



TANZANIAN CHILDREN'S FUND

Volume I, Issue 12

Fall 2009

A letter from the Executive Director

By India Howell

Mission Statement

The Tanzanian Children's Fund was established to aid the children of Tanzania. Working in partnership with registered non-governmental, non-profit organizations in Tanzania, TCF provides financial and intellectual support to projects and programs designed to improve the lives of children in need.

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Former Ambassador of Tanzania, Mark Green recently described our Children's Village as a, "joyous place built on love and compassion". No time in the past 6 years have those words had more power for me than in the past few months. Whether I am watching our new flock of toddlers learn the intricacies of the *Hooky Poky* in pre-school or watching 13 year old Benja make a fantastic save as goalie for the school team (and looking straight up to be sure I saw it!). My days are filled with joy as I watch our children grow and thrive in this loving environment. This Village, this Family, this Community has really come into its own this year and the results have been better than even I could have dreamed.

In July when we filled Rubondo House, our last children's house, I couldn't help but notice the positive changes that many of our first children, who came to live with us, have undergone. Many old wounds have healed. Many smiles that were buried

Doctor, age 12, embraces his new younger brothers and sisters

deep have been resurrected. And most importantly, each and every one of our 69 kids feels that they are home. This is their place.

Our 12 new children in Rubondo House are simply spectacular. All of us are amazed as we thought we already had the most fabulous children in Tanzania and then we manage to find 12 more! Each one has a story and now, each one has a chance to find their dreams and make them come true.

Of course there are still many challenges on the horizon. They are called teenagers! With 5 budding teenagers living in my house things can get a bit dra-



matic. It amazes me how devastated or angry an otherwise tough skinned 13-year-old boy can get when one of his sisters says "you are like a hyena". Because I have very little patience for bickering, I've developed a new strategy to stave it off and from Mama losing her temper. It's called "The Poof". When someone is trying to bait you with words you just say "Poof" and blow those nasty words away. The plan seems to be taking hold. Now kids will jump in and say "poof" when they see two others baiting each other.

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Gyetighi Teachers Circle By Andie Trotter

Every morning at eight o'clock, the harmonious sound of flutes and drums reverberates off the hills near Gyetighi Primary School. If you follow the music, you'll see more than 400 uniformed students marching to their classrooms in formation to start the day's learning. This daily ritual is led by the new Gyetighi marching band, a group of students selected by Mr. Vitalis Surumbu to build school

pride and discipline.

Endearingly known as "The Commander," Vitalis has been a teacher since the 1970s, when Tanzanian President Julius Nyerere mobilized the People's Defense Force to expel the oppressive rule of Idi Amin in Uganda. Vitalis, like most male teachers at the time, took a hiatus from the class-



Andie Trotter with students at Gyetighi

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Gyetighi Teachers Circle cont.

room and headed into the battlefield. He recalls the national pride he felt, marching to the beat of the drums. Since joining Gyetighi's teaching staff last year, the Commander has been busy thinking of ways to improve the school environment, starting with some rusty drums covered in weathered goatskin. He started the marching band not only to engage students in music and teamwork, but also to support one of the main goals of our partnership – to end corporal punishment at the school.


Since 2007 we have been managing Gyetighi Primary School in collaboration with the Karatu District Education Office and the local School Committee and some remarkably positive changes have taken place. Teachers are actually in the classrooms and teaching! 6 motivated teachers, 4 light-filled classrooms, and textbooks are just a few additions that have enabled better learning conditions. With teacher training, the once prominent “stick” is no longer the tool used to manage student behavior. However, while eliminating corporal punishment is considered an achievement to us, this major change has not been as well-received by teachers and parents. While many teachers agree that enforcing discipline through fear and abuse is not the answer, they have expressed that alternative methods have proven ineffective and left them powerless in the classroom. Parents have also encouraged teachers to revert back to the stick to address the

behavior issues.

