



The Rafiki Foundation, Inc.

PO Box 1988 • Eustis FL 32727-1988 • 407-557-2850 • FAX: 352-483-9132

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“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the LORD, ‘plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.’” (Jeremiah 29:11, NIV)

Dear friends and family,

For most of us the beginning of a new year is both a time for reflection on the past year’s events and lessons and a time for pondering the coming year’s hopes and possibilities. As I have contemplated the last eight months in Ghana, I can see how wonderfully God has sustained me, how graciously He has blessed me, and how privileged I am to be here. Let me share a few snapshots of my past year in Ghana. . .

“Welcome, Madam Amy!”

Each of the cottages/families came to welcome me with songs, cards, and even flowers! The students with whom I’d worked as a MiniMissionary in ‘06 were duly impressed when I remembered all of their names. This was no easy feat when you consider what some of their names are: Atarebono, Akalukri, Abelpoka, etc.



TAKEN ON MAY 19TH, THE DAY AFTER I ARRIVED

Teaching July-December ‘08

Every day at the schools seemed to be a healthy mix of surprises, mistakes, successes, and, quite frequently, laughter. Here’s a sampling...

“I live at Monkey Village!”

It was story time with my Primary One Reading class—the normally lively and sometimes rambunctious students were always quiet and attentive during this time because they adored hearing stories. That day I had selected “The Lion King” (for those of you unfamiliar with the story, one

of the characters in it is a baboon named ‘Rafiki’—a Swahili word meaning ‘friend’) and when I came to the part about the baboon I stopped. I asked the students, “Do any of you know what ‘Rafiki’ means?”

They all eagerly nodded their heads, and then confidently and earnestly chimed in unison: “MONKEY!”



SOME PRIMARY ONE STUDENTS AND THEIR YOUNGER SIBLINGS

“Flatbread, honeymoons, and setting precedents”

During the last school term, the Primary Five and Primary Six Bible class, along with the rest of the Rafiki residents and staff, studied the book of Deuteronomy. One day I brought in flatbread (unleavened bread) to share with the students and as I passed it around I warned them I was not setting a precedent by bringing in food. I then asked them what they thought ‘precedent’ meant. After a thoughtful pause, one girl raised her hand and replied, “Please, madam, it means you’ll bring food only if it relates to the lesson!”

About a week later we were discussing how various laws set forth in Deuteronomy demonstrate love, mercy, honesty, or faithfulness. When we came to the edict excluding newly married Israelite men from military service, I asked the class what “What do you think this law demonstrates?” One typically quiet boy’s hand shot up. “Please, madam, it shows love because he [the man] needs to have a honeymoon!”

You can imagine how my students kept me on my toes and made me laugh. Of course there were moments of frustration and disappointment too, but God is so good and He has used those times to humble me and teach me to rely on Him. I am looking forward to this coming school year and the valuable lessons which will be learned and taught!

"Village Events"

In early November some of the Home Office directors from the U.S. were here. During their visit the students performed a short piano and choral recital. Despite their nervousness at having such an esteemed audience, the kids sang and played delightfully (not that I'm biased).

Later in November we welcomed new children to our Village—two brothers named John and Matthias. Since their parents' deaths, both boys had been living with their uncle and his large family in a village deep in the bush. When John and Matthias first arrived here they were wary of "obrunis" (white people), didn't speak any English, and were seriously underweight. Now both boys are flourishing, bonding with their mama and siblings, and when I see them they always greet me with wide grins and little salutes!



JOHN WITH HIS UNCLE AND SOME VILLAGERS



BOTH BOYS WITH THEIR NEW MAMA ON THE WAY TO RAFIKI

You've seen a glimpse of '08 and I trust you share my hope that '09 will be even better! I am immensely grateful for your generosity—I know your prayers and your financial gifts have made it possible for me to live and serve here in Ghana. Though you may not hear from me frequently, please know that I thank God for you and think of you often!

Here are a few specific prayer requests for me personally and for our Village. Please pray for:

- Continued wisdom and patience in my teaching—I'll be spending the whole school day at the JSS.
- Reliable internet service.
- Smooth and peaceful transitions of power for the new president and government officials in Ghana.

With love,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Amy L. Wetton".

Amy

PO Box 9459 KIA
Accra, Ghana
WEST AFRICA

E-mail: ketchamafrica@gmail.com