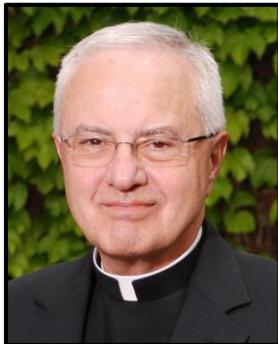




# FRIENDS OF EAST AFRICA FOUNDATION

*March 2016 Newsletter*



I'm especially looking forward to spring this year: I'm planning my dozzenth trip to Uganda, the "Pearl of Africa," for a very special occasion.

On May 18 we plan to dedicate

"Building A" of the Ruth Gaylord Hospital complex. Thanks to an extraordinarily generous leadership gift from Thomas Bisanz, the building will named in memory of Mr. Bisanz's mother: the **Helen Bisanz Outpatient Centre of Excellence**.

Tom is a longtime friend whom I have known since he was a high-school student of mine at Saint Thomas Academy in the early 1970s. He is now a successful real estate investment adviser in Dallas, Texas. I am delighted that Tom and his wife, Susan, also will travel to Uganda for the dedication.

Dedication guests and I may get an opportunity to meet the RGH's newest namesake: little "**Baby Ruth.**" The premature newborn – just under 3 pounds – was abandoned outside the hospital gates in the early-morning hours of Dec. 9, 2015, and likely was born just hours before.

RGH staff evaluated the baby, then transferred her to Mulago Hospital's

neonatal unit for specialized care. In a few days, she was breathing normally and was returned to the tender loving care of the RGH nursing staff on Dec. 29. Before long she was big enough to go home to her adoptive family – Dr. Maria and Charles Lugemwa and their children Conrad (17), Conley (5), Coleen (3) and Cornellius (2). By Valentine's Day, she weighed over 7 pounds.

"In [Baby Ruth] I see the real fruits of our initiative," Charles wrote as the new year began. I couldn't have said it better.

Warm regards!



Reverend Dennis Dease



*Baby Ruth on Dec. 15, 2015*



### **Hospital OK'd for blood storage**

In early January Ruth Gaylord Hospital received approval from Uganda Blood Transfusion Services to store blood on site. Nakasero Blood Bank in Kampala provides the hospital's supply.

Transfusion availability assures full service of the hospital's new surgery suite. The first surgical procedure there took place on Nov. 26, 2015, our Thanksgiving Day. Just after the new year, surgeons successfully operated on another patient in the new operating room *(left)*.

## **CEO reports on 2015: Collaboration anticipated with UM Medical School**

There's good news from Ruth Gaylord Hospital CEO Peter Kiggundu, who recently welcomed a group of physician visitors, including three from the University of Minnesota Medical School: Dr. Gregory Beilman, Dr. Jeffrey Chipman and Dr. Timothy Schacker, a director of RGH's parent organization, Hope Medical Clinics. Drs. Chipman and Schacker had visited the hospital campus several times before and were impressed by the construction progress there.

Chipman, who is vice chair of education and program director as well as assistant dean for curriculum, expressed interest from the medical school's Department of Surgery in collaborations, partnerships and opportunities at the hospital for its faculty and residents to give time and skills in service internationally.

"We are very excited about the opportunity to work with the University of Minnesota Medical School," Kiggundu said. "It is acclaimed internationally for its excellence, and our staff look forward to learning from theirs. Our patients will benefit greatly from their care and expertise. I hope we can build a

relationship that will carry on for years to come."

Kiggundu also provided an annual statistical summary that illustrates the hospital's growth in 2015. Last year the hospital had 9,673 outpatients, 491 in-patients, 780 visits for prenatal care, 221 deliveries, 583 ultrasound scans, and 438 dental visits. The total – 12,183 – represents an 18 percent increase over the previous year.

As in 2014, the hospital continued to serve a large number of children under 4 years old. They made up 28 percent of total outpatients in 2015. Similarly, 25 percent of in-patients were young children.

The average number of monthly visits for prenatal care was up more than 27 percent, and the average number of deliveries in a month was up 28 percent.

The dental department averaged 37 patients per month, down slightly from 39 last year, and the ultrasound department averaged 58 scans per month, compared to 54 in 2014.

## RGH campus and 'Building C' exterior ready for big rainy season

Thanks to the generosity of so many donors, the roof and exterior of "Building C" on the Ruth Gaylord Hospital are complete, and walkways and parking lots are being paved just in time for Uganda's "big" rainy season (March to May).



The Friends of East Africa Foundation raised more than \$240,000 for the new building, which is expected to be ready for occupancy in July 2016. Its three levels, ramped for handicapped accessibility, will provide space for male patients as well as five top-floor apartments for interns, residents, visiting doctors and nurses.



Paving work continues around the campus, too. Pictured above: Workers lay paving stones in the courtyard of the convent building that houses the Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary Reparatrix who staff the hospital.

This landscaping work is more than "icing on the cake." It's important not only aesthetically but for practical reasons, too. It helps keep Uganda's ever-present dust or mud out of the buildings. These pleasant areas also contribute to a sense of calm, beauty and order – all of which promote healing and improve health.



*Building C (center back) is located conveniently just a stone's throw from the main hospital building (foreground, right).*



## Visiting medical professionals bring supplies, give CPR classes to RHG staff

Dr. Debra Weimerskirch Estrem (pictured above third from left), an emergency room pediatrician with Children's Hospitals and Clinics of Minnesota, and three of her colleagues – (left to right) Jeffrey Smith, EMT Peter Brooks and Fatima Jaffer, a certified pediatric nurse practitioner – had a productive visit at the Ruth Gaylord Hospital last month.

The team, volunteers for Our Children Health Care, conducted American Heart Association-certified cardiopulmonary resuscitation training sessions for RGH staff and brought training materials and medical supplies they had collected for the hospital: CPR training mannequins, airway treatment and First Aid supplies, and an automatic external defibrillator (AED) with an extra battery and pads.

“We had a great time,” Weimerskirch Estrem said. “Pete (who is a critical care

emergency medical technician) is already thinking of what class to bring them next!” Weimerskirch Estrem has shared the team's experiences in a YouTube video here:

<https://youtu.be/zJm5Jhjm14M>

### ***Thank you!***

Sew Good Goods founders Judy Walker and Birdie Cunningham and their cadre of dedicated volunteers recently provided 50 handcrafted blankets for new babies born at the Ruth Gaylord Hospital.

Sew Good Goods, based in St. Paul, Minn., is a nonprofit organization dedicated to donating high-quality, handcrafted items of beauty and function.

**Learn more at [sewgoodgoods.org](http://sewgoodgoods.org)**

**The Friends of East Africa Foundation is a Minnesota nonprofit corporation designated by the Internal Revenue Service as a 501(c)(3) organization. Contributions are fully tax-deductible.**