



Camp Uganda 2008

Empowering Youth to Save Endangered Chimpanzees

Spring
2008

Dear Sponsors and Friends,

I am delighted to present to you our second annual report on Camp Uganda. It was another successful year with 25 kids, 6 teachers (2 snuck in), a camp director (Norma Emerson from Canada) and a program director (Peace Nakitto from Uganda) thanks to our many supporters. Norma and Peace have written beautiful reports describing their experiences of this year's camp. I encourage you to read them and the campers' page. I just have a few things I want to share.

What I found most exciting about this year's camp was that the children went home with tree seedlings in their hands so that they could practice what they learned. The Ugandan educators at UWEC (Uganda Wildlife Education Centre) instill the message in the campers that if you must cut down a tree, you must also plant many more trees in its place. Each camper knew exactly where they would plant their trees.

I am also thrilled that five campers from our first camp in 2007 wrote to me this year asking for funding to go to a wildlife park. Unfortunately, it is challenging enough to raise the money needed for the camp, so I could not fulfill their request. However, this shows that the camp influenced their appreciation and concern for wild animals and all of nature.

I hope you will continue to be inspired by our mission and achievements and will continue, or begin, to support us in whatever way you feel possible. I dearly appreciate and remember each of you who has helped me to realize this challenging dream. Our next step is to grow the camp so that we can include 90 twelve year old kids each January. We hope to achieve this by 2010.

I strongly believe that when we support youth and the environment, we are supporting better health and happiness for future generations. It is fine to find cures for our ailments, but prevention is always the best medicine. A healthy planet always fosters healthy people, animals and ecosystems. The best health and happiness is my wish for you.

Hugs and Smiles,

Haida Bolton
Founder and President
Camp Uganda



GREETINGS FROM UGANDA AND THE UGANDA WILDLIFE EDUCATION CENTRE

The Camp this year was great. It seems every year keeps getting better and better. We would like to extend our warm appreciation for all the efforts and support that was rendered to organize Camp Uganda in January 2008.

The children from Masindi seemed more aware of the Chimpanzees, since they are neighbouring the Budongo forest where the chimpanzees are found. The children from Gulu had a different experience, due to the fact that they come from an area where "war" has been a prominent part of their lives

The major theme of Camp Uganda 2008 focused on "Bringing Peace in Our Environment." As we put an emphasis on the youth to save endangered chimpanzees, we try to focus on how well young people can relate to their environment, including themselves. This includes the elements of CARE, RESPECT, APPRECIATION and SUPPORT. In Uganda there are many conflicts occurring between wildlife and people. Camp Uganda 2008 wanted to bridge peace between people and the environment they live in.

Having the Children from Gulu was really a great idea. To be honest, these children "brought tears into my eyes and joy to my heart". Looking into the faces of the animals I work with and see everyday at the Uganda Wildlife Education Centre, keeps reminding me of the responsibility I have for them. When I looked into the faces of these children, it reminded me to appreciate each day that goes by in my life with a smile. These children just never stopped to smile throughout the camp. I couldn't imagine what the war has put them through, but they can afford to SMILE.

The camp changed the perception the children had for wildlife and chimpanzees. The hands-on aspect of the camp played a spectacular role in transforming these perceptions: Fear and Hate.

These perceptions were bred into the children by adults and fellow peers who either had bad experiences or knew very little about the animals.

When the children came to Camp Uganda 2008, it all changed for them. They got a chance to touch and learn all about the animals and watched them every time they woke up and went to sleep.

For the children from Gulu, this Camp was really a landmark in their lives. After camp they said that they learned to "FORGIVE" and the importance of "FORGIVENESS". They were inspired by the chimpanzees and other animal stories. They wondered how people could do cruel things to such beautiful and innocent animals. They related these experiences to what the "WAR" had done to them back home. They learned the importance of PEACE for both the animals and people in order to create a better environment. They told stories of how the war had destroyed many things back home, including the animals and how they are trying to recover from it, and do everything to rebuild their homes. Education seems to be a hope for them, to make a better life for themselves and their families. They live and study in refugee camps, where everything is shared including bedsheets. These children were willing to share anything they had with the other kids.

(cont'd on pg 3)



Peace Nakitto feeding orphaned chimps.

"If the chimpanzees can forgive us for the cruel things we have done to them, then we can surely forgive others for the cruel things they have done to us."

