

The Fantsuam Foundation — Further Progress in Zankan

By Cicely Brown (VSO) 2008-10

Since October 2008 when Friends of Nigeria supported Fantsuam's micro-finance team with loans to Zankan, a small community about 25km from Kafanchan, the Fantsuam Foundation's influence there has grown. This fall twenty individuals from the Zankan II group each collected N40,000 (about \$250) having successfully (i.e. unflinching!) repaid previous cycles. Here are some of their stories:

Forty-eight year old **KALO BATURE** was eager to answer the question: "How

has the loan helped you and the community?" As a pharmacist, Kalo is one of the only healthcare providers in easy



access to the village. "The loan has meant that the community is able to enjoy better health services. I can buy more expensive drugs such as cough syrups and strong antibiotics which simply weren't available before." It's also helped to provide income to him and his family which includes seven children.

More capital means more business means more profit. This has given

MARTHA DAVID the ability to solve more domestic problems for her extended family of five children and five grand-



children. The loan helped her improve her farm and her storage facilities which gave her enough money to care for a family member who became desperately sick and had to be hospitalised, which is often way beyond the reach of the rural poor. Now she's focusing on keeping her own high blood pressure under control so she can continue helping her family.

IYA LUKA began her story by saying that the first N5,000 loan she



received from Fantsuam felt to her like N500,000. Since then she has progressed. With the last loan alone, she was able to buy grains in quantities that allowed her to make enough profit at market not only to repay the loan but to build enough capital to roof her son's house that was in danger of collapsing in the rainy season.

As well as farming and rearing pigs, **LADI ANDREW** sells grains in three local markets – Manchok, Ganawuri, Kagoro. She, like Martha, was able to ensure that her husband recovered fully after being hospitalised after a car accident and was also able to make some repairs to



her house to strengthen it against the rainy season.

VICTORIA ADAMU made sure that she told her story before we left. She was brimming over with pride at having used the profit from her loan to pay for her son to attend the Federal Polytechnic in Bauchi where he is taking a Business Secretarial Diploma. As well as selling grains, Victoria keeps livestock, including goats and pigs.



Holiday Card Donations

Want to make your donation to FON a meaningful holiday gift for someone? Request cards that show through photos and a brief text that you have contributed in their honor to VSO or Fantsuam. Just mail your check and indicate how many VSO and/or Fantsuam cards you'd like to Friends of Nigeria, c/o Thomas Cassidy, PO Box 421, Pocono Pines, PA 18350. We'll send one card to you for each \$25 you donate. See samples at: http://www.friendsofnigeria.org/Announcements.htm#_FON_Donation_Gift.

President's Column

By Mike Goodkind (16) 65-67

Where's the party?

The obvious answer is that FON is celebrating the Peace Corps' 50th anniversary and holding our own biennial meeting in Washington the weekend of Sept. 23-25, 2011. Some observers are estimating that about 10,000 RPCVs and other friends will be in the Washington Metro area the weekend of our meeting.

FON has booked a bloc of hotel rooms at the Sheraton Crystal City Hotel in Arlington, VA. It's the central gathering place for our own party, and we have a hospitality suite there for the duration. We'll be attempting to schedule our events either within walking distance or an easy Metro ride from the hotel. Downtown Washington is only minutes away from a Metro stop across the street from the hotel. The hotel is also near Sunday's anniversary ceremonies at Arlington National Cemetery and the Memorial bridge walk to the National Mall, and our observers on the ground assure us there are many great venues to enjoy food and drink just outside our door. The room price is a reasonable \$119 until our bloc is filled or Aug. 23, whichever comes first.

If you haven't yet reserved your rooms, I urge you to do so even if you are unsure of attending. Reservations require a credit card guarantee but no deposit, so your planning is without obligation. Get more information or reserve at <http://www.starwoodmeeting.com/Book/PEACECORPS> or call 1-888-627-820.

FON is busy planning our own activities as well as easy ways to link up to Peace Corps-related events. We'll have a dinner event, probably Friday night, as well as additional entertainment, education and fun. If you have suggestions, please contact **Ken Sale (15) 65-67** (Ksale@aol.com) who is scouting out many of the preliminary arrangements. (Please put the phrase "FON/50th" in the subject line.) Feel free to contact me as well (mgoodkind@earthlink.net).

We'd especially like to hear from FON members in the DC Metro area who have ideas for activities and can perhaps join the fun early on to make the event a success.

Updates about our gathering will be provided in future issues of the newsletter and on our GoogleGroup (You are a member, aren't you? If not, contact me at mgoodkind@earthlink.net to join). Also, the National Peace Corps Association is sponsoring a variety of events. You can see their timetable at: <http://www.peacecorpsconnect.org/resources/peace-corps-50th-anniversary/#key>.

Our meeting and gathering have a decidedly Peace Corps flavor, although it's important to recall that Friends of Nigeria's membership and activities reach beyond our U.S. Peace Corps founders. We have members from similar international groups, including VSO, which we support financially, and CUSO-VSO, the Canadian volunteer overseas organization which recently merged with VSO. In an effort to reach beyond our Peace Corps roots, a former FON newsletter editor, **Andy Philpot (VSO) 65-67**, has rejoined the FON board as our Canadian representative. He will be attending a meeting in Vancouver in early Dec. with the hope of attracting CUSO, VSO and others to FON. You'll see this evolving focus in obvious ways, such as reports on new members and their affiliations, and in subtle ways, such as less frequent use of the word "Peace Corps" on FON forms and literature. But we are not changing; we are making sure that our tent is open to all dedicated Friends of Nigeria.

See you in Washington – if not before.

Correction

The fall newsletter incorrectly (page 9) identified Alan Frishman as a member of group 24. Alan is actually in group 22.

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Job Opening!

**Work out of your home!
No heavy lifting (usually!)
(no pay either)**

*By Mike Malaghan (25) 66-69,
FON Vice-President*

The current FON board has agreed that we and a small volunteer team are having too much fun doing all the work. We are ashamed that we have not invited more people to work for nothing other than the pure joy of contributing.

Peter Hansen, our treasurer and membership chair, would like some help with his work. There are many opportunities available for keeping in touch with members and their records, and (a big AND) do some marketing to bring more Nigerian RPCVs and alumni of other NGO groups into the dues-paying fold.

Which brings up the next opportunity to contribute. As you may have noticed from recent FON newsletters, we are supporting more and more Nigerian development projects. You have seen that when the money goes directly to a trusted person on the ground in Nigeria, our money goes a loooooong way. We are always on the lookout for a new worthy project. We welcome new ideas, VETTING the ideas that come our way, and keeping in contact with

our friends on the ground and with the organizations we benefit. Can you help?

Every other year we have a reunion. Planning for this September's reunion program – coinciding with the Peace Corps' 50th Anniversary – is fairly well along, and we are welcoming people who can join our planning team to make this a successful – and fun – event. We are looking for a variety of talents, ranging from selecting the beer list and keeping a headcount to identifying interesting speakers and meeting venues.

Do you like the FON newsletter? If you are one of the many who reads it cover to cover and wonders how Warren Keller and his team manage to put all this together, we invite you to change wonder to contribution. We have a book editor, but how about other arts – film, theatre, music, poetry? We cover the Nigerian news, but how about some opinion or analysis? (Think of all the fun you could have bragging to your friends that you are a contributing editor.)

