Our New Kenyan Home

We moved into our new office and agent quarters in Kakamega in April. The ribbon cutting ceremony, official opening, and placing of a thank you plaque will be held when Executive Director Joy Ruffeski visits Kenya at the end of May. Trees, shrubs, and flowers will also be planted in the coming months to make our “home” an inviting and comfortable one.

This has been an exciting process that started in June 2014 when Ginny Golding celebrated her 65th birthday by playing 65 holes of golf in a day to raise monies for this purpose. It took time to find a suitable plot of land for building, purchase the property, and have the deed transferred to CHES; things move much more slowly in Africa. With the additional funds from an anonymous donor, we were able to start the actual building last summer.

Special thanks go to former agent and director Gordon Brown who travelled back and forth to Kenya on numerous occasions at his own expense to oversee all processes relating to the design, contracting, and construction of our new quarters. Without his expertise completing our own building could not have become a reality. We also appreciate the work of Kenyan board member Brenda and CHES Kenya office manager Rebecca as they worked on the building committee with Gordon, ensuring that work was completed satisfactorily.
February of this year marked my fourth visit to the CHES hostel in Katesh, Tanzania. I remember the “grand opening” in 2010. There were the buildings themselves. By that time Pius Masha’s original vision of “a hostel for 12 girls” had already grown to two dorms with a combined capacity of 50 residents! There was also a small ablutions block and a very small kitchen. What I remember most was the community involvement: parents, teachers, and local administrators, the appreciative speeches, the long dance line weaving past the newly finished buildings, the joy of playing Scrabble and cards with the girls outside under jerry-rigged tarps.

By 2012, the new kitchen with fuel-efficient stoves that piped smoke to the outside had been built and the bathroom block expanded. Babu William, hostel cook, was delighted with his new domain. We brought the first 40 of the many quilts made by Dorothy Middleton’s group of dedicated and generous quilters - one for each bed in the hostel. One of the mothers who came to admire them commented, “We can’t believe that the mamas in Canada have made these for our girls. These mamas are so kind and the quilts are so lovely.” There was a cottage for the supervising matron, a room where the night watchmen could stay out of the rain, and a storage room. During that visit, Pius paced off an area adjacent to the new kitchen and quietly suggested that with, “the help of God and our friends in Canada” a new dining room-study hall should be constructed with a capacity for 100 girls (A 100 girls? Where did that figure come from?!?!?). I gulped while Elaine Carter confidently responded, “Of course, we can do that.” And so we did. Our visit in 2014 saw the addition of two more dormitories and the dining hall-study hall built adjacent to the kitchen with a serving hatch connecting them. And what a well used building it has become! Pius, as always, knew what was needed. It has served the CHES girls well, not only those in residence but also the many who come for the annual tutorials and workshops. Now there is also a large new building combining an all important CHES office; a guest house with a lounge, kitchen, and 3 self-contained guest rooms; a small meeting-classroom space; and Mshikamano – a store cum computer-printing shop where girls are trained in retail skills on a rotating basis.

Our latest visit, this past February, saw further additions to the hostel campus: more storage space for food and equipment as well as an attractive decorative cement wall surrounding the campus. On two of the buildings, guttering and large tanks now collect water prior to the dry season when the pipes from the town water supply often run dry.

But the constancies remain. From the beginning, there have been vegetable gardens, plantings of fruit trees, flowers, shrubs, and trees. The small vegetable plots, each cared for by two girls, contain tomatoes, spinach, and other vegetables in season. They are immaculate, bountiful, and with nary a weed. Flowers and flowering shrubs surround the buildings and the baby banana and avocado trees planted at the time of our first visit are now in full production. The quiet beauty of the hostel campus enfolds and calms immediately.

