



The Rafiki Foundation, Inc.

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December 2008

“You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise” (Deuteronomy 6:5-7 ESV).

As we eagerly await the addition of children to the Rafiki Village Ethiopia, we are concentrating on our work and on the children whom God has already blessed us—Jon, Jess, and Ben. We pray they see parents who love God with all their heart, their soul, and their mind.



JESS 14, JON 16, AND BEN 11

The Village

Moving to the Village at the end of August has been a huge blessing. Our coworkers, the Dulanys, now live next door. Mike is able to walk out the door to work on his various projects. Many Ethiopians have commented when seeing Mike working around the Village. They comment on what a hard worker he is. Ethiopians are not used to seeing foreigners doing physical work. Many have commented on the beauty of the landscaping work he and his workers have done.



MIKE PUTTING IN NEW WALK

We are still working through the Ethiopian government paperwork needed before we can begin to accept children. Furniture for the children's cottages has been ordered. Sherri is researching the options for furniture for the school. Mike has much work to do to install all the kitchen appliances for the dining hall. Applications are being prepared and passed out to begin the hiring process. The mothers and the teachers will both have to go through a two month training before we can accept children. There are many supplies that need to be unpacked and organized.



JESS SORTING SCHOOL BOOKS

First Visitors

In mid-October, Susan and Bob Hegel came to stay at the Village for a week. These two are our first official visitors to the Village and initiated the guesthouse. They were good sports as the guest house has not been completely outfitted yet. They had beds and a coffee maker stocked with quality

Ethiopian coffee. A cooler chest served as their refrigerator. Susan sewed many curtains for the children's cottages. Bob worked with Mike and Ken.

The Internet

"It's a blessing and a curse" applies to our love/hate relationship with our internet situation. Since moving to the Village, our internet capabilities are limited. We are now rural instead of living in a large city. We are able to read e-mails on line. We love to hear from you. Please do not send large attachments as our slow internet cannot handle large graphics. Sherri has postponed working on her masters as the internet is too slow to submit required class work. *Please pray as we research options to improve our internet speed.*

Dedications

Please pray for two dedications that are coming up. First of all, in December, the Home Office will be dedicating their new facility in Florida. In February, we will be holding a dedication ceremony for our Village. We do not have a date set as of the writing of this newsletter. *Please pray as we work out the many details.*

Bingham Academy



KIDS WITH THE SCHOOL VAN

Thank you for all who pray for our children as they make the daily commute to Bingham Academy (BA). *Please do not stop.*

We are so grateful that the children have adjusted well to this new routine in their lives. The trip is long and draining. Jon and Jess are achieving good marks in school, and they are able to participate in sports, too. Jess was able to participate in an art exhibit. Ben goes to school on Wednesdays and truly enjoys it. He is able to participate in music and PE classes. We are prayerfully considering sending him full-time next school year. *Please pray with us as we continue to see HIS will for the education of our children.* On November 24, Jon's tenth-grade class stopped by for a couple of hours. They were on their way back to BA after donating their time to help another mission station. The class acted as mules as they carried box after box of items from our container to the appropriate building. We hope to continue this partnership with BA as the students can fulfill

required community service hours by helping out at our site. Please pray for BA as twenty-three teachers including high school art and computer teachers are desperately needed for next school year. BA provides a wonderful ministry to our family so we can concentrate on our work at the Village.



JON'S TENTH GRADE CLASS AFTER VOLUNTEERING

The Holidays

This time of year is always a hard time to be away from family and dear friends. Please pray for us and our families during this time. Thanksgiving was celebrated by the Ritters and Dulanys on Sunday November 30 as the children had school on Thursday and then various school activities during the weekend. As we have stated before, December 25 and January 1 are not holidays here. Ethiopians celebrate Christmas on January 7, since they follow the Orthodox calendar. New Year's Day is September 11. The Ritters and Dulanys will gather on the evening of December 24 to celebrate our last quiet Christmas as we expect a Village flowing with children next December. The Ritters will still celebrate Christmas quietly at home on December 25.

As we approach three years in Ethiopia, we thank God for each of you. We appreciate the part you played in getting our family to Ethiopia and then helping us to be able to stay here. Thank you for your prayers and your gifts and your encouragement.

Grace and Peace,

Mike + Sherri Ritter

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