

Project Kenya 2009

Helping African women & children impacted by HIV/AIDS

Asanti, Thank You.....

To all my friends, family and co-workers for your donations towards my 2009 goat, food and uniform projects in Kenya.

I left for Kenya on Monday August 24th 2009 and arrived in Nairobi Wednesday oddslot afternoon.

Esther and Daniel from The Ecumenical Centre were waiting for me at the airport. My vacation had begun.

The Ecumenical Centre

After a good night's sleep, I went to "work" on Thursday morning.

I converted the donations to Kenya shillings. At the rate of 67shillings per dollar, I had so many bills; I needed my bodyguard Daniel to stay close to me. We went to the supermarket to buy the groceries for the families. It took us two trips to bring all the food back to the centre.

The ladies were surprised to see me when they came to unload the car. I tip my hat to them they are strong. They unloaded those bags with ease and carried them inside on their heads and shoulders. We sorted and packed the foodstuff. Every member family received packages of salt, sugar, rice, cooking fat, flour and chapati flour.

Upstairs in the work room, the other members were busy sewing school uniforms, making jewellery

and school shoes. A grant from a donor enabled Esther to buy sewing machines. The sales from the uniforms are reinvested back into the centre.

We had a nice reunion that afternoon, everyone was delighted with the pictures from my last visit.

For the next few days, Esther and I delivered food to the community. I met old friends and made some new ones. We visited families in the slums, met others in the markets, travelled miles uphill and downhill on smooth roads and rough terrain.

On one trip, we got stuck in the middle of an intersection. We got out, pushed the car back, moved the rocks to the side of the road and continued our journey. All in a day's work!

While Esther and I were busy delivering food, Daniel took the "goat" money and drove 5 hours to Nyeri Township. It took him several days to negotiate with the farmers of the Kenya Dairy Goat Association. On Sept 1st, Daniel called with the good news. He had bought the 11 goats and was on the way home. Happy Birthday!!

These goats looked healthy, I was reminded of my childhood in Guyana.

Some families picked up their goats, we delivered others and one goat went home in a taxi. Martha, who has cerebral palsy, received 2 goats, one male and one very pregnant female. The word had spread and within 30 minutes, two

neighbours had stopped by to book the services of the male.

There is a shortage of male goats so Martha's mom has guaranteed income for a long time. When the female goat has her baby, Martha and her sister will have nutritious goats milk on a regular basis.



I had received donations to buy uniforms for 2 students. There was a greater need in a family with four kids so we bought uniforms and shoes for all 4 kids. The father of these children was recently injured had an accident recently and can no longer work. This family was also one of the first to receive a dairy goat.

During my visit, Esther and I talked about creating a revolving fund which will allow the women



Family received uniforms and shoes



Project Kenya 2009 Helping African women & children impacted by HIV/AIDS

Ecumenical Centre cont'd

to borrow money and start their own small businesses.

The Centre has evolved. They have now split into 5 groups of women



with a leader for each group.

The women meet on Monday afternoons at a location close to home. Everyone contributes 50 shillings towards the revolving fund. The kitty



Esther (L) visiting members of the Centre



already has 12,000 shillings.

The Centre wants to "grow" this kitty a little bit more so all members can borrow and start their own small business. In order to be fair, the leaders of the five groups are finalizing their constitution. This will determine who gets to borrow the money first.

At one of the meetings I attended, one member needed 1,000 shillings (\$14.00) to start a charcoal business while another needed 2,000 shillings (\$28.00) to start her used clothing business.

Please contact me if you would like to make a donation to the fund.

Or, you can wire donations directly to the Centre and e-mail Esther, eswan0132@yahoo.com with the details of the wire.

Please wire to:

Name of Bank: Barclays Bank of Kenya, Ngong Branch

Account Name: Ecumenical Day Care & Support Women Project

Account Number: 1044153

Swift Code: BARCKENX



Children from the community



Patrick Mukundi Mathenge

Since my cell phone did not work, Patrick offered to lend me his. The next day he gave me a quick lesson. As it was almost dark, escorted me back to my hotel.

During the journey, Patrick told me his story.



Meeting Patrick

At 22 years old, he has just returned to high school after a 4 year absence. Patrick is very soft spoken and wants to be a doctor. He is very humbled by Esther and Daniel's generosity and wants to return the favour. One day he will establish a foundation to help educate intelligent poor children.

I asked Patrick to write me his entire story, both good and bad.

After Patrick finished writing his story, he in smiles more. He told me he felt so much better about

Patrick *cont'd*

his situation; there was hope for the future.

As a thank you for the loan of his cell phone, I bought Patrick all of his school supplies and toiletries.

After reading his remarkable story, I promised him to create a little booklet and sell it for \$5.00. The money from the sale will be deposited into his account to help pay for next year's school fees.

Please contact me if you would like to buy a copy of the booklet about this remarkable young man.



Shelter Children Rehabilitation Centre

I went to Shelter Children's Home for the first time on Saturday August 29th. I was visiting Reuben who had moved from Motherly Care Children's Home.

Two years ago, when I met Reuben, he thanked me for coming all the way from Canada to bring them food. Then in a very soft voice, he asked me to bring him a toothbrush and toothpaste on my next visit; of course I kept my promise and then some.

