



# The Rafiki Foundation, Inc.

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Dear Family and Friends,

## Joy, Hope, and Love

The Ugandan Coiners wish you a wonderful and joyous Christmas season filled with hope and love. As this season draws nearer and we stop and look around at the Village, we see that this is what Rafiki is all about—hope, love, and joy. Everywhere we look we see the love and hope that being here at the Rafiki Village has brought to children, young girls, and workers with joy and smiles that are shown on each face.

## Children, Rafiki Mothers, and Mothers' Assistants

One of our greatest joys this year has been the growth in the Rafiki Children's Center. When we were writing our Christmas letter to you last year, there were twenty-one children in three cottages. This year as we write, there are forty-four children and seven cottages open with one cottage being used by a Rafiki Mother-in-training. What a sense of joy and hope there is in these children and in the Rafiki Mother's and mothers' assistants who have been so faithful to care for them. Children come to us now from many different places, even from deep in the bush. They come sick, tired, unwanted, and with no hope. It is hard to believe that just a few weeks at Rafiki can change that child to one who is smiling, joyful, and full of new hope in a future that now looks bright.



ALICE BEFORE



ALICE AFTER

Recently the Rafiki Mothers and mothers' assistants gave a Ugandan-style picnic to the children and workers of Rafiki. We looked around at the faces of children, gardeners,

cooks, guards, mothers' assistants, Rafiki Mothers, and ROS (Rafiki Overseas Staff) and thought of the joy and the love that we could see shining out. The wonderful thing is that what we were seeing is not there just at this time of year but is there throughout the year. That is truly a blessing from the Lord. We sat around and laughed and joked and ate matoke, groundnut sauce, and roasted pork with our fingers and enjoyed being the Rafiki Family in Uganda.



UGANDAN PICNIC

## Rafiki Girls' Center

Compared to twenty-one girls last Christmas, this year there are thirty-six beautiful young ladies attending classes every week. The fifth-semester girls are beautiful and confident young women who are filled with hope where before there was no hope for them as village girls. When you see them walking down the road you can always tell the Rafiki girls from the other village girls because there is a glow and a joy in them that sets them apart from those walking around them. It is especially wonderful to see these students using the skills they are taught at Rafiki to minister to their village and churches. Many are helping in Sunday schools and children's churches wherever they worship. Just recently, the newest class of girls completed their first sewing project, making serviettes (cloth napkins) for the children's center. What an eye-opener for both girls and children as the young women came at lunch and presented sixty beautifully made and colorful serviettes to the children and their families. As they walked around and met the Rafiki Mothers and children, you could see the joy and love that was in all the faces. Led by Gretchen Petersen they then sang for the children and

left, leaving with a sense of belonging to a wonderful family.

### **Construction**

Are we stopping there? Of course not! In answer to specific prayer requests, funds have been donated, and Stuart is busy overseeing the construction of cottage nine. It is fun to see God's hand at work when His people are faithful to pray and to answer His prompting. We are a rapidly growing Village and are truly hoping to be at sixty children by the time that we leave on furlough next summer. Just think of the lives that God has already picked out to be a part of this family here at Rafiki Village Uganda.

### **Rafiki School**

You didn't think that we would leave the school out, did you? The Rafiki School is, like the rest of the Village, a place of joy, hope, and growth. Starting in January 2006, the school will be on the Ugandan national school schedule with the new school year beginning in January of the year and ending in December. On that first day of school in January, thirty-three of our forty-four children will be in school uniforms, waiting in line for the learning to begin. Here future leaders of Uganda in business, industry, politics, and Christian ministries are starting on a path that will lead to one of the top educations in the country. We are not just saying that because Marsha is one of the teachers there. The first-class curriculum is designed to be God-centered and challenging for each student, and we are excited as we see the progress made by the unwanted, leftover children of Uganda. We are in awe of God and His choices as we mold and train each of these young students for the bright future that lies before them.



MARSHA AND SARAH

### **The Coiner Family**

What about us? Do we experience the love, joy, and hope that we see reflected around us. Definitely! We are truly blessed as we minister in this place and see how very faithful God is to nurture and grow us up, just like He is doing for these children. We have seen His faithfulness as He has taken care of our daughter Lisa in America at Covenant College. Lisa had to leave Covenant on medical leave but received a correct diagnosis and has fully recovered. She has been able to stay with Marsha's sister Jennifer and her family and has had the added blessing of extra time spent with the family. In addition, she was allowed by Covenant to finish her courses by internet and will receive the credits for the classes she has taken. Melanie continues to be a delight here in Uganda. She is taking senior courses and could graduate a year early if she so desires. Lisa will be joining us here in Uganda for a family Christmas—a reunion not only with her natural family but with her Rafiki family also.

We so appreciate the many of you who have knitted your hearts together with us concerning this ministry to some of God's most vulnerable. May you, too, experience the love, joy, and hope that has its basis in the powerful work of God in the lives of those who are precious to Him.

With Christmas blessings to you all,

*Stu, Marsha, Lisa, Melanie*

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NOTE: Please visit [www.rafiki-foundation.org](http://www.rafiki-foundation.org) to find information on your ROS, what *Rafiki* is doing, the centers, and the Exchange.