

## Teethsavers May Newsletter 2008

### Crusade in the NYIMBA DISTRICT

NYIMBA, our first of five districts to introduce the Teethsavers Program - what we do and how we do it - was beyond excitement. Our teaching team of seven had an outstanding presentation in the native language - NYANJA. Not knowing any of the words said, I had a special opportunity to watch the teachers and the learners. There was much leaning forward, attentive focusing on each speaker and applause of gratitude. Packets loaded with printed material were passed out. The afternoon was time for all to watch teaching, screening, diagnosing and treating random selected primary school pupils. The finale was those participants who wanted an examination and treatment by our team. I was so proud of our team. I think they'd been practicing behind my back. It was a very long day, 16 hours, covering 216 miles (6 hours round trip). The trip was slowed by many deep chug holes.

### The next is Jack's report on our trip and presentation to the PETAUKE DISTRICT

As the participants slowly trudged into our small meeting room, I was thinking this is going to be a tough crowd to teach BUT, by our second presenter, Mutale Mulenga, who presented the Six-Year Molar Focus with passion, the room was warming up and the rest of the presentations went well. Japhet added a twist asking for volunteers to come forward and demonstrate what they had learned. This brought great laughs, applause and other human sounds of approval. Then each participant received 92 tooth brushes to distribute and teach others with (thus our motto, 'Teach a Few to Teach Many'). Our finale was to teach and treat primary school pupils and any participants that wanted an exam and treatment under a great big nearby shade tree on the hospital grounds. I rode in the back of our truck with the other team members. It was like riding in a covered wagon as we were covered with a tarp. It was a rough two and a half hour trip back to Katete. We leave one of our three operators and four dental assistants at a closer in rural school while the team is on the road. Teethsavers has been receiving many letters of appreciation from the villages and schools where they have served. Below please find one of these letters. This letter is from Fusala Fanwell Chisala, Headteacher at CHIMWA B SCHOOL.

On behalf of the school, as well as the community, I write to really thank and appreciate the services and help given to us by your organization, Teethsavers International.

Our school pupils, as well as the community, have really appreciated this gesture of LOVE by your organization for sending to us this team of gracious personnel who have conducted Oral Health Education to all of us freely and graciously. This is true of the Biblical Teaching by our Lord Jesus Christ who said "Love your neighbour, Do unto others as you would have them do to you. As a rural community, this gesture has left an indelible mark of love in our hearts. The Oral Health Education "planted" in us is being implemented in our villages as well as the school. Please keep up this spirit. I should also appreciate the gift of books given to our school. Thank you very much. May the Lord Almighty enrich you with a lot of wisdom. We hope you shall return to us again. God bless. Thank you.

Also following is a letter of appreciation from one of Dr. Rudd's trained dental assistants, Isaac Mumba.

Firstly, let me acknowledge that very few people have the information that Teethsavers International is disseminating to schools and communities. Therefore, being a member of the organization makes me valuable not only to the organization but to the nation of Zambia as well. The first opportunity that I had was to be trained as a dental assistant. As a dental assistant, my role is to sensitize the children on oral hygiene how to clean the six year molars. Since I value the health of these children, I have adopted the methodologies taught by Teethsavers to teach the children. Beside teaching, I also sit at the table assisting an operator with mixing of materials we use for filling the cavities and giving them the needed instruments. It is in this work we see the problems of periodontitis. Being one of the few people that are to teach many, I feel privileged and obliged to be patient and meek when dealing with the children. Other opportunities I have are that of knowing new places and people of different cultures. I also have an opportunity to learn from a dentist, Dr. Jack Rudd, and be trained as an operator in the future.

Much work remains to be done in Zambia, but we now have some trained people to help with the task. Other countries and areas are asking for our help such as Malawi, Sierra Leone and Nepal. We serve a Great and Wonderful God who cares about His children all over the world.

If you would like to make a donation, please send it to: Teethsavers International, Inc., c/o Westminster Presbyterian Church, 3321 Indiana, Lubbock, TX 79410. All donations are tax deductible.