The gentle leadership qualities of Naomi, Pius, Bernadetta, Rayheli, and Rufina are all pervasive. Their standards are high but achieved always through kindness and example, providing loving role models for the girls. Over the years, we’ve seen the young girls arrive at the hostel, skinny and scared. Under the mentorship of these Tanzanian CHES leaders and the older girls with whom they’ve imbued these same values, we’ve seen the little ones grow and mature into self-confident, poised young women. These are qualities that will never appear on an accounts sheet, but make the CHES hostel the wonderful place it is - that make a real and tangible difference in the lives of these girls.

by Sara Williams
Hoping For A Safe House

Thanks to the tremendous generosity of two donors, CHES fulfilled a long held dream in February by moving into the new CHES House we’ve had built in Kakamega, Kenya. No longer having to rent our office and agent quarters saves us about $10,000 a year; funds that can now be used to support the education of our girls there.

Our task there is not yet quite complete. We had hoped to be able to include a small additional apartment at the new premises. This would be used by CHES girls who have to come to the office for various reasons but don’t have time to get home on the same day. Young girls staying in a local Guest House is fraught with risk but our “Safe House” would be secure place to spend the night.

Similarly CHES grads who we hire to help out at workshops and during registration can end up spending their entire earnings on transport from home to office and return. Free accommodation in a CHES apartment enables them to work, save, and stay safe.

Finally, there are times when agents overlap as one generally arrives to be briefed before the other departs. Agents, too, could access this mini- apartment.

Our builder - who has been pretty accurate to date – estimates this addition will cost about $27,000. Just before Christmas, we received a wonderful gift of $15,000 to build this addition from Sandee Rothwell and her family. $5,000 remains in the kitty from the initial building project. Hence we need only (!) $7,000 to complete the project.

Elsewhere in this Newsletter you will note our proposed upcoming Fund Raising drive in June. If all goes well or if funds are donated from, to date, unknown sources, we hope to find the necessary funds and have this important addition in place in time for the next school year.

by Chris Harker

Many of our girls live in homes like this.

AGM - Notice to Sponsors

All CHES supporters are invited to join us for our Annual General Meeting on

Saturday, August 26, 2017, from 2 – 4 pm.

The meeting will be held at the River Room of the Centennial Community Centre in New Westminster (65 E. 6th Ave., New Westminster). Refreshments will be served as we review the successes of the past year, present updates on our initiatives, and elect the Board of Directors.

We can’t do everything . . . but we can do something!
Obituary: My Dear Friend Mzee Quleka

I first met Mzee Quleka in the fall of 1991 under the shade of a baobab tree in the village of Mureru. My wife, Linda Breault and I had just accepted a two year assignment as CUSO volunteers in Tanzania. Mureru was one of three villages in Hanang District in which we would work doing community development.

Quleka and other Mureru elders had gathered with us under the tree to discuss the needs of the villagers. Quleka stood out as a taller than usual Barabaig man composed of muscle and bone along with a huge heart and an attitude towards development far advanced for that time. He also disbursed strong hugs which would sometimes threaten to crush my spine. Of course safe drinking water was the greatest need but Quleka wanted education especially for girls to be a high priority. He was later chosen by the villagers to be the chairperson of our primary school building committee. I recall helping him practice his signature so it would be accepted by the bank when he co-signed with me cheques to pay for school building supplies. The two room primary school with housing for teachers would be opened prior to our return to Canada in 1993.

Then there was CHES which at that time only operated in Kenya. Linda Breault and I became responsible for establishing CHES in the Hanang District. From the beginning, Quleka was a key member of the board of directors. He would walk the difficult walk from Mureru to Katesh with his spear and herding stick on his shoulder to attend all board meetings. I remember well his suspicion of spaghetti when he joined us in our home for dinners. It was strangely different from his usual ugali and he thought it looked like a tangle of snakes or (shudder) worms.

My most recent return to Hanang with my current wife, Sandy McKinley, was in June of 2016, less than a year ago. A highlight of our trip was a visit to Quleka’s home in Mureru. We found Mzee to be frail and weak but strong enough with the help of his wife to get up from his bed and out into the sunshine. I received one of those Quleka hugs and the tears streamed down both of our cheeks. It would be the last time we saw each other on this earth.

by Don Fraser

POSTSCRIPT: After 1993, Mzee continued to support CHES and walked the 28 kms to attend meetings until well into his 90s. He remained on the Board as an Honorary Member until his death on April 5. He was well over 100 but as births were seldom registered when he was born, his exact age is not known. He will be missed.
I am Jentrix Angara Masai, a Kenyan, aged 23, and a CHES beneficiary. I attended Archbishop Njenga Girls High School from 2009 to 2012. Currently I am pursuing a degree in Special Needs Education (specialization: visual impairment) at the University of Eldoret.

