



Our Mission

Mt. Meru Tumaini Health Clinic is dedicated to providing quality health care, community development and educational programs for the people of the Meru region of Tanzania

I Am Only the Messenger by Diane Thompson

This last August, I had the opportunity to live in the village of Ndoombo, Tanzania for two weeks. Of course I had many dreams and preconceptions about how the trip would unfold, but never did I imagine the unique experiences and amazing people I would encounter. The most profound experience would be the overwhelming gratitude shown by the people of Ndoombo of which I did not deserve since I was only the messenger.

First of all, let me explain. Without your support, we would not have been able to distribute thousands of pounds of corn, rice, beans, and cooking oil. In addition to the food, 75 families would not have received two chickens to help build their flocks. The responses were always similar. "Thank you." "God bless you." "Thank you for the food." So I pass these thanks and blessings on to

you, for I am only the messenger.

In addition to food, we also distributed eye glasses. With your generosity, we were able to fit 129 people with reading glasses and 5 people with distance glasses. They were so excited when their vision cleared so they could see the words on the page. The greatest success was when a lady was fitted with distance glasses and she exclaimed, "I can see the kids on the road!" Again the response was, "Thank you!"

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Top: Exaudh Mbise talks to one of the many widows living in Ndoombo.

To Right: Children of Ndoombo carrying food home.



TEA for TUMAINI Makes a Big Splash! By Joannie Williams, RN

Actually, there were no spills or splashes except perhaps for tiny ripples as sugar cubes plopped into the tea at our most recent fundraising event of the year. Held on a perfect Sunday afternoon in September, TEA for TUMAINI was the successful culmination of a huge effort on the part of many people to recreate an authentic early 20th century afternoon tea.

The setting for our tea party could not have been more elegant. The Henry S. Durand home in Racine, Wisconsin, built in 1856 and furnished in Victorian style, was graciously donated for our use by the Masonic Center of Racine who own and maintain this historic mansion on Main Street. For one lovely afternoon, we stepped back in time as if we were at Downton Abbey.

The dining room, living room, ladies' parlor and library had tasteful groupings of furniture in place for our guests

to sit and sip their tea, while nine charming teenaged girls and boys dressed in period costumes, on loan from the Racine Theater Guild, strolled around offering trays piled with a magnificent variety of sweet and savory finger foods. The youth had a lot of fun acting the part of Downton Abbey servants, even speaking in English accents, bowing and curtsying for the delight of those enjoying tea.

All of the food was homemade and donated. Down in the kitchen, led by Marj Byra, a crew of volunteers arranged the beautiful goodies on trays. A cart in the mansion's outer hallway held the trays for the runners who went back and forth replenishing supplies. Brought from Tanzania by Exaudh Mbise and prepared by "brew master" Denise Mbise, the delicious tea was poured from four silver tea services.



Servers for "TEA for TUMAINI Fundraiser" From left to right: Aliliywa Mbise, Logan Munoz, Anna-Lisa Mbise, Parker Munoz, Wendy Cieszka, Alex Thompson, Alexander Mbise.

MMTHC Provides Healthcare Support to the Community by Valerie McKinnis

Our family of six spent two amazing weeks in Ndoombo, Tanzania during August of 2014. I am a hospitalist physician in rural Colorado and I spent most of my time caring for patients at Mt. Meru Tumaini Health Clinic. The clinic provides both acute and chronic medical services at minimal charge to community members. Poverty and lack of reliable transportation make it challenging for most folks to access primary care services outside of the village. The clinic's services are essential to the health and well-being of the entire community. I had the great privilege of working with Philomena Komba, a recent Tanzanian medical school graduate, and talented local nurse, Romini Mbise. They saw many patients with a wide variety of acute and chronic medical conditions including skin infections, lacerations, musculoskeletal injuries, acute respiratory infections and diarrhea. Several individuals with severe asthma (most of them women and children) were evaluated and successfully treated with medications purchased

by the clinic. Many patients with HIV infection, chronic joint infections, malaria and other parasitic diseases as well as chronic medical conditions like high blood pressure, heart failure and osteoarthritis were evaluated and treated as well.

Our children, Kate (11) and Abby (9) helped organize the pharmaceutical stock as well as medical supplies brought from the U.S. They also helped with food and chicken distribution. Natalie (5 ½) and Josee (5 ½) had a tremendous time playing with all of the wonderful kids we met. Darren, my husband, helped with food distribution and other projects in addition to keeping the rest of us organized.

Mt. Meru Tumaini Health Clinic serves an essential role within the village of Ndoombo and surrounding communities by providing access to care for all and high quality medical services. Continued financial support of this amazing work allows the talented clinic staff to provide essential medical services to all who enter their doors.



Left: Philomena Komba and Dr. Valerie McKinnis

Right: Darren McKinnis and Diane Thompson help people find the appropriate reading glasses.

Joshua by Exaudh Mbise

"When God closes a door, he opens a window" is also a Meru saying.

