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We are sorry for the lack of newsletters in 2012; however, Bush Fire has been undergoing a season of change over the last year as new requirements from the Ugandan government prompted major changes in how Bush Fire was structured. We have waited until things settled down before updating everyone as there was a lot of confusion about how the new requirements would be implemented at Bush Fire.

The first significant change is that the children are no longer housed in a family type structure as before with boys and girls living together with a set of house parents. The government requirement is that boys and girls over the age of twelve be housed separately. This resulted in a complete change to the housing structure and has taken almost a year to accomplish. The original house parents, many of whom had their own biological children living at Bush Fire, are no longer the primary oversight in the homes. The majority of the original house parents, along with their children, have constructed and moved into their own homes located near Bush Fire. The children are now supervised in the homes by teachers who live on the base and teach at the primary, secondary or vocational training schools. The teachers will be responsible for documenting the care of the children, as required by the government.

The next change is in the development of an accredited vocational training program. Bush Fire Vocational School has been accredited by the Ugandan government to issue certificates of completion for vocational training.



The government is very supportive of the school since a lack of practical work skills is a significant problem with students who are coming through the Ugandan educational system. It is very common for a student to go all the way through university in Uganda and not be able to find a job in his or her field of study due to the limited number of jobs requiring degrees. The majority of jobs in the country are in skilled labor areas and thus the desire to encourage vocational training for all

students. The government will provide a nine month advanced training in thirty five different vocations to teachers at Bush Fire who wish to continue their instructional training and are willing to stay at Bush Fire and teach. The vocational training building has been expanded to include two additional classrooms and an office. The vocational

training opportunity will be available to students and adults living outside of the Bush Fire community. Bush Fire Project provided funds supporting the construction and furnishing of the vocational school. The desks shown in the picture were made by the vocational students for use at Bush Fire, resulting in a significant cost savings compared with having to purchase them.



The primary school provides instruction to Bush Fire children and about 90 additional children who come in from the surrounding village each day. The school is seen as a real asset to the community. The new school year began the first week of February, and registration was going on for the new year. I had the opportunity to meet a local witch doctor who wanted to send nine of his eleven children to Bush Fire so that we could, in his words, “put our God in their hearts so the demons would quit troubling them so much”. Praise God that the school can have such a positive outreach to the community. Bush Fire project provides monetary support for the outside students whose families have limited incomes. The families are asked to pay a small amount, with the payments often being in the form of food which is utilized by Bush Fire.

The secondary school at Bush Fire will be offering only Senior 1 and Senior 2 classes this year. This will limit the number of students so the school can grow slowly as resources allow. The secondary school is also going to be open to outside students and registration so to begin. Outside students will be expected to pay the full cost of their schooling. As the secondary school grows, more classes will be offered each year. All secondary students will be required to take studies in two vocational training areas.



We attended a wedding earlier this month for Pauline and Benard. Pauline is the oldest of the original children who came to live at Bush Fire in 2004. Pauline has completed training in catering and hotel management and returned to Bush Fire following her training to run the hospitality program, which cares for visitors who come to Bush Fire. In addition, she teaches the students who are interested in catering and hotel management as part of the vocational training program run at Bush Fire. Benard came to Bush Fire two years ago to teach science and math at the Bush Fire Primary School and has shown himself to be a faithful follower of Jesus Christ and an excellent example for the children at Bush Fire. We look forward to seeing the good fruit that will come as this young couple models biblical values for the children at Bush Fire.

Bush Fire has been able to purchase a number of tracts of land where food is produced for use by Bush Fire. Over the past two seasons production has been difficult because of extended periods of drought that delayed crop planting and harmed overall

production. We are now looking at irrigation as a means to provide adequate water when necessary for the fields. We are working on a small scale irrigation project now where different methods will be tried to find the best balance between cost and production. There is currently not electrical power available to the area, and thus power must be supplied by diesel generator, which significantly increases the cost. On Pastor Kitanya's land a deep water well was drilled in 2012 and currently is being used to supply clean drinking water without charge to a nearby village where residents previously had to travel two kilometers each way to obtain water during the dry season. The generator and water source are both large enough to allow use for irrigation while supplying the water for the village. The irrigation project will utilize this resource help to leverage additional benefits from the money spent supplying water to the village. Bush Fire Project will be providing monetary support for both the village water project and irrigation project as the cost to run the generator is about \$10/day.



The Bush Fire church provides assistance to the community in many ways. One of the areas that the US ministry has assisted in community outreach is in construction of homes for widows. On our recent trip we visited the home of a widow who cares for three young children at home and whose oldest son lives at Bush Fire. The mud-stick hut shown is her current house where she and three of her children live; however, the land that the hut sits on was land owned by her deceased husband's family, some of whom want her to leave since her husband has died and they want the land.



This widow attends the church faithfully and works very hard to provide the best that she can for her children. She has been able to purchase a small plot of land on her own. The plan is that the US-based ministry will provide the funds while members of the Bush Fire church will provide the labor to build a small brick house with a metal roof on her land where she can live in peace with her children. These small brick houses cost about \$2000 to construct and make a significant difference in the living conditions for these families.

Thank you all for your faithful support of Bush Fire. We ask that you continue to pray for the following specific areas:

- The new living structure at Bush Fire will provide a godly environment for the children.
- That the children of Bush Fire and those coming into the schools from the outside will have a true relationship with Jesus Christ.
- That the community outreach programs will continue to provide the love of Christ to those in desperate need.

Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, to God who alone is wise, be honor and glory forever.

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