

# Θεν ανδ Νατηαν □ σ Νεωσ

Τηε Τιγερσ Χλυβ Προφεχτ – Υγανδα



It seems a long time since were back in the UK. The smell of freshly washed clothes has long worn off and the dust has now re-entered every pore on our bodies but that is a small price to pay for the joy and excitement that comes with working with the street boys of Kampala. They never fail to be a source of amusement which is amazing considering the lives they lead. The greatest joy remains in seeing the progression a boy makes from when he arrives at the drop in centre in town looking tatty, thin and smelly to when they leave Tudabujja to go back to their family or start in a new foster family, looking smart, healthy, confident and well, smelly, after all they are teenage boys! In many cases it is almost the story of the Lost Son which Jesus told in Luke 15 acted out before our eyes.

Sadly not all the stories end happily. As we write this news letter we have been met with very sad news that Ganafa, a boy who was just recently resettled has died aged 12. He left Tudabujja halfway home about two weeks ago, healthy, full of joy for the new life that lay ahead of him and proud of his achievements to leave his old habits behind him. He was reunited with his family but found his mother was very sick, a few days later she died. Then last weekend we got the news that he had also died of Pneumonia which was not picked up at the hospital. The combination of recovering from malaria, the trauma of the death of his mother and his lifestyle of sniffing glue to cope with the daily toils of life while he was living on the streets meant that the pneumonia became too much for Ganafa's body to handle. We can take comfort knowing that he did not die alone on the streets like other boys but that he received love and care from the members of the Tigers staff and boys and that he was able to be reunited with his family and see his mother again, if only for a short time. The father of the family died long time ago so one of Ganafa's older brothers is looking after the siblings that include 8 and 10 year old girls. Our social workers are trying to find a way to support this whole family in the long term.

There has been much encouragement 11 other boys have left Tudabujja this last month to be given a permanent alternative to life on the streets, the majority of them returning to their families. The boys are met back in their villages with a whole host of reactions. Thankfully the project social workers are well trained and have good experience to be able to help the boys and the families to see a way forward for the whole family. Also since returning three Farm apprentices have finished their year of basic sustainable agriculture training and have also returned to their villages where they have been assisted to put into practice what they learnt while they were with us for the year.

We have had a good number of visitors over the last couple of months. The Coulter family who members of our sending church, Christ Church, Winchester came and stayed with us for a week before moving to Kenya, also David our Vicar at the church and Mike Carson met up with us while they were in Uganda visiting other parts, Jen's old youth leader, Roy was in Uganda for a month doing things that men half his age would be very proud of and we also had a team from Holy Trinity Church, Bradley Stoke come and run a holiday club for the boys as well as give

some much needed IT and capacity building training to the staff here. The longest member of staff at Tigers now knows how to turn a computer on and next week Nathan is going to introduce him to the world of e-mailing!

We also have had time away ourselves; we had a much needed weekend away to Lake Mburo. It was mainly a chance to relax with friends but it is also the only accessible place where Zebra can be seen so it was nice to go and see some in the wild.



Uganda is in a time of turmoil at the moment. About a month ago we heard the news that many of the IDP (Internally Displaced People) Camps in the North of Uganda were beginning to close down as many of the people living there have begun to return to their homes as much of the fighting had died down. This good news was quickly replaced with the news of the floods across parts of Uganda, killing many lives destroying homes and businesses of hundreds of thousands so many people have had to return to the camps so that they can have access to food and shelter. A 10 month food shortage is predicted in these areas as the land recovers from the damage of the floods.

We are also gearing up for CHOGM (Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting) which will take place in November. The Queen, 53 heads of Government from within the commonwealth, including Gordon Brown and 5000 delegates will descend on Kampala. We hope and pray that this all goes well and that after massive investment from the Government here to improve the infrastructure and aesthetics of the city that this event will somehow improve the lives of the local Ugandan. We don't yet know what will happen during these weeks, roads closed, tight security, Kampala hasn't seen a riot for almost 5 months now so there is fear that rioters are saving themselves. Many expatriates have planned holiday for this time, to get out of the country or city, we will remain as we suspect that life for the street children will be very difficult during this period as the streets will probably be 'cleaned up'!

Away from that we have improved our 'RETRAK Wrapped Up' gift catalogue available all year round but worth having a look at in the run up to Christmas [www.retrak.org/content/view/191/284/](http://www.retrak.org/content/view/191/284/) and we also have a range RETRAK branded clothing which you might want to look at too.

For regular up to date news you can visit our Blog [www.nathanandjen.blogspot.com](http://www.nathanandjen.blogspot.com) or you can e-mail is on [n.j.gregory@talk21.com](mailto:n.j.gregory@talk21.com) to tell us your news.

God bless,

Jen and Nathan