You may have noticed how Greg Jones has brought us into the electronic age over the past four years. We have plenty of opportunity for you to use your computer/internet expertise to put us on Facebook and Twitter (and whatever else pops up in the future).

And, we are always seeking dedicated board members. The next official vote on the Board of Directors is September at the Washington, D.C. reunion. But the news is better than that. You can start NOW. That's right; you don't have to wait until September to be voted onto the board and start working for free.

Here's the best part. All you have to do to get started is to send an email to President Mike Goodkind (mgoodkind@earthlink.net) or me (mgm@malaghan.net). Or contact Peter (pjhansen@ia.net), Warren (warrendkk@yahoo.com), or Greg (gregory.j@comcast.net) directly. We know once you start getting active, you will be thrilled when one of us contacts you, teaches you the secret FON handshake, and votes you into our select group.

Our operators are standing by.

But wait, there's more.

We are also looking for new ideas. If you have been thinking of what else FON could do to keep the memories alive and make a continuing contribution to Nigeria, bring it on. We need fresh ideas, fresh hands.

If you are thinking "maybe" or "I will get back to this later," drop us an email TODAY before the mood passes. Let's talk.

Letters to the Editor

In response to Richard Holmquist's letter in the fall FON newsletter, Richard writes, "Obituaries are depressing enough and there is no need to make



them more so. No need for the grey background." I do not find obituaries or the grey background depressing. For me the obituaries are an appropriate marker that this person's active involvement has come to an end.

I do not object to the cause of death being included. The cause of death and a little of their family involvement tells me these people ate and slept, laughed

and cried like the rest of us. The deceased become more real when some of these details are included.

Richard writes, "...death is diminishing no matter how you look at it." Why place a value against it? Death isn't uplifting or diminishing, good or bad. It just is.

Bill Schroeder (13) 64-66

Building a World of Change Makers — Ashoka Fellows in Nigeria

As announced in the recent fall newsletter, FON made a one-time donation to Ashoka in support of its program in Nigeria. Ashoka has been active in Nigeria since 1991 and has elected over 80 fellows in that time. Profiled are three of the fellows, who work on Transparency and Accountability issues. Election year, city, and state follow the name.

CHIBUZO EKWEKWUO (2001, Aba, Abia)

Public & Private Rights Watch

Chibuzo is helping to solve the problem of widespread corruption among Nigerian government officials. Previous efforts to address high-level corruption have been based on the premise that citizens are either victims or pawns of those in power, and hence, they are powerless to effect meaningful change. Chibuzo, who believes that it is up to the people to make democracy function effectively, has created the first initiative that is addressing the issue of corrupt leadership in Nigeria as a consequence of ineffective “follower-ship.” He believes the foundation of an effective civil society can be forged through elected politicians being held accountable by the courts, citizens and local leaders. Citizens need to be educated to see the correlation between corrupt leadership and lack of public investment, he argues, and a new generation of young people must learn



that politics in a democracy is a noble profession. Based on these convictions, Chibuzo works to re-educate and reorient Nigerians toward becoming active, ethical participants in the democratic process.

AUSTIN ONUOHA (2001, Abakaliki, Ebonyi)

Human Right Commission

Understanding that violence often results from the conditions of poverty, Austin uses conflict situations as the entry point into communities to improve existing institutions’ capacity for economic and social development. Where police and courts have failed to resolve conflict, Austin restructures and formalizes local, democratic institutions to serve as dispute mediators and foster community building. In order to ensure effectiveness and sustainability, Austin channels his idea through already existing local institutions called Community Development Associations, or CDAs. The end result is a stronger sense of solidarity and a mobilized corps of engaged citizens, ready to advocate for positive change and implement new systems toward a better future.



JOHN PATRICK NGOYI (2006, Ijebu-Ode, Ogun)

Justice, Development and Peace Commission

John Patrick believes that poverty in Nigeria can be alleviated and democracy sustained if citizens hold public officials accountable to honor their electoral promises, be fiscally responsible, and develop programs and budgets only with the input and regular monitoring of the community. His Justice, Development and Peace Commission (JDPC) empowers communities to critically analyze government performance and budgets at all levels. From local Town Hall Meetings to a monthly publication to monitoring and advocacy groups, he provides arenas where citizens can learn how to be politically active and then use their new understanding to hold government accountable. Using basic communication tools and the power of the existing social infrastructure, including microfinance groups and religious communities, John Patrick demonstrates not only an effective method for democracy building but also for behavior change.

Keep The Lorry Rolling!

As of November 30, 2010:

VSO Project (since 2004):

Total raised:	\$39,109
Number of donations:	718
Number of donors:	356

Fantsuam Project (since 2008):

Total raised:	\$13,306
Number of donations:	206
Number of donors:	164

VSO Blogs

Emily Bullock (UK) 2010-
Cicely Brown (UK) 2008-10
Glenn Dodge (Canada) 2008-9
Wil van Koningsbrugge (the Netherlands) 2006-7

<http://www.emily-in-nigeria.blogspot.com/>
<http://cicelyinnigeria.blogspot.com/>
<http://acanuckamuck.blogspot.com/>
<http://www.wilvankoningsbrugge.whereareyou.net/>

The Pulaku Project

By *Christoph Herby (Benin)*

I'm a Benin PCV, and I'm about to COS and embark on a project with the Fulani that will take us through Nigeria. The Pulaku Project is an initiative to document the changing lifestyles of the Fulani throughout West Africa. We're especially interested in finding contacts in northern Nigeria. We are funding the project through photo print sales, but more importantly we want to reach an audience interested in the Fulani and West African culture. You can learn more about it on our website: www.pulaku.com.



Language Interpreters Needed

I am with Lionbridge Federal, a language services company, and I am looking for potential interpreters of various languages spoken in Nigeria, including Geruma, Ejagham, and Kalabari. We work with the Federal Immigration Court system all over the country, and we currently have an increased need for interpreters of these languages. All of our interpreters work on a freelance basis, making this a great way to earn supplemental income while providing a much needed and valuable service to the community.

Please let me know if you are interested or have any suggestions as to how I might contact potential interpreters of these languages -- individual referrals or suggestions for other organizations that might be helpful for me to contact. If you have any questions about this, I would be more than happy to provide further details. Thank you in advance for any response.

Kate Marden, Recruiter, Lionbridge Federal, 1101 14th Street NW, Suite 200, Washington, DC 20005

Tel: 202-741-3968 Toll Free: 888-241-9149 Ext: 3968 Fax: 202-289-4677
www.lionbridge.com <http://interpretation.lionbridge.com/>

Working in Nigeria Again

By *Mel Schnapper (15) 65-67*

I am most likely (90%) returning to Nigeria for a one-year contract as Change Management Advisor to a newly created Federal IRS, based in Abuja. I would like the FON community to know that I could be available to assess/monitor/check out any proposed or already funded project for FON support (new or continuing).

Thanks to FON, I met **Wilhelmina van Koningsbrugge (VSO) 06-07**, a Dutch VSO sponsored by FON who was in Abuja during one of my assignments there in 2007.

