

# The Baobab Home

## Happy 2008 Everyone!!!

Welcome to the 2008 Baobab Home Update!

We hope that whether you celebrated Christmas, Hanukkah, Eid el Haj, Winter Solstice, Kwanzaa or a holiday of your own making, it very happy and peaceful. We finished 2007 in a grand style and

expect 2008 to be even more successful, thanks to all of you! Please catch up with some of the ways your donations have been used this year and what we have in the works for 2008. Don't forget to check the blog site once in awhile. Heri Ya Mwaka Mpya!! Blessings of the New Year to you!



## Myles and George- Two Boys and a Lot of Love

In Tennessee there is a little boy named Myles Martin. He is almost 3-years old and he was born surrounded by love. So much love in fact, that his Aunt Marika and Uncle Brian have honored him by donating enough money to allow



Myles

The Baobab Home to open its Baobab Home for 2008. Myles' father then pledged to match his brother's donation in the coming four years. Every donation enabled us to open but the Martins pushed us over the top! And so a few weeks ago, when Social Services called us with news of a 12-year old boy who had been found in a nearby village, we could confidently say "yes, we will take him!!" The boy is named Georgie, and he is a smiling, laughing, almost completely non verbal tornado. He is

most definitely not a baby. He is easy to fall in love with and a hard one to keep up with. I, along with some of our volunteers believe that he is autistic. He is familiar with electricity, running water, eating with a fork, wearing shoes and riding in cars so we knew that he was from the city and not the village. We knew that someone loved George very much because he just radiates love. Benard, Emmanuel and Yassini (some of the street boys), helped us to look for Georgie's family by posting notices in Dar. Then I went on Tanzanian television with George hoping that someone who knew him would see him. The next morning, his father arrived at the Baobab Home, so scared and with tears in his eyes. Someone had seen us on TV and told him. The trip from his house took almost two hours-that's how lost Georgie was! George just went right under his Dad's arm as if he had never left. George's mother abandoned them about 6 years ago. We miss George a lot around here, but he

remains part of the family. Because George's father cannot find care for George, Yassini, one of our street boys, has arranged for his younger brother, now living on the street in Arusha, to live in as a babysitter. George responds better to men than women and George's father has promised to let Yassini's brother apprentice with him in exchange. I found a group founded by an American woman that helps families with autism so we will get George evaluated.



George

## OPEN!!!

On Christmas day 2007 we officially opened the Baby Home!! We had a party in the morning at the breakfast program with



*Babu telling stories*

fruit, cookies and presents from Eufemia, Monica and Oscar of Italy. In the evening we had a bigger party up at the Baobab Home. Babu, an elderly man who remembers the old stories and fables of Tanzania, came to tell share with all of us some of his wisdom. We lit a fire and everyone sat at his feet in rapt attention. It was then that we paid tribute to all of you who make our work possible. We had a short dedication in front of our "Umoja Wa Dunia" wall where some of your pictures are hanging. Then Kifimbo and Kitebo, two local musicians, played drums and sang to the kids. Everyone danced and Mugin made popcorn and we ate Mwajuma's brownies.

## But Terri, Where are the Babies?

No sooner had George left when our outreach baby Fatuma and her father showed up. BH donor Jennifer Okonsky has been keeping Fatuma well fed since her mother died 4 months ago of an AIDS-related illness. Fatuma's father loves her dearly.

To all of our monthly donors in 2007 whom we depend on so much- KT Miller and Laura Guyer Miller, Elizabeth Jamison, Mina Van Dyne, Yvonne Boutell, Christian Okonsky, Jennifer Okonsky and Jesse Rankin, Karen Loeschner, John Rotunda, Lee Verner, Shane Hofeldt, the Hofeldt family, Noel Schaus, Carissa Guild, Lauren and Monica George, Frederike and Brian, Diane Roth, Michael Griffin, Evelyn Cleynen, Vince and Sherry Williams, Ann Grimwood, Charlotte and Claire.

To all of you who did fundraising in 2007 or sent donations that appeared just when we needed them most- Ans Groener, Kyle Shapiro and Family, Gwen and Ian Keith, Heidi Schuster, Johanneke Pas, Trinity Cathedral, Jennifer Ossa, Sarah Townsend, Emma Mbaraka-Thor, The Christenson Family, The Townsend Family, Roy Graham, Joan Koss-Chioino, Charley and Norma Arnold, The Barnes Family, David Bunnell, Paul Fargis, Ed Fargis, Hendrix College, Mary Pelesky, Victoria and Chris Ryback, Evelyn Reger, The Richboro Shop and Bag, Marilyn and Lester Shmaltz, Ren Draya and Dan McCandless, Council Rock High School, Rochelle

