

President's Message:

ACCES IS ABOUT 'PEOPLE HELPING PEOPLE'!


First, of course, ACCES is about sponsors helping students. ACCES now has 65 sponsors helping 62 post-secondary students and can count 7 students who have completed their courses. Contributions continue to come in a little at a time.

Other interesting accounts of 'people helping people' have come from Kakamega. Peter Ludeshi and Paul M'Mbwaro have been able to arrange an exchange of work and expertise with the CHES and ACCES agents. The two young men are studying accounting at RIAT Polytechnic at Kisumu. As part of their program, they must undertake an "attachment", a supervised field work experience related to their course. Peg Klesner, ACCES agent, assisted and supervised Peter and Paul as they reviewed and entered the month-to-month ledger statements for the Kakamega ACCES accounts. Marnie Strong, CHES agent and accountant by profession, provided a day's inservice instruction for the students. What a profitable venture!

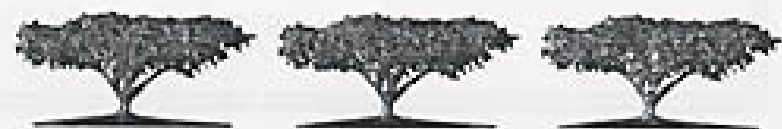
Nora Harrison, who retired from a position as French department head at Argyle Secondary School in North Vancouver, has used her expertise in this area on more than one occasion while serving as a volunteer agent for both CHES and ACCES. She has often tutored secondary school students who needed help with the French language and, further along in this newsletter, you may read about a particular use that Nora recently made of her teaching skill in order to help a young refugee from Rwanda.

Justus Abuko and Francis Mukolwe, engineering students, needed a place to live while they complete their training. It was arranged that they would live in one of the two cottages behind CHES-ACCES headquarters and that in exchange for their accommodation they would assist Anton, the askari (security guard).

These instances of co-operation between CHES and ACCES, schools and students, are in the spirit of the work of the two societies and the people involved in them. It is our desire that more and more people will be helping one another as ACCES grows and continues to assist Kenyan young people to become self-sufficient.


Beth Scott
President, ACCES

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DID YOU KNOW?

- that the Republic of Kenya, on the east coast of Africa, is bordered by Ethiopia and Sudan to the north, Somalia to the northeast, the Indian Ocean to the southeast, Tanzania to the south and Uganda and Lake Victoria to the west.
- that the population of Kenya is in excess of 26,000,000.
- that Kiswahili and English are the official languages, and that all families speak their tribal language. Luhya is the tribal mother tongue of the Kakamega District.
- that education is not compulsory. One-third of the children never attend school. Only 10% of the elementary school population continue their education at the secondary level. There are four state universities in Kenya.
- that in 1992, according to estimates by the World Bank, Kenya's gross national product (GNP) measured at average 1990-92 prices was US \$8,453m., equivalent to \$330 per head.
- that agriculture (including forestry and fishing) contributed an estimated 26% of gross domestic product (GDP) in 1992 and employed about 76% of the total labour force in that year.
- that Kenya's agricultural development has been intermittently hindered by low rainfall, while the high rate of population growth has exacerbated unemployment.
- that in 1990, the World Bank annual development report included Kenya, along with 26 other African countries, as being amongst the world's poorest.





Margaret (Peg) Klesner has recently returned from Kakamega in Kenya, where she has been an ACCES agent for four months. This was her second time in Kakamega. Previously, Peg had been a CHES agent. In 1987, Peg retired from the North Vancouver School District where she was a Learning Assistance teacher at Carson Graham Secondary School.

CONNECTIONS

Chance plays an important role in Kenya, as in all of Africa. Sometimes being in the right place at the right time gives people an advantage that otherwise would not have been available. This was the case the day that Jean Paul dropped in at the ACCES house in Lurambi.

