

CONTACT

Greater Kansas City Chapter of People to People International

gkcptp.org



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JOURNEY TO UGANDA

by Terry Smitka

The four traveling companions of Tom Waggoner, David de la Fuente, Terry Smitka, and Pete Davis, set off on another journey of discovery on March 11, 2010, when they took a trip to Uganda. Since this was our first trip to sub-Saharan Africa, we tried to select realistic goals for this trip. Being middle-age-plus gentlemen, a primary goal was to limit our casualties to 25%. In addition, we wanted to see for ourselves the challenges faced by this former British colony which seems to be best known by its association with Idi Amin. The trip was a great success. We all came back safe and sound; and our understanding of the people, history and culture of Uganda has been greatly enhanced.



David de la Fuente, Pete Davis, Terry Smitka and Tom Waggoner traveled to Uganda in March 2010

Why Uganda?

Why did we choose Uganda? This is where participating in the officer sponsorship program with People to People really opened some doors. Terry and Pam Smitka sponsored two of the officers in recent years, LTC Muhoozi Kainerugaba and LTC Milton Katarinyeba. They are from Uganda and both are currently working in the capital of Kampala. Terry, Tom and David, try to sponsor officers from the same region to make it easier to organize group events with our officers. That has allowed all of us to get to know the officers sponsored by the group. Hence, the three of us were all friends with the officers before we visited. For that reason, Uganda made perfect sense for our first trip to the southern part of the continent.

Arrival After a Long Flight

After twenty-six hours of travel, we arrived late on Friday night, March 12. LTC Muhoozi arranged for someone to transport us to our hotel, so we were relieved when we saw a gentleman with a sign waiting for us at Entebbe airport. He immediately escorted us to the VIP lounge and took care of all the arrival details. This was quite a greeting and we were feeling very important at the time. Little did we know that we would be seeing a lot more of these aides during our trip. After eating some Samosa, we were then transported the 45-minute drive to the Golf Course Hotel (which we would highly recommend) in Kampala. The hotel informed us that there was a problem with our reservations, so we were getting very anxious because it was close to midnight. However, our drivers came to our rescue and had a conversation in their native language with the hotel manager. We were then told everything was fine and we were welcome to stay in the presidential suite on top of the hotel. It was quite a luxurious place; and after celebrating with 3 or 4 Nile Special beers, we staggered to our room to get some much needed rest.

Membership
renewals are
now due.

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or submit by mail
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GKCPTP
PO Box 22365,
Kansas City, MO
64113

The Tour Begins

We woke up on Saturday morning to what would be a stereotypical day of sunshine and about 85 degrees. We arranged to meet LTC Milton, and his wife Olivia, at our hotel in the early afternoon. Olivia was a travel agent so we worked out a four-day package with her to visit some sites in the area as well as arrange a safari. Our tour started immediately as we returned to Entebbe to visit several cultural sites there. Entebbe is located on Lake Victoria and was the provincial capital when the British ruled Uganda. Even today, President Museveni and the Ugandan government have their headquarters there.

We visited the zoo to see all of the animals that are native to Uganda. We also visited the botanical gardens, which were originally laid out in 1898 and contain over 300 species of plants. We were impressed with the large number of plants with medicinal purposes.

Kampala

On Sunday, we took a tour of Kampala, a city of 1.4 million people that was originally the capital of the Buganda empire. Driving around this crowded city, we were struck by the traffic congestion and the hundreds of small shops that are frequented by the locals. Our stops included the Mengo palace, Rubaga hill, United National Museum, and the Kasubi tombs. The tombs were particularly interesting, as they have been declared a UNESCO World Heritage site. Built in 1881, this huge thatch facility holds the remains and many artifacts from four famous Buganda kings. It was a very respectful atmosphere and is a spiritual and political site for the Buganda people. A couple of days after our visit, we saw a local newspaper and were shocked to see the lead story was about the tombs being burnt to the ground. Local riots soon followed and several people were killed, although we were not near the place at the time. How ironic! Later that day we traveled to Jinja, which is home to the source of the Nile River. We took a boat ride and actually stood on a small island where the Nile emerges from Lake Victoria. We saw quite a few Colobus monkeys along the river, which were really the only wildlife we saw during the entire trip outside of the game parks. After visiting Bujagali Falls, we returned to our hotel.

Highway Courtesies

I would like to make mention of the roads and the driving in Uganda. There seems to be only one main road going east and west out of Kampala, so naturally it is very crowded with backups extending over a mile. This was no problem for our driver Katamba. When the traffic was completely stopped, Katamba would just take off in the oncoming lane until a vehicle larger than his would approach. That meant that if you were driving a motor scooter (bodaboda), you were basically invisible to Katamba and were forced to drive on the shoulder if you wanted to survive. Even regular cars elected to make three lanes of traffic when Katamba was in their lane.

