



Viva News

Volunteers in Irish Veterinary Assistance
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December 2015

*supporting
livestock farmers in
the Developing World*

**VIVA Wheelers celebrate
10 years of cycling for VIVA**



10 years of cycling

Dear Supporter,

2015 is a special year for VIVA. Our long-time cycling fundraising group, the VIVA Wheelers celebrated its 10th birthday with a return to one of its favourite locations, Westport. Over the last 10 years and 50,000 km they have raised almost €250,000 for VIVA's overseas projects. This is a fantastic achievement and a credit to everyone involved.

The funds raised by the cyclists and hikers were instrumental in the funding of our Ugandan Animal Traction project as the money raised on the overseas cycles in Vietnam and Morocco (€120,000) allowed us to attract almost €300,000 in funding from Irish Aid towards the project.

This project comes to a conclusion at the end of this year and we have been working hard to ensure that the project is on a secure footing for the future. The farmer groups involved have formed a Co-Op in recent years to take over the running of the project and have set up a processing centre for cassava (their main crop) which should be operational soon. On pages 4 & 5 you can read about our educational bursary for farmers from the Co-Op which is being generously funded by the National Ploughing Association.

We look forward to your continued support in 2016.

Pat Murphy (VIVA Chairperson)

Mike Burke (VIVA CEO)

Super Supporters

VIVA would especially like to thank the following for their generous support in 2015:

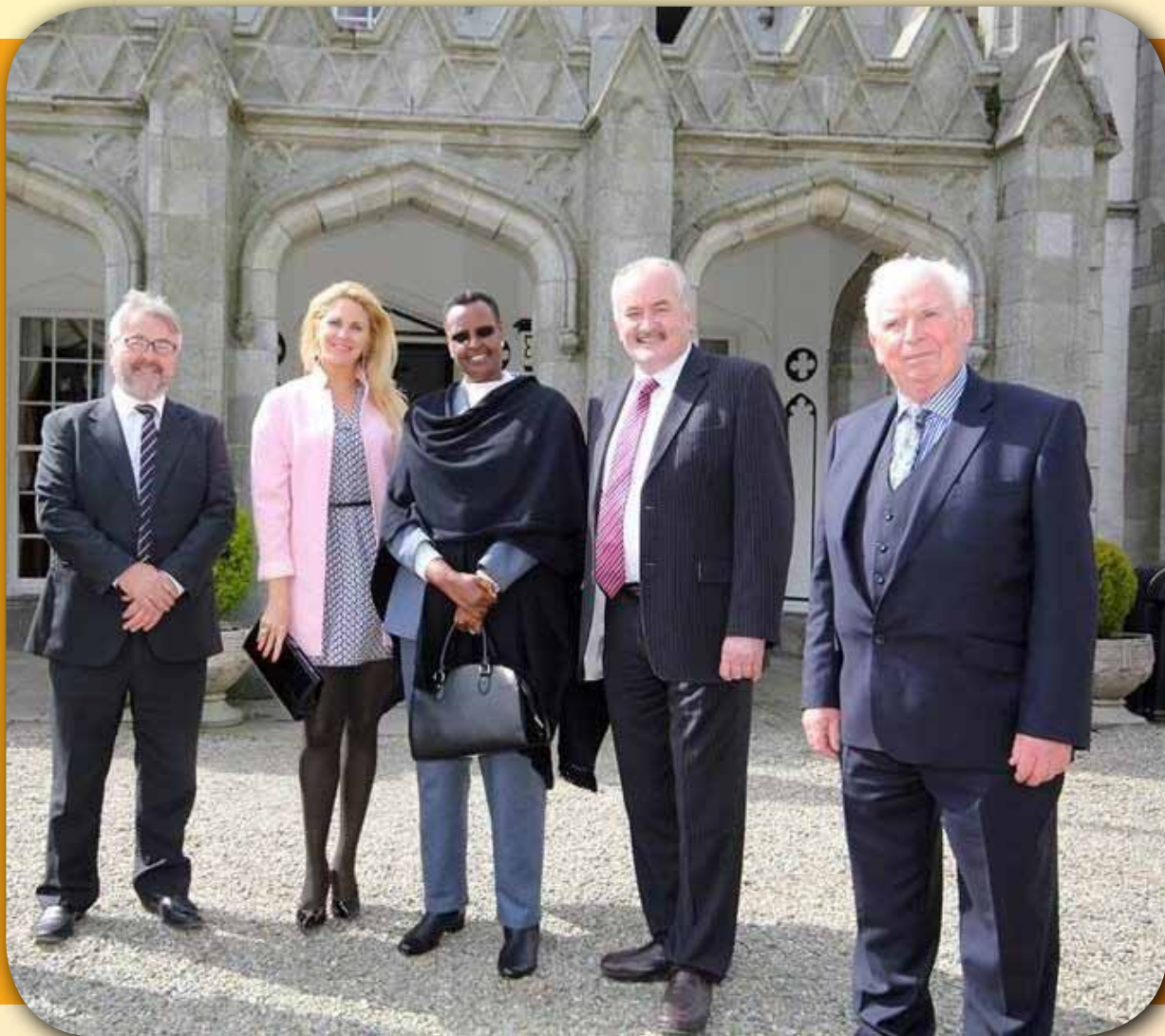
- Veterinary Officers Association (VOA)
 - Maurice & Paula O'Reilly
 - Dermot Forde
 - Michael Horan
 - Pádraig Jordan
- Erica Borge & the Clare Vets
 - Tim & Carolyn Hyde

