



Agape in Action

LIFE. OPPORTUNITY. HOPE.

Newsletter 9

June 2009



Go to www.agapeinaction.com and support riders on the 310 km bike ride to raise money for the Atashinda Fund (*which gives very needy young people an opportunity to go to high school or to learn a trade*) and Clean Water (*efforts are ongoing to come up with solutions for the water quantity and quality crisis in south eastern Kenya*).

There is a short promotional video for this event posted on our web site which shows last year's efforts through sun, rain and even hail! A group of enthusiastic riders will endure the elements and hills of the Niagara escarpment again this year from August 12-14th to put their 'love' into 'action'. Please help to make all this effort worthwhile for these volunteers. Donating is as easy as the click of a button – www.agapeinaction.com – click on 'tour d'agape'.

Current Fieldworker Activities:

- Sis. Jeannie Barton continues her 6-month stay in Kenya. Jeannie is a trained nurse and has been supporting the AinA health program across Kenya. She has been facilitating medical and dental checks-up for the children and has been providing training for teens on critical health and relationship issues and adults on health issues and family planning etc...

- Sis. Jane Samwell will be visiting the coastal region at the end of June to do some Sister's classes and Sunday School work in the area.

- Bro. Warren Barton hopes to join his wife Jeannie in July and will be doing some carpentry work for us as well as ministering to the ecclesias and researching agricultural opportunities.

- Sis. Sue Whitton and Bev Dickeson also plan to travel to Kenya in July where they will spend some weeks in the coastal region training sisters and young people in tailoring. This will be of great benefit to all involved.

Please keep all of the volunteers in your prayers.



30-hour Famine

Thanks goes to the Toronto CYC who went without food for 30 hours in support of Agape in Action. It's hard to believe that so many in our family in Christ do this on a regular basis in areas affected by drought and escalating food prices. We look forward to the time when the ploughman will overtake the reaper and the deserts will blossom as the rose. May Christ soon return!





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June 2009

Experiences of a Fieldworker

Sis. Robyn Anderson was on the ground in Kenya for a couple of weeks with Sis. Lynn Tutticci from Australia. They were able to spend this time in Kamukuywa in Western Kenya where Agape in Action has a large sponsorship program as well as supporting the Lela Children's Home and have recently built 'Kimbilio', a shelter for about 30 orphaned teenagers being cared for by a Christadelphian couple. This is the first instalment of 2 in which she shares her experiences. Next newsletter we will include instalment 2. For the full version visit http://www.agapeinaction.com/about_publications.html

"I have just returned home from what has been for me probably the most rewarding experience of my life to date. Earlier in the year, Jeannie asked if I was able to join her and Lynn for two weeks during her stay in Kenya. I have always harboured a dream of one-day being able to do some worthwhile work in the service of the Truth overseas however I always felt that there was little that I could contribute. I have no great qualifications such as nursing, or teaching, or for that matter, administration skills however I do enjoy story telling and have taught Sunday school for many years of my life. I was assured that this was, "just the thing" and so my Kenyan adventure began.

Our flight was uneventful as far as flights go and so finally we were descending into Nairobi International Airport. Lynn was able to identify the Game Reserve from the air and we were both surprised with how drought stricken the area seemed to be. Except for the presence of Africa's beautiful "Umbrella Trees", we could have been touching down in any rural Australian town. Immediately, I was aware that we were in a developing country. Some of the faded international flags which moved slightly in the warm air were in tatters. To quote an Australian brother, "They had a form of prosperity but denied the power thereof". While not feeling threatened I was aware of being somewhat of a "curiosity" as now Lynn and I were in the minority in a crowd of dark skinned, brightly clothed people.

