



Canadian Harambee Education Society

We can't do everything...but we can do something!

SPRING 2009 NEWSLETTER #47

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

It seems the weather was on our side. The CHES documentary "Educating Margaret" was rebroadcast on CBC just before Christmas, when we were all snowed in here in Vancouver. Seemingly, many more people saw it this time as we were deluged with phone calls and emails resulting in eighty more scholarships. Imagine eighty more Margarets! We have DVDs of the documentary available for anyone interested. We are not selling them but would like to cover our costs, so if you would like one, please let us know and we will have it mailed out to you. A donation of \$10 would be appreciated.

I think that in these difficult economic times, it is more important than ever to continue supporting our girls. The money that we save each family from putting out for tuition can be used for food. Never underestimate the power of your gift to these girls. We are providing them with an education that will sustain their lives, the lives of their families, and ultimately their nation. At the VERY LEAST, we are keeping them unmarried and not pregnant for four years. They will emerge four years older and hopefully wiser. Their self-confidence will be boosted and their prospects in life even better.

To all our supporters and sponsors, you are doing a wonderful thing.

Lorrie Williams

FUNDRAISING FOR CHES

Get your CHES T-Shirt, designed by Louise Paulsen's *Whither Thou Goest* image (see right). CHES T-Shirts are \$25, available in Cream, Yellow and Rust and comes in (mens) sizes S, M, L and XL

Please contact the CHES office to order your T-Shirt today!

Other fundraising items available through the CHES office:

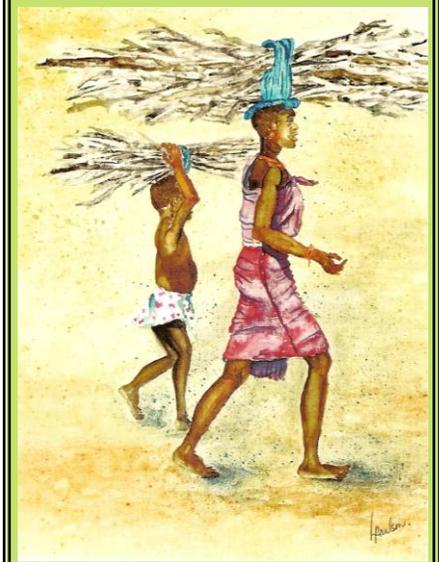
CHES CBC Documentary DVD, *White Necklace* (book by CHES Director Chris Harker), Note Cards beautifully painted by CHES Treasurer Louise Paulsen

EDUCATING MARGARET DVD

The CHES documentary that aired on CBC is now available to you. A donation request of \$10 is to cover the cost of production, CD, and shipping.

The DVD cover features artwork by our own Louise Paulsen (CHES Treasurer), entitled "*Whither Thou Goest*", a woman carrying firewood followed by her daughter also carrying firewood, supporting the belief that what the mother does, the child will also do.

It has been demonstrated in Margaret's life as her two children are doing well in school. Here is our SUSTAINABILITY!



Upcoming events you won't want to miss, page 8

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. How do I send letters to my student?

Write directly to your student and mail it directly to Africa. Do not send it to CHES.

2. Why do you sponsor only girls?

A book could be written to answer this question. Suffice to say that girls are the last to be considered for schooling. It's not that the families love their daughters less, it's that they think the boys have a better chance at becoming a wage-earner.

3. What happens if I cannot renew my scholarship?

CHES will keep the girl going to school and will find her another sponsor.

4. Can we send gifts?

This is not practical. The gifts might get stolen or lost in the mail. There may be duty charged on the gift and the girls/families don't have the money to cover this. CHES has a student fund for extras such as toiletries, etc.

5. Can I visit my girl?

Yes. It would be an experience to remember. Let us know when you are going!

6. What happens to the girls after high school?

Those that qualify go to university. Some go into teacher training, some to nursing. Some become business traders. It is beyond our capabilities to keep track of all the graduates, but just the fact that they did graduate is the sustainability we seek.

7. Does CHES have a school?

No. We pay for girls at various schools but we do help selected schools with textbooks, libraries, etc when we receive large bequests.

