

October 2007



Dear Everybody,

You won't know Bernard Mutondo because in our books we changed his name. But he was one of the most infamous commercial poachers in North Luangwa National Park, killing many elephants and other wildlife over a period of more than twenty years. He was one of the men who shot at the elephant *Survivor* very near our research camp, and he allegedly shot at

Mark while he was flying our project's airplane. We tried on several occasions to set Bernard up with other jobs so that he would not poach, but he always went back to shooting elephants. After we assisted the game scouts of North Luangwa with boots, uniforms, patrol food and transport and NLNP was protected, Bernard moved into other areas to do his dirty business. After all this time - we received this letter from Bernard:

Dear Mark,

Here in Mpika, Zambia we are okay. I hope you're fine too.

Well, I'm looking for assistance from you, since I stopped poaching completely and have met Mr. Hammer Simwinga, Community Development Officer, who had a word with me concerning wildlife conservation.

Please help me with some carpentry and joinery tools or find me a job which can make me pre-occupied as I've done away completely with poaching, a totally changed person I am. If possible I urge you to please find me a job within Mr. H. Simwinga's Community Development Office of the NLCP.

Yours Sincerely, Bernard Mutondo

Of course we are happy *if* Bernard has truly reformed from poaching – and even *if* it may be just because he is getting a bit old to poach! Though some may think us naïve, we have decided to help him. His joining our project will be a powerful example for other commercial poachers and would-be poachers because this legendary poacher still lives in poverty despite a lifetime of slaughtering wild animals. On the other hand, his neighbors who have joined us have successful fish farms, sunflower presses, and grinding mills.

We wrote Bernard to get his assurance that he would no longer poach, and to find out how much money he needed. He guaranteed that he would never again poach and he requested a loan of two million Kwachas (\$500) for carpentry tools to be coordinated by Hammer Simwinga. Always the businessman, Bernard ended by saying, **"I have 9 pigs and 25 chickens which will work as collateral."** Though Bernard Mutondo was one of the most notorious poachers in Zambia, and one of the last to put down his rifle, we will help him set up shop so that he can make chairs instead of killing elephants.



HAMMER AND QUEEN

As we told you last spring **Hammer Simwinga**, the Development Officer we hired in 1994, was awarded the prestigious *Goldman Environmental Prize*. Only one person from each continent receives this award, and Hammer won for all of Africa! The ceremony was a glorious affair at San Francisco's Musconi Opera House with more than 3,000 people in attendance. Queen, Hammer's wife, was also there and joined him on-stage in a colorful Zambian chitenge dress that she had sewn herself. They were further honored at the *National Geographic Society* in Washington DC. It was a rewarding celebration of the success that you helped make possible. We wish all of you could have been there. You can visit the Goldman website and watch a video of Hammer's continuing work: www.goldmanprize.org.

Hammer and Queen are now back in Zambia continuing the 21 year old project that has transformed the economy and saved the wildlife of North Luangwa. Bernard Mutondo is proof of that!

Photo courtesy of Robert Legander via The Jane Goodall Institute

ELEPHANTS:

This elephant family is walking by *Delia's Hill*, which is now a noted landmark for tourists in North Luangwa. This is the spot where Delia turned over our truck as shown in the *National Geographic* TV film from the mid 1980's. At that time elephants in the park were being shot at the rate of 1,000 a year by commercial poachers, so we would never have been able to take this photograph. Now the elephants roam here freely and safely. What a testimony to the hard work and commitment by so many.