In recent years VIVA has been involved in a novel training programme with Bóthar and the Irish Prison Service. Prisoners at Loughan House in Co. Cavan and Shelton Abbey Open Prison near Arklow, Co Wicklow have been rearing dairy calves and goats for Bóthar's overseas projects as part of a Prisoner Rehabilitation Programme. VIVA's role is to provide training at both locations to the participants. The training, which comprises 5 modules, encompasses animal health, calf care and animal welfare and care across all the animal species.

These calves are donated by farmers, schools and community groups from all over the country and are reared by inmates for 18 months. Once they mature, they are airlifted to needy families in the Developing World, each of whom will receive expert training in livestock care before receiving

their animal. Each family that receives the gift of an Irish dairy heifer agrees to pass-on the first-born female calf to another needy family. Over the last five years, nearly 380 calves have been generously donated to this programme.

On April 13th of this year, the Ugandan First Lady and Minister for Karamoja Affairs, Mrs. Janet Museveni, arrived in Ireland to meet Bóthar to thank the organisation and its donors for the farm animals it had donated in the past to the people of Uganda and she invited Bóthar to re-introduce the programme there. She also visited Bóthar's calf-rearing programme at Shelton Abbey Open Prison and was very pleased with the quality of the heifers being reared by the prisoners under the supervision of Farm Manager, Thomas Gregan.



(L to R)
Harry Lawlor
(Bóthar
Chairman),
Niamh
Mulqueen
(Bóthar),
Mrs. Janet
Museveni
(Ugandan
First Lady),
Peter Ireton
(Bóthar
Founder),
Brendan
Minnagh
(VIVA).

National Ploughing Association (NPA) sponsors VIVA Bursary



- With our animal traction project in Uganda ending in 2016, VIVA is now concentrating on ensuring the sustainability of the project. To this end VIVA have established an educational scholarship to send two farmers from the Co-Op (which will run the project once VIVA pulls out) to the prestigious Baraka Agricultural College in Kenya to pursue a 16 month course in Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development. On completion of the course the farmers will return to work in their communities mentoring other farmers in their community and helping to develop the Co-Op. This scholarship is being generously funded by the National Ploughing Association.
- NPA Managing Director Anna May McHugh said “The Ploughing Association are delighted to be in a position to fund these students to the total cost of €5,000, which will cover their academic course fees, accommodation, food and travel. This is an incredibly worthwhile cause and one very close to the NPA’s core ploughing and sustainable farming values.” According to Mike Burke of VIVA, “the support of the NPA in funding these scholarships is vital in ensuring the sustainability of the project. These two farmers will return to their community and have made a commitment to mentor and train their fellow farmers for five years. They will be a huge educational resource for their community. The co-operation of VIVA and NPA in this unique project (which is part-funded by Irish Aid) is a unique example of solidarity between Irish farmers and vets and their colleagues in the Developing World”



PJ Lynam (NPA Chairman), Anna May McHugh (NPA Secretary), Brendan Mimmagh (VIVA) at the launch of the Bursary.

The two farmers selected by the Co-Op, Solomon Ajak and Julius Itiakorit, commenced their studies this summer and are enjoying their experience so far especially the interaction with other students from across the African continent. According to Julius, "What excited us most was that despite our different origins, the uniting factor was to acquire practical skills that will change the lives of our parents and friends back home. Armed with the anticipated social impact we are to cause once we go back home, we are driven to absorb as much as possible from our instructors". The course encourages sustainable, environmentally-friendly agricultural practices which maintain soil fertility.