In an educational system where a suggestion such as using pencils instead of pens in math class is viewed as a dramatic change, the need for a participatory dialogue is central for sustainability. On Mondays after school, the teachers gather for Teachers Circle, which I attend. This weekly English discussion group was initiated by the teachers last year to improve their command of English. For many teachers, their profession was not by choice but by default. Options for continuing education is determined solely by performance on the national exam. One fallback for students who do not perform well on the Form 4 (11th grade) exam is Teachers College. Most Gyetighi teachers have a Form 4 level education and rank on the lowest tier of the government pay scale. They are thirsty for any opportunity to continue learning.

As the teachers have developed their English confidence, the Teachers Circle has become a liberal forum for voicing opinions. Discussion centers on comparative education along themes such as classroom management, learning assessment, and teaching methods, where each teacher poses a question and different viewpoints are shared. For example, one teacher's inquiry about club activities at other schools generated a lively exchange about the role teachers can play to cultivate extracurricular interests. This resulted in the recent expansion of extracurricular opportunities for students after school including a choir to perform

at school events, a sewing club to mend school uniforms and learn about income-generating embroidery skills, an environment club to gain practical knowledge about resource conservation, and a drama club to build confidence. The teachers even initiated All English Day for the whole school every Thursday with the motto: “No English, No Service!”

Gyetighi teachers are daily demonstrating their commitment to education, both for themselves and for the students. Ideas are emerging from within rather than only being imposed from outside. In response to the discipline challenge, the Commander identifies students who are most disruptive and works to transform their behavior by assigning them a leadership role in marching band that transfers to the classroom. Hosiana, a Standard V (5th grade) student with albinism who recently joined our KLR (Kids Living with Relatives) Program, radiates with pride as she shouts commands to the marching students. And Gyetighi marches forward with a renewed sense of school identity as the teachers innovatively test new approaches to old problems. 

Andie Trotter is our Education Director at Gyetighi Primary School. Andie grew up in Missouri. She has worked in the international educational field for the last 8 years, living and working in Japan and Nepal.

A Letter From the Executive Director cont.


Beyond our cozy world of children at the Children's Village, I am most gratified by our growing relationship with the greater community and local government. They have truly come to appreciate all that we are doing and all that we are striving to achieve. To demonstrate this, they will honor us once again by bringing the Uhuru Torch to the Children's Village on September 28 to officially recognize and pay tribute to our work. (The Uhuru Torch, or Freedom Torch, is a 129 day torch race. In 1961 President Julius Nyerere had the Uhuru Torch placed at the summit of Mt Kilimanjaro as a sign of hope and peace.)

In September we will be welcoming a new Volunteer Coordinator and a new Microfinance Director to replace Danielle May and Andy Bryant. It will be difficult to say goodbye to them. They've both made a lasting impact on our work and our children. Their replacements will have large

shoes to fill!

Also ahead, the biggest kid day of the year – Christmas! My mind swirls at the thought of filling wishes and dreams for our 69 kids! As I write this letter, it is only August and yet a day does not pass without a child coming to me with stars in their eyes asking me to “tell Santa I really want a bathrobe or teddy bear”. The kids in my house are already throwing out ideas for our Christmas performance. They want me to tease my hair and play Diana Ross again! Ah.....the things we will do for our children.

I am looking ahead at the coming months with a happy heart knowing that we have accomplished much and are poised to accomplish more in this wonderful place where children are getting a chance to chase their dream.

Thank you one and all for helping us to make their dreams come true!! 



Dickson, age 2, is all smiles during “Ugi” (snack time)

