



makindu

CHILDREN'S PROGRAM

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NEWS FROM MAKINDU CHILDREN'S PROGRAM

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A shared vision across the globe. When people truly share a vision, they are connected — bound together by a common aspiration.

Letter from the Director

Greetings friends of the Makindu Children's Program. I'm happy to report that the Children's Center is growing and thriving and continues to provide food, medical care and educational opportunities to over 400 orphans and vulnerable children in Makindu, Kenya.

This late summer and fall MCP completed our largest fundraiser ever – a "Proper Walk" fundraising trek in the Rift Valley, Kenya, which has raised \$110,000 to date. To read about this adventure please read articles by walk coordinator Michael Farley and another article by two time walker Dennis Winger.

In Portland Board Member Steve Randolph completed a "Shadow Walk". His article guides us through reflections on a solitary walk in the cool mists of the Pacific Northwest.

This summer Winnie not only walked the Rift Valley but also medically treated hundreds of kids in Makindu. Read about one special child, Mutenthya, who last spring was close to death due to medical issues and malnutrition. When Winnie revisited Mutenthya in the late summer, "although I had seen this transformation so many times before, I dared not believe that this child would actually survive..." Mutenthya was thriving!

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Mr. Kampana

Bwana Kasee (otherwise known as Mr. Kampana) was an elderly beggar in Makindu who made his home in a tiny acacia tree along the Nairobi-Mombasa highway just outside of the Sikh Temple. He made his bed up in the high branches, resting upon several torn strips of a cardboard carton. In the past several years, he had become too weak and stiff to ascend the tree by himself, and he would patiently wait for someone to help him get in and out of the tree each day. In the past year, even this became too difficult. So he would trudge some kilometers away at the end of the day to sleep in an abandoned goat shed.

This gent spent his days begging for shillings outside of the Temple. At the end of each day, he would keep only a few shillings for a sparse meal or snack for himself, and would then give all the rest of his collected coins to an 11-year-old street boy named Madonna. Madonna would then buy whatever food he could find in the shops and bring this food back to his elderly great grandmother to cook – to feed all of the children in Madonna's village who had not yet eaten that day.

This was perhaps an unlikely triad of saviors: an elderly beggar, a young street orphan, and a poor and struggling granny, giving virtually all they had to those who had even less. Surely, I thought, we could do something to help these children as well. Thus, MCC was born.

Since 1997 when I first visited Makindu, I have known this kind and gentle soul and trusted in his wisdom. He became the eyes and ears of the streets for us, often sending word of a child or family in trouble or distress. The children all knew him well. And whenever there was leftover food at the centre, they would bring it to him at night. In a way, he was the grandfather of all the desperate children of Makindu and epitomized what represents the spirit of MCC — hope and compassion.

Upon arriving to Makindu in August, I found him missing from his normal begging place, his tree-home abandoned. Upon questioning, another street beggar told me that Kasee had apparently gotten ill and had died in the hospital a few weeks previously.

I have known few people with more honor and heart than this man; Makindu has lost a great soul, but has been enriched by his gifts over the years, as have we all.

— Winnie Barron



Proper Walk 2008



Another Great Success

The 4th Proper Walk was a great success! Thanks to many caring people, \$110,000 has been raised to date for the children of MCC.

In what has become a ritual before every Proper Walk — prior to the actual trek — the walkers visited the MCC for a day of festivities. We were able to meet the local Makindu Board of Directors, staff, guardians and, of course, the children. The kids and guardians sang, recited poetry and danced — with some of the bolder Americans joining in. A wonderful meal of goat and rice topped off the days events.

That experience always has an overwhelming impact on the walkers. It gives them an understanding and appreciation of why they are about to take on the challenge of such an arduous undertaking. Like others before them, when the going got really tough on the trek, the 2008 walkers remembered the children and concentrated on the good that will come from their efforts.