Event: The Peace Corps and Africa, 24-26 March 2011

Submitted by *Cathy Day (Niger) 04-07*

UW-Madison is hosting Peace Corps and Africa, an event to honor Wisconsin's 50-year involvement in Peace Corps, from March 24 to 26, 2011. Hosted by the African Studies Program, the gathering will bring musicians, artists, story-tellers and thinkers to campus to celebrate, reflect and debate on the legacy of Peace Corps in Africa. Both former volunteers from all

over the country and a wide spectrum of participants with ties to Africa are planning to attend. Events will include panels, discussions, StoryCorps interviews, art exhibits, dance and a keynote speech by current PC director Aaron Williams.

More details are available at <http://africa.wisc.edu/peacecorps>.

Conference Planning Team, African Studies Program, University of Wisconsin-Madison, email: events@africa.wisc.edu.



Benin bronze plaque

Recollections

By Julian Martin (03) 61-63

What Do You Think of the Queen?

I had supper with the priests my first evening at Abbot Boys Secondary Grammar School. Those two men of God, who took a vow of poverty, had a cook, two houseboys, a large refrigerator, a new Peugeot and a fine well furnished house cleaned by the houseboys. The priests were served three meals a day and tea and cookies twice a day. It was not how missionaries were depicted in *Reader's Digest*. Headmaster's vow of humility was tested daily by the power to lord it over, abuse, and degrade the hired help and the three hundred teen-age boys under his control—he failed the test.

"What balance," the assistant headmaster priest marveled as he watched me lift food with the fork tines up. I watched



Dwight Siemiazko and Julian. Dwight is a disabled union underground coal miner. We were speaking about labor history at the grave site of Cisco Estep, the union miner killed by the machine gun on the coal company armored train in 1913. Another friend and I do labor history and mountain top removal tours.

them cut their food with a knife and fork and then push it with the knife up on the back of the fork, tines down.

"What do Americans think of the queen, Julian?" Assistant Headmaster asked. I didn't know at first which queen he was talking about. I had no knowledge of the brutal British treatment of the Irish and never heard of the Black and Tans or Michael Collins. "No Irish nor dogs need apply," was how some British considered the Irish. It probably disappointed the priest to learn that Americans seldom mentioned the Queen.

"What about the cowboys, Julian?"

Assistant Headmaster was as ignorant about cowboys as I was about the Black and Tans. He thought cowboys drove cattle hundreds of miles and fought gun battles with Indians. I'm not aware of

any briefer period in any nation's history that had so many movies made about its heroes and anti-heroes. Almost before the cowboys got started as a profession, they were replaced by cattle-hauling trains. It was like telling a kid there is no Santa Claus. The priest wanted so much for the movies to be real. It was going to be a long two years.

Headmaster told me that he had hired Emanuel Obiako Anyaduigwu to cook for me and that I should pay him three pounds per month which was then about nine dollars. I was stunned by the low wage and being a union coal miner's son immediately doubled the amount, causing unforeseen consequences. The cook next door was fired when he asked his Indian "master" for a raise.

My Indian neighbor had picked up on the superior feelings of many of the Irish priests. I saw him imperiously call for his house boy to come and pick up a small box and carry it a short distance into the house.

The other Indian teacher was loved and respected by the Africans. He and his family attended a local church and were given a tumultuous welcome of dancing and singing in front of their house when they returned from their trip home to India.

Before I arrived, some conflict must have occurred between the two Indian families. They were not speaking. I never learned why they were so cool to one another.

There were some pleasant conversations with my Indian neighbor but the other Indian teacher was more formal—I don't recall more than casual greetings and perfunctory exchanges. My Indian neighbor was weak and more sociable than the other Indian who was strong and private.

The several Indian teachers in Igboland were on contract with the owners of the schools and were recruited from the mostly Christian state of Kerala. Christians in Kerala claim that the disciple Thomas carried the gospels to southern India. Headmaster was in charge of hiring and firing and he, of course, hired Christians. I doubt if he knew that I was a fading Christian whom he would help fade clear out of

sight, forever—not eternal forever just the forever that would be my life.

I thanked the priests for dinner and walked across the school compound to my new home. It was a newly built cement block duplex with wood doors and window frames and a bam bam (onomatopoeia for a metal roof). I was the first inhabitant. The other half of the duplex was the school carpenter's shop.

First Night

The school electric generator was on from six until nine in the evening. When the lights went out after nine, I lit my Aladdin lamp and started to read at the dining table. No one told me about sausage bugs—that was my name for them. They looked like miniature sausages with wings and they did suicide plunges toward my bright light. Their dying bodies covered the table. I went to bed.

Emanuel Obiako Anyaduigwu had neatly made up my bed. I had a manservant! It went against my proletarian upbringing. But what was I to do, fire him after Headmaster had landed him a cash paying job? And compared to Emanuel I was rich so I did what rich people do—hired a servant. My servant seldom wore shoes which caused his feet to be splayed and his legs were skinny as if he might have suffered from malnutrition as a youth.

I tucked in the mosquito net and tried to go to sleep. It was my first night alone in Nigeria. The fun had just started.

It was January and the harmattan wind brought tiny sand particles from the Sahara in a cool haze to my sinuses as I lay awake in my new home. The wood in my house was green, and it responded to the dry wind by making sounds like a machete crashing through the door. All over the house the wood was taking turns drying out and contracting with loud cracks.

To accompany the cracking wood, what sounded liked at least a hundred lizards decided to visit the attic side of my ceiling. It was the Nigerian lizard Olympics. They were all running sprints, each in a different direction, and I didn't know what they were. Were they rats or some exotic African animal? The training at

UCLA did not prepare me for machetes crashing through the doors nor lizards happily chasing around and perhaps fornicating in my ceiling.

As if the sounds of the axe murderer and the lizards weren't enough to worry me, the women in the neighboring village started wailing a mournful chorus. The drums joined in. I knew for certain they were coming after me. I would not make it past my first night alone in Nigeria. The story would be on every front page in the United States.

There was a night watchman who patrolled the school compound. He was not an Igbo and I suppose he was afraid of the dark and the Igbos. At intervals, he let out a scream to bolster his courage and ward off the thieves and evil spirits of the night. I don't know if he was having fun with the new European or if it was just a coincidence that he chose to scream right outside my open window at the same time the machete murderer came through the door accompanied by the drumming and wailing out back and whatever that was in the attic. I think I passed out. The next thing I knew it was morning, sunny, bright and quiet outside. I was alive.



Holly Grove Poverty Initiative group to which Dwight and I were speaking. The red bandana is in honor of my grandfather and the other union miners who fought at the Battle of Blair Mountain. They wore red bandanas to identify that they were on the union side. They were called red necks.

I found out later that the wailing and drums were people mourning the death of a baby in the village behind my house. They weren't coming after me. They had their own problems. And later that day what looked like hundreds of lizards were jumping from under the roof eaves to escape the attic heat as the sun got higher in the sky. They returned that night and every night for two years.

The Beatings

After three weeks teaching chemistry I gave my students their first chemistry test. In the Form 4 class, Edwin Igbozurike got a perfect score on the test—he was the only student who passed. I casually mentioned to Headmaster that everyone but Edwin failed the test.

The next day Headmaster came to my class with a handful of canes and ordered the students, except for Edwin, to line up and file out the door. On the way out and on the way back in, he grabbed each student by the hand, bent their fingers back and broke the canes on their stretched palms. As he beat on their hands, his face grew red and his eyes bulged. The canes, one at a time, disintegrated as he beat on my students. It was awful to watch. The students were in tears. I didn't want to teach in that unhappy environment. I felt as if I was in a Charles Dickens novel. No beatings, please.

