



SWTZ - July-September 2013

I am writing this newsletter from the UK, where I am spending a few weeks catching up with family and friends. I have been asked many times now about the recent events in Nairobi, especially "How safe are you in Tanzania?". We want to reassure everyone that, although Nairobi is not that far away and Wendy and Rebecca know Westgate Mall well, where we are based, we, the children, and our staff are very safe. We do all we can to provide physical security (dogs, alarms, watchmen...), and are alerted to possible dangers well in advance by our security company. And, we also pray constantly.

We have watched over the years as things have changed in Tanzania and there have been more terrorist attacks, not only in East Africa, but in the rest of the world too, and we continue to pray not only for ourselves, but for you too, as we live in this increasingly unpredictable world.

To cheer everyone we have included a couple of testimonies in this month's newsletter - stories that remind us why we exist, and encourage us to keep going through the hard times...

First testimony is from Hamis, who lived at SWTz for three years after we found him on the streets of Arusha. Hamis left SWTz in July 2011 to return to his family home, having been repatriated with his father. His time at SWTz wasn't always easy for Hamis (or our staff!) and he had some issues especially with rebellion and anger.

Hamis finished his primary education last year, and was offered a place in a secondary school close to Arusha. Hamis' father pays for his school fees, but didn't have enough to buy everything else he needed so Hamis visited us asking if we could help him buy school shoes. We said we would buy him school shoes if he could bring us a good school report. He did! He is getting As, Bs, and Cs in nearly every subject - a great achievement. Hamis is speaking very good English now, and wants to join the Army when he graduates. And, best of all, he said that though he struggled during his time at SWTz, he never forgot the love at SWTz, or the counseling we gave him, and never forgot the life-lessons we taught him. He apologised for his behavior, and told us he is back on track.



We saw a new Hamis, determined to succeed and do things the right way.

Second testimony is from Nick, who is from the USA and volunteered with SWTz a couple of years ago. I am quoting from an email he wrote to our children recently, with his permission:

"Hey kids, its Nick, you know, the one with the long hair and silly beard? I know that it has been a while - years in fact - but I still remember each one of you vividly. I am currently in my last year of university, and today in one of my classes I opened my wallet and found a sheet of paper containing each one of your names. I wrote them down so that I could pray for each and every one of you - so that I would not forget any of you. I nearly cried when I read that list in class. But that's not why I'm writing.

A beautiful friend recently told me that true and Godly Love does not sit around and think and plan how they are going to do things. Love does not remain still and worry about what the future will be. She told me that Love just does. Love is action. Love does not hesitate or worry, just like God does not hesitate or worry. You must believe this to understand what I am about to say.

Every single one of you has more Love than anyone I have ever met. You are angels. You all showed more Love than anyone I have ever met. And you all gave me more Love than I have ever been given before, please believe me when I say this. When I arrived, you hugged me and did not let go. When I worked, you talked to me the whole time. You told me about yourselves, and your history. You asked me questions because you really were curious about me. You trusted me like a Father and a Brother. You listened to me. You shared your food with me. You loved me.

I went to Africa because God told me to, and because He told me that the reward would be greater than I could imagine. I was in a very bad place at home at the time - my Family had fallen apart, my Father and Brother had attempted suicide, and I was not able to pay for school. One night, God told me to read Genesis 1:12. It said "The Lord said...Go from your country, your people, and your Father's household to the land I will show you... and I will bless you." So I went, and I met you all.

It takes a smart person to teach mathematics, and it takes a smart person to teach science. It takes a smart person to teach gardening and carpentry too. But here's the most important thing: you all taught me to Love, and that is the hardest thing of all to teach."

Sometimes it seems like we aren't achieving much, and sometimes it can feel like what we are doing is downright futile. But, from these testimonies we learn that we just all need to keep on doing what we know is right, and not be concerned about seeing "results". We need to just be ourselves, and simply love people (and sometimes that love is a tough-love as was often the case with Hamis). It DOES make a difference. Our SWTz children, despite all the things they have been through in their short lives, still have hearts so full of LOVE it simply oozes out of them and affects everything it touches! We can learn from them.

We have been so blessed recently with many wonderful visitors, and presents arriving in the post (including two big boxes of beautiful designer clothes from KingKow in Hong Kong - huge thanks to KingKow and the amazing Hayman for organizing this shipment). So, our children have been showered with gifts, and love.

We held a party to celebrate several birthdays with cook-your-own hotdogs and cakes...James ate **5** hot dogs! And we took some of the girls on a trip to town for Chinese food and a visit to the best supermarket where they chose their own biscuits, candy, and birthday toys! Enjoy the pictures below!

Birthdays July-September: Alex (16); Arnold (13); Iddy (11); Eliza (16); Careen (15); Mwajuma (14); Mariam (10); Mahija (10);



Our fashion models!



Cooking hot dogs (the small children were very well supervised, don't worry...)



Eating hot dogs is hard work...relaxing with a pack of cards afterwards...



Eating and shopping until we drop with Mariam, Riziki, Mahija and Neema!



The lovely Thoits Family came to visit Riziki...but somehow Mariam found centre stage!



Sandekei cutting a dash at a school event!



Careen's wonderful education sponsors, Toni and David, visited her from the USA, and we had a lovely lunch with them, and Meghann and Erasto from The Foundation for Tomorrow. It happened to be close to Careen's birthday - she was surprised with a cake and gift!

Finally:

Thank you so much to everyone who responded to our need for medical insurance, and a huge THANK YOU to the person who donated the year's insurance costs - this will make a huge difference in the level of health care our children can receive, and we already have next years' fees pledged!

And...over the years we have strived to do the best we can, given our resources, and to run SWTz in such a way that it would be a model for others to learn from. Over the past few months we have had so many compliments including being a "model NGO", and "...a beautiful compound where children can flourish...". We started with an idea, a tiny house, 4 boys, and a budget of around \$225 a month!! We now help over 75 children on a daily basis. A beautiful compound. Many staff. A much bigger budget.

Last thought: Mark 9:23 Jesus said unto him, "If you can believe, all things are possible to him that believes."

Thank You for helping to make a difference in Tanzania!!!!