



Friends of Kenya Schools and Wildlife

Partnerships for Education and Wildlife Preservation

November 2006

Ordinary People Helping Ordinary People

Africa is in the news a lot these days. Bill and Melinda Gates, Bono, Oprah Winfrey, Kofi Annan, Angelina Jolie, and Nicholas Kristof, through donations of huge sums of money to alleviate some of the most intractable problems facing the continent, and through their efforts in the media to raise awareness about global poverty, genocide in Darfur and the plight of orphans, are creating images that are difficult to ignore or forget. The example they set is one that many of us with far fewer resources and little or no media visibility would nevertheless like to follow and/or support in Africa or in other countries.

We may give a donation to one of the large international organizations that supports orphanages, provides a chicken, cow or pig to a family, or does research or provides services in the fight against HIV/AIDS. Some of these organizations do wonderful work, and most of the funds they receive directly benefit the people they help. Many others, however, have earned reputations for corruption and ineffectiveness, with as much as 70% of donated funds never being used in the ways that donors intended.

Since the early '90s, the number of smaller organizations working in developing countries has grown rapidly. Often started by individuals who have seen first hand the needs and the inequality that exist elsewhere, these small non-governmental organizations (NGOs) work in villages and neighborhoods with local officials, community organizations, and local NGOs, often bypassing the government and its bureaucracy. The best of them work in partnership with communities as they help to foster local definitions of development that emphasize sustainability and empowerment for community members. Over time, the partners develop a relationship that becomes as important as any of the work they do together.

The diversity of these projects is great, and some of the most common efforts focus on: ***agriculture and food production; health services and prevention of disease; education at the nursery, primary, secondary, or university levels; economic development, and preservation and protection of the environment.*** Actually, all of these activities are connected in so many ways that it's impossible to work in one area exclusively without having an impact on others, or without realizing that efforts in one area must be expanded to include others. For example, the focus of FKSW is ***education***, because we think of education as an investment in a person's future. But an individual's ability to learn is significantly impacted by their health, by hunger and by their environment in so many ways that we aren't even aware of until we experience it first hand. So we have gradually broadened our activities to include food and nutrition, providing clean water, treatment and prevention of diseases and sanitation and hygiene. With the establishment of a sewing project at Lake Baringo this summer, we are also beginning to use education as a step towards economic well-being for some of the adolescents and adults in this community.



Boys at Longicharo Village

The starting point for any development effort begins with the community and their immediate needs. Using what resources already exist, and augmenting these as needed, the process is guided by the vision and values of the community. Each community is different, and there is no map for negotiating the challenges that sometimes seem to conspire against progress. In the poorest of communities, the resources they have to offer are not money, materials or even the most hospitable environment. The greatest resource in these communities is often the spirit, tenacity and optimism of the people and the social networks through which they support each other by working together for a common good. And every community has a vision for a better future for the children.

When we visit one of our partner communities, and we see children in their new school uniforms, sitting under the trees outside their new classroom, eating their lunch of beans and rice and we look around at the happy faces of the adults as they look on, we feel wonderful and a bit in awe of how easy it is to make a difference in peoples' lives. And then we realize that this really is not extraordinary. It is simply the result of ordinary people helping ordinary people... with help from people like you!

Mike Lawrence

With great sadness, we report the death of our good friend and partner in Friends of Kenya Schools and Wildlife, Mike Lawrence, who passed away in August. Mike was the owner of Westminster Safaris, Ltd., and our guide through the adventures we've enjoyed in Kenya. We will miss him greatly. Mike's oldest son, Guy, has taken over as the leader of Westminster Safaris. It was Mike's vision that gave birth to FKSWS, and our work in the future will be one of his legacies. To honor Mike, we have set up a memorial fund within FKSWS. If you'd like to make a donation in his name to continue the work that he saw as his gift to the country that he so loved, we would be happy to receive it and let the family know. Funds in Mike's name will go specifically to support student scholarships, teacher salaries and to purchase educational materials and supplies.



Kenya in July...

...is winter! It's the coldest month of the year. In Nairobi, rainy days with temperatures in the 40's and 50's reminded us of winter in Oregon. In the arid areas, it was just as hot and sunny as ever, but with the addition of torrential rains and thunderstorms at night. Before the FKSWS Safari group arrived in early August, Maggie Donahue and I spent two productive weeks working in Nairobi and spent time in Longicharo Village. Here are some of the highlights:

