



# Friends of Kenya Schools and Wildlife

November 2015



## August in Kenya

We filled the warm days of August in Kenya with visits to Endonyio Sidai, Kachiuru, Molo, and Lake Baringo, days that revealed exciting changes since our January trip. The Endonyio Sidai community works with great determination to complete the construction of their primary school by January. At Kachiuru, we hardly recognized the school compound, a result of activities there to provide clean water and a new school. At Lake Baringo, a team from the Rotary Club of Newport, Oregon, the sponsoring club for our Rotary grant on Kokwa Island, came to see the progress on grant activities. They also ran vision clinics at three schools, distributed feminine hygiene kits, and participated in a fundraiser at Endonyio Sidai before heading off to the Masai Mara for a wildlife safari. One member of John and Gwen’s Eugene Metro Rotary Club arrived with Gwen and spent the month in Kenya and a second Metro member joined us for two weeks. With almost non-stop activities for most of the month, but with a few days off to relax at Lake Baringo, it was one of the best trips ever.



## Endonyio Sidai



guests, enjoying themselves as much as did the audience. Proud parents watched the performances, dancing on the sidelines and laughing with amusement when the young boys practiced their high jumping, a signature move of the dance for Maasai men.

As dark gray clouds covered the sun, threatening rain, the men lined up to drop their bills and coins into a basket on a small table. A man recorded each donation with the name of the donor, while

**Harambee!** Since 2005, FKSWS has been working with the Endonyio Sidai community to build a primary school for classes 1-8. Last year, with six classrooms completed, community members planned to hold a *harambee* to raise funds for the 7<sup>th</sup>. But because of a drought that forced them to take their cattle, their “walking bank accounts,” to forage elsewhere, they’ve waited a year for the return of the rains and the cattle to be able to host this event. They gathered on July 31<sup>st</sup> and asked FKSWS to match what they raised.

When we joined the party, it was well underway. The students, wearing traditional costumes and elaborate beaded headdresses, necklaces and bracelets, sang and danced for the



Women in line to make their donations

another announced the same to the audience. The women came next. At the end of the day, the basket held 420,000 Kenyan Shillings, about \$4,100, enough with FKSWS’s match to construct the classroom. Taking the initiative to find funding for the last classroom, the community has since secured a commitment from the local Member of Parliament. If all goes well, the school should be finished by the start of the new school year in January.



Endonyio Sidai School 2004



Endonyio Sidai Primary School August 2015



## Kokwa Island

On August 3<sup>rd</sup>, the visitors from Newport spent a busy morning at Kirepari Village on Kokwa Island. At Kirepari Primary School, they met Richard Lemukut and Samson Chebii as they worked with a group of men to construct a “living” fence around the school compound. Richard explained that every other post in the fence is actually a section of a live tree trunk that will grow and eventually shade the compound. The fence will provide security for the school and protect other shade trees from the ever foraging goats that roam the island. A section of the compound will be fenced in to house another grant funded project- dairy goats that will be owned and managed by the Kirepari Women’s Group.

At Kokwa Primary School, the group learned that the new library and computer lab, which has been fitted with work tables, two laptops and 4 desktop computers, are being used regularly by students and teachers. Three teachers who had never before even touched a computer have received some basic training and were proud to tell us that they couldn’t believe that they are now teaching others what they have learned.

The grant also provided medical supplies, life jackets and a foldable bed to equip the school/dispensary’s ambulance boat. The boat will carry patients from their homes on the island to the dispensary or to the mainland in case of emergencies. When it is not needed to transport patients, the school will use the boat to transport students and it will also serve as a water taxi for island residents. The small fee paid by riders will provide income for maintenance of the boat and to purchase fuel. Other grant funded medical equipment includes a delivery bed for pregnant and sterilizing equipment for the dispensary



Richard Lemukut and Samson Chebii at the “living” fence whose construction they supervised



Claire Little examines books in the new library



Nurse Paulo checks the eyesight of a young student

Dr. Rick Letherer, an optometrist from Newport, offered to conduct vision clinics during his visit. At Kokwa, he worked with Paulo, the island nurse to organize two clinics, one at Kirepari and one at Kokwa Primary School which together screened 307 students and residents. The screening provided information about visual acuity and identified individuals with undiagnosed conditions who will be referred to a medical facility for further diagnosis and treatment. Many of the elderly residents have cataracts and almost no one has glasses that could easily correct poor eyesight. One 5 year old boy from Kirepari was referred immediately to the Lion’s eye hospital in Nairobi and after further tests and diagnosis, underwent eye surgery earlier this month. FKSW covered the cost of his treatment. The clinics highlighted the need for further attention to the needs for medical care for the residents in these rural villages. Thank you Dr. Rick.



Dr. Letherer examines at patient at Kirepari



The school/ambulance boat and the driver in the pink shirt



## Kachiuru

Great surprises awaited us at Kachiuru. Although we knew that a new borehole installed last year was providing water for the community and that a filtration system had recently been installed to remove salt and minerals from the water, we hadn't seen the impressive system in action. We arrived on the day the potable water was turned on for the first time after the installation. Already people were lined up with their jerry cans and buckets. Men filled a trough to water their animals and excitement was high.

The pump and filter are powered by two solar panels and water from the borehole is piped to the filter in the school compound. Eventually, people will pay a small fee for the water with the income used for maintenance and upkeep of the system.

A second surprise was a small building built by Kachiuru residents. The structure, for which each family in the community contributed one board, provides space for a staff room and head teacher's office.

