

August 1, 2005

# The ZAMBIAN CHILDREN'S FUND



## Chishawasha Newsletter

*Photo by David Egen*

*Shield & Nicholas are both 9 now*

### News from Zambia

*by Kathe Padilla*

Wow! I can't believe it has been more than six months since my last newsletter! I have been back & forth to Zambia twice in that time, so there is a lot to report.

When I returned to Zambia in January, I found the first house we were building not yet finished. The well had been drilled, but we did not yet have plumbing, or electricity. When I left Zambia in August 2004, the electric company had promised to have electricity connected by the end of that month, but somehow they didn't get around to it until after I returned and had someone to go to their office everyday until it was connected. We could not get water until we had the electricity connected because the Glassco Foundation wanted to give us an electric pump. We were forced to get water from a neighbor's well, which meant we had to fill large barrels at a hand pump, then roll them to our construction site one at a time. The electricity was finally connected in February.

Once we had electricity, the Glassco Foundation provided us with a pump and two 5,000 liter water tanks. They then built tank stands and installed all the necessary pipes. We were able to finish plumbing the house, turn on the water and electricity and finish building our first house in March.

I returned to Zambia the beginning of May to find the household moved into our new five bedroom house. We now have the luxury of three toilets, a bath and a shower. The new house is much larger than the house we had in town and the children love living out in the country with plenty of room to play. Family members of our school children from N'gombe came out and cleared a large area for a soccer field in April.

*(continued on page 2)*

## Building a Primary School



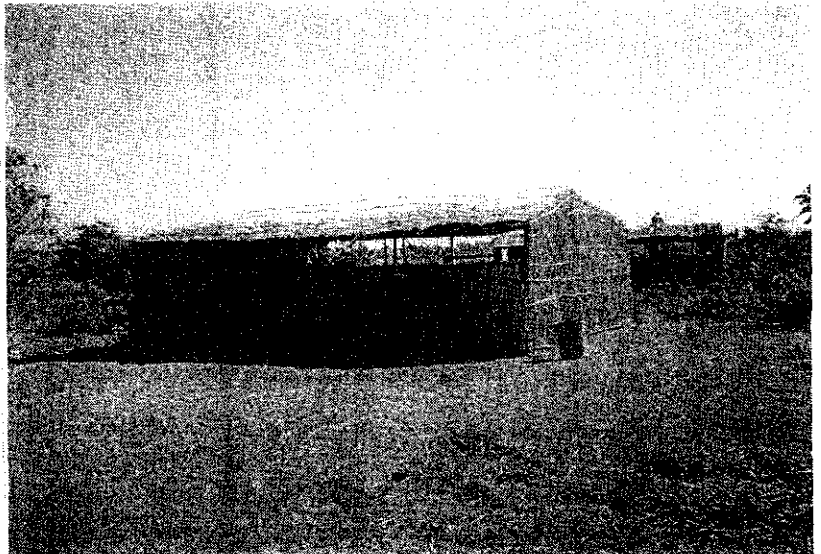
*7<sup>th</sup> grade class*

Once everyone moved into our new house, we had to find space to keep our school going so the children don't get behind in their studies. In May, we built two classrooms made of thatched grass where we are holding our 3<sup>rd</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade classes. It is very important our 7<sup>th</sup> graders keep up with their studies because in November they will take a national exam to see if they qualify to go on to 8<sup>th</sup> grade and secondary school.

In January when the new school year starts again and the older children have graduated to 8<sup>th</sup> grade, Mrs. Mwanza, our 7<sup>th</sup> grade teacher will go back to teaching 4<sup>th</sup> grade and Mrs. Sichone, the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade teacher will start a new 1<sup>st</sup> grade class.

We would like to start a new class for the children who do not pass the 7<sup>th</sup> grade exam or do not have enough education (and are too old), so they can be taught basic reading, writing, math and health/nutrition. We have a number of children between the ages of 5 and 7 ready to start a new 1<sup>st</sup> grade class, along with Daniel, but first we need to finish building the second house so we have a place for them to live.

While grass classrooms do have a certain charm, during the six month dry season fire sweeps through huge areas of the "bush", where it is allowed to just burn itself out. One can see the progress of the fires for miles as they burn everything in their wake. The possibility of losing our classrooms and everything in them is a real concern. So, in May we started having "fire drills". We do them once a month to practice saving chalkboards, books & furnishings. Once we have finished the second house and have a roof on the storage building, we will start building our first wing of classrooms. We estimate each room will cost \$5,000 to build.



*Our grass classrooms*

We had hoped to finish building our second five bedroom house before the move in April, but things rarely go as planned in Zambia. The second house and the storage building have been started; the foundations are in and all four outer walls are finished, along with the walls between the rooms in the house.

Unfortunately because we have had so many complications in building, everything is costing more than we had planned. The first house alone cost us \$33,000 to build. Inflation continues to be a huge problem for Zambia and is now running at between twenty and twenty-five percent annually and the value of the U.S. Dollar is actually down. That means all of our building materials keep going up in price and we have to raise employees' wages just so they can afford a modest standard of living.

In the U.S. we blame the increase in the cost of gasoline on China, which is not the problem in Zambia where we have always paid \$4.00 to \$5.00 a gallon. In Zambia, the problem is China's building boom has doubled the cost of cement in the past year. Now that we have the walls built for the second house and the storage building, we need to find enough money to put on roofs (which will cost about \$2,500 each), plaster the walls and complete the construction of both buildings (another \$4,000 each) before the rainy season starts at the end of October.



*Our first house, front view*



*Back of the house*

The new house at the Chishawasha Children's Home had a lot of international visitors in May including Colin Glassco and Debby Norman from the Glassco Foundation for Children in Canada. Maria Vanderham and Kate MacLean of Calgary, Alberta came to help with construction, David Egen from L. A. came to film the children, and Margie Matter of Tucson, her daughter Mary Ann and their friend Jill Mandeville also came to visit.

After all the visitors and I left, the children who used to come to our little school from N'gombe compound all moved into the new house so they could continue their education. Once again, the Zambian Social Welfare Department is unhappy with us because we have too many children living in the house. We have to finish the second house as soon as possible so that we have no more than twenty children in one house. Once the second house is complete, we will be able to take in a few more children.

## Fall Schedule

Kathe will be returning to Zambia for the month of September. Pastor Dawn Keller, from New Spirit Lutheran church, her husband Joel and a parishioner, Naomi Osgood will come for two weeks in mid-September to help build. Judy Lindquist of Kansas will also be visiting and film producer David Egen (who took the photos of the children in this newsletter) will come to shoot footage for a video.

Kathe & Barby are now scheduling Kathe's fall & winter speaking schedule. At this point, Kathe is scheduled to visit Toronto October 9 to 14, New England the 14 to 19, and New York State October 21 to 23. Plans to visit San Francisco & Calgary, Alberta in late October or early November are still being worked out.

We welcome any opportunity for Kathe to speak to any group of 10 or more people. If you would like to schedule a speaking engagement for Kathe, please contact us at [crgbpg@aol.com](mailto:crgbpg@aol.com) or [zambiancf@yahoo.com](mailto:zambiancf@yahoo.com) or phone us at (520) 323-2504.

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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*