

The Kellermann Foundation Newsletter

News from Bwindi Community Hospital

Volume 2 Number 3
July 2011

Malaria Threat Decreases

For the last five years, Bwindi Community Hospital has focused its malaria prevention and control efforts by distributing insecticide-treated mosquito nets to the most vulnerable citizens: children and pregnant women.

The number of malaria cases seen in our outpatient clinics among children under five has been reduced from 51% in 2006 to 2% today. We celebrate this tremendous success with all our partners, especially Buy-A-Net Canada (BAN). Our Community Health & Batwa team and our Village Health Promoters, who have trekked to every household to bring a net, enjoyed the May 2011 visit of Gail

Fones, Director of BAN. During her visit, Gail was happy to find that the most underprivileged Batwa pygmies were sleeping under nets.

Despite this progress, malaria is still a problem in the Bwindi area, accounting for 30% of all deaths, according to our 2010 household survey. Only 60% of the general population sleep under nets, and our target of 90% has yet to be met. The effort continues!



Gail Fones and BCH staff on a visit

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Imaging the World Links with BCH

In our quest to curb the high maternal death rate in Bwindi's remote area, we are privileged to have partnered with Vermont-based ITW, which will train local health providers to capture high quality ultrasound scans. These scans will then be relayed to volunteers around the world, with potentially lifesaving diagnoses returned for prompt intervention. Three outlying health facilities (at Nyakatare, Byumba, and Nyamwegabira) will link to BCH, which in turn will link to the Vermont volunteers. Using cell phone signals, diagnoses will be shared within the team, "saving lives by bringing communities of the world together; one ultrasound scan at a time." The initial focus, beginning in 2012, will be maternal health.



Dr. Kristen DeStigter, ITW team, & BCH staff

Healthcare for Entire Community

To address local healthcare inequalities, BCH partnered with International Medical Foundation (IMF) to launch the eQuality Health scheme early last year. This program improves access to quality, affordable health services for the sick and poor. The community pools resources to contribute an advance payment of \$3 per person per year. This way, the rich subsidize the poorest and the healthy help the sick. Each person then pays about half a dollar as a nominal fee to access a package of services including surgery and inpatient treatment. The eQuality program has gained momentum recently and now boasts of a membership of over 17,000.

Turinawe Evas (not her real name) was one of the happiest recent beneficiaries of eQuality Health. For 13 years, Evas had suffered from uncontrollable urine leakage due to a hole between her urinary bladder and the birth canal. This developed after a difficult delivery at home because she could not get to the hospital. She lost her first baby in the process. Evas has never married due to this problem. At first she believed her injury was a curse from God, because she was not married when she became pregnant. She was told her

problem could be solved with surgery, but she could not afford the cost. Her luck changed when a Swiss medical team hosted a surgical camp last May. Because she had registered with eQuality Health, Evas was able to have the repair procedure for less than \$1.00. When Evas returned for follow-up, she said "I am very happy that now I am normal. There are many more in my village who said they will come for treatment if I got better. Can I marry and have children?"

It costs BCH only \$6 per person per year to offer affordable quality service to the community. We encourage your support to help cover the \$3 per person per year (\$180,000 annually) that is not covered by the community.



Swiss surgeons work with BCH staff

Carol's Corner

Thoughts from Carol Kellermann



Kenneth met with Amama Mbabazi

Kenneth Turyamubona, now age 25, first got my attention years ago when he asked Scott and me for a kerosene lantern and an alarm clock. At the time we were struggling to keep Batwa in school. They often lacked school fees and basics such as soap, a mattress, proper clothing, school supplies, and transportation. Batwa were looked down upon and considered too stupid to learn. Their poverty was a source of amusement and derision with the other tribal group, the Bakiga.

"Kenneth," I said, "we have so little money. Why do you want these items?" He replied that he wanted to get up at 4:00 a.m. to study! Soon after this request, Kenneth won first in the District and was admitted to Buddo, the school of the kings of Buganda, and now of important politicians and the wealthy. Kenneth was proving all the stereotypes were wrong.