The following day I told the students that I didn't approve of what Headmaster had done and that I would never again tell him about low student test scores nor would I allow him to come to my class and beat them.

I discussed the beatings with John Nwosu, my best Nigerian friend and a tutor at Abbot. "I fear for the priests and nuns" John said in answer to my question of what would happen if things got unwound in Nigeria as they had in the Congo. He told me of the Irish nuns at a neighboring school punishing the students by making them stand on their knees in the mid-day sun for two or three hours at a time.

I once walked by a classroom where Headmaster was teaching. He must have been talking about a biblical character. I heard him say with disgust in his voice, "And why did she do it? Because she was a Jewess."

Too many of the Irish priests were stereotypes of the British imperialists in a movie I saw as a kid. I never quite knew what I was seeing except there were hundreds of disorganized black warriors after the obedient, organized, red-coated, spit-and-polish British soldiers. The black men died with drama but the proper British just fell over dead.

I need to keep in mind that Headmaster was good to me. He provided all the creature comforts I needed, hired me a cook and ordered anything I needed to teach my classes. After Joyce Carlson, also of Nigeria III, and I got married he loaned us a Volkswagen. He was considerate and kind to me and Joyce, but not to Africans.

Within Seventy-Five Miles of Pittsburgh

By David Grove (05) 62-64
dlgrove@gmail.com

When we were about to begin our language training at UCLA in the fall of 1962, Dr. William Welmers, Visiting Professor of African and Near Eastern Languages who served as coordinator of our language instruction, provided our group with a general introduction to Hausa, Ibo and Yoruba. Explaining that they are tone languages, he said that we shouldn't have too much difficulty learning one of them "unless we grew up within 75 miles of Pittsburgh." At the end of the session I approached Dr. Welmers and confessed that I had grown up in Johnstown, which, raging floods notwithstanding, remained about 70 miles from Pittsburgh. Why, I asked, would my proximity to Pittsburgh make it difficult for me to learn one of the Nigerian languages? He replied, "Pronounce 'cot'." I did. "Now," he said, "pronounce 'caught'." Even my untrained ear could detect that I had pronounced the two words identically. That, he said, was why I would have difficulty with a Nigerian language.

Western Pennsylvanians don't articulate the "aw" sound of "caught," or "bought," or "sought," which sound is very important in the Nigerian languages. As luck would have it, my wife Barbara and I were posted to the suburbs of Lagos, where I taught (tot) law in the law faculty of the then-new University of Lagos and she taught English at the Lagos Anglican Girls Grammar School. Being linguistically challenged did not present as great a handicap there as would have been the case for me had we been assigned to many other places where our fellow trainees served. (Barbara grew up just outside of Philadelphia and so was free of this geography-based disability.)

Then and Now

By Jim Lancaster (01) 61-63

I am now retired from the federal government after nearly 30 years of experience in various federal agencies in addition to private consulting and economics experience. My wife Harriet was a county and federal senior manager/executive.

Harriet, daughter Illana, son Aaron, and I have all given service to the Peace Corps over these many years. Please see below. As one of the very few African Americans who joined the Peace Corps early in 1961, I never dreamed that at the time of the 50th anniversary of the Peace Corps there would be an African-American President and an African-American Peace Corps Director. I feel that my wife, children, and I have been truly blessed as a result of each of our Peace Corps experiences.

Jim Lancaster (01) 61-63

Peace Corps Volunteer, Kaduna & Zaria, 1961-63.

Assistant Director for Administration & Finance, ACTION/Peace Corps, Washington, D.C., 1979-81.

Harriet Lancaster (wife)

Director, Office of Planning and Evaluation, Peace Corps, Washington, D.C., 1980-85.

Peace Corps Country Director, Ghana, 1994-99.

Illana Lancaster (daughter)

Peace Corps Volunteer, Botswana, 1994-96.

Aaron Lancaster (son)

Senior Budget Analyst, Peace Corps, Washington, D.C.

Temp Duty Assignment as Admin Officer, Guyana, 2000-04.



Jim is fifth from the left in the second row, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, 1963.

Harriet and I have an NGO, African Literacy Art & Development Association (ALAD), www.aladafrica.org. Over the past seven years we have built a pre-kindergarten school for eighty students and an adult literacy center, a library and an adult literacy center, and, currently, our second library which will include an adult literacy center and a computer center. We have provided 150 women (and a few men) with micro-credit loans of an average of \$300.00 each. All of these projects are in Ghana, where we lived for five years.

In addition, I am rather an active board member of Hope

for Haiti, www.hopeforhaiti.com. We are doing wonderful things in Haiti. We recently received \$40 million of in-kind donations and approximately \$5 million in cash contributions. So, I am involved in my “mom and pop” NGO and a more mid-size NGO. It’s been fun and interesting.



Additions to the Smithsonian

By Steve Clapp (06) 62-64

Steve's Peace Corps memoir, Africa Remembered: Adventures in Post-Colonial Nigeria and Beyond, was published last year and reviewed in the Summer 2009 FON newsletter.

I have a friend who served in the

Belgian equivalent of the Peace Corps in Niger and is now a docent at the Smithsonian Museum of African Art in Washington, D.C. When I sold her a copy of my book last winter, she showed it to Janet Stanley, the museum's librarian, who requested a copy for her permanent collection and suggested selling the book in the museum's gift shop. After months of bureaucratic delay, the book went on

sale in the gift shop in July.

I also had occasion to mention to Janet that I had written my “major paper,” equivalent to a master's thesis, at Columbia Journalism School on a cult of Yoruba worshippers in Harlem. That paper, “African Theological Arch-Ministry, Inc.,” was still on file in one of Columbia's libraries and is now in the Smithsonian Museum's permanent collection as well.

After Peace Corps, Enugu—1967 to present

By *Richard K. Mastain (staff) 65-67*

In early June of 1967, the U.S. consulate in Enugu recommended the evacuation of all U.S. families. I drove Mary and our three daughters, Carey, Juli and Mardi, to Port Harcourt. They traveled to Zurich to join our son, Rick, where I joined them in July.

During the spring of 1967 I had applied to colleges and school districts. However, because of the on-coming civil conflict, the mail and phone systems provided no response. I did have an offer from the Education Development Center (EDC) in Newton, MA so that's where we headed following a month's travel in Europe.



Mary and Dick, 1967.

The EDC was one of the original Education Laboratories following passage of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965. The EDC staff, along with consultants from MIT and Harvard, was responsible for the development of some of the finest elementary and secondary school curricula ever presented.

My responsibilities included the planning and implementation of training programs for Peace Corps trainees, and the hiring and supervision of staff to

prepare PCVs for Liberia and Ethiopia. Happily some of the staff included past PCVs **Monica Newland Greeley (18) 65-67** and **Claudia Kutzler Parliament (18) 65-67**.

Following a decision by the Peace Corps to do in-country training, I was again looking for a job. In August, 1969 I was hired by Yale University to head a newly formed non-profit corporation, the New Haven Education Improvement Center (EIC). The purpose of the EIC was to determine the needs of the New Haven school system and to utilize the resources of Yale and six other colleges to assist in meeting those needs.

