

December 14, 2009



ANNE K. TAYLOR FUND NEWSLETTER DECEMBER 2009



Anne and Carol, Coordinator of the School Nutrition Programme

Dear Supporters and Friends of the Anne K. Taylor Fund:

Thank you all so very much for your generous support over this past year which has enabled us to be so effective in Kenya's Masai Mara. I want to take this opportunity to wish you all a very Happy Holiday Season and I hope that 2010 will bring peace and more happiness to our world.

On a personal note I am so delighted to let you know that my daughter, Farley, and her husband Stuart Lansing, gave birth to a beautiful baby boy named Taylor on October 25th. What a blessing! We were all in Chicago for this momentous event and I have now graduated to "Grannyhood"! Rather daunting to say the least but I accept it with pleasure – does anyone want to see photos??!!



Farley and Taylor Lansing



**Marett Taylor and Stuart Lansing
New Board Members**

I would also like to welcome my other daughter, Marett, and Stuart Lansing to the Board of the Anne K. Taylor Fund. I know they will be an active and positive force and I look forward to working with them.

I now want to let you know what we have achieved this past year with your help. I spent a large part of 2009 in Kenya working on the project and also meeting many friends who came on safari with us (A.K. Taylor International) this year.

As you all know this is a multi-faceted project so it seems I never can keep this newsletter as short as I would like to! Thank you for your interest and for bearing with me!

1. PATROLS

The Anne K. Taylor Fund/Care for the Wild (AKTF/CFTW) team continues to work closely with the authorities, with Sgt. Pengo of the Mara Conservancy being in command of our team. They continue to do extensive patrols apprehending poachers, removing snares, rescuing animals with man-induced injuries and helping me with my community work. If you would like to see clips from the BBC Big Cat Diary Live show featuring our team in action please go to <http://www.bbc.co.uk/bigcat/>. When the opening pages come up you will see the presenters of the Big Cat Diary Live show, and to the left of the photo you will see a selection of videos. Please select **“More videos”** and click on **“Anti-Poaching Patrol”**. This link was given in the last newsletter but in case you missed it here it is again!



Anne and Team with Asgar Pathan, Care for the Wild, Kenya

This year Kenya has been in the grip of a devastating drought which has caused hardship for the people of Kenya, the livestock and the wildlife. It has also meant that the poaching has increased and the team has been kept extra-busy. The rains have started now in some areas of the country, thank goodness, so hopefully the situation will improve for man and beast. I am extremely grateful to Asgar Pathan of Care for the Wild, Kenya who supports our team and our patrols so generously. We are also most grateful for the logistical and moral support provided by Brian Heath and the Mara Conservancy

2. FORTIFYING LIVESTOCK ENCLOSURES

This year, I concentrated on providing 8' chain link fence to help many Masai families fortify their livestock enclosures. This, I believe, will help cut down on predation and the resultant revenge killings of the predators which often occur – lions being the main target and whose very survival is threatened. The numbers of lion lost in Kenya to the poison, Furadan, is staggering – 75 that we know of have died a slow and terrible death. You may have seen a segment on this subject on 60 Minutes. The livestock carcass is often laced with Furadan, which has no taste or smell, killing everything that feeds on the carcass including the large predators, vultures, jackal, hyena, etc. Conservationists around the globe are working hard to get Furadan banned (which I am told is now a possibility) and all surplus tins removed from stores in Kenya (which has not happened and it is still widely available – and cheap) with a write-in campaign to the Kenyan Prime Minister and to FMC, the distributors in the USA. The Prime Minister's (Hon Raila Odinga) email is ps@primeminister.go.ke - via the Permanent Secretary whose name is Dr. Mohammed Isahakia and he is very good – OR info@primeminister.go.ke. It has also recently been recorded that several children have died from ingesting Furadan by mistake. Richard Leakey's Wildlife Direct <http://wildlifedirect.org> has been spear-heading this battle. If you would like to add your voice to this campaign please let me know and I will give you more details.

We fortified 30 “bomas” which has proven to be very successful. In 2010 we plan to do that many again, or more, as funding allows. Human/wildlife conflict is one of our largest challenges and, with the downturn in the economy and tourism, there is no compensation paid to the Masai for losing their livestock. When I met with the elders earlier this year we discussed this issue and it was a hot subject. It is very costly and labour intensive (to avoid false claims) to operate a compensation scheme and the Reserve authorities are unable to do it at this time due to financial restraints. In a matter of minutes a leopard can and will kill or maim as many as 40+ goats or sheep – leaving those that live with horrifying injuries that defy the imagination; lion can penetrate a weak fence and take a prized bull. This is devastating as the Masai’s entire wealth is tied up in their livestock. I have heard from my team leader that our efforts have been extremely successful and the communities are very grateful for this assistance. By helping the community, we also help to preserve the wildlife as ultimately the Masai are responsible for the wellbeing of the animals. With a few exceptions, the Masai are incredibly tolerant of the predation knowing that tourist dollars provide a lot of benefit to their communities.



