



The Giving Circle, Inc.



TRAVEL HANDBOOK

Date: April 7, 2012

Version: 2.0

What we have done for ourselves alone dies with us; what we have done for others and the world remains and is immortal.

~Albert Pike



No man stands so straight as when he stoops to help a child.
~Knights of Pythagoras



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Introduction

Welcome to the family. By now you have received much of your pre-trip information and we hope this document will help you with almost everything you will need to know.

Of course there is always more and please know there is no silly question and feel free to contact us with any questions or concerns.

The general rules are outlined in the following list and supported by the rest of this document. We take these trips very seriously and expect that everyone on the travel team will follow all the rules.

- 1) Mandatory team meeting attendance
- 2) Medical information must be given to Leaders for evaluation
- 3) Interviews of volunteers wanting to travel with the team
- 4) All payments and required documents must be received **1 month** before the trip
- 5) Team must only check bags allocated to them: 1 bag checked (personal) and the other 2 checked bags are for Koi Koi supplies
- 6) During the duration of the trip from leaving the Saratoga/Albany area, traveling and in Uganda no one goes off on their own **EVER, unless team leaders are informed and grant permission (for members under 25).**
- 7) **No drinking or use of recreational drugs is allowed** – it is a must to follow our code of conduct. Remember while in Uganda you represent TGC/TGCA our ability to work and help in Uganda depends on our good reputation. In addition life in a Ugandan prison is hell.
- 8) No going out in Jinja town at night without an approved TGC representative.
- 9) Blogging needs to be written professionally...the team represents TGC and all posts must represent the overall project and TGC goals. These trips are not based on individual agendas.

Pre-Trip Information

Before the trip date we will have several meetings to better explain this wonderful trip and answer any questions or concerns.

We will also have a week or so before the date where we will have a **packing party** at Kelly (momma Koi Koi) & Mark's house. We will contact you with the date before hand. The address is:

**Mark & Kelly Bertrand
18 Karner Dr.
Saratoga Springs, NY 12866**

We will also let you know items that we will seek to bring with us for distribution to our Ugandan family. Please look for that information and this will also be given at one of our meetings.

Contacts

In Uganda

Please give your friends and family Moses number and our office address in Jinja. In addition we will share your assigned phone number in Uganda with the team and team leaders in case you must be reached while in Uganda.

It is recommended that you give the contact information for where we will stay, to your family and friends at home, for the Hotel Paradise on the Nile (information below).

The Giving Circle Africa

Plot number, 22/24 Iganga Road. Room S08.

Mailing address: P.O. 107, Jinja, Uganda

Phone: +256775952627 Moses +256752818550 Emma +256753098355 –Mark B

The Giving Circle Africa Team:

- Moses Wambi: team leader moses@thegivingcircle.org
- Emmanuel Walubi: VP treasurer emma@thegivingcircle.org
- Rose rose@thegivingcircle.org
- Cecelia Cecelia@thegivingcircle.org
- Chris Le Marinel chris@thegivingcircle.org

The Giving Circle USA Team leaders:

- Mark Bertrand US Cell 518-727-8960, mark@thegivingcircle.org
Ugandan phone +256753098355
- Kelly Bertrand US cell 518-312-9680, kelly@thegivingcircle.org
- Ron Deutsch US cell 518-469-6769, mkd67@aol.com
- Denise Stasik US Cell 518- 764-8789, dstasik@nycap.rr.com
- John Tamoshunas US Cell 518-469-7008, tamoshunas@hotmail.com

Home Base / head quarters while in Uganda:



<http://nilehoteljinja.com/>

Nile Road plot 201 Jinja Uganda

256-702-455486

256-752-753443

For 2012/3 we will use as our home location the Nile Hotel, which for returning members is found just before the bridge/ dam entering Jinja.

- The Rooms are very nice each with a balcony with cost including breakfast roughly 57000 ugs = \$21 per night.
- Buffett around 20,000 ugs = \$7 per person per night
- Wireless

More information will follow as the trip nears.



While in Uganda your phone will only work if you have international coverage or an unlocked Iphone with a Ugandan sim card. We carry with us several Nokia phones and will have with us a few team phones, which require a Uganda SIM card. Both the SIM card and minutes can be purchased in Uganda.

UPDATE: a change in Ugandan law you must now register your sim-card and will need your passport or license when buying the card. This number will now be always your official Ugandan number. This will take several days to register.

I have a registered SIM in my phone and am happy to let members make quick calls home.

We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give. ~Winston Churchill

Electrical Requirements:

If you wish, you can bring your laptop with you, there is wireless at the hotel albeit slow and sometimes limited.

We will have with us 2 (or more) laptops that will be available to any team member to use. These will be found in Mark & Kelly's and perhaps Denise's room and will be the main hub for all team members to write to our blog and if needed for checking e-mail quickly.

The hotel does have a room with computers and business equipment where you can check your email, print and other computer-related needs. There is a very small fee for this service.

Chargers or anything you need to plug in. Remember you are not in the USA and power and outlets in Uganda are the same as in Europe. Below is a site to buy adaptors. We bring with us several but it's a good idea to have your own, they are very cheap and good to have any time you travel. Link: <http://www.110220volts.com/> (Grounded US to Grounded European Schuko Power Adapter Plug, these are in the \$3.00 USD range).



In Jinja we have a store that sells a universal power strip below. This is your best option as it can be used almost anywhere in the world, take any plug and offers you 5 openings. The cost is 40,000 shillings about \$16USD or double that price online.



What we have done for ourselves alone dies with us; what we have done for others and the world remains and is immortal. ~Albert Pike

Documents – Passport & Visa



This website is helpful for anyone, experienced or inexperienced, traveling outside of the US. It informs you of all the details you need to consider when traveling abroad, link: http://travel.state.gov/travel/tips/tips_1232.html.

