

Newsletter

*Harambee
For Kenya*



No. 47 Dec 18 to Mar 19

Time moves so quickly especially when we all have to work as well as giving talks and selling soapstone and other gifts at events, small and large. This last few months were no exception and of course we must not forget the Christmas break. The boys finish school at the start of December and go back for the new school year in January. So over Christmas we hear how those that had completed their secondary education, got on in their exams. There were three boys who completed this year, Hendrick, Derrick and Julius. They all got a mean average grade of "D" which was a little disappointing for them as they were expecting higher. The grade would enable them to get a job, but not what they wanted to do, so they have had to rethink. Julius went back to his extended family so we are not aware of what he is now doing, but Hendrick and Derrick decided to go to Polytechnic to train in a skill. Hendrick is training to be a tailor and Derrick in building. When we saw them in March/April they were enjoying their course so far, albeit at the early stages at the moment.

We have considered that it is more beneficial for the lads to study for a skill as they tend to come out of secondary then needing to train in something. This can make it rather difficult to find sponsors willing to continue to support their studies. We are encouraging them to go straight to Polytechnic to learn a skill as they can lose a job but they will not lose a skill. We also noticed that after the second year at secondary they start to struggle. It has taken us a while to work out why but we think we now know. In Kenya they finish primary in year 8 and so at the end of year 2 in secondary, they are at the stage of our yr10's who are starting with GCSE's. So yr 3 and 4 means they are actually attaining A Level standard, which is what their final exams are. From yr 4 they go on to University if they have the grades. It has made us realise that they struggle with the harder academic courses and need to do courses that are practical, from which they can then earn money immediately they leave education. A number of them have run away when they have not been achieving at school and we have brought them back. John Bosco is a prime example. He was determined to go to secondary school but then started to "fail" (his words). He was slipping further and further to the bottom of the class and could not cope. He ran to the street but was found and encouraged to learn a trade. He chose to be a mechanic and is now really enjoying his course and achieving well.

We hope you enjoy the rest of the newsletter and thank you for your continued support and patience in waiting for it to be produced.

Trustees:- Roger Dann (Chairman), Lesley Dann, Patricia Musgrave, Jackie Cooper, Mike Wilding, Ben Vince, Bill Compton. Tom Nixon, Jackie Parker

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Project News Nyakoe

I am sure you would like to know how Nash is doing since he was found wandering the streets of Suneka at the age of four. He is now in school and is doing really well. In fact while we were at Kisii, inside 2 weeks he was understanding a lot of what we were

saying and speaking quite a few words of English. He is a bright boy which in itself can be difficult as when he knows what he wants it is hard to change his mind, which can cause arguments with some of the boys when he tries to take something they are playing with. But with careful moulding he should be fine.



We were fortunate to see Malak, one of our older boys you has moved from the house and is working in Kisii Town doing pedicure and manicure. It is so good to see him succeeding and enjoying what he does.

Although we did not see him, Christopher, another one of our boys who has grown up, contacted us too. He is working as a DJ in Kisii, has a wife and is enjoying life. It is so nice to see our boys grow into valued members of society who are doing well through hard work.



Mike with Nash

The boys that are still in the house are all trying their best in their various schools and also enjoy getting involved when things need to be done around the house. While we were there, the roof was replaced on the kitchen as it had started to leak. So health and safety aside, (we do not see much of it in Kenya!) they got on and sorted it out. Of course we asked them to be careful, but they seem to be like mountain goats - with no fear and walk and climb any where.



It is lovely to watch them working together as a team and to see the pleasure in their achievement, even though we sit biting our nails while watching them.



Kijana (right) wanted to help with sewing while we were doing ours. So he helped unpick things. Then Jackie said she would show him how to sew a button on and Josphat wanted to learn too. They did really well and so we left a sewing bag with Lydia for the boys to use and suggested that they were the only boys to use it for sewing buttons on any clothes that needed them.



Fundraising Carvery

Lunch Sunday 3rd
November 2019

12.30pm

@ London Beach Hotel Tenterden.

£30.45

The price includes a 3 course meal and coffee in a beautiful setting. There is a choice of starter and desert. You buy your own drinks from the bar. The total amount of the cost of the meal is returned to the charity after the meal.

We have a limited number of spaces so please book early and pay a £10 deposit to secure your seat. The final amount will be due by 28th September.

Do join us for a lovely social event. To book your places, contact Lesley on 07941041616 or h4kinfo@gmail.com

Our Thanks go to the following for their Support.

Christ Church Pennington
Southborough Primary School
Nanny Byles. Auntie Julie & Uncle Alan,
Carole Pavey. Jane Stoddart
Tony & Val Parris Eileen (BOP Group)
Debruslais Chartered Surveyors
Nick and Liam Barnard and all their supporters.
Jenny Manklow Landy & Gracie
Caitlin Wheatley, Mike Parker, Jack Dowson
Michelle Wheatley Chris Allen
1st Howden-Le-Wear Cubs and Scouts.
And all our regular supporters

Many of you will have noticed one Lady's name regularly on our thank you list. "Nanny Byles" is a lovely elderly lady who keeps herself going and on the ball by knitting. She has made so many jumpers for the boys and now makes hats and fingerless gloves too. You can see from the picture, the joy on the boys faces.