I was born into a polygamous family in which my mum was the second wife. I am the only child of my dad and mum. Life started to be unbearable when my parents divorced compelling me to stay with a step-mother. I have two step-brothers and five step-sisters. Life has not been a bed of roses since then.

My primary education created a lot of challenges. I was unable to get the exercise books that I required and the situation forced me to start selling avocados to my fellow pupils at school when I was in Standard 5. The avocados were easy to obtain because we had avocado trees at home. I did my first Standard 8 examinations in 2006 and scored 370 marks out of 500 marks. Lacking school fees for my secondary education, I was forced to repeat the same class in 2007 and scored 385 marks out of 500.

I tried my luck at CHES for a scholarship but unhappily I was not accepted. I opted to join a nearby secondary day school. My dad was unable to pay the required school fees which forced me to drop out while still in Form I. I never lost hope because I had dreams to achieve and wanted to succeed. I then tried for the second time to get the CHES scholarship and this time I was successful. I was the happiest person in Kenya, knowing that at least I had the opportunity of achieving my dreams.

My secondary life was not that easy. Sometimes I was unable to afford to buy food but I managed to put a smile on my face because my school fees were being fully paid. Nor could I go home during my holidays due to unbearable conditions there - so I remained at school. I participated in music festivals, did Kiswahili recitals, and was able to reach provincial levels. I sat for my Form IV exams in 2012 and scored well enough to earn university entrance.

I joined the University of Eldoret as a government sponsored student; the government is paying part of my school fees. I also apply for a loan every year from the Higher Education Loans Board. This covers the balance. In addition, I am in a work experience programme at school. My salary helps to cover food and lodging.

My sincere gratitude for my scholarship goes to the CHES board both in Kenya and Canada. I could have been a Form I drop-out from a local day-school. The scholarship enabled me to be who I am today. Besides being a student, I also participate in the CHES Beneficiaries Association of Kenya (CHEBAK) activities. We mentor high school students in the schools attended by CHES girls. I do also engage in the PADS FOR GIRLS INITIATIVE where we donate some money to buy sanitary pads to enable our girls to stay in class.

Thank you so much for the scholarship that I received; it indeed changed my life for better.
What A CHES Scholarship Meant

I am Vugutsa Lincy, a CHES beneficiary.

The CHES scholarship came my way as a miracle. I completed my primary education in 2007 and scored 395 marks. This was a great joy to all my family but the reality of the school fees required tempered our joy. This was going to be a very big challenge to my single, divorced mother. She had already started preparing me psychologically to go to a local village school so that I could at least get an education; or maybe get a casual job to get school fees.

However, a church friend told my mother about CHES. The following day, we were at the CHES offices in Kakamega where we found interviews underway. Getting this chance was important to both of us as it was the only way I could get a first rate education and have a brighter future. Days after the interview I called the office and found out that I had been granted a scholarship and that my sponsor was Bev Facey Community School.

This news changed my life forever. While in school, I worked very hard and got direct entry to University. My mom was very happy and so thankful to CHES for giving her daughter a chance. She was so happy to see me graduate with my Bachelor of Education in November 2016 and she gives a big thank-you to the whole CHES community for makings our dreams come true.

I am currently a High School teacher, teaching Mathematics and Business Studies. I also coach volleyball in the school. Additionally, I teach and ref volleyball in the sub-county and county games.

I find time to work with my CHEBAK members in the mentorship of our younger CHES “sisters” still in school. We remind them that “all things are possible despite where we come from” and that “their dreams are valid”. This has helped us to get in touch with many CHES girls, to find ways to handle the challenges they are experiencing first hand, and to encourage them to continue working hard.

