

February 2006

The ZAMBIAN CHILDREN'S FUND

Chishawasha Newsletter



Building our Primary School

I am returning to Zambia in January to start work on the construction of the first wing of our Primary School. Funding for the first wing of the school has been provided by the Glassco Foundation of Canada (see article following).

First, we ordered a block press from Project KickStart, an organization out of San Francisco that develops tools to help people overcome poverty in the Third World. This block press will allow us to manufacture up to 300 blocks a day using a mixture of soil, water and as little as ten percent concrete. As expensive as concrete is of late, we hope this will be a significant savings in building costs.

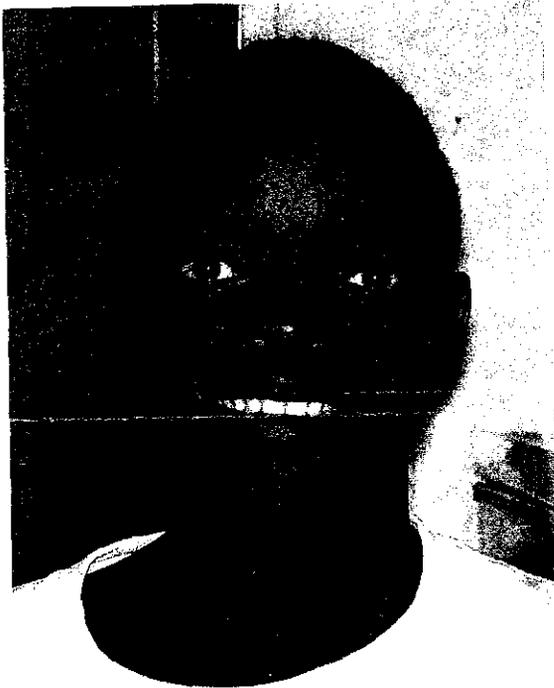
This wing of the school will include six classrooms of which only four will initially be used as classrooms. One of the rooms will be used as a kitchen and the other will be a combination library, nurse's office and school office. We will need a kitchen because, as we did in Lusaka, we will be having children from the neighboring village walking to our school every day. Initially, we will have up to 50 children walking to our school every morning and they will be fed breakfast before school begins and then the children attending our school and living in our houses will join them for lunch. The children in our houses will eat breakfast in the morning in their own homes. The school children will also be provided with clothes and shoes as well as medical care when needed.

Our school will have a Kindergarten class, a 1st grade, 4th grade and a new accelerated class for older children who have never before had the opportunity to go to school. Each class will be limited to twenty students this first year.

In addition to the first wing of the school, the Glassco Foundation has also pledged funding to build three 3-bedroom houses. 2006 promises to be a busy year.

Now, thanks to the Glassco Foundation, the villages have a bore hole that has been fenced off so animals cannot get close enough to pollute the water. Each bore hole has a hand pump that everyone can use. There are now green garden plots completely surrounding the pump with everyone in the village able to grow their own vegetables and fruit trees. Best of all, villagers we met with reported such a drop in new cases of trachoma that in some villages no new cases have been reported at all.

Our Smart Children



In late December, Josephine Molumbe, the Manager of CCHZ, e-mailed me with some of the best news yet. All, but one, of our 7th grade students who sat for their 7th grade exams passed!

In Zambia, all students must pass a government exam in order to go on to secondary school. Secondary school covers 8th through 12th grade and is equivalent to our high school. The amazing thing about our children doing so well is many of them had never been to school before they came to live with us. So, they attended school for only three or four years. Not one of our children has been to school for the full seven years one would expect. Every one of these children worked very hard to pass this exam. Obviously, besides being industrious they are also really smart!

Siyanga is one of our best students Photo by David Egen

Volunteer Opportunities

In addition to the first wing of our Primary School, we hope to build three or four 3-bedroom houses and a small clinic in 2006. We will also continue farming and planting groves of fruit trees while raising and educating more children than ever.

