



The Protea

Elizabeth Bowers Zambia Education Fund

Vol. I, No. 2

An education scholarship program for Zambian girls and women

December 2006

Beth's Girls Update

Beth's Girls are intelligent, beautiful, healthy, and energetic--a cohesive group of young women working hard at their studies, empowered by the support of the EBZEF scholarship program. Today there are 23 students in grade 8; 20 in grade 9; 5 in grade 10; 6 in grade 11; 6 in grade 12 for a total of 62 Beth's Girls.

Insights into Zambian culture make it clear that EBZEF is asking Lunda village girls to go against their cultural tradition to get an education. They have few educated role models in their community aside from their teachers, only two of whom at Lumwana West are women, from the Luvale tribe. The challenges to Beth's Girls include educating their own parents to the benefits of such study.

In addition, the boys in the village are jealous of the scholarship opportunity for girls, trying to make the girls pregnant so they cannot pursue an education. World Vision Zambia reports 13 cases of pregnancy from Lumwana West Basic



EBZEF Scholarship Recipients in their Beth's Girls T-Shirts

School, insisting this issue "needs to be addressed so that [the girls] are advised to see the importance of education." In an attempt to work with and beyond local custom, EBZEF encourages girls to return to school as soon as possible after the birth of their babies.

WVZ also says that the efforts of EBZEF have "boosted morale for the girls in school to see someone from afar caring for them." Encouraging each of Beth's Girls was a highlight of the Bowers' visit

to Lumwana West and Mwinilunga. In addition, Peace Corps Volunteer Kristen Schmidt is meeting with Beth's Girls at Mwinilunga High School for regular career counseling sessions. By supporting one another, Beth's Girls are creating a new vision of the future for Zambian village women. 🌿

Prudence as a role model



Prudence Masanyinga, EBZEF's first high school graduate, and role model for Beth's Girls, met us at the Lusaka Airport. She was with us in the city and for the journey north to Lumwana West where she acted as host,

are the two remaining of a family of nine children.

Now completing a computer course at Lifetech Business College in Lusaka, Prudence hopes one day to teach this skill to other village girls. In January, Prudence will study for a certificate in social work with a focus on community participation at Chalimbana, a government training institute in Lusaka, to prepare her to study for a 2-year college diploma in social work.

Her dream is to return to Lumwana West to encourage others to continue their education. "Most of our parents in rural areas believe that educating

a girl child is a waste of money. She won't do anything in the future. So I want them to learn from me and from Beth's Girls that educating girls is also important; they can bring development to society." Prudence will lead the way.

Her speech to Beth's Girls in the village was a rousing affirmation of the power of education for women in Zambian culture. Prudence is an ideal role model for Beth's Girls, since the EBZEF scholarship agreement asks each girl to "give back" to her village in a significant way. Prudence is already doing so. 🌿

Thank you

to our generous donors who support the education of Beth's Girls. Every dollar you donate goes directly to help the young women of Lumwana West.

translator, cultural interpreter, and spokesperson for Beth's Girls. Prudence and her brother Goodson, both now living in Lusaka,

Visit to Lumwana West

Gerry and Linda Bowers traveled to Lumwana West in August 2006 to meet their 65 Zambian “daughters.” Since August is school vacation month, all of Beth’s Girls except the seniors (who were studying for their exams in Mwinilunga), were present to welcome their American “mama” and “papa” with a warm celebration of song and dance.

The villagers enthusiastically welcomed the travelers informally upon arrival and formally two days later with an entire day set aside for singing, dancing, speeches, skits, food, a meeting with the all girls in their crisp, school uniforms,

and much more. People walked to the village from many miles away to share in the festivities. The Lunda people are rightly known for their hospitality.

Mr. Madimwanza, Beth’s “atata” (father), refurbished Beth’s hut for the Bowers to stay in. In addition, they visited the fish ponds Beth helped to build. The 11th grade girls came to visit Beth’s hut—and stayed with the Bowers, sleeping lined up like sardines on the floor of their hut for the duration of the visit. They taught the Bowers much about Lunda culture, their challenges as women, and their own dreams for the future.

PCV Bob Wilder reports “The people



Beth’s Girls welcome Linda and Prudence

The Library Project

The Lumwana West library is under construction by the villagers who have carried many tons of earth, sand, and rock by hand or on their heads to build the 30’ x 60’ foundation. In addition, they had to break the rocks by hand to create concrete for the footings under the bricks.

Extended family units of the village were responsible for making their share of mud

bricks which were fired in the traditional way. WVZ reports that “the community has molded 10,000 bricks and is providing unskilled labour during the construction.” While village politics tend to slow the project down at times, the achievement so far is impressive.

Peace Corps Volunteer Bob Wilder

is over-seeing the project under the auspices of the Peace Corps Partnership Program. He reports that currently the walls are up, the doors and windows are framed, and 8 clear plastic sky-panels are ready to install as soon as the roof is under way. The solar panel for the roof is yet to come.

The left-over 1’ x 10’ boards from the framing

will make solid bookcases, to be built by village carpenters, who will also hand craft the necessary tables and chairs. Bob’s assessment of the progress of the project is “chovu, chovu.” The library will support literacy in the community.

“Chovu, chovu” is Lunda for “slowly, slowly,” a reflection of the concept of Zambian time.



Village men making bricks for the Library



Beth’s Girls sleeping in Beth’s hut.

in the village still talk about how blessed they are to have friends like you and how amazed they were that you would come all the way here for them. You are truly loved by all.” To the people of the village the Bowers say “tude hamu” (“We have left part of ourselves with you”).