The following is an excerpt from a letter written by Regina Michael to her sponsor Anita Hagen. Regina is in Form 4 at Sumaye Secondary School in Katesh, Tanzania. It is a school that is only 4 years old and is at the base of Mount Hanang.

"I would also like to tell you about our country Tanzania, "The home of mankind." Our country has many natural mountains and National Parks and a good natural environment. Mountains include Mount Kilimanjaro, the highest mountain in Africa, which is 5895 metres high, Mount Meru in the Arusha Region, which is 4565 metres high and Mount Hanang where I am, which is 3218 metres high.

In our National Parks there are good animals like lions, elephants, giraffe, buffalo, lions, zebras, leopards, rhino, gazelles and others. This years weather condition is not bad and people have good harvests. Food crops in our country are maize, beans, wheat, rice and millet. Cash crops include cotton, coffee, sisal, sunflower and tobacco. Telling you by using pen point is not enough. I warmly welcome you to visit our country Tanzania to see and enjoy for yourself the natural beauty. "

Written by Regina Michael (printed with permission)

About a Girl

I am eighteen years of age and I would like to appreciate the fact that I have finished my secondary education in peace. I really do not know where my life would be if it were not for CHES. God bless the CHES society with the endless blessings ever.

I joined CHES in 2006 and started harvesting the fruits of this organization. Before I had gone to school, I remember receiving a small sheet of paper with following information: One pair of Bata shoes, a uniform, two pairs of socks and a pullover. I said wow! It was my happiest time so far as I was going to look so neat. I kept my uniform so well and, even in Form three, the same thing happened and this made me to look smart as the Assistant Head Girl.

I really felt so nice when I received text books from CHES. My heart pumped with everlasting joy again when I received a new calculator. For now I really don't know what I can give to CHES but to pursue my career and get a job as a broadcaster.

I also want to remember the workshops we have had so far. We have really gained from these workshops. Personally, the topics given like assertiveness, taking responsibility and games have made me to be bold, courageous and responsible. I want to remind myself of when someone approached me for a friendship, and not just friendship but love relationship. I quickly remembered how to act assertively and aggressively and chose the best I could and said No, and I meant No. The person was so big, the person I can call a grandfather. This became a challenge to me. From that experience I really came to learn that the topics we were taught from the Workshops were so beneficial, especially to me personally.

I still remember the game, The Big Chair, that was taught by our beloved mother Alinda Ware and other agents. You see, The Big Chair was like an exercise and I really found it very funny. I remember laughing at it and I feared because I suspected that I might fall. I ran away from being the first person and the last person. I became the middle person among others.

I remember being taught about stress and how to manage it. Through these teachings I have been able to manage stress in and out of my school. I therefore have all the reasons to say thank you for the workshops.

Without forgetting about the delicious food you have always prepared for us. When I go back home there is usually a big, positive change, having an acceptable fat shape just from the delicious food. So happy do I become when someone tells me that Irene, you have changed so well.



Irene Nasimiya

During the month of April, I was so glad after receiving a letter from my sponsor who promised me that he will be coming to Kenya. Up to this time I am still hoping and expecting to see him. I come from Kakamega and so far I haven't gone for tours, but I believe that one of these fine days I will tour with the Canadians and enjoy with them as a CHES girl.

My dreams came true when I started associating myself with the Canadians from CHES, and I know that one of these days I will tour Canada.

By Irene Nasimiya

YOU MADE ME PROUD

On behalf of all African girls who have been sponsored and who are being sponsored by CHES, I would like to thank all the Canadian Community for their kind support in enabling us to pursue an education. Formerly girls were not valued in the African community and therefore were not given a chance in education. But because of your kind support, many African girls have gotten a chance to pursue their dreams.

Personally I, Hellen, don't know how much I can thank the Canadian board both in Kenya and in Canada, my mum and best friend Margrete, my sponsors, the Don Brengle family, the agents present at that time and today for enabling me to get access to education.



I was hopeless, I had no parents, no one to turn to and my uncle, who was my guardian at that time, had no means for educating me in high school. I lost hope in life; this was due to the huge debt I had in school that's about thirty-seven thousand [about \$600ca]. Due to this, when I tried to attend classes, I was chased out of school, the watchmen knew of me and were warned never to allow me in the school compound. My locker and chair were kept in the principal's office.

