



RAFIKI

FOUNDATION
MISSIONARY NEWSLETTER

September 2020 – Andrea and Scott Nelson

“See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are” (1 John 3:1).

Dear friends and family,

Here in Ghana, as around the globe, we continue to live amidst limitations brought on by the coronavirus pandemic. However, we are cautiously optimistic as the number of active cases here is on the decline. Also, international air travel resumed to and from Ghana. Universities are reopening with e-learning methods in place, and junior and senior high students are being prepared for their national exams. In his sixteenth speech to the nation since the first reported coronavirus case in Ghana, the president recently notified the nation that primary level education will resume in January. *Please thank God with us that Ghana’s government has taken a proactive role in fighting the coronavirus and that their efforts are having an impact.*

At the Rafiki Village, we are about eighteen weeks into what we are calling academic maintenance. Four teachers who are staying here, and others who go and come from the Village, have been providing review lessons for resident students in the Village as well as e-learning for day students outside the Village. Students are completing the lessons and receiving teacher feedback either remotely (day students) or in person (resident students). We will soon break for three weeks and then begin another ten weeks of learning before Christmas break. *Please thank God with us that we have had teachers willing to adapt to alternative learning methods. Please also thank God that many of our residents have expressed a growing love for school and an eagerness to return to full-time school.*

Aside from reviewing school subjects, many residents have been learning in new arenas. Each

day one Rafiki house has the responsibility of making breakfast for the whole Village—about 100 people! Some of our teens are becoming quite accomplished at cooking what I see as a hybrid between an omelet and scrambled eggs.



Three of our Perseverance House young men pose as they prepare eggs for the whole Village

On the weekend, older teens assist one Rafiki Mother in cooking lunch and supper for everyone. Several of our girls’ houses have planted and are tending to a large garden where they are learning local farming practices from their Rafiki Mothers. Three of the boys’ cottages also help in a garden. Residents will soon be eating hot peppers, okra, and tomatoes from their own gardens. A few

residents are learning to play the guitar and have improved enough to help Andrea lead the singing during the Sunday service at Rafiki.



One of our budding guitarists practicing a praise song

About 15 youth have learned or strengthened their sewing abilities through sewing new curtains for the dining halls and some school classrooms. A couple girls even sewed their own church dresses! Andrea has a weekly drawing class with about twenty-four of the children and youth who love—and are quite good at—drawing. *Please thank God with us that our youth have opportunities to make good use of the time available during this different learning season.*

We are also making use of more hours outside the classroom by hosting leadership and discussion groups. Jason has a leadership meeting with some of the older guys. Additionally, two groups of junior and senior high girls are meeting with Andrea and Belinda to discuss a variety of topics which are relevant for a maturing young woman. *Please pray that God will use these discussions to do the heart work that only He can do in the lives of these young people.*

With the airport reopening September 1, our family is cautiously optimistic that we will be able to travel to the U.S. later in the year. We will be monitoring COVID-19 statistics and restrictions and hope to make a decision mid-October. *Please pray for the decision to be clear and that, one way or another, we will be able to take some time away*

from our work to reflect, recharge, and relax.

It is difficult to put into words the gratitude we have for you, our faithful partners, in this ministry. We know these are difficult days around the world, but God continues to show His graciousness to us all.

Enjoy these additional photos from our Rafiki family to yours!



It's a presidential election year in Ghana. A registration group came to Rafiki to register our students who are old enough to vote



Grace, who would like to be a nurse, gained experience taking blood pressure measurements for the kids' annual height, weight, and blood pressure testing exercise



As an enrichment activity exploring the effects of gravity and friction, the kids made DaVinci bridges out of popsicle sticks. Later outside, teams attempted with varied success to build full-size bridges with large bamboo stems



After a few months' COVID delay, Ian's braces were removed under strict safety protocols



Under the shade of a big mango tree, a few kids watch a soccer game



About a dozen residents, including these who were the first four, have done extra chores to earn new backpacks

With love and thanks,

Scott, Andrea, Grace & Ian

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