

ABCD: Art Building Children's Dreams



ISSUE 5 SPRING 2014 NEWSLETTER

www.abcdreams.ca

2014 Volunteer Trip to Tanzania by Frank Smith

What a great group of volunteers Lynn and I had with us this year. Christine and Megan, were returning to Tanzania after previous trips. Margo, Mike and Paul were newcomers to the ABCD Africa experience, as was Matt who travelled all the way from Australia to join the group!

After arrival in Moshi, shopping for school supplies, and a nights rest, the team travelled up to Marangu West and got straight to work painting 3 classrooms at Makomu Primary School. They became a cohesive working unit quickly and, surrounded by smiling children and teachers, shared in the effort to paint walls, doors and window frames. The 'abcdreams team' hiked up and down the hill to the school every day on their way to work, greeted with handshakes and loud 'jambos' from folks in the community. A warm 'thank you' presentation at the school brought a memorable closure to their experience.

Many other highlights characterized the overall experience of the volunteers. These included: hiking down a steep gorge to see beautiful Kilasila waterfalls, learning to speak survival Swahili, shopping in local markets, Art Day excitement connecting with all the ABCD families and children, going on safari and hiking part way up Mount Kilimanjaro. Lynn and I extend immense gratitude, on behalf of the local community, to this amazing group of volunteers for improving the children's learning environment.



Group in Tanzania

ABCD UK

In 2013 John de Ronde, a friend of ABCD who resides in the UK joined his volunteer efforts with **ABCD Canada** to form ABCD UK. John's energetic efforts have lead to 65 students in the Lyamungo Sinde region being sponsored. This region is approximately 45 kilometres east of the villages serviced by **ABCD Canada**.



ABCD Australia

ABCD Canada is blessed to be partnered with ABCD Australia. It is exciting to see how they are working on various projects of varying sizes and in various stages of development and readiness in Malawi, South Africa, Kenya and Sri Lanka – and of course have ongoing projects and a couple of new ones coming up on some of the more remote locations in Fiji.



Big ABCD Fundraising Event in 2014!

Mark Your Calendars

Plans are underway for an evening of enjoyment with live music by the exciting **Blackboard Blues Band**, dancing, entertainment and a silent auction of beautiful African art. Good conversation over drinks and appetizers are also on the agenda. Join ABCD Directors in fellowship and support for the educational needs of the children of Kilimanjaro on November 14th, 7:00-11:00 pm at the Aurora Cultural Center. Tickets \$65 available from Frank (905) 473-5006 or Lynn (905) 939-2597. Mark your calendar and check our website for updates

**Breakfast
for
4,000**

All students attending primary schools in Marangu West Ward are enjoying a healthy breakfast thanks to ABCD supporters. The 569 students at Mbahe na Ng'aroni Primary School are the most recent addition.

Lynn Bird



*Kiunguni Komalyangoo
Primary School*

The Children of ABCD by Frank Smith

ABCD is supporting almost 60 children in their education. The average age of the children is rising as we add more secondary school students (where the cost to the families is much higher) than primary school students to the program, and as our existing students succeed and move on to higher grades. Over two thirds of all of our students are now in secondary school, vocational training school or college. College programs involve boarding costs and much higher fees and this places a great demand on our resources. **Please consider making a donation to help these senior students accomplish their goals.**

This year, we welcome four new students to the ABCD program: Charles, Diana, Secilia and Laura. All are in secondary school and were recommended to us by our Advisory Committee due to the poverty of their families and because they are making a real effort in school. Please read their stories on the website and consider supporting them in their educational goals.

Several students have left the ABCD program this year deciding to find work in the local community. Some have already found jobs. Emanuel, Gaspari, Gerald, Honest, Jackson, and Robati have all received years of schooling, skills development, and qualifications thanks to their supporters. We hope this will help them to find meaningful directions in their lives. ABCD wishes them the best and will continue to follow their progress.



LAURA



SECILIA



DIANA



CHARLES

School Infrastructure Improvements

by Frank Smith



Improvements group at Sekao



Komela kitchen almost done



Komela PS toilets

ABCD is committed to continuing its work to improve the learning environment for the students and teachers of Marangu West. In addition to the completed toilet at Makomu Kindergarten, the completed kitchen at Kiunguni/Komalyangoe PS and the new roof at Makomu PS, ABCD has repaired the toilet at Nduweni PS, and the new kitchen is almost completed at Komela PS!