A letter from the Board Chairman By Nano Chatfield

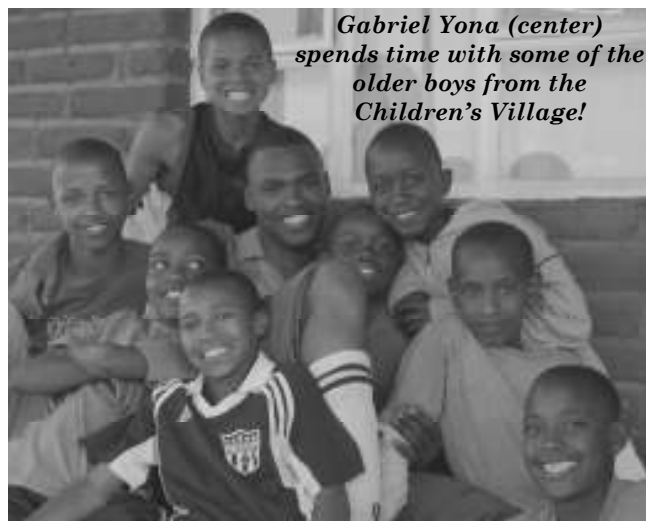
Our Student Teacher Program is one of our most innovative programs at the Children's Village. Our volunteers rely on our Student Teachers to translate, explain how things work, or prod children to hurry along to school, to bath or bedtime. Most of our Student Teachers live with us in one of the Children's Houses supervising our kids during their free time, mealtime, bath and bedtime. The Student Teachers become a part of our family, tucking kids into bed at night, playing soccer with them and even playing on our staff soccer team. They are ideal role models for our kids as they are ambitious and determined. Our kids bond with our Student Teachers, and think of them as Big Brothers and Big Sisters.

Each year in February, we interview promising secondary school students who are from neighboring villages. These students have completed their 'O' level secondary education, but due to family financial issues are unable to continue to their 'A' level secondary education. The Student Teachers teach for one year as Assistant Teachers at Gyetighi Primary School and help out with our children at the Children's Village, and in return, we provide a scholarship to com-


plete their 'A' level secondary education.

Our Student Teachers all assist a Head Teacher which helps lower the student/teacher ratio in the crowded classrooms at Gyetighi Primary School. Our Student Teacher Program is a 4 year program. Through this program, students improve their English, have an opportunity to learn about teaching, learn what it means to have a job and greatly expand their opportunities for employment when their education is complete.

Since we initiated this program in 2005, we have sponsored 24 Student Teachers. After we select our new Student Teachers, we begin our search for sponsors for these promising, dedicated young adults. Our first Student Teacher, David Mankala is now working at a safari company in Arusha. Another Student Teacher, Gabriel Yona has been sponsored by one of



Gabriel Yona (center) spends time with some of the older boys from the Children's Village!

our volunteers and is now attending a government run Teacher's College. In July 3 of our Student Teachers finished Form VI and all of them received high scores on the National Exams and have been given government scholarships to attend university. This is a dream that wasn't possible within their reach. We are so proud of their perseverance and accomplishments! 

Microfinance Program Initiates Savings and Credit Cooperatives (SACCOS) By Andy Bryant



Andy Bryant, right, and Richard lead a training class for microfinance clients


When aid workers talk about the most important and effective ideas for community development, they often mention girls' education and community mobilization. The former empowers traditionally disenfranchised girls and women. The latter allows for groups of people to unite and pursue projects and dreams otherwise not possible. Both girls' education and community mobilization provide marginalized people, often impoverished and lacking a strong voice in their own affairs, with the opportunity to take charge of their own affairs and strive for goals and dreams extending far beyond

today or tomorrow. TCF has long supported numerous initiatives to educate girls. In keeping with our mission to alleviate poverty and the causes of unwanted children, TCF has recently launched a new initiative through our Microfinance Program that will mobilize our neighboring communities to take charge of their own destinies.

In June, our Microfinance Program helped to create 3 savings-and-credit cooperatives (SACCOS) with a combined membership of about 150 of our Tanzanian neighbors. These organizations will be an alternative route for community members to access financial services. Essentially, cooperative members pool their savings and make loans to one another, to be repaid with nominal interest. TCF's role is to train the elected leaders of these cooperatives to manage the affairs of the organization.

These cooperatives differ from our Microfinance Program. While TCF offers small-

business loans to entrepreneurs, the cooperatives will offer loans for any number of purposes including payment of school fees, purchase of land, home construction, and the like. Because the funds are derived from the members themselves, the cooperatives can be self-sustaining, with no need for external donor funding. Further, members create their own Constitution that guides the organization and conduct their own affairs with minimal outside interference. The concept of the SACCOS is a 'new idea' for our neighbors, which they've embraced with ingenuity, motivation and determination to help one another succeed.

