

July 15, 2009

Jambo (Hello) from Tanzania,

This could be a short note tonight. Your Swahili word of the day is nimechoka. This means "I am tired". They do not call Wednesday hump day for nothing! There were a lot of construction activities so let's get to the meat of the subject.

Construction/Site Activities

We had an extremely productive day on the site. Last night, you will recall I lamented that we could use another bricklayer or two on the job to expedite the process. Well, we found the bricklayer and the process stepped up significantly. I think the site supervisor, Aloisi, was trying to see how fast he could work us today mortaring, building scaffolding and filling rooms with bricks to feed the bricklayers. We went up four rows of bricks today and the walls are now over six feet tall.

When we left the site last night, we had no bricks on the ground outside of the guesthouse. This evening when we left the site we had a little over three hundred on the ground. The Sister that supplies the bricks for the project (yes, the bricks are made by a nun) used a "just in time" delivery system for us today. At lunch time today, which is 1:30 PM, we were just about out of bricks and afraid we would run out and lose the brick layers for the rest of the week. While at lunch (we had our turkey for the main course today) we had 250 bricks delivered to the site and at the end of the day we had an additional 250 delivered. At least we now know what we will be doing in the morning!

Today we had a first on the construction site. We had a woman carry a brick from the loading window up all 28 stairs and placed it on a stack of bricks in a room. This could be an event in the Tanzanian construction Olympics that will be held on Friday at the site. In fact, to prove that the first trip was not a fluke, she did it five additional times. Sarah Coughlin performed the feat this afternoon. Her father, Dan, was starting to fade along with the rest of us but this inspired him to continue to trudge on this afternoon and make it to the 4:30 PM quitting time. Way to go Sarah!

Kids Program at the Kindergarten- a Note from Susanne Taylor

This morning the children greeted us by chanting 'Good Morning' and 'Welcome.' We thought that was an improvement over yesterday's greeting of 'wazungu' or 'white people!'

Today, we taught the children the names of the colors in English and they taught us in Swahili. We also learned how to tell them to sit down (ka). They were very excited that we were there and kept jumping out of their seats. We were surprised that they remembered how to sing 'Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes' which we first taught them in 2006.

This afternoon we spent some time sorting out the school supply closet. You will be pleased to know that the people of Mailisita are very careful with the supplies that we have brought here. I think we have enough crayons and pencils to supply all of Tanzania. Next year we will concentrate more on medical supplies!

What is on tap for tomorrow?

More bricks and more undungo. We are not going to ask for another bricklayer. Three bricklayers appear to be optimum. The kids program will be in full swing so there will be a lot of activities in the morning over at the Parrish.

Look forward to continuing this dialogue this week from the community of Mailisita Parrish!

Kwaheri (Good Bye) from the busy 13 in Moshi
From Moshi/Mailisita
Nathan Partain

One final note from Tanzania:

Congratulations to Father Val for passing his test (editors note: US citizenship test, and the reason he could not join the group in Tanzania this summer).
Now raise your right hand and repeat after me. Congratulations from Tanzania!