- ▣ **Fluoride water filter at Longicharo:** Three full days in Longicharo Village allowed us time to do things we hadn't had a chance to do on previous trips. On the first day, accompanied by the school committee and several children, we walked 6 km inland to the community of Rugus, where the students from Longicharo attend primary school. We saw the school and met the headmaster. The people of Rugus are extended family of the people from Longicharo, and John the chief is the brother of Stanley, chief at Longicharo. During two meetings with perhaps 100 people from both communities, they identified their priorities as clean water, continuing educational support, the school lunch program, and supplemental health services. We found out that Lake Baringo, which is the main source of water for drinking and for domestic use, has a level of fluoride that is 10 times the maximum amount that is safe for human consumption. Excessive fluoride consumption leaches calcium from the body and causes a progressive and incurable disease called fluorosis. The symptoms are brittle and blackened teeth, brittle bones and skeletal deformities. The disease is cumulative and has no cure. The damage begins in utero. The Catholic Diocese of Nakuru is currently installing 13 bone char water filters in the Baringo area to remove fluoride and most of the bacteria from the water that people use, but Longicharo is not one of the sites. So, we've applied for a matching grant through Rotary International, to contract with the Diocese to install a filter at Longicharo. We are partnering with the Rotary Club of Hurlingham in Nairobi, and will receive approximately \$12,000.00 from Rotary for the large filter and individual filters for families to remove the remainder of the bacteria. FKSWS will contribute \$1250 in funds and we thank Ron and Judi Cameron for their generous support of this project.
- ▣ **School Lunch Program at Longicharo:** In January, we started a school lunch program for the 20 students in the Longicharo Nursery School. One of the women prepares lunch, which consists of beans, maize, rice and uji (finely ground cornmeal), each day for the children. One unexpected development of the lunch program is that the enrollment has suddenly increased to 55 students with the addition of 25 nursery students from Rugus who have no school and so now attend the Longicharo nursery school and also have lunch!
- ▣ **Photo Exchange:** Maggie Donahue received several hundred dollars in contributions for this project. With 5 digital cameras that she purchased with some of the funds, the children at Longicharo spent several hours photographing their friends, family, and community. She is currently working with more than 500 photos, to select the best which she hopes to show in a gallery here in Eugene and perhaps sell some of them and give the proceeds to the children. We'll ask Maggie to give an update on the project in our next newsletter.
- ▣ **Health Services:** While in Nairobi, I met with two young Kenyan doctors who work in hospitals in Nairobi. They are interested in working with nurse Stella Lenguris at Baringo to provide services that are beyond her resources and to make referrals to hospitals or specialists for people who have difficult cases, like some of the chronic respiratory diseases and cataracts. We talked about the possibility of setting up a medical camp for one or two days.

▣ **Sewing class:** Sarah Lenapunya, one of our Njemps friends at Baringo teaches a class for adolescents and adults who were not able to attend school as children. They are learning English, Kiswahili, math, and some basic business. We visited the class one afternoon and talked with the students, who said they wanted to learn to sew so that they could use their skills to earn some income. So, we bought 3 treadle sewing machines, for about \$80 each and took them, with fabric, pins, needles, and scissors to the class. John Riako, a local tailor, and his wife Priscilla have been working with 10 women since August to teach them the basic skills and John says “they’re doing great.” We do have a potential outlet in Nairobi for their products, whatever they may be. The women would like to make school uniforms for their children and others in the area.

▣ **Meetings with other organizations:** In Nairobi, Maggie and I met with people from several local organizations. One was the National Organization of Peer Educators (NOPE) whose staff teach adolescents and adults to educate their fellow students and colleagues about HIV/AIDS through drama. Another was SchoolNet Africa, whose mission is to connect schools to the internet and therefore to the world. Lucy Kinyanjui, the SchoolNet coordinator for Kenya, took us on a tour of Kibera, the largest slum in Africa, where they are working with several small informal schools. We visited an orphanage run by a woman named Mama Tunza who is caring for 150 children whose parents have died from HIV/AIDS; we stopped in a small used text book shop run by a middle aged man who tutors, for free, children who are having difficulty in school. We visited a small secondary school for girls, really just a room in a ramshackle building, where the two volunteer teachers coach the girls in soccer after school and they compete with other teams in the city; we also visited a small organization run by youth in Kibera. They have a recording studio, a library and educational activities that they have designed and created on their own. It was inspiring to see the enthusiasm and spirit of the people here to make their lives better when they have so little. We gave soccer balls to the girls and left school supplies at the two schools.



Capt. Bubu barbecues fish steaks on the beach at Manda Island on a grill he made out of small sticks.

FKSW Summer Safari August 6-28, 2006

Highlights of our summer safari included five spectacular days and nights in the Masai Mara where we were audience to the Great Wildebeeste Migration. Thousands and thousands of these animals, on their way north from Tanzania in search of grazing each fall, come through the Masai Mara, the northernmost section of the Serengeti Plains. We saw a small river crossing, but also thousands of zebras, topi, and other antelope who were walking along with the wildebeeste. We spent several days on the coast in Lamu and enjoyed a delicious barbecue lunch of fish stew, coconut rice and fish steaks on the beach. Other highlights: soccer games at Waso and Longicharo schools, baby elephants, baby lions, leopards and giant forest hogs in the Aberdare Mountains.



