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**Bududa Canada Foundation
54 Aberdeen Avenue
Toronto M4X1A2, CANADA**

**Bududa America Foundation
111 Rex Avenue
Philadelphia, PA 19118**

Greetings from Barbara,

I am still here in North America and not planning to return to Bududa until late January, but I talk to the folks in Bududa almost daily and sometimes twice a day. Maybe I do not have my finger on the immediate pulse, but communications are pretty good.

The school year ends at the beginning of December in all of East Africa, so the end of year exams will begin soon for our students.

The chairman of our board, Father Paul Buyela, once said to us that the measurement of how our school was doing would be in 1) how many students sat for outside exams, and 2) how well our students performed in their outside exams. Let me explain. At Bududa Vocational Academy, BVA, we teach Bricklaying and Concrete Practice, Carpentry, Tailoring, Hairdressing, Nursery Teacher Training, and Introduction to Computer Sciences. This year we have almost 95 students sitting for outside exams out of approximately 150 registered students at Bududa Vocational Academy.





These are a few of BVA's students who will be sitting for outside exams.

This represents huge progress from when we first began in 2008. I remember well when we first started we did not send any students for outside exams. The most vivid memory I have is of the moment when the results of our first three outside exam students came back to us. All three had failed. The atmosphere in the room was palpable and the effect on all of us involved (maybe 3 staff at the time) was devastating.

Imagine how far we have come now in 11 years. We have more than 150 students. We have six departments, a majority of our students are sitting for outside exams and almost all are passing now. If they fail, they fail one subject in a set of exams and have to do a retake. Every year we have more students and more students sitting for outside exams.

Looking to the future, and to visitors to Bududa in February and March of 2020, the guest house is going to be busy. We have 16 visitors coming to the guest house in February and March, many of them for their first visit to Africa. Let me tell you about two of them: Ron Kanter and Jim Sharp. They are both from Philadelphia and they heard about this project from an article written in the local paper about our work in Bududa. They think they can best help with their carpentry skills and have already made a lathe, powered by foot for Bududa. They are eager to come and we are energized to host them.

This is my news from and about Bududa. On the home front, the fall is a time for fundraising, and Sheila Havard and the staff in Bududa are already hard at work renewing the sponsors of the Children of Bududa Program. It involves many hours, and Sheila does it remarkably well and volunteers her time. It is more like a dedication, and not only does she not get paid but she puts in a substantial amount of her own money to support the program and recruits her

Quaker Friends to sponsor and help. What a blessing to have Sheila doing this work!

For me, I plan to be in Toronto and Montreal for fundraisers in November and to host one here in Philadelphia in December.

As is always the case, we need money to run these programs in Bududa. The sponsors mostly pay for the Children of Bududa Program, and we have to raise the money for Bududa Vocational Academy. We have been enormously successful with our Shelter Fund campaign, with \$111,000 in cash and pledges toward our goal of \$135,000 which will remain as a reserve fund for Bududa Learning Center.

Now there is the question of operations. We still need \$11,000 just for Quarter 4 of 2019, and then we need money to operate the school for 2020. Our budget is \$135,000 annually for Bududa Learning Center. It is a tall order, and I also feel blessed to have all of you as such generous donors to this work we are doing in Bududa.

Now I must sign off and get to work to raise this money for Bududa in every way I can.

With great appreciation for your support in the past and hopes for your support in the future,

Barbara Wybar

a/k/a Bubby

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In the USA: Please make your check payable to **Bududa America Foundation** and send to:

Barbara Wybar, 111 Rex Ave, Philadelphia, PA 19118, USA

Matsanga Nelson

I got to know Matsanga Nelson back around 2010 when I was living in the guest house in Konokoyi, a hamlet in Bududa. Nelson was about ten or eleven then and he would come by the guest house often, always with a winning smile on his young face.

