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RAFIKI FOUNDATION MISSIONARY NEWSLETTER



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Missionary #258

“Behold, how good and pleasant it is when brothers dwell in unity!” (Psalm 133:1).

Jambo, Rafiki friends and family!

We were so grateful to get another visit from short-term missionary and friend, Susan Peoples, this past month. Every short-term missionary is a blessing to the Village—offering fresh energy, unique experiences, and additional helping hands—for there is always much work to be done. Yet Susan is part of an “elite” group of short-term missionaries, who make annual “work visits” to multiple Rafiki Villages on the African continent. And when she is back in America, she is still finding ways to share about the ministry with others.



Susan with our upper school choir

Susan is a Buckeye at heart, born and educated in Ohio! She completed a three-year nursing degree at Samaritan Hospital School of Nursing in Ashland, Ohio, becoming a registered nurse in 1967. In the same year, she married her husband, Dave. For the next twenty years they served the country as an Air Force couple and were blessed with two daughters. Those daughters not only extended the family with twelve grandchildren, but the adult grandchildren have now blessed Susan to be a great-grandmother of five!



Susan at Rafiki Classical Christian School power lunch

God has used Susan’s numerous life experiences (faithful follower of Christ, nurse, wife, mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, and now widow) to be a blessing to so many in Africa! Could God be preparing you for short-term service as well?

As term one of the school year got underway, we hosted our first Parent Teacher Fellowship gathering—a forum to address the specific concerns of parents whose children are preparing for one of the many “high stakes” national exams. Along with fielding their questions and fellowshiping over tea, we got to share a video about the work of Rafiki, across the

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years and across the world. It had a profound impact on our parents, giving them a broader perspective of the mission and ministries that have blossomed outside of the familiar twenty-nine-acre Village here in Kenya.

Rafiki graduates (former residents) returned to the Village for their quarterly check-in and to write personalized letters to their sponsors. Over lunch, these young men and women got to fellowship with their “little” brothers and sisters. In times of reflection, they shared some of their hindsight and prayerfully impressed upon the younger students the importance of “studying to show themselves approved” (paraphrased) as it says in 2 Timothy 2:15. It was an emotional, uplifting, and enlightening homecoming.

The last official activity before our flight back to the States for deputations and the Enrichment Conference was the term one Matriculation Formal Hall. This formal hall is convened annually to celebrate the promotion of students to the next grade and students who have been newly admitted to the school. It is a festive time of thanksgiving and praise to the Lord. Student achievements and teacher awards were celebrated. But the highlight of all formal halls centers around the recitations that the classes work so hard to prepare. In term one, pre-grammar (age three through five), and grade one and two, students take center stage.



Teacher Antony, parent conference



Rafiki graduates return

Prayer Requests

- *Covering over our daughter-in-love, Samra, who is due to give birth this month!*
- *Safe travel and fruitful interactions, as we visit churches and supporters in various states during February and March.*
- *Successful completion of the first school term for our staff and students, while we are away.*
- *Twenty new long-term missionaries to go out and serve with Rafiki.*
- *All Rafiki children to be fully sponsored.*



EC2 recitation practice

Several lively recitations were presented, reflecting various aspects of the curriculum that are being studied. They were each met with rousing applause from the audience of proud parents and encouraging classmates. The program concluded with beautiful choral harmonies from the School of Rhetoric—our most senior students. It is a wonderful sight to see the entire student body assembled together, glorifying God with their gifts.

As the program came to a close, the audience was honored by the presence of two surprise guests: Esther and Mercy Ondiek, international children's authors (and sisters) were in town visiting their elder sister, whose children recently joined our school.

They were intrigued to learn about Rafiki and celebrate their nieces' and nephew's matriculation. When we met them at the carpool line days before, we learned that Esther and Mercy, experienced educators and professional librarians, were passionate about sharing Kenyan stories and increasing children's literacy.

Their joy in learning about the school led them to donate several copies of their newly published book, *Hoofbeats and Tails*, for our review and to add to the grammar school library. Mercy, who now lives in New York, traveled back to America knowing that the quality education her family members are receiving here matches the classical Christian education on other continents.



Hoofbeats and Tails authors

Praises

- The continued growth of the school is a testament to God. It represents the impact that Rafiki is having in the local community. Getting to share God's truth and faithfulness with more and more children each year is truly an answer to our prayers, and to yours!
- The Lord was faithful to provide the new skilled teachers we needed for this school year.
- Our work visas have been processed successfully!

We miss you all and hope to see as many of you as we can during our return from Africa. An American embrace, a conversation over a cup tea, coffee, or hot cocoa would be wonderful way for us to store up memories with family and friends.

Upendo (Love),

Theodore and Crystal Wilson