Katamba did show some respect to oncoming trucks as he would try to squeeze in front of the cars stopped ahead of him until the trucks passed. Thankfully, there was no evidence of road rage in Uganda. The roads themselves show numerous signs of construction along the way, but outside of a few nice stretches, could use a lot of improvement.

Western Uganda

Monday afternoon, March 15, we left Kampala for a few days to visit the Queen Elizabeth game park in western Uganda. The 210-mile trip took close to eight hours because of road construction and just plain difficult roads. As we finally approached the park a little after dark, our car was forced to come to a complete stop as a hippo sauntered across the street right in front of us. As startling as that was, about 200 yards away on the other side of the bridge was a village with dozens of children outside playing. Finally arriving at the Simba Safari Camp, we were surprised to find that the camp was temporarily without electricity and we were the only travelers in the camp. But we were treated to a decent meal and celebrated our arrival with a few Nile Specials. Our rooms were modest to say the least, but it was sufficient for each of us as well as the geckos that shared our room.

Chimpanzee Safari

On Tuesday morning, we started early because we went on a Chimpanzee safari in the Kyambura Gorge. This was a walking safari so our guide carried his AK-47 with him just in case. He explained that normally just shooting in the air will scare off any predators, but occasionally they have to take more drastic measures. It turned out that we never felt threatened although the walking up and down the well-worn paths was quite tiring. We did see tracks made by lions, elephants, and other animals, but our only close-up encounter with wildlife was when we surprised a group of hippos in the river. They were very upset with our presence and roared loudly as they retreated to the water. We never could find the chimps but did see many other monkeys.

At this point, we were still accompanied on our trip by Grant, one of the aides that met us at the airport, and he felt that our accommodations were not adequate. So we checked out of the camp not really knowing where we were headed. In the meantime, we had scheduled a lake safari on Lake Edward. Traveling on the boat with about 50 passengers, we were amazed at all the wildlife we saw along the shore. There were many hippos, water buffalo, elephants, crocodiles, wart hogs, lions, and countless other species clustered around the shore.

It was a spectacular sight and surprising how close we were able to get to the animals. We finished the day by taking a driving safari through a portion of the Queen Elizabeth park. Once again we saw many species of animals with the most prevalent being Kobs, which are similar to an impala.

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We spent Tuesday night in a town on the road back to Kampala and spent most of Wednesday traveling. We stopped along the way in a town called Fort Portal, which we believed to be the most prosperous town we visited outside of the capital. We ate dinner that night at the Cassia Hotel overlooking Kampala with Milton and his wife. The pace of our activities was finally catching up with us as we retired fairly early that evening and scaled back our plans for the rest of the trip.

We spent Thursday, Friday and Saturday touring the city, souvenir shopping, visiting with some new-found friends, and actually playing golf. The golf course would be difficult to compare with courses here, but it was still an enjoyable diversion. We were a little reluctant to chase our errant balls too far into the bush however. We let the caddies take care of that duty.

Courtship, Uganda Style

We spent a leisurely Saturday afternoon on a picnic with Milton's family and discussed the state of the economy in Uganda and what measures need to be taken in the future. Both Milton and Muhoozi agreed that the most important areas of focus should be the roads, mechanized farming, and mandatory education. We also learned a couple of very important things about the relationship between men and women in Uganda. First of all, you must pay the father of your future wife if you want her hand in marriage. Apparently Olivia was quite a catch because Milton said he had to pay her father 10 cows to marry her.

We also found out that husbands in Uganda did not allow their wives to eat eggs, chicken, pork, or grasshoppers in years past. Apparently the husbands were concerned that the wives would eat these delicacies before serving it to them.

We thought this was a novel idea and decided to try it out on our wives when we returned home. Being kind and considerate gentlemen, we even loosened the rules a little to allow them all of the grasshoppers they could eat! Our scheme backfired when our wives just stopped cooking meals altogether. We relented a few days later.

It was finally time to return home and Grant and Katamba graciously escorted us to the airport. They took care of all of the details again and sent us on our way with a great feeling about Ugandan hospitality. This turned out to be one of our most educational adventures and one we will talk about for many years.

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN



Dear Members,

In September, I had the opportunity to network with other PTPI chapter members at the worldwide conference in Phoenix. It was a terrific opportunity to exchange ideas and meet many new friends from Peru to Nepal, from Africa to Denmark and all across the United States as well. Among the highlights, it was announced that there is potential for six new chapters in the USA! Bylaws were passed for the Americas Region and officers Tracy Justinak, Meg Carter and Barb Capozzi were introduced. It was a pleasure to accept the "2010 Best Chapter Website" award on behalf of the chapter. Congratulations to Sharon Valasek who received a recruiting award, and to Inga Barringer, the recipient of the "Leadership Award," and to Steve DiGiacinto the recipient of the "Eisenhower Distinguished Service Award." Our chapter was certainly well represented in the awards category and I could not have been more proud!