REQUIREMENTS

U.S. citizens currently require a VISA for entry into Uganda & of course a PASSPORT.

This is each individual's responsibility. DO NOT WAIT UNTIL THE LAST MINUTE to get your passport if you do not have one.

The VISA info is below, you may get it from the Ugandan embassy (info below) or attaining it at the airport in Uganda which is very easy and, most times, fast.

ENTRY/EXIT REQUIREMENTS

Entry into Uganda requires a passport valid for three months beyond the date of entry, a visa, and evidence of a yellow fever vaccination. Your passport must have attached your YELLOW CARD and a polio vaccination for children under five. Visas are available at Entebbe Airport upon arrival or may be obtained from the Embassy of the Republic of Uganda. The current fee for a three-month tourist visa obtained upon arrival at Entebbe Airport is \$50.00 USD. **Have a NEW \$50 bill for the visa.**

Travelers should be aware that a visa does not determine how long a person may remain in Uganda. The Ugandan immigration officer at the airport of entry will determine the length of authorized stay, which is generally from one to three months as a tourist. Extensions of duration of stay may be requested at Ugandan immigration headquarters on Jinja Road in Kampala. Airline companies may also require travelers to have a visa before boarding. Travelers should obtain the latest information and details from the Embassy of the Republic of Uganda at 5911 16th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20011; telephone (202) 726-7100. Travelers may also contact the Ugandan Permanent Mission to the United Nations, telephone (212) 949-0110. Overseas, inquiries may be made at the nearest Ugandan embassy or consulate.

The Visa's are good for 90 days after entry. We will need a 'single entry' visa. Once again the most effective way to do this is to go through the Ugandan Embassy in Washington, D.C. but will cost a bit more due to having to pay for FEDX both ways. A visa should not take more than two weeks to obtain. Details can be found here:

<http://www.ugandaembassy.com/visa.html>

Special NOTE: If you choose to send to the Ugandan Embassy for your visa you MUST have your yellow card attached to it. Your personal doctor will give you the prescription. You need to go to the county health office for your HEP and Yellow fever shots. After you get your shots the county health nurse will give your Yellow Fever card to staple into your passport. PLEASE staple that card to inside the back cover of your passport. **No yellow fever card; no entry into Uganda!**

1. The "type" of visa is ORDINARY
2. Visa required "type" is SINGLE JOURNEY
3. The "class" is ORDINARY
4. The "commonwealth country for which visa is applied" is USA
5. "Reason for travel" is "To visit our friend Moses Wambi and help continue working on the Orphanage for the The Giving Circle Africa in Jinja Uganda"
6. The "reference" in the country is Moses Wambi
7. **The address is:** The Giving Circle Africa
Plot number, 22/24 Iganga Road. Room S08.
8. The address in Uganda where we intend to stay is:
Nile Hotel
Nile Road plot 201 Jinja
Tel. + +256 702 455486
It is a SINGLE ENTRY Visa

IF we fly through London

The flights on British Air have changed so now no long layover in London as in the past. We will have just over an hour now, which brings us into Uganda at 10:20 pm.

POST-UGANDA TRAVEL

You may need an additional visa if you plan on traveling to other countries while in Africa. Each country has different entry requirements and you will need to research this on your own depending on your plans. Go to: http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_1765.html for more information.

The best advice is to purchase your visa at the border during your travels, according to past volunteers that we've talked to. Guidebooks discuss a multi-country visa for Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania but we have not found this to actually exist.

PLEASE: Let the team leaders know **well in advance** of the trip if you are planning any such trip outside of Uganda. NO minor will be allowed to make any trip outside of Uganda unless with a parent or guardian. Once you leave Uganda you do so on your own and TGC/TGCA is not responsible for you in any form.

"I am only one, but I am one. I cannot do everything, but I can do something. And I will not let what I cannot do interfere with what I can do." ~Edward Everett Hale

Health/Medical



Immunizations

Before you depart, several immunizations are highly recommended. Yellow Fever is mandatory. Some take several weeks before they confer immunity, so keep that in mind when you're making your appointments. There are also some that are preferentially not given at the same time.

You don't want to get these immunizations at the last minute!

The CDC website for travel to East Africa:

<http://wwwn.cdc.gov/travel/regionEastAfrica.aspx>

The CDC website with info for Uganda Travel:

<http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/uganda.aspx>

More Important Information

Hepatitis A and B (can get as series of 3 shots called Twinrix). These are individual injections over 6 months and should have at least 2 before you travel. Talk to your Doctor. You will get shot one month then 30 days later the 2nd and 2 is all you NEED for this trip. The last shot can be done 5 months later and after you are back.

Updated tetanus shot.

Yellow fever vaccination is MANDATORY and must be attained from your local public health office at the county. You will need a prescription from your Doctor for this.

Malaria pills. This is also a must that you have an anti-malarial drug to go to Uganda. Taking the medications does not guarantee you will not get malaria but is the safest & most effective way we can protect ourselves. Most prefer Malarone taken daily as opposed to Lariam which can cause some problems with sleep. Ask your personal Doctor. These are pills and only need to be in hand a week before we leave.

Remember some immunizations require certification e.g. Yellow Fever. These documents will be important especially in terms of re-entry into the US. You should have your yellow card that certifies you have received the yellow fever vaccine to get into Uganda. We have not often been asked for it, but please keep the yellow card with you and in your passport as described above. All this information is found at <http://www.state.gov>.

NO swimming in fresh water lakes like Lake Victoria - many parasites live in that water.