The first step — on the 10-day 2008 walk — occurred on August 11th. Starting at an elevation of 8,000 feet on the Laikipia Plateau (where the temperatures dipped into the 40's F), ten Americans, ten Africans, one Australian and twenty-three camels descended 5,000 feet to Lake Bagoria. Getting down that treacherous terrain required three days of strenuous manual labor and a great deal of determination on the part of everyone involved. Trails were so overgrown and/or non-existent that pangas (machetes) had to be used to cut away bush and tree limbs before the camels could pass through.

Lake Bagoria is a saline alkaline body of water known for its flamingos, geysers/hot springs and abundant bird and wildlife. It took the walkers about a day to cover the entire length of it — 32 kilometers (approximately 20 miles). On Day 5, with the thermometer registering 103°F, we hiked another 24 miles from Lake Bagoria toward Lake Baringo.

Heat exhaustion and water-borne dysentery plagued some of the participants during the middle of the Walk and slowed the pace a bit. Two of them were forced to get aboard camels,

which is usually a sure cure for any ailment. To say the ride is uncomfortable is putting it mildly, but the relief that short respite brings is readily apparent.

The last three days found our group making the tricky up-hill climb to the plateau.

August 20th marked the final step of Proper Walk 2008. The odyssey covered 151 miles.

Heartfelt thanks to those who volunteered their time, energy and talents to do the Walk. They paid all their own expenses and committed to raising \$10,000 each for MCC. And we owe a debt of gratitude to all who gave so generously to the project. Without YOU, it would only be an adventure. With your support, it truly is an Adventure for a Cause.

To read more about Proper Walk 2008 (and previous Walks), check out www.properwalk.com.

— Michael Farley

(Proper Walk Founder and MCP Board Member)

Views from a Proper Walker

I'm the most recent addition to the MCP (Makindu Children's Program) board that recently had the great honor of participating in Proper Walk 2008, my second Walk. My first Walk was the 2006 trek along the Ewaso Nyiro River. A list of the walkers who participated in each Proper Walk may be found at www.properwalk.com.

As the founder of these "Proper Walk," fundraisers, board member Michael Farley explains that a proper walk is a Kenyan term meaning to walk many miles over many days. Each Walk is a unique experience since they are completed in completely different areas of the northern frontier district. Proper Walk 2008 was held in August and was a 10-day trek that began at the top of the Great Rift Valley Escarpment. The camel ranch Ol Maisor provided 23 camels and nine staff for the ten walkers.

This year's hike was unique for several reasons, chief among them the topography of the Great Rift Valley and the pastoralist tribes that make their homes there. On the second day, while slowly making our way off the Great Rift Valley Escarpment, our camel caravan was attacked by African killer bees which swarmed one camel and brought him to the ground. We now knew this Proper Walk was going to be anything but a Sunday walkathon in Golden Gate Park.

When we arrived at Lake Bagoria the next day, we were greeted by thousands of flamingos rising from the shore. We watched as they flew a short distance and then glided back to the surface. Our caravan circumvented Lake Bogoria and its active geysers then set course for Lake Baringo, a hike of 43 miles over two days in extreme heat.

We came to a disputed boundary area between the Njemps tribe (pronounced JEMS) and the Pokot (pronounced POH KAWT') and were told to stay close together as there was ongoing conflict between the two tribes. A warning was issued

at the last Njemps village that the route ahead was not safe, but our caravan of walkers and camels didn't have a choice but to move forward and keep our schedule. As we set up camp late that afternoon, a Pokot warrior entered camp carrying an AK-47. The warrior determined the caravan was no risk and left our camp.

At Lake Boringo the next day, we were treated to an impromptu market by a very hospitable group of Pokot where walkers purchased Pokot stools, a bow and arrow set, and amazing beaded work. Afterward, a traditional Pokot dancing was performed with several members of our group. I still believe Amanda, who was our Ol Maisor guide, and I were married during one of the dances although this has not been independently confirmed.