Construction of a new toilet and new kitchen at Kitowo/Napaku PS has just begun. We are happy to report that

these projects also bring needed work to local builders and labourers who are sometimes our own ABCD students! It should also be noted that the efficient stoves which are installed in the new kitchens are government approved to make the least impact on the environment as possible.

Our Advisory Committee has confirmed that top priority for schools is the replacement of very old and unsanitary toilets. To this end ABCD will seek funding to expand our infrastructure development to other schools.

If you have a connection to a business, a community group, a service club or any means to contribute towards helping us achieve these goals above, please let us know.

Solar Reading Light Project

by Terry Maynard

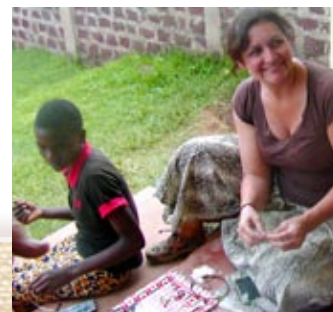
“We cannot make the lights because we do not have cough-drop tins in Africa.” That is the response we observed when presenting a solar reading light made from Canadian recyclable materials. On this year’s trip we sent a prototype solar reading light made from reclaimed electronics and a used cough-drop tin. The absence of cough drop tins in Tanzania was something we hadn’t expected, but it gave us a further incentive to move ahead with this project.

People in Africa have demonstrated their resourcefulness with limited resources such as making toys from coat hangers, musical instruments from pop bottle caps and plastic soda bottles, sewing machines operated from the back wheel of a motorcycle, and using solar chips to charge cell phones. schools to 6. Approximately 1500 students are receiving food support from our generous donors.

Harnessing the innate resourcefulness and ingenuity of our ABCD students towards production of an affordable solar light using local materials is a challenge we are very happy to accept. ABCD is developing a course on creative thinking with help from past trip volunteer and consultant Megan Mitchell, to help students focus their ingenuity towards this solar light initiative. This course could result in production of affordable reading lights, but furthermore it could help our students be more competitive in the global economy. Developing countries experience success when they combine their available resources and the ingenuity of their people. This is another way ABCD can help the students of Tanzania overcome poverty.



Solar reading light – made from discarded solar garden light and a cough-drop tin



Megan Mitchell – Canadian leader in creative thinking

Looking for Laptop and Cell Phone Donations

by Shai Laserson

Many companies, universities, libraries, and individuals regularly donate their used computers and other gear when they refresh their technology. ABCD: Art Building Children's Dreams is looking for your help in locating such gear.

We are looking for **Notebook Computers** with the following specifications:

Donated computers will be refurbished and put into use at ABCDreams sponsored computer labs allowing our students to gain valuable computer experience.

- Windows 7 – *compatible or higher*
- 2GB of RAM
- 120GB Hard Drive
- Power Adapter



ABCD student, Robati of Ngaruma Vocational Technical Collegiate, enjoying access to a computer

We are also looking for unlocked cell phones which can be used by our volunteers overseas to communicate and coordinate the charity's activities locally. Cell phones should include original power charger and if possible should be no older than 3 to 4 years old.

If anyone knows of a person or company that is looking for an organization to partner with and donate such equipment to, we would greatly appreciate hearing from you.

ABCD Funds a Second Computer Classroom

by John de Ronde

With the experience in mind of the past success of the Ngaruma Vocational Training School computer room, ABCD decided in 2014 to support a computer classroom at Makomu Secondary School.

The headmaster at Makomu SS, Thomas Kaniki, had already finished the construction of new classrooms at the school, installed electricity and re-enforced security in readiness for a new computer system.

Within our narrow budget, we decided on the same system as had been installed at Ngaruma VTC for 10 computers to

start, with the addition this time of an internet tower and connection.

Emmanuel Mush was transferred to Makomu SS as IT Technician, (Emmanuel is now supported by ABCD at IT college for his further training) and we are envisioning a burgeoning computer program under Mr Kaniki's guidance.

The excitement of the students is mounting and they can't wait to get their fingers moving on the keyboards!



Makomu Planning Meeting



Ngaruma Computer Room



Thomas Kaniki



Emmanuel at work

Journey of our Board 2013-2014

by Terry Maynard



Interviewing **Shai Laserson** for the board position was moot since Shai had demonstrated the commitment of a board member for the last few years. Shai consistently showed up at fund-raisers and has offered very helpful technical advice regarding ABCD technology needs and the needs in Tanzania.