Drink only bottled water. Check to be sure seal on bottle top cracks when you open it and check bottom of bottle to be sure there is no sealed needle hole for refill via that route, this is common in Africa & all 3rd world countries. We buy water by cases so we always will have it with us.

We provide at the end of this handbook a medical form that each person must complete and return to us ONE MONTH prior to travel.

Insurance



The Giving Circle carries volunteer liability insurance; we will provide more information.

Also please consider getting travel insurance for this type of trip. We use Volunteer Insurance at the following link that explains various coverage. We recommend the \$35.00 USD or \$45.00 USD cards as they offer travel & baggage delay coverage's as well. This is what we used last year and is through the same group Fly for Good who handles our flights.

If you wish more info on it contact Ellen from Fly for Good that you booked your flight with. ellen@flyforgood.com (Ellen Sladik – 952-886-7642).

<http://www.volunteercard.com/insurance.php> Please check this out, it is good coverage and inexpensive.

Others Providers are listed below.

1. <http://www.travelguard.com/> - Travel Guard
2. <http://www.worldnomads.com/> - Worlds Nomads
3. Also look into www.squaremouth.com - *they do comparisons on the different providers.*

If you have much, give of your wealth; if you have little, give of your heart. ~Arabian Proverb

Flights

fly for good. 

<http://www.flyforgood.com/index.php>

We use this site for our tickets at a good discount and British Air provides a humanitarian program which allow for 3 free bags which is a huge saving and an easy way to transport needed items to our family - The Koi Koi House, medical supplies & educational items.

- The contact: ellen@flyforgood.com (Ellen Sladik – 952-886-7642)
- Ask Ellen to make sure that “3 Bag Allowance both ways” appears on your itinerary. IF we use British Air. If we use KLM or other airline we will receive only 2 bags.
- If we fly British we will have 1 stop in London for XX hours and then on to Entebbe. If KLM a 4 hour layover in Amsterdam.
- Checked Baggage is 50# each plus 2 carry on's.
- Have all liquids in a ziplock bag (strict in London).
- Leadership team will book their flights first. Then the rest of the approved team will book theirs in order to get the team on the same flights. Reasons for same team travel are:
 1. Ease of transition from our home area to the airport
 2. Ease of transition once in Entebbe Uganda to Jinja.
 3. Ease of transition for return to Entebbe then home again.
 4. And of course this is a most special time and we all should be together to enjoy every part of this adventure.

“There are many in the world who are dying for a piece of bread, but there are many more dying for a little love.” ~Mother Teresa

Location – Entebbe, Uganda



We should all be arriving at the same time, same flight and early so we will head to Jinja as soon as we are ready. We will have a bus and our team waiting for us to arrive.

We will travel to Jinja by bus. We will discuss this in team meetings prior to the trip. By bus from Entebbe to Jinja will take approximately 3 hours. Transport will be about \$50.00 USD each and that covers both ends of the trip, this is a very good price.

Location – Jinja, Uganda

Home Base / head quarters while in Uganda:



Nile Road plot 201 Jinja Uganda
256-702-455486
256-752-753443

. Do not call and book rooms we will take care of this for you!

For 20123 we will use as our home location the Nile Hotel, which for returning members is found just before the bridge/ dam entering Jinja.

- The Rooms are very nice each with a balcony with cost including breakfast roughly 57000 ugs =\$21 per night.
- Buffett around 20,000 ugs =\$7 per person per night
- Estimated Pricing (subject to change):
- Wireless

** Breakfast is included (buffet including: eggs to order, toast, drip coffee, tea, bananas, pineapple, watermelon, cereal).

- Nightly buffets will be approximately \$7-8 USD each. Will have plenty of fruits and veggies and some meat for those who want that, pasta, beans and other items..
- Laundry service available for a very small fee.
- Wireless available We will have with us at least 2 laptops for all to use.
- We do a daily blog <http://koikoihouse.blogspot.com/> and each night invite one to 2 members to write their thoughts for the day in order to have all members having at least one turn. Please share the address <http://koikoihouse.blogspot.com/> with your family and friends. We post as many pictures as we can. Internet in Uganda is slow and not always up, but at the hotel it works pretty well.
- We suggest you bring your passport to the desk when checking in and have them keep it in the safe until you leave. You do not want to lose your passport!
- We will have a large meeting room at the hotel we use to staging of all the items we bring for the family, village and education and any building items.
- We will arrange for transport daily to the site (cost to be determined later) and paid ONE MONTH prior to trip.

Money



Please note that U.S. currency notes in \$20.00 or less USD denominations are exchanged at a far lower rate than \$50 and \$100 USD currency notes. Please do not bring anything under \$50.00 USD for use in Uganda \$100s are best. Though please bring one NEW \$50 for your visa which you will need right after we get off the plane in Entebbe.

In addition, travelers often find that they cannot exchange or use US currency printed earlier than the year 2007, **also bills that are torn, written or have stamps or other markings will be exchanged a lower exchange rate. So please get 2006 and newer printed \$100 USD bills with no tears, marks or stamps.**

Once in Jinja or on our way there we will stop at our bank to exchange money. We can do this several times during the 2 weeks so do not exchange all your money. If you run out of shillings we can bring the team to the bank to exchange more and or one of the team leaders will always have a great deal of shillings on us.

Money goes very far in Uganda and the current exchange rate is in the 2600+ Ugandan shillings to \$1.00 USD range http://coinmill.com/UGX_USD.html#USD=1. The exchange rate is always subject to change.

*“Never doubt that a *small group* of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.”*

~Margaret Mead

What to Expect – Life in Uganda



This was taken from a Travel website



Elevation: The Jinja district of Uganda is around 4000 ft. above sea level. The air will be thinner than you may be accustomed to.

Uganda is on the equator Average day time temps mid 80-90 night temps 70s.