However, Batwa do not make it through school on their own. Because this is the first generation of Batwa to receive formal education, achieving success is a complex equation. It involves not only assisting the Batwa financially, but also working with schools and parents, ending practices such as caning, talking about unseen cultural prejudices, and having transportation for counselors to visit schools and settlements. It requires that the Batwa feel there are loving people who support them even when the surrounding culture is still sometimes hostile. All of this will help Batwa develop the skills to thrive in their new world.

A Kerosene Lamp and an Alarm Clock: Small Investment for a Bright Future

Here is what Kenneth had to say about his education:

When I was young, we used to move from area to area looking for food, money, and other Batwa. I looked after cows in Kihembe for 4 years while we lived there. I knew that looking after cows was the best job ever and I could not want to leave it. I worked for Bakiga for food, which I no longer have to do.

In 1993, I started school. I would study for one term only, then go away to Kihembe to help my parents. In 1998 I attended Kitariro School for Primary 1 and in 1999 I joined Primary 2 at the new Bishops School. This time I really wanted to study. I always wanted to be first in my class from the start. My worst thing was when a girl defeated me. I faced some tough competition but by working hard became first again.

My teachers were very good and loving towards me, apart from one teacher who never wanted a Mutwa to be the first in class. With the guidance of the teacher Hope, I was able to continue my education and persevere.*

Kenneth continued to excel at the Bishops School, completing Primary 4 and 5 in one year, and then after Primary 7 being accepted into Buddo for Senior One.

My tough time was when I joined Senior one at Buddo in Kampala. I was very lonely. I never knew English very well, which is the national language of Uganda, nor did I understand Luganda, the language of the tribal group in Kampala, but I was aided a lot in being accepted because I was a good football [soccer] player. At Buddo, the competition was very fierce and there were very many brighter students than I was. I had to cope for a time until I caught up with becoming fluent in these two languages and as I did this I came to like Kampala very well.

Why did I complete school when other Batwa did not? I was bright and I liked school, I enjoyed attending to my lessons, and I learned what the

**Mutwa is the singular form of Batwa.*

teachers taught very quickly. The support I got from Carol and Scott made school easier for me because I had everything I needed and this helped me focus so I could do my best. When I didn't make it to the University at first, I thought that I had failed since I couldn't become a doctor. But I had a plan B, which was becoming an accountant, and that is why I joined a local college and performed well so that I could gain my name back. [Kenneth will next attend Uganda Christian University Bishop Barham College thanks to a generous scholarship from [Uganda Partners.](#)]

My plans for the future are to become an accountant, have a well paying job, build a good house, and marry and have a good family.



Kenneth shows volunteers how to mud a new Batwa home

Kenneth has earned many firsts as a Mutwa: first place in Kanungu District with the highest scores for acceptance into Senior levels of either tribal group, the first Mutwa to attend Buddo, the first Mutwa to join Bishop Barham College in Kabale, and the first Mutwa to join the staff of the Batwa Development Program. These successes would not have been possible without the backing of friends who support him through the Kellermann Foundation. Will you make this kind of difference to another Mutwa student today?

To support education for other young people, send a check to the **Kellermann Foundation**, P.O. Box 832809, Richardson, TX 75083 or visit our [website](#) to donate securely online. Please indicate that your gift is for "Education."

An Open Letter from Our President

Dear Friends:

Dr. Scott Kellermann recently returned to Uganda to spend several months. He wrote to me that in his first two weeks he attended two five-hour church services, welcomed many visiting physicians and friends (including mountain gorillas at his doorstep!), spent time with the Batwa pygmies, and was asked to speak at a gala event in honor of Uganda's new Prime Minister Amama Mbabazi. He also told me that while the economic conditions in Uganda have presented challenges, there have been many accomplishments. Here are a few:

- The Batwa Experience living history site at Bwindi is gaining popularity among visitors.
- Over 700 students are being supported in education, and 112 Batwa homes have been built.
- Plans for a new nursing school have been approved, and Bwindi Community Hospital hopes to break ground by the end of 2011.
- The maternity ward is expanding to 42 beds, thanks to a grant from the Japanese Embassy.
- New technology is being discussed that will help transform ultrasound imaging for maternal health care in Bwindi.
- Plans are underway for the creation of a Batwa Women's Center that will provide art training, skills development, and adult education.