I wish that I could report that my four years in New Haven resulted in some significant changes. However, you, as PCVs in Nigeria and often as teachers back in the U.S., know that institutional change is difficult. I am proud of a major study EIC did with the Black Coalition of seven components of the New Haven school System: governance, finance, school management, library services, counseling services, reading programs and in-service opportunities. Each component was studied by a committee comprised of college and public school personnel, students and community members. The reports by each of the seven committees were extremely well done -- thorough, constructively critical and well documented. The recommendations, if implemented, could have made a significant difference. Almost everyone liked the reports, EXCEPT the local newspaper (especially the report on governance and finance) and the school administration.

I was fortunate to be assigned to the Yale Child Study Center to participate in the meetings of the center's faculty and to become involved in a study of two of New Haven's lowest achieving schools. During the five years of the study, the focus on parent involvement and school leader-

ship resulted in one of the five schools showing up in the top 10% of all New Haven elementary schools.

The last sixteen years of my 39 years in education were spent with the California Commission on Teacher Preparation and Licensing (renamed the Commission on Teacher Credentialing). The Commission is responsible for establishing the standards for the preparation and licensing of educators in the California Public School System. I joined the Commission in October, 1973 as a consultant. From 1975 to 1985 I served as Chief of Programs; from 1979 to 1985 as Chief of Licensing and professional development; and from 1985 to my retirement in October, 1989 as the Executive Director. A ceremony was held each year to honor a handful of Teachers of the Year. One year **Sharon Meeker Johns (23) 66-67** (PCV on the Owerri-Aba road) was honored, and another year **Doug Shult (23) 66-67** (PCV in Calibar) was honored.

Mary and I have lived in Ashland, OR since 1973 and are pleased to have chosen this place for our retirement years. We have been married 61 years. Our grown-up children, Rick, Carey, Juliann, and Mardi, join us in sending our very best to each of our extended Peace Corps/Nigerian family.

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Mary and Dick 2010.

The White Man's Burden, Why the West's Efforts to Aid the Rest Have Done So Much Ill and So Little Good

by William Easterly

Penguin Books, 2006, 436 pp.

Reviewed by David Strain (07) 63-66

A sixteen-year employee of the World Bank and now economics professor at New York University, William Easterly has turned on his fellow planners at the World Bank to write a gripping analysis of why so much of the \$2.3 trillion which has been spent on foreign aid has been ineffective despite being administered by people who care. In no way is this a plea to discontinue foreign aid to poor people in developing countries. But Easterly tries to define why the big plans, the “Big Pushes” of foreign aid, have so often not gotten down to the poor to help them in their misery, and he suggests approaches that would make aid more effective. In the course of the book he tells many fascinating stories about where aid has not worked (witness the \$4 billion lavished on the Nigerian steel mill from which not a single ingot has emerged), and where, sometimes with aid and sometimes without, ingenious people have devised ways to improve the poor's condition.

Easterly distinguishes between Planners and Searchers. “Planners” are like those at the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund who have a top-down approach on how to get governments needing their money to act. One problem is that these aid organizations require that they deal with the local government however corrupt or ineffective. The second is their one-size-fits-all approach to problems. There is little or no knowledge or investigation of whether the prescribed fix will work on the ground. Easterly equates “Searchers” with business men looking to make a profit in a market economy. They experiment to see how to make their

product work and sell, and if it doesn't, the business fails. The business analogy, he thinks, is appropriate because success is determined by whether the buyers buy, and failure is visible to all. This does not happen at the multitude of aid agencies, whose numberless goals (Jeffrey Sachs lists 449 interventions in his big 2005 plan *The End of Poverty*) and diffused responsibilities make it impossible to tell whether anything has been achieved and, if not, who is responsible. Feedback from the poor is limited, and the aid agencies are often more focused on the feedback from the donors (aid must use American contractors, buy American goods, not offend American religious scruples, satisfy American needs for the “big” solution, etc.) than on whether the aid is useful in alleviating the particular problem of the poor it is supposed to address.

Rather than the big plan, Easterly recommends a series of projects addressing particular problems at the local level using techniques which maximize effectiveness. When Gordon Brown as Chancellor of the Exchequer, in announcing Britain's latest big plan, commented about how easy and cheap it was to do good with medicine which would halve malaria deaths at twelve cents a dose or prevent malaria at \$4 a bed net, Easterly comments that if it is that easy why are there still millions dying without them or cutting up the bed nets for wedding veils or, an example I read recently, putting the bed net away so that it wouldn't get dirty. Easterly contrasts a “Searcher” solution of PSI, a Washington based NGO, which “sells bed nets for fifty cents through antenatal clinics in countryside Malawi” to poor mothers who value them and need them, giving the nurse who sells them a cut so she'll have a supply on hand and subsidizing the low priced sales by sales to better off families at \$5. Children nationwide under bed nets has risen from 8% to 55%. Where bed nets were given away free in Zambia 40% of the recipients did not even use them. And then there are the bridal veils.

This is the main theme, but in the over 384 pages of text, Easterly gives an

exciting, witty, and fact-filled account of why a results-oriented aid program is necessary and why so much has been thrown to the winds. He explores why aid agencies feel they must deal through corrupt governments (economists debate whether it is bad governments or poverty which has trapped the poor in poverty) and whether aid lifts poor countries into sustainable growth. He points out that aid agencies have their own needs for survival and adopt studies which show aid is effective while ignoring studies to the contrary. He gives many examples of how top-down planning to bring democracy or free markets, for example in Russia and Iraq, has failed. One reform I'd always favored was the registration of land so the owners could use the land value to borrow money. Easterly shows how this “great idea” failed when adopted in Kenya because it totally ignored the Luo land-use practice of seasonal exchange of plots, an owner/tenant relationship unknown in the west, and so has been abandoned. During the George W. Bush presidency, a neo-colonialism or neo-trusteeship for failing (or those thought likely to fail) countries was actively considered. To rebut this approach Easterly provides a compelling review of the lack of growth during colonialism and of the failures in our recent attempts to establish a market economy in Iraq.

There's too much covered in *The White Man's Burden* to do it full justice here. As it explores the West's attempts to do right by the poor, it opens for discussion many interesting questions about what we should be doing and why. I thoroughly recommend it.



Benin mask, 14th century

Working Towards a Culture of Peace in Africa

Abuja, Nigeria, 22-25 October 2010

By Mike Abkin (21) 66-68

The Africans who attended the Third Global Summit of the Global Alliance for Ministries and Departments of Peace in Japan in 2007, inspired by the Summit and its call for ministries and departments of peace, formed the African Alliance for Peace (AAP). The AAP has since expanded from the four countries represented at the Japan Summit (Rwanda, Senegal, Uganda, and South Africa) to also include members from Sierra Leone, Ghana, Nigeria, Democratic



2010 AAP Summit Attendees.

Republic of Congo, and Cameroon. It is still constantly growing.

The AAP's vision is to support the creation of a culture of peace and non-violence in all African countries, including calling for structures in government and civil society to support a culture of peace.

The AAP held its First Regional Summit in Accra, Ghana in 2008. The Second Regional Summit was held in 2010 in Abuja, Nigeria with the theme of "Building Institutional Capacities and Partnerships for a Culture of Peace." Twenty people attended, mostly from Nigeria and South Africa plus one each from Australia and the United States representing the Global Alliance. Many more Africans wanted to attend but were unable to due to funding limitations.

