

Local teens spend Christmas vacation working in Rwanda

by Autumn Morgan



Nathan Van Cleave with children who are all members of the same family

It was a very different Christmas for Nathan and Kristen Van Cleave of Heppner as they spent their vacation working with their grandparents, who are short-term missionaries, in Rwanda.

The Van Cleaves noticed many drastic differences in the way people live in Rwanda as compared to the United States. People in Rwanda live in mud homes. They walk for long distances to draw water from community wells. But despite their sparse conditions, in front of most of these mud homes, passersby will see flowers and plants decorating the front of the homes.

Rwanda, though a small country, is very crowded with activity, especially in the cities. Drivers swerve in and out of traffic. The rules are very relaxed. Police have checkpoints and randomly pick who they want to pull over.

Rwanda is a country that is still recovering from a civil war and genocide in which at least 800,000 people were killed. Between this, the AIDS epidemic, and Malaria, Rwanda has hundreds of thousands of orphans. It's orphanages like the Home of Hope Rwanda that provide a safe haven for these children.

Upon arrival, one of the first things that Nathan and Kristen noticed was how happy the people were, despite their conditions. "They have so much less (than we do) but they are happy. They don't realize what they don't have," said the Van Cleaves. A lot of people farm in Rwanda but there is a desperation for work. Most people have to walk everywhere as motorized transportation is a rarity. Some women, most with babies on their backs, earn extra money for their families by sweeping the streets. They are paid \$1-2 U.S. dollars per day.

Children at the orphanage were thrilled to have new people visit them. One child was very intrigued

by one of Kristen's hair ties. Another girl enjoyed playing with Kristen's hair. Kristen said the girl was curious about what she would look like with blond hair so Kristen bent over draped her hair around the young girl's head.

Nathan and Kristen found that one of the most popular event with the people in the small communities was making balloon animals. They said that the adults were almost as bad as the children when it came to pushing and shoving to get one of the animals. Later, while visiting a family in one of their mud homes, they saw one of the balloon animals proudly displayed. On Christmas day, Nathan and Kristen visited the children's ward at a local hospital where they handed out stuffed animals.

The church in the community, which their grandfather is in charge of building, is all ready booming. Approximately 300 people meet in the unfinished church. Currently there are four choirs that perform two to three songs each at the services. For each song there is also a dance to go with it.

"People are very friendly there. They look you in the eye, they wave and smile. Everyone is very happy to meet you," said Nathan. He said the people were so happy to receive their gifts and were thrilled to see new faces. "When you drive down the road, they will chase after you."

Kristen said she most enjoyed visiting with the orphans. "They are always hanging onto you. They always want to touch you," she said. "I just enjoyed being with the people there." Kristen also noted that there is an ever growing need for education for the children in Rwanda. During her trip she met a girl who was a week older than her but had only finished the fourth grade. Kristen is a 10th grader and Nathan is a senior.

While in Africa, the



Nathan and Kristen Van Cleave spent Christmas away from home this year

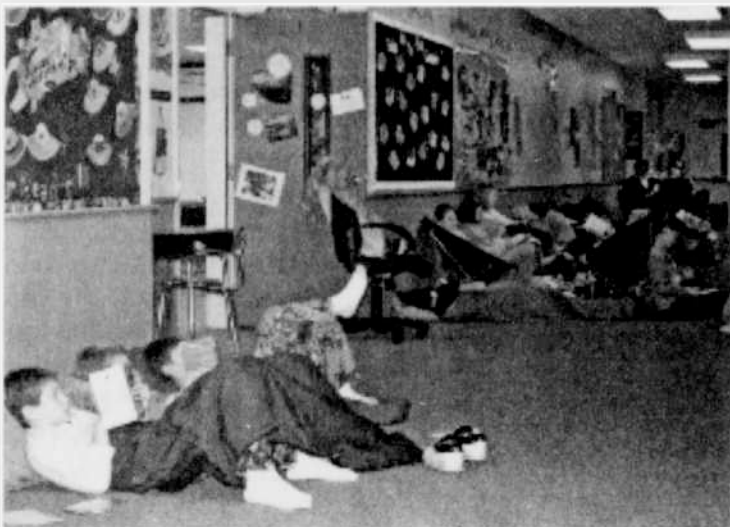
Van Cleaves were able to travel to the Congo border and met with people who worked with approximately 120 orphans in Congo. Workers are having a hard time getting food to the orphanage in Congo because of all of the rebels.

Both Nathan and Kristen said they would like to go back to visit Rwanda

someday.

Currently there are many children at the Home of Hope Rwanda that are in need of sponsors. For more information or to sponsor a child, visit www.homeofhope.ca. Nathan and Kristen's grandmother is currently in charge of gathering the information and pictures of the children living in the orphanage.

Fundraiser held for reading program



On Thursday, January 17, students began reading after school and continued reading all night.



For the 19th year in a row, Time Out for Reading is underway in grades five and six at Heppner Elementary School. The students spend the month of January reading as many minutes as they possibly can, and are rewarded with prizes and activities along the way.

