



The Rafiki Foundation, Inc.

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"I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership . . ." (Philippians 1:3 NIV).

Greetings from Ghana, dear family and friends,

What a joy to write you after many challenges and trials these past months: waiting, then getting ready, then leaving!

My house sold on February 23rd, three hours after I mailed my last letter. The sale was confirmed on March 17th. I closed on March 29th, after two "Moving to Africa" sales. I quit my job with Group Health Plan on April 1st after more than twenty years employment. (No joke!)

April was spent at Melinda's house, sifting through remains of 409 Honeysuckle and packing ten boxes to Accra. My computer keyboard broke the last week of April! But the "Bond Voyage" parties were wonderful! I am very grateful for the messages written or spoken those last days in the USA. The written ones I am using as my "mail" now. The spoken ones are in my brain's memory folder. My ten boxes left April 30th at 2 p.m. (ten minutes after I had finished packing them) and arrived May 3rd the day I left. The British Airlines plane I traveled on was struck by lightning while on the ground in London!!! Though I saw the brilliant light, thankfully the pilot did not explain until the plane was four hours in the air—too late for us passengers to change our minds.

May 3rd I arrived at Kotoka International Airport (KIA) after sixteen hours flying

time. Time flies, too, but I have not caught up. Every sight, smell, sound is new. My brain can hardly compute it all and think or talk at the same time.

Sight:

The city of Accra has about two million people—the size of St. Louis. The Atlantic Ocean, with its beautiful beaches, is the southern city limits. The city has only two grocery stores, but four lane roads with speed limits, streetlights, cement sidewalks, internet cafes, live theater, a symphony, a zoo, and an international soccer team. Most Ghanaians (Gha-nay-yens, accent second syllable) travel by mass transit— either a taxi for one or two people or a *tro-tro* for a dozen or more. All Ghanaians are people-oriented. Greetings to any person is important: "Madame, how are you? How is your day? How is your family?" Only after that, would a Ghanaian start his conversation with you. It is hard for this American to think of the person first, then the details next. With time, I hope to learn. Temporarily, I am living in Pokuase, a "suburb" of Accra thirty minutes from the Rafiki Village with Cathy, a fellow ROS (Rafiki Overseas Staff). I am looking for rental housing until the Rafiki Village duplex is built. Target date is October.

Smell:

Ghanaian food is spicy smelling and tasting and very reasonable. *Fu-fu*, made from yams, is pounded and cooked

into a paste resembling a ball of grits. *Fu-fu* softens the spicy groundnut soup, made with peanuts, tomatoes, onions, chicken, and pe-pe (hot peppers). Hot peppers add the spice! *Kinke*, fermented cornmeal cooked in corn stalks and served hot, smells like cooked artichokes and has a slightly bitter taste like potatoes or squash. It works well with the spicy soup or stew to soothe your mouth. Water is a staple here—it smells and tastes great! Ghanaians drink tap water. I drink filtered water for now, about three liters a day.

Sound:

Crickets, dogs, and frogs occupy the night sounds where I am staying. (Sounds like 409 Honeysuckle in my mind.) In Accra, there are more people sounds both night and day. People sell their wares along all the main thoroughfares. No need to get out of the car—this is drive-through shopping, like drive-through fast food and pharmacies. It is possible to do all food, personal, and household shopping without ever having to leave your car. And everything is sold with a smile!

The Rafiki Village has sounds of children singing hymns in school, babies crying before nap time, teenage girls making woven baskets during “production time,” hammering and pounding for new buildings, the two cooks preparing food in the kitchen and sweeping the dining hall. (Lori is my Food Service mentor©). The May 18-28th Rafiki medical clinic brought hundreds of people sounds. Four MiniMissionaries and volunteers from area churches came as doctors and staff to treat the local people with donated medicines and supplies.

In these first new weeks in Accra, as I e-mail you and receive your emails, I am learning how vitally important your “word” is to me. Like God’s Word, it has sustained me, nourished me, comforted me. As Paul writes in Philippians, I do thank God every time I think of you. And I pray with joy because of your partnership in this great adventure of changing children’s lives!!!

Praise and thanks to God for:

- E-mail and infrared phone
- Safe travel for me to Accra
- Safe travel for my ten boxes

Prayer requests to God for His wisdom in:

- Learning my “food service” job
- Choosing rental housing
- Buying a reliable auto
- Finding a church home
- Maintaining malaria-free health

Your eyes, nose and ears in Accra,



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P.S. Please do not send “forwards” or attachments. Downloading them is difficult.