Roosevelt Middle School Active and Caring Teens & “A Taste of Kenya”

For the third consecutive year, the Active and Caring Teens class at Roosevelt Middle School held a May fundraiser to benefit FKS. A Taste of Kenya was such a success last year that they did it again! This year, their efforts raised \$1100.00, bringing to \$2750.00 the total for 3 years. Most of the funds go to the village of Longicharo to support student scholarships, salary for teacher Grace Koinale, and to buy educational materials and supplies. Next year, the class plans to do a schoolwide fundraiser in addition to the Taste of Kenya evening event.

Aaron Kaufman spent hundreds of hours in the creation of wonderful 17 minute DVD of our January 2006 visit to the community that was part of the agenda as well as an inspiring speech by special guest Dr. Babacar Fall, Associate Professor at the University Cheikh Anta Diop of Dakar, Sénégal. A small group of students once again worked with Chef Mark Zolun of Iraila restaurant to make an African dish for the event.

January 2007

John and I will return to Kenya in January, planning to stay for the entire month. We plan to visit each community with scholarship money for parents, teacher salaries and money for educational materials. We'll check on construction projects at Waso, Edonyio Sidai and Kachuru. We'll take our Rotary partners to Longicharo Village to meet the communities who will be the recipients of the water filter, and will also visit the sewing class to see the progress the women are making. We'll meet with the doctors about the medical camp and with our friend and new advisory board member, Florence Omosa of Nairobi. Florence is a Senior Regional Organization Development Policy and Systems Analyst with US-AID whose advice has been crucial as we move along.

With a lot of help from our friends...

FKSW is just a little over 3 years old. I think it's remarkable that most of the funds with which we operate have come from individual donations and that we've not done any major fundraisers. You, our generous friends, have given us close to \$35,000! As costs rise, and as our projects grow in depth and breadth, our reserves have fallen and we must now think about fundraising in a different way. Our budget for the coming year over \$9000.00 and while we have approximately a third of that amount right now, we will need to raise almost \$6000.00 to get us through the year. We plan to apply for grants and maybe will even do a real fundraiser this year. But in the meantime, we could really use your support.

Scholarships	2500.00
Teacher salaries	1500.00
Educational materials	500.00
Construction	1000.00
School lunch at Longicharo to feed 60 children lunch for an entire year	600.00
Sewing project at Baringo	300.00
Fluoride water filter (already funded)	1250.00
Contingencies, Reserve, Admin	1500.00
	9150.00



Hellen and Lonah Lekisika, twins who receive FKSWS scholarships to attend primary school. Their mother prepares the school lunch each day.

Scholarships: In January, fifty students will each receive a scholarship for one year of primary education. A \$50 scholarship, up from \$40 last year to accommodate rising costs and a falling exchange rate, covers uniforms, books, shoes, a geometry set and miscellaneous school fees. We strongly encourage sponsors to provide this support for the full 8 years for a child, but we will happily accept donations for one year if that's not possible. We will send you a photo and information about your child and will update this information each year.

Teacher salaries: The salary for one teacher for a 3 month term is \$60. For 5 teachers for three terms per year it's \$1500.

Educational materials: Approximately \$500 per year for all five schools.

Construction: We need approximately \$1000.00 to finish construction on the school at Edonyio Sidai. A report on this project in the next newsletter!

School Lunch & Sewing Projects Lake Baringo: (described above)

Contingencies, Reserve, and Admin: We also need funds for administrative costs. There is no paid staff at FKSWS. We're all volunteers! Costs include bank transfers, transport in Kenya, telephone calls, and office supplies. In the past we've covered these costs out of our own and family members' pockets so that 100% of your donations could go to the projects, but we can't do that any longer! Our goal is to keep administrative costs to 10%.



Priscilla Riako shows Ilene how to use the sewing machine

Notecards

We have notecards for sale. 32 different photos of wildlife, people, or incredible Kenyan landscapes. \$1.50 each; 5 for \$7.00; 10 for \$12.50. We can put together a package to mail to you. They're great gifts! Thanks to Ron and Judi Cameron for their work to put these together!

Friends of Kenya Schools and Wildlife is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. All donations are tax deductible. You may send contributions to the following address or for more information, contact us at:

FKSW

95363 Grimes Rd. Junction City, OR 97448

Email: info@fksw.org Ph: 541-998-8505 Website: www.fksw.org