December– February

This is the hot dry season. Excellent for birds and animal viewing, though long grass may make some smaller species hard to see. Spring-like conditions in Uganda and ideal time for gorilla trekking.

March

Intermittent rains start at this time. Game viewing is excellent over short new grass of the plains. Spring-like conditions are moderated by cool nights.

April - May

This is the heavier rainy season, and road conditions can become difficult. There's great biological activity in the reserves, beautiful green landscapes and panoramas, but muddy, slippery, conditions for gorilla trekking.

June - October

This is the cooler dry season. Peak tourist season is July-August. Excellent wildlife viewing conditions, though many roads are dusty. This is an excellent time of year for gorilla trekking in Bwindi National Park.

November

Here begin the short rains. There's nice greening of plants, and birds begin arriving from Eurasia. Expect intermittent showers and some flash flooding. Muddy and slippery conditions for gorilla trekking.

The **culture of Uganda** is made up of a complex and diverse range of ethnic groups. [Lake Kyoga](#) forms the northern boundary for the [Bantu](#)-speaking peoples, who dominate much of [east](#), [central](#) and [southern Africa](#). In Uganda they include the Baganda and several other tribes. In the north live the [Lango](#) and the [Acholi](#), who speak [Nilotic languages](#). To the east are the [Iteso](#) and [Karamojong](#), who speak a Nilotic language. A few [Pygmies](#) live isolated in the [rainforests](#) of western Uganda.

CULTURE (from Wikipedia)

Religion

[Christians](#) make up 85.1% of Uganda's population. There were sizeable numbers of [Sikhs](#) and [Hindus](#) in the country until [Asians](#) were expelled in [1972](#) by Idi Amin, following an alleged dream, although many are now returning following an invitation from the “new” president, [Yoweri Museveni](#). There is also a good size Muslim community. You will find there is peace between the religions in our area that we in the US could learn from.

Sport

Soccer is the game here. The [Uganda national football team](#), nicknamed *The Cranes*, is the national team of [Uganda](#) and is controlled by the [Federation of Uganda Football Associations](#). They have never qualified for the [World Cup](#) finals; their best finish in the [African Nations Cup](#) was second in [1978](#). [Cricket](#) is also one of major sports having made the [World Cup](#) in 1975 as part of the [East African cricket team](#). Furthermore Uganda also engages in basketball however this is not well developed, there is a national league played by college students and a few high school students. Uganda hosted and won a regional tournament in 2006 other countries that participated were Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda and Burundi. Growing in popularity in the country is rugby; the National team has been growing stronger as evidenced by

more frequent victories and close games against African powerhouses like Namibia and Morocco.

Note the children LOVE to play this game and to just have you play with them. Consider bringing in one of your bags a couple of good and deflated soccer ball.

Cuisine

The [Cuisine](#) of [Uganda](#) consists of traditional cooking with [English](#), [Arab](#) and [Asian](#) (especially [Indian](#)) influences. Like the cuisines of most countries, it varies in complexity, from the most basic, a [starchy](#) filler with a [sauce](#) of [beans](#) or [meat](#), to several-course meals served in upper-class homes and high-end restaurants.

Main dishes are usually centered on a [sauce](#) or [stew](#) of [groundnuts](#), [beans](#) or [meat](#). The starch traditionally comes from [ugali](#) ([maize](#) meal) or [matooke](#) (boiled and mashed green banana), in the South, or an ugali made from [pear millet](#) in the North. [Cassava](#), [yam](#) and African [sweet potato](#) are also eaten; the more affluent include white (often called "Irish") [potato](#) and [rice](#) in their diets. [Soybean](#) was promoted as a healthy food staple in the [1970s](#) and this is also used, especially for breakfast. [Chapati](#), an Asian flatbread, is also part of Ugandan cuisine.

[Chicken](#), [fish](#) (usually fresh, but there is also a dried variety, reconstituted for stewing), [beef](#), [goat](#) and [mutton](#) are all commonly eaten, although among the rural poor there would have to be a good reason for slaughtering a large animal such as a goat or a cow and *nyama*, (Swahili word for "meat") would not be eaten every day. Various [leafy greens](#) are grown in Uganda. These may be boiled in the stews, or served as side dishes in fancier homes. [Amaranth](#) (*dodo*), [nakati](#), and *borr* are examples of regional greens. Ugali is cooked up into a thick [porridge](#) for breakfast. For main means, white flour is added to the saucepan and stirred into the ugali until the consistency is firm. It is then turned out onto a serving plate and cut into individual slices (or served onto individual plates in the kitchen).

Language

[Uganda](#) is ethnologically diverse, with at least forty languages in usage. [Luganda](#) is the most common language. English is the official language of Uganda, even though only a relatively small proportion of the population speaks it. Access to economic and political power is almost impossible without having mastered that language. The East African lingua franca [Swahili](#) is relatively widespread as a trade language and was made an official national language of Uganda in September [2005](#). Luganda, a language widespread in central Uganda, has been the official vernacular language in education for central Uganda for a long time.

Etiquette in Uganda PLEASE RESPECT THESE TIPS!

1. **HAND OUTS** Please **DO NOT** give out any free handouts (candy, money, baseball hats, pens, etc) to the children or other villagers unless we do this a team. This is one of our most important values. As tempting as it is to give a pen here or baseball cap there, it creates a begging mentality, especially among the children, that is very sad and unpleasant to be around. Word spreads fast, and once one child has received something, the others will soon be begging, "give me my pen" as their way to beg for a gift too. Let's try our best to not encourage this behavior. It will allow

us to return to the village, time and time again, with the volunteers having a pleasant experience each journey. If you want to make a child smile, rather than handing out a gift, try singing with them, teach them a song, color with them, dance, bring a battery operated tape or cd player with speakers to share music, or show them pictures of your home and family. If really you want to give something to a villager, ensure it is done through John and the clinic in an organized way.

