

Nyaka Notes

Nyaka AIDS Orphans Project @ www.nyakaschool.org @ (517) 402-2787

***Our Mission:** To provide quality, free education, and extracurricular activities, both formal and informal, as a means to counteract pervasive hunger, poverty, and systemic resource deprivation.*

***Our Vision:** For rural communities in Uganda to build strong community and family structures using sustainable, community-focused approaches to address challenges they face due to the HIV/AIDS pandemic.*

Nyaka AIDS Orphans Project Newsletter

Volume 8, Issue 1 Spring 2010

Latest News...

~**June 2010**, Jackson Kaguri is going on The Price of Stones book tour and coming on as Nyaka's fulltime Executive Director!

~**June 10th, 2010** The Price of Stones comes out in book stores.

~**Summer 2010**, we are rebranding our logo. Keep an eye out for our new look.

~**Summer and Fall of 2010** we are redoing our website. Contact us at info@nyakaschool.org or (517) 402-2787

Nyaka Board of Directors

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Twesigye Jackson Kaguri-- Executive Director

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Chair of the Board-- gives his thoughts on Nyaka's progress.

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National Coordinator-- We have moved offices in Kampala and it has changed our capacity to do our work.

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Sue Linville and The Price of Stones-- We have a book coming out titled The Price of Stones and we would like to visit your area.

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From our Staff

Message from the Board Chair

Dear Friends of Nyaka,

Greetings from Uganda! I have been at Nyaka for about a month now, and I am excited to report that things are great. Our students at both Nyaka and Kutamba primary schools are off to a strong beginning to their school year. As always they remain joyful and so very eager to learn. I wish I knew how to transplant their wonderful attitudes to many kids in the US. Kutamba has grown to 5 grades this year so we have added 2 new teachers and also a new headmaster. They all are solid additions to our staff that will further strengthen that school. Total enrollment at the 2 schools is 381 for this year. The school buildings are in very good shape, and the grounds are beautiful



with colorful flowers planted everywhere. Gardens at both schools are producing modest amounts of fresh vegetables and fruit.

On March 21 Carol and I, along with Nyaka Headmaster Stephen, visited all of our graduates from the past 2 years. We have 41

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Our New Kampala Office

Dear Friends,

We moved into our new head office today. We were in the Rubaga neighborhood of Kampala, and now we are in Makindye,

Kampala. It's a bit out of town, but the location and office are excellent! This place is free of noise pollution and full of fresh air. One of our biggest challenges in Rubaga was the dust coming up from the dirt road out front of the office. Now, we are all overjoyed to be in an environment free of dust. I tell you, it really is a wonderful office. We can even accommodate 5 visitors. It is well equipped so that we can take our meals and even a shower from within. Because of the kitchen, we no longer need to walk far to get our lunch. This is saving us precious time.

This office has become a very positive, non-monetary motivator for all of us in the office. We enjoy our work and not once look at the clock.

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2009 Nyaka Graduation

- 26 students graduated.
- 26 students passed their exams.
- 26 students joined our 21 students already in secondary school.
- 48 students now in secondary school building their futures.

See more pictures online at our Facebook Page.



A Week at the Nyaka School by Teacher Aggrey



Nyaka School opens every Monday at 7.30am with morning lessons for primary six and primary seven up to 8:00am. We close on Friday at 5:00pm.

- An assembly is held from 8-8:30am everyday except on Tuesdays when the school hosts a religious leader to their assembly. This adds an additional forty minutes from 8:30am to 9:10am.

- Normally lessons go on every day Monday up to Friday with a break at 10:30-11am, Lunch from 1-2pm, and Home work help at 4:30.

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The Students' Corner

The Insights I Gained at Nyaka: Monika Dietrich



Monika is a student at Michigan State University in Nutrition Sciences

It is difficult to summarize my experiences in Uganda; when I reflect upon my six weeks there, I can't pin down one description of the time. Instead, I remember a jumble of emotions and events that come together in my mind as a representation of the school.

I was at Nyaka to carry out a nutritional assessment of all the children there, measure weight, height and arm circumference. Indeed, being at Nyaka was so much more than my project. It was perhaps the most concentrated learning experience I have ever had. While I was often regarded as highly knowledgeable due to my university education, I found that I was the student of those around me. Every hour of every day I was in a culture very different from my own, interacting with people who had lived very different lives.

The most important lesson I learned
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Letter from a Secondary School Student: Izidolo

Dear Reader,

I am Mugisha Izidolo in S.2 in Ishaka Secondary School. This is the experience I have together with my fellow students from Nyaka AIDS Orphans School.

We are well fed and we are served food which is enough. We have 3 meals every day: breakfast, lunch and supper. Most of the time we eat posho and beans.

On the side of sleeping, we sleep about 60 students in one dormitory room and we use double decker beds.

On the side of learning, really teachers work very hard and they love us. They guide us and help us very much. There is not much difference between our teachers at Nyaka and Ishaka. They are almost the same. We learn 14 subjects but we have small library compared to the number of students in our school. We don't have classes at night because some students are day scholars. We only do our home work and revision at night guided by some teachers.

