

Give a Girl a Chance – and she'll make the most of it!

from Blessed Bakhita Girls School in South Sudan
I am Josephine Nakuru Benjamin John. I am fifteen years old. Toposa by tribe. I am now in class eight. I am an orphan. I have a mother only my father died when I was still young. I live in Narus with my mother and brother. I am from a very poor family.



I started my primary school in 2014, but life was not easy for me to continue with my studies. Fortunately, in 2016 you started supporting me with all the requirements up today. I am working very hard never to shame you, not even to bring shame to my mother.

I wish to become a Minister of Education. I would like to do the way you have done to me, helping the poor especially supporting them in Education. I wish to see you face to face one day.

Give...till it helps!

Backyard Fence—conversations about the new community

Before our Learning Tour to Yellowstone and the Grand Tetons, I didn't know what these places were or could even imagine what was in store for me during this trip. I grew up in a rural town in Zacatecas, Mexico and immigrated to California in the late 80's at the age of 27. Fast forward years later, after my retirement, my daughters surprised me with a plane ticket to travel with NCP to Yellowstone and the Grand Tetons. One of my daughters, who had previously traveled with NCP to Nepal, explained to me the purpose of these Learning Tours. Immediately I thought to myself, "How will I learn if there is a huge language barrier that I can't cross." My daughter assured me that she would be able to translate to make sure I get the most out of the Learning Tour.

Hiking through Yellowstone opened my eyes to the vastness of this planet and the different ecosystems that I didn't know existed. When I saw the bright colors of the Grand Prismatic Spring and the towering Fairy Falls, I could feel God's presence in his creations on earth. Watching a momma bear and her two cubs walk across our hiking path in the Grand Tetons made me realize that animals are just like us and we must respect their place on earth too. Hiking and camping with people from different ages and backgrounds helped me understand that there can be a peaceful coexistence and mutual respect between all types of life.

Even though I could not understand English I was still able to learn even without having my daughter translate. There are so many other ways of learning visually and spiritually when you get close to nature and are willing to understand it. This experience has taught me to value the wildlife around us and do what we can to protect it because we still have a lot to learn from it.

I pray to God to bless NCP and their work so other people can have these life changing experiences and learn the value of all that God has to offer in our planet.

- Luz Gonzalez, Ontario, CA (translated by Claudia Gonzalez)

New Community Project Advisory Board: Robbie Miller (chair), Taona Makunje, Steve Brady, Jerry O'Donnell, Greg Davidson Laszakovits, Kim McDowell, Linetta Ballew, Hope Steele, Timothy McElwee, Alex Murphy

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As the World
Turns...



"...turning the world upside down..."

Newsletter of the
New Community Project

Ideas that challenge us.
Experiences that
change us.
A community that gives
us hope.

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Learning Tour Goes for the Gold

Two end-of-the-summer Learning Tours took participants of all ages to Denali & Kenai Fjords National Parks in Alaska and Yellowstone & Grand Tetons in Wyoming. Wildlife aplenty, with a side of amazing geologic features, greeted both groups.

The Alaska group may have set a Guinness record by seeing off-cloud-encased 20,310-foot Denali six days in a row AND was in Seward the day of 17-year-old gold and silver Olympic medalist Lydia Jacoby's homecoming parade! Not to be outdone, the Yellowstone/Tetons group had two sightings of mother bears and cubs.

COVID Response: Myanmar

Thanks to the generosity of our network, NCP has raised nearly \$75,000 to help our neighbors in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Dine reservation in New Mexico deal with the many impacts of COVID. The most recent campaign raised \$3600 for oxygen concentrators urgently needed by our partner in Myanmar. The February military coup coupled with on-going poverty have left that Southeast Asian country particularly vulnerable to the pandemic.

Catching Some Rays

NCP is turning even further toward the sun by beginning to provide financial support for Give Solar, a Harrisonburg, VA group installing solar panels on the roofs of nonprofit agencies. They have also begun adding panels to local Habitat for Humanity builds so that the low-income owners' energy will come at near zero cost and zero emissions.

Raising Some Cain

NCP staff are doing their best to get into "good trouble" here, there, and everywhere. Director David Radcliff made over 70 virtual and live presentations in the past six months in schools, colleges, conferences, and congregations in OH, VA, PA, IA, KS, IN and NC. He also taught three online classes at Elizabethtown College and led two Learning Tours.

Along with two new greenhouses and increased garden space to meet local food needs, NCP Vermont has modified irrigation and water catchment systems in response to climate change. A second day of food distribution has been added each week, along with Meals on Wheels for seniors and the Everyone Eats program. EE helps keep restaurant workers employed while sourcing local food to create healthy prepared meals for those in need.

There is collaboration with the village to expand community gardens and build a pavilion - it would be used for vegetable preparation, workshops and monthly community meals.