Julius and Solomon beside a garden of green vegetables they are growing in Baraka College



Julius and Solomon at the zero-grazing unit



Julius and Solomon at the rabbit unit – these rabbits are bred for their meat



Solomon in his field of carrots



Supporting livestock farmers in
the Developing World

The VIVA Wheelers

The VIVA Wheelers are a group of cyclists of all ages and abilities who have raised almost €250,000 for VIVA's projects worldwide since 2005 with fundraising cycles and hikes in Vietnam (2005), Morocco (2007), the Burren (2009), Bantry (2010), Westport (2011), Dungarvan (2012), the Glen of Aherlow (2013) and Leitrim (2014).

This year to mark the 10th anniversary of the VIVA Wheelers, the 47 cyclists and hikers returned to one of our iconic locations, Westport. Blessed by the weather, with a mercifully dry day following downpours on the Friday, the participants raised almost €12,000 for VIVA's overseas projects bringing the 10-year total to a magnificent €247,000.

The cyclists enjoyed some of the finest scenery the west of Ireland has to offer with the Doolough Valley near Leenane the highlight of the route. The hikers climbed the 445m high Diamond Hill in the Connemara National Park which offers panoramic views of the islands of Inishturk, Inishbofin and Inishshark along with the Twelve Bens mountains and Connaught's highest mountain, Mweelrea.

At the celebratory meal in the Castlecourt hotel in Westport that night, presentations were made to the following participants who have taken part in every one of our events:

Syd Nagle, Donagh McDonnell and James Madden

In addition, 6 participants that have taken part in all six of our Irish "Bike 'n Hikes" were honoured:

Roy Gallie, The Fabby Family, Jim Higgins, Cathy Waddell, Ascinta Kilroy and Mary Sadlier.

Lastly, a presentation was made to Pat Murphy, who was the inspiration behind the concept of the VIVA Wheelers.

The icing on the cake was the meeting with An Taoiseach, Enda Kenny, who was in the hotel for another function but who took time out to chat with some VIVA Wheelers.

Finally, a special word of thanks to our long-term sponsors, Zoetis (who sponsored our dinner) and Veterinary Instruments Ltd (who sponsored the food breaks). In addition, the support of XLVets, Veterinary Ireland, Prime Health Vets, Interchem and Duggan Veterinary over the years is also appreciated.

The cyclists gather on the outskirts of Westport as they leave the town



Karen Mulherin fuels up as the hikers set off for Connemara



The cyclists head for Louisburgh with Croagh Patrick ahead



Pat O'Brien, Mike Burke, Clodagh Muldowney, Brian Flynn and Rebecca Fabby enjoy a break in the Doolough Valley



Cathy Waddell looking very comfortable at the 70 km mark





Our loyal admin team
– Aisling Burke, Aifric
Madden, Roisin Burke

Mike Burke makes a
presentation to our
main sponsors, Eamonn
O’Sullivan of Zoetis (right)
and Paddy O’Donoghue
of VIL (left)



Mike Burke makes
a presentation to
Donagh McDonnell,
James Madden and
Syd Nagle to mark
their participation in
every VIVA Wheeler
event

Mike Burke makes a
presentation to Pat
Murphy (right), the
originator of the VIVA
Wheeler’s concept.





(L to R) John Henry, Conor O'Scanail, Martina Mimmagh and Cathy Waddell at Aasleagh Falls

A break in Tourmakeady



Melanie Farrar and Paula Bergeson Quinn at Kylemore Abbey post-hike

An Taoiseach, Enda Kenny, meets with (L to R) Mary Rafferty, Mike Burke, Eddie Downey (IFA), Brendan Mimmagh, Perpetua McNamee, Gearóid Connolly, Margo Harty (kneeling)



The "Univet" and "C & M Vetlink" Golf Classic

The 2015 VIVA golf classic returned to one of its favourite courses, Tullamore Golf Club's mature 18-hole parkland championship course in July. VIVA would like to thank Tony McManus for organising the event and to all the competitors who played on the day with 35 teams competing for an array of prizes. Once again the VIVA classic was sponsored by Univet and C&M Vetlink. Without their valued support it would be very difficult to stage this most successful annual competition that has raised over €77,000 for VIVA's projects. The VIVA Golf Classic returns to Tullamore Golf Club on Friday, July 15th in 2016.

Special thanks also to the following for their sponsorship:

Liam McEldowney, Donal Brady and John O'Roarke.