On sports we engage in different activities ranging from football to volley and many others.

If I am to pick one day at Ishaka College I would say:

We wake up at 5:00 and go to classrooms for morning revision.

7:00 am we eat porridge.

7:30 am we go for prayers.

8:00 am we start our studies.

10:30 am we have a short break and go back to class up to 1:00 pm

1:00pm we break for lunch.

2:00 pm we go back to class up to 4:00 pm when the day scholars go home and for us we join games and sports up to 6:00 pm.

6:00pm we break for supper.

7:00 pm we join our class for night revision up to 10:00 pm when we go to our beds to rest until the following day.

Generally, the school is very good and we hope to pass well after completing our S.4 and join high school.

May God bless you all.

Mugisha Izidolo

Letter from a Secondary School Student: Derick



I am Mwesigwa Derick now a student at St Gerald's secondary school. We are six students who were admitted there from Nyaka Orphans School. We went to report with our Headteacher and Miss Christine Kasime. We got a very warm welcome by the students we found there. They carried our belongings and took us to the Dormitories.

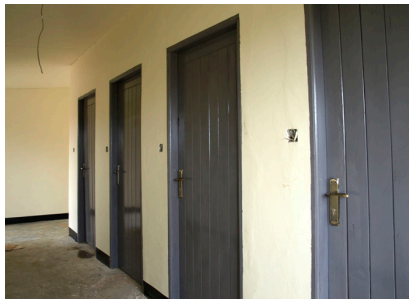
We are happy with the food though it is not as balanced as at Nyaka School. Most of the meals are beans and posho.

The teachers are more or less like those of Nyaka. We attend all lessons. Teachers hurry to teach us and they guide us and counsel us. They also encourage us to work hard. The best thing at Gerald's is that we stay at school and have enough time to read our books and do our homework.

Mwesigwa Derick

The Blue Lupin Community Library

We are opening the library on April 26th. We have a librarian and furniture. We are now purchasing reading books and computers, and other infrastructure.



The Price of Stones

It all started in 2005. During a casual conversation, Jackson Kaguri mentioned to me that he wanted to write a book about the Nyaka School and his experiences. I responded, "I can write." And so, it began. After a series of interviews, a trip to Uganda and the school, and scores of e-mail correspondences and phone calls, the book was complete.

Or so we thought. A long revision process followed under the guidance of our agent, Caitlin Blasdell. Finally, in January 2009, the book sold to editor, Carolyn Carlson at Viking Penguin. It's been five years in the making, but when the book is released on June 10th this year, I think you will find it was worth the effort.

"The Price of Stones is an inspiring account of turning tragedy into hope for others," said President Jimmy Carter. For all those involved with Nyaka School, you've seen firsthand how the hope of one man can inspire others. You've seen the smiles on the kid's faces. You've seen the Nyaka graduates standing proud. With this book, we share the Nyaka story with the world. We highlight the plight of AIDS orphans in Uganda and throughout Africa, we reveal Jackson's inspiring story of perseverance, and we demonstrate that compassion can be a powerful force in the world. Best-selling writer, Lynn Vincent, said of the book, "By page 23, I was hooked. By page 33, I had tears in my eyes...." It is my fervent hope to have everyone crying this summer.

When The Price of Stones is released in

June, it will be available at all bookstores and on-line book sellers. Jackson has a book signing tour scheduled for several cities in the US and Canada June 14-24th. Other events will follow and all can be found listed on the book's web page, <http://www.thepriceofstones.com>. If you wish to have a signing at a local book store in your area, please contact Jackson at tjk@nyakaschool.org

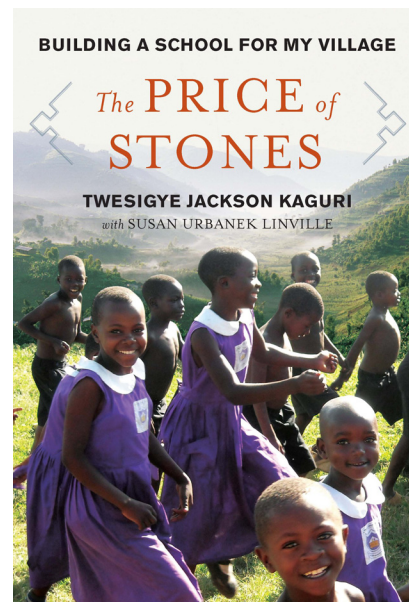
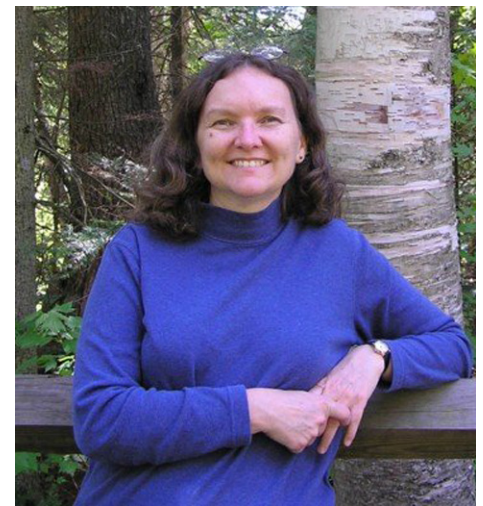
or Yen at Yen.Cheong@us.penguingroup.com about places and dates.