Today I can walk confidently around being a CHES graduate and a Cedar student. I know my dreams will soon come true.

Live long, Canadians! You made me proud.

Hellen Atieno Otiende

KAKAMENGA AGENTS, COMINGS AND GOINGS

In early March, Marguerite Chiarenza returned to Vancouver. Along with her sister and two other CHES agents Norm and Cheryl Filipenko, 400 applicants were interviewed for the new school year. Their hard work and long hours during this process are truly appreciated! Visiting the 11 schools attended by CHES students, they also provided leadership and monitoring of day to day operations.

Norm and Cheryl will be home in late April after greeting and training new agent Ron Shepherd, who hails from Toronto, Ontario. CHES is sincerely grateful for the commitment these dedicated volunteers have shown.

Thank you!

CURRENT STUDENT COUNT

	CHES Kenya	CHES Tanzania
Form 1	166	80
Form 2	93	65
Form 3	69	53
Form 4	73	41
Post Form 4	0	14
Total	401	253

NEW ACTIVITY IN HOMA BAY

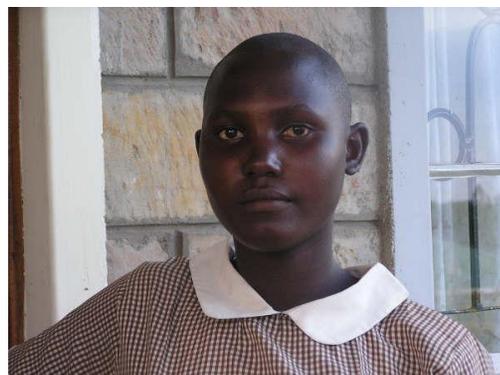
While I was acting as CHES agent in Kenya, we had the occasion to visit a very special Nursery School and Children's Home. This home (run by Benedictine nuns whose work with orphans in Kakamega has long been familiar to CHES agents) is for children who are HIV positive, or who have lost their parents to AIDS, or both. The sisters founded it just four years ago to serve Homa Bay, one of the poorest areas in Kenya and the one most afflicted by AIDS.

While I was there, we met an American doctor who has been working in Kenya for five years and who sponsors children's education, out of his own pocket and with the help on an NGO he founded. As we talked, he told us that most of the students he sponsors are boys, simply because few of the girls come to his attention. Maybe the girls have to wait for the boys in the family to be educated, maybe the girls are just expected to marry, or maybe the girls do not even dare to hope for education. Whatever the reasons, it seemed to be a situation in need of CHES, and the Board in Canada agreed that we should experiment by offering ten initial scholarships.

With very little time before the opening of the new academic year, we began looking for the best candidates. Sister Ann (the social worker from the Children's Home, who regularly comes into contact with families devastated by AIDS and poverty, and often headed by children) brought us the first candidates and helped us with numerous other details, including allowing us to use the Children's Home for interviews. Sister also came with me to the girls' boarding school that had the best reputation in the area. After initial hesitation, the Head Mistress became enthusiastic and agreed to take ten students and to cooperate in any way possible. The American doctor came up with other candidates and introduced us to the director of a charitable primary boarding school for orphans. This director brought us some names from his school, a school open only to students proven to be among the neediest orphans, and he also agreed to help with their shopping needs (in order to enter a boarding school, girls are required to bring with them a number of items, including mattresses, that amount to an expense of almost \$200). In the end, thanks to the help of the Children's Home, the Head Mistress of the boarding school, the American doctor, and the director of the orphans' primary school, we were able to put ten of the poorest students I have come across into a wonderful school with all their expenses met.

Most of the girls are without mother or father. One has two parents, but the father is blind and the mother was injured in a road accident and is unable to work. These girls are poor, the poorest. But there is more. In this area, even more than in other parts of Kenya, girls are not given the consideration that goes to boys and, not only can they be forced to marry at a very young age but, if their husband dies, their tradition allows them to be inherited and forced to marry his relative. In such an environment role models and examples can be as important as the scholarships themselves. Let us hope that CHES, aided by continued support from the community, succeeds fully in Homa Bay and that we are able to bring more scholarships, as well as hope and dreams, to its girls.