Thank-you so much to those who support CHES. I am Madam Lincy today because of the sacrifices you make to ensure girls like me get a high quality education.

Thank You Sponsors and Donors

Thank you sponsors who have sent in the $600 to pay for their student for the 2017 school year. If you have not done so and are unable to continue sponsoring your student, please let us know so we can find another sponsor. Currently we have a few Tanzanian girls without sponsors so if you have friends who are interested in supporting education of a girl in Africa or are willing to support another student yourself, please contact the CHES office (canadianharambee@shaw.ca)

We also would like to thank the many sponsors who sent in extra donations for the CHES program. If you have any questions about tax receipts or payments for sponsor fees or donations, please contact the CHES office. Note: any donations made through Canada Helps have a 3.9% fee deducted by Canada Helps for its administration and tax receipts are given by Canada Helps for your donation to CHES.

We can’t do everything . . . but we can do something!
R R Smith Memorial Fund Foundation

A special thank you to the R.R. Smith Memorial Foundation (BC Teachers’ Federation) for their grant of $1,500 for student support. This money will be used to purchase much needed school supplies, text books, and mosquito nets for CHES girls in Kenya and Tanzania.

Lorrie Mwamire Okunyanyi

My name is Lorrie Mwamire Okunyanyi, 23, from Kakamega, a small town in western Kenya. I’m currently living in Canada pursuing a Bachelor of Business Administration in Accounting. I came here late 2015 thanks to Lorrie Williams who got me a two-year scholarship at Dorset College in Vancouver.

I was born into a family of six siblings, third born and first born daughter of Mr and Mrs Anjere. My father, Laban Anjere went through the CHES scholarship programme about 30 years ago when it first started and then sponsored both males and females. He was sponsored by the founder of CHES, Lorrie Williams, who was then the principal of my father’s school in Kenya.

To show his gratitude to CHES my father named me after Lorrie Williams; hence my name. Being an educated man in a village where education for girls was not a priority, my father was determined to educate all his children including the girls. He encouraged me to work hard in middle school which I did. I eventually got a CHES scholarship to a credited boarding school, Musoli Girls.

A boarding school scholarship is a very precious gift to poor, bright, and determined village girls who would otherwise never have a chance to attend high school. Boarding school makes them focus their minds and exempts them from a lot of chores that girls have to do such as fetching firewood and water, cooking, taking care of their younger siblings, doing the wash, etc. Hence I’m so grateful to have had a CHES scholarship because without it, I wouldn’t have passed exams and I wouldn’t be someone with a clear future as I now see it unfolding. I see myself changing my family’s economic status.

To show my tremendous appreciation, I joined the CHES Alumni Association of Kenya (CHEBAK) in order to give back to the community, to help more girls get opportunities, to see a brighter future, and to have the great feeling of being a free, independent woman.

Education is the key. Thank you again CHES.

Have You Looked Lately?

Our website www.canadianharambee.ca is constantly updating information on its pages. Look for notices of upcoming events, information on past happenings, success stories of our girls, and new pictures from Kenya and Tanzania. Check out the links on the website as these are regularly updated.
It was time for some very serious activity. In March, a group of Secondary School teachers from schools where CHES girls are enrolled took part for 3 days in a Math Seminar held at CHES House. Led by facilitator Robb Taylor, retired math teacher and CHES sponsor, they discussed techniques and teaching aids which might strengthen the math skills of their students. They examined characteristics of successful teachers, methods of organizing their lessons, and ways to motivate their students. Following that, Primary School teachers took part in a two-day seminar offering these techniques, aids and strategies, and practice with the activities thanks to the able assistance and translation skills of Wayda Sulle a local Secondary School Math teacher.

Officers from the Hanang District Education Department opened the seminars, bringing greetings from the Ministry of Education and asking the teachers to find ways to make students “less afraid” of mathematics.