We also saw five hippos wading in the water while they waited for nightfall to engage in their favorite activity, nocturnal grazing. Our camp had unknowingly been set up directly in the hippos foraging route. During the evening, the hippos approached the camp and bellowed long and loud complaints. Fortunately, they came no closer. Hippos are considered the most dangerous animal in Africa and responsible for the most human deaths in the wild (not counting the mosquito).

Proper Walk 2008 covered over 150 miles through extreme heat, five indigenous tribal territories, one torrential downpour, and several impromptu Barack Obama rallies. So far, this 2008 "adventure for a cause" has raised \$110,000 for the Makindu Children's Program with a grand total from all four walks of over \$250,000. If you are inspired by this year's Walk please donate to the Makindu Children's Program by going to the website (www.properwalk.com) and click the DONATE button.

Oh, and the camel that was swarmed by the African bees survived and is doing well back at home on the Ol Maisor ranch.

— Dennis Wininger



Proper Walk 2008 Participants

Dennis Wininger – San Francisco, California

Ashley Wolff – San Francisco, California

Tommy Allen – Goochland, Virginia

Dave Brooks – Richmond, Virginia

Emily Walsh – Baltimore, Maryland

Winnie Barron – Brownsville, Oregon

Bill Bonwell – Richmond, Virginia

John Walsh – Baltimore, Maryland

Lena Zentgraf – Charlottesville, Virginia

Michael Farley – Louisa, Virginia

A Shadow Walk

A true "Proper Walk" as defined by "old Kenya hands" (Englishmen staying on after independence) involves trekking long distances usually over hot dusty and challenging terrain with some bit of danger. A few years ago, MCP board member Mike Farley enhanced the definition, adding another dimension to the "properness" of a long walk — doing it not only for adventure but for a cause, the children of Makindu.



Although I walked the Kenya Proper Walks of '04 and '06, I was not among the walkers heading down into the Rift Valley last August. I knew my absence would make me a tad melancholy, trying to imagine the challenges they were facing and I was missing, so I determined that I would at least join them in spirit by taking a long walk to coincide with the last three days of Proper Walk '08 — a "Shadow" Proper Walk of sorts.

I'll admit that the venue I chose didn't fit the Proper Walk exactly, but it seemed like an interesting challenge — to walk all 75 miles of trails in Portland's Forest Park. The park is a wonder — 5,100 acres of woodland, including some old-growth firs and hemlock, set on the hillside to the north of the city but still in the city limits. The Park is officially about 50 years old but has been preserved

from development for over 80 years.

Day One of walking started just after dawn followed by the only element of danger I faced: an usual thunder and lightning storm was moving from the west as I parked the car and started up Wildwood trail. Entering the forest was a particularly eerie experience. The combination of low dark grey skies, the darkness of a sunless morning and the forest's own enveloping powers gave me an odd claustrophobic feeling that was almost comforting — entering a secret mysterious, living place. Then a bright flash of light just over the ridge and a disturbingly close tremendous "BOOM" made me stop in my tracks. Hmm, lightning, close, very close, and I'm standing beneath towering 200-foot Douglas fir trees. (My wife had warned me as she left for work that I ought to wait until the storm's worst had past. I knew there'd be hell to pay now if I

got struck by lightning. She would never say "I told you so," but it would be there hanging in space.) As the rain started, I made my decision and continued along the trail whistling a tune from Guys and Dolls to buck up my courage and luck.

Although it rained most of the seven hours I spent walking that first day, the forest canopy provided protection until noon for the rain to really drip down to the trail and me. In fact, days two and three were the same — cool, rainy and grey — and me, soaked. The rain added a nice refreshing element to the walk and deterred other less determined hikers from the trail. In the course of three days, 52 miles, and about 18 hours, I encountered only a dozen or so people in the park though only a few miles away were several hundred thousand souls.

