



Happy Holidays Everybody! Greetings from sunny, warm Bwindi. It's a festive time of year and we are overjoyed to have Scott and Carol Kellermann back in town, especially at Christmas. They are working with the BDP and it is reassuring to have their help and support with the Batwa pygmies. Life for the Batwa was rather desperate, but due to the support of many, much has been accomplished. One of the obvious problems for the Batwa was the lack of housing. When we attempted to distribute mosquito nets we were faced with the problem that their thatch houses were too small to accommodate the net. Homebuilding has been a high priority for the work of the Batwa Development Program (BDP). Many volunteers have come from abroad and given of their time, energy and money to give the Batwa a "gift of a lifetime", a home to live in. What follows is some of the good work our volunteers have done this past year.

Starting the year, Dr. Robert Clift and wife Linda from Reno, Nevada checked out Rotary projects while here trekking the mountain gorillas in the Bwindi Impenetrable National Park. They plan to return and build a Batwa house in 2010. Bob is an active Rotarian and has been a great supporter of our 3H Rotary project.

Nevada City, Ca. was well represented by our first group of the summer. The group comprising of Dr. Jean Creasey and her two daughters, Mary and Annie, Dr. Sarah Woerner and engineer Loren and also Joanne Hild and her 2 daughters Mackenzie and Flannery. We conducted dental clinics and screening in multiple Batwa communities and schools. They also built a Batwa house, assisted with our 3H Rotary project and Loren helped design and construct a water tank at the Batwa cultural center.

BDP began the month of July with a visit from Tom Shaw and his son Taylor from Chicago. They visited the Batwa Cultural Preservation Center and they also built a Batwa home. Most enjoyable was the fun of mudding the house where Tom and Taylor filled mud in to the eaves of the house. This activity normally requires a ladder for most people because the eaves are eight feet high. With their height, Tom and Taylor had no problem. Tom will also be helping try to start a project with the Dallas Mavericks. "The tallest people in the world, helping the shortest."

During July, BDP was most happy to host Matthew Blaire and Audrey for a week. They had spent a month in South Africa and came to visit Batwa communities and participate in BDP's work with the Batwa. They met Batwa pygmies for the first time, hiked up to the Batwa cultural site to help build a latrine and spent some quality time visiting many Batwa households.

Mid July was full of fun with many volunteers. Two groups came with missions of building Batwa homes, sharing life experiences and preaching the gospel.

Emmanuel Church from Grass Valley, CA, led by Deacon Anne built a home for a Batwa family at Mukongoro village, participated in brick making for the school latrine and worked at the diocesan clinics. They crossed the Bwindi Impenetrable Forest on their way to visit the Batwa homes and students at Mpungu village. They wrapped up their visit with a hike to experience our Batwa cultural center next to the Bwindi Impenetrable Forest. Cecilia made a well appreciated contribution, which enabled us to buy our cook Gino, a new stove at the guest house. Keith assisted with a couple of quality frying pans.

Global Buddies came to town in August. They worked and played with the families and children of the Batwa and built a house for them in one of the villages. They will be returning in July of 2010 to continue their good work. If you are interested in learning more, just Google Global Buddies.

Sol Hansen is the hydrologist for our Rotary 3H (Health, Hunger, Humanity) project. Sol has spent the past year bringing clean water, latrines and goats to the Batwa communities. Sol's parents Ralph and Nancy, also came to visit and participate in his passion of the past year.

It was enjoyable to listen to their discussions and feel the closeness and love that binds and strengthens their family. Ralph and Nancy had a great time here in Bwindi; participating in building a Batwa home and working on water tanks. Everywhere they went the Batwa were very grateful for what Sol was doing for them.

Our old-friend and medical student from University of Pennsylvania, Steve and his wife Sonia, traveled to Bwindi to support the work of BDP. They built a house for Robin and her four children, a very responsible Mutwa woman. We all spent the day mudding the house with lots of laughing, singing and joy. Robin's happiness was expressed in the smiles and giggles of her children.

In October, two scientists, Nathaniel Dominy and George "PJ" Perry came to study the evolution of the pygmy phenotype. In other words, to study why the Batwa pygmies are vertically challenged. Their study could offer some interesting information about the rainforest hunter/gatherers. They will be returning in February to take blood samples for DNA studies. They were joined by Nate's wife and his father-in-law, who assisted Nate and PJ with their work.

November brought Blackie's sister Joyce for his birthday. Needless to say, Joyce and her friend Jan, had a fantastic time from markets in Kampala to delivering goats to the Batwa in Bwindi and then back to Kampala for their final nights meal at Café Roma, Blackie's and now Joyce and Jan's favorite Italian restaurant.

Arriving a few days after Joyce and Jan, were Kathy McNair from Cameron Park with her niece Kerry. And flying in the next day was a couple who looked rather familiar, Scott and Carol Kellermann. Scott and Carol hit the ground running and can't stop smiling.