Jean Paul had never heard of ACCES or CHES but he saw the Canadian maple leaf painted on the post at our gate. He was quite new to the Kakamega area, a fluent French speaker, and desperate for a chance to speak his own language. He'd heard that French was one of the two official languages of Canada, so he ventured inside in hope of finding someone with whom he could communicate. Fortunately, his initial connection was with Nora Harrison, ACCES agent and former head of the Argyle Secondary School French department in North Vancouver. It turned out that many people were to benefit from that connection!

Jean Paul explained that he was a refugee of the Rwanda revolution and the ensuing horrors. He had been an orphan himself, raised and later educated with the assistance of the Catholic Church. After completing two years of medical training in Zaire, he had returned to Rwanda and was working at an orphanage. The daily escalation of intertribal fighting made it increasingly dangerous for any Hutu who remained in Rwanda.

One day, he had the opportunity to talk with a Kenyan lorry driver who was delivering food supplies to the orphanage. He asked whether the driver would be willing to smuggle four of the boys and himself out of Rwanda in the back of the lorry. The driver consented, Jean Paul gathered the boys together, and they set off for the Tanzanian border. The driver assured Jean Paul that they would be allowed into Tanzania but was concerned about what would transpire at the Kenyan border.

The crossing into Tanzania went smoothly, but all were nervous about what would occur when they reached the border with Kenya. The faith that *'things will eventually go well'* is part of the African character, but when they reached the border with Kenya, they were detained by the border guards. By then the truck driver was personally committed to the safety of Jean Paul and the boys. He persisted in arguing on their behalf and finally convinced the guards to let them into Kenya.

That evening they arrived in Nairobi, unable to speak either English or Kiswahili, the two official languages of Kenya. However, over the next few days, Jean Paul managed to contact the Catholic Church and arrange for four families to 'foster' the four boys. This was a great comfort to him but he now had time to wonder about his own life.

Over the next few weeks, in his personal drive to find someone with whom he could speak French, he located the offices of Alliance Francaise. On one of his visits he made friends with a student whose family happened to be from Kakamega. They had coffee together daily, and began a friendship which helped relieve some of Jean Paul's isolation. Soon the young man mentioned to his brother, William, that he had met this intelligent and interesting young man. William's curiosity grew and finally they all were having coffee together and sharing their thoughts. William soon shared his brother's liking for Jean Paul and trusted him in a way that is rare between strangers.

Finally, he offered to help him leave Nairobi with its many problems. He arranged for Jean Paul to reach Kakamega (6 hours away by bus) where he could stay in William's room at no cost. This was a very rare occurrence in a country where intertribal clashes are still frequent. Jean Paul accepted the offer although he felt continued concern for the boys he had brought to Kenya.

Shortly afterwards, Jean Paul arrived in Kakamega, and began to search for someone to talk with who would understand the extreme circumstances of his recent flight. He spent several days 'footing it' as they say in Kenya, orienting himself to the businesses and public services in town. It was on one of those days that he walked down the road from Lurambi and discovered the ACCES house. He had found ...Nora!

It was very good initial connection for both of them. It was immediately apparent that he was a very interesting and deep thinker who wondered about many things, including his own future. He came daily, at first just to talk, but eventually he asked if we would teach him to type. I provided the first lesson and explained that he would be on his own to practise and follow the lessons in the typing book. Almost every day that Jean Paul visited, his English improved until he could discuss most things without unconsciously switching to French. Little by little his typing speed also increased.

One day Nora was discussing some CHES business with Moses, the headmaster of Shikunga, (one of the high-performing secondary schools in which CHES sponsors students) when the problems of French teaching at Shikunga surfaced. As the wheels began to buzz in Nora's agile brain, she made a suggestion. If he could use two teachers for the price of one, she would arrange for him to meet Jean Paul. Then, if that meeting went well, she would spend two months overlapping and teaching with him so that the organization of classroom instruction would be strong.