Photo left by Marc (and Peggy!) Faucher – NLNP 2006

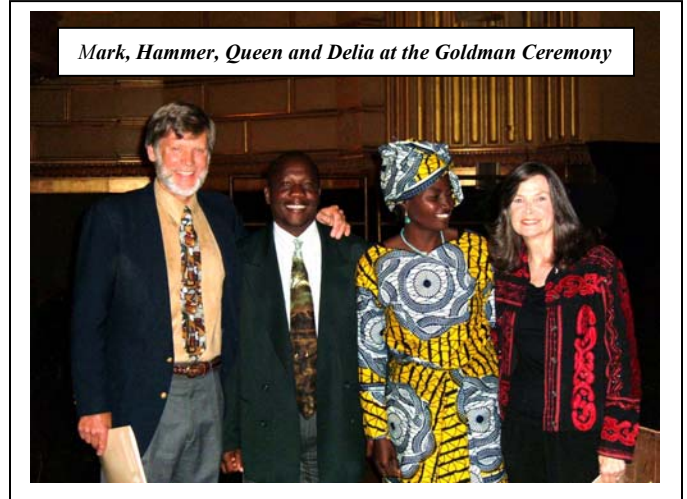


An excerpt from a *The New York Times* article 6-30-07:

In 1986, two American Zoologists, Mark and Delia Owens, came to Luangwa to study lions, and found poaching so pervasive that elephants were being shot almost nightly within earshot of their camp. They set up a project to give local residents alternatives to working for the many commercial poachers in the area. The Goldman Environmental Foundation estimates that [Hammer] Simwinga [who continues the work] has increased participant incomes a hundredfold and doubled food supplies [since poaching has stopped].

The article ended with Hammer's quote: **"They [the poachers] are seeing that their friends are doing better than they are stealing meat from the bush."**

You can read the entire article at: www.owens-foundation.org.



You may have heard that elephants are again being poached in Africa. But **not** in North Luangwa. Because of our project and the continuing work of Frankfurt Zoological, Harvest Help and others, North Luangwa National Park remains one of the most secure wildlife areas in Africa. Our work helping people with alternative livelihoods so they do not have to shoot wildlife is working beautifully. *Survivor*, *Cheers*, and *Long Tail* continue to come to our old camp, and are safe. **BUT - we still need you!** We are raising \$35,000 to buy Hammer a truck. At age 45, Hammer cannot continue crashing over rough bush tracks in the rain on an aging motorbike. Transport is critical to success in these remote villages. **Please help us help Hammer!**

GRIZZLIES: We also need funds so the Foundation can continue grizzly bear habitat protection. We have found several key properties here in the Pacific Northwest that must be conserved for grizzly bears and other wild species for generations to come. We hate asking, but it takes money to make good things happen.

Recently we sat near a small pond on one of these wilderness tracts and watched a spotted deer fawn drinking from the still water. Fifteen feet away a Great Blue Heron stood still as ice, searching for frogs. Perhaps the fawn had never been that close to a GBH. His curiosity seemed to get the better of him. He walked slowly toward the bird and at five feet away crouched on legs like cocked springs, inching forward. The heron stood statuesque as the fawn stretched his neck, putting his nose to the bird's beak. Soft as a whisper, the fawn sniffed up and down the heron's neck while the heron remained. Finally, the fawn backed away to re-join his mother nearby. Somehow we have to keep places where fawns can sniff herons, elk calves can rustle cattail leaves, and moose can eye a passing grizzly. Each acre of wilderness adds hope for our planet and our future.

MARK UPDATE: Mark was seriously injured August 1, 2006 on a back country trip when he was thrown from a bucking horse at high speed down a steep mountain. Being Mark, he was determined to return to the spot of the accident exactly a year later. Well, he made it – a few weeks early in fact:

I did not know what to expect in late July when I rode *Summit*, my more dependable horse, back to the spot in the Cabinet Mountains of Montana where, a year earlier, my other horse *Whiskey* had thrown me

- **CITES Secretariat:** 15, Chemin des Anemones -- Case Postale 456, CH-1219 -- Chatelaine – Geneva, Switzerland. PHONE: 4122-979-9139-40, FAX: 4122-797-3417, EMAIL: cites@unep.ch
- **U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service** -- 4401 North Fairfax Drive, Room 432 -- Arlington, Virginia 22203

LEGACY PLANNING:

Touch the future by including the Owens Foundation in your Estate Planning.

Contact Tammy Johnson for more information:

- **Will, Living Trust or other plan:** Name the OFWC as a recipient of a fixed amount or a percent of your estate.
- **Annuity or Life Insurance Policy:** Designate OFWC
- **Retirement Plans:** Designate OFWC as a beneficiary of all or a percentage of your Retirement Plan.