2. **DRESS** Please dress modestly: no short shorts, no short skirts (at or below the knees). The culture is very conservative Christian and a smaller % Muslim and we are trying our hardest to respect and maintain their level of modesty.

3. **FOOD** Please be happy with the food that is served (mostly matooke with a ground nut sauce). If you know you are a picky eater, pack your bag with power bars. Otherwise, please be gracious and complimentary to Irene (or whoever might be cooking) and let her know how delicious her meals if we eat any meals at the Koi Koi House.

Bring power bars for lunch but please remember our Ugandan family eats no lunch and struggles to have meals 2xs a day so please do not eat in front of the children at lunch time. It's 2 weeks and living as our Ugandan family does every day should be seen as an honor, not a discomfort.

4. **PHOTOS** Please ask before you take a picture of a villager. While the children usually really love when you snapping a photo of them, but some of the adults at times do not, so please ask. Bear on the cautious side and always be respectful, by asking before you snap.

5. **THEFT** Keep a close eye on your belongings, at our hotel you can lock up money and jewelry and passport in the safe at the main desk. That being said things in your room are safe and the penalty for stealing there is harsh, but these are VERY poor people. Just be smart and lock up money or jewelry. On that there is **no** need to take expensive jewelry. These are items they will never have.

7. **INSIDE SHOES** please bring one pair of flip-flops or other comfortable sandal to ONLY wear inside. It is considered rude to wear your dirty shoes inside the house. If you are uncomfortable walking barefoot inside, bring an "inside" pair of shoes and always leave your dirty shoes outside the door.

8. **MARIJUANA, COCAINE etc** **Please leave marijuana at home.** Smoking marijuana is much more serious a crime in Uganda than in the U.S. Moses, Emma and our team could be arrested **and the orphanage shut down if anybody was ever caught smoking on the premises.** Having volunteers smoke reflects poorly on the clinic and jeopardizes the whole projects reputation. Note you will suffer in prison until your family buys your way out of prison.

NOTE: NOTHING is more important then our children of the KOI KOI house, of our villages and our projects. Drug use and or drinking will NOT be tolerated. We will be in Uganda for 2 weeks if you must party do so at home and not in Uganda.

HIV/AIDS



Sub-Saharan Africa suffers the highest rate of HIV/AIDS on Earth; it is a fact of life in Uganda. All of our Koi Koi Kids are orphans because of AIDS; several of our children are HIV+ being born with the illness. Some of our villagers & their children, some of the children you will meet at the schools, some of the street children we will see and spend time with have and were born with HIV.

Uganda is often held up as a model for Africa in the fight against HIV & AIDS. Strong government leadership, broad-based partnerships and effective public education campaigns all contributed to a decline in the number of people living with [HIV](#) & [AIDS](#) in the 1990s.

Although there is a lot to learn from Uganda's comprehensive and timely campaign against the AIDS epidemic, emphasizing Uganda's success story must not detract from the devastating consequences that AIDS continues to have across the country: personally, socially and economically. There are currently an estimated million people living with HIV in Uganda, and a further 1.2 million children who have been orphaned by AIDS.

This all being said, please read the list below.

1. Yes do consider this before you make your travel plans, **but**,
2. With simple precautions this is **not** something to fear or become paralyzed over.
3. The very same faces you see of our children do not change when you discover they were born with HIV, they still need our help and they still need our love they are still children as are the villagers still our family who suffer and need our help.
4. As we all know you cannot be infected with HIV from holding or hugging or loving our children.

You **cannot** get HIV:

1. By working with or being around someone who has HIV.
2. From sweat, spit, tears, clothes, drinking fountains, phones, toilet seats, or through everyday things like sharing a meal.
3. From insect bites or stings.
4. From donating blood.
5. From a closed-mouth kiss (but there is a *very* small chance of getting it from open-mouthed or "French" kissing with an infected person because of possible blood contact).

We will have latex gloves with us.

If a child gets cut or injured avoid any blood and calmly bring the child to one of the team leaders, Moses, Emma, Chris ASAP as you would with any child.

If we go to the streets to check on the street children we will always have latex gloves and hand sanitizer with us. But please do not fear these street children as they suffer heartbreaking lives.

NOTE: Do NOT give street children money, you can buy them food but check with us first.

Here is a website for more HIV information: Caring for Children with HIV

<http://www.childcare-ppin.com/ezine/health101.htm>

Packing List

Note: This is overly comprehensive and you may not need most of it, especially if you know that someone else in your group is already bringing a certain item.

Documentation

- Valid passport and photocopy of front two pages (in case of loss)
- Uganda VISA and photocopy
- Other forms of picture identification (driver's license, state issued identification card, Age of Majority card, etc.)
- Immunization Records-yellow card stapled to passport
- Details of medications you are taking
- Documentation regarding any pre-existing illness/allergy which might require medical treatment
- TGC letter to British Air or humanitarian bag program with your name filled in.
- Personal use medications including malaria meds, Dramamine, if needed. Make sure your meds are in your carryon.
- Sunglasses.
- Hat: Protect your head the sun in Uganda is very strong.
- Sunscreen.
- Insect Repellent, if you use wish.
- Personal use items such as shampoo, soap, etc.
- Shoes (2 pairs), pants, Capri's (knee length or longer), long skirts, long shorts plenty of shirts. Hotel provides a laundry service for a very low cost.
- Shirts, no thin straps, nothing low cut.
- Sweater or sweatshirt for evening.
- A nicer outfit in case we meet with local dignitaries or go to church with our villagers.
- Backpack or something to carry your stuff in at the village and in Jinja, etc.
- Money for souvenirs if interested (We will have more discussions about shopping, etc., at upcoming meetings. Do your best to estimate what you may want to purchase and have enough cash on hand for that.). That includes

paying for the hotel and your meals. Credit cards are basically useless here. BUT you can pay for the hotel with a **Visa only**.