The walk now is a blur of up and down trails and map checking (to keep to my routes) and the mind numbing — or clearing — quality of sustained hiking. The mind wanders over immense territories as your feet tread the well-worn path. As I walked, I enjoyed comparing this shadow walk to my Proper Walk experience. Part of me would have preferred the good company of Mike and the other trekkers and the camels instead of this solitary stroll (not even a shadow with me on the shadow walk). But the cathedral-like quality of a tall tree forest provided a quiet mind time for reflection on nature and life — the "how did they get here?" questions and the obvious follow-ups. The walk was, as the Kenya walks had been, something of an unintended spiritual meander — a pilgrimage where what you see is not just with your eyes. I thought, too, of the kids in Makindu and the wonderful folks who support them. This is the most "proper" aspect of the Proper Walk and my shadow walk — that our attempts at adventure and challenge act as avenues for good people to donate to the cause. (The shadow walk raised over \$1700! Asante sana sana!).

Hey, you might consider doing a shadow walk yourself. Let us know if we can help.

Oh, by the way, I did encounter two Giant Pacific Salamanders and a doe.



—Steve Randolph





A Taste of Africa 2008

The Taste of Africa Auction, held at The Beacon House in Eugene, was a great success. Due solely to the coming together of many generous people, we were able to meet our goals and even surpass our expectations, even in these financially unstable times.

Thanks to the dozens of supporters who contributed wonderful things to be included in the auction. Many, many thanks to all of the people who attended the auction and purchased those items and adventures. We owe the

success of the project to our loyal supporters and generous friends. Auctioneer Sid Vorhees and his wife Hank were instrumental in making the auction run smoothly.

The kettles of traditional African foods were emptied by the end of the day. Ugali, a main stay in the diet of the children at the Makindu center, was eaten with relish along with a very nutritious and delicious Peanut Stew. As usual, the Goat Stew was the most popular food on the menu and brought back memories to several Board Members of meals they had eaten on their recent trip to Kenya.

The Market Place, generously stocked by the "Swahili" store and staffed by Elizabeth Pankala and her adorable daughters Elli and Annabelle, was once again a major point of interest and a great place to purchase unique holiday gifts. As usual, the handwoven African baskets were a hit and many went home full of soapstone figurines, hand carved utensils and pretty jewelry.

Special gratitude goes out to the Clean Up Crew. Such an important but nearly thankless job of "tearing down the tents" and putting it all away for another year. The members of the board and volunteers, who spent many, many hours putting this all together, deserve a generous round of applause and special recognition. You know who you are and we love you for all you do, everyday, for the children of Makindu. Your rewards shine in the eyes of the children who will know hope because of your contribution. My thanks to you all.



— Twila Butler, Board Member.

Letter from the Director, continued

In October MCP hosted the third annual, "A Taste of Africa" auction in Eugene, Oregon, which included goat stew, African music, and a bicycle raffle. Some of the items auctioned included guided river raft excursions, week-end get-aways at the Oregon coast and the use of a home in Guanajuato, Mexico!

On Halloween night we organized a Party at Cosmic Pizza in Eugene featuring the marimba group Kudana and Brazilian percussion group Samba Ja! as well as African Dance led by Andrea DePalma. THANK YOU TO ALL PERFORMERS!

All of this fundraising has enabled MCP to continue funding services for over 400 orphans in the Makindu District of Kenya. With global food prices on the rise and economic insecurities around the world, we must redouble our fundraising efforts on behalf of the children of Makindu, Kenya.

Please see our website (www.makindu.org) to view recent pictures and a link to the recent Portland Oregonian article about MCC.

It is an honor and privilege to work in support of the children of Makindu and to work with all of you.

Thank you. Asante Sana.

— Lou Enge

HIV/AIDS in Sub-Saharan Africa

In Africa, HIV and AIDS are so wide spread that in one way or another, entire communities are impacted. If individuals aren't infected with HIV themselves, they are nonetheless "HIV-affected": they care for someone who is infected, they earn less, they grow less food, they send fewer children to school and they are unable to care for all of the vulnerable children.

