

Newsletter



No. 50 April 20 to October 20

Hello everyone

We apologise that this newsletter is late....very late. You would think that we would have a lot of news as it is from April to October, but everyone has been keeping their heads down, concentrating on keeping safe from COVID.

The figures in Kenya are not as great as we have had but then we cannot be sure they are accurate as there are many people who do not go to Doctors, preferring other local cures, because they cannot afford to get medical help. But it does not seem as bad as in other countries of the world. The numbers are starting to increase again and we know that there have been a few diagnosed in Kisii and Meru. Thankfully our houses are away from the towns which is protection in itself. But we do have a few boys who feel they can just leave the compound without telling everyone which is not good. The Kenyan adults are doing their best to educate them about this but as with all young people it is an ongoing education.

We have heard that the schools our boys in Nyakoe go to are opening so we have been bombarded with requests for extra money to facilitate this. Obviously the secondary school boys are sponsored and we thank their sponsors for keeping the donations going. We know how the schools work and as much as their fees were not paid for the summer term they were closed, they still had to pay the teachers so they are playing catchup and are collecting those funds now. Thank goodness we had them safely in our UK account to send. We try very hard to be good stewards of your money and for those that do not know, we keep it safely in the UK and send it when needed. Andrew, the Kenyan treasurer is very good at managing it once it arrives and all the Kenyan trustees are happy with the arrangement.

Unfortunately we have not been able to get any clothes or shoes out to help them as we cannot visit at the moment. But we may have a way of sending things through an importer which will cost us about £100 per case. Other friends have used them successfully for their charity so we are looking at trying this which may help a little.

This will not be a long newsletter but we hope you enjoy the latest news and if you can think of a way to help us raise money at this very difficult time, please do not hesitate to contact us. We will try our hardest to get more news from Kenya to send another out in December.

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Meru

We have heard that the boys are doing well keeping themselves occupied. They have been keeping the house clean and "fumigating" as they call it in Kenya. (We Call it disinfecting.) They even did the gate which as you can see from the picture is pretty big.

The older boys have been helping the younger boys keep up with their schooling by teaching them things from their own books. But certainly Maths and English are important for them to keep up with. Most of the boys will have to remain in their present school year because they have missed virtually a year. Kenya Schools start in January and finish in November. One or two schools have started back but the boys in Meru have not gone back and neither have we heard when this would be.



We heard recently that Job and Derrick have "become men" This is the term that Kenyans use when they reach year 8 and are then

circumcised and taught about relationships and what we would call the birds and the bees. It generally means they go away with other boys for three weeks, is run by a local church and can cost as much as £300 each. We have always said that we cannot afford this because we have so many boys. So we suggested that as John (Chairman) is a Pastor and Tom (trustee) has worked with youth, then they could run it and we could then pay for the medical team to teach them what they need to know and do the medical procedures. We even suggested that we could offer this to other boys and actually make some money for the project, by charging them for this.



Derrick and Job.

One good thing that has come out of COVID is the fact that the boys could not go anywhere to have this done. So they organised their own course and the older boys played a prominent role using the notes they had from their own course they went on a year ago. The medics circumcised them and the boys threw a party. So a lot of money was saved. This may all seem strange to us but there are traditions that are followed as otherwise the boys would not be accepted in society. In fact we are told that women will not consider marrying a man who is not circumcised.

Our Thanks go to the following for their Support We have so many people to thank this time. Please forgive us if we miss you out. We are so grateful to all of our supporters. Without you Harambee for Kenya would not exist.

Paul and Janet Rowlinson Frank and Rosie Heald Ben Vince
Ann Sadler Dave Goodwin Colin Goodwin Alan Alexander Jenny Owens
Thandi Rudin Matthew Higginbottom and his Brother James and Samuel Douglas.
12th Lewisham Scouts 23rd Bromley Scouts Kent Scouts
Doug Prentice Desbruslais Chartered Surveyors Karen Douglas Sarai Hewitt
James Robb Francesca Creffield Lawrie Smith John Bright.
Jane & Kim Barton Beth Williams Karen Douglas Hayley Kindlysides
Darren Bradley Mark Dann and all those who came to the golf day.
And all those who sponsored the Camp For Kenya Challenge.

And all our regular supporters

Shoes

We have received a message from Andrew in Kisii that all the boys need new shoes for school. Kisii schools are now opening and the boys have been returning. Some boys have grown a lot and therefore need new uniform and all the boys have outgrown their shoes. (All the boys in both projects need new shoes) Our own children in the UK are very hard on school shoes, I am sure many of you with children will agree with that. But in Kenya, the boys are just as hard but together with the rough ground they have to walk on they wear them out quite quickly. Andrew and John make sure they pass shoes on to younger boys if they can but often that may only be a few pairs they can do that with, rather than many as they are too worn out to pass on.

So if any of you would like to give the boys a Christmas present, we would ask that you consider donating £5 toward us having to buy them all new shoes. We have about 70 boys so you can see why we are asking for help. If you want to help you can go to the website and pay in through Virgin Money or pay into our bank account directly. Harambee for Kenya 60-10-30 11544252 and mark the reference as "Shoes".

For those that can help us may we say "THANK YOU"

Project News Nyakoe

The boys in Nyakoe are doing really well and like the Meru boys have been busy keeping the place and themselves clean and tidy. The older boys are going back to school now and the primary school closely followed.

Nash was going to the private school next door to the safe house but the owners have closed it and moved to Kisii town which is 6km away. They had two schools and we believe they have amalgamated them. Nash had been given a free place at this private school so unfortunately he will have to change schools as he is too little to go to Kisii every day. At the moment he only goes for the morning so he cannot go to St Peters where all the other boys go as it is a long walk there and back. So Andrew has said he will go to Mariba school which is much closer. This school is the one we removed our older boys from because the PTA kept asking us for more and more money for different things. So he will only go there until he starts going full time and then he will move to St Peters with the other boys.

All the boys were told about the Camp For Kenya and asked Andrew if they could join in. They had a lovely time and although others were only doing it for one night, the boys did it for a few! We found them sponsors which meant they helped to raise money for the projects too. Very humbling.

Hudson is about to go to College now to train in hospitality and cooking. He wanted to train to be a teacher, but the Kenyan system is that students go where the government say they should go and look at the cluster of exams they pass well and give the students a choice of career. Then they tell them which college they should go to. Fortunately he will be going to Meru so he will be near the other boys and will be able to stay there for some of the holidays or even weekends and John and Tom will be near to keep an eye on him to check he is OK.



Nash with Benard on the Camp for Kenya.



Gallery