- Adapter and converter if bringing anything electric. Check your appliance to determine if you need a converter. You will need the adapter. Or you can ask to share with someone who already has one.
- Journal/notebook/several pens.
- Camera, charger or batteries (bring extra as the heat may draw them down).
- \$100 USD bill for your VISA if getting at airport in Uganda (ones secured in Nov 2008 are good for a year) Visa is \$50.00 USD.
- VISA paperwork. If getting in Uganda these can be found when getting off plan in luggage area, a short simple form.
- Money for hotel, hotel does take **visa card** but no others.
- Money for tips (hotel staff) if you want to do that (room cleaning service available for small fee, each person can decide this) a nice tip goes a long way for these people and their families.
- Money for beverages at hotel and when out during the day, you can find cold soda. You MUST drink plenty of liquids while in Uganda.
- Nutritional supplements – daily vitamins and minerals, powered drink mixes, electrolytes, Vitamin C, etc. if you take these.
- Snack bars or other snack foods during the day. Need to eat discreetly and on the go. No actual “lunch” time as our Ugandan family seldom eat more than 2 times a day some only once.
- Baggies for disposables, hand wipes tissues (none in rooms), etc. Nothing can be left in the villages, so be prepared to take out anything you bring in.
- Jewelry/watch- if you bring this, don't bring a valuable one.
- A really good sense of humor and lots of patience – you are on African time in a rural area where English is seldom spoken. Rip up those project plans when you get off the plan and just go with the day as it presents itself. Have fun be wide open to a new culture, do not force your beliefs be it religious or political on anyone. Teach by actions and be ready to learn from the Ugandans.
- Carry on – liquids need to be 3oz or less and in a quart sized plastic bag. 2 Carry on allowed by British Air check with their website to see what is allowed.
- We will bring a laptop or 2 for team use at the hotel. If you have an international cell phone and buy the chip, you can also use that to make calls back home.

Other items to consider:

- **Hand sanitizer!**
- **Small first aid kit** (ensure there are many Band-Aids)
- Flashlight and LED head lamp (with batteries)
- **DEET insect repellent** (the higher the percentage of DEET, the better)
- Sunscreen (though majority of the time is spent indoors)
- Tums
- A book or playing cards or something that will occupy you in the evening
- **Hand towelettes**

- **Alarm clock** (battery operated)
- Lip protectant
- Pocket knife (Swiss Army, Leatherman, Multipurpose tool, etc.) pack in checked bags NOT in carryon
- Water bottle
- For women: tampons with no applicator like OB are a good idea. Keeps garbage to a minimum.
- Journal/notebooks for ideas and notes, pens (bring lots of pens, they have value and they tend to disappear)!
- Gifts for friends: please be cognizant that we have a policy on gift giving (not acceptable to give gifts in bulk to village children or adults). Small gifts for friends are a good idea, bringing pictures of your home and family or postcards to share from your home town/country are a great idea.

Volunteer Information & Forms

The following are several required forms for our trip:

1. An emergency medical form is attached – Please complete and return to Denise or Mark. We will use those forms only in a medical emergency and will keep them confidential. If you have any concerns, please discuss with Denise or Mark.
2. Volunteer Trip Information Sheet. Please complete and return to Mark, Denise or John.
3. TGC letter for British Air Humanitarian flight program. Add your name and sign this letter and print two (2) copies and bring to the airport with you with your tickets and passport. British Air may or may not ask for a copy of this in order to receive your 3 free bags.
4. Volunteer Code of Conduct agreement & parent guardian waver.



MEDICAL QUESTIONNAIRE

Date of Trip_____

Full Name_____

Date of Birth_____

US Physician_____

Physician's Phone Number_____

Health Insurance Provider_____

ID/Member Number_____

Health Plan Phone Number_____

Emergency Contact Person_____

Relationship_____

Contact Phone Number_____

Health Issues/Concerns

Current Medications

Drug	Dose	Frequency	Purpose



WWW.THEGIVINGCIRCLE.ORG

Volunteer Trip Information Sheet

**Team
Rafiki**

PLEASE FILL OUT AND RETURN TO ME BY E-MAIL OR TO MY ADDRESS BELOW

Name_____ Age_____

Address_____

Phone home_____

cell- (phone used on ground in Uganda) _____

Dates planned on ground in Uganda _____ - _____

Flight information __Please email Mark a copy of your flight info or attach__

Depart Airport _____ Airline_____ Flight Number _____

Date of arrival _____ Time of arrival _____

Date of departure flight from Uganda _____

Time of departure flight from Uganda _____

Please note: All volunteers are covered under The Giving Circle volunteers insurance.

Mark Bertrand 18 Karner Dr., Saratoga Springs, NY 12866 cell: 518-727-8960
email: mark@thegivingcircle.org

Please feel free to contact me by cell with any questions



British Air Humanitarian flight program

To Whom It May Concern:

_____ is part of a team from The Giving Circle Inc. a US based charity traveling on a humanitarian mission to Jinja Uganda on your airline to work at our the orphanage and school under construction.

Your airline's most generous humanitarian policy both your fee reduction and baggage allowance is most helpful in our mission to help ease the suffering of the children and people of Uganda.