Underlying the discussions and activities was the realization that students in their last year of Primary School study mathematics in Kiswahili – their textbooks are written in Kiswahili and their lessons are taught in Kiswahili. If they are successful in obtaining a placement in Secondary School, they are suddenly faced with textbooks written in English and lessons taught completely in English. Large classes do not offer much time for practice in basic skills such as addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division. Teachers overloaded with huge classes and little access to teaching materials have a very difficult job.

Each seminar participant was issued with a dozen bottle caps, 3 dice, half a deck of playing cards, a notebook, marking pens, and flipcharts. The bottle caps are found everywhere in the countryside. Twelve bottle caps, numbered inside with numbers from 1 to 12 can be put in a small bag and drawn one at a time to give “random” numbers. An almost limitless number of questions can be posed: 12 + 7, 9 + 4, 8 x 3, 11 x 6, etc. Fractions can be defined with a numerator and a denominator drawn from the bag. The bottle caps can be used as markers in simple mathematical games.

As the teachers were challenged in pairs to “play” these mathematical games, they realized that there was laughter erupting. Success was obvious. It was pointed out that if a student was able to enjoy these number games, they were indicating that they were having fun with numbers! In fact, by observing how each student performed, a teacher could “diagnose” whether a student had mastered the mathematical skill involved. Simple games using dice resulted in improvement in basic math skills. The “half deck” of playing cards comprised one black suit and one red suit. Thus integers could be introduced with the black cards being positive numbers and the red being negative numbers. Combining these with a semi-permanent cardboard number line taped to the wall, operations with integers became easy. Another skill mastered.

Evaluations from participants indicated they now realized they had all the materials they needed all around them. They could make their own teaching aids. They vowed to return to their schools and to pass on the techniques and teaching aids practiced in the seminars. Many stated that they now saw that there was mathematics all around them and their students “had nothing to fear”. They realized that they could hold seminars like this themselves to encourage “professional development”.

Books containing all the material discussed and developed during the seminar were bound by the two women who run the Mshikamano shop at CHES House and were presented to each participant. A huge thank you goes to all the people at CHES House in Katesh for hosting these seminars, and to the Hanang District Education Office and the teachers in the Hanang District.

by Robb Taylor

We can’t do everything . . . but we can do something!
CHEBAK – Wonderful Diamonds

CHES Beneficiaries Alumni of Kenya – CHEBAK – are former CHES students who are actively involved in a variety of activities to benefit the current CHES girls. Established in 2014, members are passionate about “nurturing needy girls into women of substance through investing in education, mentorship, and talent promotion.” They follow the CHES motto with an addition of their own: “We can’t do everything . . . but we can do something. Together we are better.”

CHEBAK are currently carrying out the following projects:
- a school based mentorship program
- fundraising for the welfare kitty that facilitates shopping for the needy girls as they go to school
- “Pad for Girls” Initiative which ensures that girls are provided with sanitary supplies so that they do not miss school
- training of other CHEBAK members on better income generating activities.

They have visited many of the schools CHES girls attend and are actively involved in mentoring the girls there. Next term they will be working with and providing mentorship to CHES students at Archbishop Njenga, Mukumu, Bulimbo, Bishop Sulemeti, Keveye, and St. Angela School for the Deaf. If you follow Facebook, their page is CHES Beneficiaries Alumni of Kenya: there you’ll find regular updates as to their activities.

A Big Thank You

Each month, Bob and Joan Ianson, owners of Heirloom Linens in Victoria, hold a fundraising event and January’s charity recipient was CHES. Having visited Katesh and seen first hand the work being done by CHES, duvets in all sizes were on sale for the month of January with 50% of the profits being donated to CHES.

Perhaps this year’s cold and snowy winter was responsible for the success of this event. A very special thank you goes to the Iansons and Heirloom Linens for their donation of $1,685. Directors Chris and Catriona Harker received this much appreciated cheque for CHES.
Three Girls: Three Stories

Tanzania is a country devoid of a social services safety net. Hence, in a country where the struggle to survive is a challenge for a huge segment of the population, anyone with special needs faces great difficulties. For such people, any level of success may be a goal; but it is a bleak one. Here though are the abbreviated stories of three such young women that CHES has supported along the road to success.