The future of our Microfinance Program will increasingly involve facilitating the mobilization of local communities and the mobilization of their savings to help one another to achieve their dreams. 

For the last two years, Andy Bryant has been our Microfinance Director. In 2007 with our Managing Director, Peter Leon, they created our Microfinance Program, which now has 250 clients.

Student Teacher Success Stories By Andie Trotter

Starting with two exceptional students in 2005 who had no financial resources to continue their secondary education, the Student Teacher Program has grown to enable 24 highly motivated young people to pursue their studies. The program offers a monthly stipend, room and board, tutoring, and training in exchange for one year of service as a student teacher or athletics assistant at Gyetighi Primary School and big brother/sister at the Children's Village. Student Teachers who demonstrate responsibility and motivation are then sponsored to complete their secondary education. Edward Baramay, Julius Metta, and Josephat Karengi are three student teachers from 2006 who graduated from Form 6 (Advanced Levels) this year and are headed to university this October! While they were applying to universities, they came back to RVCF to "give back and help other students succeed." They launched a program held at Gyetighi Primary School to tutor our sponsored secondary students who were back for the month of June on school vacation. Through word of mouth, the program quickly grew beyond our 47 sponsored students and delivered more than 400 hours of teaching in eight subjects to 70 students in Forms 1, 2, and 3 (eighth, ninth, and tenth graders) from the surrounding villages. The classes also included small group discussions on study skills, time management, handling peer pressure, selecting

subject combinations, adapting to challenges at school, cooperating with difficult teachers, and goal-setting. The students loved the program because the classes were taught by "big brothers" who could relate to their problems and give practical advice. They felt comfortable showing their curiosity and asking questions. One student remarked, "I learned more in one month here than I did all semester at school!" Another student expressed, "I don't look forward to school vacation because I sit idle at home. But this vacation I challenged my mind!" The three graduates said teaching was an eye-opening experience where they learned confidence, how to manage adolescent behavior and group dynamics, and how to motivate the students. The long school vacations have the potential to derail students from their goals due to idle time and negative influences in their home environments. We hope to continue this program to give future graduates an opportunity to earn pocket money while sharing valuable academic and personal support to secondary

Former Student Teachers, Josephat, Edward and Julius, after finishing Form 6!



students following in their footsteps.

Julius Metta has not yet confirmed his university, but he plans to study management to become a project planner. Edward Baramay will be studying for a BA degree in history and English and aims to attend law school and start his own law firm in the future. And Josephat Karengi will be starting a BA in Education program at the University of Dar es Salaam. He plans to open up his own school in the future. From the "school" he started with Julius and Edward in our community, we see he already has what it takes to make a difference! Asante sana to sponsors who invest in these bright young people who are poised to make a lasting meaningful impact in Tanzania! 🐘

Family News



We are happy to announce that our Managing Director Peter Leon Mmassy and his wife, our Social Worker, Grace Christopher Lyimo welcomed their first child, Joann on May 19, 2009.

Joann, the youngest member of the Tanzanian Children's Fund family!

We'd like to introduce and welcome Holly Payne from the New Zealand organization VSA. Volunteer Service

Abroad sends volunteers around the world for a 2 year commitment. As a registered ESL teacher, Holly is now teaching Standards IV and V, Drama Club and our new English Conversation class for our teachers at Gyetighi Primary School. Holly is from Wellington, New Zealand.

We'd like to welcome Magda Heywood as our new Microfinance Director who will begin work with us in September. For the past 2 years she has been a Peace Corps volunteer in Azerbaijan, training entrepreneurs and trainers in microfinance programs. Magda grew up in California.