Over the past year our work in Uganda has been remarkable, thanks to our generous supporters. During the coming year, we will continue working to achieve our mission to provide sustainable development, health, education, and spiritual outreach in partnership with the Batwa pygmies and adjacent communities. A gift, for example, of \$25 buys mosquito nets for a family, \$100 sends a child to a local primary school for a year, \$600 pays a nurse's salary for six months, and \$1,500 builds a new home and provides healthcare for a Batwa family.

Will you consider making a contribution today? You can make a secure donation online through [PayPal](#) or you can send a check to:

The Kellermann Foundation
P.O. Box 832809
Richardson, TX 75083

Thank you in advance for your generosity. Every donation makes a tremendous difference in the success of our work.

Sincerely,

R. Simi Lyss, MD

President of the Board of Directors

P.S. We are so encouraged by the wonderful things going on in Bwindi! Please help us continue the work by sending your gift now.



The Kellermann Foundation

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Supporting the Batwa pygmies and Bwindi Community Hospital in southwest Uganda

Volunteer Stories

Are you one of the many volunteers who worked with the Batwa or served at Bwindi Community Hospital this year? We would love to hear about it! Email your story and a few pictures to our Volunteer Coordinator, Letty Biedenbarn at letty@kellermannfoundation.org or mail them to us at the address above. We will feature some of these stories in future newsletters and on our website.

YES! I want to support the work of the Kellermann Foundation.

Name(s) _____ Phone _____

Address _____

City / State / Zip _____

Email _____

Check: My gift of \$ _____ is enclosed. (Payable to **The Kellermann Foundation**.)

Credit card: Charge my gift of \$ _____ to my MasterCard VISA

Credit card # _____

Exp. ___/___ Signature _____ Date _____

Monthly pledge of \$ _____.

Charge the credit card listed above. OR

Send me payment envelopes at the above address to pay by check.

My gift is for:

Unrestricted use Bwindi Community Hospital The Batwa Development Program

Other: _____

Your donation is tax-deductible to the extent permitted by law.

Please print this page, fill out the form, and mail it with your check to:
The Kellermann Foundation, P.O. Box 832809, Richardson, TX 75083

Or donate securely online here: [Donate](#)

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Thanks to Our Volunteers!

In the United States and in Uganda, volunteers from across America and from several other nations are reaching out to support the programs of the Kellermann Foundation. All of these generous friends are helping us work toward our mission to provide sustainable development, health, education, and spiritual outreach in partnership with the Batwa pygmies and adjacent communities.

In the U.S., numerous organizations are presenting educational programs, selling [BatwaBaskets](#), and holding fundraisers to support our work. In Uganda, over 20 groups of volunteers are visiting Bwindi this summer to help with our projects. They include college students, interns, physicians, linguists, geographers, short-term missionaries, world-ranked lacrosse players, Rotarians, and others. These volunteers will build houses, visit the [Batwa Experience](#), work at the hospital, study the Rutwa language, help with computer mapping systems, hold sports camps for children, and otherwise pour their hearts into serving with the [Batwa Development Program](#) and at [Bwindi Community Hospital](#).

Their work makes a tremendous difference. To all our volunteers, regardless of where they are, we offer a heartfelt THANK YOU!

If you would like to volunteer with our organization, please contact our Volunteer Coordinator, Letty Biedenbarn, at letty@kellermannfoundation.org.



Volunteer Sami Bachir works with Batwa schoolchildren