

Update from Brenda Buell

January 9, 2014

A New Year Begins!

I hope that each of you enjoyed a blessed Christmas and are now ready to get going on the new year. My Christmas was difficult in some ways because Ed was not with us. I know he is at peace with our Lord and Savior but we really missed him this Christmas. I was blessed to spend 39 Christmases with him and almost 40 years so I expect it to be awhile before anything seems normal again. Having said that, I rejoice in the fact that God blessed me with a Christmas full of family. All my children, spouses, significant others, grandchildren, and my mother spent a few days at my house. As some of you already know any time spent with grandchildren is wonderful. My mother will be turning 95 in March so I cherish any moment spent with her.

The work of the sawmill continues. We have had the usual problems just getting started but some of the trees have been cut down and the sawmill is being used to cut boards. The tractor has really been important in the whole project. It was used to get the sawmill into the woods and is now being used to move the logs. I am hoping to get some video to put on the website sometime soon. I will let everyone know when it has been added to the site.

The new group of women at Tracy's Heart is doing very well. This session is scheduled to last 6 months. All the women are now coming to the center 5 days a week. They are in groups for learning but they want to be together all the time. We decided to let them try it for this session. We have 21 women who come on Monday - Friday. Because Byabecca was working too hard 6 days a week and then had church on Sunday I set Saturday as our day off. When I am in Bukavu, DR Congo I try to spend Saturdays at the house doing things I could not get done the rest of the week. Word is spreading that I do not want visitors on Saturday but I am sure I will have to remind everyone when I get back.

Some of the new mamas at Tracy's Heart Center



We now have 12 orphans in the Tracy's Heart program. Eight of them are still without sponsors. It will take \$30 for each child in order for them to go to school and have some food. Each orphan is now living in a home where they are being cared for but there are no funds for school uniforms, backpacks, supplies, and fees. With the \$30 a month school will be taken care of with a little bit left to add to the caregivers food budget. This will help each orphan along with his or her new siblings be able to have bread and hot tea before school each morning. I just purchased a computer for the secretary at Tracy's Heart Center, Emmanuel. He will now be in charge of the orphans program. He will make sure money is kept in the account for paying the school fees and taking care of any medical needs and give the rest to the families to use for food. I will be taking back a digital camera just for Tracy's Heart so Emmanuel will be able to send new pictures each year and an occasional note from the orphan. This has been difficult to do in the past because of no Internet at Tracy's Heart but now there is an inexpensive option that will allow us Internet access from the center. If you are interested in adopting one of our orphans please contact me at bjbuell@heartforcentralafrica.org. I will assign you one and will get you the information on your orphan in a couple of months when I return to Congo. If you already support an orphan I will be e-mailing you soon. I have current pictures of some of the orphans and will try to get more sent to me so I can get them to you. This part of the Tracy's Heart program should be running much more smoothly now that I am getting Emmanuel set up to handle the work. Please remember that all the money you send or have sent to help an orphan from Tracy's Heart is spent on the orphan. None of it goes to run the program. I had not intended for this part of the program to keep growing but God keeps putting these children in front of me. Two of the orphans are grandchildren of one of the night watchmen of the center. Their father murdered their mother and then fled to another country. They witnessed the murder. It is very important to bring some normalcy back into their lives. Three of the new orphans lost both of the parents in the war. They have 5 other siblings but right now I am just trying to get the older ones in school. Two other orphans have parents somewhere but nobody knows where. The parents moved, took the younger children with them, and left the two older children on the street. A neighbor has taken them in. I put their picture below. Their names are Mabele Kamundala and Bertin Kamundala. They are 16 and 14 but the younger one is still in

primary school because he missed so many years.

I am planning on returning to Congo by the end of March. My doctor has asked that I stay until then so she can adjust and monitor my medicines before I return to an area with no medical help available. I will go alone if God asks it of me but I am praying and asking God for others to go with me. If you have any desire to spend some time in Congo this year please contact me and we will see where God leads us. There is still much to be done and there are no other missionaries in the city. I could keep several people busy at Tracy's Heart or putting together the blade sharpener for the sawmill.

I think this is enough information for now. I need sponsors for the orphans and I need people to come for however much time you can and help with the work. I know God has workers in mind so I will continue to trust him. God bless each of you and thanks so much for your prayers and support. Love, Brenda

Mabele and Bertin with Kasavubu their caregiver.