Golf Classic regulars Tony McManus & Leonard Dolan



John Magee celebrates his 'hole-in-one' at the 11th hole

Bothar lend a helping hand to VIVA



Bóthar have committed to providing an annual grant of €20,000 to VIVA over the next three years in recognition of the ongoing support provided by VIVA to Bóthar in its training programmes and overseas projects. This support is greatly appreciated.

Peter Ireton (left) and Dave Moloney (right) of Bothar present Brendan Mimmagh (centre) with the first grant cheque

Heifer Draw 2015

Our annual Heifer Draw raised almost €12,000 for VIVA's projects.

The winners are as follows:

- **The Limousin Heifer** – Damien Reilly, Dring, Co. Longford. (Seller's Prize – Brendan Leslie, Granard Co. Longford)
- **€500 Travel Voucher** – Johnnie Dermody, Mullinroe, Co. Longford.
- **€250** – Evelyn Murray, Ardagh, Co. Longford.

The most excited winner was young Evelyn Murray from Ardagh. She decided to take the cash equivalent of her prize and intends spending it on "pony stuff, dolls and sweets" in that order!

Evelyn Murray with her winning cheque



Last year's winner, Liam Garavan, with his heifer, "Altamira Jordan", at his farm in Westport, Co. Mayo. "Altamira Jordan" comes from the herd of Brendan & Joan O'Connor in Liscarroll, Co. Cork.

The Veteran Vets relive the glory days of the UCD

Every year donors raise money for VIVA in imaginative ways. However, one of our favourite fundraisers in recent years has been an annual re-run of one of the great UCD Superleague rivalries of the late 80s - Vet Faculty v Commerce Faculty - which has raised nearly €2,000. This is Denis O'Connor's match report for the 2014 fixture which we didn't have room to feature in last year's newsletter.

The highlight of many sports fans' 2014 was the eagerly anticipated rematch between the Veteran Vets and the Commerce Tulips in Belfield on Feb 8th. With no love lost between these two teams a bruising, full blooded encounter was expected and it didn't disappoint. The game began at an unforgiving pace and the Vets were caught cold with two early Tulip goals despite the best efforts of goalkeeper Tadgh Murphy to justify his inclusion in the starting eleven. The Vets didn't lie down however (not all at once anyway!) and their midfield of Tony O'Donoghue, Seamy Fagan and baby of the team, John Hennessy, were soon getting the better of their opposite numbers and bringing the lethal strike-force of the Sexton brothers and Denis O'Connor more into play. Indeed, Michael Sexton proved a real handful for the opposition defence on the rare occasions he managed to stay onside in the first half, which alas, ended scoreless for the Vets. After a rousing half time speech, given by chief cheerleader Tom (I forgot my boots) Fabby and the application of industrial amounts of deep heat, the Vets took to the field again with renewed vigour. With fullbacks David Connors and Tom Murray raiding down the flanks like youthful versions of Roberto Carlos it was only a matter of time before the Vets got their just rewards and it came in the shape of a sublime finish by Tony O'Donoghue from a very tight angle. With Centre backs, Donagh McDonnell and Conor O Scanail, now lording it over the opposition forwards, it was all out attack by the Vets for the final



The 2014 Veteran Vets team with star guest player, Tony O'Donoghue of RTE

fifteen minutes in search of the equaliser that their legions of supporters were baying for. Unfortunately it never came; thanks to some fine Tulip goalkeeping and the ever unsympathetic woodwork!

On leaving the field.....

Quote of the day: "It's much easier run with two pulled hamstrings than one"- C O'Scanail

Muse of the day: "I never knew I was this good at soccer"- D McDonnell

Thought of the day: "Why did I say I'd wash the jerseys - the wife is going to kill me!"- Tom Murray

Refrain of the day: "Pass the ball Sexy"- Usually directed at Michael Sexton (often with various adjectives preceding "ball") or his more talented brother Tomas.



The 2015 version of the Veteran Vets

Having congratulated the victorious Tulips, all retired to Kiely's for a hearty lunch and some liquid anaesthesia! Many thanks to the guest players on the day - Tony O' Donoghue of RTE, Tom Murray of MSD and Tomas Sexton of CORK. Also thanks to kit sponsor MSD and lunch sponsors Bayer, Norbrook and Pfizer. The match was preceded by a minutes silence in remembrance of deceased teammates.

The 2015 match took place in March and this time the Tulips wilted under the animal power of the Vets by 2-0!