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 Harold Pliszka, B.H.Ecol.
 Pam Amulaku, B.S.W., M.S.S.
 Scott Muzychka, B.Comm., CA

Volunteers:
 Janet Pliszka, B.Comm.
 Jacqueline Ford, B.A., B.Ed.
 Eric Amulaku

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Mission Statement

To help youth in developing nations to better themselves, their families and their communities by providing educational scholarships for secondary education.

Volunteer Opportunities

If you are interested in any of the following opportunities Please contact us at volunteer@hytes.org:

1. HYTES' members who would like to contribute to the newsletter.
2. Three volunteers to form a committee to develop an education package to fit within the Alberta Public School Curriculum.
3. Three volunteers to form a committee to plan and implement our next fundraiser.

2005 Alberta Resource Rebate Cheques

The Alberta government is sending cheques of approximately \$400.00 to all Albertans in the next couple weeks. Please consider donating a portion of your cheque to HYTES.

Your donation will go towards helping secondary students pay their school fees in Kenya and Tanzania.

What are our founders doing with their cheques?

Janet and Harold Pliszka plan to put their new daughter's cheque into an RESP to help fund her post-secondary education. "We plan to use the second

cheque on blinds for the living room and will donate the entire amount of the third cheque to HYTES."

Scott Muzychka, Jacqueline Ford, and their daughter Zoë plan a similar donation to the Pliszka's donating one of their three cheques to HYTES.

Please go to www.hytes.org/donate/ to download a donation form or to donate online.

HYTES Now Accepts Online Donations

We recently signed registered with CanadaHelps.org and can now accept online donations using their services.

CanadaHelps.org is a non-profit organization with charitable status that accepts online donations and forwards the money to charities as specified by the donors. They keep only 3% of all donations to cover transaction fees.

To make an online donation, please go to www.hytes.org/donate/ and click the "donate now" icon. CanadaHelps.org will issue your tax receipt directly.

You can choose to donate once or to donate monthly using their online service and you can choose to donate to the Canadian charity of your choice.

Including recent donations from The Loyalty Group and their employees totalling \$1,064.00 and KPMG's donation of \$800.00, we have now raised \$4,994.32. Many thanks to all our donors, volunteers and supporters!

Student Scholarships: Who are we supporting?

Early in January, we paid the tuition for two girls, Ann and Jackline, going to school in Nairobi. Ann received the honour last year of being top student at Uthiru Girls School and Jackline was given the title of “Most Improved” reaching a standing of fourth overall in her high school.

A third student, Michael, is deciding which school to attend. Once we have this figured out, we plan to pay his tuition and boarding fees. Michael was living in the streets of Nairobi and is currently residing in a group home for boys.

We also have one student picked out for a scholarship in Tanzania and are reviewing applications for several others. HYTES’ volunteer, Eric Amulaku, is travelling from his home in Nairobi to Dar es Salaam towards the end of January to finalize applications and payments.



Ann, Jackline and Michael in Nairobi,
Kenya, East Africa
(Photos by Eric Amulaku)

Thank you letters from students

Below you will find excerpts from letters of thanks from Ann, Jackline and their parents. We also want to thank you for helping us help them.

“I want to thank the HYTES for supporting me in my education .My parents were really struggling to get my school fees and now the HYTES Organization has come to my rescue... I’m going to work hard and maybe soon in life I will become someone important in our country and I will never let you down in everything that I do.”

- Ann, student

“We have a family of three boys and one girl, Ann who is a student in Uthiru Girls High School... In case of school fees we have been relying on my brother in law. But now he also has two of his sons have joined secondary school, so it’s difficult for him to continue his support for my children.

My family is very pleased our daughter was introduced to your organization and we appreciate very much that you have agreed to sponsor Ann...

Thank you very much...”

- Simon, Ann’s father

“I am very much delighted to write this appreciation letter to the HYTES organization to appreciate the help that you have given me. To me it came as a very big surprise, although I had filled the questionnaire and wrote the requesting letter I didn’t think I would be among the winners since I felt inadequate to be among the winning student in our school.