Henderson, Nancy Lommel Anita Bengstonn, Pam Clark, Trinity Cathedral of Phoenix, Hannah Okonsky, Evelyn Bingham, Barry Lalley, Emmanuel Minja, Robyn Stone, Eric Plue, Joan Sampson, Tiffany Mudric, Marisol Clark-Ibanez, The Kohn Family, Rebecca Arnold, Maggan Sjudahl, Carmela Parker, James R. Contessa, Marjolijn and Hilde, Patty Bruininks, Ian Linsell, Gaia Amalfitano, Aaron Scott, Jennifer Hyndman, Daniel and Natalie, Rebecca Place and the entire BH Softball Tournament Team, Sandy Pickett, Mary Jo Zimmer, Celeste Puccini, Channin DeHaan, Therra Gwynn, George Fargis, Bill Bradford, Tanya and Vijai, Steven Virany and Valerie Radwaner Rick Guyer, Vicki Sneed, Jackie Ahyi, David Aldridge, Dina Angress, Dee Hahn-Rollins, Jawara Lumumba, Stephanie Schalk-Zaitsev, Training Resources Group (TRG), Carol Montgomery, Jamieson Elem, The Oberholzers, Erna Beumers, Sabrina Eagan, Alison Fargis, Winston Simmonds, Jacqueline Bernard Kear, and others... please forgive... and tell me... if I have omitted your name by mistake! And, to the Martins of North Carolina and the Martins of Tennessee we say Asanteni sana na tena (thank you so much and again).

on his back, by bicycle, and drops her with us where we give her a lot of love and care.

Rest assured though, more babies are coming. I know it's hard to believe that people here don't see the urgency of the situation,



*Volunteer Daphne with Fatuma*



*Fatuma sleeps peacefully*

but often they don't. Volunteers Martha and Daphne took matters into their own hands though and travelled the city notifying

hospitals that we have space available. They were warmly received by overworked staff and we expect babies very soon! More about the babies and the Baby Care team coming!

## SPECIAL UPDATE FROM KENYA

Thanks to Caito and Ema's relentless searching, and donations of time and money from Maine Media Workshops, the Townsend Family, and Emma Thor, Emmanuel Joseph has found his father and brothers after 18 years.



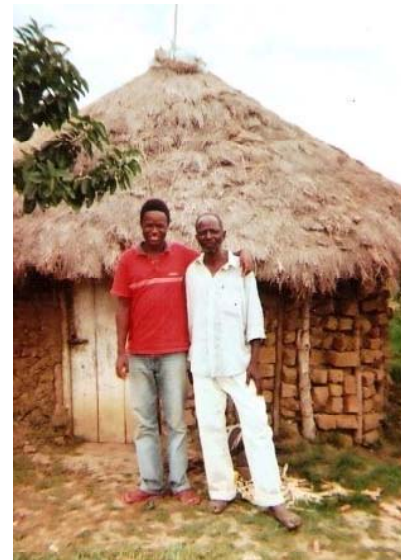
*Emmanuel and his father*

According to tribal custom Ema was not allowed to enter his father's house until certain rites were performed, so there was a party with speeches and prayers and Caito said there were tears for two days. Emmanuel wanted to stay for a week with his new family in the village so Caito headed to Bungoma town. Then

the violence began and we lost contact with Ema. Caito said that busses and businesses shut down and at night there were police

**Emmanuel's father was in shock the first day and cried a lot. The second day was filled with story telling, prayers, and tribal customs. Ema is a Luo just like Barack Obama!**

firing guns to "keep order". It was a frightening way to ring in 2008, but Caito got a bus to Uganda and was met by a family friend and long time BH supporter **Sabrina Eagan**. She sponsored his flight home! In case that wasn't enough, Sabrina also sponsored Ema to get back through Uganda. Thank you Sabrina and everyone who helped in this life changing project! I have never seen Ema look quite so happy.



*Emmanuel and his father*

## REACHING OUT IN BAGAMOYO

As long as you all keep enabling us to do so, we will keep getting people back to work, getting kids in school, and feeding them breakfast, dressing wounds, and keeping babies well fed.

### ART Gives Miriam Back Health, BH Gives Her a Hand Up

Thanks to Saskia and Daphne from Holland, Miriam will re-start her business selling donuts from her house. Miriam is HIV+ and just got on Anti-retroviral medicine

## Habibu and Shabani



*Sarah and Habibu*

Great things happening here for these two little boys. For those who don't know, Habibu and Shabani are the sweetest, smiley-est, cutest kids ever. Habibu has cerebral palsy, Shabani was grossly malnourished when we met him and is in good shape now, but will always be a bit small. Their mom is mentally ill. We have been feeding them for two years but it's been a huge challenge. A few months ago their mother took a turn for the worse. She refused to care for the children and insisted

after being very sick. She had a rough start but now looks and feels good. She is looking forward to being self sufficient again.