THE IMPACT OF HIV/AIDS

According to UNAIDS:

- The number of people living with HIV worldwide was 33.2 million in 2007.
- 2.5 million people were newly infected in 2007 and 2.1 million died of AIDS-related illnesses.
- 22.5 million, or over 2/3 of those infected, live in sub-Saharan Africa.
- In 2007, more than three quarters (76%) of all AIDS-related deaths occurred in sub-Saharan Africa.
- The majority of people (61%) living with HIV in sub-Saharan Africa are women.

OUR COMMUNITY-BASED RESPONSE

The effects of HIV/AIDS on the community of Makindu are wide spread. There is not an individual that is not affected by the pandemic to some degree, so strategies for prevention and intervention must be community-based and fully integrated. This is why MCC services include providing for the basic needs of the vulnerable children within needy households in the community, thereby strengthening the fabric of the entire community. We have funded and developed a clean water system and are working to expand business development opportunities, access to potable water and basic sanitation, and other resources crucial to changing the course of the epidemic.

A Trip to Tsavo and More: A Board Member's Perspective

The idea of taking some of the MCC kids to Tsavo National Park in order to provide them with an educational experience came from the experiences of other board members who had previously done the same. Consequently, Lisa Adam, a fellow board member and friend, and I raised \$1,800 — enough to take 100 children and some of the MCC staff on a field trip that they, and we, would never forget.

Leading up to our trip to Kenya, Lisa and I were inspired by the passion of Winnie Barron, founder and Board President of the Makindu Children's Center. As board members, we had contributed significant time and energy over the past three and four years and wanted to see the program "up close and personal." We were not disappointed. Our travels took us to the dusty town of Makindu and the Children's Center which provides services to over 400 children including medical, educational, nutritional, vocational and counseling services. We were impressed with the staff's competence and graciousness. The children had a great time enjoying the soccer balls, Frisbees, magic markers and paper, as well as the bubbles, which we brought along with medical supplies.

I spent my birthday, one of the best ever, with the children, which reinforced my belief that it is more rewarding to give than to receive. One of the graduates of the program, Babu, and I distributed fancy pencils, cookies and other treats to the children. The kids and teachers danced and sang and we

shared lots of hugs and laughter. After several days there, we had two large Greyhound-type busses and a safari vehicle take us to Tsavo, where we saw hippos, elephants, giraffe, zebras and baboons. Many of the kids had never been in a vehicle before. It was a treasured shared experience and Lisa and I felt gratified about providing these kids with this educational opportunity and adventure.

Having been back for several months, it has been apparent that our hearts were left in Kenya. These children, most who have lost parents from HIV/AIDs and live under circumstances of extreme poverty, have inspired us with their spirit to learn and thrive, despite their circumstances. It has reinforced the fact that the world is small and that we are all inter-connected. In addition, it has strengthened our belief that we have a responsibility to do what we can to enrich their lives, and in doing so, we truly enrich our own.

— Jan Johnson

NOTE: Trips to Kenya as well as to Tsavo were not funded by funds from Makindu Children's Program.





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CHILDREN'S PROGRAM



We need your help to keep the Makindu Children's Centre in operation. MCC provides food, education, medical care and a place in the community for the Makindu orphans and their guardian families. Your donations help sustain a grassroots organization that is making a positive impact every day. Here are some ways your donations help:

\$35 provides food, elementary schooling and medical care for one child for one month.

\$50 provides school uniforms and shoes for 10 children.

\$100 provides milk for 100 children for one month.

\$200 provides bulk food (maize, beans, oil, etc.) for 59 families for four months.

\$350 provides a high school education (tuition, boarding, books and supplies) for one student for one year.

Remember, all donations to the Makindu Children's Centre are tax deductible. Please consider becoming a sustaining donor.

I care and I want to share!

I am making a one-time donation of: \$ _____

I am making a monthly pledge of:

\$ _____ for _____ months.

FOR DONATION BY CREDIT CARD:

Name on Card _____

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