



TANZANIA: August 22 - September 5, 2003: 4,000 Bedkits

BY RICHARD HRYNIW
LAKEVIEW, ONTARIO

Energy is to a country what the backbone is to the body. Take it away and the body collapses. Tanzania, like any country, requires energy in many forms to meet its agricultural, industrial and domestic needs. It is fortunate to presently have adequate supplies of natural gas, and its electrical system steadily improves, but for the vast majority of the people, these forms of energy are beyond their resources.

Most homes in Tanzania depend not on the electric stove or gas range for boiling water and cooking food, but upon charcoal. It is the main source of heat for food preparation, and as a result there is the continual sting of pungent smoke in the air. It is also a strong measure of the economy. There are many who rely on charcoal for their income. It is a microscopic example of an economic structure from producer to consumer.

The process begins in the countryside, in the many small villages surrounding the core of Dar es Salaam. It is here that the charcoal makers take one to two weeks to cut and gather the mixture of soft and hardwood (particularly cashew nut) which will be transformed into the charred remains known as charcoal. They cut the wood into approximately three to four foot lengths. It is then stacked like cord wood into an area sixteen feet by six feet, and is four feet high. This is topped with a further two to three foot layer of grasses. Finally the entire structure is buried beneath a two foot layer of sand which creates a sizable castle with a dry moat surrounding it. This work has taken up another full week. Finally the wood is set afire at one end and is allowed to smoke and smolder for yet a final week. The charcoal maker constantly monitors

the process to make certain that neither too little nor too much air is getting to the burn, and small holes in the sand emitting plumes of smoke, attest to the inferno below the warm sands.

When the metamorphosized wood is finally cold, it is unearthed and bound up into ten one-hundred pound sacks. They are now

Tanzanian Bedkit – 2003

Foam mattress
2 Sheets
Blanket
Towel
Mosquito net
Ngao (mosquito treatment)
T-shirt
Kanga (thin wrap around skirt)
Flip-flops (footwear)
4 exercise books
2 pens
2 pencils
straw cap

ready for market, and will be sold to the buyers for 2,000 Tanzanian Shillings (TS) or approximately \$2 US. Thus, for four to five weeks of work, the “farmer” will realize an income of \$20 US. The next part of the infrastructure is equally fascinating, for the buyers arrive not in large trucks but on bicycles to purchase their two to three bags. This entire load (300 pounds) will be loaded over the rear tire section of the bicycle and, travelling over hill and dale for upwards of 15 to 20 miles, will be transported to Dar. No matter what time of day or from what direction, one can observe a steady flow of these charcoal laden bicycles making their way into the city. Here the “wholesaler” will hope to sell his three bags for 3,000 TS each, realizing a total profit of \$3 US for a trip that will take him two to three days to make.

Finally, the “retailer” will break open the bags and sell the charcoal – one lump at a time – until he has hopefully made a profit similar to the “wholesaler” of \$1 US per bag. Without this backbreaking labour, the majority of people in Dar would be without the energy to cook supper.

Perhaps this short course in Tanzanian economics will demonstrate to you, the donors, how important your bedkit is. To the children who receive this precious package, it is a gift of royal proportions. On their behalf we thank you for both your caring and your sharing!

Special Note About Albino Children

On this occasion, as in previous times in Tanzania, we distributed to a large number of albino children. It is important to note that often we would have these children continue to wear their sunglasses (if they had a pair) or their hat (if they had one), for their photographs, as the sun can be very detrimental to them. We thank you, the donors, for your understanding and care.

BY JOAN HRYNIW
LAKEVIEW, ONTARIO

Challenges, whether small or large are a part of each of our lives. Those of us who travel for SCAW meet many challenges on our trips that differ considerably from those that we meet daily at home. Some are simple. Some are complicated. Some we accept. Some we would like to reject as they are so alien to our thinking. A simple challenge with which to deal and accept is the total flight time of 18 hours in an aircraft with only one break after the first six-and-a-half hours. One’s legs and back yearn to stretch out, to turn and twist. The challenge is in convincing

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(Tanzania by Joan Hryniw, Lakeview, Ontario, continued from page 1)

yourself that you are and will be comfortable and that you will sleep! Somewhat!