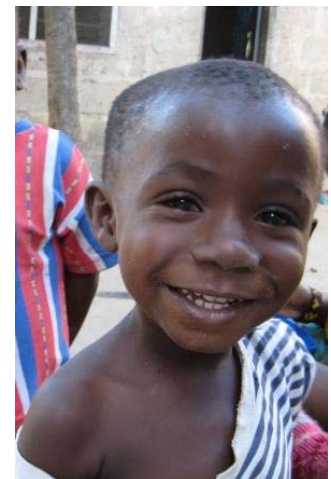
Be sure to visit our blog to learn all about the work we're doing in Bagamoyo!

[tzkids.blogspot.com](http://tzkids.blogspot.com)

### Mbaraka

Mbaraka is a boy with a facial tumor who lives near the Baobab Home. He has been conditionally accepted by the Facing the World charity to have the tumor removed, in England, all expenses paid. If his tumor proves operable, they will take him. His CT scans were lost in England and that's what has caused the delay. Facing the World will pay for more scans so we scan again soon. We are hoping for the best!

Caito helped their mother get long term, temporary birth control. And just when we thought Mama Habibu had reached her worst point, wandering around, begging, and fighting, she did something very surprising. She acquired some mangoes and started selling them on her own. She does not want her children back. We are happy that she is maintaining herself and we hope that it continues.



*Shebani*

## Rahema Starts School!



Rahema

Baobab has come a long way and so has Rehema! When we first began helping her she was a few days old and very sick. She and her sister graduated from our care but recently we helped get Rehema into kindergarten. After an inauspicious start (she ran away), she is doing great and loves school.

## Housebuilding

Our fourth house is almost done. It's been in "slow go" mode since the lead builder got chicken pox. Thank you to the Oberholzer family of Switzerland for enabling that house! Volunteer Neil Richardson will help finish up the house at the end of January.

## The (former) Street Boys

Some of our boys have family in different parts of Tanzania and we do our best to keep them in contact with them. This year for Christmas, William went home to his Aunt, Benedictor to his uncle, Gabriel to his sister, and Saadi to find out who remains in his old town. Saadi has not been home in 7 years.



Yassini, Benard, Gabriel, Mugin, Pascal (peace), Ema, Benedictor (standing), Pascal and Saadi and Justis

Yassini stayed in Bagamoyo so that we could get him into a better school this term. He will be joining Mbaraka, William and Emmanuel at Pugu Secondary School. This is the school where one former Tanzanian President attended and one was a teacher. The school is so overcrowded that boys sleep two to a twin bed. They study in shifts at night so that they never sleep together. Even knowing this, Yassini is eager to study there because they have a science lab, a library and more teachers. A special thank you to Benard and Yassini. They helped us immeasurably caring for Georgie and looking for his family. We are very blessed to care for such kind, dependable and helpful guys. Recently, we went to the pool for a much needed break for all.

One of the most exciting developments since the summer is that

Pascal, thanks to the efforts of volunteers Lynne, Daniel, Zuhura and Daphne, has learned to read. He was in the 5th grade but could not read even the simplest words in Swahili. It took us almost a year before we even realized, he was so adept at hiding it. He now reads anything and everything. We believe that he is dyslexic so if anyone has any resources on this, please send them along!



Pascal and Daniel working on reading

All of the boys need a dental cleaning! None have ever been to the dentist. We just do not have the money now. The cost is \$40 per boy if anyone wants to take this on!

## The Breakfast Program

Don't call it SOCAC anymore. Big changes here, and we are confident that they are all for the good. After much discussion we have decided to move the program to Kisiuiani elementary school. Opening at a school gives us so many advantages. We will feed more children who are in need and spend donor dollars more efficiently since we will pay no rent. We chose a school in the worst area of town. Even though by Tanzanian standards some of the children are not orphans or "vulnerable", the malnutrition rate here is so high that we are not too afraid that we will be giving any-

one redundant nutrition. Rama the breakfast program coordinator will do home visits to ensure the kids are doing well.

**Please consider making a donation to the new breakfast program as we make it bigger and stronger!**



*The Breakfast Program kids in their new uniforms*

## Volunteers, Visitors

These days, we have been beyond fortunate to receive some of the most hard working, generous, patient and understanding volunteers imaginable from all over the world.