GREETINGS FROM UGANDA (cont'd)

I quote them saying, "If the chimpanzees can forgive us for the cruel things we have done to them, then we can surely forgive others for the cruel things they have done to us."

For the children from Masindi, they seemed to have knowledge about the Chimpanzees, through educational programs. But the biggest part of the camp is that it brought them even closer to the chimpanzees and they learned new things. Some of them had never seen chimpanzees at close range. This gave them a chance. This has prompted them to protect the Budongo Forest Reserve, where the Chimpanzees are endangered due to snares in the forest and deforestation. Each of them promised to plant a tree for the chimpanzees at home and back at school.

CAMP UGANDA, creates a cultural strength by bringing young people from different cultures and backgrounds to learn to appreciate themselves for who they are and the chimpanzees for what they are, and by seeing the strength and beauty that lies in their differences. They also get to meet and learn about people from an international culture, like Canada, which exposes them to the global environment and to know that **they are not the only ones in the struggle to save the endangered chimpanzees.**

We really appreciate the continuous support.

I wish you all the best from Uganda, UWEC and USA (where I am now).

PEACE NAKITTO, 2008 Program Director, Camp Uganda

CAMP UGANDA INSPIRES RHINO CAMP

We held the first "RHINO CONSERVATION CHILDREN'S CAMP" in February 2008. It turned out so well because we adopted some ideas and activities from Camp Uganda 2008. So Camp Uganda has given birth to another children's camp, known as "Rhino conservation children's camp".

It is sponsored by a lady in Australia, who looks after rhinos. It turned out great.

Thanks for your inspiration.

Peace Nakitto



Camper grooms a sleeping Rhino

NEW WEBSITE COMING THIS SUMMER

We are currently improving our website and hope to have it launched by summertime. You can look forward to reading more letters by campers and seeing more of their artwork. If you have any suggestions for us to consider, please send an email to campuganda@shaw.ca. Please note that the web address will remain as www.campuganda.org. And if you have not yet seen our current slideshow, check it out online. The link is found on the Photo Gallery section of our website.

Camp Uganda 2008, "The Gift of Nature"

Entebbe, Uganda, has an elegant airport with cream, and black Italian marble flooring. There is an excellent 40 km road to Kampala from the airport. Both projects were updated thanks to the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting there in November, 2007. However, my husband, Don, and I soon experienced washed out roads, and met people with hardships: impoverished wages, parents and friends dead from AIDS, and children living in fear of abduction in refugee camps. Despite much sorrow, Ugandans are resilient, generous, and humourous.

We stayed in a comfortable banda, or hut with a small fridge, mosquito nets, and a welcome western toilet. The 28°C heat was bearable, the bloom of lake flies was annoying, and when I asked, "What are ants doing in the fridge?" Don replied, "Cooling off". Nonetheless, we woke up in paradise with all the bird songs, and the hmm, hmm, hmmm of nearby grazing donkeys. I told Peace, UWEC's Program Coordinator, and the zoo handlers that they were caring for a sanctuary that was *'a blessing for the world'*.

The Ugandan Wildlife Education Centre has an island for 11 chimpanzees. There are hyenas who teased the lion, white rhinos gifted from Kenya, and a majestic water buffalo who endured bullying by Laura, the bush pig. Injured, diseased or abandoned animals entered the vet clinic for 90 days. Experiencing the creatures' daily routine, and learning about their habitat was the gift Camp Uganda gave 25, twelve year olds from Masindi and Gulu.

Don, myself, Vianney, our 2009 coordinator, and his musician friend, Robert, journeyed over a "memorable" bush road, (we lost our back windshield to start with). Masindi teachers and students warmly met us. We four endured snacking tse tse flies and visited spectacular Murchison Falls, and saw baboons. Due to previous rebel activity around northern Gulu's refugee camps, Jackson, a wonderful volunteer with Raleigh International, collected the children.



Orphan chimp whispers "Thank You" to Norma & all supporters of Camp Uganda

The Masindi children were happy, chatty, and out-going. The Gulu students were quiet and showed little expression. Fear of the animals soon gave way to respect and appreciation. They liked to imitate the "Pop, pop, pop" of the endangered shoebill stork. They enjoyed drawing the ostrich, peacock, zebra and plants. I looked forward to the cultural display. Midweek, the children practised their drumming, and dancing. In the evening they shone with more singing. The groups reached out to everyone and taught their dances. The blank faces of the Gulu children transformed with an energy bursting with pride, spirit, and strength. I wish western culture had more of this rich tradition that produced confidence and joy.