Rotary Helps EBZEF

Eric Kittelson, Chairman, and the Youth Literacy Committee of the Salem Rotary Club have approached EBZEF with an offer to help stock the Lumwana West Village Library with books. “We hope to contribute both financially and logistically.” After a successful project of sending books to a library in Ghana last year, the club is aware of the challenges of working half-way around the world. They are eager to support the international literacy program of Beth’s Girls and of the village at large. EBZEF welcomes their support.

**We now accept donations
online at
www.bethsgirls.org**

Future Plans

EBZEF’s application to become a 501 (C) (3) tax-exempt organization, filed in June 2006, is still pending. The IRS is currently processing forms received in March. EBZEF cannot yet guarantee that donations will be tax-deductible. Once we receive our 501 (C) (3) status, all donations received after March 7, 2006, will be tax exempt.

Zambia Night Celebration

On October 25th, 2006, the Cat Cavern at Willamette University was transformed into an African Village to share the experience of visiting Beth's Girls in NW Zambia with friends and supporters of the scholarship fund. Displays of arts, crafts, gifts, masks, wall hangings, photos, maps, flags, and games drew the attention of well over 100 guests. Photos with a pineapple on the head like the village children were most popular among student and faculty.



Hosts Molly Engle and Lindsay Dygert

letters. Joel Henderson explained the rite of passage for boys in village culture. Student hosts circulated in brightly colored chitenge, with African shirts for the men.

A multimedia presentation with slides and videos from Lumwana West brought Beth's Girls to life. Guests enjoyed their singing and dancing as well as village scenes from the area where Beth taught aquaculture to the local farmers. John Hofer responded, "I was especially touched by their reverent respect shown to you both in the greeting line, displaying in turn their great and graceful dignity." Sponsored by the Chaplain's Office, the evening was a heartfelt thank-you to those who make EBZEF's work possible.

Interns and Volunteers

EBZEF welcomes Lindsay Dygert and Jade Snow as WU undergraduate interns for Fall semester 2006. In addition, student volunteers Oliver Donaldson and Elspeth

De Shaw as well as Angela and Jeremy Wanak, have worked hard to make Zambia Night a big success. Thanks also to hosts Joel Henderson, Terri Moberg, Liz Howe, Molly Engle, and Katie Archibald Woodward.

Mary Update

Mary Lundeba, who recieved her Master's Degree from the University of Malawi on EBZEF scholarship, is continuing her studies for her PhD in Fisheries Science at Penn State University.

She recently returned to Zambia for her mother's funeral. Since her sons were living with her mother, Mary hopes to bring her boys Terry(6) and Terrah (13) from Zambia to be with her in University Park. She is currently back in school, doing well in her graduate classes.



Little Beth

Mrs. Chilumbwe, wife of the retired headmaster at Lumwana West Basic School, enjoys her granddaughter Little Beth. Beth is the child of Mutinta Chilumbwe, one of Beth's Girls, who will return to classes at Mwinilunga High School in January.

 Give a life-altering gift this holiday season 

Share in the work of changing lives and offering hope to the young women of NW Zambia. A little goes so far:

- \$10 exam fees
- \$20 Basic School tuition
- \$35 books or Basic exam tutoring
- \$50 uniforms
- \$75 Senior exam tutoring
- \$210 HS tuition, room & board
- \$2,000 two-year college degree
- \$24,000 library/community center

Amounts vary due to the fluctuating exchange rate between the US\$ and Zambian Kwacha.

Yes! I want to change a life & impact a family, a village, & a nation by supporting Zambian women's education.

☐ I have enclosed a donation of _____ ☐ As a gift

From:

To:

Name _____

Name _____

Address _____

Address _____

Email _____

Email _____

If donating as a gift, please include your name and address as well.

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Mr. Madimwanza, Beth's Girls, Prudence and Linda
Early morning visit to one of Beth's fish ponds

*"The child of
a wise parent
hears once and
understands."*

-- Mr. Njolomba,
Head Teacher
Lumwana West Basic
School



**Zambia Team: Gerry, Fordson Kafweku (EBZEF
Board Member), Linda, and PCV Bob Wilder**

The Elizabeth Bowers Zambia Education Fund

*One life made the
connection.*



Our Mission

The Elizabeth Bowers Zambia Education Fund is a non-profit organization created to provide education to girls from the Lumwana West area in NW Zambia. Elizabeth Rachel Bowers (1979-2002) shared her compassionate spirit with the people of NW Zambia as a Peace Corps volunteer. The Scholarship legacy sustains Beth's vision of service and global awareness by empowering young women to build positive change from within, to become leaders and educators, and to improve the quality of life in their communities.

Remembering Beth

James Sakwimba, a young man from Lumwana West, was a special friend of Beth's with whom she shared her karate training. He wrote a moving tribute about her impact on the people of the village and beyond.

"The beautiful young lady was very friendly with both the young and the old. She was known to mix easily with the women folk not only in her village but also in the whole community. She had time for everyone including the young men in the community.

"The Lunda people have a proverb which says 'A straight and sharp arrow does not stay on the bow for a long time.' Beth is greatly missed in the community. She is remembered for her friendliness and determination to be an agent of change. She used to encourage the youth to work hard at school. She remains a legend in the Lumwana West area."

Special Thanks

To: EBZEF's new web-mistress, Allison Towers

To: EBZEF's new book keeper, Susan Beck

To: Mike O'Reilly for a used PC set-up

To: The Math Learning Center

Dr. Jay Schofield and Staff

The Bank of the Casacades

The Willamette University Finance Office

Bank of America

Wachovia

Glad Rags--gifts & supplies for Beth's Girls

To: Sara Knepper at Jumping Ink for T-shirts

To: WU Chaplain, Zambia Night Sponsor

To: WITS for technological support