Marguerite Chiarenza



Homa Bay Students

MARIA MEETS THE SMITHS

Once upon a time near the town of Katesh in Tanzania, three sisters lived happily with their parents. Two of the sisters were twins while the third was two years younger.

Their life was simple and uncomplicated. Their father had a job that caused him to work away from home for lengthy periods while their mother (with the help of the daughters) harvested corn from their small plot, and kept the mud-walled, thatched roofed house in good repair.

After the daughters were born and over the course of several years, the mother developed a mental illness that ultimately resulted in her taking her own life. Life became a struggle as the father attempted to retain his job and bring up his young children.

Six months later, tragedy struck again when father died of tuberculosis. As dictated by tradition in Tanzania, the family then became the responsibility of the father's brother. He dutifully brought the family to his home. However, with two wives, about a dozen children, and an income coming from subsistence farming, he was in no position to provide adequate support. He was short tempered and treated the girls badly; often the girls would have little to eat and frightful living conditions resulting in eventually having to leave school. This is not a happy story but it is far from unique.

Fortunately, CHES is established in the Hanang Region where the girls reside. They applied to CHES and given their qualifications and circumstance, CHES accepted them all. The girls were assigned to Hanang Secondary School and offered boarding privileges at the Nangwa Education Centre that has recently been built and equipped with CHES support.

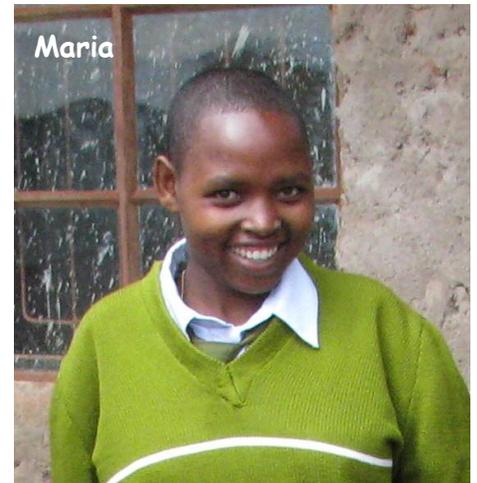
Maria (one of the twins), is the girl that Brian and Marg Smith from Nanaimo came to sponsor. In mid-February this year, the Smiths joined Chris and Catriona Harker (two CHES Directors) on a 16 day Tanzanian wildlife safari, after which all four had left for Katesh, arriving at Hanang Secondary on March 6 . The meeting of sponsor and student was touching and emotional. A bond was immediately formed thanks to the CHES Office Manager and former CHES grad, Bernadeth, who had volunteered to act as translator.

Marg and Brian are among nearly 30 CHES supporters and sponsors who have visited Katesh with the Harkers and met their students and many other members of the CHES community there. Hopefully there will be others. Recently a member of the Katesh District Office said to Catriona, "You can always tell the CHES girls in Katesh. They are the ones who always keep neat, who walk with an air of confidence and who are among the first to volunteer to help whenever it is needed". CHES supporters should be justly proud of the way in which they are helping to improve the lives of the girls they sponsor.

Maria and her twin sister are now 18; their younger sister is 16. As their education has been interrupted, they are all now in Form 2, the equivalent of grade 9.

Perhaps Katesh should change its name to KaCHES.

By Chris Harker



Maria with the Smith's



The Smith's with all three sisters

CHES KENYA and CHES TANZANIA

Welcome to all the wonderful new CHES sponsors who recently began their journey to help girls receive a secondary school education. Your letters are about to be mailed out with a photo and autobiography from your 'CHES girl'. Some of you will have been paired with a girl from Kenya, others with a girl from Tanzania. The programs in both countries are the same in that your donation will enable the CHES student to attend secondary school. But there are a few differences in the two programs as well.

The CHES program in **Kenya** is in Western Province, which is a densely populated area where farming is the source of income. The schools have been established for many years and the CHES girls usually do well in their studies. Many of the Kenyan girls may qualify for post secondary courses where other NGOs may help them with their expenses.

In **Tanzania** the CHES program is located around Katesh, about 200 kms south of Ngorongoro Crater. Many families are pastoralists, of the Barbaig Tribe. Most parents cannot speak English, lending to the girls marks being quite low, as well due to teachers with minimum training. Some CHES graduates in Tanzania are now teachers, working in offices, nurses, and young mothers.