When we drove into the 20 acre



Reuben with some of his goodies

compound of Shelter Children's Centre, I was impressed. The view was magnificent; children of all ages were playing. What a wonderful sight to see a happy bunch of kids. They were on August holidays and loving every moment of it.

I met the Director, Mary W. Muiruri, and some of her staff, then I was given the grand tour.

The Home has a girls' dorm, boys' dorm, a church, school rooms, library, offices, guest facilities, kitchen, and dining room. They have their own well, grow their own vegetables, raise cows, chickens, rabbits and goats. The cow poop is recycled into ethane gas used and used in the kitchens.

They Centre is also seeking a sponsor for the solar panel project. Blackouts are scheduled from 8am to 6pm every second day.

The Centre is home to 197 children; 102 girls and 95 boys. 85% of these children are orphans and 15% are destitute.

Recently, when the number of boys increased, the Conference Hall was converted into the boys' dormitory. There are bunk beds and single beds; the children sleep 2 to a bed but one per top bunk.

The girls' dormitory is very small and home to the babies and preschoolers. The Centre desperately needs a new dorm for the girls. The proposal for the new girls' dorm is to have walls between the beds so the girls can have their own private space.

Most of the children attend boarding school or day schools in the neighborhood. Some of the teenagers are in college and university.

The Centre stresses education as a key factor in the children's rehab.

The children also receive counseling and life skills training.

The Centre receives support/donations primarily from the private sector and some government assistance. As usual, there are many football scores challenges.

I spent the afternoon with Reuben and several of his friends. They gave me a second tour and told me about their chores. Every child helps out at the Centre. The beds were neat and tidy; everything was in its place.

The kids at the centre are engaged in beadwork and have a paper bag factory. Paper bags that are made for companies include their logos.

I gave the kids some design tips and bought some of their jewellery.

I went back to visit the Centre the next day, Rift Valley Adventures was hosting a mountain bike race that started and ended at the Home. The race was won by Kenya's number one cyclist Kijja



Mary with some of her students

David. A TV crew from England was on hand doing a documentary on Kijja. I got Mary interviewed; free publicity for the Centre and hopefully more donations from abroad.

Some of the teenagers volunteer in the nearby community.

he orphanage has a website but I will create a quarterly newsletter for them.

Project Kenya 2009 Helping African women & children impacted by HIV/AIDS

Shelter Children *cont'd.*

The Centre is looking for volunteers to visit, share their expertise with the students and enjoy real Kenyan culture.

For more info on Shelter Rehabilitation Centre, please visit their website www.shelterchildren.org

To make a donation to the Centre, please contact me or wire directly to the centre and e-mail Mary at:
swok2001k@yahoo.com

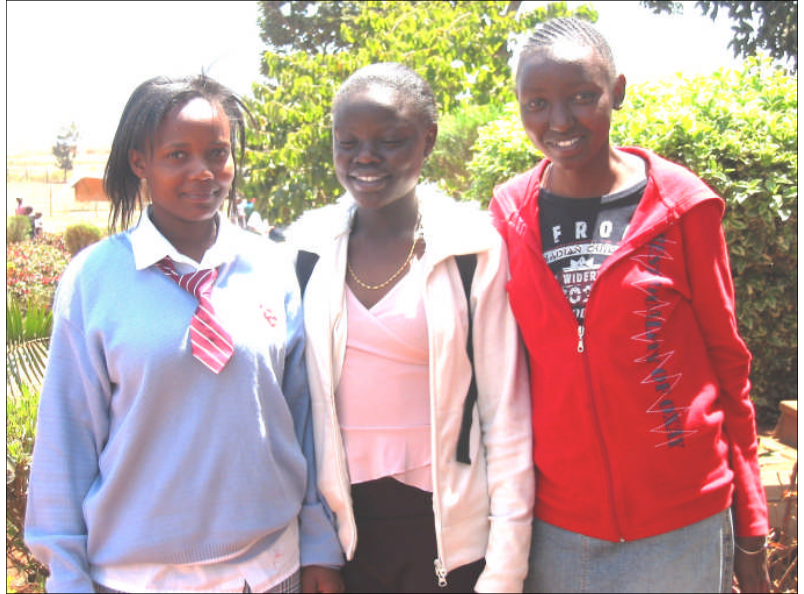
Please wire to:

Name of Bank: Barclay's Bank of Kenya, Ngong Branch

Account Name: Shelter Children's Rehabilitation Centre

Account Number: 1017601

Swift Code: BARCKENX-03-043



Project Kenya 2010

As a result of my visit, I have pledged to do the following

- Raise funds for The Ecumenical Centre's Revolving Fund
- Sell Patrick Mukundi Mathenge's booklet
- Raise funds to buy computers for the library at Shelter Children Rehab Centre
- Find companies to buy Shelter Children's paper bags
- Create a quarterly newsletter for Ecumenical Centre and Shelter Children Rehab Centre
- Arrange a team of medical personnel to travel to Kenya in August 2010
- **Please call me if you would like to visit Kenya**

Thank you!! Asante!



Floreen Forde

416-391-5648 ♦ flojo99@rogers.com

**When you see someone in need,
Love demands a loving deed;
Don't just say you love him true,
Prove it by the deeds you do. --- Sper
COMPASSION PUTS LOVE INTO ACTION**