Joshua Abraham is a 16 year-old with a condition called "severe keratoconus" who needed coronary surgery. He had previously been evaluated at the Lutheran Hospital in Arusha, where he was referred to Kilimanjaro Christian Medical Center (KCMC) in Moshi, where he was later transferred to Dar Salaam, a 10-hour drive from Arusha. None of these hospitals were equipped to help Joshua with his eye problem. "There is nothing we can do here," is what they were told. "To save your son's eye, you will have to take him to India or if you can afford it, Europe."

Joshua is the last born and the only son of Bertha and Abraham Lothi. The youngest of 5 children.

According to his parents, Joshua's eye issues started when he was still in grade school. They thought they just needed the right prescription to cure their son's eye problems. They thought maybe Joshua needed glass, never in their wildest thoughts did they ever think it would go as far as surgery. But then in the last few years, Joshua's eyes deteriorated faster and faster. In his classroom, he started changing sitting positions, from the back of the class to middle, to front. He played this moving game for a while, until he was as far in the front of the class as he could go.

In June this year, Joshua's family decided to suspend Joshua from going to school, because his eyes had gotten so bad that he could not see anything. The family started thinking about the final words of wisdom they had received from the three major hospitals from where they had sought help, "Go to India, or Europe." "Wow" the family thought, what started as a small thing has grown to a point where they felt lost. They have never been out of Tanzania and now all of a sudden they had to go even farther than they have ever been. "But how? And by what means?" the family thought. "Whose guest are we going to be?" So, they stayed at home. They decided there was nothing they could do. Even if they sold all their belongings, they could not pay for what they needed to

do for Joshua.

Well God had a plan all along. Fast forward a month. We are preparing to leave for Tanzania; we are at the very last minute in our preparation. At this point the only mission group participants are Diane Thompson and myself. We have a list of things we would like to accomplish, like food distribution, chicken distribution, books for the school library, windows and doors on the new building, etc.

One Saturday evening less than a month before we have to leave for Tanzania my brother from Colorado calls me to ask if we were still accepting people to go on this year's trip. "Of course," I replied. "She is a doctor," my brother adds. Great, we might be able to see patients along with everything else. We skyped with Dr. Valerie McKinnis and talked for a while. She asked questions, we asked questions, and were comfortable with her. We are ready now. But a few days before we left for Tanzania, I got a text from Valerie telling me about her friend who is in Juba (South Sudan). She would love to go see him if it was possible since she is going to be that close. "He is sick and about to lose his eye," she tells me.

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Joshua and his father, Abraham, outside the clinic.

Successful Distribution of Chickens, Again... by Exauidh Mbise

Last year we started giving pairs of chickens to families in the village. Families are selected by village elders based on their degree of need and their ability to care for the chickens. Last year's chickens are thriving and supporting their families well. We have reports of the hens laying eggs and having baby chicks. Some families sold or traded their rooster for necessary supplies for their family and kept their hen. One family went as far as giving their rooster to the church as a gift of thanksgiving for the successful delivery of a grandchild.

Since the program was so well received last year, we decided to increase the number of chickens that were purchased in August. This year, 150 chickens were purchased with the extra special help of the McKinnis girls who raised around \$500 by selling lemonade and baked goods. On the second day of the trip, the girls passed out the chickens to 65 families. In addition to the 65 families, 10 orphans were chosen to raise chickens of their own. We are hopeful that these chickens will provide their new caretakers with better nutrition and someday, an income.



Top Left: Salome and her sister receive chickens from the McKinnis girls.

Top Right: Two widows from Ndoombo receive chickens.

Right: Kate McKinnis gives chickens to students from the school.



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This year, some of the elderly women with the greatest need received warm blankets and others received a few extra shillings to help make ends meet. One lady, who was bent over from years of carrying heavy loads, was so appreciative of her new blanket that she insisted that we wait as she retrieved two avocados from her tree. Of course, many thanks were exchanged from both sides.



The local elementary school also benefited from your contributions. An additional 10 copies of each textbook were purchased for the school, grades 1-7. These books have been added to the sets that were purchased last year. I was able to see the books that were purchased last year and I could tell that these books were being well used. In addition to the books, much needed school supplies as well as some fun items such as bracelets, balls, and even some sweets made their way over to the school. It was hard to tell if the students or the teachers were more excited when new supplies came to the school. Either way, the sentiment was the same, "Thank you!"



Food, eye glasses, and textbook distributions that improve the lives of the people in and around Ndoombo, Tanzania.

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Meanwhile a small shop that had been set up in the billiard room displayed photos, cards, fabric and jewelry from Tanzania. Boxes of Tanzanian tea were also available for sale, and at the end of the event our sales tally approached \$700.

Many women showed up wearing hats, but there was also a collection of hats arranged on two long tables in the entry foyer for guests to wear if they so wished. Some people wore vintage clothing and some dressed in Tanzanian kitenge. Some came in Packer fan clothing! It was a "come as you are" affair.

Wendy Spencer, who is the docent for the center, led two tours of the mansion and received rave reviews for her animated and witty narrative of the history of the Durand family and their home, including the ghosts who still reside at the Mansion!

