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Issue #9

*For you are great and do wondrous things; You alone are God.  
Psalm 86:10*

Thank you once again to each one of you for your continued prayers which are bearing much fruit, not only at Bush Fire, but also in the surrounding villages. In the last newsletter, we shared about a satellite church that was started in nearby Wangobo in a small rented building which was quickly outgrown. Our prayer request was not only for a suitable building in which to meet, but also that the harvest would continue, adding many more souls to the Kingdom of God. We praise the Lord for doing exceedingly abundantly above all that we asked as He has not only provided a new church structure at Wangobo, but also two additional churches have been started in other villages. In the second half of 2010, several hundred people came to the Lord. One of those included a witchdoctor who had tried to work evil against the Bush Fire director, but after his confession of faith in Christ, took a team from Bush Fire to help him destroy his shrine. Please pray against this infestation of witchcraft in the land and that those who turn to the Lord will also completely reject witchcraft and see it as the evil that it is. Pray that these individuals would grow strong in the Lord and become mighty witnesses of His life-changing power.

In addition to the church growth, we praise the Lord that the *Chosen to Lead* (CTL) ministry is having a positive impact on its participants. *Chosen to Lead* trains up men to be the godly leaders that the Lord calls them to be in the home, church, workplace

and community. Bush Fire staff have completed the training, and the materials are being used in the wider community with a good outcome. Please pray that this ministry will continue to build up men in their god-given roles to the glory of God.



First CTL Class

Donations to Bush Fire Project in 2010 provided for the digging of a deep water well, which was dedicated in June. This well, which is located on the Bush Fire base, provides a source of clean drinking water that is not dependent upon the rains for collection.



The 160,000 liter cistern that was previously constructed is still in use. Water from the cistern is now pumped to

showering facilities, replacing sponge baths using hand-carried water. Having an abundance of water through both the well and rainwater collection systems also enables the gardens at the Bush Fire base to be irrigated. Eventually, as funds allow, the well water will be pumped into tanks by the homes and/or dining hall, thus reducing the distance that water needs to be carried.



Last year, Bush Fire Farm supplied all the rice and maize that is consumed annually by the staff and children. Crops of cassava, sweet potatoes, and ground nuts also provided food to Bush Fire. In addition to the commercial farm, Bush Fire has set aside land that is used by each of the children's homes. Together as a family, they are responsible for cultivating a vegetable garden, and the children also have begun taking turns caring for the different types of livestock that are raised for food. These activities teach the children responsibility as well as important skills necessary for life in an agricultural society.



The year 2011 marks the beginning of a significant change taking place at Bush Fire. Since 2006, Bush Fire has had its own primary school on the base, but the secondary school children have been attending boarding schools in Jinja. This was the best academic option for the few secondary age children at the time because of low quality village schools, but as time went on, problems became apparent. Sam Kitanya, director of Uganda Family Resource Link which runs Bush Fire Children's Home, shares the following:

*"The concern that arises is three fold. First of all, the nature of boarding means children are away from the nurturing environment of Bushfire. The foster parents desire to be more involved in the emotional development and spiritual training of their children. When students come home from boarding school during holidays, it is often necessary for them to unlearn bad behaviours and refocus on spiritual values. Having*

*these students remain with us at Bushfire will help us contribute to their solid Christian upbringing and emotional welfare.*

*Secondly, it is an economic fact that the cost of boarding school is greatly taxing the ministry budget. It has come to our attention that we already have the facilities in place to house and feed the students. We are now making preparations to educate them at Bushfire as well . . . Although we have a completed architectural plan, the actual construction will take some time yet the burden of paying another year of boarding fees is too much. Since we do not want to compromise the quality of the buildings by rushing to complete the secondary school under pressure we have decided to put up temporary classrooms here at Bushfire. We have hired three qualified teachers and have applications for three more. This will be more than enough to ensure the proper education of our children at the secondary level.*

*Thirdly, by having them here, the older students will be able to contribute to the welfare of the younger children. This is consistent with Ugandan family values and reinforces a sibling type relationship with their fellow foster children. This bond is strengthened by older children working in the gardens to help sustain the growth of the younger ones. It also allows the students to not just accumulate academic knowledge but to also learn hands on life skills. There will be a mandatory vocation training of some kind no matter what subjects the students choose to focus on in school. They will be able to make money selling the furniture, paving stones, clothes etc they make while still schooling. In addition, rearing goats, keeping chickens and tending gardens is a part of life here. No person can sustain a future family without these skills. We also plan to implement parenting and business classes for all students. These additional trainings will help bring the ministry to well-rounded balance where the education of our children is concerned.”*

Please keep this time of transition in your prayers as the staff seeks the Lord’s wisdom moving forward for establishing the correct structure for the secondary school and vocational training program. Pray also for the older children to be reintegrated into Bush Fire, especially that they would recognize the value in these new changes and embrace them. Finally, please pray for the Lord’s timing and provision for the construction of a permanent secondary school building.



Vocational training workshop on left with secondary classrooms under construction on the right

We continue to praise the Lord for the mighty work He is doing at Bush Fire and for each one of you for the blessing that you have been through your encouragement, prayers and financial support.

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

Eric & Nancy Rockett

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