No grass grew under their feet. Everyone, Kathy, Kerry, Joyce, Jan, Scott and Carol, Blackie and Richard went on safari to Queen Elizabeth National Park in the *Batwamobile*. Just like the old days. They visited Batwa settlements, hiked to the Batwa cultural site, built a house in Nteko, a six hour hike through the forest and spent the night in tents at the settlement. Kathy emerged from her tent in the morning, looking like she just walked out of the pages of ELLE.

Todd and Michele got to Bwindi in time for Thanksgiving dinner, except we celebrated it on Tuesday, Dec.1 and it just got better from there! Michele's father Russ, is a Marine Corps buddy of Blackie's. Semper Fi! They had a wonderful trip from Egypt and the pyramids to Bwindi and the Batwa. HooRah!

Rev. Cliff, Gig and Barbara from St. James church in Dallas came in early December. They have been here so many times that we have lost count. We thank them from the bottom of our hearts for their selfless dedication and support.

We are thankful to all those volunteers who have given so much to help those with so little. It does seem that everyone's a winner. We thank you for allowing many Batwa families to celebrate the birth of Christ protected from the elements, secure in their homes provided by your generosity.

Obviously much more needs to be done. Most Batwa still reside in exceedingly cramped, squalid, infested quarters. A new home with pit-latrines and kitchen is \$750. To provide the finishing touch to a Batwa house, a final coat of mud, like plastering the walls, protects the walls from the rains and makes the house stronger and last longer, the cost is only \$200.

Housing and education are two areas that the Batwa have identified as having the greatest need. Sponsoring a Batwa child's education would be a wonderful way to practice your Christmas generosity every year. For a day school, the cost for one year is \$300. For boarding schools, the cost is \$600 per year.

The Batwa Development Program (BDP), an organization set up and run by the Batwa themselves, is doing an exceptional job of taking over the projects that Scott and Carol previously supervised. The Batwa are now making the decisions where land should be purchased, homes built, kids educated and goats distributed. It is the intention of BDP to make these projects sustainable and this can only be accomplished if the Batwa assume these responsibilities and provide leadership. It is an exciting time for the BDP-your prayers and support are appreciated. This newsletter is from the BDP staff. Please note the change of email address of the BDP - [batwapygmyies@yahoo.com](mailto:batwapygmyies@yahoo.com).

To find out more about the Batwa Development Program (BDP), you can email us at: [batwapygmyies@yahoo.com](mailto:batwapygmyies@yahoo.com) or visit our website at: [www.pygmies.net](http://www.pygmies.net). To build a Batwa house, sponsor a Batwa child in school or just make a donation, you can:

- Credit Card:  
You can now donate on-line to the Kellermann Foundation by visiting [www.JustGive.org](http://www.JustGive.org). Simply visit the website and type "Kellermann foundation" into the search box at the top right of the page. You may donate using your American Express, Discover, MasterCard or Visa card. All your donations are tax deductible.

- For Cash, Check or Electronic transfer  
Batwa Development Program  
The Kellermann Foundation (US tax ID #34-2018044)  
P.O. Box 1901, Penn Valley, CA 95946, USA

- Batwa Development Programme  
Stanbic Bank, Kihhi, Uganda, Swift code: SBICUGKX  
Account Number: 0140572760001

We appreciate your generosity that has allowed the Batwa to begin to extricate themselves from their life of poverty.

Merry Christmas,

The Batwa Development Program



*Emmanuel and Epiphany at Kitariro Batwa Settlement*



Another fun group of nine folks from Epiphany Episcopal Church, led by Toni Luc Tayengo returned to the Bwindi and worked at diocesan clinics and built homes for two Batwa families. There was a lot of dancing and singing with praises of joy and happiness. They preached and fellowshiped at Buhoma Church. They also hiked to the Batwa cultural site to experience the rich heritage of the Batwa. The Batwa have one of the oldest cultures in Africa and the BDP is working to teach and preserve this culture for their children and the world.

In the beginning of August, we had a wonderful visit with a group from the Diocese of Dallas, led by Mrs. Diane Stanton. Diane is the architect and founder of much of the work with the Batwa and has made numerous visits to this area. The group had a nice evening with Bishop John and others. The next morning was a visit to the students at Bishops Primary School, characterized by good entertainment with singing and dancing. Although Diane's group had a very tight schedule, they were able to mud Moses and Flora's new house, visit some households and enjoy a Batwa presentation, along with singing and dancing from the Batwa of Kitariro. The group concluded their visit with shopping at the Batwa Craft Banda next to the Bwindi park gate and a tour of the Bwindi hospital. The BDP appreciates all of the support Mrs. Stanton and the Diocese of Dallas have given to the Batwa over these many years.

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