The papers presented covered prevention of political and electoral violence

in Africa, interfaith peace, the role and importance of institutionalizing peace through the establishment of ministries of peace in governments and of national peace academies, and next steps for peace in Nigeria. The presentations included much discussion, inquiry, and interactive exercises.

A highlight of the Summit was the showing of the film *Soldiers of Peace: Stories from 14 Countries around the World* and the ensuing discussion of it led by two of its featured "soldiers," Pastor James Wuye and Imam Muhammad Ashafa. The Imam and the Pastor both presented papers of their own the following day.

See <http://www.soldiersofpeacemovie.com/> for more about the film, and for another documentary about the inspiring story and peace work of Imam Ashafa and Pastor James, see <http://www.iofc.org/imam-pastor>. Also, the Imam and the Pastor have founded the Interfaith Mediation Centre in Kaduna, Nigeria whose vision is "Interfaith coexistence towards a developed society free of violent ethno-religious and socio political conflict" (<http://imcnigeria.org/>).

The Summit events concluded with a visit by four Summit organizers and attendees (Oseremen Irene, Victor Ogunmakin, Biancca Pace (Australia), and myself) to the offices of Nigeria's In-



Director General Golwa, Victor Ogunmakin, Biancca Pace, Oseremen Irene.

stitute for Peace and Conflict Resolution (IPCR) (<http://www.ipcr.gov.ng/>). Billed as a courtesy call on IPCR's Director General, Dr. Joseph Golwa, the meeting developed into a two-hour exchange

with the Director General and several of his division directors, recounting stories and plans about peace-building activities of our

respective organizations. Established in 2000, the IPCR is a Nigerian government think tank that conducts peace research, policy analysis, and interventions, including early warning and response in crisis situations both inside Nigeria and elsewhere in Africa. IPCR is also developing peace education curricula for dissemination to primary and secondary schools in Nigeria.

The next step for the AAP is attendance

at the next Global Summit of the Global Alliance, being held in October 2011 in Cape Town, South Africa. That venue will be an opportunity for the AAP to gather and chart its course for the coming years.

Some personal reflections about my return visit to Nigeria will appear in the spring FON newsletter. In the meantime, a report of the Summit, including a link to the paper I presented at national peace academies, is available at http://www.nationalpeaceacademy.us/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=280&Itemid=29.



Pastor James.



Imam Ashafa.

Edited by Virginia DeLancey (04) 62-64

New Election Timetable is Ready

The new timetable for the 2011 general election is ready and is to be released after the alterations to the amended constitution are endorsed by the state houses of assembly. The election is to be shifted from January to April to provide greater time for the registration of voters. Registration is to take place for only two weeks in January, after the distribution of the Direct Data Capture machines to all states and local governments by the end of December. According to the chairman of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), Nigeria has an eligible population of between 60 to 70 million people. The registration of voters is to take place in 120,000 registration centers which will cover all 8812 wards, 774 local governments in the country. The registration centers will be operated by 360,000 ad hoc staff from the National Youth Service Commission, members and students of tertiary institutions. INEC has also made plans to engage traditional rulers to help in the mobilization of adults to register. (Sources: *This Day* [Abuja], 11/10/10; *Vanguard* [Lagos], 11/15/10).

Trade Unions Bring Country to a Halt

The Nigerian Labour Congress (NLC) and the Trade Union Congress (TUC) carried out a nation-wide, three-day warning strike to protest the delay in implementing the new minimum wage of N18,000 (US\$118) for workers. The strike effectively disrupted work throughout the country as banks and other financial institutions, schools, power, petroleum services, ports, and state offices were deserted. Transportation services were disrupted, including bus services and flights, mostly domestic, from Lagos Airport and Murtala Mohammed Airport, stranding hundreds of passengers in the airport terminals, when union officials refused to allow them to board their flights. Reports from across the country indicated complete stoppage of commercial and economic activities.

The unions suspended the strike early, after only one day, saying that they had achieved their aim of drawing attention to the non-implementation of the minimum wage. They said that they had been able to obtain a personal promise from President Goodluck Jonathan that he would fast-track the processes that would lead to the passage of a bill to legalize the new minimum wage by the National Assembly. The labor unions will convene again in the first week of December to take further action if the government fails to submit the bill to the National Assembly for accelerated passage.

Twenty-four hours after the strike was suspended, workers of the Power Holding Company of Nigeria (PHCN) alerted the population that most parts of the country would continue to experience a black-out because armed soldiers continued to occupy the PHCN's installations and stations. (Sources: *Daily Independent* [Lagos], 11/10/10; *Daily Trust* [Abuja], 11/11/10, 11/12/10; *This Day* [Abuja], 11/10/10; *Vanguard*, 11/10/10, 11/11/10).

Explosions Kill 12 During Independence Celebrations

During ceremonies marking the 50th anniversary of independence, several small bombs were set off by members of the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND). Twelve people were killed and several others injured. Two car bombs went off in Abuja and a smaller explosion was set off near the parade grounds. MEND issued a statement that there is nothing worth celebrating after 50 years of failure. The explosions did not disrupt the Independence Day ceremonies.

Nigeria's Secret Service has charged five people in connection with the bombings, including Charles Okah, the brother of Henry Okah who was arrested in South Africa for allegedly masterminding the bombings. The Secret Service has established the identity of the person who drove and coordinated the vehicles that were brought to Abuja for the bombings, the one who directly

coordinated the bombings with Okah, the individual at whose residence in Port Harcourt the vehicles were wired for detonation and from where they left for Abuja, and the one who confirmed to his accomplice that he had completed the job immediately after the bombings. (Source: VOANews.com [Dakar], 10/1/10, 10/5/10, 10/20/10).

Nigerian is Charged in South Africa for Abuja Bombings

A South African court has denied bail to Henry Okah, a Nigerian businessman who has been charged with terrorism in connection with the bombings that killed a dozen people in Abuja. The judge said that he believes that Henry Okah was the leader of the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) which claimed responsibility for two car bombings on October 1, Nigeria's 50th Anniversary of Independence. Okah has denied that he is the leader of MEND although his wife has provided a letter in which she calls him the leader of MEND. The trial date is set for February.

Okah is accused of providing the two cars in which the bombs were detonated. He is also accused of supplying military equipment to MEND through his security company in South Africa. Okah's lawyer said that he will appeal the decision and might challenge the constitutionality of the law that allows South Africa to prosecute an individual for terrorism-related crimes even if the crimes were not committed on South African soil. Okah might also be extradited to Nigeria for trial, but South African judges may not grant extradition if the defendant might receive the death penalty in the requesting country. (Source: VOANews.com, 11/19/10).

MEND Threatens More Kidnappings in Niger Delta

The Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) said that its fighters have been instructed to attack oil facilities and kidnap people, despite an ongoing military crackdown. The group also said that it killed 10 soldiers

and injured at least 17 in an ambush of military gunboats that were preparing to raid a militant camp. Earlier in the week, Nigerian security forces rescued 19 hostages in a series of raids in the delta. The hostages included 2 Americans, 2 Frenchmen, 2 Indonesians and 1 Canadian who had been taken the previous week from a rig operated by British-based company Afren. The other 12 were Nigerians, 8 of whom were kidnapped from an Exxon Mobil platform and 4 of whom are employees of construction firm Julius Berger. The Nigerian military also arrested a militant gang leader, Tamunotonye Kuna, and more than 60 of his followers believed to be behind the recent kidnappings and paraded them in front of the media at an air force base in Port Harcourt. The military also warned Niger Delta residents to leave areas where the militants hide. (Source: *Chicago Tribune*, 11/21/10; CNN.com, 11/9/10; Reuters, 11/17/10; VOANews.com, 11/8/10, 11/19/10).

