

The Elizabeth Bowers Memorial Fund

An education scholarship program for Zambian women

2005 ANNUAL REPORT

The Elizabeth Bowers Memorial Fund (EBMF) was created in 2002 in honor of Elizabeth Bowers, a Peace Corps Volunteer who died while serving in the village of Lumwana West in NW Zambia, Africa. The purpose of the EBMF is to provide the opportunity for education for young women from the village of Lumwana West and the surrounding area. This includes 8th and 9th grades in Lumwana West Basic, high school in Mwinilunga, and college beyond high school.

Administration

The EBMF was created in cooperation with the Peace Corps to educate girls in the village where Beth lived who would otherwise not go to school. Donations received from Beth's family and friends funded educational opportunities through the first two terms of 2005. As funds continued to be received by Beth's family in her memory, it became clear that this money should be used to continue the education of Beth's Girls for as long as possible. Several of Beth's Girls also expressed interest in continuing on to college. Two additional partnerships were created to continue this vision.

Zambia's Scholarship Fund, a charity program to educate teachers in NE Zambia, agreed to sponsor EBMF under its tax-exempt status. The EBMF also transitioned from local administration in Zambia by Peace Corps to administration by World Vision Zambia. Peace Corps was a partner in establishing the EBMF and worked with the EBMF to identify and administer funds for the first scholarship recipients. Since Peace Corps volunteers complete their service every two years, it became necessary to find another local agent in NW Zambia. The EBMF contracted with World Vision Zambia to continue local management of the program.

For the last school term of 2005, Beth's family assumed responsibility for the Memorial Fund in partnership with Zambia's Scholarship Fund and World Vision Zambia. Management and administration of the Fund were provided by family and volunteers. All donations went directly to support Beth's Girls.

An advisory board was created to help with special projects and to advise on general direction of the EBMF. Members include family and friends of Beth: Linda and Gerry Bowers, Jeani and William Bragg, and David and Michal Wert. The Fund is also fortunate to have Daniel Irvine, World Vision International in Washington, D.C., and Fordson Kafweku, World Vision Zambia in Lusaka, Zambia, as active members of the advisory board.

Girls Sponsored in 2005

Table 1 shows the breakdown of girls supported by the EBMF for the last term of 2005. A total of 43 girls received educational scholarships, including school fees, books and supplies, uniforms, tutorial and exam fees, plus room and board for high school students at Mwinilunga High School.

Beth's Girls sign an agreement to be diligent in their studies, to live a healthy lifestyle and to mentor other younger girls. They receive information on Beth and her values and correspond with the Fund to report their progress and discuss their goals for the future.

Table 1. Beth's Girls by Grade- 2005 Term 3*

Lumwana West	#Girls	Mwinilunga HS	#Girls	TOTAL
Grade 8	13	Grade 10	6	
Grade 9	12	Grade 11	6	
		Grade 12	6	
TOTAL	25		18	43

* Preliminary data

In addition, the EBMF continued to support Mary Lundeba, Beth's fisheries trainer in Kitwe in 2001, through her Master's degree in fisheries at the University of Malawi. Mary successfully completed her Master of Science degree in August of 2005. She will continue her PhD studies in fisheries at Penn State University in 2006.

Financial Report

Table 2 provides a statement of financial activities for 2005 and shows the balance of monies in the EBMF at the end of 2005.

Table 2. Statement of Activities
for the period January 1, 2005 to December 31, 2005

<i>Revenue</i>	
Donations	\$ 36,397.00
Saving Interest	\$ 36.02
Time Account Interest	\$ 175.26
<i>Total Revenue</i>	\$ 36,608.28
<i>Expenses</i>	
Administration	\$ 36.00
LWBC/MHS School Fees	\$ 3,608.00
Mary Lundeba Fees	\$ 415.00
Service Fees in Check-in-Account	\$ 36.00
<i>Total Expenses</i>	\$ 4,089.00
<i>Increase in Net Assets</i>	\$ 32,519.28

Support Materials

The EBMF website (www.bethsgirls.org) was updated in 2005. Thanks to William Bragg for his volunteer effort to provide an attractive and informative website. The brochure also evolved this year to be more focused and more attractive. Thanks to Angela Wanak for her efforts to redesign the brochure.

A PowerPoint presentation was prepared to provide background on Beth, her time as a Peace Corps volunteer, and to offer cultural information on Zambia and on the community she came to love in Lumwana West. This was used for a fund-raising presentation and was made available to Peace Corps and World Vision for general information and fund-raising.

Other Activities

The Willamette University Atkinson's Graduate School of Management provides an opportunity for graduate students to partner with non-profit organizations to assist in a variety of tasks. The EBMF was fortunate to be selected by a team of four students: Angela Wanak, Sneha Goswami, Allen Xiao, and Wes Hare. They provided good support and ideas in 2005, helped create a five-year budget for the Fund, and developed the new brochure. In 2006, they will help define a fund-raising strategy(s) and will help the EBMF with organizational issues.

Looking forward to 2006

The current success of the EBMF makes it clear that it should become its own 501 (C) (3) public charity organization. This opportunity will commence in 2006.

From the 2004 senior class of six girls at Mwinilunga High School, only one passed her exams to be eligible to go to college. Investigation of how to help girls pass exams identified the need for additional study (i.e., tutoring), the need for books and supplies, and the need for a well-supplied local library. Two programs will address these deficiencies in 2006:

- Tutoring will continue for girls in grades 9 and 12 to help prepare them for exams
- The EBMF is again working with the Peace Corps Partnership Program to fund construction of a community library in Lumwana West.

The library project will provide a substantial center for learning within the community. EBMF will stock the library with books and resources to supplement education and health information needs, and will staff it with a local director who will run the facility and assist those using the library. Peace Corps Volunteer Bob Wilder will oversee the project and has been working with the Lumwana West community elders to initiate the program. They are in full support of the project and have already selected a site for the new library. Much of the work will be done by Lumwana West residents to bring revenues into the local economy. The project has been approved by in-country Peace Corps Director Dave Morris, and is scheduled to begin in April or May 2006. It should take 2-3 months to complete. A 2005 one-time donation to the EBMF by Beth's grandmother, Helen Bowers, provides up to \$20,000 to construct, furnish and stock the Lumwana West Memorial Library. Linda and Gerry plan to attend dedication services in Lumwana West in late summer.

To access the EBMF and its partners:

Elizabeth Bowers Memorial Fund - www.bethsgirls.org

Zambia's Scholarship Fund - www.hearttoheartafrica.org

World Vision International - www.wvi.org

Peace Corps - www.peacecorps.gov