



August 20, 2018

SCAMS AND GOD'S GOODNESS TO HANDS ACROSS NATIONS IN UGANDA

Hello dear supporters, this newsletter was extremely hard to write as it involves negative news.....with a good ending, and there are no photos that really go with it. So please bear with me and read it to the end so you can get the full gist of things people are up against in the culture we find ourselves.

Returning home from Uganda to our beloved country, specifically NE Washington is always somewhat of a culture shock. The beauty of the countryside and the friendliness of the people, the amenities available within a few minutes or miles, the lack of rubbish along the roads and the good condition of most of the roads, is wonderful and restful for Carolyn. One of the other differences is that the people of N. Uganda have a strong need to rely on God for each day's provision and even their very lives. Many of them, when praying, thank God for keeping them alive "even up until today".

Recently, we at Hands Across Nations (HAN) have been in a battle in which we have desperately needed God to help us. There is a devious group of people who have seen all the good that is happening through HAN in teaching adults in villages, prisons and the disabled to read and write in their tribal language. In the Bible, Proverbs 22:1 says, **"A good name is more desirable than great riches; to be esteemed is better than silver or gold"**. Our name is good after 15 years of working in the region, providing clean water through spring protection projects, starting a sewing school for poor widows and orphans, and helping war victims and the disabled to recover. Our goal since 2014 has been to reach every Lango tribe member who wants to read and train them, using the Bible as the foundation, within 10 years.

This malicious group has used a name which is so close to our name that people are confused and are fooled into thinking they are working with us. "Hands

Across the World" (HATW) is being advertised as a charity which is sponsoring children in schools.....for a small registration fee of about \$8.00, for each child. Parents are desperate for their children to attend school so this "scam" seems like a huge answer to prayer for them. However, there are no actual sponsorships and their money is pocketed by the thieves.

We first learned of it when a former inmate who now works in a school called to request that HAN send some of the sponsored children to their school. Immediately we contacted authorities, letting them know that this other "Hands Across the World" has no connection to us. It went through all the local and government officials and was signed. We then set up a trap with these officials and 4 people were arrested the next day! We celebrated and thanked God for such a quick solution. The four were released the next day with just a warning, and went right back to continuing with their scam!

Peter, our head teacher, spoke on all the radio stations in the region letting the people know of this diabolical scam and that HAN is not connected in any way. The highest security official also went on air and made it clear people should not give them money. Two months later one of their people was promoting their con scheme on the radio and they were still working in an even larger area including two other tribes. Many people called in to the radio to tell their stories of being duped and losing money. The leading government official called the radio station while the person was still on the radio and called for the police to arrest him which they did. Not surprisingly the person has not shown up in the Lira Main Prison yet. They have made plenty of money in their scam to pay a handsome bribe to officials.

There is a concern for our teacher trainers' safety as some people still confuse the two organization names and may think that our workers are the evil scammers. Mob justice where people are beaten to death for stealing is not uncommon.

You might think that this is terrible, and would slow down the amazing progress in literacy being made by our teachers and learners in the "Learning to Read to Read the Bible" program, but just the opposite is the case! We have trusted in the scripture Romans 8:28 **"And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose"**. The Hands Across Nations name and reputation are being discussed over and over in a

positive way over the radio so more people are becoming aware that they have the opportunity to learn to read and write. The leaders of all the districts and sub counties in each district, are also becoming aware, and becoming partners in promoting adult literacy through HAN.

We are seeing God flattening mountains and opening doors preparing the way for His Word to be read and understood in their own tribal language.



Though we must have an armed guard and now have a German Shepherd dog guarding our office/ home, (she patrols around the walled compound every hour with Jimmy at night) we are not afraid of what can happen. In many scriptures in the Bible, God says to those who belong to Him, “Do not be afraid of them; the LORD your God himself will fight for you”. With more than 3,000 teachers trained and 30,000 learners in classes or graduated, we trust in the One, The Lord Jesus, who invited us to work with Him in Uganda, to finish the work.

May God bless so many of you who have provided the financial and physical means for us to continue in Uganda, both an adventure and a calling.

Please visit our website: www.handsacrossnations.org. The new website now has a donation button which makes it simple to send a gift to HAN online. Also, be sure to mark your calendar for Saturday Oct 6th for our once a year Hands Across Nations Benefit at the Chewelah Civic Center! It's going to be a great night!

Sharing the love of Christ in practical ways,

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