The program is self-sufficient, receiving no money from HES or the District. In an effort to raise funds for this year's program, a whole pan of Mrs. Allen's famous Babe Ruth Bars will be raffled off to a lucky winner. Tickets for the drawing are \$1 each or six for \$5, and are available at HES, Heppner High, and Heppner TV. The fortunate

recipient will be announced on Thursday, January 24, at 5 p.m.

"Mrs. Allen's Babe Ruth bars are the best," commented one hopeful ticket buyer.

Mrs. Allen's reply to that compliment was, "I'm afraid my tombstone will read... HERE LIES MRS. ALLEN... SHE MADE A MEAN BABY RUTH BAR."

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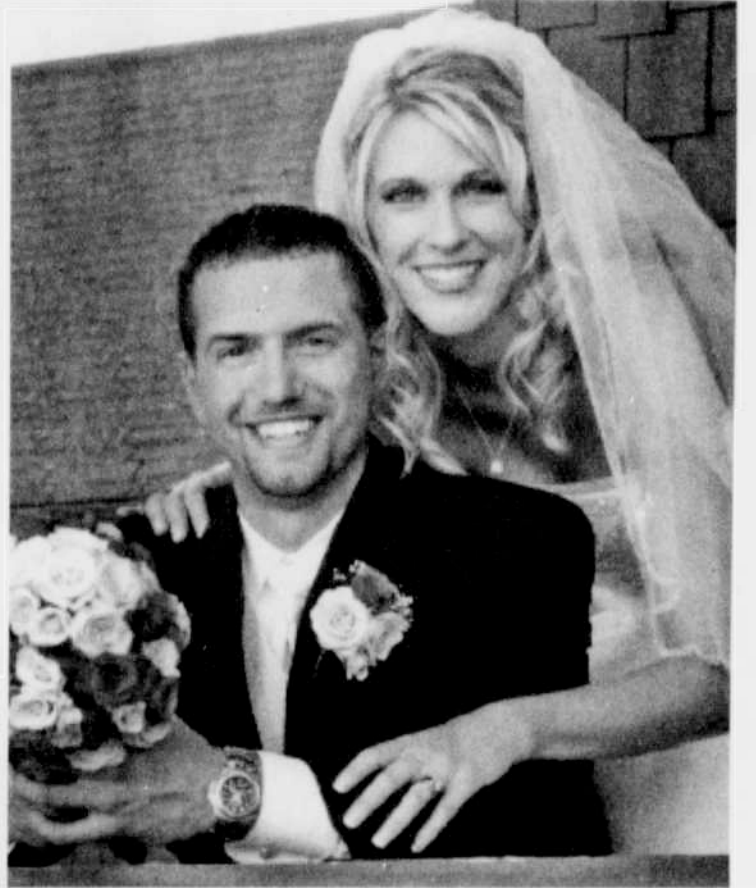
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Kristen Van Cleave with some of the people in the village

Jones, Young married



Brandon and Rebecca Young

Keith and Deborah Jones of Pilot Rock and Bruce and Debbie Young of Heppner announce the marriage of their children, Rebecca Kate Jones and Brandon Young.

The couple was married July 7, 2007 at the Episcopal Church of the Redeemer in Pendleton by the Rev. Frank Moss. A reception was held in the hospitality room at the Pendleton Round-Up grounds. A wedding trip was taken to Cabo San Lucas, Mexico.

The bride is a 2000 graduate of Pilot Rock High School and holds a B.S. from the University of Oregon and MAT from Willamette University. She is currently employed as a kindergarten teacher with the McKenzie School District in Blue River.

The groom is a 2001 graduate of Heppner High School and holds a CEM from Oregon State University. He is currently employed as a project engineer with Hamilton Construction Co. in Eugene.

The maid/matron of honor was Jill Sorey (best friend) of Hermiston. Bridesmaids were Rachael Jones (sister) of Portland, Kelly Manning (friend) of Newburg, and Danielle Alexander (friend) of Washington, D.C. Raegan McElligott (cousin of the groom) from Salem was the flower girl. Best man was Scott VanWinkle (best friend) of Kamiah, ID. Groomsmen were Corey Miller (friend) of Heppner, Luke Young (brother) of Heppner, and Matt Young (brother) of Corvallis. Ring bearer was Tegan McElligott (cousin of the groom) of Salem. Ushers were Brian Ehler (cousin of the bride) of Susanville, CA and Shane Lazinka (cousin of the bride) of Pilot Rock.

The bride wore a strapless ivory gown with a chapel length train. The bodice and bottom were embroidered with beads. The ivory veil was shoulder length with swarchosky crystals. The bouquet was made of bright and light pink roses.

EOU announces 2007 fall term dean's list

More than 550 students enrolled at Eastern Oregon University for fall term 2007 have been named to the dean's list. To qualify for the dean's list, students must achieve and maintain a grade point average of 3.5 or higher on a 4.0 scale while completing a minimum of 12 hours of graded coursework for the duration of the

term.

The following EOU students from the Heppner area qualified for the fall 2007 dean's list:

Heppner - Blair Keithley
Lexington - Elizabeth Orwick and Theresa Rushing

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