Secret Service Intercepted 13 Containers of Arms from Iran

Nigeria's Secret Service intercepted a shipment of 13 containers of 107mm rockets, grenades, and other explosives and ammunition that were said to have been shipped from the Middle East and had entered Nigeria in error. The Bill of Lading listed the contents as building materials, including glass, wood, and pallets of stones. The French-based shipping group CMA CGM said that the containers had been loaded in Bandar Abbas in southern Iran by a local trader and that it was a victim of a false cargo declaration. The State Security Service (SSS) said that the shipment had not entered Nigeria in error, but that Nigeria was the destination of the containers and that the SSS had been monitoring the movement of the illegal cargo before it entered Nigeria. It has been claimed that the SSS believes that the arms were imported by some local politicians to destabilize the country if they lose in the upcoming elections that are expected to be hotly contested.

Nigeria summoned Iran's ambas-

sador for talks about the arms shipment, and the Iranian Foreign Minister joined the talks, as well. Diplomats in New York indicated that Iran was probably in breach of the UN sanctions on the regime which forbids it from exporting any kind of weapons directly or indirectly if the seized weapons were originally loaded on its territory. The Iranian Foreign Minister authorized Nigerian officials to interview one of the two Iranians implicated in the arms case, Azimi Agajany, who received a visa to travel to Nigeria after receiving an endorsement from Sheikh Ali Abbas Othman (also known as Abbas Jega), a Nigerian who worked for Radio Terran's Hausa lineage service and studied in Iran. Jega is now in the custody of Nigeria's SSS. The other Iranian, Sayed Akbar Tahmaesebi, has diplomatic immunity and cannot be questioned without Iran's consent. He entered Nigeria after Nigerian authorities received a letter of recommendation from Iran's foreign ministry saying that he would provide administrative support at its Abuja embassy.

The U.S. government has offered to assist Nigeria in the investigation. Other Western countries also applied diplomatic pressure on Nigeria to report the issue to the UN Sanctions Committee. Resolution 1929 provides that once prohibited items are found, states are required to submit an initial report within five working days. Nigeria has now reported to the UN that it seized the shipment. (Sources: *Daily Trust*, 11/11/10; *Leadership* [Abuja], 11/11/10, 11/14/10, 11/16/10; Reuters, 11/11/10; *Vanguard*, 11/13/10; VOANews.com, 11/16/10).

Swiss-based Freight Forwarder Pays Penalties for Bribery

As officials around the world attempt to tighten air cargo safety after the recent discovery of two bombs in the UPS and FedEx transportation networks, another problem has been revealed—bribery. Panalpina, a major freight forwarder based in Switzerland, admitted that it had paid thousands of bribes between

2002 and 2007 to government officials in at least seven countries: Nigeria, Angola, Russia, Azerbaijan, Brazil, Kazakhstan, and Turkmenistan. In settlements with the Department of Justice and the Securities and Exchange Commission, Panalpina agreed to pay nearly \$82 million in penalties. Panalpina paid the bribes to avoid inspection, documentation requirements, and customs duties. Such payoffs could create the opportunity for explosives to get onto an aircraft. (Source: CNN.com, 11/8/10).

Nigeria is Top Destination for Africa-bound Remittances

Nigeria remains the top destination for Africa-bound remittances, accounting for nearly half of remittances to the continent. Nigeria accounts for an estimated US\$10 billion in 2010, a slight increase over the previous year. Other top recipients were Sudan (US\$3.2 billion), Kenya (US\$1.8 billion), Senegal (US\$1.2 billion) and South Africa (US\$1.0 billion). Others also include Uganda, Lesotho, Ethiopia, Mali, and Togo.

The World Bank noted that remittance flows to sub-Saharan Africa will reach US\$21.5 billion in 2010 after a small decrease in 2009. The study was carried out by Migration and Remittances Factbook 2011, a World Bank publication that tracks documented private transfers of funds and migratory patterns around the world. The report noted that remittances are a critical lifeline for families and communities across Africa and added that there is a pressing need to make it easier and cheaper to send and receive remittances in Africa. It noted that the average cost of sending money to Africa is more than 10 percent, the highest among all regions. (Source: *Vanguard*, 11/11/10).

Women Win Championship and Qualify for FIFA World Cup

The Nigerian women's team qualified for next year's FIFA Women's World Cup with a 5-1 win over Cameroon in the first semi-final of the CAF African Women's Championship in South Africa.

The Nigerian women's team, a five-time winner of the continental championship, then claimed once again the African Women's Championship with a 4-2 victory over Equatorial Guinea. The team also won the Top Scorer and Most Valuable Player awards as well as the Fair Play trophy in a tournament they dominated from beginning to end.

Upon their return home, the champions were treated to a less-than-winning reception at Murtala Mohammed International Airport. The Nigeria Football Federation arranged to transport them on an old flat-bed Mack trailer that had no hand railings. Sensing that it was dangerous, they changed plans and herded the women onto an old MAN-Diesel truck that had been converted to carry cargo. The 10-ton truck took the heroines from the airport to the local terminus, driven by a shirtless old man who supposedly maintained that "Any work is work. It doesn't matter to me the nature of the cargo. Cargo is cargo, whether they are champion footballers or arrested drug pushers. Mine is to deliver the goods right on time from one place to the other." (Sources: South African Press Association [Daveyton], 11/11/10; *This Day*, 11/15/10).

FIFA Bans Nigeria's Amos Adamu for Three Years

FIFA's Ethics Committee has suspended Nigeria's Amos Adamu from all footballing activity for three years and fined him \$10,000. The committee also suspended Tahiti's Reynald Tamaril for one year and fined him \$5,000. The action follows allegations that the two Executive Committee members asked for money in return for voting on World Cup hosting rights. The suspension means that they will not be able to vote on which countries will host the 2018 and 2022 World Cup. Adamu, one of FIFA's most senior figures and Nigeria's Director of Sport's Development in the Federal Ministry of Sports & Social Development, is the first official from FIFA to ever be banned for bribery. Four other former Executive Committee members were also banned for breaching various

articles of FIFA's Code of Ethics.

Adamu released a statement protesting his innocence and vowing to fight the ruling. The Nigerian Economic and Financial Crimes Commission has stated that it will get in touch with FIFA for evidence of the scandal. However, Adamu has already said that he will file an appeal as allowed by the FIFA Code of Ethics. (Sources: *www.BBC Sport*, 11/18/10; *www.FIFA.com*; *www.Guardian.co.uk*, 11/18/10. *www.SuperSport.com*, 11/18/10).

