



"Wildlife is an echo of our own beginnings"... 1981

*William Holden*

# Summer 2015

**WILLIAM HOLDEN'S GRANDDAUGHTER VISITS KENYA**

## ***WHWF Education Center Welcomes Valentine Holden***





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Dear Friends:

I hope you will enjoy this, our latest newsletter. While you read about our activities in Kenya you will also hear from a very special guest who came to stay with me and allowed me to open the door to her greater understanding of the man who was her grandfather and his work in Kenya, which he considered to be the best part of his life.

I am thrilled, after all these years, to bring a member of the Holden family into our organization. Valentine Holden will be joined by Kim Fieldhouse, Bill's niece, as members of our advisory board. I am very happy to make this announcement.

Soon the foundation will embark upon an exciting pilot project to take place at Ngenia Secondary School. This new project will involve the students who graduate high school but will not be going on to university. The first year after leaving school is a crucial time for the over 500,000 students who will be joining the general population. In many cases these former students have no practical skills that they can apply to their new lives. Together with a devoted former student of our education center, Nicholas Kahiga, we will be creating model projects at Ngenia where former students can apply their learning skills in the direction of sustainable farming methods along with alternatives to habitat destruction, in ways they can apply to their own lives.

The transition from school to the real world for all young people is a difficult time in their lives. In Kenya, alternatives are limited and the dangers of a disenfranchised youth population making choices that lead down the wrong path are becoming a pressing matter. We believe we have an opportunity to reach young minds and by so doing produce a positive effect for both themselves and the environment that supports the animal population as well as the human one.

There will be more news on this project as it evolves.

Warmest Regards,

President



# A Message from V.

by *Valentine Holden*

I grew up with memories of my grandfather, William Holden, through pictures of him capturing animals in Africa in order to start a captive breeding program. I was surrounded by his collection of African masks, artwork, pictures of his travels in different parts of the world, as well as his movies. He passed away when I was too young to remember him, but I always felt a deep connection because we both love interacting with animals.

I wanted to know more about him on a personal level, not just about his Hollywood life and stardom. So I decided to get in contact with the love of his life, Stefanie Powers, who knew him from front to back and, with great warmth, she welcomed me into her life. They were together for 9 years before he passed away in 1981.

I wanted to know about my grandfather's deep passion and involvement in saving species of East African wildlife, so I asked Stefanie many questions and she patiently answered all one million of them. For over 33 years, the foundation has been running and keeping my grandfather's memory alive because of Stefanie's devotion. She invited me to come to Nanyuki to discover the foundation and its activities in the field.

Kenya offers idyllic pictures of beautiful Africa and its extraordinary wildlife, but behind this post card there is a complicated reality. Interaction between the human population and wildlife is not an easy issue in situations of conflict.

With Stefanie's help I was able to begin my understanding of the complexities of the culture, its history and the pressures from the outside world. When I arrived in Nairobi early in the morning I was filled with breathless enthusiasm. I wanted to take in everything I could all at once. It took about 3 hours by car to arrive at the Mt. Kenya Game Ranch where Stefanie lives. During that drive I saw the landscape change from urban to rural. At times the roadside was filled with fruit stands, vendors selling fruits and vegetables, and women dressed in colorful clothing. The indescribably beautiful reddish color of the soil makes the greenery stand out dramatically. I was already on sensory overload by the time I arrived at Stefanie's house.

The following day we went to the Education Center. According to Stefanie, my grandfather always wanted to create the educational component of the wildlife conservation ongoing at the Mt. Kenya Game Ranch, which was the first ever game ranch created for the preservation of species in sub-Saharan Africa.



The game ranch was created long before the word conservation was in most people's vocabulary. My grandfather imbued Stefanie with his passion and ideas. Sadly, he did not live long enough to make his ideas into realities, and so Stefanie has done everything in her power to realize his vision and has even far exceeded it.





# Valentine Holden

The main activities of the foundation are to educate the children and local communities and to support the function of the animal nursery. Children who visit the foundation learn about bio diversity and ecosystems as well as to be reconnected with Mother Nature. There are tents for them to stay in over-night so that they can embrace the beautiful sounds of nature and see the beautiful bright stars in the sky. They are also taught to plant trees and to grow vegetables and fruits of their own.

I was extremely impressed with the educational programs at the center, and was amazed to learn how many people - children and adults - from local communities come to the center free of charge. The facilities all around the center are very impressive as is the library, which inspires curiosity in the students as it did in me. There are paintings done by former students, all sorts of displays and charts, and a wonderful white board teaching device that brings the latest technology to everyone who is fortunate enough to come here. Another thing I was impressed with was seeing on every building tiles with the names of many of the donors that contributed to the foundation. Chills went down my spine thinking of all the amazing and generous people who keep the foundation alive and have done so for all these years.

The icing on the cake, for all the students and for myself, was a visit to the animal orphanage at the Mt. Kenya Game Ranch. This is where the magical connection happens. Watching the kids play with the animals as they are feeding them brings me back to my childhood. It was crystal clear to me that the foundation's work is bringing local people a better understanding and a value of these precious animals and the vital role they play in enhancing the environment we so desperately depend on. At the present time the two species that are most threatened are elephants and rhinos. Perhaps through programs such as what I have seen at the education center there might be some hope for the future of these two magnificent species. I enjoyed every moment I spent in Kenya ... learning about the work of the foundation, and how it keeps my grandfather's memory alive. It makes me very proud to be a small part of his legacy. As I was growing up, I learned this quote from my grandfather ... "Aging is an inevitable process. I surely wouldn't want to grow younger. The older you become, the more you know; your bank account of knowledge is much richer." I too feel richer for my visit to Kenya, for my growing involvement in the William Holden Wildlife Foundation, and for the knowledge Stefanie has imparted to me about my grandfather that I cherish and respect.