Moses accepted and agreed that if Jean Paul was suitable, he would receive an untrained teacher's salary and accommodation as a regular staff member. A few days later, Jean Paul and Moses met at the ACCES house and agreed on a starting date. Three weeks later, Nora and Jean Paul headed for Shikunga to begin their mutual responsibilities. Jean Paul adjusted to the new environment quickly and was soon enjoying his teaching and the students. He also took on several extracurricular responsibilities.

When the first monthly paycheck arrived, Jean Paul suddenly appeared back at the ACCES house to 'borrow' four envelopes. Puzzled, I provided them, and finally asked him why they were needed. I should have known without asking. "So that I can send the boys '*kitu kidogo*' (a little something) to assure them they are remembered. I know they have many changes and memories to adjust to, so I want them to know I will always be supportive. Someday, we shall all want to return to our beloved country."

If that day finally dawns, Rwanda will need compassionate leaders with the qualities of Jean Paul. Chance may have another opportunity to influence history!



We are proud to feature some of the students who have received scholarships through ACCES donors. In this issue, a recent graduate, Patrick Omutiti, and two students who are currently enrolled at post-secondary institutions give us an account of the importance of ACCES sponsorship.

PATRICK OMUTITI

*Past Chairman of the CHES Alumni Association
 Graduate of Eregi Teachers' College, August, 1994*

Presently I am a primary school teacher, but I have been a CHES and ACCES scholar as well as Chairman of the CHES Alumni Association for two years. During secondary school I was sponsored through CHES by Nancy Dalby, then in Eregi Teachers' College, I was sponsored by Nora Harrison (who is currently the ACCES agent in Kenya).

After my secondary education, I served in the National Youth Service for a period of 1 1/2 years. I went through basic training, which involved extensive footdrills and all sorts of harsh discipline.

When Nora offered to sponsor me for teacher's training in Eregi Teachers' College in September, 1992, I was very pleased. I graduated from there in August, 1994, and was posted in September, 1994. My posting occurred quickly because President Moi issued a presidential order that teachers who graduated at that time had to be posted immediately.

I now teach at Emulole Primary School in Khwisero Division in the Kakamega District. I teach the following subjects: Business Education and Kiswahili in Standard 8, Music and Kiswahili in Standard 7, Mathematics in Standard 6, Physical Education in Standard 5 plus Arts and Crafts in Standard 4. I really enjoy my job as a teacher because pupils at times seem to be both challenging and entertaining. I would urge more Kenyans to join the teaching profession because it is a noble job from which other professions are born.

In my own personal time I enjoy driving and listening to music. In fact, I have made a lot of adventures with Nora Harrison who taught me how to drive in her famous Suzuki. The good advice she shared with me has enabled me to cope well with the difficulties of Kenyan life.

Eventually I plan to buy a small piece of land and settle there. This is necessary for me because my father has a wealth of his own problems and divorced my mother. So I have inherited no piece of land to call my own.

I feel very fortunate to have a good occupation and the opportunities of a good education which I trace to the assistance of both CHES and ACCES.



Jackline Lidoro is enrolled at St. Joseph's Nursing School at Nyabondo. While she was a CHES student she attended Kaimosi Secondary School.

Jackline Lidoro

My family consists of twelve members, six girls and four boys, and my mother and father.. I am the last born in my family. My elder sisters and brothers are at home helping with work. We have a small garden where we grow a different variety of crops, including maize which is our staple food, beans, cow peas, groundnuts and vegetables. During the beginning of the year, the rainy season, we have a lot of work since we have to cultivate and plant the crops. My father always gives each person a small portion of land to cultivate their crops. On my side, I have planted sugarcane and tomatoes. When they are ready I sell them in the nearby market. We do not rear cattle but only goats and sheep. My father is a farmer, that is why he grows a variety of crops and sells them to the market. At the end of the year we come together and celebrate by buying presents to each other.

