



# RAFIKI

FOUNDATION  
MISSIONARY NEWSLETTER

March 2020 – Andrea and Scott Nelson

***“The LORD bless you and keep you; the LORD make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you; the LORD lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace”  
(Numbers 6:24-26).***

Dear friends and family,

Last summer at the Missionary Renewal and Debriefing camp we attended, we talked a lot about transitions. They are a fact of life, and an unavoidable aspect of overseas life as a missionary. Old friends come for a two week mission, and they depart. Previously unknown to us short-term missionaries arrive, and two, four, or eight weeks later they depart as new friends. A fellow missionary is a long-term teammate, and then she retires. These times of relationship are followed by a feeling of being unsettled.

At the end of January, we had a joyous, yet sad, retirement send-off for Janet Kucko who is leaving after many years of service at Rafiki Villages in Ghana and Liberia. Her departure has been followed by a season of adjustment for everyone around the Village. Candidates for a new assistant for Andrea have been interviewed and a very capable young woman with a degree in social work was hired. And, so the transitions continue. *Please thank God with us that even in the midst of change, we experience God’s unchangeable grace.*



As Janet prepared to retire and depart, a group of youth gathered to bid her “farewell.”

One year at a time, the Rafiki children are all becoming teens. By the end of this year, eighty-two of our young people, either living at the

Village or receiving scholarship benefits for schools outside the Village, will be age thirteen and older. In the next two years, the remaining nine children will cross into their teen years. I would not say we are becoming experts at raising teenagers, but we certainly are having ample opportunity to walk with them through these years of great opportunity. *Please thank God with us for these young people, and pray that He will clearly lead and guide them in His ways.*



Our music teacher is reinvigorating the music program. At the last recitation, we heard a nice performance from the peer-directed recorder chorus.



Our three pre-primary classes, along with grades 1-3 are filled with day students from the community. What a wonderful opportunity to share God’s Word and excellent education with our neighbors.

This was the third Christmas we gave the junior and senior high students a learning opportunity as their gift. Rather than purchasing gifts for them, we let them travel to the large market in central Accra with their Rafiki parent to spend the Christmas money they were given. In the course of the day, they navigated public transportation, determined a good lunch vendor, moved through a very busy shopping district, evaluated the quality of items, bargained for better pricing, and chose something they were excited about. Overall, it has been a very good experience and an outing our teens look forward to each year. *Please thank God with us for the faithful giving of our sponsors who provide for a Christmas gift and so much more for our Rafiki children.*



Only six residents remained at the Village over Christmas, we thoroughly enjoyed meals, games, and activities with them.

Even with the emotional roller coaster which can accompany the teen years, we are so thankful to see the work God is doing in their lives. One by one, we see them growing in gratitude and understanding of the great blessing God is giving them through their life at the Rafiki Village. One young alumni of Rafiki pours himself into the lives of our oldest boys whenever he is able. Another older resident has made a noticeable change in his work ethic at school noting the cause is his realization that he wants to help his family in the future. Another girl has realized that her caregiver here at Rafiki cares deeply for her and that she wants to be serious about heeding her advice, doing well in school, and helping her relatives in the future. A university student commented that his time living at the Rafiki Village has given him the necessary ingredients to help him fare well

wherever he finds himself, especially academically and spiritually, and he is so grateful. *Please join us in giving thanks for these signs of personal and spiritual growth in our young people.*



Here is one of our young men holding one of our hens before we thinned our small flock.

We are grateful too for the opportunity to grow and mature through the lessons God is teaching us here. It is a large and humbling responsibility to oversee the care of these treasured young people. We know you are regularly lifting us up to our faithful God in prayer. *Please join us in thanking God that He designed His church to operate as a family of faith.*

With thanks and love,

*Scott, Andrea, Grace & Ian*

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