We hope you enjoy reading The Price of Stones and encourage you to spread word of the book to your family and friends.

And please remember, without your kindness, continuing support and love for the Nyaka kids, Nyaka AIDS Orphans

School would never be the success it is today. With this book we toast your generosity of spirit and concern for those who have lost so much.

Sincerely,
Susan Linville



Message from the Board Chair Continued from Page 2

students at Ishaka Secondary School: 21 in S.2 and 20 in S.1. All of them look well and fit even though they complain about the food, as do virtually all boarding students everywhere. We met with the Deputy Headmistress and she spoke glowingly of our students. They are performing well academically, and she reports they are better behaved than typical students from the public schools.

We have six of our 2009 graduates at St. Gerald's secondary school. All of these students scored in the highest level on the national exam last year. As at Ishaka, the Headmaster spoke of the solid academic performance of our graduates and he is delighted to have them at his school. The strong examples all Nyaka graduates are setting serve as terrific motivation for our primary school students. They also are paving the way for our future graduates to be welcome at Ishaka and St. Gerald's.

Lastly, we visited our 2008 graduate who is enrolled in a driving/mechan-

ics vocational training program. He has already become a good driver and will complete his mechanics training in 2011. He likes the school, again, except for the food. He has recently recovered from a bout with typhoid that hospitalized him for 4 weeks. But other than still being a bit thin he is physically well.

I can't possibly put into words how proud these children have made me. They are the products of hard work, dedication and love from all of our teachers and staff; and of course their own love of learning and hard work. Yet none of this would have happened without you. Your generous support of Nyaka has measurably and significantly improved the lives of 429 AIDS orphans in Uganda. I hope that brings you some warm feelings too.

On behalf of all of them, and many more to that will follow, I sincerely thank you.



Rob Auld
Board Chair

The Insights I Gained at Nyaka Continued from Page 3

hit me at some point during my first few days. All my life my only impression of Sub-Saharan Africa had been of sad, depressing images of starving children, of an unrelenting virus that infected much of the continent, and of statistics so grave they seem unreal. Can I be blamed, then, when I was utterly surprised by the smiling, happy faces I saw everywhere I went, by the people working so hard to feed their families instead of being beaten down by their situation, by the extreme generosity and good-heartedness I encountered in every village I visited? I don't know what it is I expected, but

learning about Africa from a foreign perspective had somehow made me forget that, no matter where you are or in what situation, people still have lives to live, just like every single person on this Earth. However cliché it may seem, it really hit me that we are not Ugandans or Americans, and we are not wealthy or poor: we are people. We are sad, we are happy, we mourn, we celebrate, we laugh and we cry. I thought I would be consumed in sadness to be surrounded by so many children who had lost parents to an unforgiving disease- who had gone through so much. Instead on the first day of school I saw smiling children running into the school grounds, girls sitting together and chatting under the

Our New Kampala Office Continued from Page 2

Allow me to inform you of some figures regarding our progress.

- We have harvested 2.5 tons of maize and 400 kgs of dry beans from the Desire Farm.
- In Jan. and Feb. 512 grannies received voluntary HIV testing and counseling.
- We purchased 130 new uniforms for our students this Spring and 300 pairs of shoes.
- Our final numbers for constructing kitchens and latrines for grannies in 2009 stand at 38 very good kitchens and 61 sanitary permanent latrines.

We thank all of you for the success we have achieved and the miraculous changes which have occurred in the children and grannies' lives.

James Asiimwe
Country Manager



shade of trees, boys playing a thrilling game of football. They screamed with joy at every goal. What I think is terrible is with all of the negativity we encounter regarding Africa in the United States, it is easy to forget this humanity. This humanity is exactly why schools like Nyaka are so important and so good. My time at Nyaka was amazing in many ways, and the lessons I learned will stay with me, and will come back to me when I am thinking of those living in areas of the world so different from my own.

Monika Dietrich
Student of Nutrition Sciences at
Michigan State University

A Week at the Nyaka School Continued from Page 2

- Every Wednesday afternoon we hold a debate and discussion session between 2 and 4pm. Here pupils practice their language skills.

- Tuesday afternoon from 3:30 to 4pm is a time when all pupils gather and have religious studies either conducted by teachers or a religious leader.

- Monday and Thursday afternoon at 3.30pm to 4.00 pm is proposed time for Mathematics and Science club respectively.

- Every Friday in the afternoon is a time for games where children play a variety of games like foot ball, netball and volleyball.

- Saturday and Sunday we reserved for devoted Christians to join their local churches for worship since Nyaka School is on a church based foundation.

Teacher Kwizera Aggrey



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You can do it. You can make a difference. You can help by donating now.

You can donate money, time, expertise, labor, and skills.

Call us at (517) 402-2787 or email us at info@nyakaschool.org.

Without you these children would not have the bright future that they have now.

Thank you for all you do!

-Nyaka Team



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