Thank you again for helping us change the world

Mark Bertrand
Founder: The Giving Circle Inc.
www.thegivingcircle.org
18 Karner Dr.
Saratoga Springs NY 12866
mark@thegivingcircle.org

Code of Conduct



Volunteer Code of Conduct

Volunteer Understanding:

As a volunteer, I _____ agree to abide by the following code of conduct while serving as a volunteer of The Giving Circle (TGC), Inc. and The Giving Circle Africa projects in Uganda (hereinafter "TGCA")

Health insurance and services:

- I understand that it is my responsibility to have adequate health insurance coverage for international travel. This insurance coverage should include medical evacuation in the case of an emergency.
- I understand that it is my responsibility to obtain all necessary vaccinations to protect myself from exposure to diseases common to Uganda as recommended by my physician and the Center for Disease Control.
- If I am a healthcare professional who will have direct patient contact I must have professional liability coverage that will extend to TGC/TGCA in Uganda and the scope of my work will not exceed that which I am authorized to do in the United States of America.
- In the event that I have any direct patient, Koi Koi Kid or villager contact, I fully understand that the risk of contracting HIV while working with our Ugandan family.

Conduct:

- I agree not to engage in any political activities of any kind or promote any specific political or religious agenda while onsite individually or with a team at TGC/TGCA. I specifically agree not to preach to anyone or to pressure anyone to accept my political, cultural or religious beliefs. I pledge to respect and honor the beliefs and traditions of our Ugandan hosts and family.
- I agree not to possess or engage in the use of any illegal drugs (such as marijuana). I agree that any violation of this will result in my being sent home at my expense.
- I understand that if I am over the age of 21 that the **very** moderate drinking (1 drink with meal) of alcohol while at TGC/TGCA is permitted in the evening while not with children or villagers. No alcohol is permitted to be consumed at times when at the Koi Koi House, on TGCA village property, at or near any school. Excessive alcohol consumption and inappropriate behavior will not be tolerated & will result in my being sent home at my expense.
- I understand that if I am over the age of 21 I may venture into Jinja at night but **MUST** return to the hotel before dark. I agree that I will not venture into Jinja town on my own at night for my safety and the good of TGC/TGCA and its programs.
- I agree to obey the laws of Uganda and to respect the traditions of the local culture.
- I agree to respect the children of the Koi Koi House and the villagers in and around Uganda. I understand that such respect includes requesting permission before taking photos or videos of the TGC/TGCA operations, staff, patients or villagers.

- I will not give handouts to children or other villagers while at TGC/TGCA, unless I have received permission from TGC/TGCA Managers.
- I understand that TGC/TGCA is involved in an education sponsorship program and I expressly agree that I will not make any promises to the children or young adults that I meet while in Uganda with regard to education sponsorship. I fully understand that the TGC/TGCA Program is in place to address this need and that any interest in education sponsorship will be addressed through this program.
- I understand that I am prohibited from driving or riding on the motorcycle or similar vehicle without permission from team leaders. I further understand I am responsible if I choose to and am injured and can not hold liable TGC or TGCA or any person.
- I agree that while at the Koi Koi House and village (s) and during my mission trip that I will not use abusive language towards a child, villager, staff member, volunteer or another participant.
- I understand that I am responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of all proprietary or privileged information to which I am exposed while serving as a volunteer, whether this information involves an individual staff member, volunteer, patient or other person. This confidentiality does not extend to knowledge of any such person's illegal activity or any incidents of sexual misconduct or harassment.
- I understand that if I do not abide by the Code of Conduct, or if my behavior and/or conduct is otherwise unreasonable, uncooperative or disruptive in any way, I may be required by my supervisor or the leaders of TGC/TGCA to leave the site and return to the United States early at my own expense.
- As a volunteer I understand that TGC/TGCA may publish photos and testimonials of volunteers, including myself.

Date: _____

Signature of Participant *or of Parent/ Guardian if Participant is a minor*

Assumption of Risk, Indemnity, Release of Liability and Waiver of Claims



Assumption of Risk, Indemnity, Release of Liability and Waiver of Claims

PLEASE READ THIS ENTIRE DOCUMENT CAREFULLY BEFORE SIGNING.

All volunteers must sign this Agreement. For any volunteer under 18 years of age (hereinafter “minor” or “child”), the parent(s) must sign on their behalf.

I, _____ do hereby affirm and acknowledge that my involvement with or at The Giving Circle, Inc./The Giving Circle Africa, the Koi Koi House and the Giving Circle village property (hereinafter “TGC/TGCA”) is purely voluntary and I am donating my time without compensation. At no time will I be considered an employee or independent contractor of TGC/TGCA.

I have arranged my travel to Uganda by a commercial carrier and travel within Uganda may be by bus, private automobile, van, motorcycle or taxi, none of which is operated or within the control of TGC/TGCA. I understand that motor vehicle travel in Uganda can be dangerous and that motor vehicle laws may not be observed nor enforced. I have been fully informed of the inherent hazards and risks associated with volunteer service and travel in Uganda. I fully understand that these risks can lead to severe injury, disease and even death. Despite the potential hazards and dangers associated with the activity of volunteer work and travel in Uganda, I wish to proceed and I freely accept and expressly assume all risks, dangers and hazards that may arise from my volunteer work and travel and any other activity undertaken during travel expeditions which could result in personal injury, death and property damage to me.

In consideration of being allowed to participate in volunteer work with or at TGC/TGCA as well as the use of the facilities and equipment operated by TGC/TGCA, I hereby waive any and all claims against TGC/TGCA, its officers, directors, employees, representatives, agents and volunteers from all liability and responsibility, whatsoever, for any claim or cause of action that I, my estate, heirs, executors or assigns may have for personal injury, property damage or wrongful death arising from my travel and volunteer activities whether caused by active or passive negligence of the releases or otherwise. By executing this document, I agree to hold the releasees harmless for any injury or death, which may occur to me during my travel or volunteer service.