The 3rd annual Deanna Rose Farmstead picnic took place on September 19 and was again a fantastic success. As LTC Jan Willem Maas (senior ranking officer of the 11-1 class) remarked, "It was a wonderful Sunday afternoon. Good food, fine people and wonderful weather. There is nothing more to wish for." Thanks to Jane Kohl and Kim Nitz and the planning committee for putting this program together and to the IMSD and PTPI for their generous support.

Our chapter has participated in two local ethnic festivals this fall. We are getting the word out about our great organization! Thanks to Paulette Markel, Renee Stephenson and Irina Kobzeva-Pavlovic for their outstanding leadership in chairing these events.

Another class of international military officers will be arriving before long! Please keep extending invitations to prospective sponsors. There is a sponsor orientation scheduled for December 8 at the Kauffman Foundation Conference Center.

I would like to extend a note of thanks to Jim Malouff, who has recently stepped down from the board of directors due to increasing family responsibilities. Jim has spearheaded a number of initiatives that have enhanced our chapter.

Important board and committee positions need to be filled for the coming year. We are in need of communication's committee help for the both the newsletter and the website, as well as board of directors positions. Please consider lending your talent to this organization. You may contact me at dburnett5@kc.rr.com for more specific information.

Warm regards,

Pat

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Military Class of 2011

The GKCPTP military committee has begun its preparation to receive and place the 2011-2 class of international military students and their families who will begin to arrive at Ft. Leavenworth in early January of 2011. Currently, a class of 50 students from 48 different countries is expected.

The committee would like to urge every existing sponsor to promote this program to friends and family. All you need to do is provide either Karen Haber, Membership Vice-President, or any military committee member, with potential sponsor candidates' names, e-mail addresses and phone numbers. One of us will make sure that membership and sponsor materials are sent to your referrals.

4 Please mark Wednesday evening, December 8 on your calendars. A sponsor briefing scheduled on that date will provide an opportunity to meet and mingle with other GKCPTP sponsors as well as hear the latest information regarding the program directly from representatives of Ft. Leavenworth. This briefing is a great time to exchange ideas and gather valuable tips from other sponsors.

We would also encourage you to invite any potential sponsors that may have expressed an interest in the program, but for whatever reason may not be able to commit for the 2011-2 class-year.

The sponsor briefing event begins at 6 p.m., December 8 at the Kauffman Foundation, 4801 Rockhill Road, Kansas City, Missouri 64110.

Listed below is contact information you may need in regard to sponsoring or referring potential sponsors.

Military Committee

Sharon Valasek
svalasek@kc.rr.com
816 213 5847

Sonia Eichenwald
seichenwald@aol.com
913 851 0873

GKCPTP Vice-President, Membership
Karen Haber
karen@kchaber.com
816 741 9518

CALENDAR

DATE	EVENT	LOCATION	TIME
12/2/2010	SAMS graduation	Eisenhower Auditorium, Lewis and Clark, Ft. Leavenworth	9:00 a.m.
12/3/2010	10-2 Holiday Dinner Dance-invitation only RSVP required	Riverfront Center, 123 Esplanade Leavenworth, KS	6:00 p.m.
12/8/2010	Sponsor briefing	Kauffman Conference Center, 4801 Rockhill Road. Kansas City	6:00 p.m.
12/9/2010	10-2 Badge ceremony	Eisenhower Auditorium, Lewis and Clark, Ft. Leavenworth	10:30 a.m.
12/10/2010	10-2 Graduation	Eisenhower Auditorium, Lewis and Clark, Ft. Leavenworth	9:00 a.m.
12/10/2010	11-1 Holiday dinner dance- invitation only rsvp required	Riverfront Conference Center, 123 Esplanade Leavenworth, KS	6:00 p.m.
12/15/2010	Know your World-Saudi Arabia	Eisenhower Auditorium, Lewis and Clark, Ft. Leavenworth	3:30 p.m.
Jan. 7-9	Arrival window for 11-2 class		

Note: 10-2 class graduates December, 2010; 11-1 graduates June 2011; 11-2 graduates December 2011.

Contact Newsletter GKCPTP

Ethnic Enrichment Festival

Committee Chair, Irina Kobzeva-Pavlovic

The Greater Kansas City People to People Chapter proudly joined the local international community in celebration of the annual Ethnic Enrichment Festival in Kansas City this past August 20-22, 2010. The Festival provided unique opportunities for attendees to enjoy music, traditional dances, games, food and beverages from all around the world.