Once in Tanzania, the challenges change daily as we travel away from the centre of Dar es Salaam down rough narrow roads – sometimes paved, but often rutted dirt roadways. The smells of diesel exhaust, decaying garbage, garbage burning, and body sweat mingle and assault our senses as the blowing wind constantly changes. Setting up the bedkits to enable you, the donor, to have a wee peek at Tanzania in the background is the ultimate challenge. Here it is ever shifting sand on which to set up the bedkits. Now, what will there be in the background? Will it be barren ground, scraggly bushes, small mounds of garbage, or a barren wall that will reflect the sunlight and thereby distort the photos? Often the best site is one we cannot choose – it would usually be in front of, or behind, the village thoroughway – too much traffic would distort the pictures, or at schools, it would be the only pathway to the children’s washrooms. The ultimate challenge in setting up the bedkit is the sun. We can contend with the wind as we can pin down, tape down or set rocks inside of blowing objects. The sun, however, we can’t alter. We finally choose a suitable site, take a half hour to set up the bedkits, photograph perhaps 10 groups of children and...by then the sun has shifted. Now it is shading their faces and we still have 470 children to photograph. We gather a team of eight people, simultaneously lifting the sheet holding the three bedkits and move forward, set it down, move the cement blocks holding the signs, move the stools, straighten the bedkits, make wind adjustments and start all over again. Then about one-hour later, the challenge begins again.

The children are not a challenge – excited and anxious as they are, they wait patiently as we sit them down [*jo ka* in Swahili], straighten out T-shirts, call out *chukka* (smile), and snap the photos. The albino children experience the worst challenge of any of us. Their blue eyes and their pale white skin are super sensitive to the sunlight which we need for taking the photos. Many have cancerous skin sores on their arms and faces. As a result, this year we chose to leave the hats or sunglasses on those few who were fortunate enough to have them. As some of you will see, many do not have these commodities.

Not a complaint came from them, just a big smile and a quiet, gracious “thank you” or *asante* (Swahili for thank you).

The 45°C heat, the constant sweating of the team, the frequent reminders – Did you drink water? Are you feeling O.K.? What number are we at? Etc. Yes, all of these are challenges – some heftier and tougher than others, but none of these compare to the challenges the beautiful children of Tanzania face on a daily basis. Hunger is a constant challenge. With soil very sandy and water difficult to obtain, it is not easy to grow enough food to feed your family. A family’s dinner is cooked in one pot on a small charcoal burner. It often consists of ground cornmeal added to water (hopefully from a nearby well and not a river) with bits of beans, yam, etc. added to it. Usually it is cooked in a corner inside the small, dark, smoky hut while the baby lies beside it on the floor.



Medical attention is rare. Good health is an ongoing challenge. It is estimated there is only one doctor to every 30,000 people. Malaria is the country’s greatest child killer – thank God for the mosquito nets your donation has provided. Mosquitoes are always very prevalent. Many children face challenges just walking to school, either barefoot or wearing footwear too big or too small for them. Articles of clothing are cherished – regardless of the number of holes or rips in them. When it comes right down to it, our challenges melt away to nothing as we come to realize and understand that these smiling, giggling or shy quiet children face a far greater challenge than we are ever likely to face – that of survival. Thanks to you donors for giving them some hope, and the knowledge that others care for them.

BY KATHLEEN MURPHY LONDON, ONTARIO

On July 16, 2003, I connected with Joan and Richard Hryniw representing SCAW. We met years ago when they did a presentation on their trip to India for my Brownie unit. This year I had vacation time to use before December 31st, and I was inquiring whether any SCAW team could use another volunteer.

This was the beginning of my good fortune. A team led by Richard and Joan would be leaving on August 22nd for Tanzania. Richard told me that while they usually have a team of five persons, this time they only had four. However, Richard was cautious because he did not think I could get a flight and the necessary visas and immunizations with only six weeks prior to departure. I assured him that “Kathleen Murphy luck” would prevail, and I would appreciate joining the team. Less than 24 hours later I had a call from Richard with good news that a flight was confirmed. I was going to be able to go. Unfortunately, Bud Adams was unable to join us because of an accident four weeks before our departure, so in actual fact our team remained a four-person one.

My travel experience to date brought me into a world of cultural exchange and the opportunity to be an ambassador for Canada and learn about other countries. This time I was looking for a deeper involvement, with hands on experience, and an opportunity to participate in a tangible way. SCAW fit the bill with the task of delivering 4,000 bedkits over a 12 day distribution period to some of the poorest children in Tanzania.

SCAW is built on the contributions of so many volunteers. Over the six weeks prior to leaving, and since coming to Tanzania, I have been overwhelmed by their dedication and effectiveness. In observing the volunteers at the SCAW office, I was so impressed with their efficiency and commitment to prepare the labels and tax receipts. My team leaders, Richard and Joan, provided the comprehensive orientation for new travelling volunteers. Together as a team, we had a pre-departure dinner and label sorting experience. Until that time, I had no appreciation for how much time is spent with the labels ensuring that the donors who give multiple orders, get a variety of photos.