Two incidents involving Nelson are memorable for me. Once he arrived “chez moi” limping, with a badly swollen knee and a sort of a pimple in the middle of the swelling. I knew from having lived in Bududa for many years that the children and also the adults are tough when it comes to physical pain. They complain little and seem willing and able to tolerate a lot more than us westerners. I am not a doctor and have zero training in any first aid, but over the years I have found myself doling out first aid fairly frequently. I would do the simple things I did for my children as they were growing up: wash a wound, apply antiseptic cream, bandage it, etc. When it was beyond me, I would call a wonderful dedicated doctor in Mbale, Dr Jan White. She usually picked up immediately. I described the situation and she said, “Is the knee hot?” I felt the knee and reply and she said, “Give him an antibiotic, x no. of milligrams and he is to take two a day for five days.” As the years wore on, and I had been living in Bududa for a few years, I had a supply of these drugs in my back room. (Antibiotics are available over the counter anywhere in East Africa and usually they are very cheap, often less than a dollar for a prescription.)

Nelson took the pills, got better and the smile remained.

The last time was different and the outcome sad. In the early years Nelson lived with an old aunt in a mud house near the road. The house was not in good shape, with holes in the roof and the mud walls crumbling on the sides of the house. Auntie was poor. To my horror and complete surprise, a thief broke into the house by smashing in the back wall and stealing I hardly know what. Maybe a pot or pan!!! Poor Nelson at this point just looked frightened. I could see the fear on his face, with the leaking roof and an insecure house, what was he to do, as a small boy.

As a team, the Children of Bududa staff agreed we needed to build Nelson and Auntie a new house, but it turns out that the house was not hers and the owner would not let us rebuild as he wanted the land. So we looked for a piece of land on which to build Auntie a new mud house. I found one with a wealthier landowner who had been a recipient of one of our cows back in 2008 when we worked with an NGO, giving away animals.



John was his name and he allowed us to build a mud house for Auntie and Nelson on a small piece of his land.

With the house built, Auntie then said to us, you have built the house but I need a latrine and so we dug her a latrine and put a wee building on top of it. A few years later when Nelson was a teenager, Auntie complained that Nelson was not being a good boy and she didn't want him any more. In the end, we called a meeting with our social worker, Martha, Auntie and myself, and Auntie brought in the Local Chairman One. He is like an administrator for her hamlet and low down on the totem pole. At the meeting, she listed her complaints. One, he milks the cow early in the morning before he goes to school and he drinks the milk and he does not bring any to her. Two, he has been known to take a stick of sugar cane from a field as he goes to school. I try not to laugh at these complaints as they seem so innocuous to me. Imagine trying to relate these crimes to somebody in North America. Poor Nelson. Afterwards Martha finds Nelson crying because where is he to go with old auntie not loving him.

Auntie wants us to put him in boarding school. In the end, that is what we did and he has done well. In fact, he did so well that he easily qualified to go on to nursing school. After graduation Nelson said he would like to go to nursing school. We were not sure where the money would come from, but as usual, we found the money and Nelson is now in his second year of nursing school near Kampala. He loves it, he is grateful and he is doing well. His smile is more self assured and stronger than when he was a young boy in Bududa. Good on you Nelson!

Moses Watata – Carpentry Student, BVA 2019

In February of 2019 our carpentry teacher, James Wesonga, mentioned to me that a particular student who was working in the carpentry department at the time was outstanding. This was Moses Watata.

Being the curious type, I wanted to know more. I was shown his work with wooden joints and dovetailing and it looked pretty remarkable to me, especially as all this work is done entirely by hand and with pretty simple rough tools .

Moses is probably 5 feet tall, if that, and he smiles a lot. I asked if I could interview him and he came along with his teacher, James Wesonga, as he does not speak much English.

He is a "skills" student, taking only practical courses. The teachers wish him to take further studies as he is so good at his work. He does not want to and it may be that he does not speak English well and is shy about using the language. He has not passed his primary 7 leaving exam (equivalent to



Grade 7 in the North America) and so that limits him and the choices he can make.

He likes his classes in carpentry and particularly the practical work. Obviously he does well.

I asked about his home life. His dad is a carpenter and works locally near where I stay at our guest house. He told us that things are tough at home as they are very poor and life is not good. He has many brothers and sisters. He would like to help his family if he could, by getting jobs doing carpentry work.

I asked him what was the best thing about BVA. He reflected with a big smile and said the big machines we have to plane and saw wood.

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