The traffic jam leaving the airport was just of foretaste of things to come! Never have I seen such disorder on the roads as lane markings disappeared and three lanes became six, no five and a half, watch out!!! I am not the calmest of passengers, and faith in the driver took on new meaning as we wove our way through the foray of vehicles, motor bikes and hawkers who descend on mass at red lights (which by the way have little meaning on the weekends). If you can acquire a driver's licence in Kenya seems to me you shouldn't have to apply for an international one - you could drive anywhere!

It is quite a drive across town to the home of Bro Jacob's and Sis Edith's home, and so I was able to marvel at the contrasts of large western type warehouses, tall commercial buildings and the smaller business houses with their faded or broken facades and the rusty corrugated roofs. As we moved in and out of business districts the scenery would change to lush green trees and shrubs dotted here and there by the vibrant colours of bougainvillea and other exotic flowers. The roads were paralleled with Kenyans walking or cycling in a steady stream to goodness knows where. For a country, which has a 50 - 60% unemployment rate, I was never able to figure out just where these people were going. With the ever present Matutu's (mini buses for public transport) blaring rap music and horns, people crammed in every available space, the constant stream of pedestrians and animals, Nairobi and for that matter Kenya is a busy place. However, having said that, the traffic seems to be the only aspect of life not effected by the "African Time Syndrome"!

We were the guests of Bro Jacob and Sis Edith for three nights. Tears of joy flooded as we met with Jeannie and Lynn was able to meet again Jacob, Edith, Charles, Lucy, Shadrach and for the first time Baby Andrew.

Sunday morning memorial meeting was a very moving experience for me. Josiah, a young brother from Canada who was travelling with Josh Thurlow and Abi van Heerden, gave the Bible Class talk before the Memorial Meeting began and Josh was our exhorter.





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June 2009



Slowly the dark, tin hall filled with shy brothers and sisters and we were able to join that choir of beautiful voices giving praise to our Lord and our Father. The collection for that morning, if you were able, was to assist the travelling costs of members to and from the meeting! The words of one of the hymns we later sang, certainly took on new meaning - "Count Your Blessings". We then found that the whole ecclesia were invited to the home of Simon and Shiela who were welcoming the arrival of their first child, a gorgeous little girl, Abigail. It is customary to share a meal, give thanks to our Father in prayer and, of course, song.

As the guests leave, they tuck a monetary gift into the child's clothing. We drove for ages along the most unbelievable roads, crowded markets and slums. Simon, a teacher and Sheila crowded a large number of us into a room slightly bigger than our bathroom. It was divided by a curtain into a living room and a bedroom. The cooking and washing was done in the communal courtyard below. They consider themselves blessed as they are now on the second floor and feel safe!

Jeannie opted to drive the first leg of our journey to Kamakuywa in order to get a "feel" of the vehicle before her mentor (Josh) left our company. After an amazing packing feat by Josh and prayer we settled back to enjoy the journey, as much as the roads would allow! I was amazed as the country opened up before us. Beautiful plains, distant mountains, people going here, going there and overriding it all the frustration of the lost potential of this country. I was almost breathless as for the first time I gazed on the Great Rift Valley. This enormous scar on the earth's crust, running as it does from Syria, through Israel into Africa down onto Mozambique. We stopped for photos and while trying to take in the panorama before me my mind drifted to the Scriptures - "And His feet shall stand on that day on the Mount of Olives ...and the Mount of Olives will be split in two from east to west... The Lord will be king over the whole earth. On that day there will be one Lord, and his name the only name." In that great upheaval, how will this great valley be affected? I imagined the enormous eruptions that formed it in the first place and shuddered at the thought that it may happen again. We passed acres of hot houses where Lynn informed me flowers for the export market were grown, the burnt out shells of dwellings from last year's riots and the accompanying tents where people have made their homes while reconstruction takes place.