Then there is our key volunteer in Africa, Mama Wandoa. She met us at the airport. Her bear hugs were full of love, and her heart so appreciative of SCAW and the work it has done in her country over the past three years. She, with the help of her children, grandchildren and friends searched out sources for the best cost and quality for all the contents of the bedkit. Mama’s home became the assembly work area every night as 500 pieces of foam were rolled, and the contents of the bedkits were bagged so the

children had an easy way to carry them. Mama, in cooperation with the teachers, principals and the local volunteers, ensured that the kids receiving bedkits met SCAW criteria. They assisted with checking the lists, dressing the children, and providing interpretation to the children and parents who wanted to speak with us.

Now as I finish typing my thoughts for this newsletter, I know that more volunteers will edit and print this publication, sorting and finally sending the photos to you, the contributors. This trip has reminded me that each person doing his or her own small bit can collectively make a huge difference. It is awesome to be part of the SCAW team!

To look back on the 12 distribution days, so many images and memories come to mind. We were up and on the road daily at 7:00 a.m., and most days returned to our accommodation by dinnertime. We endured mid 40°C humid temperatures, and at some sites limited shade. When the temperature was in the thirties, we would comment on what a cool day it was! We enjoyed listening to the children say thank you, softly, as sometimes they were afraid they would mispronounce the words. The children taught us action songs about looking for butterflies or reminding us that reading is fun. We also learned some Swahili words, which the children found very amusing when we practiced using them. Each child beamed with joy on receiving their bedkit. Upon leaving one of the distribution sites, we passed a child five kilometers away, still walking home with the bedkit on his head and with a kick in his step, knowing that he would be going to have a great sleep that night. On our last day of distribution we had a rain shower, reminding us that not everything goes quite perfectly. The bedkit and labels dried out in less than an hour, and we were back in business. I will also remember the appreciation of the school children who did not receive bedkits, but who got to take home a pencil or crayon that were given by some of our Canadian friends who wanted to share something with their friends in Africa. Pencils were treated like a 20 dollar bill might be coveted by a Canadian student.

This trip has been a wonderful way to use

my vacation, and has allowed me to fulfill my dream to be of service to others and learn about a different way of living. I would encourage you, the donors, to consider becoming a travelling volunteer.

BY MARILYN HILL WATERLOO, ONTARIO

We were fortunate to meet many Tanzanians—each with their own unique set of circumstances. Let me tell you about some of the people we met in one village. Beside the school there was this long pile of sandy dirt with smoke coming out some holes in the side of the pile. An older man was tending the fire inside the pile through these holes. He was very friendly, although he could not speak English. He was genuinely happy that we were interested in his job of making charcoal. See Richard's story for more information about charcoal making. We exchanged names and he wrote his name in the sand. We wrote our names in the sand for him to read, but he did not understand, so it would be fair to say that all he knew how to write was his name. He will work four to five weeks making charcoal, and it will reap him less money than the cost of one bedkit!

After the distribution, we went on a walking tour of the village. There was no village proper that we could see, just some mud huts scattered throughout the fields and trees. The first family that we visited was a widow who had four young children. We recognized her from the distribution because she had to carry one of her children, who had cerebral palsy, to have his photo taken. The boy, who was just about all that she was capable of carrying, was wearing a hand-sewn pair of underpants that kept falling off (there was no elastic at the waist). The family's mud hut had two rooms of the same size. The entrance room was open on two sides. The kitchen/living/eating/sleeping room was approximately four feet wide by five feet long. The foam mattress from the bedkit was already in place on the floor. It took up more than half of the room. The mattress would double as bed and seating for the entire family of five people. There was a little fire going in the corner of the room. The mosquito net from the bedkit was hanging from the ceiling and it would be big enough to cover the whole family. The widow survived by asking others for flour and other food items.

The next family we met was a woman who had a handicapped child as well. The mud hut she lived in was bigger. It had three rooms. An elderly man owned the house and he had taken the woman and her child in. He lived in one room and she and her child lived in another. The middle room was for storage, and I'm not sure what else because there was no furniture.

This village had no electricity. The people were so poor and their living conditions were absolutely primitive. The Headmaster of the school said that next year they hoped to get electricity. I'm sure someone would get a TV (although information we have suggests there are only two TV's per 1,000 people in Tanzania). What will happen to these people when the whole world opens up to them? Will they despair that they have been left out? Will it inspire them? What will it do to their social structure?

I had a hard time sleeping that night because of the terrible living conditions of these people. Why had I been born in Canada? The next day's distribution had me asking that question all over again!

