

AUGUST 2025

RAFIKI FOUNDATION MISSIONARY NEWSLETTER



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Missionary #102

*"For as the rain and the snow
come down from heaven
and do not return there but
water the earth, making
it bring forth and sprout,
giving seed to the sower and
bread to the eater, so shall
my word be that goes out
from my mouth; it shall not
return to me empty, but it
shall accomplish that which
I purpose, and shall succeed
in the thing for which I
sent it" (Isaiah 55:10-11).*

Dear friends and family,

We are in the rainy season—a time of almost daily rains, lots of farming, high school graduations, two months of no school, and a time of renovations and repairs. Our second set of graduates celebrated their momentous day with family and, of course, food. The ladies in the kitchen prepared a sumptuous feast for all of the attendees, and topped it off with a beautiful (and yummy) cake.



Now that schools and universities have closed for the next couple of months, the residents have gone home to their extended families. For those who are farmers, this will be a great help for them. One of our young ladies has entered a tailoring class. One of our young men will spend the next month or two doing carpentry work at Rafiki. The first set of graduates met with us for lunch in a local restaurant. It was really nice catching up with them. They are all doing well in university and we count this as God's gift to us.



The only residents in the compound with us are wildlife. There is a family of about thirty or so Guinea Fowl, and a family of Dik Diks. A handful of monkeys come around daily to dig up seedling potatoes. Our employees are farming in the Rafiki compound for the first time. We are learning the hard way about heavy rains and erosion, and how to overcome a monkey infestation. The vegetables are doing well and should be ready just in time for school to begin again in the middle of September.



A few months ago our students participated in a math competition. Several of our students qualified for the second round, and we just learned that one of our day students qualified as a finalist. He is the only student from any school in Ethiopia in any age group to qualify for the final round of this competition, which was open to any student in Africa,

so this is a great accomplishment for him!

Until school begins, there is quite a bit to be done. Applications for the next school year have been collected, assessments of all applicants have been conducted, and we are prepared to hold a lottery next week to see which children will be selected. This is the first country in which we have seen a lottery done to choose which new children will be admitted. In former times other criteria were used to select children, but after much deliberation it was decided to use a lottery to insure fairness within the community.

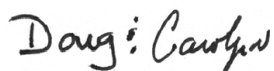
The community recognizes an excellent education when it sees one, so we saw about 650 applicants show up for the assessment. Unfortunately for them, only thirty-six will be chosen. Keeping our class size down to eighteen (we double stream five class levels—from early childhood level one to second grade) is one of the keys to creating an environment for the children to excel in. Even in the class of three-year-olds, they are learning in Afan Oromo and in English.

We are working with Mekane Yesus, Rafiki's church partner, to open an English-speaking church service in Modjo. Several of our resident children have begun playing guitar and hope to be on the worship team. We are hopeful that many of the youth in the area will attend.

Praises

- One of our students is a finalist in an international math competition.
- The rainy season is upon us, which makes the farmers (and us) happy.
- Rafiki's relationship with the education bureau and local community leaders is very good.
- Mekane Yesus has given the green light to opening an English service in Modjo.
- The mother of one of our national staff had a brain tumor removed and is recovering well.
- Our staff and students have planted more than 600 trees in the Village.

Love,



Carolyn and Doug Koepke

Prayer Requests

- *For all those applicants who will not be selected by Rafiki's lottery to get a good education.*
- *For a new missionary couple still raising prayer and financial support to achieve both of these quickly. We are praying that they will be able to come to Ethiopia by December.*
- *There is so much renovation and repair work to do now that the buildings are dormant.*
- *As an NGO, Rafiki is required to submit a 5-year project agreement plan. The plan has been submitted, but we are waiting on its approval. Bureaucracy takes its own sweet time.*