When I was told this great news I thought I was dreaming hoping to get up the next day to go and confirm with the teacher whether I was lucky enough to win the HYTES organization school sponsorship or not, but the good news is that I was indeed not dreaming and it was still a reality. I had won this life changing sponsorship...

To me this help from the HYTES organization clearly shows that you have faith in me. I would like to work as hard as possible on my grades, in all subjects offered in the school curriculum to ensure that this golden opportunity offered to me is not wasted...

I would like to say thanks to HYTES and all the people who have supported me including my parents and teacher. I also thank HYTES very much since you’ve made me a very happy student, who hopes to work very hard in school without the worry of being sent back home in the middle of the term because my school fees were not paid.”

- Jackline, student

“I wish to congratulate you all at HYTES for your kind offer of taking my daughter to be one of the students you have decided to...sponsor. I am very happy and I can tell you that your gift is very much appreciated.

Being just a guard of a meagre salary if 4,534.00 KES [\$74.10 CAD per month] with four children to bring up I felt it was a very big burden for me because out of the small amount of money I earn. I have to pay my house rent, buy them food, clothings and also cater for medical bills whenever one of them became sick.

Thank you very much for your great offer to me and I pray to God to add you more strength and wisdom and have the same spirit to help other who may be in a dilemma as it had happened to me. Truly speaking this time I was about to give up education for my daughter because I could not have money to pay for education with still having outstanding bills..., for sure I had only money to clear the balance...”

-David, Jackline’s father

Movie Review: *Nowhere in Africa* (2002)

Directed by Caroline Link and based on the autobiographical book by Stefanie Zweig. Subtitled from German and Kiswahili.

by Pam Amulaku

Sadly I missed this film in theatres, as I was off ‘somewhere in Africa’ at the time of its release and subsequent Oscar triumph for Best Foreign Film of 2002. It makes me wonder if any of the hundreds of local extras involved in the production of this German-made film, shot almost entirely on location in Kenya, were ever able to see themselves on the big screen!

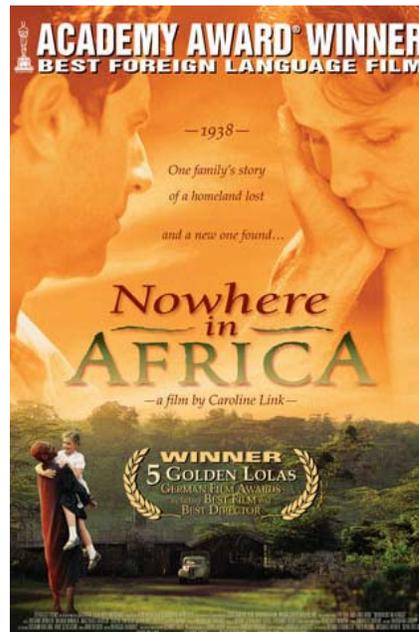
A good friend recommended *Nowhere in Africa* to me fairly recently, and fortunately a few copies of the film were available in the teeny-tiny foreign film section of my local video store. Even on a modestly sized television set, I found the work to be visually striking, an accomplishment of the filmmakers’ intent to convey a “rougher, dustier and more authentic Africa” than previous historical epics such as the famed *Out of Africa* (1985) or “high-gloss safari park” National Geographic-style shows have illustrated. (Interestingly, in the remote community of Mukutani where at least one-third of the film was shot, the *Nowhere in Africa* production team actually built a 40 km. stretch of road as payment for being able to film there, at the community leaders’ insistence that this would be of greater benefit than offering cash wages to individuals.)

The emotional storyline is just as compelling and genuine, to a large extent based on the traumatic true lives of the German-Jewish Zweig family during the rise and fall of the Nazis. In the film version Walter Redlich, a budding young lawyer, sees the drastic consequences of Hitler’s anti-Semitic policies coming and in 1937, slightly ahead of the mass Jewish exodus from

Germany, takes up unlikely refuge in Kenya. After securing employment on an ornery British colonist’s farm and pulling through a near-death scare with malaria, Walter sends for his high-society wife Jettel and their wide-eyed five-year-old daughter Regina to join him there. It haunts Walter that he is unable to convince he and his wife’s parents and siblings also to flee at that time, as the news from home on a crackly transistor radio steadily wanes and the worst is feared and ultimately confirmed.

