



Buyamba News

Learn to do good. Seek justice... Defend the orphan...
-Isaiah 1:17

Write your child at:
God Cares School
P.O. Box 26977
Kampala
Uganda
East Africa



Supporting God Cares School, Kampala, Uganda

October 2011

Buyamba Soles – a Journey of “Firsts”

When I met Pastor Dongo for the first time, I was struck by how much love and joy flowed from the man... his smile, his warmth and that great laugh of his. I was instantly a friend and have since grown to love him like a brother.

When I first saw the beautiful beads that adorned the necklaces and bracelets at the Buyamba Uganda booth, I was mesmerized by their color and depth. Little did I know they were made of recycled paper and rolled individually by hand. Similarly, I had no idea the role they would play in changing so many lives. That

was also around the first time I met Julie Dimas. I was impressed with her deep sense of responsibility and love she had for the children of Uganda. Her quiet grace and love for Jesus was evident as she explained what Buyamba and God Cares School was all about.

When my wife returned from her first trip to Uganda, I noticed that something was alive in her. She was always loving and unselfish, but now her spirit was determined to help others in need any way she could. I did not understand it at the time, but God was at work within her. She came home with a love for people that she barely knew. She also loved the artwork and crafts made by the women of Uganda...I again noticed the beads she had brought back as gifts. They were distinct, colorful and beautiful.

When my daughter returned from her first trip to Uganda, she was so excited to tell us about the trip and so determined at the same time to

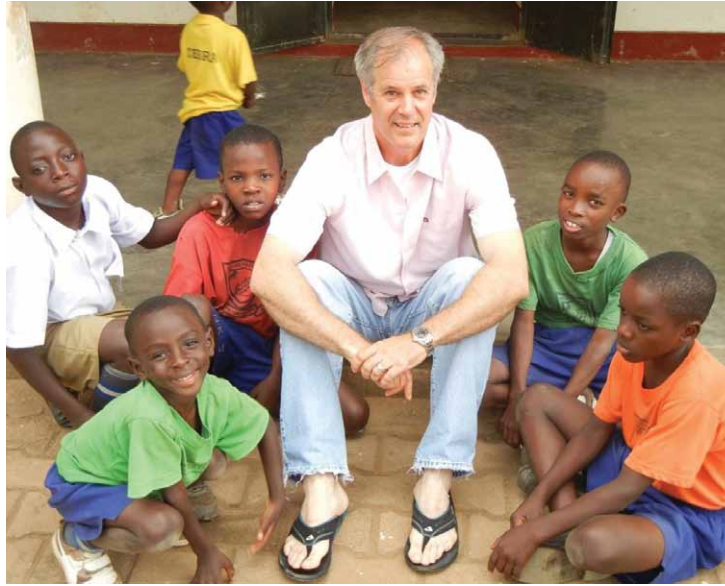


figure out a way to help and make a difference in the lives of the people she had just met. She wanted to start a business selling jewelry made with the beautiful paper beads. She told us stories.. that the jewelry was made by women in Uganda, and it was the only way they could support their families. She also informed me for the first time that I needed to help... “Since you are in the shoe business,” she said, “we need to figure out how to put the beads onto shoes and sell them so we can further help the people of Uganda.”



What was with these beads? How were they made? Who made them? Who could I send to Uganda to work on this? That answer came back loud and clear from both wife and daughter... “You should go.”

The first time I heard that my 24 year old son wanted to go to Uganda was about a week before my flight was scheduled to leave. I wondered what that was about, as there seemed to be no way I could get seats that late for an international flight. I figured it was just an expression of regret... We sat next to each other the entire trip. It was our first international flight together. God has a way of working things out.

My first impression of Uganda was a complicated mix of emotions. How could one place be so hot, humid, loud, unorganized, backwards, uncomfortable, beautiful, surprising, and fulfilling?

When I first met Dongo’s beautiful wife Florence, I was amazed at her strength and the love and compassion she had for others. Then I met their children: Worship, Hope, Thanks, and

We are so blessed by the efforts of our sponsor Craig Hardy (pictured above) and all at ACI International as they have envisioned the “Buyamba Soles” shoe line that will directly benefit the kids at God Cares School. Pray for the success in its release in Target stores in April!

Your donations are essential to the life of this ministry. Please send all financial support to:
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If you have any questions please contact julie@ugandabuyamba.com

Ezra... Amazingly they were a blend of their parent's hearts. I knew there were another 16 kids or so running around that I had not met.

When I first heard the choir and congregation sing worship hymns at Kabalagala church, I was moved to tears at the deep love and outpouring of their spirits they displayed. When I first met the people of Uganda, I was taken aback by their considerate, kind and loving spirit. When we first heard a little girl at the high school sing "How Great is our God,"

we commented that her voice was like an angel... nobody seemed to bother with the fact that none of us had actually heard an angel before.

When we first arrived at the clinic and met the beautiful women that make the paper beads, we were struck by their caring spirits and we found them to be as colorful and unique as the beads they were making. When we first met Olivia, we choked back tears as the story was told that her husband had died of aids, she was HIV positive with seven girls to look after... and the husband's family had taken away her home and possessions since she had no male heir. We met ten women in total that first day and many had the same tragic story about their lives.

When we first met Irene and found out she was Florence Dongo's sister, we knew that the "selfless gene" ran strong in their family. She was a wonderful woman that had started the HIV clinic as an outreach to the villages. She first brought the women together and taught them how to make the beads as a means to mentor them, to love on them, and give the women a place they could come and share their grief and struggles. Did I mention that Irene and her husband Sam have taken in over 30 children from the streets and feed and care for them?

When my son first met Phillip, the little boy at the clinic, he was really taken in by the warmth of the boy's smile and the gentleness of his eyes.



Cody Hardy in Uganda



Again, we fought back tears as the little boy told us his favorite sport was football, but the other little boys would not play with him since he was infected with the HIV virus.

So, here we are, our first trip to Uganda, somewhere out in the bush at a clinic watching these displaced and burdened women make their beads and jewelry. Good thing God is able as we, while believing all things are possible, had no idea if we could actually help them.

Our first inclination was to buy up all their beaded necklaces and bracelets (which we did). However more was needed and the vision God had first placed on our hearts was to create a cycle of giving by first creating a broader market for which we could use the beads (shoes!) Then jobs could be created on the ground in Uganda by teaching the women mass production skills to produce the beads. Then the beads would be shipped to China to be added onto footwear where from the sales we would donate a portion of the profits back to God Cares School completing the cycle of giving.

Many "firsts" were needed and are still needed before we can say this mission was successful. But God is good and He has answered prayer at every turn. We have our first retail partner in Target... we placed our first orders for over 2,000,000 beads. We helped create over 200 first time jobs and these incredible women are shipping over 100,000 beads a week all on schedule! Their first payday was at the end of August. The first delivery of shoes will be to Target in the spring of 2012, and we hope through all of the creative marketing planned that the word will get out and people will help support this exciting and great cause. More to come on that....

Oh, by the way, our first idea of a name for this business stuck... .. Buyamba Soles was born!

Craig Hardy, President, ACI International



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