Irina Kobzeva-Pavlovic chaired our chapter's participation in Kansas City's annual ethnic enrichment festival

Volunteers and great supporters of our organization operated the GKCPTP booth. It attracted the attention of hundreds of visitors from the entire Greater Kansas City area, as well as other regions of the country and other nations, such as India, Korea and Ukraine. We have had over 60 inquiries and information requests regarding the upcoming events and sponsorship opportunities.

We are hopeful to gain several new members and sponsors for GKCPTP. The event was a success due to an outstanding support of the board of directors, officers and volunteers who have helped us prepare for the event, and worked hard to promote the good word about our organization. Thank you all for participating!



Dak Burnett helps set up our booth; little did he know of the wind and rain storm that would blow through Friday night

Introducing Kansas City Global

GKCPTP and PTPI will be linked to the new website clearinghouse, www.KansasCityGlobal.org. The site was launched on September 30, with great success and a fabulous turnout from the community. The Kansas City Global website is the most comprehensive resource for information about international businesses, organizations, events, educational opportunities, and ethnic communities in the Greater Kansas City area.



For example, if you are looking for something for your military officers, such as halal (Muslim meat), you can put it in the search engine and what do you know, there are quite a few butchers and stores that carry halal in Kansas City. Who knew?

5

Kansas City Global provides a single point of contact for people looking for information on the Kansas City metropolitan region's global activities and resources. It is a one-stop location for communication, partnership, and growth.

The directory currently includes more than 600 entries with organized links to: 1) area businesses, 2) organizations, 3) educational institutions, 4) individuals whose work and interests are international, 5) a calendar of local events including ethnic celebrations and educational programs and 6) connections to global businesses. Click on www.KansasCityGlobal.org and find out all there is to know about the exciting opportunities Kansas City Global has to offer!



Children of one of our international military officers (and his spouse) pose at the Lithuanian photo board at Kansas City's annual ethnic enrichment festival

3RD ANNUAL DEANNA ROSE FARMSTEAD EVENT

Sunday, September 19, 2010

Abundant sunny skies and hot weather were on order for the third annual Deanna Rose Children's Farmstead picnic on Sunday, Sept. 19. This year's picnic included approximately 350 sponsors, officers and children. The lovely, new main entrance at Deanna Rose made for an easier transition for those taking the long bus ride from Fort Leavenworth to the park.

There was plenty of time for everyone to socialize before enjoying a delicious American buffet of barbecued brisket, fried chicken and many other typical picnic items. Most of the children were in quite a hurry to finish eating and get to the business of feeding goats, fishing, and exploring the 12 acres of the farmstead.

For those not familiar with the Deanna Rose Farmstead, its concept is to bring the charm of the farm to children living in the city – whether in the US or in a faraway country. It opened in 1978, but was re-named in 1985 to honor Deanna Rose, the first Overland Park police officer to die in the line of duty.

This event is a great opportunity for the IMS families to gather with their sponsors. It's also a good chance to introduce new sponsors to the idea of "adopting" an international military officer. The GKCPTP board of directors and planning committee is grateful to Ft. Leavenworth and the International Military Student Division for helping to make this another successful event!



PTPI 19TH ANNUAL WORLD CONFERENCE

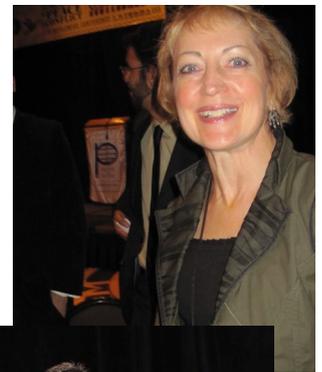
Several hundred PTPI chapter members traveled to Scottsdale, Arizona to attend PTPI's 19th *Worldwide Conference: Symposium on Peace and Conflict*. Representation from the Americas Region included the Buffalo, New York; Greater Kansas City, Missouri; Greater Phoenix, Arizona; La Porte, Indiana; Las Vegas, Nevada; Los Angeles, California; Palm Beach, Florida; San Borja, Peru; San Diego, California; Scottsdale, Arizona; Sheboygan, Wisconsin; Stockton, California; Trenton, New Jersey; and Washington DC National Capital Area chapters.



INTERNATIONAL RESTAURANTS

Looking for interational restaurants? Consider these.

Argentinian	Piropos
Austrian	Grunauer
Brazilian	Fogo de Chao
Brazilian	Em Chamas
Ethiopian	Blue Nile Café
French	Le Frou Frog
French	Aixois
French	Cafe Des Amis
French	Tatsu's
German	Beethovens
Greek	Tasso's
Indian	Swagat
Indian	India Palace
Indian	Ruchi
Irish	O' Dowds
Japanese	Edokko
Mexican	Ixtapa
Persian	KC Grill N Kabob
Spanish	La Bodega
Swiss	Andre's (confections + lunch)



Inga Barringer, Sharon Valasek and Steve DiGiacinto were recognized for their service to People to People at the September 2010 World Conference