(cont'd on pg 5)

"Fear of the animals soon gave way to respect and appreciation."

"The Gift of Nature" (cont'd)

The children were delighted by the vervet monkeys who roamed freely around the zoo. They were displaced when a golf course replaced their forest home. I asked one of the children, Derrick, where he was going with a glass of mango juice. "To give it to the monkeys." He placed it under a tree. We saw a monkey put his head in the glass, tip it over and lick it up. I was grateful for this student's compassion. The campers were soon writing thank you letters with such comments as "God bless the sponsors", and "Long live the sponsors." Derrick thanked me for the great week he'd had. By matatu, or van, they travelled home with their seedlings that they planted in their communities after cleaning them! "That wouldn't have happened without the teaching from Camp Uganda," e-mailed Godfrey, a Masindi teacher.

On our final day, Peace arranged for Don and I to spend time with Nipa, a young Congolese chimpanzee brought in after its mother was killed. She was so playful, curious and trusting. I felt my heart warming and opening to this endearing, hairy, childlike creature. We all benefitted from the hands-on, experiential learning at Camp Uganda.

Waberly, (Thank you)

Norma Emerson, Camp Director 2008

WE ARE NOW A CHARITY!

Charitable status was gained on September 27th of last year. This means that we can now offer Canadians an income tax receipt for any amount above \$20. Donors will also continue to get a newsletter once a year which will give a report about the camp and one of our thank you letters written by a camper.

The cost of sending a camper to Camp Uganda, is \$25 per day or \$125 for the full five days. This includes transportation across their country, food, accommodation, entrance fees, classroom time, program material, certificates and tips for the Ugandan volunteers. This does not include any administrative costs. Once again, if you donate \$250 or more, sponsoring at least two children, we would be pleased to recognize your name, your business and/or your website on our website.

We are concerned this year that transportation costs may increase due to increased fuel costs brought on by the war in Kenya. Whatever happens, we are committed to our goal to "Empower Youth To Save Endangered Chimpanzees." Chimps are our closest living animal relative, sharing 98.6% of our genes. We owe it to them and to ourselves to allow them to live their lives in peace in their proper forest homes. Wouldn't you agree?

If you wish to make a donation to help sponsor a child to camp, you can write a cheque to Camp Uganda and mail it to 561 Forsyth Avenue, Parksville, BC, V9P 1G9 Canada.

Please indicate to whom the tax receipt should be made. If you want further news by email, please give us your email address. Thank you!

DEAR CAMP UGANDA SPONSORS,

LET ME START BY GREETING HOW ARE YOU. WE THANK YOU FOR WORK THAT YOU HAVE DONE TO US. HOW GOOD ARE YOU. YOU HAVE GAVE US THINGS LIKE FOOD, DRINKS, BOOKS, ETC. WE HAVE SEEN THE CHIMPANZEE, HYENA, MONKEYS, BUFFALOS AND OTHER ANIMALS THAT I HAVE NEVER SEEN BY MY SELF THAT I HAS SEEN LIKE CHIMPANZEE, RHINO, CROCODILE AND EVEN LAKE VICTORIA, THE BOATS THAT I HAD NEVER SEEN BY MY EYES.

THANKS FROM
AHUURA LILIAN
FROM KABALEGA PRIMARY SCHOOL,
MASINDI DISTRICT.
IT IS BUNYORO REGION
AND IT ON LAKE ALBERT

CAMPERS PAGE



To Camp Uganda sponsors,

I would like to thank you to allowed us to come in wildlife education centre and also I would like to thank you to save us well from here, also you have care of us without you we will not come and see a good thing because of you, to allowed me to come and saw many type of animal like rhino, zebra, etc. I would like also to thankyou because you make me to be able to know the first largest mammal animal and the second one. I ask you to continue with the programme.

I remain yours,
Amito Nancy
Pakwelo Primary School, Gulu
Thanks

May the all mighty God bless you
and give you peace, amen

Camp Uganda

Conservation Education Society

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Special Thanks To

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