Nigerian Athletes Fail Drug Tests at Commonwealth Games

Damola Osayomi who won the silver medal in the 100 meter race in the Commonwealth Games was upgraded to gold when the Australian athlete who initially won the gold was disqualified after a protest was launched against her for a false start. Osayomi subsequently tested positive to methylhexanamine, was stripped of the gold, and decamped from the Games Village although she confessed ignorance about the drug. The President of the Athletics Federation of Nigeria, who attempted to console her, is sending the results for further laboratory tests. The drug that she consumed was not a steroid, but a stimulant, according to the anti-doping officer of the IAAF, which he said should make the penalty lighter. The drug was reclassified earlier this year and can be used with a Therapeutic Use Exemption certificate as of the beginning of 2011.

Samuel Okon, who was sixth in the 110m hurdles also tested positive for methylhexanamine. He waived his right to the B sample test and was provisionally suspended at the time. The Commonwealth Games Federation President indicated that he was concerned with the number of incidents that were coming up with the same substance. He suggested that it might be coming from the use of supplements and products such as nasal decongestants. Therefore, it is possible to take it by accident. Recently, several Jamaican sprinters and 11 Indian athletes also tested positive for the substance. The Jamaicans were given three-month

suspensions. (Source: BBC SPORT, 10/12/10; *Daily Champion*, 10/13/10).

Trans-Saharan Highway will Link Nigeria to Five Countries

Nigeria's Trans-Saharan Road Liaison Committee is investigating the best way to raise N150 billion (about US\$100 million) to finance the proposed construction of the Trans-Saharan Highway project. The highway traverses six countries in the Sub-Saharan region including Nigeria, Niger, Chad, Mali, Algeria and Tunisia with the objective of enhancing easy movement of goods and persons within the region and increasing the volume of trade among member countries. The main axis of the road starts in Lagos and terminates in Algiers on the Mediterranean Coast. It will have a total length of about 4,680 km. The road is now paved except for the last section of 223 km in Niger between the Algerian border and the town of Arit. Nigeria has completed its portion of the road, 113 km, and has started to make some sections of the road dual lane. The Ministry of Works is also planning to install 150 electronic weighbridges on some of Nigeria's roads, including the Trans-Saharan Road in order to regulate allowable loads on the highway and prevent premature failure of the roads due to excessive axle loads. (Source: *Vanguard*, 11/15/10; *Leadership* [Abuja], 11/11/10).

Cameroon's Lake Nyos Remains a Threat to Nigeria

Seventy thousand Nigerians living near Cameroon's Lake Nyos could be swept away in a flood if a dam breaks. Lake Nyos, which is only 108 km from the Cameroon-Nigeria border, lies at an elevation higher than the adjoining Benue and Katsina-Ala plains in Nigeria, and its waters flow into the tributaries which are the source of the Katsina-Ala River. The main threat to Nigeria is from the highly unstable upper lake body which holds about 50 million cubic meters of water. With the breakage of the dam at that location, the flood would spread over wide flood plains as it entered Nigeria, inundating over 50 towns,

villages, hamlets and farm lands, flooding over 15,000 hectares of land. More than 35,000 people and 20,000 cattle and other livestock would be caught in the flood and could die.

Lake Nyos is a deep crater lake high on the flank of an inactive volcano in the Northwest Province of Cameroon. A geological tremor might be enough to break the weakening natural wall of the lake allowing water to rush downstream and through villages as far away as Nigeria. Because of the threat, the Federal Government has approved the construction of a dam in Kassimbilla in Taraba State to prevent excessive flooding and gaseous content from entering the country. (Source: *Vanguard*, 11/15/10).

Lagos State Passes Law to Protect People Living with HIV/AIDS

Any form of prejudice, negative attitudes, abuse and maltreatment directed at people living with HIV and AIDS amounts to a stigma. A law in Lagos State now provides the right to sue by anyone discriminated against or stigmatized for living with or affected by HIV/AIDS. The law also makes it an offense for anyone to intentionally infect others with HIV, punishable with fines not exceeding N200,000 (US\$1,307), imprisonment up to 10 years, or both a fine and imprisonment. The law also makes it a punishable offence for any health worker to intentionally reveal the HIV status of any person living with HIV and affected by AIDS. It also stipulates jail and fines for any person or organization that claims unsubstantiated remedies or cures for HIV with the intent to defraud unsuspecting people. The latter applies to religious organizations that brandish cures for the infection. To make the law effective, a Justice and Human Rights Watch group is to be established which will be under the control of the Lagos AIDS Control Agency and which will be responsible for monitoring and implementing the provisions of the law. The law was initially conceived in 2005. (Source: *Daily Independent* [Lagos], 11/10/10).

Nokia to Expand Its Life Tools Program to Nigeria

Since 2009, 6.3 million people have signed up to pay Nokia for commodity data in India, China and Indonesia. The subscription service can provide cell phone messages with the current average wholesale price for locally-grown farm produce, for example. The service is so valuable that farmers are willing to pay for monthly subscriptions.

Nokia has announced that it is expanding its program, Life Tools, to Nigeria. Although studies suggest that only 29 percent of Nigerians own a cell phone, other figures place a higher access rate because phones are often shared. Nokia plans to work with Nimet, the Nigerian meteorological agency, and Namin, the Nigerian agricultural market information system, on its service which will cost N250 (c. US\$1.75) per month. For an additional \$1.40 a month, mobile users can receive daily texts, with graphics, on health and disease news, English language training, or entertainment and sports news. (Source: Nokia Blog, 11/2/10).

Lead Poisoning Kills 400 Nigerian Children

The medical aid group Doctors Without Borders says that lead poisoning has killed some 400 children in northern Nigeria in the last six months. This is more than double the 160 deaths, including 111 children, that Nigeria reported last June, but many thousands more are suspected to have been poisoned. Nigerian health officials say that the poisoning is due to illegal gold mining. WHO has sent epidemiologists and pediatricians to help care for the currently ill and to prevent similar problems in the future. They have recommended that the government help communities clean up the informal gold-mining sector, rather than eliminate it altogether. They also suggested inexpensive, safer practices that would allow mining to continue. (Source: IRIN [Kano], 10/12/10; VOANews.com, 10/5/10).

PCV Construction

By George Toth (10) 64-66

Is this a record for PCV construction projects?

As a PCV I taught 35 classes a week at St. Peter Claver College (SPCC), now Aghalokpe College, in Aghalokpe/Sapele. As a sideline I built stuff at the request of and full backing of Father Cadogan the principal at SPCC.

While at SPCC I designed and helped build:

- 1] A water system,
- 2] 20 flush loos for students,
- 3] 20 showers,
- 4] a dining hall and kitchen,
- 5] a staff house, and
- 6] a dorm for 50 students.

As a result, SPCC became the only school I know of that had flush loos for students. I planted bananas in the sewage water drain field of the loos and produced a good crop of bananas.

Fr. Cadogan said that the dining hall had the widest span of any non-steel support in the area.

The most difficult thing I did was raise a 2 ton steel tank 10 to 12 feet using ancient Egyptian technology. Fr. Cadogan had bought the tank made of 1/2 inch thick steel plate, 7x7 and 4 feet high. He built a concrete platform to put it on and then found out the guy who sold it to him had no way to put it up. So the crew of locals and I pried one side and then the other, put boards under it and then cement blocks until it was high enough to roll onto the platform. Anyway, it worked. It took about 2 weeks, and last I heard it's still there.

Friends of Nigeria
c/o Peter Hansen
1203 Cambria Court
Iowa City, IA 52246-4530
Winter 2010

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