Regina adapts quickly and happily to her new surroundings, with fear and darkness her only real memories of Germany. On the contrary her parents (her mother in particular), demonstrate considerably more reservation and less resilience dealing with their radical change in scenery and socio-economic status. Defying Walter’s requests to bring a refrigerator and mosquito nets from Germany, Jettel instead shows up with elegant party dresses in her suitcases and a trunk full of expensive china. These central protagonists predictably encounter a barrage of ‘transformative challenges’ from culture shock to grief, poverty to marital problems, racism to natural disasters. Being essentially ‘reduced’ to a farm hand has dealt Walter’s esteem a major blow and a resentful Jettel laments, “yes we’re alive but what for?... I feel like I’m dead here, sometimes I wish I were!” Their trusted house-help Ouwar (skillfully played by rising Kenyan film star Sidedo Onyulo, also featured in *The Constant Gardener*) and his close relationships with young Regina, Walter and eventually with

Jettel as well, seem to be the only thing that holds the family together at many points throughout the film.



Without exposing much more of the plot, one very interesting historical tidbit depicted in the film shows how the German refugees in Kenya were suddenly reclassified as ‘enemy aliens,’ rounded up by colonial forces when Britain officially declared war on Germany in 1939. Acknowledging that their Jewish captives were anything but sympathetic to

the Nazi forces yet feeling the need to ‘do something’ with German nationals in their midst, British forces opted to send the men to a makeshift internment camp in Nairobi and put the women and children up in the exclusive comforts of the Norfolk Hotel – still known to be one of Kenya’s most aristocratic accommodations. “What a nice prison, Mama!” exclaims Regina upon their arrival. Before too long, the absurdity of this British policy is truly realized, and the Redlich family returns to work on a different farm, Regina enrolls in a British boarding school and paradoxically Walter even ends up serving as a Sergeant for the Royal British Army.

A segment of history lacking in this re-telling of wartime in the British colonies and indeed, overlooked by most accounts, is the participation of thousands of Kenyan soldiers in this same Royal British Army. The British needed African manpower on all fronts, and as citizens of the Commonwealth, Kenyan men were called upon to enlist, with many ultimately serving as combatants in Europe. In fact, my husband

Eric and I only recently discovered that both our grandfathers saw action in Italy at approximately the same time! The coincidence ends there of course, as while my grandfather came home a celebrated veteran honored every November 11th to this day for his sacrifices, Eric's grandfather and the other half million African soldiers who fought for the British and French in World War II were never formally recognized and quite deliberately forgotten about by their colonial masters... but that's a whole other story!

Back to the film, that does a decent, if calculated, job of juxtaposing the German and Kenyan cultures and emphasizes the distinction that unlike the exploitative British colonists who ruled the day, the Redlich (and real-life Zweig) family were in Kenya against their will, only because they had been chased out of their homeland. One of the Kikuyu farm workers interjects a particularly poignant and prophetic quote to this effect:

If someone steals your cow it will be killed and eaten and you can forget it. But if someone steals your land, it is always there. You can visit it, it will always be there. You can never forget it.

Of course, as time wears on each member of the exiled family collects their own attachments to Kenya, and it becomes more and more difficult to think about leaving once the war is over. On impending departure, Ouwar wisely notes that "the first to leave on safari has dry eyes," and all I can really say about that is that my eyes were certainly not dry by the end of the movie!! My favorite scenes were those featuring the endearing young Regina and her many adorable Kenyan chums climbing trees, translating storybooks into imaginative theatre pieces, and even hinting at a romantic tangling with a handsome Kikuyu lad. Apparently the 'real' Regina Redlich – the now 75-year-old Stefanie Zweig – described this love interest her first book, a children's

story entitled Mouthful of Earth. After watching Nowhere in Africa based on Zweig's book of the same name, I find myself rather intrigued to read her memoir Somewhere in Germany that goes on to recount her teenage years in an unfamiliar homeland.

