

The workers included HIV victims, many working in bare feet or sandals.

The foremen on the job were paid \$5 a day. When they left after three weeks, Mr. Kawzenuk and Mr. Truelove left their clothes, tools and \$25 – the Tanzanians were thrilled.

The gesture was one of the many ways Steve Truelove enhanced Mr. Kawzenuk's experience.

"Steve is so knowledgeable. It's a passion. He thinks of it night and day," says the admiring administrator.

Steve Truelove has gone three consecutive years.

"He's very generous with his time and money," Mr. Kawzenuk adds.

He was continually impressed by the gratitude of the Africans. The principal at the school claimed the new cookhouse was better than those in many hotels, "and comparable to the cookhouses at your homes in Canada".

Not only did they gain a cookhouse, they gained it quickly. Saving every bit of cash they have, the Tanzanians may take years to buy the cement to complete their own homes. In the meantime, many of live in dirt-floored stick shacks sharing with goats valued more highly than children.

Simple treasures

The hockey bags full of supplies they took with them were well-received too, but Mr. Kawzenuk acknowledges they could have taken 1,000 and not made a significant difference.

The supplies taken to the schools were a source of wonder.

He tells his story about the marvelous solar calculator. The teachers were rummaging through one of the hockey bags

one day when he came in for a bag of cement. He asked if they knew what the calculator was. When they didn't, he took them outside where they saw it light up. He then asked them to add 12 plus 12. He punched it into his calculator and, to their great shock, revealed the answer on the screen.

Back inside, he demonstrated a stapler, and a tool which they thought quite frivolous – a staple puller. Who would ever invent something like that?

One day, he took photos of the kids playing soccer outside. The next morning, he asked the staff if they'd like to see his pictures. As they nodded their assent, they looked for the prints in his hand.

Instead, with Bob Marley playing in the background, he set in motion a slide show. When they weren't dancing, they were incredulous. A teaching tool like that, worth \$1,000, was beyond any realm of possibility. The kids were riveted to the screen when they got their turn. There are no mirrors or even glass in the area. It was the first time many had seen images of themselves.

Seventy soccer balls were taken to be used by the students. While Mr. Kawzenuk was there, none were in use. They were too valuable. The kids played with their battered ball on uncut grass, cropped by cattle released by the nuns on Sundays to feed.

Changes

It wouldn't be hard to lose hope, facing the reality of the Tanzanian people. The two high school administrators discussed this when they were there.

Mr. Truelove reminded Mr. Kawzenuk that when Mr. Truelove came to the village

the first time three years ago, there was no HIV Centre, three-quarters of the hospital wasn't there, many of the children who now attend school children had no school to attend. The enrollment now is double what it was three years ago and more orphans are going. Sadly, there are many more than there were three years ago.

With a modest education, the young people can gravitate to the bigger centres and find employment and escape their subsistent lifestyle. Health care is better, while it is far below standards we would accept.

With all that accomplished, it is almost time for the Canada Africa Community Health Alliance volunteers to move on to areas of far greater need, Mr. Kawzenuk says. The organization will continue to fund local projects after the North Americans have gone on.

The experience has been somewhat humbling to the highly successful educator, used to identifying problems and enacting solutions.

Many of his initial ideas, when placed in the context of the Tanzanian experience, were unsuitable. The problems he witnessed so vast and complex. He got the message.

"I don't have the answers. They need so much," Mr. Kawzenuk acknowledged as he scrolled through pages of photos at the

the widespread use of cell phones. The technology there is light years ahead of here – and cheap, he says. He called using a \$20 phone purchased there and spoke for 10 minutes for about \$2.

"If you can move that quickly on that technology, maybe there is hope," he says.

In an area where quality of life is restricted by so much, Coke can be bought for 50 cents and a pint of beer costs a dollar at the hospital. It is perhaps a telling statement about first-world priorities when food doesn't reach the impoverished but pop and beer do.

Back home

Back in Canada, Mr. Kawzenuk sees rays of hope.

A February Read-a-thon by the students at Cobourg West had a target of \$5,000. It's a lot, when \$9,000 will pay for the construction of an entire classroom and give generations of Tanzanians hope.

His experiences and those of Steve Truelove will be incorporated into the character education programs they offer at their schools.

"We have so much to be grateful for. So many have so little. We can help and be aware. We can support others in so many ways. Poverty is awful. There is no dignity dying of AIDS," Mr. Kawzenuk says.

If Canadian kids can understand these things, he feels there is hope: "It's a start."

"I'm celebrating St. Patrick's Day with my girlfriend of 42 years," Tim Gilligan announced to patrons dropping by for true Irish food and drink at the Queen's Hotel in Coborne. Mr. Gilligan and wife Liz, plus their children, spouses and extended family, annually mark the day with special menu — corned beef and cabbage, spuds, Irish stew, Guinness on tap and green beer — and, of course, music inside and outside on the street. This year, the celebrations extended from all day Saturday to Monday, officially St. Patrick's Day. PHOTO BY MANDY MARTIN



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