For several years **John De Ronde**, as a caring individual, has been helping another community in Tanzania. In 2013 John decided to form ABCD UK to further help his community of Lyamungo Sinde. John provides vital on-the-ground expertise to ABCD Canada as he resides in Tanzania for lengthy periods of time.

It's bittersweet to see board members move on. However, it is exciting to learn and absorb ideas from new members. This year board members **Joe Crone** and **Merrin McHugh** moved on from their volunteer work with ABCD and we welcomed new board members **Shai Laserson** and **John DeRonde**.

Joe Crone used his love of music to help create a fund-raiser music CD featuring a song performed by the ABCD student in Tanzania. As a board member Joe kept us rooted in a simple uncomplicated approach to running the organization. He will be missed.

Merrin McHugh wanted to get first-hand experience with grant writing when she joined the board. Her success contributed greatly to the success of several new projects such as computer centres, break-fast programs, and school infrastructure repairs.

We thank the board members who are moving on for their invaluable contributions and welcome the new board members as we move forward.

Advisory Committee Letter

Hello all,

On behalf of ABCD, Marangu west ADVISORY COMMITTEE and The entire community of Marangu West, We THANKS ABCD: Art Building Children's Dreams for the BIG SUPPORT in our community in Education by supporting school fees, school supplies, personal care, breakfast programs, Cow programs and constructions of kitchens, toilets and classes.

These supports bring positive effect to the Marangu West Community in terms of education and family wise especial to the poor families.

I take this opportunity to present our appreciation THANKS to the ABCD board of Directors for the work and effort to make all this happen. May God Bless you all!

With Thanks
SEBASTIAN F. MASARO
ABCD AGENT COORDINATOR
MARANGU - WEST

Family Cow Program

by Lynn Bird

The ABCD Advisory Committee identified one needy family in each of three villages in Marangu West to receive a pregnant cow purchased by ABCD. The cows came with one years supply of medication, food and minerals and each cow had been vaccinated. The benefits of this program to both ABCD families and the whole community are great. Of course the cow provides milk for the family but in addition the sale of surplus milk to the local milk coop provides much needed additional income. The whole village will benefit in the future because female calves are passed on to another needy family to raise.



If you have recently donated... we thank you very much! If not, and if it's been some time since you last donated, please visit the website to see how easy it is, and to see what your donations actually accomplish for the children. You will receive a tax receipt for donations over \$20. Tax receipts will be issued annually before the end of February but you may request to receive an immediate tax receipt following a donation. Thank you for caring.

If you have a dream to go to Africa one day why not join our next ABCDreams volunteer trip in February of 2015? Just let us know that you're interested and we'll put you on the email list for further information. Email is: info@abcdreams.ca

The Best of ABCD and the Kilimanjaro Volunteer Trip

You have to live in the moment when you travel. And when you have so many great things happen, it can be hard to remember them all. I like to make lists and here are the best of my memories of the 2014 Tanzania trip:

Days for Girls overwhelming success

Our wonderful self-organizing work crew: ABCDream Team

All the positive feel good books everyone was reading

I need more shillings

Education is the key of life – George and Benson rap

I need more coffee to take home

The awesome ABCD Art Day

Dancing the Boot Scootin' Boogie for the mamas

Jambo, Jambo Bwana, Habari Gani, Mzuri Sana

The daily hot water dribble and bad hair days

Getting swarmed by watotos (kids)

Home visits to see the real world of Marangu West

Up on the Roof

Impromptu dance party

& smiling kids and parents after another wonderful volunteer trip to Kilimanjaro!

Kivaheri Tanzania Asante Sana
Volunteer Megan Mitchell

Art for Africa

by Terry Maynard

Chunks of paint and ugly cracks!

That's what we saw when we unrolled paintings brought back from Africa. They don't survive the flights well. Our goal is to bring back from our trips some of the wonderful paintings done by young artists in the North Kilimanjaro Region of Africa. We want to encourage these young artists and provide them with a world-wide market for their works. The challenge is to export these pieces safely and affordably.

ABCD is pleased to introduce a digital solution to help young African artists. We will use digital photographs of the artwork in Africa and then print the paintings using a high quality canvas process. The results are remarkable and now artists in Africa have a way of exporting their creations. See the paintings for sale in the Art For Africa section of the ABCDreams.ca website.