At my former secondary school in Kaimosi there were a lot of co-curricular activities in which I actively participated. I belonged to the netball and volleyball clubs. This was the school team which could go to other schools and participate. The winners were given a trophy. There was also cross country where the whole school would run rounding the nearby community. The last people would repeat until they ran to the timed time. I was not fond of these long races but I would run the short races including relay and throwing javelin. I remember in Form Three I got a present of soaps for being best runner in my class.

During school days, on Monday and Friday was quiz day where classes would assemble in the school hall and compete by asking each other questions. On Tuesday and Thursday was games day where everybody was expected to go on the field and play games. On Wednesday was the day each one met in the clubs they belonged. I was a member of a Youth Christian Society and we often toured schools for the disabled, including Kaimosi School for the Handicapped and Mumias School for the Blind. From that experience I developed an urge of helping them and decided that in the future I would become a nurse. When the year ended, we had Parents' Day where they prayed. I finally did my exam in 1993 in October as KCSE - Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education.

However, there is also a lot of suffering in my community. Most people are not educated, especially in good hygiene. It would also benefit my community if I became a nurse for then I could advise them on the measures that would promote education and health. In the future I would really like to health care the sick and the old and assist the needy.



A FULL ACCES SPONSORSHIP IS \$360.00 PER YEAR.

100% of your donation is sent to Africa for scholarships.

Administration costs are obtained through other means.

PLEASE NOTE: Some renewals are due. If you wish to obtain a tax receipt for 1995 please give this matter your consideration.

ACCES is happy to accept post-dated cheques for all sponsorships.

I believe that for us in Africa, our salvation lies in our own hands and nowhere else. Only we can be the architects of our future...

Olusagen Obasanjo - Nigerian statesman

Francis Mukolwe is currently attending W.E. C. O. Polytechnic in Kakamega. While he was a CHES student, he attended Ekambuli Secondary School.

FRANCIS MUKOLWE

My names are Francis Likoye Mukolwe. I am a boy aged twenty-one. I come from a family which comprise four children with three boys and one daughter. I am the fourth or rather the last born. My hobbies are reading novels, listening to soft music, playing volleyball and making friends.

I personally decided to apply for the Mechanical Engineering Technical Course because ever since I was a small child, I dreamt and I still dream that one day I will become an Engineer. It is a feeling that has ever been in my mind and therefore I wish one day this dream will become true. On the other hand, since employment opportunities currently in Kenya are scarce, I thought it important to apply for a practical course which can create self-employment after attaining it. This is because the above mentioned course is a two-way traffic in that if you lack an employment opportunity after attaining it, you can employ yourself since you will have achieved the practical skill.



My future hopes are: becoming an Engineer, being a good citizen and helping the needy.

ACCES BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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All Directors of ACCES are Volunteers

"Unless a sustained financial effort is made, it will be impossible to make any lasting improvement in the living conditions of millions of African children..."

Boutros Boutros-Gali
 UN Secretary-General

"If each of us put money and effort in the right place we may save three lives."

That was a message Beth and George Scott took to heart when they read a book called *Save Three Lives* by Robert Rodale. And after having seen TV pictures of desperate poverty in Africa, the retired couple decided they wanted to do something.

"We are two ordinary people who decided through ordinary circumstances that we too might save three lives," Beth told an audience at Knox United Church in Parksville on December 15, 1994. (Joey Goodings in *The Parksville-Qualicum Beach News* December 20, 1994)

Beth and George Scott will be happy to speak about ACCES to small or large groups anywhere in BC.

For more information, write to:

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 2441 Christopherson Road
 Surrey, BC V4A 3L2

Phone or Fax: (604) 538-7267



GEORGE AND BETH SCOTT

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The second Annual General Meeting of ACCES will be held on

Saturday, June 17, 1995

at

2:00 p.m. in the afternoon

at

**2441 Christopherson Road,
 Surrey, BC
 V4A 3L2**

Supporters and interested persons are welcome.
 Please let us know if you plan to attend!

PHONE: 538-7267