The third, and biggest surprise, just in front of the existing school, was the construction that had begun on the first two classrooms of the new Kachiuru Primary School. Funded by a grant from the European Union, the classrooms, which will be built of stone, will be impervious to the termites which have plagued the current wooden structure. The first two rooms will be ready for students when the new school year begins in January.



Head Teacher Samuel Mutabari in his new office.

With Samuel's coaching, the school committee asked their Member of Parliament to provide resources for a third classroom. He agreed. In this isolated and neglected village, it's a great start! Now there are just five more classes in need of funding.

Next will be funding for a much needed a dispensary.



Top: Bore hole with solar panels to run the pump.  
Bottom: Filtration system near the school.



New school in front, old school in back



## Molo Wool Project



Anastacia Njuguna holds up a sweater she knit



Philomena Nyokabi is the overlock expert

**Sweaters and Socks!!** The Karunga women are busy knitting sweaters thanks to the two Italian “industrial strength” knitting machines donated by Eugeneans Mark and Mari Dembrow. Mark and Mari used the machines for many years to knit beautiful sweaters designed by Mari. When they retired, they wanted to donate the machines, still in perfect condition, to someone who would use them. Our friend Jim Bryson connected Mark and Mari with the women of the Molo Wool Project who gratefully accepted the gift. Now the women are making school uniform sweaters for two schools in Molo. They also knit and sell blankets, shawls and sweaters to local customers. An overlock machine purchased earlier this year creates perfect seams as the sweater parts are sewn together and trimmed at the same time.

The Black Swamp Spinners of Ohio donated funds to purchase a sock knitting machine which we took to Kenya in August. Now, lucky Karunga customers will have warm sweaters to wear when it’s cold, and they’ll also have warm feet!



John holds part of a sock knitting machine, a gift from the Black Swamp Spinners



## Lomayana Primary School

Lomayana Primary School at Lake Baringo sits at the end of a long sandy road. There is no sign on the highway to indicate its location. The prickly pear cactus planted on either side of many of the roads here as fencing sometimes grows to 20 feet and eliminates the ability to locate oneself visually. We tried three roads before we found the school. Lomayana staff had requested hygiene kits for their girls and we offered to host a vision clinic there as part of our visit.

One hundred and seventy five girls received kits after an information session with the local nurse, who talked to them about feminine hygiene,



Nurse talks to the girls

menstruation and how to care for the kits. Danny Romero and Larissa Williams, graduates of the Newport High School Class of 2015 and

Newport Rotary Interact Club members had worked with Rotarian Claire Little to make some of the kits. At Lomayana, Larissa helped with the distribution to the girls and Danny spent most of the morning and early afternoon assisting with the vision screening for the 212 students and residents who came to the school. We really appreciated their help and they were wonderful traveling companions!



Danny Romero and Larissa Williams



## Secondary Scholarship Students



An important aspect of FKSW’s scholarship program is monitoring the students...their marks, their health, their attendance...to keep track of how they’re doing and to offer help if problems arise. The high school students also receive help to plan for the future. One girl knows she wants to be an engineer and is hoping to attend university. A boy who has a love for science wants to be a microbiologist. Some students know they probably won’t attend university but don’t have ideas about what else they can do. With this in mind, Samuel invited 18 students at Lake Baringo to get together to talk about careers.

On August 10, students came by boat and taxi from their homes near the lake to the small town of Marigat. Samuel began the conversation by saying that not everyone would go to college and that there were many other things they could do. He pointed out that in the communities at Baringo, people are often “dormant” because they haven’t the skills to do even much needed jobs like masonry, construction, plumbing, building water systems or working with electricity. Without a vision of anything else, men usually become fisherman. Women might train to be teachers or nurses, but most often stay home to care for children and the household. On this day, Samuel encouraged all of the young people to think more broadly.



Samuel shows a page from the career catalogue

He shared with them a catalogue distributed by the Kenyan government with information about many jobs in different fields and schools for skills training. He suggested that the students identify needs in their communities and then think of themselves not as employees, but as “employers in the making.” He encouraged them to employ themselves in their own businesses and then employ others. Later, the students and their parents met with a local administrator and a community youth director who told them about scholarships available for various careers and how to access the funds. The young people were very attentive to the presentation and it will be interesting to follow them over time to see where these ideas might lead them.

## Secondary Students from Lake Baringo



Annet Lemukut  
14 years old  
Kisima Girls’ Secondary School



Julius Lenaiki with his father  
15 years old  
Eming Boys’ Secondary School



Sophia Letikaa  
15 years old  
N’gambo Secondary School



August Photos

Please consider making a donation to fund worthwhile projects like the following...

Scholarships for one year are:

- \$50 for primary school (uniforms, shoes, books)
- \$125 for boarding (room and board at school)
- \$500 for secondary (room, board, tuition, and supplies)

School lunch program:

- \$500 per term at Kirepari Nursery School

...or make an unrestricted donation in any amount to help with the greatest need or...contribute to the following significant efforts:

- \$10,000 for a dispensary at Kachiuru
- \$8,000 each for additional classrooms at Kachiuru

It's easy to give!

- ❖ Put a check in the enclosed envelope (with hard copies) and drop it in the mail
- ❖ Use the PayPal button on our website ([www.fksw.org](http://www.fksw.org))

*Thank you!!!*



Heather, Danny, Claire and Larissa with the women at Lomayana



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