One girl who looked about nine-years-old arrived at the photo spot wearing only the T-shirt that had just been given to her. Mama Wandoa came to say that this girl did not go to school. Her grandmother was blind, so she had to stay home to help her grandmother get around. She came to the distribution naked because she had no clothes. We quickly took her kanga out of her bedkit and put it on her so that she was totally clothed for the picture. A kanga is a wrap around skirt made of thin material. A regular skirt is worn beneath the kanga. What could I do? I had my "new" skirt from Value Village in my backpack. I quickly pulled it out and gave it to her. The smile on her face was incredible. The joy in my heart was overwhelming. That was the best \$4.99 I've ever spent! (Matthew 25:35-40)



**“ANNUAL SCAW
BENEFIT CONCERT”
An Evening With Lynette
Jenkins* and Friends**

Will be held at **St. James’ Cathedral**, 65 Church Street, Toronto, on **Saturday, December 6th, 5-7 p.m.**, at a cost of **\$10** per person. All proceeds will be used to purchase SCAW bedkits. Mark your calendar now—and order your tickets from Lynette at 416-281-8758 (or SCAW office).

The concert, provided by artists from the Kiwanis Music Festival, will include a variety of classical and seasonal music. Come and make a day of it in Toronto—stay with friends, go shopping and/or sight-seeing, and then finish your day at this wonderful Cathedral.

The outstanding talents of our young Canadians is amazing. Be prepared to have your spirits lifted, your mood lightened and your soul appeased.



*Lynette Jenkins, a physiotherapist, is well known to SCAW. As well as being one of our frequent overseas travelling volunteers, Lynette also works arduously through her own Kiwanis Club.

**SOME RECENT SCAW
BENEFACTORS ... WHY NOT
TELL US YOUR STORIES!**

1. Article published in LaSalle [Ontario] Silhouette: **“Dried Flowers in LaSalle help give third world children a place to sleep”**.

At the age of 85, Marie Heine lives in a house that her late husband built for the two of them. The house is surrounded by lovely trees, flowers and bushes, all of which he planted. Visiting their home is

**NEXT SCHEDULED
DISTRIBUTION TRIPS**

**OCTOBER, 2003 -
BANGLADESH**



SCAW All Occasion Card
Mother & Infant, Chennai,

like arriving at a fairy tale cottage in a magical forest. Many of the plants are suitable for drying and using in colourful arrangements. Her garage is full of dried and drying plants waiting for Marie to assemble them into her creative arrangements – in vases, teapots and other attractive containers, which she then takes to Carrick Farms to be sold. The Carrick Family has refused to accept any commission, as Maria donates 100% of all her sales to SCAW. Over the past five years, Marie has raised over \$4,000.00. She had to be persuaded to allow her name to be used for this story, but agreed to, in order to spread the word for SCAW, and to encourage others to make donations of their own.

2. We just received notice that a newly married couple recently requested donations to SCAW in lieu of gifts, and we are to expect funds for 50 bedkits. And on the subjects of weddings, yet another couple is sending a cheque for the money they would normally have spent on wedding favours for their guests. They plan to copy the photographs and place them on the tables for the guests to take home instead.

3. Kiwanis Clubs: The current Governor of Eastern Canada and the Caribbean Division, Governor Bill Stuart and his wife, First Lady Faye Stuart, requested that donations be made to SCAW instead of giving personal gifts to them. The results were staggering ... almost \$50,000.00 in donations. Lady Faye almost wore out SCAW’s carpet trekking back and forth with all these donations.

Have you purchased your Holiday Greeting cards yet? We have two delightful all occasion cards available one featuring the photo left, a Chennai, India mother with her infant in SCAW’s 2003 newly styled cradle; the other is of a group of smiling, happy Ugandan children. These attractive black and white cards measure 4½" x 6¾". We are selling them, tax included, in packages of twelve (12) cards for \$10. Inside, the single greeting PEACE makes it easy for you to utilize this card for any occasion. Contact Linda Webb at the SCAW office to order.

The Ugandan photo is not available for this publication, however, we anticipate it will be on our Web site by the time you receive this, so check it out.

We also have our delightful Hasti Note package (drawing of a sleeping baby) available in packages of ten (10) for \$6. (tax included).

THANK YOU
for your
contribution to this
Tanzania trip

Black’s Photography for
photofinishing

**Champion Photochemistry
Limited** for continuously
funding film and photofinishing
costs since 1986.

Konica Canada Inc. for
donating film

**The Printing House
(Russ Cosman)**
**5120 Dundas Street West
Etobicoke, Ontario** for the
printing of this newsletter

**Kay Kelly,
Harry Keating and
Maurice Kowanetz**
for publishing this newsletter

Donors and Volunteers!