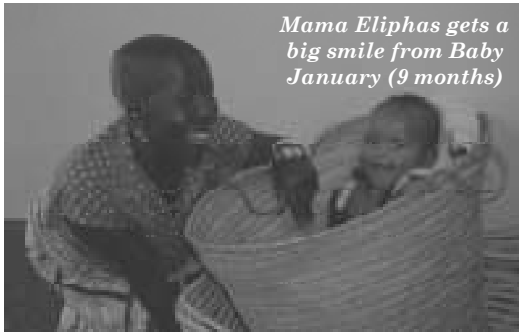
We'd like to welcome Christy Slice as our new Volunteer Coordinator who will begin

work with us in September. Christy has travelled and worked in Tanzania frequently since she graduated from College of Charleston. Christy grew up in Maryland.

Last May the Torrington Rotary Club honored India Howell with the Paul Harris Fellow Award. The award is named for the founder of Rotary International and is the highest recognition a Rotary Club can bestow on an individual for service to humanity. India accepted the award on behalf of all the volunteers who have helped us with our work.

The Tanzanian Children's Fund is now on **FACEBOOK!** Join our group and keep up-to-date with news, photos and videos from the Children's Village. This a great way to connect (and stay connected!) with our dedicated volunteers and friends! 🐘

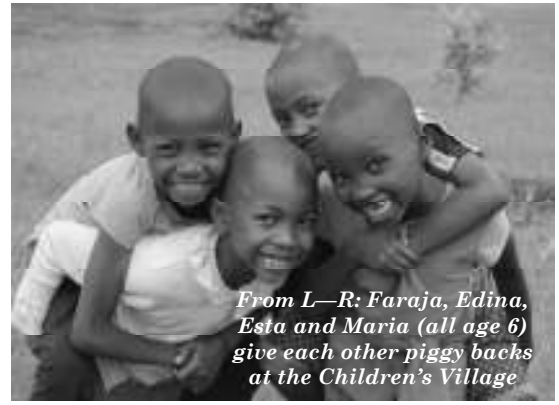
Photo Album



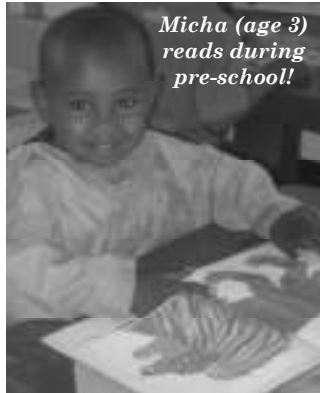
Mama Eliphas gets a big smile from Baby January (9 months)



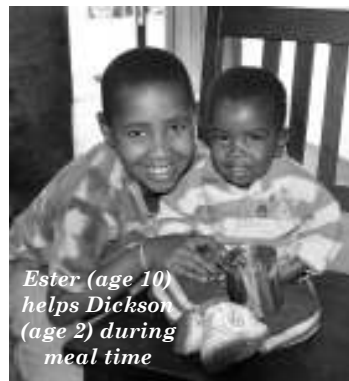
Jackline (age 6) was welcomed to the Children's Village in July, 2009!



From L—R: Faraja, Edina, Esta and Maria (all age 6) give each other piggy backs at the Children's Village



Micha (age 3) reads during pre-school!



Ester (age 10) helps Dickson (age 2) during meal time



Lucy (age 14) and Marietha (age 10)



Lucia (age 3), Neema (age 2) and Elibaraka (age 3)



A big smile from Neema (age 2) in her new rain jacket!



Gabriella (age 3) with new brother Nada (age 6)

Asante Sana

Since last April we've had dedicated, talented, energetic volunteers share loving and funny moments with our kids. Throughout each day our volunteers inspire, challenge and comfort our kids. We can't thank our volunteers enough for their tender kindness, insurmountable patience and pure joy they spread among all of us at the Children's Village. In June, Anne, Caroline and Alice Collins taught the kids to knit hats, a Shady Hill School tradition, which has turned into a Knit-O-Rama. Everywhere you look our kids are knitting and wearing bright colored hats! Our family keeps on growing as more volunteers join us at the Children's Village! Thank you one and all!