Excitement grew as we drove up the pot-holed lanes to the home of our hosts. Ready and waiting for us were a group of young people who quickly grouped themselves together and began their "welcome song" for us. It is a stony heart indeed that doesn't muster a tear or more to hear the beautiful voices in harmony and the joy on their faces. Hugs and handshakes followed as each of them came forward to greet us. Jeannie's and Lynn's joy was overwhelming as they explored the improvements at Justus' and Annette's shamba. Kimbilio, the home for these young people is a "Refuge Home" indeed. It is my prayer that AGAPE and CBM UK will receive the wisdom from our Father and the necessary funds from us to be able to continue the work that has been done. The young people excitedly took us from the girls' dorm to the boys' dorm, showing us their individual beds complete with sheets and blankets, mosquito nets and pillows. Separating the two is the communal area where homework is done and is a place just to "hang out" when time permits. Jeannie, with eyes glowing said time and again "Rob, this time last year none of this was here" - almost as though she could not believe the transformation.

It is with great joy that we can thank our heavenly Father and those who have worked so tirelessly to make this dream come to fruition. The girls have planted gardens, neatly bordered with diagonal bricks so that, "their home could be pretty." As if this was not enough we were then taken to "Lela" where again we were welcomed with young voices in song. "Lela" in Swahili means "Caring" and it is a true blessing that we have been given the opportunity to share in the caring of these children. I met Francis, Augustine and Gibson for the first time and as I worked with these men in the days following my admiration for them grew. Francis walks and talks music - I still shake my head in amazement at how quickly he has these children harmonising new songs. His joy at receiving some simple songs on sheet music for the children was unbelievable and in the week that followed, he compiled new stanzas and worked tirelessly with the children to learn their "memory verses" set to music for our concert...



TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT NEWSLETTER.



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June 2009

Kamukuywa Lela Children's Home

The Kamukuywa Lela Children's Home was officially opened on March 31st, 2009. 'Lela' means 'caring' in Kiswahili. This home was built by CBM UK and CMaD UK and with the ongoing costs being supported by CMaD-UK and AinA. There are 60 children who now have a place to call 'home'. The opening was a big event with 650 people showing up for the occasion! The love that Justus and Annett have shown to the children is truly remarkable, and their example has moved others to show their love in Jesus in so many ways. We truly feel that God has blessed this project and ask for your continued prayers for these children as they grow up in a loving family and develop a solid foundation in the hope of the gospel.

The following are some pictures taken at the opening of the home.





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Urgent Needs:

- 3 Ongoing sponsors for **Kamukuywa Lela Children's Home** (\$30/mth)
- Several sponsors for the **Good Samaritan Academy Mwandeo** (AinA Nursery School in Mwandeo, Kenya) (\$30/mth)
- Several sponsors for the **Godo School of Light Nursery** (AinA Nursery School in Godo, Kenya) (\$30/mth)

For more information on any of the above projects visit our website project page at: http://www.agapeinaction.com/project_current.html or email us at agapeinaction@rogers.com

This widow struggles to look after her twelve grandchildren on her own. This is typical of the type of families that Agape in Action is helping through child sponsorship



IMPORTANT NOTES:

- All those paying into the Australia Account, please earmark your payment with either your child's ID number or your name.
- A new video has been uploaded to our website. It's a video highlighting Agape in Action's Health Program and can be viewed at http://www.agapeinaction.com/about_publications.html
- If you ever shop online, please sign up with igive and a percentage of your purchases will go to AinA. More information at: www.igive.com (it's free to sign up).

AinA Registration in the USA!

AinA has begun the registration process in the USA. Thanks goes to those who are spearheading this effort. God willing, this will eventually allow those who donate in the USA to receive a tax receipt.

"Na Sifa" (with praise) CDs Available!

A Music CD by the Kamukuywa young people to raise money for their school. African flavoured songs of praise. These CDs are \$10 each. Please contact us to order your copy or be a distributor at your ecclesia.

For more information, to become a child or project sponsor or to make a donation, please contact us

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"This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for one another. If any one of you has material possessions and sees a brother or sister in need but has no pity on them, how can the love of God be in you? Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth." 1 Jn. 3:16-18