Udageja was a normal Barabaig child at birth but thanks to measles as a toddler, she became totally blind. She was taken to primary school where, very soon, it became apparent that she was a very bright child. This led after Standard 7 to a CHES scholarship. She excelled in her studies and at a time when very few of our girls acquired marks enabling them to move on to High School, she achieved this goal. This led to university and subsequently, teacher training. She married and now has three children. She has taught for a number of years at Nangwa High School but is often seconded to the University of Dar es Salaam to work on policies for the handicapped. She is becoming recognized nationwide as an important voice in this field.

Ancilla cut her leg when she was about 9. The wound became infected and had turned gangrenous by the time it was seen by a doctor. Her leg was amputated above the knee. When we first met Andrea as a CHES school girl, she was using a branch to hobble from class to class. The next year we returned with crutches for her. At the age of 17 she sidled up to me to tell me she’d stopped growing. That was the signal for us to take her leg-shopping at the prosthetic department of a hospital near Moshi. She had to remain there for two weeks so that the leg and particularly the cup could be fitted and she could learn to walk with it. We met her 3 weeks later, wearing a classy pair of slacks and walking with only a nominal sway. Being a bit of a stylista, she wasn’t too happy with the “sensible shoes” she was advised to wear, but looking normal and being able to get around without obvious devices had changed her life. She was glowing. When she left school she opened a hair dressing salon near Katesh. Her income is modest but she is able to make ends meet and shares her income with her family.

Theresia was born with numerous physical handicaps. She requires a certain amount of personal care as she is short with a twisted spine, abnormal hands, legs, and feet. She is also very bright. This enabled her to achieve a CHES scholarship. After leaving school, no jobs were open to her and she was not eligible for High School nor was home an option as conditions were stark and she would have been unable to contribute viable labour. While growing up she had been living with nuns in a local convent. After Form 4 she took a CHES sewing course and having learned quickly, she soon supported herself by selling the clothes she made. She continued to live in the convent. When we met her many years ago, she asked if we could get her a knitting machine. The next year, we brought one in our hand luggage. On arrival in Tanzania, I was required to open the long, narrow box in customs to prove it wasn’t a rifle! Theresia quickly learned to knit; she could make a school sweater before lunch and the income from this she was able to keep. We then sent her on a computer training course where again, she proved to be very capable despite her disfigured hands. But there was no job and so back to the nuns she went. Some years later they told her that she had to either leave or become a nun. There was nowhere for her to go but becoming a nun would have required her to take an oath of poverty and sacrifice her meager but important belongings; a sewing and knitting machine. Neither choice appealed to her. Catriona and I talked with the principal of the Nangwa Technical school that offered sewing, knitting, and computer classes. There were already too many students in all and more teachers were required. Funding for this was questionable. We pointed out that a teacher’s aide cost far less than a teacher but that such a person, under direction, could manage classes and help the students. The principal was interested. We then mentioned we knew of an ideal person who, if provided with the necessary (student) assistance, room and board, and a reasonable salary, could do this very job. Theresia was hired. That was 3 years ago. When we visited her in November 2016, she was in full charge of a computer class of 42 and, later, showed us her tiny, but private and perfectly adequate house on campus. “How are you?” we asked. “I am very, very happy”, was her reply.

We can’t do everything . . . but we can do something!
Shopping and Eating in Katesh

There are some not so subtle differences when it comes to arranging a meal in Katesh. Taking something from the freezer and popping it into the microwave to then eat a few minutes later is not an option. The expedition begins by leaving CHES House and walking for about one kilometer along the edge of a main but now paved highway to the market. Here we acquire our fruit and vegetable needs while chatting with the friendly sellers who have come to know us over the years. A two minute walk takes us to the butcher shops, a row of six stalls where the products and prices are all the same. Before dawn, two or three cows are herded to an area behind the stalls where they are slaughtered and the carcasses divided among the butchers. Each has pieces of cow hanging on hooks at the back of the stall. Body heat exists if it is before 9 a.m. On this occasion we select butcher number 4 only because we chose number 3 on our last visit. We request a kilo of meat. Our butcher turns and, with a panga (machete), chops off several of the closest chunks and begins to weigh them. We complain that the pieces he has chosen contain too much stomach; or bone; or fat. With a look of resignation, the merchant grabs the offending piece and, on a bloody and obviously well used chopping block, hacks off a bit of what we don’t want. Waving away a few of the flies, he carefully weighs our purchase for which we then pay 5,000 shillings or just over $3.00. He puts it in a plastic bag for us and we turn for home unless there is a need to visit the tiny Pic-and-Pay where a few staples may be available.

