



The Rafiki Foundation, Inc.

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"I know that when I come to you, I will come in the full measure of the blessing of Christ"
(Romans 15:29).

Greetings Dear Loved Ones,

My return to Ghana has certainly been filled with the full measure of the blessing of Christ! Please share in the joy that our prayers have been answered and I am once again serving in Africa! Thank you all for your prayers, calls, cards, e-mails, and support while I was healing from the neck surgery in Tennessee. I was certainly encouraged by your outpouring of love.

Returning to the Rafiki Girls' Center was amazing. The girls did not know I had come back so we surprised them during morning devotions. At first they did not recognize me because I had cut my hair for the "Locks of Love" program while in the US. Then when it "hit them" they welcomed me with open arms, praises, hugs, and their beautiful smiles! Below are some pictures and there is a short video clip at: <http://cccoakridge.org/return-short.wmv>.



A BIG WELCOME BACK!



MY BOSS, CATHY, AND I REJOICE.

I am currently teaching entrepreneurship and art and leading devotions each morning. We are blessed to have MiniMissionaries at the Village through July so my schedule is lighter and I can ease back into my duties at the girls' center. Please pray for strength and wisdom as I resume my work.

This year I was privileged to attend our Rafiki Children's Center's "Our Day." This is the primary school's end-of-the-year celebration. The children quoted Scripture, read essays, recited poems, did skits, and sang songs to celebrate their school year. The kindergarten children even showed us their own books that they had made! The picture below shows us reading one of them together.



AUNTIE MELISSA READS TO AFUA AND ADWOA

The children, Rafiki Mothers, and assistants all enjoyed seeing my scar, looking at the x-rays showing the metal plate and screws in my neck, and observing my "hi-tech" electrical nerve stimulation unit with pads that "shock you." Some of the questions the children asked: "Did they saw your neck?" "Were you awake?" "If the back of your neck was spoiled (hurt) why did they open the front?" "When will they take the metal out?" "If I touch you will I get electricity?" Out of the mouths of babes...

And speaking of babes, I thought you would like to see baby Moses, one year later. If you recall from my July 2005 newsletter, he was our fifty-fifth orphan and came to us last June, barely weighing six pounds. Look at him now!



A TRUE SOCCER FAN! GOD IS SURELY GOOD.

Liberia

Liberia had peaceful elections, resulting in the first female head of state in Africa! The new government is making progress. You may have seen news coverage of the president, Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, as she visited the United States. (She was even on Oprah!) Liberia's former president Charles Taylor, once one of Africa's most feared warlords, is in The Netherlands for his long-awaited trial at The Hague for some of the worst atrocities committed in Africa.

My timeline for going to Liberia is probably early next year. We are planning on my being in Ghana for a while longer, until Phase One of the construction is complete in Liberia. Donna and Ed Bland are doing an excellent job there. The drilling of the well was successful, the fencing and entrance gate are complete and soon the construction of the buildings will begin. You can read about their work at <http://www.rafiki-foundation.org/ros/bland/bland.html>. Please continue to lift them up in prayer as well as the entire of country of Liberia. We are thankful for God's obvious answers thus far and the progress that is being seen there.

I do not know how I will be able to leave these girls in Ghana when it comes time for me to go to Liberia. However, God has already begun the preparation for the separation. It is a hard lesson to accept. I do not like letting my heart be broken. I had a very hard time leaving my family after being with them during my medical treatment. My three-year-old niece and six-year-old nephew gave me a canvas tote bag decorated with their hand prints inside of a heart, and it said "I Left Half of My Heart in Tennessee." It is so true! Yet, somehow God gives us the ability to continue on the straight path He has set before us. I know this heartache experience will help me with leaving Ghana when that time comes. It is still hard.

Our main prayer need at the Village in Ghana is for staff. We need (Ghanaian) national staff for teachers, Rafiki Mothers and assistants, and Rafiki Overseas Staff to fill open missionary positions. Please pray for God's provisions to be poured out here.

Personally, I would ask you to pray for guidance as I search for a vehicle. May I know just the one that God has given me!

Thank you again and "May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit" (Romans 15:13).

Love and Blessings,

Melissa/Missy

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