Our Harrisonburg site hosted eight summer interns who promoted food justice, solar energy for low-income folks, educational programs, carbon farming, and an initiative to make the city 100% renewable by 2035.

Outside of town, the Jubilee Climate Farm is testing annual vegetable food systems to determine how to capture the highest levels of carbon into the soil, with the overall goal of becoming a model for larger scale climate-friendly agriculture. The produce is delivered to a women's shelter and low-income apartments.

Falling Into Place

The final pieces of last fall's A Place of Their Own campaign are falling into place. Batwa women are harvesting crops from their new fields in Rwanda; Malawian girls attending high school 30 and 50 miles away now have dormitories rather than squalid rental rooms; flood-ravaged tukuls are being rebuilt on higher ground in South Sudan.

Hungry hungry hippos – and more

Our partners' requests for our *Tell Us What You Need* fall campaign include:

- Hippo (and fish) habitat restoration in Congo along Lake Tanganyika to save farmland (marauding hippos) and local fisheries
- A beekeeping project in rural Malawi for income and nature in the face of climate change
- A tailoring center for women in Rwanda (rent of a market stall currently takes half their profit)
- A tiny home for a Dineh family in New Mexico (they now spend much of the day under a tree)

Altogether, our fall campaign comes to over \$35,000. A great holiday giving opportunity for your school, congregation, family, club or yourself! More info on page 2 and the website.

Time for Us to Fly (maybe)

After a COVID-dictated pause, we are hoping to resume international Learning Tours in 2022. First in line is Nepal (January), then the Ecuadorian Amazon (early June), and possibly Africa. We're also planning on Lybrook, Denali, and Arctic Village next summer. More on page three.

Wind in Our Sails

Consider a year-end gift to NCP, and/or contribute to our Endowment Fund, now nearing \$100,000!

Dear Mr. Radcliff, thank you for showing us interesting things about the world. The pictures were so cool. I will pick up a lot of litter to save the planet and reduce, reuse, recycle as much as I can. I hope you go to other places and learn more – and most of all have fun.
-Trixan, 4th grade, Franke Park Elementary School, Fort Wayne

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Justice—or Just Us

Seeking fairness for people everywhere

Fall Campaign: *Tell us what you need*

We asked our partners what they needed most, beyond our normal grants. Here's what they requested:

Auba, Congo: well

"I have visited this pygmy village and they request me to help them to dig a well for the fresh water. They now travel two hours to look for the water at the Sangya River. Traveling a long distance has caused many assaults against the girls and women, and the girls has not enough time to study. Drinking the river water has also caused many diseases among them - especially children and older people. Almost 850 households will benefit from this project. \$7855 is the cost." – Ron Lubungo



Gisenye, Rwanda: tailoring center

"As you know, training a girl or a woman is like training a community. The tailoring center will serve 20 women as a place to store and sell their products. More importantly, this Center will be a place that the group will carry on their daily activities without any interruption. Right now, each woman is renting a small place where they do their tailoring. They may earn \$80 to \$100 per month, but over half of their income is needed to pay rent for their stall at the market. The center will cost \$11,000, and each woman will pay a small monthly amount for upkeep. We deeply appreciate you for helping us to empower them in their life's endeavors." – Etienne Nsanzimana



Lybrook, New Mexico: tiny house

"A young Dineh family has such a poor house that they spend much of the day under a tree. If you could provide \$3500 for materials and also send a group to help with construction, as well as weatherization of other homes, that would be great." – Erik Dennison



Lake Tanganyika, Congo: hippo & fish habitat

"Grass and trees along this lake have been destroyed by human activity and flooding. As a result, there is soil erosion, fish don't have a place to lay eggs, and hippos are more prone to head inland at night to sleep and graze, destroying crops. That's why we would love to plant trees and grasses there. We request \$5,000 to restore 7.5 acres but can use more if it is available." – Ron Lubungo



Batwa community, Rwanda: fruit trees

"We would like to plant 500 fruit trees. We will grow them in the nursery and distribute them to people, especially the young people & Batwa women to plant in their homestead. We will also plant trees on collective land to share the fruits with the vulnerable in our society in a period of two years. Cost: \$1270." – Etienne Nsanzimana



Holy Trinity Peace Village, S. Sudan: grinding mill

"The World Food Program is providing sorghum and maize for St. Thomas primary school, but there is the challenge of grinding since the area is remote – the closest grinding mill is 60 miles away. Therefore, the 279 children (including 45 girls receiving NCP scholarships) mostly eat boiled grains as they cannot make flour. The grinding mill will not only help St. Thomas primary school but other nearby schools. The cost is \$3660." – Gladys Mananyu



Balaka, Malawi: beekeeping

"The project will enable 20 households to diversify their sources of income, increasing resilience to climate change. Along with additional earnings, beekeeping has a positive impact on food supply and nature conservation. The cost is \$3500." – Taona Makunje

Balaka, Malawi: sanitary pads

"We will train 30 girls in making sanitary pads, as this is crucial to keep girls from missing school every month. They will also learn to be role models to share life skills with other girls so they can combat gender violence and other issues. Cost: \$2500." – Taona Makunje

Truth...or Dare!