My job, once home, is to cut the meat into small pieces and save the less appealing bits for Naomi, our Treasurer, who takes them home for her dogs. We have an old fashioned grinder that I attach to the dining room table. It has tiny holes and the meat is fibrous which means several attempts and cleanings are required before it is reduced to an edible state. The process provides me with a good workout.

Catriona’s role, later in the day, using about half the meat, is to create a shepherd's pie, curry, or spaghetti dish with veggies either incorporated or on the side that will generally last us for two evening meals. We have a propane burner that enables us to cook even when the power goes off though cooking in the dark has its own challenges. We are avid supporters of headlight flashlights.

We eat between 7 and 8 p.m. and, thanks to a large box of South African wine and wine glasses made in China, are able to maintain a semblance of gracious living. After the meal, the hot water that I’ve boiled in the kettle is ready. I wash; Catriona dries.

As there is no TV, no radio, and no newspaper, we settle down with our books for the evening.

by Chris Harker

Three modest success stories of three young women who, had not CHES selected and supported them, would have led lived far less productive lives. Every sponsor must realize what an enormous change you make to a girl’s life with your support.

by Chris Harker

We can’t do everything . . . but we can do something!
Saskatchewan CHES Group News

There is a very active group of volunteers in Saskatchewan who continually support programs through a variety of creative and fun-filled fundraisers. For those supporters in Saskatchewan you may wish to take note of the following events and also pass this information on to your friends, family, and neighbours.

Tomatoes for Tanzania sale: This is an annual event held by 80-year old Willie. Last year he raised $1,200 for CHES! He has over 1,000 tomatoes plants in 4-inch pots and will be selling them in Saskatoon in May. This year there are about 30 varieties available from new hybrids to old heritage types, cherries to large Italian, paste to mid-size, yellow and red. Thank you Willie for your dedication. It truly makes a difference to the CHES girls to know so many people care about them. Contact Sara Williams (sew130@mail.usask.ca) for the date.

Fundraiser: Put October 24 on your calendars and look for further news of this event! Currently the organizers are asking for silent auction donations for the fundraiser. Please contact Sara Williams to donate items.

Something New!

This year CHES is initiating an annual fundraising appeal to help enhance academic and welfare support for our girls and to finance additional scholarships. Many of our sponsors already donate additional monies to help support our programs and we so appreciate their generosity.

However, your sponsorship only covers school fees for your student, so it is always necessary for CHES to raise additional monies yearly for student supplies and textbooks; workshops, tutorials, and seminars; education related capital projects designed to enhance student learning and to offset future local expenses; program management and administration in Kenya and Tanzania; and organization (CHES) management and administration in Canada.

In the past, funds have been generously raised by volunteers through golf tournaments, school musicals, and so forth. However, these are no longer occurring and therefore we are looking at different ways to raise the necessary funds to enhance our work. We don’t wish to have to increase sponsorship fees.

At the beginning of June, we will be reaching out into the wider community to find new donors in our effort to expand the work of CHES. According to Malala in her speech in the Canadian House of Commons, 130 million girls worldwide are kept from school. We find this heartbreaking and as our motto says, “We can’t do everything . . . but we can do something”. No director or agent of CHES receives any remuneration for his or her work with CHES – we readily give our time and pay our own way to Africa when required because we know the difference it makes in the lives of the girls.

Please share this information with your friends and neighbours and if they receive an email request from CHES and ask you about us, tell them about our work and the difference it makes to a girl’s future. We appreciate your ongoing support.

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