**Sarah Towndrow** came to TZ to volunteer on her gap year in 2000. She met Gabriel while working at a home for street boys then and knew that he stood out from the other boys. Sarah's mother Jill and I have corresponded over the years about Gabriel's progress. Sarah decided to pay her old friend a visit. Before she left the UK Sarah had an incredible all night fundraising party which provided crucial general operating expenses for BH. For much of her visit, Sarah stayed right in the heart of the Home where the traffic can get hectic with sick kids, healthy kids, loud kids and hungry

kids. She took it all in stride. Then the whole Townsend Clan showed up and I got to finally meet my dear pen e-friend, Jill. Sarah threw us a great party and in the revelry, a cow named Dora was pledged. Karibu Dora!

In November, **Emma Mbaraka Thor** returned to Bagamoyo after several years gone. She brought her 4 year old son **Solomon** and her mom **Eva**. Together they all worked in the breakfast program each day. Emma's Kiswahili was handy to have around. Her friends and family in Sweden sent a very generous donation. Among many other things, it enabled us to get Mwanaidi a much needed MRI scan on her legs for \$700 and helped Ema to find his father. Karibuni tena Emma and family!



*Daphne visiting Saidi after he got hit by a motorcycle with gifts from Italy.*

Currently **Saskia** and **Daphne** of Holland are here. They are friends of two-time volunteer **Marjolijn**. Once again, they did incredible fundraising before they left Holland and brought shoes and clothes for the kids. So far their donation has bought about 50 school uniforms and shoes for our breakfast program kids who

have none. They also paid for a new pipe to be installed from the Baobab Home to the water company to improve water flow. We are constantly having to buy water on the street which would be a fortune when there are dozens of diapers to be washed. They bought us a few buckets of paint and gave the front porch a much needed white wash. They also enabled our babysitter Mwajuma to go for evaluation and treatment of her irregular heart beat and high blood pressure at the Heart Institute. Hats off to them for still smiling during this busy month of preparation!!

Making a surprise appearance is **Martha** of Canada! We didn't expect her, but we are glad she is here!! She works the breakfast program each day with Rama. She is finishing up a book project with one of the former street boys

named **Mussa**. She also helps to take Mwanaidi swimming to give her legs some exercise and she is helping me to edit some policy documents.



**Thanks to Sarah and Martha, former street boy **Mussa** (on right) is writing about his life as a Mangati cow herder, why he ran away as a child, and how he came to go to school. Here he is pictured in his tribal clothes and school shoes. His life as an insider and outsider to his own tribe makes for compelling reading. **Mussa** learned to read only 4 years ago but now devours books and speaks Swahili, English and his tribal language.**

## Donations, Publicity and Fundraisers

Shane Hofeldt, KT Miller, and Laura Guyer Miller have prepared a book about the Baobab Home and you can have your very own copy by visiting [blurb.com](http://blurb.com). The text was written by Laura, photos were taken by KT and the design and inspiration came from Shane. Order one and keep us on the coffee table! Thank you Blurb Team!

Coming soon to a mailbox near you! Carol Montgomery has designed and donated a beautiful desktop calendar for 2008 with pictures of Bagamoyo children, again with photos supplied by KT Miller. We are sending them out to donors this month. If you don't see yours soon, please write to us! Pictured right is one of the children.

 An advertisement for a book titled "The Baobab Home: A Babies' Home & C...". The ad features a small image of the book cover on the left, which shows a group of children. On the right, there is the Blurb logo and the text "The Baobab Home A Babies' Home & C...". Below the advertisement, the URL [www.blurb.com/bookstore/detail/126128](http://www.blurb.com/bookstore/detail/126128) is displayed.


### **Mwanahamisi**

Her mother died years ago. She lives with her grandmother who supports several orphaned grandchildren. We got Mwanahamisi into primary school two years ago and she is doing well. In 2007 we got her treated for a severe foot fungus and worms. This month she needs shoes and supplies for school.

## What We Still Need.

Despite all this success, and because of it, we need your help more than ever! The new school year just started and we got many more kids into school than we anticipated. Dora the cow will need a house, the baby home needs a few repairs, our vehicle needs a tuneup and we need a new filing cabinet!

We depend on those monthly donations a lot! You'd be surprised how much \$20 can do per month. Also, if you would like to donate some computer time we need just one person who is able to do some administrative work every month. If you are interested, please write to Terri at [info@tzkids.org](mailto:info@tzkids.org)

### Kwaanza

Kwanzaa is an African American holiday celebrating the concept of Pan Africanism. It uses the Swahili language to convey ideas of self determination and unity. Jo and Mike Place celebrated in Plainfield, NJ this year sharing the Baobab Home DVD and the 2008 calendar while raising money. Asanteni!!

## To our global family of supporters

ASANTENI SANA\*THANK YOU\*DANK U VEL\*MERCI\*  
DANKE\*GRAZIE\*TACKA DIG\*WABALE\*GRACIAS\*  
THANKS MATE!

