

Sunday

July 11, 2010

Jambo from Tanzania,

Please accept my apology for being so slow to write this year but I have been busy building the guesthouse and directing the energy of enthusiastic college kids working on site and around Moshi. First an update on the construction followed by a taste of some of the fun we had last week.

Jenga (Building) Construction Update

This year, once again, we are laying brick (cement block or tafali in Swahili). We have already surpassed last year's record number of block carried to the second floor (first floor in Tanzania). We have now framed out all fourteen guestrooms on the floor with the walls on the center hall way nearly to the ceiling. We need to hang some lights in the hall way to see but unfortunately the guesthouse site does not yet have electricity. We will spend next week finishing off a few interior walls and "choos " (bathrooms) on the floor. Our goal would be to leave the site late next week in a position to finish the walls and be able to put the windows in late summer or early fall.

Father Val has arrived in Moshi, is doing well and is ready to work. His work plans include planting a few fruit trees around the guesthouse site. In the summer of 2008, we planted a papaya tree in the courtyard of the school. I ate some papaya last week on coffee break from that tree with the teachers and Terry Mulligan from the school. A couple of more fruit trees could be a nice addition for fresh juice for the guest of the guesthouse or the kids at the school.



Fun Things We have Done (Dola Dola)

Logistics have been a challenge this year due to the number of volunteers who have come to work. We maxed out last week at 28 people on Wednesday. The challenge moving that many people around Moshi arises in the morning on heading to Mailisita and then getting everyone back to their respective hotels at night. This entails multiple shifts of people filling up our mini bus that we are renting from the Upendo Children's Home and Father Kawishe's Extended Cab Toyota truck.

On Wednesday night the kids from Holy Cross wanted to come over to the Leopard Hotel from the Uhuru Hotel where they are staying. Taxis are available in Moshi but the main mode of transportation

for the locals is by a mini bus (mini van with numerous bolted down benches) which should only hold 15 people but usually is carrying twice that many people.

Matt Partain and the rest of the Holy Cross kids decided to rent a Dola Dola for the evening, including the assistant driver that hangs out the sliding side door (if it has one) and shouts out the stops and says where the Dola Dola is headed. They boarded the clean Dola Dola (it had been hosed out recently) and headed to the Leopard Hotel in downtown Moshi. Upon arriving at the hotel, the next challenge was how to make sure that the Dola Dola would be available after dinner. That challenge was easily handled when the kids invited the driver and his assistant upstairs to the back terrace where they would be dining with the rest of us. Transportation issue resolved with a little old college ingenuity.

School Kids Update

Not much happened at the school after mid week. The school was out on Wednesday (Saba Saba celebration – Saba saba, or 7/7, is the anniversary of the founding of the Tanzanian political party TANU...or at least that's what Wikipedia says) followed by two days of celebration for the ordination of a new priest from the parish. Hopefully, the kindergarten will be in session this week where all the visitors will see some of the potential future stars of the Stella Maris Primary School.

With the Holy Cross kids departing on Monday night (they have been in Moshi for nearly two weeks), the frequency of updates should pick up. We hope you enjoy these updates and I hope you are enjoying the description of the sights and sounds of Moshi/Mailisita.

Kwaheri from Tanzania/Moshi/Mailisita

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