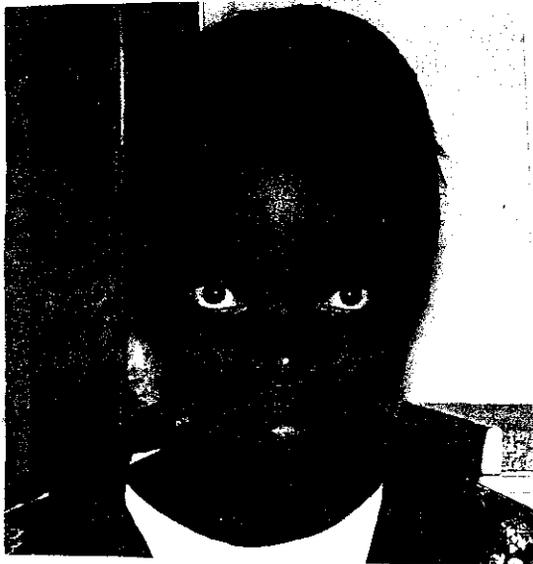
We are now planning a trip for volunteers in August. If you would like to come to Zambia to help us build, please call the office at (520) 323-2504 and let us know. We will advise you regarding health issues and send you an application. Before coming to Zambia, you must submit a complete ZCF application, have all necessary vaccinations, be taking an anti-malaria medication, and pay the \$2,500 fee in full. You will need to purchase plane tickets yourself, but all arrangements while you are in Zambia will be taken care of including a visit to Victoria Falls and a game reserve.

The Glassco Charitable Foundation for Children

Back in May of last year Colin Glassco of the Glassco Charitable Foundation for Children from Calgary, Canada visited us at the Chishawasha Children's Home. You may remember Mr. Glassco's Foundation drilled our "bore hole" for us in Zambia, thereby allowing us to start building. The reason Mr. Glassco was in Zambia in May was to celebrate the drilling of the 100th bore hole in Zambia. In 2000 his foundation drilled 10 bore holes, in 2003, they were up to 40, in 2005, 80 and they hope to drill 50 more during 2006.

The Glassco Foundation started working in Zambia in 1997, when Mr. Glassco met Dr. Boateng Wiafe, a local eye surgeon who was known as a "street surgeon" – someone who was doing surgery wherever he could. Mr. Glassco was so impressed with Dr. Bo's work he built the Lusaka Eye Clinic so Dr. Bo would have a place to work. The doctor performs surgery on both adults and children; trachoma is a major cause of blindness in Zambia and children are born with cataracts due to malnutrition. Dr. Bo removes children's cataracts so they are able to see for the first time in their lives.

Once Mr. Glassco realized that most of these people were blind only because they were so poor they did not have access to clean water, he set about working to remedy the situation. First he started buying and distributing medicine to help cure trachoma, than he realized people would not get trachoma at all if they were simply able to wash their faces with clean water every day. So, he started drilling bore holes all over the Southern Province, particularly in one of the most impoverished regions of Zambia, the Gwembe Valley. Along with the men to drill the bore holes he sent people to teach the basics of washing in clean water daily.



I was lucky enough to be able to travel with Mr. Glassco in May to visit a number of the sites where the wells have been drilled. For most of the villages, getting a well that provides clean water is nothing short of a miracle. I saw some of the water holes the villages had used previously. They were simply mud holes that every person in the village, all of their animals and all of the wild animals in the region used. During the rainy season the water was always dirty because of animals standing in it to drink and during the dry season, there frequently was no water at all.

Paxina is from Choma in the Gwembe Valley Photo by David Egen

In Tucson: We need volunteers: to work in the office, pack on Wednesdays and help at the calendar events. Please let us know if anyone has available space (garage or storage unit) to store donations. Lastly, a Kenmore dryer is available for donation. For more information on any of the above please call Barby Goldschmid (520) 546-6380.

Calendar

In early December the Zambian Children's Fund tried to reach out to more people in the community by having a booth at the 4th Avenue Street Fair. We were not allowed to sell goods from Zambia because we did not make them ourselves. So, we sold brownies for a dollar each. Mostly we talked with people. We told them about the tragic situation of one in four children being orphaned by AIDS or other diseases and our work to raise these children and give them an education and a skill. Many people handed us small donations and others bought a brownie and gave us more than we asked.

Join us at the next 4th Avenue Street Fair on March 24, 25 and 26.

We will have a booth at the **Peace Fair in Reed Park on February 25** where we sell Zambian goods (baskets, fabrics and jewelry) as well as t-shirts.

What's New

- ❖ Sam Weeks from Ithaca is volunteering to teach our Children during 2006-2007.
- ❖ Please welcome new board members - Joel, Martha, Barby, Mary, Gladys, and Jacky.
- ❖ Joan will be working as our Development Director and in the office Tuesday & Thursdays.

Zambian Children's Fund
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Return Service Requested



*Unless someone like you cares a whole awful lot,
nothing is going to get better, it's not.
~ The Lorax, by Dr. Suess*