You are helping to make a difference in the girl's lives by sponsoring a student.

Louise Paulsen (CHES Treasurer)

	KENYA	TANZANIA
Schools	11 different schools	28 different schools
Boarding schools	10 full boarding	9 with dorms or hostels and boarding
Day schools	1, but has a hostel for CHES	18 day schools, lunch and tea provided
Girl schools	8 girls schools	no girls schools, all mixed
Form 1 to 4	like our Grades 9 - 12	like our Grades 8 -11 "O"-Level Forms 1 - 4, "A"-Level Forms 5,6
Student selection	Canadian Agents plus Kenyan Committee choose girls based on KCPE result and class standing and from a poor family.	Tanzanian CHES committee meet with TZ School officials and village elders to choose girls who have been called to a Secondary School but can not pay fees.
Scholarship level	Girls must have passed Grade 8 exam. Each year CHES girls must be in the top half of her class 2 out of 3 terms.	Girls must have passed Grade 7 exam. Girls must pass the Form 2 Government exam to keep her CHES scholarship.
School terms	January to November 3 school terms each year. Marks and letters sent to sponsors 3 times a year.	January to November 2 school terms each year. Marks and letters sent to sponsors 2 times a year.
Language	2 official languages - English and Swahili. Students are taught English in primary school and all secondary classes are taught in English. Girls are quite fluent in English, spoken and written.	The official language in Tanzania is Swahili only. Students receive very little English language training in primary school. All secondary classes are taught in English. Girls can write in English but they are not very fluent in spoken English.

THE BLOOMING HOSTEL

More years ago than she would probably want to remember, Sara Williams came to Tanzania as a Peace Corps volunteer, assigned to teach in a school in Mbeya. Her first day, the headmistress asked Sara to be the *sewing mistress* in a then still very British education system. Sara explained she did not know how to embroider, crochet, or darn a sock so the headmistress asked if she would be the "garden mistress", in charge of developing the school's garden.

Thus began a lifelong interest in growing everything from vegetables to rare ornamental trees. Sara, who now lives in Saskatoon, retired from her position as horticultural extension specialist at the University of Saskatchewan a while ago, but continues to write books, give workshops, answer questions on CBC radio and maintains her own 5 acre garden.

In February, 2008, Sara visited Katesh to meet the girl she sponsors and her life has not been the same since. Meeting one's girl is, in itself, an emotional occasion. But it was after she got home that Sara felt she had to do "a bit more." She contacted Chris and Catriona Harker who were visiting the CHES project in Katesh in March and asked them for advice. Consultations with local committee members ensued and in due course the project of building of a hostel was recommended.

Since 2003, twenty five new secondary schools have appeared in the Hanang District. Attendance at the secondary level has soared. However, many schools are distant from the homes of those who attend, making it necessary for many students to board with families who live near the school. Often such accommodation is meagre with no water or proper lighting. Girls are often regarded as paying servants and required to cope with household chores before attending to their homework. On occasion sexual abuse from the male members of the household occurs.

Building a hostel in a central location provides girls with a proper dormitory complete with electric light, running water, a cookhouse (with a cook), proper latrines and night-time security. Once

constructed, the fees paid by the girls (or by their sponsor) covers the cost of food, staff and utilities.

This is what Sara is doing now on the outskirts of Katesh. Through speaking engagements and personal contacts she has now raised over \$20,000. Land has been acquired, water is on site, the main building is up, the roof is on and the framework for the latrines is in place. There is even a large vegetable garden already in production. Plastering walls has yet to occur, though window glass and doors have to be purchased. Electricity is planned but not yet installed. A simple kitchen has yet to be built.

Sara's dream just one year ago is on the way to becoming a reality. The completion of the hostel however, will depend on her success in raising the necessary funds. If all goes according to plan, the first 16 girls will be in residence in July.

Anyone interested in supporting this project can contact Sara at sara.williams@usask.ca or send a cheque directly to CHES with "SW Hostel" written on the memo line. We thank you for your help.