I cannot wait to come back to this beautiful place ... it is already a second home to me.

After suffering a cracked pelvis from a fall, Chocolat is improving under the devoted care of her "surrogate mother" Graziella Cotman. Chocolat is regaining strength and condition, but recovery is a slow and complicated process. This incident underlines the seriousness of the special needs required for this chimpanzee, who was partially paralyzed as a result of the poacher's bullets that went through the body of her mother as she carried the infant we now call Chocolat.

With your support we can meet the needs of maintaining Chocolat at her present home, while looking for a permanent solution for this unusual case. We will keep you updated as we progress in our efforts.

**CHOCOLAT**  
**UPDATE**





# News from Kenya

**T**he Education Center started off the first of the year a bit behind schedule due to a two-week teachers' strike and the reassignment of one school principal that resulted in cancellations of bookings because students were on furlough until the strike ended.

Schools benefitting from the WHWF rural schools instruction program recorded even higher improvement on their national exams in the most recent testing period than in previous ones.

Nanyuki Primary, who celebrated last year when their best student scored 250 points out of 500, this year had at least five students scoring over 300 points. Instructors attribute the improvement to the new syllabus books that WHWF donated to the school.

Education Coordinator Michael Ng'ang'a reports that the students are continuing to show excellent performance in the subjects with which they assist teachers.

Michael represented WHWF at a UNESCO-organized workshop on capacity building and the periodic review of Mt. Kenya Biosphere Reserve. Mt. Kenya was designated a biosphere reserve 36 years ago and the national coordinating board is required by UNESCO to review the projects in the reserve and send reports on them to the Paris headquarters every ten years.

The workshop was to review all projects undertaken by various stakeholders geared toward continued conservation of the Mt. Kenya ecosystem. At the invitation of the United Nations Development Project (UNDP) National Coordinator, Michael gave a detailed presentation on the conservation program at the Education Center, the rural library program and on the installation of energy efficient stoves in schools neighboring the forest to reduce the

The slaughter of the majestic elephant and rhino for their ivory and horns is accelerating all over the continent of Africa. We must quell the demand or they won't survive the decade.

The United States is the second largest market for illegal ivory, so please write your representatives in Congress and ask them to introduce or support legislation banning sales of ALL ivory and providing harsh punishment for violations of the law.

Won't you please join us in writing to the embassies of the countries fueling the blood ivory trade, indicating that you will boycott all products from their respective countries until they outlaw the sale of ALL ivory and rhino horn and commit to stringently enforcing those laws?



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1233 20TH ST NW #400, WASHINGTON, DC 20036

number of trees being cut down to provide fuel for school kitchens. He feels a major benefit of the workshop was allowing other stakeholders to see the efforts being made by WHWF to raise the standard of living for the local people while conserving natural resources.

## SUPPORT WHWF WITH A DONATION

**I want to carry on with the work of the William Holden Wildlife Foundation.**

**Enclosed is my contribution of:** ☐ \$250 ☐ \$100 ☐ \$50 ☐ Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Please check this box if your donation is for the  
Julie Powers Memorial Library

Donate online to the Julie D. Powers Memorial Library at [www.whwf.org/powers.html](http://www.whwf.org/powers.html)



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# WHWF Merchandise

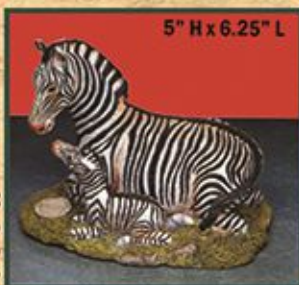


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From a collection made exclusively for the WHWF by Novelino, the artisans have given these handcrafted sculptures their careful attention by reproducing each minute detail of these beautiful and exotic creatures. Each limited edition piece has been discreetly signed under the base by WHWF president, Stefanie Powers. Please visit [www.whwf.org/novelino.html](http://www.whwf.org/novelino.html) for the pieces that are currently available.

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\$12 (boxed set of 10).



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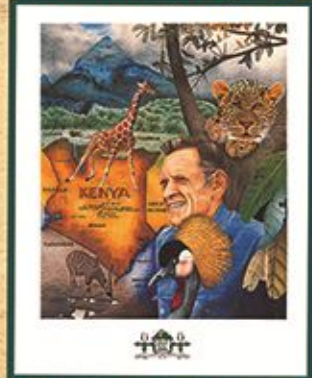
**BANDANAS \$12**

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Adjustable, 100% cotton, unconstructed cap with velcro closure  
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**T-SHIRTS \$20**

All of our t-shirts are imprinted with soy-based inks.  
Our off-white logo t-shirts are made of Fortrel EcoSpun,  
produced from recycled plastic bottle caps. Our dark  
green and black t-shirts are 100% cotton.



## MERCHANDISE ORDER FORM

All items are available at our online store at [www.whwf.org](http://www.whwf.org). If you would like any items gift wrapped and sent as holiday gifts, along with a card that indicates it is from you, please supply the full names and mailing addresses of recipients, as well as who the gifts are from. Call our office with any questions.

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WHWF Bandana	SHIPPING: \$2 U.S. \$4 CAN / \$6 INTL	\$12	\$2	
GREY'S ZEBRA by Novelino		\$110	\$20	
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Christmas Cards (boxed set)	SHIPPING: \$3 U.S. \$5 CAN / \$7 INTL	\$12	\$3	
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