I understand that travel to TGC/TGCA can be difficult for those with disabilities or requiring special medical attention and or services. I have consulted my physician and I have or will obtain all necessary authorizations, immunization and medications prior to travel. I understand that TGC/TGCA does not have the capacity to refrigerate medicine and therefore cannot accommodate persons requiring refrigerated medication. Persons on restricted diets or with food allergies must consider that TGC/TGCA cannot control the contents of foods prepared in Uganda in terms of food additives, oils and specific sauces.

I understand and agree that any travel not directly related to my volunteer service at TGC/TGCA shall be considered personal in nature. TGC/TGCA shall not be responsible for any transportation, lodging, meal, or other miscellaneous expense related to personal travel. I release and hold TGC/TGCA harmless from any and all liabilities, claims, demands, actions, causes of action, costs and expenses of any nature whatsoever arising out of personal travel.

I, expressly agree to indemnify and hold TGC/TGCA or any affiliated entity harmless from any and all claims, actions, suits, procedures, costs, expenses, damages and liabilities, including attorney’s fees brought as a result of my volunteer involvement with or at TGC/TGCA.

I expressly agree that the foregoing waiver and assumption of risk agreement is intended to be as broad and inclusive as is permitted by law and that if any portion thereof is held invalid, it is agreed that the balance shall, notwithstanding, continue in full force and effect.

This Assumption of Risk, Indemnity, Release of Liability and Waiver of Claims Agreement together with the Volunteer Code of Conduct, represent the entire agreement of the parties hereto and supersede any and all prior or contemporaneous oral or written understandings, statements, representations or promises. All of the terms are contractual and not mere recitals.

I acknowledge that I have carefully read this Assumption of Risk, Indemnity, Release of Liability and Waiver of Claims Agreement and that I fully understand its terms, and understand that I am giving up substantial rights, including my right to sue. I also understand that I have been told that I can have this agreement reviewed by my attorney prior to executing the document. I acknowledge that I am signing the agreement freely and voluntarily and intend by my signature to be a complete and unconditional release of all liability to the greatest extent allowed by law.

Signature of Participant
or of Parent/ Guardian if Participant is a minor

Date:_____

Parents of volunteers under the age of 18

As to my minor child, I acknowledge that I have carefully read this Assumption of Risk, Indemnity, Release of Liability and Waiver of Claims Agreement and that I fully understand its terms, and understand that I am giving up substantial rights, including my right to sue. I also understand that I have been told that I can have this agreement reviewed by my attorney prior to executing the document. I acknowledge that I am signing the agreement freely and voluntarily and intend by my signature to be a complete and unconditional release of all liability to the greatest extent allowed by law. I, nor any relative of my child, are unable to accompany my child on this humanitarian trip to Uganda/TGC Koi Koi House. I hereby entrust and appoint as guardian of my minor child: _____. I acknowledge that I have discussed with appointed trip guardian all pertinent health and/or other relevant information and/or concerns as related to my minor child. If a situation were to arise concerning my child the appointed guardian will first contact me as the parent, but if said guardian is unable to contact me, the appointed guardian working with the TGC leadership team may act on my behalf concerning the health and welfare of my child.

Signature of Parent/ or legal Guardian

Date:_____

Signature of Participant

Date:_____

Signature of assigned trip Guardian

Date:_____

Excursions

Letter from John:

Hey Everyone,

In less than 5 months, we will embark on another journey across the ocean to see our family in Uganda. There will be lots of work to do and when the weekend comes, there will be a few options for those of you who would like to venture out and experience what

Africa has to offer. There will be time to shop from our local women in the village and in town, and for the more adventurous types; you may want to challenge the Nile River with White Water Rafting.

You can take a look at the Adrift site <http://adrift.ug/> to see if this is something you may be interested in. There are all different levels in which you can experience the Nile. You can leisurely float along and take in the sites, or take on the rapids with the extreme level 5 rafters. Be prepared....your going to be thrown out of the boat so it's not for the faint hearted. Prices range of course, but for a day of rafting, it's about 145.00 for the extreme adventure, or the family float which is a leisurely drift down the river for about 35.00 and prices vary. I have not done this but know of teams who have and it is definitely wet and very wild!!! Check out the site for details.

Another option of course is a Safari to Murchison Falls. There are many sites on the net to look at to get an idea of what you will see there. Nishtha, nm679435@albany.edu one of our team members who went last year, can share her experiences with you should you have questions. We booked the safari through the hotel and for 3 days, I believe it was about 260.00. It's a very long drive, about 6 hours to the game park. Leave Saturday morning very early, 5am and return Sunday evening around midnight. A one night stay is in a tent, but very safe and comfortable according to Nishtha

Take a look at Churchill Safari site. <http://www.churchillsafaris.com/index.html> This is the organization we will be renting the transportation from so I'm sure they are willing to work out a deal once we know how many people are interested in going on Safari. A 3 day safari is a nice break and could run you as little as 300.00 but no guarantee! Depends on how many people book together for the trip.

You will see all the African Big game, Elephant, Giraffe, Hippos, Warthog, Zebra, Water buffalo, Kudu, Impala, Crocodile, and on and on....a river boat cruise is also included along with your meals.

So, please begin to think about whether you would like to take part in either one of these excursions and we will coordinate everything and let you know how payment needs to be made. They most large companies accept Visa in Uganda (with a 5% surcharge). It's easiest to pay with cash (US) is fine. If arrangements need to be made ahead of time from here in the US, I'm sure all major credit cards will be fine.

Ok everybody, give this some thought and let me know if you're interested.

Take good care,

For anyone who would like more information about either white water rafting or safari please e-mail John at:

John Tamoshunas tamoshunas@gmail.com