Anne’s Vehicle Loaded to Deliver Chain Link Fence and Water Tanks to Masai Homesteads



Anne & Team at Kilonga’s Chain Link Fortified Sheep Shed

I recently heard from our AKTF team leader, Elias as follows on the subject of the chain link fences:

“For those who have already put the chain link, It’s a success story as they told me that they are able to sleep and are happy that there’s no more losses for their goats/sheep. One family near Engos told me that they couldn’t believe it while they met the Honey Badger face to face in the morning. He was trying to get through the sheep boma but was impossible because the chain link was put 2 ft underground making it hard to enter. He tried to dig in different corners till the morning hours. So they said they only heard of the animal but they have never seen it apart from that day.”

(Honey badgers, interestingly, cause tremendous damage to their livestock, particularly to the lambs and kid goats if they get into the enclosure at night.)

3. MICRO FINANCE - MASAI LADIES’ BEADING PROJECT MANAGED BY JOSEPH AND REGINA MPATIANY

We have managed to receive certification for their bead work from Wildlife Friendly www.wildlifefriendly.org an organization dedicated to the development and marketing of products that conserve threatened wildlife while contributing to the economic vitality of rural communities. This should help me market these beautiful beaded bracelets to benefit the women. If anyone would like to purchase a beaded bracelet or two please let me know. They can also be fun, colorful napkin rings – a great house present for a dinner party.

I am most grateful to Steph and Justin Bigart of Sage Spa and Salon (www.sagespaliving.com), Billings, MT; Jay and Lynne Montague of Montague's Jewelers Billings MT (<http://www.montaguesjewelers.com>) and Vivian Rahl of Two Old Hippies, Aspen, Colorado (<http://www.twoldhippies.com>) for supporting this women's project by marketing the bracelets. I also would like to thank many individuals (you know who you are!) for selling the bracelets in their communities on behalf of the women's project.

4. SNARE ART

Kioko Mwitiki continues to make the engaging small animal sculptures from the snares which the team removes from the bush. We still have some on hand should anyone want to purchase one or more – regrettably we have sold out of elephants, the most popular animal. We have lots of warthogs which I am partial to as it was an injured warthog, Sir Francis Bacon, which caused me to start this project!

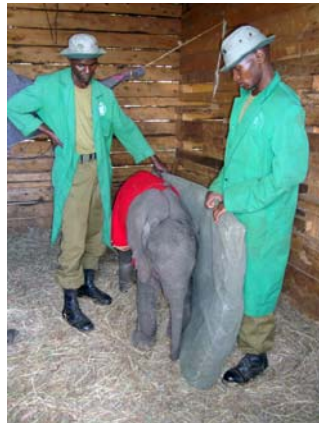
5. ANIMAL RESCUE

We assisted with the rescue of a pregnant rhino whose lip was almost severed by a snare – along with two elephants whose legs were cut to the bone – and a third, sadly, we found too late as it had already died.



Anne with Rhino Rescue Team

We also participated in the rescue and air transfer of two orphaned baby elephants from the Mara to Daphne Sheldrick's Orphanage in Nairobi. Sadly, one of the orphans named Kilgoris, was speared and died shortly after arrival. Through AKTF I supported the Sheldrick's this year as they have been taking care of more orphans than ever before due to the drought and poaching incidents. It is said that the large Chinese presence in Kenya is instrumental in the increase in illegal poaching of elephants and rhino to support their insatiable appetite for ivory and rhino horn.



Sheldrick Keepers Caring for the Orphaned and Injured Kilgoris

6. SCHOOL NUTRITION PROJECT

This pilot project, generously funded by the National Soybean Research Lab, University of Illinois has been operating now for 9 months with full co-operation of the parents, teachers and community, feeding over 700 children in two schools. Thanks also to Cynthia Cassano of the Crowley Children's fund, for her donation which was also designated for this programme. The project has shown incredible results, both academically and physically, for the children in the Oloomongi Nursery School and Pusangi Primary school. A cup a day of fully nutritional **Insta porridge** makes the world of difference to their well-being. **This nutrition, health and hygiene project** is being headed up by **Carol N. Kiugo** of Insta Products. U of I has generously agreed to extend this initial programme into 2010 – after **which I will need to find another source of funding or somehow make this project self-sustaining.**



Anne Distributing Insta at Pusangi School



Children Enjoying Their First Meal at School

I am grateful for the extra time they have given me, and the children, to make this happen. The Masai community is very enthusiastic to introduce the nutrition programme to many more schools and I will have further meetings with community and elders when I am in Kenya to see if this can become a reality. **If anyone is interested in supporting this nutrition programme please let me know.** I would be most grateful. It costs approx \$45.00 to feed one child for a year once the water tanks, etc. are in place. A full budget is available for anyone interested.



