



FRIENDS OF EAST AFRICA FOUNDATION

September 2016 Newsletter



May was an eventful month for the Friends of East Africa Foundation!

I enjoyed another extraordinary visit to Uganda, this time for the May 18 dedication of the

Helen Bisanz Outpatient Centre of Excellence – the “front door” of the Ruth Gaylord Hospital complex.

The outpatient facility is named for the late mother of Thomas Bisanz, a Dallas businessman whose generous leadership gift made its completion possible. Tom

and his wife, Susan, enjoyed the dedication festivities with us. I hadn't visited the hospital campus in over a year, so it was enormously gratifying to witness the progress. A drone “flyover” photo below captures it well. Building skeletons and muddy grounds have been transformed into beautifully landscaped, welcoming health care facilities. It's practically miraculous!

My heart is full of gratitude for all of you. Your generous gifts and many prayers have made this dream come true.

Warm regards!

Reverend Dennis Dease



May 17: Ruth Gaylord Hospital campus nears completion.

Ruth Gaylord Hospital works to improve water supplies

In most of the United States, we can assume we'll have reliable sources of clean drinking water. Not so in Uganda. Although it's home to Lake Victoria, the world's second-largest freshwater lake, Uganda has had a national water system only since 1972, and service in this developing country remains unreliable.

Water supplies often run short, particularly during the two dry seasons: January, February and March, and June, July and August. Taps ran dry early this month due to repairs needed at Kampala's main water reservoir, prompting residents to fetch water from area wells.

With the short water supply, prices have skyrocketed from 4 cents to between 15 and 30 cents for a little over five gallons. If that sounds inexpensive,

remember that a Ugandan's net average monthly salary is about \$195. There are other costs, too, such as a negative impact on the status of women, who in eastern Uganda spend an average of 660 hours per year collecting water for their households – two full months of labor.*

Now consider how much water a hospital requires. The Ruth Gaylord Hospital consumes more than 5,800 gallons a month. In an effort to reduce its expenditures, the hospital has metal water reservoirs that collect rainwater, which is useful for irrigating the grounds, flushing toilets, washing bed linens and more. But all water intended

for consumption – whether supplied by the national grid or the skies – must be boiled and sterilized. Well water isn't any better. The Kampala Capital City Authority reports that up to 80 percent of spring wells there are contaminated.

During the dry season, even the hospital's reservoirs quickly run dry, water costs climb and, in worst cases, patient care can be compromised. At its recent annual meeting, the Friends of East Africa Foundation board decided to investigate installing an underground reservoir capable of storing 100,000 liters (26,417 gallons) of harvested rainwater. Use of stored water could reduce the hospital's

operational costs as much as 40 percent. The board also voted to support locating and drilling a well if water can be found on the hospital's property.

Meanwhile, a group of University of St. Thomas School of Engineering faculty, students and alumni is working to develop a small-scale, solar-thermal system for providing potable water that would be of great use not only to the Ruth Gaylord Hospital but to the surrounding community and developing areas around the world. Plans are underway to install five pasteurization devices at the hospital that could treat 1,000 liters of water per day, using solar energy.

* "Gender in Water and Sanitation," a working paper of the Water and Sanitation Program, World Bank, 2010.

The Ruth Gaylord Hospital requires more than 5,800 gallons of water a month.

Almost a year old, 'Baby Ruth' continues to thrive



'Baby Ruth' is growing fast! It won't be long before she's walking and talking.

Remember the Ruth Gaylord Hospital's little namesake, "Baby Ruth"? She's getting close to her first birthday: (It's Dec. 8.)

As you'll recall, Ruth was born prematurely and found abandoned outside the Ruth Gaylord Hospital gates hours after she was born. But God had a plan.

Today Ruth's adoptive family of six – Dr. Maria and Charles Lugemwa and their children Conrad (17), Conley (5), Colleen (4) and Cornelius (3) – embrace her as their own.

Just over 18 pounds, Ruth is growing fast, crawling and meeting developmental milestones, and is "just perfect," says her dad.

Colleen calls her "Collisa," since the other Lugemwa kids' names each begin with "Co." Maria calls the baby "Kilabo," meaning "gift." And Charles' mother calls her "Namukasa," his maternal grandmother's name.

New video shows progress of hospital campus

During the dedication celebration of the new Helen Bisanz Outpatient Center of Excellence at the Ruth Gaylord Hospital last spring, Father Dennis Dease had an opportunity to view some terrific video of the hospital campus, courtesy of a Ugandan videographer with access to a drone camera.

The "flyover" footage now introduces a new YouTube video about the hospital.

Narrated by Dave Nimmer, a retired University of St. Thomas journalism professor and Twin Cities reporter, the video showcases the hospital in a new way. Share it with your friends!

[Watch now!](#) (Ctrl + click to follow link)

Friends of East Africa provide grants to Ugandan students

In addition to supporting the Ruth Gaylord Hospital, the Friends of East Africa also provide limited scholarship and emergency assistance to Ugandan students when resources permit.

The foundation has provided 10 scholarships for Ugandan students at Catholic middle schools, community colleges and universities in Uganda and Minnesota. The foundation also is assisting a student enrolled at St. George's University Medical School in Grenada.

Among the recipients this year were:

Esther Nyewoyo, who graduated this summer from the YMCA certificate program in hotel and institutional catering.

George Ssenabulya, who recently began studies for the priesthood at St. Mbaaga's Major Seminary in Ggaba, located in the Archdiocese of Kampala, Uganda.

Congratulations, students!

Ruth Gaylord Hospital: A healing oasis in the heart of the community

Here's a bird's-eye view of the Ruth Gaylord Hospital campus, taken just before May's dedication of the Helen Bisanz Outpatient Centre of Excellence.

Drive into the gated campus, lower left, and park in the newly paved lot or get dropped off at the center's entrance (foreground), which also serves as the hospital's main entrance.

The Ann Jostrom Center for Labor and Delivery, named for the mother of benefactor Sue Schwalbach, tees directly behind the center and also houses the hospital's surgical suite.

The convent building (upper left, with rainwater reservoir tank) houses the



hospital chapel and the nuns who help to staff the hospital.

“Building C,” ramped for handicapped accessibility, appears at right. Nearly complete, it will provide space for male patients and five top-floor apartments for interns, residents, visiting surgeons and nurses. Up next: Plastering, tiling and furnishing the building's middle level, completing its landscaping and paving its parking area.

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