Ticket sales, donations and sales from the store have brought in upwards of \$2,000 thus far. We have been blessed to be a blessing to our Tanzanian sisters and brothers in Ndoombo. Thank you to each and every one who volunteered to make this tea party a "jolly good time!"

Cheerio and Asante sana!



Top Left: Judy Amundson, who went to Tanzania in 2013, pours tea.

Top Right: MMTHC Board members Barb Elmer, Jill Wanggaard and Joannie Williams dress for the occasion.

Left: Aliliywa Mbise prepares to serve cucumber sandwiches.

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We left for Tanzania and we worked. Almost towards the very end of our stay in the village, one evening as I had just come back from Arusha, I stopped at the clinic to see how things had gone that day. As I walked through the gate in the corner of my eye, I noticed there was a man sitting on a bench outside the clinic waiting. I looked at him, we exchanged greetings and he asked if he could see the doctor to talk to her about his son who is blind! "Yes of course," I said. So we went in and talked to the doctor. The doctor agreed to see his son and the following morning the two came back to see the doctor. This was the last work day at the clinic for Dr. Valerie. So, she advised Joshua's dad that from our clinic there was not much she could do, but the doctor continued explaining, that when she gets back in the US she would make contact with a few individuals. And whatever she learns or she finds that will be of help to his son Joshua, she will then pass it to me so that I may then pass it on to them. So we exchanged contact information, Joshua and his dad left to go home.

We left Tanzania to come back to the US. Got back to work and I opened my e-mails as I usually do and right away I noticed I had an email from Dr. Valerie with the subject line "for a cornea work transplant". In it was the reply to Dr. Valerie's e-mail request for help for Joshua. Working with her friend in South Sudan she was connected with two doctors, one in Kenya and one in the U.S. The reply was that the two doctors would be happy to see Joshua. They outlined the years of treatment requirements and asked if Joshua's family could do that.

As I write this message to you all, I am glad to tell you the following: First, Joshua and his dad made it to Tenwek Hospital in Kenya where God has opened the door for Joshua to receive back his sight.

Secondly, they have met with the doctors (the same doctors who treated Valerie's friend from South Sudan) who will be performing the surgery.

I spoke with the family on Thursday, October 9th, and they thought they might get a call from the hospital in mid-October telling them to come for Joshua's procedure. As

of this publication they are still waiting for that call.

When you were working to help make this year's mission trip possible, did you know you were going to be helping a young man regain his sight? No! And neither did I. But I guess God works in mysterious ways as it is been made obvious to us.

Not until I came back here did I realize that all this time I was participating in a God's mission to restore the young man's sight. The way I look at it, it could have been too easy for Joshua to get treatment in Arusha, but then we would have missed out on the opportunity to see something far more important (Seeing God's miracle at work) which I believe is what has just happened here. See how he has connected us from Colorado, Wisconsin, to South Sudan to Tanzania, and Kenya.

Through generous donations Denise has wired \$1,145.00 to Tanzania to help with Joshua's medical and travel expenses. Money you and others have raised to show Joshua and his family we care.

Indeed, when God closes a door, he opens a window.

This is why we do what we do...For the children of Ndoombo and the surrounding communities.

Please consider a generous gift to the people of Ndoombo.



2103-2104 Income Statement

Beginning Balance as of July 1, 2013		\$ 5,289
Revenues:		
Non-Designated Income	\$ 26,675	
Designated Contributions	\$ 8,792	
Designated Fundraising	\$ 2,155	
Other	\$ 4,346	
Total Income for the Year:		\$41,968
Expenses:		
Clinic Employee Salaries-Ndooombo	\$ 5,152	
Clinic Electric Expenses-Ndooombo	\$ 664	
Pharmacy Expenses-Ndooombo	\$ 851	
Vehicle Maintenance-Ndooombo	\$ 2,137	
Office Supplies/Printing Expenses	\$ 593	
Organizational Fees	\$ 79	
Wire Transfer Bank Fees	\$ 277	
Professional Fees	\$ 216	
Library Project Expenses	\$ 2,331	
Fencing Project Expenses	\$ 824	
Landscaping Project Expenses	\$ 1,183	
Incinerator Repair Project Expenses	\$ 19	
Clinic Maintenance Expenses	\$ 155	
Food Purchases for Distribution-Ndooombo	\$ 12,000	
Fundraising Expenses	\$ 174	
Other (in/out trip payments for group)	\$ 5,346	
Total Expenses for the Year:		<u>\$32,001</u>
Income less Expenses:		<u>\$ 9,967</u>
Ending Balance as of June 30, 2014 (before 2014 trip)		<u>\$15,256</u>

2015 Mission Trip

Save the Date:

August 3-August 14

Cost of trip is Approximately:

\$3,000 without Safari

\$4,000 with Safari

Contact:

Denise at 262-930-8267

or

Exaudh at 262-902-2342

For more information



2014 Trip Participants Left to Right: Diane Thompson, Kate McKinnis, Valerie and Natalie McKinnis, Abby McKinnis, Darren and Josee McKinnis, Exaudh Mbise

Contact Us:

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Donations can also be made via the web at
www.mmthc.org using PayPal or by mailing to
the above address.

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