Child Finishing Insta Porridge



Masai Mother Mixing Insta Porridge

7. DEWORMING OF MASAI STUDENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES

We de-wormed the students in ten schools with effective results – the children were badly infested with worms. While I do not currently have the funding to provide food to more schools, I felt that if we de-wormed the children, the food they do eat will have better nutritional value. A brief excerpt from Carol from the field: **"When we visited Olobosoitto, the head teacher told us a class seven student at a neighbouring school died of worms. He was being operated and the worms that were removed weighed 2kg! Up to now it's still like a nightmare...The students, teachers were very, very, very happy Anne, I wish you were around to see the joy on their faces. I also visited Olopikindong'oe, they wanted to know about Insta products so they can buy for the students. AKT Fund Team said hello, teachers, students from all schools we de-wormed, and Pusangi & Olomong'i too. Their appreciation to you, Insta, U. of I., AKTF and your generous donors and regards to you Anne. They miss you a lot."**

8. BUILDING OF CLASSROOMS AND INSTALLATION OF GUTTER SYSTEM AND WATER TANKS

This project was completed at Oloomongi Nursery school. We installed two large water tanks with water being collected off the tin roofs of the newly constructed classrooms, which we also funded and supervised. There are some very happy children and parents!



Delivering Water Tanks to School



Elders in Front of New Classroom

9. TEACHERS

AKTF pays the salaries of two excellent teachers, and supplements a third, in order to keep them there! Faith, the teacher at Oloomongi nursery school, for example, is fantastic and is an asset to the school and a bonus to the students. She could not survive on the salary she was being paid by the community, as is the case with the other two teachers, so I jumped in with this worthwhile investment.

10. BLOGGING AND RADIO INTERVIEWS

Our team leader, Elias Kamande, blogs on the Mara Triangle Website from time to time (I hope this will become more frequent!) to keep you informed as to our team's activities. This can be found at: <http://www.maratriangle.org/blog/2009/11/19/update-from-kamande-on-work-of-care-for-the-wildakt-scouts.html#entry5848715> . I was also advised that he had an hour long interview about our work on one of the swahili speaking Radio stations in Kenya to let the Kenyans know about our work and the challenges we all face with conservation – particularly that of human/wildlife conflict. It was a question/answer session and this was the most visited subject. There is talk that this may become a regular programme which would be wonderful news.

11. DR ASUKA TAKITA

Congratulations are in order for Asuka who has recently given birth to a beautiful baby boy named Dan! AKTF funded Asuka to partake in a Wildlife Veterinary course in South Africa which will hopefully now allow her to work on wildlife rescues. Currently she works on domestic animals and livestock and headed up the distemper/vaccination campaign for Masai domestic dogs which we funded last year.

12. MOBILE FILM THEATER

The mobile film theater, purchased by AKTF and operated by Born Free Foundation continues to take the message of conservation to tens of thousands of Kenyans. A very effective educational tool.

13. AKTF FUNDED VEHICLES

The AKTF funded vehicles are fully operational and allow the authorities to be very effective in patrolling, community work, monitoring wildlife harassment and many other purposes. The operational costs are provided by Care for the Wild Kenya, Olare Orok Conservancy and the Mara Conservancy. **We actually need to buy a larger vehicle for our patrols – if anyone would like to help on this front please be in touch with me. We have a small Suzuki which is functional but is really too small for our team of 8 over terrible “roads”.**

14. TWO WAY RADIOS, TENTS AND UNIFORMS

I purchased three more radios to improve the team's communication and plan to replace the tents and uniforms.

15. MEETING WITH JESS ATKINS OF M.E.A.K. (Medical and Educational Aid to Kenya) <http://meak.org/>

I had a very productive meeting with Jess in New York over Thanksgiving. She has been responsible for many wonderful projects in Northern Kenya and is possibly interested in working with AKTF on community projects which will fit MEAK's mandate in the Mara. At the top of our list is a mobile health clinic to serve the community who live in the remote areas of the Mara. It would be wonderful if this could become a reality as the medical hardships which the Masai community live with each day are hard for us to imagine. She will be visiting our project in January. She made a short video of her last visit to the Oloomongi nursery school – it will warm your heart. The children are irresistible and you will “meet” their teacher, Faith. You can check it out on their Youtube room (Oloomongi is one of the videos). I hope you enjoy it:
<http://www.youtube.com/user/MEAKenya>

16. TEXT BOOKS AND SPORTS EQUIPMENT

I continue to provide text books and sports equipment to students, to my team and to the rangers with whom my team patrols. Education is a top priority for most Kenyans and by providing the text books it helps their children tremendously. Most people cannot afford to buy the books and thus their children are at an extreme disadvantage. (The Government is supposed to provide them to the schools but this does not always happen in these rural schools.)



