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RAFIKI FOUNDATION MISSIONARY NEWSLETTER



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Missionary #258

*“...his delight is in the law
of the LORD, and on his law
he meditates day and night.
He is like a tree planted by
streams of water that yields
its fruit in its season, and
its leaf does not wither.
In all that he does, he
prosper” (Psalm 1:2-3).*

Greetings Rafiki family and friends,

The December to March time frame is known to be the driest and warmest time in Kenya. It is what those in the northern hemisphere refer to as “summertime.” But the grass is not dark green and abundant, rather it is light brown because it awaits the “streams of water” which come every year to nourish it.

Yet, as we collected our thoughts for this newsletter, the nimbostratus clouds began to gather in the sky. By dusk, the clouds had opened, and torrents of rain began to pelt the clay and aluminum roof top, like clashing cymbals. By morning, the ground was drenched and there were several deep puddles around the Village, leading many to speculate, “*Ni wakati wa mvua nakupanda mbegu,*” —It’s time for rain and planting the seeds.”

The Long Rains

Sure enough, since last Sunday, we have been under a heavy rains alert. The advisory comes as the country awaits the start of the long rains season which traditionally runs from March through May in Kenya and much of equatorial Eastern Africa.

The highest seasonal rainfall amounts of greater than 300mm (11.81 inches) are normally received during April across most parts of the country (including Nairobi County). Within the Village, we can manage fine even when there is standing water. And we know how desperate the trees and flowers are for it! But traveling on any of the local (dirt) roads outside of the gate is much more tenuous. Local residents are advised to be on the lookout for flash floods, mud slides, poor visibility, and are warned not to shelter under trees or near grilled windows to minimize exposure to lightning strikes.

Rafiki’s Running Residents

“Now Asahel was as swift of foot as a wild gazelle” (2 Samuel 2:18b).

As this nephew of King David and member of ancient Israel’s military was acknowledged for being unbelievably fast on his feet, we want to celebrate the recent accomplishments of our small track team (which consists of four Rhetoric students) at the Kasarani Subcounty Track and Field competition. Twenty-



Training with Rafiki observers

six secondary schools participated in the event and there were a total of fifty-two runners for each race!

Normally, only two participants are picked to represent the subcounty at the next level of competition (the Regionals). However, this year all four of our hard-working athletes were selected! To God be the glory! Paul competed in the 400m, 200m, 100m and hurdles (placing first, first, second, and first respectively). Ben and Peter each placed third in their 800m heats. Ruth placed third in the girls' 200m race. At Regionals, 623 secondary schools (eleven subcounties) will gather to compete. The athletes who qualify to advance will proceed to the Nationals in Mombasa, where all forty-seven counties of Kenya will gather to compete. We will keep you posted on their athletic trek.

Encouragement and Evaluation

The Rafiki Home Office staff made its fourth official visit to our Village since we have been serving in Kenya. Like short-term missionaries who come, their accent, mannerisms, and conversations always bring a touch of home to us here. It is always an emotional boost. Yet, unlike other short-term missionaries, their time here is also an official visit (akin to a military “grand inspection”). It is a brief but valuable time in which they provide insights based on their wisdom, experience, and supportive role. The Home Office team looks over the Village grounds. They visit classrooms to observe teachers and listen to student presentations. They visit outreach schools that are now using our curriculum. They visit partner churches in the local area that are working side by side with us to spread the gospel. They fellowship with us, and pray with, and for us. And, before they depart, they share their insights and suggestions, providing a fresh perspective on what we can develop and what we can maintain.

We were encouraged that they noticed our aesthetic upgrades throughout the school buildings. They noticed that our students had a more respectful and friendly disposition but still retained appropriate formality with their elders. They remarked on the improved poise, expression, and good posture of the student recitations, which ranged from grade one “What Is Science” to grade six’s narrative about Solomon’s Temple structure and practices foreshadowing the work of Jesus Christ, and they loved the choir selections from the School of Logic. As with all the other Villages, there is always room for improvement but through their eyes and their words, there was positive movement.

Animal Encounters, continued

On our recent trip outside of the Village, we encountered two Rendille Camels strolling on the road. The Rendilles are one of several types of camel found in Africa. This species—which shares family traits with antelope, llama, deer, alpaca, and cattle—does better under poor pasture conditions and rough terrain and is able to tolerate drought conditions better than some of its relatives.

At full maturity, their body weight ranges from 661 lbs. to 1,213 lbs. Their average standing height is six to seven feet (at the shoulder), with head and hump extending even higher. These graceful but imposing creatures have been invaluable to African, Asian, and Middle Eastern cultures for thousands of years, being treasured as essential transportation and as a source of milk, meat, and wool.



Rafiki resident athletes



England Kisumu teachers



Crystal and Theo with
Director of Africa Operations,
Erica Robertson



Please pray that more day students can be sponsored, receive a holistic Christian education, and come to know Christ as Lord and Savior. Each year, as more of our resident orphans graduate, we are able to admit more students from the neighboring community. But even our heavily subsidized school fees are more than some families can manage, especially with multiple children. Please consider sharing this need with fellow believers in your Sunday School class, colleagues at work, a prayer group, and fellow classroom parents at your child's school.

Please join us in thanking God for the fruitful meetings, stamina, and protection of the Home Office staff, as they visited (six) Rafiki Villages across East Africa over the past few weeks.



Home Office, along with Guy Waters, a member of Rafiki's Board of Directors, visited mid-March

Travel Update

We will be on the east coast and in the midwest March 28 through April 26 to attend the annual missionary conference, visit churches, and spend time with family. If you are interested in having us visit your church, Bible study, or prayer meeting—or if you would like to host a coffee/dessert gathering where we could share about the work of Rafiki—please send us a message at one of the emails provided. We would love to see you!

Lastly, we continue to be grateful to each of you for the prayer and financial support that you provide! Together, we are fulfilling the call to “*help people know God and raise their standard of living.*”

God bless,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Theodore and Crystal". The script is cursive and fluid, with the first names being more prominent.

Theodore and Crystal Wilson