



The Rafiki Foundation, Inc.

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*"There is the sea, vast and spacious, teeming with creatures beyond number—
living things both large and small" (Psalm 104:25).*

Do you remember the first time you ever saw the ocean? I was a young teenager when my godparents took me to Myrtle Beach. It was indeed, "vast and spacious." Recently we took our girls from the center to see the ocean as part of a field trip into Accra, the capital of Ghana. For most of them, this was the first time they had seen the "sea." They loved it and were in awe. Josephine, with eyes as big as saucers, asked me, "Madam, does it ever finish?"



FLO, ME, AND JO

Recently, the girls were asked to write a paragraph describing "The Hardest Thing About Growing Up." Their responses speak volumes about the challenges they face. All carried a similar theme: passing from childhood to adulthood means your parents/guardians no longer care for you. In this culture there is often no "childhood/youth/pre-teen" progression. Once the child is too heavy to carry on the mother's back (around the age of three), then childhood is over and the youngster is considered old enough to work.

Magdalene candidly shared what so many young girls face in their villages:

"The hardest thing about growing up is when your parents stop caring for you. It is very hard to look after yourself, and you have to try hard to do everything for yourself. Because this is what you are going through, you will be deceived by many men. So you will be confused if a man says that he will do everything for you. You receive from him any gift he gives to you. He will also get something from you and this will lead to pregnancy. You will drop out of school and you cannot be able to take care for your children in the future and your life will be sad."

Elizabeth captures the dilemma in her paragraph:

"The hardest thing is getting money. If you don't have money you can't get food to eat and you can't go to school. Money is nowhere to be found. Where are we going to get money? If our parents don't give it to us, we will not go to school and education is the key."

Education is the key and a Christian education is the better solution. This is what Rafiki offers. You are making a difference in the lives of the Rafiki Village children and teens! Thank you for giving so generously and praying so earnestly! These girls would not be able to continue their education if not for the work God is doing through you with Rafiki.

Please pray:

- That each girl will seize this wonderful opportunity and clearly see that it comes from God.
- That the girls who do not yet have a personal relationship with Jesus as their Savior and Lord will be called unto Him.
- That the teachers will communicate the wisdom of Christ.

Liberia

The plan is still in place that I will move to Liberia and work at the Rafiki Village just outside of Monrovia. The Village construction is going well. I intend to go during the first quarter of 2007. The picture below shows progress on my future dwelling!



THE BACK WALL OF MY DUPLEX IN LIBERIA!

The needs are great with 85% of the people unemployed and 75% illiterate. The following is a summary of a news conference on Monday, September 24th of Alan Doss, head of the U.N. mission in Liberia.

U.N. peacekeepers in Liberia may begin a gradual drawdown of their forces in 2008 if the situation continues to improve and security risks are reduced. Doss said the war-ravaged nation has achieved significant improvements in restoring peace and building democracy since President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf was inaugurated early this year. But peace remains volatile he said. We do underline that the situation remains fragile. Liberia is just emerging from a quarter of a century of growing instability that culminated in a fourteen-year civil war. And that's not going to be overcome in a few months.



The country is rebuilding. They recently re-opened their postal system and issued new stamps, one is shown above. The picture is of President Sirleaf on inauguration day.

Please continue to pray:

- For peace, stability, and renewal in Liberia.
- For the corruption to be removed and honest, Christian people to be in power.
- For the Rafiki Overseas Staff (ROS) that are now there, Donna and Ed Bland.
- For completion of the construction of the Rafiki Village Liberia.

Thank you so very much for your partnership, love, and support.

Much love and sincere gratitude,

Melissa Wiedemann

Melissa/Missy

P.S. A note about communication:

Four times a year, I send a quarterly newsletter. This comes from the Rafiki Home Office. If you have provided them your e-mail they send you a link to the website (www.rafiki-foundation.org/ros/wiedemann/wiedemann.html) and under my picture you will find a link to my latest newsletter. This allows you to see the photos in color. If you have not provided your e-mail, they will mail you via regular mail a black and white copy of the newsletter. To alter the way you currently receive the quarterly newsletters, call or e-mail Susy Harbick at the Rafiki Home Office (phone: 210-244-2600; e-mail: ros@rafiki-foundation.org)

I also send a monthly prayer letter via e-mail. This comes from Russ Miller (russ@covenantrecording.com). If you wish to receive this, please e-mail either Russ or me.

I welcome e-mails and answer each one. If I do not answer your e-mail in three or four days, please resend it as we have found that many e-mails get lost in space. Also, just a quick "I got it" reply to let me know you received it would be appreciated.

I love to get letters and cards from the States, too. This requires an airmail stamp. Use the following address:

Rafiki Village Ghana
PO Box 9459 KIA
Accra, Ghana
West Africa
Att: Melissa Wiedemann

When MiniMissionaries come to work with us, I give them letters to mail when they return. That is how you get a card/note from me with a U.S. stamp and the return address of PO Box 97, Orlean, VA, 20128 (my dad's address). I hope this clears things up!

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