



**The Rafiki Foundation, Inc.**

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May 2003

*“Abraham hurried into the tent to Sarah. ‘Quick,’ he said, ‘get three seahs of fine flour and knead it and bake some bread’”*

(Genesis 18:6).

Dear Friends,

How quickly can you bake bread? I used to think it would take at least half a day to bake bread—that is, until I came to Kenya and learned how to make *chapatis*, which is flat bread fried in a pan, and probably like the bread Sarah made in a hurry for the angels of the Lord. One of the most enjoyable aspects of my work with the girls is teaching them how to bake. They already know how to make *chapatis*, but the girls have never baked yeast breads and quick breads. Last week, as part of our class on measuring, our newest girls baked banana muffins. You should have seen their faces as they watched the muffins rise in the oven! From lumpy, limp batter, little “cakes” grew. For the girls, this is a new and exciting experience; for us it is just something we have always taken for granted. Their wide-eyed wonder inspires me to take less for granted in my life and to see the newness of each day through their eyes. It would be enough for these girls to just “escape” from their empty lives for five days a week, but to also be able to learn to bake, to sew, to produce a *Rafiki* product is truly a wonder to them.

Six new girls joined us at the *Rafiki* center the first week of May. I am getting to know Rose, Mary C., Brenda, Damaris W., Mary M., and Felisters as I give them instruction in cooking. Our “first-born” girls no longer have cooking classes, but are the ones mainly responsible for preparing lunch, now that they know their way around the *Rafiki* kitchen. Instead of cooking class, this older group now has music instruction and every once in a while they sing for us, demonstrating their new skills. As the new girls watch the older ones; I see admiration, excitement, and a little trepidation in their faces as they consider their own future at the *Rafiki* Girls’ Center.

The first week with our “second-born” girls was exactly what we expected—they were nervous and confused, but happy to be with us. What we did not fully anticipate was the joy of our “first-born” girls to have new students join them.

Before the first day of our new semester, Jane Pope, our center director, and I had been speaking with our girls about what they could do to make the new girls feel welcome on their first day. We reminded them of how they felt that first day in October. Nothing specific was decided so we just let the matter go. However, when I arrived at the center at my normal time on that first Tuesday in April, I saw something quite unexpected. All of our new girls were having their tea break outside, but I had to look very carefully before realizing that they were new girls. I had expected to see nervous new faces of girls in street clothes. Instead, I saw contented girls in *Rafiki* uniforms. How was that possible, since this was their first day and no measurements for uniforms had been taken? Jane told me that, before devotions in the morning, the “first-born” girls decided to share their uniforms with the new girls, to make them feel welcome.

In the providence of God, the new girls were just the right size. Surely our “first-born” could not have done anything more touching for the girls, or for us. Gone were any doubts we may have had that God was teaching the girls to love each other in practical ways.

Since that first day, the girls are learning to work together in the kitchen preparing lunch and then cleaning up. The kitchen is the place where the principles of teamwork are developed, since it takes all of the girls to prepare and clean up lunch for eighteen to twenty people every day. In production, where they spend their afternoons,

the work is more individualized. Our new girls are learning to draw while the other girls are putting to use their newly acquired skills.



The photo shows Perpetua working on a note card and Mary watching her get her "snap" taken. The girls are producing very attractive note cards which are shipped to the *Rafiki* Exchange and available to purchase there, or over the Internet. To see the products from all the girls' centers, you can access the website at [www.rafiki-foundation.org](http://www.rafiki-foundation.org).

My work with the girls is obviously the most important aspect of my life here in Kenya. Even the members of our BSF class love to hear me talk about the girls when I use our experiences for illustrations of principles from our *John* passages. Our BSF class is at capacity now, in spite of seven leaders having to withdraw from leadership during the study of *John's* Gospel. We have been greatly encouraged as God has provided a replacement for every leader who left. As leaders and members study *John's* Gospel, many personal applications have been made even by those who have been Christians for years. The most thrilling times for us are when we hear that a class member has applied the truth of *John* 3:7, "**You must be born again,**" by receiving Jesus as her personal Lord and Savior. As far as we know, at least five of our class members and one of our students in the school program have been born again as a result of the study. Although the study will be ending soon, I fully expect to learn that others have also been touched to receive Christ by the time we have our "sharing night".

One of the personal applications I have made from *John's* Gospel comes from *John* 15:5, "**I am**

**the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.**" It is a privilege to be a "branch" of the Lord Jesus; however, it is not always easy to remain in Him and in His calling. There are so many needs in Africa—it is hard to say "yes" to one and "no" to another—but this is what distinguishes God's calling from our own self-proclaimed "works." The next newsletter you receive will be from me as a citizen of Kampala, Uganda. God prepared me in a very personal way to agree to *Rafiki's* request to move to Uganda to serve as headmistress for the *Rafiki* School. Unlike Kenya, the *Rafiki* Children's Center is already open and has children living with their *Rafiki* mother at the village.

I will not move to Uganda until mid-July so that I can continue at the Nairobi *Rafiki* Girls' Center, for as long as possible, there just aren't enough of us here quite yet. We need more missionaries called to Africa for this work, since everything we do is people-intensive. (That is a prayer request.) Please pray that until July I will maintain my focus with the girls in Kenya and with BSF—there is still much to be done here. The *Rafiki* Home Office will have my address and telephone in Uganda as soon as I have one. Stay tuned for the next report from a new place, with new people, in a new job, and surely a new perspective on God's calling on my life. It's one adventure after the other with the Lord, and I would have it no other way!

In His love,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Joanne Colvin".

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NOTE: The *Rafiki* web site has been revised. Please visit at [www.rafiki-foundation.org](http://www.rafiki-foundation.org) and find information on your ROS, what *Rafiki* is doing, the centers, and the Exchange.