Thank you Laura Armitage, Richmond Hill, GA; Katherine Armstrong, Scarborough, ME; Emiko Bennett, Charlotte, VT; Elaine Bonds, Aspen, CO; Leanna Bonds, Aspen, CO; Taylor Buonocore, Morristown, NJ; Anne Childs, Watertown, MA; Alice and Jane Eliza Chisholm, Savannah, GA; Whitney Clarkson, Washington, DC; Alice and Caroline Collins, Watertown, MA; Jessie Cronan, Winchester, MA; Mackenzie Davis, Medford, MA; Pooh Gephart, Newtown Square, PA; Nancy, Rebecca and Rudy Gerson, Henderson, NV; Aline Gittleman, Philadelphia, PA; Sarah and Sophie Gould, South Hamilton, MA; Caroline and Marci Gummo, Richmond Hill, GA; Samantha Hoffman, Carbondale, CO; Cindy and Caroline Kamm, Mill Valley, CA; Jessica Kane, Media, PA; Amanda Keller, Paoli, PA; Emily Lyons, Ellsworth, ME; Jesse Mckenna, Wenham, MA; Thomas Minehart, Reading, PA; Rachel Miranda, Tinton Falls, NJ; Luke Morong, Camden, ME; Maria Pascual, London, England; Holly Payne, Wellington, New Zealand; Andrew Petersen, Clearwater, FL; Alanna Phelan, Princeton, NJ; Sam Roos, Cape Elizabeth, ME; Elle Schurtz, Mason City, IA; Jeanie, Rebecca and Hannah Shaw, New Canaan, CT; Karen and Emma Shorr, Beverly, MA;

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Asante Sana cont.

Mason Stabler, Littleton, CO; Leah Steers, Edmond, OK; Donna, Harry and Molly Storer, Sherborn, MA; Tracie Terrill, Dallas, TX; Jonah Tower, Arlington, MA; Carolyn Watson, Calgary, Canada; Rebecca Webb and Austin Heye, Belmont, MA; Karen Wellard, New York, NY; Caitlin Wood, Ellsworth, ME; Alissa Yerardi, Philadelphia, PA and Elissa Zirinsky, New York, NY.

We'd also like to thank all of our fundraising hosts and hostesses who introduced us to new friends and gathered old friends together. Thank you *Carter Bacon and Peggy Wiles for an evening at the Brookline Country Club, Brookline, MA; Mitsou McNeil and Dana Hall School, Wellesley, MA; Barbara Spiegel and the Torrington Rotary Club, Torrington, CT; Todd and Lisa Cronan, Winchester, MA; David and Jeanne Laskin, East Chatham, NY; Todd Cronan, Goodwin Proctor Law Firm, Boston, MA; Charlie, Liz and Emily Poole, Yarmouth, ME; Linda Hayes, Princeton, NJ; Jane Steele, Far Hills, NJ; Tacoma Rotary Club, Tacoma, WA; Kitty-Ann Van Doornick, Tacoma, WA; John and Peggy Walton, Kirkland, WA.* Thanks also to the schools who welcomed us into their communities-- *Dover Sherborn High School, Sherborn, MA; Shady Hill School, Cambridge, MA; Pingry School, Far Hills, NJ.*

In June we sent a 40-foot container of donations from Maine to the Children's Village. On August 21, the container arrived in Dar es Salaam where it is sitting in customs waiting to be trucked to the Children's Village! Beth Currier and Emily Poole organized this herculean effort to pack and send over 400 boxes. We'd like to thank Don Olen and Peter Noyes of Earl W. Noyes & Company, Portland ME for their expert advice as well as our volunteers who helped us pack! *Betts and Laura Armstrong, Scarborough, ME; Nano Chatfield, Cape Elizabeth, ME; Beth and Libby Currier, Scarborough, ME; Sabrina Garnett, South Freeport, ME; Casha Kearney, Cape Elizabeth, ME; Cindy Knowles, Cumberland, ME; Lucy Lacasse, Scarborough, ME; Marcia Livada, Cape Elizabeth, ME; Emily and Liz Poole, Yarmouth, ME; Hallie and Trillium Rintel, Cape Elizabeth, ME; Annie Skapinsky, Cape Elizabeth, ME; Peggy Wiles, Cambridge, MA.*



Asante Sana!!



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