



The Rafiki Foundation, Inc.

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"The LORD has done great things for us and we are filled with joy" (Psalm 126:3).

What kind of interesting things do you see on your way to work each day? Just in case we had forgotten that we live in Africa, God surprised us with an interesting sight as we drove to Rafiki the first week of school. As we passed through a crowded section of town, we saw a LARGE, spotted animal on a rope casually hop into the back of a small car. Almost as surprising was that no one in the busy crowd seemed phased by the fact that there was a HYENA in their midst! We were dumbfounded and shook our heads the rest of the way to work. We found out from one of the Nigerian teachers that trained hyenas, as a source of entertainment, are fairly common. Evidently they haven't made it into an American circus act yet!

Our Return

We were pleasantly surprised that there were NO surprises at our house upon our return. We thanked God for the many people who "held down the fort" while we were in the States for five weeks. We were greeted with warm smiles and graciously questioned about our journey and how "our people" (family) were all doing.

All seventy of the children at Rafiki nearly (literally!) bowled us over with an enthusiastic welcome. We were surrounded by children and greeted with lots of big hugs.

Back to School

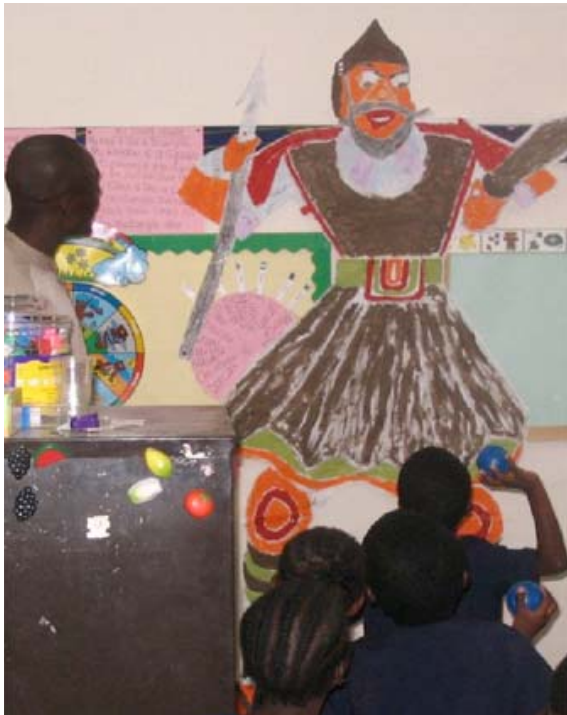
Pre-Kindergarten started with eleven children in Julie's class. Sometimes God surprises us by how quickly He answers prayer. Noah is a spindly little four-year-old who, when he arrived at Rafiki over a year ago, did not speak any English or Hausa and no one at the Village knew his dialect. He tends to be high energy and very tactile. The first three days of class, he seemed to be deliberately testing Julie at every turn and responded with "NO" at any request.

She talked to his Rafiki Mother and we prayed that God would develop a trust in the relationship. The very next day, Noah came ready to cooperate, gave Julie a big hug, and said, "I love you, Auntie." He has continued to show his desire to listen, learn, and cooperate. When another little boy, who is quite new to the Village, was having a hard time sharing, Julie asked Noah, "Do you remember when you were new and couldn't understand?" He responded with comprehension in his eyes, "Yes, Auntie," and let the toy problem drop. ***Pray for the teachers to effectively train in love and for the children to learn self-control – quickly!***



The kindergarteners were surprised to see Goliath in their classroom this week. Teacher Solomon had made an elaborate almost life-size picture of the giant. Before taking them in the classroom, he asked

them, "Do you think Goliath was bigger than Headmaster David?" They answered with a resounding "NO!!"



They were awed by his size but then took turns playing David by throwing balls at the picture. A great illustration for defeating our enemies!

Around the Village

The Rafiki Boys' Center (RBC) has begun to interview the first applicants for the first semester of classes. What an exciting time to know that we can make an immediate as well as eternal investment in the lives of more people. The man who donated the land for Rafiki here, Mr. Adamu Adiwu, has been eager to see the RBC put into place for some time. He garnered applications and made his home available for interviews for boys in his area. Tom Maggio, the RBC director, was initially surprised to find out that all twelve of the boys he interviewed that day were first-born sons. ***Pray for those boys chosen to persevere and have hearts open to learning.***

Most of us grew up with books at our fingertips, did multiple book reports during our school years, and still have a good book

to read in our spare time. But in most of the world, books are luxuries that are unaffordable and unavailable even in schools. Although all the Rafiki Mothers are literate, they have not read much, so the RCC director assigned each one of them a biography to read. Although they received the books without much enthusiasm, they were surprised to find out how much they enjoyed reading about the faith of people such as Corrie Ten Boom, Cameron Townsend, Jim Elliot, and Mary Slessor (in Nigeria). They commented about how much they suffered, how they persevered through trials, and what great work they did.

Surprises with God should not be a matter of *if* He will answer, but the *when* and *how*. We have prayed for more qualified Rafiki Mothers to come to Rafiki so we can add to our existing seventy children. A new mother will begin training this week! Now we pray that God will sustain children such as little Gabriel, who came to medical screening with malaria and a variety of other medical problems, until they can be placed in a cottage here. ***Please pray for more Rafiki Mothers and God's protection on the children who will come to live here.***

Can You Believe It?

This is the start of our ninth year in Africa – six in Madagascar and the start of our third in Nigeria! Surprisingly, we have been on the field longer than any other current ROS family. God has surprised us in many ways not the least of which is that through both strangers and friends, we have been supported through prayer, finances, encouraging letters, and welcoming homes and churches. As always, thank you!

Joyfully,

*David & Julie
Lauren, Anica, Amelie*

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