A lot of critiques I read on this 144 minute film claimed it was entirely too long and dull at parts, but I have to say I was quite riveted throughout and would definitely recommend Nowhere in Africa to those who haven't had the opportunity to see it yet. If you are predisposed to weak tear ducts as I sometimes am, make sure you have some Kleenex on hand... but don't worry, it's not the kind of film that leaves you desperately depressed either. It's just the kind that makes you want to go to Kenya ;)

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Website Review
www.comminit.com

by Pam Amulaku

Comminit.com is a comprehensive Victoria, B.C.-based site that serves as a virtual clearinghouse for all things related to international development work! Here you will find information-sharing and links to relevant resources, news, opinion pieces, polls, interviews, research papers and theoretical models, employment vacancies and upcoming events all over the world plus many more tidbits for those involved in the development field. You can also create a personalized 'Drum Beat' subscription to receive regular e-updates on the specific type of information you're interested in, and there are two subsidiary components to this website: 'La Iniciativa de Comunicacion' focuses entirely on Latin American development issues while 'Soul Beat Africa' is of course, devoted to "communication for change" on that continent.

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**Fun with Swahili:
 Poa kachizi kama ndizi**

by Harold Pliszka

We came upon many fun sayings while visiting Tanzania in 2005. The people were so friendly - you could spend a good ten minutes greeting each other when you met for the first time.

One of my favourite sayings seemed to start on the beaches of Zanzibar and gradually worked its way onto the mainland and westward towards the Serengeti. That saying is, "Poa kachizi kama ndizi" and it means "Crazy cool like a banana".

"Habari?" literally translated means, "What's the news?", but also means, "How are you?". Young people in Tanzania would often reply to "Habari?" with "poa" or "kachizi".

I felt proud to overhear someone in a market where tourists did not seem to shop refer to Janet and myself as, "mzungu kachizi." They were calling us "crazy tourists." "Mzungu" seems to be what East Africans call all white people. Directly translated, it means Europeans or people of European descent.

**Useful Translations:
 Swahili to English**

- habari - news
- poa - cool
- kachizi - crazy
- kama - like
- ndizi - banana
- mzungu - European(s)
- safi - clean
- picha - picture, photograph
- asante - thank you
- asante sana - many thanks
- karibu - welcome
- karibu tena - welcome again

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HYTES Tax Receipts

We are a registered charity and will be sending tax receipts in February 2006 to all donors who gave to HYTES between August 1, 2005 and December 31, 2005. Receipts are provided for all donations of \$20.00 or more. While we greatly appreciate the support given at the silent auction in August, we can only provide receipts for donations and not for silent auction purchases.

Useful Links

- Rebate Cheques:
gov.ab.ca
- Our Site:
hytes.org
- Donate Online:
canadahelps.org
- Rebates:
sharetheprosperty.ca
- UN Education Portal:
portal.unesco.org/education

Helping Youth Through Educational Scholarships ("HYTES") is a Canadian not-for-profit organization that has no affiliation with any government or religion. We raise funds in Canada to provide scholarships in developing nations. Our initial focus is on paying for secondary tuition costs for community minded and financially challenged students in Kenya and Tanzania.

We believe that it will be Africans who will improve the standards of living for Africans and that education is vital to this process.

**Our Charitable
Registration Number is
828039545RR0001.**

All articles written by Harold Pliszka unless otherwise stated. Many thanks to all who helped with this issue.

Membership and Donation Form

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

Province: _____

Postal Code: _____

Country: _____

Phone Number: () _____

Email Address: _____

Membership: \$25.00 Yes No

Donation Amount: \$20.00 \$50.00

\$100.00 \$150.00

\$200.00 \$300.00

Other Amount: _____

Total Payment Enclosed: _____

Please use one "Membership and Donation Form" per person.

You will be provided a tax receipt via email (or regular mail) if your donation is \$20.00 or more. Please note tax receipts are not provided for membership fees.

Please contact me with any opportunities to volunteer with HYTES' initiatives.

I would NOT like my name published in any HYTES material (printed or online). Please consider this gift as an anonymous donation.