



New *Horizons*



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Rtn Vikramdatta

NURSING SCHOOL HELPS INDIGENOUS COMMUNITY SURVIVE IN UGANDA



For thousands of years, the Batwa Pygmies lived among the silverback mountain gorillas in the Bwindi Impenetrable Forest of southwest Uganda. But in 1992, the forest was declared a World Heritage Site to protect the endangered silverback, and the Batwa lost their home.

Forced to transition from hunter-gatherers to farmers, they did not adapt well, and their very survival was threatened. Over the years, Rotary members in the United States, Uganda, and other parts of the world helped with efforts to aid the Batwa. Most recently, those efforts have focused on the creation of a nursing school to serve the entire southwestern part of the country.

Dr. Scott Kellermann, a physician and Rotary member from California, USA, discovered the plight of the Batwa in 2000, when he and his wife, Carol, traveled to the area as medical missionaries to assess the indigenous people's needs. He describes the situation they found: "Abject poverty. No access to health care, no access to education, no clean water, no sanitation, land insecurity, and food insecurity."

The Kellermanns' survey found that 38 percent of the Batwa died before the age of five -- twice the rate of Uganda as a whole -- and that the average life expectancy was 28.

BUILDING A HOSPITAL

Shortly after his first visit, Kellermann and his wife sold their possessions, including his medical practice, and moved to Uganda -- where they stayed fulltime until 2009 -- to help the Batwa. Starting with mobile clinics held under trees and with IVs hanging from branches, they treated "200, 300, sometimes 500 people a day," Kellermann recalls. Eventually, they launched a foundation and built Bwindi Community Hospital.

Kellermann's Rotary connections helped to equip it. Projects supported by a series of Rotary Foundation grants and backed by members in Uganda, the United States, and other parts of the world provided an operating theater, a dental unit, generators, solar panels, and clean water and improved sanitation, and taught the Batwa how to raise small livestock to improve their nutrition. Now, the infant mortality rate is down to 6 percent, and the number of women dying in childbirth has declined 60 percent.

CREATING A NURSING SCHOOL

A few years ago, two entrepreneurs, James Jameson and Steve Wolf, met Kellermann while they were in the area to track gorilla. After they learned of the need for a nursing school, they contributed more than \$650,000 to plan, design, and build it. The Uganda Nursing School Bwindi opened in November 2013. The pair also paid to send Jane Anyango, a registered nurse at the Bwindi hospital, to Queen Margaret University in Edinburgh, Scotland, where she earned a master's degree in nursing that enabled her to take over as the school's principal teaching tutor. And they provided iPads, loaded with a year's worth of textbooks, for every nursing student at the new school.

Birthday and Marriage Anniversary Wishes

1	Ann Devaki	W/O Rtn DN Raghava	04 th Jan	Birthday
2	John Sudin	S/O Rtn PD Shetty	05 th Jan	Birthday
3	Rtn Dr Rajendraprasad	Ann Laxmi	08 th Jan	Marriage Anniv
4	John Pranith	S/O Rtn Girish Alva	11th Jan	Birthday
5	Rtn Purushotham		14th Jan	Birthday
5	Rtn PD Shetty		15 th Jan	Birthday

Edited and published by Rtn. Vikramdatta

Charter on June 09, 2008. Meets at KS Hegde Hospital Auditorium , Deralakatte on Monday at 6 p.m