Visitors from Durham

We had visitors in Kenya while we were there. Three leaders, (Caitlin, Mike & Jack) from Crook and Weardale District Scouts (County Durham) came out to see what H4K is trying to do for Street boys in Kenya. Before they came, they raised money to buy things for the projects and collected clothes, pens, pencils etc to take out for the boys to use. With the money raised, they were able to buy:- Meru....2 spades; Poles and netting to fence in the eco-fuel "tank" and putting it in; Cushions that needed replacing for the four sofas and the fabric to cover most of them; A Bull calf which has not yet arrived (picture to follow) inc a check up by a vet; shorts for school; a bench for the dining room; wood etc for the cow shed for the calf (still to be built); plastic sheet for a water slide.

Kisii.....Replacement of fencing for the chicken run (includes an extension to same); fencing for growing vegetables to keep chickens out etc; seeds - tomato and peppers; plastic for a water slide. (Meru was in need of more things as Kisii had been gifted with items when Bromley Scouts visited them last summer) Well done guys. It was so good to have you on board. You are an Ace team.

Caitlin wrote:-

'It was a unique experience with a lot of emotions throughout. It was an honour to meet the boys and be accepted so warmly into their home and we are looking forward to returning in a few years hopefully with a group of our own explorers from our district of Crook and Weardale.'

We would also like to give a huge thank you to the H4K team, who helped us to arrange the visit and looked after us out there, Through the laughter and the tears! You have become another part of our ever-growing family and we look forward to supporting everything you do over the many many years to come.'



Merru

The boys are doing really well and they seem very comfortable in their surroundings. We also had some wonderful news about Caleb.

Caleb was born prematurely and his head was slightly damaged when he was born and remained slightly out of shape. Unfortunately his mother thought he was "handicapped" so she abandoned him. His grandmother took over and looked after him until she died, after which a teacher cared for him. Caleb has learning difficulties and so the teachers family pressured her to get rid of him. The teacher then asked H4K if they would care for him. Of course John and Tom agreed and he has been with us for 5 years.

His teachers said that he was not capable of taking the end of primary exams and so John approached the local polytechnic to see if there was a course he could do. They invited him to visit and see the college and was thrilled to be greeted and encouraged that they felt he could do well doing a hospitality course. John then approached the local MP who helped to ensure that Caleb's course will be sponsored, which is very encouraging. Caleb is really excited about starting his course in May. He will be well suited to the hospitality industry because he is polite, always offers help and when asked does what is needed to be done. He is such a gentle young man who always cares for the boys in the house and he deserves a chance. We are so glad that he has been given one.

It was felt by John and Tom (Trustees) that there were three boys in the safe house that they could trust completely. Caleb was one and the other two are Lewis and Job. All three boys willingly help and have never tried to steal anything, which can happen in light of where the boys have come from. So it was decided that they should be made prefects to help Dennis who looks after all the boys.



Left to right - Lewis, Caleb and Job..

Each of the boys were given a new tee shirt and pair of shorts as a reward for how they have helped Dennis already without being asked. All the boys are aware that if they ask them to do something, they should. Each of these boys lead from the front and certainly the other boys have accepted them in their new role because already they have earned the respect of the other boys.

New “Therapy” Play Grounds.

Those of you who are on our Harambee For Kenya Facebook page, will have seen about the playgrounds. But for those that are not, the boys have been blessed with having these to play on.

Chris, one of the trustees, took Nick and Liam Barnard with him to build a playground at each safe house which would help the boys to relax and have fun. Little do they know that in fact these playgrounds will help them to de-stress. All the boys that come into our safe houses, have experienced rejection, violence and abuse and trauma. A simple explanation is that in our brains we have an area which is called “Mammalian Brain” which is also known as the fight and flight area. When a traumatised child/person experiences something “bad” (in their eyes) they struggle to face up to it and then run from it. Our boys, if they have a bad moment they will often run back to the streets, which is something we want to prevent. So to help them calm down, they should stretch swing and rock. So with guidance from a therapist that Chris knows, advised what would benefit the boys most and that is what was built.

To compliment this two other friends of Chris', Landy and Gracie, went over for a week and did other therapeutic activities, like painting to express their feelings etc. The boys really enjoyed what they did with them.



The boys love the play areas.

Our main priority is looking after the boys in two safe houses, but we also support about 12 children in the village where Jimmy, one of the trustees, lives. The village is called Gathua and is in Muranga District which is about 2½ hrs drive away from Nairobi, on the way to Meru. We found that one family in particular was struggling with a house that was leaking badly when it rained and had mud floors on which the three children and a grandmother slept, laying on rags. The outside toilet had only torn polythene for walls and was extremely dangerous because the wooden floor was rotten, and with the drop being about 50ft deep, we were concerned that someone, particularly the children, could easily fall in. Chris Dade did separate fundraising for this project and he approached Debruslais Chartered Surveyors, to see if they would be willing to help. Thankfully they, and other donors, assisted to raise enough money to rebuild the house and the toilet. So Chris, Nick and Liam also went to the village to help local builders rebuild this.

Here are a few pictures.



The old house (outside and in) left. The toilet, right,



Grandma & the 3 children love their new home. (One girl was at school)

We managed to pay for new furniture (for her). She said she had never slept on a bed before This lovely Lady is thrilled with her new home.

Gallery

