

Our Own Home

A refuge for orphans living with HIV/AIDS in Jinja, Uganda



Merry Christmas,

www.africaourownhome.org

December, 2008

At the risk of sounding redundant and unoriginal: what a joyous time of year! The children finished their school term with a concert that I enjoyed immensely. They sang, recited poems, and danced to traditional songs. They obviously worked very hard preparing the concert, and their pride was all over their faces.



Our Own Home's 1st Anniversary Celebration

William and I began the task of shopping for the children. At Christmas they get chocolate, and new clothes of their own. This means a lot to them, they have to share so much living in a group home. But oh my, it is confusing looking for clothes for all these kids in all the right sizes! We wanted to give each child three shirts, and three bottoms (jeans and shorts for the boys, skirts for the girls) along with socks and shoes. Remembering their faces last year when they each received one new outfit, I can't wait to see them this year when they open up three!

The children have been asking every day, "Are we going to Kampala today?" **They are eagerly anticipating the Christmas cantata at Kampala Pentecostal Church.** We went last year and were wowed at the spectacle of lights, decorations, dancing, drama, and a choir of 300! This endeavor involves packing lunch and dinner, and renting a bus to take us to the capital city for the day, and it has been a highlight of our first year together. Already it has become a "tradition" we hope to continue for many Christmases.

One African tradition that cannot be overstated is the glorious Christmas meal! While most families subsist on rice, cornmeal, and beans the better part of the year, Christmas is a time for meat, potatoes, sausage, greens, matooke, and all the bells and whistles – most importantly, cake and soda! **"Mommy, what are we going to eat at Christmas?"** They have asked me again and again. They salivate as I list for them the delicacies we plan to prepare. Though our diet at Our Own Home has a wider variety than most Ugandan households, this is still a tradition we cannot miss, and means more to the children and staff than even the gifts.



The girls show off their new "jewelry"...

The three-month holiday from school presents a unique challenge in keeping the children busy and stimulated. **We hope to hire a teacher, or be blessed with a volunteer teacher, who can lead a reading class for those few who are still behind on their English.** Someone who will be able to give them just enough practice schoolwork so as not to fall behind before the term begins in February. In addition, the children are spending time crafting some beautiful necklaces that will be making their way

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to the States for sale before long. The boys are learning the art of chair-making, a skill that kept Daddy William supplied with school fees when he was their age. We hope their time at home the next couple of months is filled with fun and play in addition to being useful.



...and water pistols for the boys!

We are still looking for a house for the babies. I am tempted to sigh here, or to wonder how much longer it will take, but I remember well the challenge of finding our current location. It is God's will, so in His good time He will take us to the place He has already prepared for us.

Thank you so very much for your generous support and prayers! Please remember Our Own Home as you contemplate year-end giving.

With joy,

Mommy Holly

Please visit our website at www.africaourownhome.org! Here you'll find an overview of our ministry, pictures, our newsletter archive, volunteer, contact and donor information. Please share and e-mail this link to anyone who might be interested in learning more about Our Own Home!



Jackson and Mommy Holly

Please join us in continued prayer that God will provide the right facility and resources for our expansion plans to begin receiving babies at Our Own Home.

We are still requesting donations of cloth diapers, Balmex or similar generics, and baby toys that can be sterilized (boiled)...not teethingers or cloth toys. Of course we always need children's multi-vitamins....and some deodorant for the older kids. If you are in Casper, call and we'll arrange pick-up of the items. Otherwise, please see shipping information on the website under "donations".

Please share this work with your church or others you know who may be interested. If you know of someone who would like to be on our mailing list, please send us their address by mail or e-mail at the address in the next paragraph.

If you would like to make a donation, please make checks payable to **Our Own Home** and send to: 1075 Beaumont Dr. Casper, WY 82601. We also accept credit card and Paypal donations online at www.africaourownhome.org. Donations are tax deductible as permitted by law. If you have any questions at all, please call Joe at 307-267-2712 or write joe@africaourownhome.org.

Please write to me holly@africaourownhome.com. I'd LOVE to hear from you!
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