What we don't know *can* hurt us – especially in the long run. NCP doesn't shy away from facing the truth about our world, challenging all of us to dare to act for something better. Thus, this Truth...or Dare! segment: By the numbers: Face the truth, dare to act!

- After learning about our *A Girl and A Bike* program (\$110 provides a bicycle and first-term scholarship for girls walking 7-14 miles to school in Malawi), children in a Virginia congregation decided to hold a bike-a-thon to raise money to help out. 187 laps around a parking lot later, they had wheeled in over \$3300! 30 girls in Malawi go' be riding to school!

- When her congregation held a Care for Creation weekend led by NCP staff, Amy came away "feeling determined" (her Facebook tag) to act. "*Paper towels are not a friend of our environment, so I cut up some dish towels to make smaller wiping cloths! When they are dirty, they will be washed to be able to be reused, thus reducing our waste!*" (51,000 trees a day to produce paper towels for the USA – who needs 'em!)

- Concerned about climate change and wanting to do their part on this issue and generally care for our earth, a congregation in Pennsylvania held a special end-of-the-summer fundraiser for our *Million Tree Campaign* (100,000 trees a year for 10 years). The pastor preached a 5-sermon series with the titles Rooted, Grounded, Sown, Flourish, Grow; then they put out a basket and raised \$5400 over several weeks – \$2500 of which was doubled by a matching grant – bringing the total to nearly \$8,000, which equals 80,000 trees @ ten cents per tree! (trees per dollar differ in our partner areas, but that's the cost in Myanmar and South Sudan)

- Inspired by our Food Justice work in Vermont (where 1 in 3 people are food-insecure), a youth group partnered with us to build their own Little Free Pantry at their church. We have also worked with the town of Starksboro to expand the community garden and build a pavilion for community meals, and to install an electric vehicle charging station.

- "When you go on a trip to Alaska with NCP and a few weeks later you finally break up with your clothes dryer... I've missed my clothesline for years. Bringing it back. (Even learned some fancy knots.)"

– Christine from CO [With melting glaciers, thawing permafrost and struggling wildlife, Alaska reveals the stark truth about climate change. Using a clothesline can save as much as 2400 pounds of CO² per year!]



Experiential Learning

Go. Meet. Learn. Grow. Be renewed. Change—yourself and your world.

Experience of a lifetime

Experiential learning is NCP's way of helping us see ourselves and our world in a different way. Visit our reopening Sustainable Living Centers; invite a speaker to your school or congregation; join a Learning Tour (see *Backyard Fence*, page 4).

2022 Learning Tours

(Upcoming trips subject to COVID-19 situation)

Nepal (January 7-18, 2022) Travel to this beautiful but impoverished Himalayan country, hosted by Shakti Samuha, an anti-trafficking group supported by NCP. Experience teeming Kathmandu, as well as rustic rural areas. Visit shelters for returnees from the sex trade. Go to an amazing vantage point to behold the Annapurna Range and to Chitwan National Park (rhinos!).

Africa (dates and destinations TBD) Experience African culture, vitality and natural wonders on this trip to one or more of the following countries: Rwanda, Nigeria, South Sudan, Malawi. Visit schoolgirls, women's groups and reforestation programs supported by NCP, and be wowed by wildlife in a National Park.

Ecuadorian Amazon: Deep Jungle (June 3-9) Explore places deep in the rainforest where outsiders rarely venture, meet renowned shamans and all manner of amazing plant and animal life (monkeys, sloths, pink dolphins!), visit NCP rainforest preservation projects.

Lybrook, NM (June 23-28) Work alongside Diné (Navajo) elders and youth on community projects; talk with and learn from local artisans. Learn about the history, culture and current challenges facing the Diné, including hydraulic fracking; visit Chaco Culture ruins.

Youth Wilderness Adventure (July 21-25) For youth 18 and under, this trip begins at NCP's Sustainable Living Center in Harrisonburg, VA for teambuilding and info on earth care and backpacking skills, then camp and hike in the Shenandoah National Park.

Denali/Kenai Fjords National Parks, Alaska (July 27-August 4) Camp and hike in the Denali National Park, see bears, moose, caribou, a sled-dog demonstration—and hopefully Denali, the highest mountain in North America. Seward offers a cruise in Kenai Fjords NP to see whales, puffins and a calving glacier.

Arctic Village, Alaska (August 5-13) Visit this north-of-the-Arctic Circle community: Gwich'in by birth, caribou by culture. Hike and camp in sight of the Brooks Range. Learn about the threat to their way of life posed by oil drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and by climate change. Enjoy traditional foods.