MATCHING DONATIONS:

Some companies match employee & retiree donations to 501(c) (3) nonprofits such as the Owens Foundation. Multiply your giving and empower conservation.

RECOMMEND A FRIEND:

Let us know of anyone who shares our love of people, wild places and wildlife. We never share our database with anyone - ever.

DONATIONS FOR NORTH LUANGWA: Thanks to all who have shipped school, craft & medical supplies to North Luangwa. They are GREATLY needed and appreciated. More are still needed.

IMPORTANT: The US Postal Service has eliminated all reasonably priced shipments outside the US and the only option for shipping to North Luangwa is very expensive AIRMAIL. Please check the cost of shipping before going forward with a project and keep weight in mind!

School Supplies: Crayons, pens, pencils, erasers, chalk, wildlife books & magazines (used are fine).

Medical Supplies: Antibiotic bars of soap, latex exam gloves (sterile not required), sterile bandages, antibiotic ointment, gauze, first aid tape, Band-Aids, Ziploc bags and backpacks.

Sewing Supplies: Women's groups can use any fabric, needles, thread and sewing notions.

SHIPPING: Label medical donations as *Hygiene Supplies*, school and craft donations as *Education Supplies*. List on the USPS Customs Form as a *Gift* with a low value. Ship USPO surface/no insurance.

***** IMPORTANT ***** Use sturdy boxes, w/2 strips of duct tape in each direction and overlay edges w/2-inch plastic tape. Use USPO "M BAG" for books at a slightly reduced rate, 11 lbs minimum and 66 lbs max per box. Use USPS site: <http://ircalc.usps.gov/> to calculate postage by weight.

SHIP TO: Hammer Simwinga, PO Box 450140, Mpika, Zambia. **THANK YOU - THANK YOU - THANK YOU!!!**

SURFACE SHIPPING ADVOCACY: The loss of reasonable surface postal shipping outside the US (to Zambia) has hit us hard. Please write and/or call your government representatives and share your concern that individual and organizational humanitarian aid to remote places like N Luangwa has been seriously impacted by this change. You can go to <http://www.petitiononline.com/zikomo/petition.html> and sign a petition in support of a return of "M" Bag and surface shipping outside the USA. Tell others.

- **For Address Info:** Write - *The Office of the Clerk of the US House of Representatives/US Capitol* -- Room H154 - Washington, DC 20515 - PH: 202-225-7000, or email for info www.clerkweb.houses.gov - or email your representatives directly through the following link: www.house.gov/writerep
- **President George Bush**, The White House - Washington, DC 20500 Email: president@whitehouse.gov

THANK YOU: So many people bring their special talents to the OFWC and we are thankful for each and every one of you. Special thanks to Bruce Mendelson of Nikon Precision Donations Committee and coworkers Lynne Browne and Cliff Greenberg for a grant for Hammer's work AND a digital Nikon camera that is being hand delivered by Fred Frankel who is also donating a digital camera for the Warden for NLNP! Thanks to Rita and Bob Lane for their delivery services and to Monika Schneider for her camera donation as well. A special thank you to Margaret and Hank McCamish, Susan and Bill Darnell, Mary Jane, Bud and Emma O'Connor, Marc and Peggy Faucher, Elizabeth Holland and Gene Brant, Emily Fisher, Shana and Andy Laursen for their continuing support. Thanks also to Australian Jude Price (and her parents!) for promoting Hammer's work, to Siggie Hosenfeld for her research efforts and to Gordon and Junie Streeb who are always there for us. Thanks to Steve Drogin for supporting Kalahari research and conservation efforts. And many thanks to Mischa Tryzna and Hanka Kotrla for forming a Dutch non-profit to raise funds for Hammer's work. Really - the list is endless. Each one of you makes success possible.

*Owens Foundation for Wildlife Conservation, Inc. -- P.O. Box 870530, Stone Mountain, GA 30087 -- www.owens-foundation.org
Mary Dykes at 770-270-0729 marydykes@mindspring.com or Tammy Johnson at 678-648-1267 padman2@comcast.net*