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RAFIKI FOUNDATION MISSIONARY NEWSLETTER



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Hello to all our friends and family!

We are excited as we begin our first full year in Tanzania. The time we spent the last four months of 2022 allowed us to build relationships with the national staff, students, and residents. We were able to understand the good work that is currently being done and assess areas for improvement.

Secondary School Happenings

The school year is off to a good start. We are working to provide more variety and structure for clubs, and John is extremely grateful to all the teachers who are working hard to make this happen. We have clubs in fashion design, journalism, sports, art, and science. These clubs will provide an opportunity for students to learn life skills while having fun.

John is providing training to institute a “Culture of Grace” in the school using a video series developed by Paul Tripp, a well-known Christian counselor and author. This training focuses on “little moments” that teachers have each day with students regarding obedience. The goal is to create an environment where our teachers are vehicles for the Holy Spirit to help transform the hearts of our children. Obedience is no longer out of fear of punishment, but because students’ hearts love Jesus and want to please and honor him. Our school in America implemented this training many years ago and it had a huge impact on our school culture. We are praying for the same transformation here in Tanzania.

ChildCare Happenings

We enjoyed welcoming back our residents and mamas after Christmas likizo (“vacation” in Swahili). We have scheduled more intentional times for interacting with our residents this year. We eat dinner with them and attend devotions or homework time at least once a week. Additionally, we worship once a month with them at the nearby Lutheran church. The all-Swahili service is a bit challenging, but as our language skills improve, we will understand more and more. Gwen is working with the mamas to develop more structured activities for the residents. Like the school clubs these activities will help them learn life skills and have fun.

RICE Happenings

Gwen is very excited about the group of fifteen RICE teachers college students. This group is a little older and more experienced and she believes they will work hard and get the most benefit from the program. Gwen is currently leading a transactional English class to help the students improve their English skills. The whole RICE Program is conducted in English, so this class is a way to give extra practice and

support. Next quarter she is very excited to teach the art appreciation class!

Gwen also co-leads the daily Rafiki Bible Study to help the RICE students learn the Bible. The beauty of the RICE Program is that it focuses on the heart as well as the mind of the students.

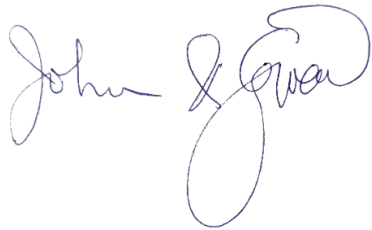
Widows Ministry

The widows are working hard on producing their newest product—soap. They have tried different materials and scents to produce a good product. They have been selling their soap to locals, and we are looking forward to adding this product to the Rafiki store later this year.

Grateful and Thankful

We thank God every day for our work here at Rafiki Village Tanzania. We feel a special bond with the children, staff, and others we have met in this beautiful country. Our bond with our fellow missionary Laurie Eastup is very special. The three of us make quite a team: hard working, Jesus loving, and fun! We also thank God for raising up such a cloud of witnesses to support us in prayer and financially. Seeing the difference that Rafiki has made in the lives of so many here is great motivation to keep building on the good work that has already started. We are also thankful for the work of the short-term missionaries who have come to help here. A short-term missionary can serve anywhere from two weeks to three months in various ways. Perhaps you might prayerfully consider joining us for a short-term mission? However, the biggest thanks goes to our great God who in His love has called us to Himself!

Love,



Gwen and John Cicone



A Fun Day at Arusha National Park