncommon, but to be able to share music, comradery, and good food is an incomparable delight! The sun sets on the first night, and everyone sleeps well.

I think everyone knows that Ancient Ways is apolitical and non-religious, but rather educational and humanitarian. I've been fascinated by the culture's spiritual orientation, where they teach religion in the schools, sharing world religions including Christianity. I've explained to people in the US why we don't evangelize as part of our mission. Shona people are highly spiritual! Maybe their song choices help explain that? Thanks for tuning in!



## **Back in the States**

All of this night air and gathering together got me into picture taking. Let me share my living accommodations for the month. As I mentioned in the first field report, I couldn't stay in my normal hut, but this alternative was just delightful, particularly since I hadn't been back since 2019, prior to Cosmas' passing. This is the Magaya homestead where Cosmas and Joyce lived. Now Matilda, the eldest daughter, has made it her home which, of course, she shares with the



entire family. (Every hut on the place is filled.) My hut was the one to the right below, comfortably nestled under the stars—I think Muda abandoned it on my behalf.

Thank you for all your support, prayers and kindnesses during this trip. It took many people keeping all the pieces knitted together back home here, and I do so appreciate all the efforts. [Please check out the website for more information and ways to donate to keep the wheels of progress moving forward](#) with Nhimbe.

### **Who Are We? And, How Do We Work?**

*Ancient Ways was founded in 1993 by Jaiaen Beck in Lacomb OR, established as a non-profit in 1994, receiving charitable tax status in 1996. Over the last 32 years we have worked to preserve the life-giving traditions of indigenous peoples, with a focus on their music, art and healing practices, giving attention to music lessons and performances.*

*Nhimbe for Progress was started in 1999 by Jaiaen and Cosmas Magaya, established as a Trust in 2010, currently awaiting NGO status. Over the last 26 years, overcoming all obstacles presented by economic hardships and volatile political policies, we have developed an infrastructure for success, continuity, and permanence. Nhimbe focuses on uplifting the rural residents' sub-standard living conditions to better assure preservation of Shona heritage. In 2020, when Cosmas Magaya passed on, Mudavanhu, his son, and Febby Shava, began a shared co-director partnership for Nhimbe. In 2026, we now expand to include Matilda Magaya's collaboration for the three (Muda, Febby, Jaiaen) director's executive assistant.*

*The focus continues to be finding the best succession planning approach in Zimbabwe and the US... interested in getting involved? Do you love humanity and desire to be of service? Welcome! Mauya!*

***A CHILD'S LIFE IS THE PATH***

~

***www.ancient-ways.org***

### **Ancient Ways**

PO Box 346 Scio OR 97374

Landline Phones:

541-259-HOPE

877-TATENDA

Whatsapp and Signal:

541-570-9059

Email: [gogreen@ancient-ways.org](mailto:gogreen@ancient-ways.org)

Paypal Email:

[Zimbabwe@ancient-ways.org](mailto:Zimbabwe@ancient-ways.org)