

The Bead

News and Stories from BeadforLife

September 2008

REMOVE FROM LIST? CLICK HERE

Beads to Bricks to a Dream Come True:
A note from Board President, Ginny Jordan

David Torach Can Wear Shoes Again!

Take Action! Give a Holiday BeadParty

Visit BeadforLife in Uganda

Teenagers Inspire Teachers

Shopping is Giving

Letters from the Bead Circle



"It gives one hope, this great strength of Africa."

Stephen Lewis, UN Special Ambassador for AIDS in Africa

Beads to Bricks to a Dream Come True: A note from Board President Ginny Jordan



We arrived at Friendship village on a warm Saturday morning for a day of house dedications. Women, men, and children, in their finest and brightest clothes, greeted us with the enthusiastic hugs. The women saying, "You are most welcome," had a new meaning this time.

We were being welcomed to Friendship Village, now a bustling community of 80 houses. Gardens ripening with cassava, beans, and greens surrounded each home.

Today we were dedicating 10 new houses. All the villagers gathered, singing and clapping in front of each house in turn. The local priest and one of the Muslim contractors offered prayers and gave their blessings. BeadforLife presented each woman with a small mango tree and a wish for abundant health and happiness for all those who will live in the home. We all honored the new homeowners with our tears and with our applause for the hard work of saving money and taking such a big step. One by one, each woman told her story.

Winifred Mirembe spoke through a teary voice:

"When my husband died of AIDS, my in-laws assumed I would die also and chased my four small children and me from our home, taking our possessions. We lived in a small shed behind a church. I did laundry for the church people for a few shillings, enough to feed the children corn meal. People called me "Mama Troubles." After I joined BeadforLife, I learned that it would be possible to have my own home. I didn't really believe it, but I started saving just in case. Then I became passionate about saving and we continued to live in that shed so we could save money. Now those people who thought I would be dead by now will never believe this belongs to me!" She twirls around and embraces the brick wall of her simple two-room house.



Village Vice Chairwoman Sanyu Robinah and Winifred Mirembe

For me, as a board member of BeadforLife, this was an affirmation that home ownership is an important step out of poverty. We are committed to assisting more of our members to build houses in Friendship Village, or to secure a bit of land and build their own homes. One by one paper beads are becoming bricks and hope and shelter for families coming out of poverty.

Thank you for your support which makes these homes possible. It's all of us working together that makes a better world.

Ginny Jordan, BeadforLife Board President

David Torach Can Wear Shoes Again!



Small tears roll down David's cheeks as he sits in his hospital bed gazing at his feet. "I have not been able to wear shoes for 30 years," he sobs, wiggling his toes. At 15, David Torach's feet began to swell as fluid accumulated with alarming speed. Soon both of his legs were deformed, growing impossibly big.

He was suffering from elephantiasis, a permanent condition in which lymph fluid cannot re-circulate and pools in the calves and feet. Walking was difficult, and the social ostracism of such a deformity left him feeling quite alone.



Being disfigured was only one of his burdens. On a dark night in 1989, rebels entered his village in Northern Uganda, killing his neighbors and burning his house. David and his wife, Alice Akello, fled into the bush with their children. They moved to a camp for displaced people in Kampala where David and his wife worked in a stone quarry earning about \$2 a day. His disease made working very difficult.

In 2004, Alice became a beader with BeadforLife and life began to change. They saved their income and managed to build a home in the new village. They sent their children to school and saved to start a business.

When David became aware that BeadforLife sponsored a charity bed at the International Hospital in Kampala, he asked if we could help find a cure for his elephantiasis. We held out little hope since it is considered permanent, but decided to ask on his behalf. Imagine our delight and surprise when we were told, "One of the few experts in the world, a Canadian surgeon named Ben King, is working at our hospital. Please bring David in." In January, the doctors operated on the first leg, and on the second in July. The photo shows David in the period between his two surgeries.

Putting on his shoes is a great delight. David says with a smile, "I'm going to go home to my people in the north and show off my new legs."



Take Action: GIVE A HOLIDAY BEADPARTY!

Its time to sign up for a holiday BeadParty, a fun way to make the season of giving help others a world away. Bringing beads to your holiday fairs, parties, gift exchanges, schools, and offices is very popular.



Pick a date and sign up as soon as you can because our calendar fills up quickly. We will support you with a "Party Pack" designed to help you with all of the details for a wonderful event including: bead jewelry, recipes, a DVD, CD of original music, biographies of beaders, and tips for a great party.

All of BeadforLife's net profits return to Uganda in income generation, affordable housing, vocational training for impoverished youth, and health programs such as HIV testing for children. You can be confident your participation does make a difference in a very direct way.

To sign up, just log in to our website www.beadforlife.org and click on "Host a Party."

Visit Uganda this fall

*There are still spaces available on the November 9 - 21 trip to **visit BeadforLife in Uganda**. Don't miss this once in a lifetime opportunity! For more information, go to www.conservationconcepts.net.*



Teenagers Inspiring Teachers

This June 1, 100 educators from 32 countries heard about BeadforLife from some very concerned and impressive teenagers. St. Petersburg High School seniors Shelby Begany, Liz Brunello, and Melissa Stiksma, and Southside Fundamental Middle School eighth grader Brent Begany, sold BeadforLife beads at the Florida League of International Baccalaureate Schools' Annual Summer Conference.

The students set up a table and sold BeadforLife beads to the teachers. They did a brisk business since the teachers were eager to learn more and take home a necklace or bracelet. These teenagers raised \$4,700.



Good job Shelby, Brent, Liz, and Melissa. And a big **“thank you”** from the young people in Uganda who will be able to go to vocational school because of the money you raised.



Shopping Is Giving!

Vacations are ending, kids are going back to school and people are telling stories about their summers. Make BeadforLife one of your stories by purchasing one of our beautiful items for someone in your life. We offer an array of red, orange, and earth tone beads that are perfect for the fall.



By sharing the story of the women who made your jewelry, you are partnering with Ugandan women working to raise themselves out of poverty. Thanks.



Ideal Fall Shopping:

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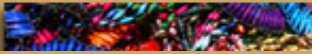
Band Bracelets: These wide bracelets make a bold statement. They are a good option for men as well as women. \$15

- **Single Necklace:** Simple and fashionable, this necklace makes a great back-to-school gift for college students or anyone on your list. \$10
- **Gift Certificates:** This is a convenient option for people who may want to pick out their own items.

Check out these and other items at our [web store](#).

Your gift gives twice: once to the lucky recipient, and once to the woman who made the beads.

LETTERS FROM THE BEADCIRCLE



Dear Wakefield,

My name is Mary and I am originally from Kenya but pursuing graduate studies at the University of Wyoming. I learned about your organization BeadforLife from a friend and I got really fascinated. I have great passion for programs empowering African Women and your organization is doing exactly that. As an African woman, I know firsthand the impact your organization is having to those poor communities, and your slogan "one bead at a time" explains the process of empowering women, especially those residing in rural areas. I visited your website and I am so impressed with everything you are doing.

I am just thrilled that a small group of people can have an idea which can move and change lives.

Thanks and hope to hear from you.

Sincerely,

Mary Gatua

WWW.BEADFORLIFE.ORG