Chris Harker



Photos: (top) Workman (*fundi* in Swahili)
(middle) Latrine-shower under construction,
(bottom) CHES girls standing in front of the dorm

After listening to Sara Williams speak on behalf of CHES, a lady named Katrin Ritchie sent Sara this note:

Hello Sara, my name is Katrin Ritchie, I am Eleanor's granddaughter, and I attended the presentation you showed of your trip to Tanzania earlier this week. I am writing to tell you how much I enjoyed your power point and the effect your words about the situations in Tanzania had on me.

There are many speeches throughout the school year we hear about programs like CHES and how they are working to give the less fortunate an education, better lifestyle, and jobs. However I was pleasantly surprised to hear how far a contribution from single individual could go.

Living in Canada, with the many benefits we are given, I can hardly imagine a world where the young women close to my age are not able to obtain an education. I think your success in sponsoring a girl through school is marvelous. Not to mention your donation for a safe housing complex, I hope you receive many contributions in support of that particular project.

Lastly, I must say your pictures were spectacular and your story was very moving. I quite enjoyed the photos you had taken of everyday endeavors made by the people native to the land. And most importantly what you said made me think,

after your talk I felt like I too should be repositioned to help in the fight against poverty, AIDS, uneducated children, or any other epidemic that needed me. You were very inspiring and I hope you continue to share you experiences and receive enthusiastic support. Thank-you for the enlightenment.

Katrin Ritchie



NOTES FROM LWAK

The following is an excerpt from an email to CHES sent by Kaye Jackson of CANRAD, an NGO from Ontario working with Lwak, a girls boarding school in the Rarieda district of Kenya. CHES was made aware of the poor economic conditions of the area and has recently offered sponsorships to a few girls at the Lwak School.

I did meet with the five students you are sponsoring. They are delightful! They are grateful for the opportunity to attend the Lwak School and consider it to be the best in the district. Lwak School is prospering with the fee support from agencies such as CHES and CANRAD. The school had purchased many new texts, had new teachers who were enthusiastic and already making a difference. One young English teacher has produced Lwak's first Year Book and has organized a District Journalism Conference at Lwak which will take place next weekend. The students are very busy with their studies but also sports and club activities. Some of the school buildings have been painted and the mission, vision and values of the school are seen everywhere. I was impressed. The Rotary Clubs of Ontario has dug a 120 meter borehole and put in 64 flush toilets and 64 showers. They are hooking up a bio-digester that will produce enough methane gas to power the kitchen which presently does all the cooking over wood stoves. The PTA and the school are fencing the whole property to keep out stray animals and also, I suspect, stray people. Mosquito netting has been purchased for all students. I know that the support that you have provided is indeed appreciated.

Kaye Jackson (of Ontario)

CHES OFFICE

We are very happy to be working in the new CHES office in Surrey. Julia Kambeitz has been hired as the new part time secretary. CHES is very lucky to have her and she is quickly learning all the various CHES tasks!

Julia is a retired purchasing agent and works in the office 12 hours a week, Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday and sometimes on Friday. Julia has excellent organizational skills and is running the office very smoothly,

If you have questions about your student or payment for sponsorship, please feel free to contact the CHES office. Room 102 B, 9030 King George Highway, Surrey, BC, V3V 7Y3, Phone: 778-565-5261



Julia Kambeitz

Email: canadianharambee@shaw.ca

UPCOMING EVENTS

➤ **AGM - CHES Annual General Meeting**

- Saturday September 19, 2pm, New West Public Library

➤ **CHES Charity Golf Tournament**

Come out and support CHES by having a great day on the course! Golf, dinner, prizes and FUN included!

When:	Thursday July 16, 2009
Time:	1:30 pm shotgun, dinner to follow
Participants:	Open to men and women of all playing abilities
Format:	Team Scramble
Where:	Musqueam Golf and Learning Academy 3904 W51 Ave. Vancouver, BC, V6N 3W1

Tournament Hosts: April Stubbs and Ginny Golding, Canadian PGA Professionals, and CHES

For more information, please contact April Stubbs at aprilstubbs@dccnet.com

HELP CHES BECOME EVEN GEEENER: REQUEST YOUR NEWSLETTER
VIA EMAIL, INSTEAD OF MAIL.

Please send your request to canadianharambee@shaw.ca