Oloomongi Children Welcoming Anne



Anne in Classroom at Oloomongi School

17. REMOVAL OF BROKEN FENCE WHICH WAS A GOOD SUPPLY OF WIRE TO THE POACHERS

This was an ambitious project which took me a couple of years to achieve as I needed to get permission from numerous people to remove the wire from about 100 acres of land. The fence was broken and was ensnaring wildlife and the poachers were stealing the rest to make snares. We worked together with rangers from Kichwa Tembo Camp, school children, our team and members of the community and my family were there to lend a helping hand. It was a long and “scratchy” day as you can imagine but we got the job done and it was a heart-warming team effort. The permission was facilitated by William Korose, Assistant Chief of the Transmara and ex team member.



Team Effort Removing Wire Fence

For those of you who know James and Felix who work with me in Kenya I needed to let you know of their terrible misfortunes. Felix lost his 4 year old daughter, Penny Anne, in India where we had sent her for an operation to rectify bi-lateral renal stenosis caused by Alagille Syndrome. Sadly she had complications and the operation was unsuccessful. Felix, his wife Catherine and son Keith were devastated as you can imagine but were so grateful for the help they received. While the child did not “make it”, it was her only chance to survive. It completely tore me apart as it never occurred to me she would not come home. The Indian doctors were terrific and did what they could in a very complicated situation – they too were incredibly emotional when I spoke to them.

James Kones just lost his wife in childbirth – their baby son survived. She leaves James along with three other children. Life is so tough in so many parts of the world and I feel so grateful that we have access to such good medical facilities in this country. May she rest in peace. Their son was born the day before Farley's.....

I want to dedicate this newsletter to James and Felix and thank them for all the help they give me when I am in Kenya and wish them strength in their loss.

A quick update of prior team members! Our first team leader, Evanson Kariuki is now a very active conservationist in international circles having earned a Fellowship in Tanzania studying the bushmeat situation, which is, of course, what we deal with on a daily basis. Peter Kamau and William Korose were also part of the original team – P.K. is now a respected safari guide and keeps in touch with our work and team; William Korose has been appointed to the respected position of Assistant Chief in the Transmara area – this is a great honour and credit to him – the first rung of the political ladder. He helps us tremendously when working with the community. I am so proud of all of them and know that the Mara is a better place for their involvement.

I would be very honoured if you would consider supporting the Anne K. Taylor Fund again in 2010 – I will ensure that all donations go into the field where they belong. I continue to do the administration at no charge and Jim kindly does most of the accounting which keeps our overheads very low. Mary Zrubek in my A.K. Taylor International office helps with administration when I am gone for which I am most grateful. Bernie Githigi helps me enormously with logistics in Kenya. I would like to thank Peter Ngori for his personal support along with Elijah and Olonana Camp in the Masai Mara for their “ground support” when, on occasion, I have needed it. Kichwa Tembo Camp, where I live, also deserves a word of thanks for their help when needed. Also, a thank you to Governors Camp, who has assisted me with my team vehicle when it has needed quick repairs. I so appreciate this help. Thanks again to Asgar Pathan, Care for the Wild, Kenya, for all his assistance and support; Brian Heath, the Managing Director of the Mara Conservancy, the Warden, Ole Lenjirr and all the Mara Conservancy rangers who work so closely with our team. Without this team effort we could achieve nothing.

Finally a huge thank you to my team members for their dedication and bravery, without whom this work could not be done – Elias Kamande, team leader; Nelson Nakuso; Peter Kilonga; Ole Sirere; Ole Saitoti and Ole Kimoro along with Sergeant Pengo. They are incredible young men and they give me hope for the future of our wildlife.

I am so grateful to the unwavering support which you all give to me so that we may continue this valuable work in the Mara (it is hard to describe how valuable it is – it is changing the community itself in favour of conservation, a lasting legacy). If ever you have any questions or need clarification on any point please feel free to call, or email me any time. I am heading to Kenya on January 4th for my usual winter migration I will be very busy with safaris and the project but that is my passion so I feel blessed.

As you know, I never send out a formal fund raising appeal but would be so grateful for your continuing support during these difficult times so that our work may continue. Tax-deductible donations, including marketable securities, may be sent to:

**Anne K. Taylor Fund
2724 Arvin Road
Billings, MT. 59102**

Thank you in advance for whatever you can do.

Thank you again so very much for your past support. Together we have achieved a lot! Both the community and wildlife (if they could speak) are so grateful.

With heartfelt gratitude and warm wishes for the upcoming Holiday Season,

Anne



Anne Kent Taylor
Anne K. Taylor fund
E-Mail: anne@aktaylor.com
Web: www.aktaylor.com