



# The Rafiki Foundation, Inc.

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*"Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past.*

*See, I am doing a new thing!"*

(Isaiah 43:18, 19).

Dear Friends,

*Welcome Home!* That is what every Ugandan will say to you every time you come back home, even when you have only been out doing errands. So I say to you, as my friends say to me, *"Welcome Home to Uganda!"*

## **Saying Goodbye to the Past**

As happy as I am to be in Uganda, it was so difficult to say goodbye to everyone in Kenya. The first part of July was bittersweet as we said, *"Tu ta onona"* (see you again) in Nairobi. I will always cherish the close friends I made in Kenya. I also treasure the many times God showed Himself to be our faithful, tireless, watchful, and loving guide. I trust God as a faithful provider to care for my ROS Kenyan teammates, our Kenya *Rafiki* girls, our BSF leaders and class members, Josephine, Francesca, Boniface, and many others whom I love.

Immediately upon my arrival in Uganda in mid-July, I realized I was in a new, "foreign" culture. I thank God for His righteous authority over all matters—corporate, and private. If you have ever lived in a completely foreign culture you know that it is not always easy to discern what is "right" in the eyes of the authorities of that culture. But God's ways are always right, and with His help I am learning about Ugandan "rights" and "wrongs." Are the rules for driving the same in Uganda? No! U-turns in Uganda are illegal—I think. I am still investigating this one, and you can be sure I am not making any U-turns! Unexpected things that looked "wrong" turned out to be right. Like the time I took my cell phone (from Kenya) to the service technician to "unlock" it. I was fine until he put the phone in his pocket, left the building, and climbed aboard a *boda-boda* (motorcycle taxi). I thought, "I just gave away my cell phone!" He was back in fifteen minutes with the phone unlocked. No problem, he was just commuting to the workshop. Ugandan money is also a bit different than Kenya shillings. In Kenya about 750 shillings equals \$10 U.S. Take a guess: about how many Ugandan shillings would it take to equal \$10

U.S.? 100; 1,000; 10,000; or 20,000? If you guessed 20,000/UGX, you are right! I have been a millionaire more than once in Uganda!

## **Not Dwelling on the Past**

East Africa is defined as the countries of Tanzania, Kenya, and Uganda. Living in East Africa for the past three years prepared me to know Africans. Ugandans are warm and hospitable, characteristics that I have come to expect and love in my African friends. There is great poverty in Uganda, as in Kenya, but the Poverty Eradication Action Plan has been quite successful. The Ministry of Finance reports that "the incidence of poverty fell from 56% in 1992 to 35% in 2000. This information helps as we drive past shanty homes on the way to the *Rafiki* Village, just northwest of the city, where those within that 35% are struggling to find a meal or clean drinking water.

In August 2002, I worked on the Kenya *Rafiki* Pastors' Conference. That experience prepared me to work on the Uganda *Rafiki* Pastors' Conference just a few weeks ago. For two weeks, we "crashed" the details and the conference was wonderful! The participants were greatly impacted by our U.S. teachers who presented a high view of Christ personally. The pastors were also encouraged that *Rafiki* is helping them with the needs of Uganda's children and teenagers. As a result of the conference, *Rafiki* now has thirty-six Partner Churches who have committed to help us find qualified *Rafiki* mothers for our children and to pray for us. **Will you also pray that the pastors of these churches will follow through on their commitments?** We now have two mamas at the village, and two assistant mamas.

**Please pray that God will provide at least two more mothers so we can bring more children to live at the village in a permanent home with a real family of their own.**

## A New Thing in Uganda

God is indeed doing a new thing at the *Rafiki* Village here in Kampala. It is an honor to help start the *Rafiki* Children's Center School in just a few weeks. We will start with a preschool for the "older" children, who are just three- and four-years-old. Each day I grow more confident about my role as the Headmistress of the *Rafiki* School. I am thrilled to be one of the instruments used by God to provide a curriculum of Classical Christian Education. As I embark on this important work, I have asked God to guide me with His Word, specifically Philippians 4:8; ***"Whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things."***



**Mama Grace and her children in front of the school under construction**

Also new for Uganda is the opening of the *Rafiki* Girls' Center in October. Please pray for Shirlene's preparation of all details, including the selection of the girls. And no, I will not have time to teach them how to cook; I will be busy with children of "my own." (But I will certainly think about the girls.)

One more delight for me in coming to Uganda is Gerald Sseruwagi, the pastor of my Ugandan church, who happens to be supported by my U.S. church in Texas.

I met Pastor Gerald in 1997 when I moved from Washington, D.C., to San Antonio, Texas. Only God could work out this wonderful arrangement! Our church is called New City Bible Church (Presbyterian) where some of the *Rafiki* children also attend. Each Sunday there is the possibility that I will help with one of the *Rafiki* children, who usually falls asleep during the service. The last Sunday in August marked the start of new Sunday School classes. I am teaching the young women of the church, some of whom have recently received Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. **Please pray for my sensitivity to their needs as I disciple the women in basic biblical doctrine.**

## Bits and Pieces

My favorite Ugandan food is fresh pineapple, my favorite view is from Tank Hill of Lake Victoria, and my favorite eating spot is Ggaba Beach "Hotel" on the big porch on Lake Victoria, where I eat fried whole Tilapia fish with my fingers as I talk with friends. (It's a rather greasy affair.) I drive a red 1992 Toyota Surf (SUV) with automatic transmission, and I finally have a luggage rack of my very own! My ankle has not quite finished healing from the fall I took in May, but I am walking pretty well and everyone says, "Just give it time." I am looking forward to moving to the *Rafiki* Village to live in the new duplex under construction. After I move there my commute to work will be as long as it takes me to cross *Rafiki* Drive, since the school is across the street from my house. Life is good. And so is God. Now if the mosquitoes would only love me a little bit less. . . .

Friends, I thank God for your support, encouragement, and personal interest in our work. You are a gift!

Love in Christ,

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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.