



# The Gweimen Centre Newsletter

A Self Sufficiency Center for Widows and Orphans of HIV/AIDS

Fall 2013

You are invited to join us at  
**Another Fabulous Auction**  
to benefit the Gweimen Centre in  
Kwoi, Nigeria.

**Friday, October 18 at 7:00 p.m.**

**Crossroads Community Church  
1N100 Gary Ave  
Carol Stream, IL 60188**

Check out our webpage at  
<https://www.facebook.com/events/149254078614530/> for an ongoing listing of items

## When Helping Helps

Rachel Vanderhill, PhD

The Gweimen Centre seeks to reflect “best practices” in its mission to help alleviate poverty and suffering among the widows and orphans. Four ways in which Gweimen strives to reflect these best practices are:

1) Gweimen was formed by members of the Kwoi community in Nigeria, not Americans. Furthermore, it is locally-managed by Nigerian Christians and receives local financial support.

2) American involvement in Gweimen is primarily through monetary support, which is a “best practice” because it helps the local Nigerian economy when the Centre purchases food, supplies, uniforms, building equipment, etc. from Kwoi farmers and merchants.

3) Gweimen focuses on helping widows and orphans “help themselves” through job training for widows and paying for school fees for

disadvantaged children. School is not free in Nigeria. Without financial assistance these children are unlikely to go to school.



Fourteen students are enrolled in the Gweimen Centre’s new sewing training program. Nigerian and American donations have provided seven new sewing machines and three knitting machines.

4) The “relief” provided is food and medical care for HIV-infected Nigerian children, an extremely vulnerable population unable to help themselves. Adequate nutrition is essential for anti-retroviral drugs to work effectively and enable children to attend school. A gift of \$1 a day will provide three meals for one child.

As a Christian organization, Gweimen cares both about the spiritual and material well-being of widows and orphans in Kwoi.



[www.gweimencentre.org](http://www.gweimencentre.org)

## Gifts

Mary Sytsma

I know several little girls in Nigeria whose names are Gift. I love that name. Let me tell you about some of the Gifts I know.

I can picture a little girl, sitting on the ground at



the Gweimen Centre, eating her lunch with her mother. She was sent home from school with malaria. She is having a hard time keeping her food down, but she needs to eat before she gets malaria medication. Finally, the Gweimen nurse gave her a shot to stop the

vomiting, so the malaria could be treated, so she could go to school, so she can thrive. On the same day as the staff fed this little girl, a grandmother of one of the Gweimen children came to the center and donated two grapefruit. Someone else brought plantains. Our storehouse of food was particularly low. The US Board sent money that would relieve this crisis. Without this emergency aid and without the Gweimen clinic in the village, what would have happened to this Gift?

I can picture another little girl, age 7, with braided hair, also named Gift. She likes school and wants to be a doctor. Her Mom is HIV positive. Her father died. We had Gift tested, and she is not HIV positive, but she is what is called a vulnerable child. She and her siblings get food and encouragement from the staff at the Gweimen Centre. We will help her to stay in school.

Gweimen means comfort, hospitality, welcome in Hausa. One of the other Gifts at the centre is often afraid of strangers. However, I can picture the day she came close to me, pressed up against my side and looked up at me with a curtain of little braids dangling around her face. In the time I spent at the centre, she had seldom

smiled. She had never spoken to me in words. However, on this day we communicated through Gweimen, through coming near.



What a privilege to be the one who can represent the body of Christ to these little ones, to be Gweimen to them, in Jesus name. And what a gift they offer in return –the trust and love of a small child who doesn't need words to understand that we are family to each other.

Your gifts help these Gifts to thrive.

### To Donate:

Give online at [www.gweimencentre.org](http://www.gweimencentre.org)

or mail your check to:

**Gweimen Centre  
P.O. Box 1517  
Wheaton, IL 60187**

**For auction donations, contact Mary Sytsma  
at 630-665-7383 or [dmsyts@comcast.net](mailto:dmsyts@comcast.net)**

[www.gweimencentre.org](http://www.gweimencentre.org)

501(c)(3) Non-Profit Organization



**See you at the Auction on October 18!**