

Marimanti News

Issue 11

April 2010

Greetings once again from Marimanti. Actually I am writing this in Meru (a town at the foothills of Mount Kenya) as the school is closed for the Easter holidays. I had some difficulty getting out of Marimanti as the rains came early (end of February) and the route I normally take to Meru was impassable. However, thankfully I found an alternative route although it took me three hours longer!

The farmers have been delighted with the heavy rain and hopefully there will be a good harvest in July. After three years of drought there was much rejoicing as the rain poured down. The fifty trees, which we planted in the school, have really shot up and the children have been very pleased not to have to water them for the last two months.

Unfortunately the heavy rain brought floods and the river water became very polluted. Consequently, we had an outbreak of cholera in Marimanti and there were a number of deaths. All butcheries and cafes in the town have been closed down. I was very thankful that none of our children took sick and we were able to send them home safely at the end of term. We are hoping that the situation will have improved and that all restrictions will have been lifted when we return to school at the beginning of May.

The eight new children admitted in January have all settled well into their new surroundings and are making good progress. The picture below shows the three girls and five boys with their teacher, Mr. Gitunga.



Thanks to the kindness of friends at home, we have been able to order uniforms for these new children, and they should be ready for next term. We now have four classes--- nursery and classes 1-3. At the end of each term the children sit for the same exams as the hearing children (common tests set by the District Education Office) and to date they have been doing very well. Slowly the local community is beginning to accept that these deaf children are bright, intelligent and can make a worthwhile contribution to society.

Building Project

The four classrooms which we built are now occupied so we look forward to the team from Ireland coming in July to help build two more classrooms. This will mean that we can admit another group of children next January, which is the start of our school year. We also hope that some members of the team will be able to work with our teachers in making visual aids, which are so important in the teaching of deaf children. We have few teaching resources in Marimanti so the teachers here are looking forward to getting pictures etc from Ireland, to help them in their teaching.



Our kitchen/dining room is now complete!! The builders were painting the inside doors as I was leaving for Meru. Above you can see the entrance to the dining room on the left and the kitchen on the right. Next term we hope we can start furnishing it so that we will have some tables and chairs for the Irish team to sit on when they come!! At some stage we would also like to put up guttering so that we can collect the rain water and have clean drinking water for the children.

Registration

It may be some time before we can start using our new kitchen as the school is not yet registered. With no funds coming in from the government it is cheaper for me to buy the food from the nearby primary boarding school than buy the food and pay someone to cook it.

It seems that our file got lost in the Education Office in Nairobi so we have to start the whole registration process again! We had been waiting in the hope that the file would be found but with no success. It has been a big disappointment but the Methodist minister in Marimanti is helping me to collect all the relevant documents (again!) and then he will take them to Nairobi personally. Let us pray that this time the registration process will go smoothly as it is difficult to keep the school operating without government funding.

Local Wedding

This term, I had the privilege of being invited to the wedding of one of the young men, who was building our kitchen/dining room. I was chauffeur for the day. After the wedding, the groom usually brings his bride to his homestead on a bicycle and there they have the reception. I was able to bring the bride and groom to the homestead in my car which caused great excitement in Marimanti. There was much cheering and clapping as we drove through the town with the balloons flying!!



At the reception, the neighbors brought gifts for the young couple. The most important gifts were the livestock. Below you can see the bride and groom being presented with a cow and two goats. Tharaka is a semi arid area so livestock are highly valued. I brought the two oldest girls from school with me and we had a very enjoyable day. The celebrations went on until late in the evening with much traditional singing and dancing. The two girls had a

lot to tell the other children when they returned to school.



I

would like to thank you all very much indeed for all your prayers and support. Without such prayer and support it would not be possible for the school to continue operating and for the deaf children in Tharaka to be educated. On behalf of everyone in Kamatungu School for the Deaf thank you all very much.

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Give Thanks

- For completion of kitchen/dining room
- For good health despite cholera outbreak
- For safe traveling, especially in the difficult conditions during the rainy season
- For children's motivation and enthusiasm



to learn

- For encouragement and support of friends at home

- That God will be glorified in all that is undertaken

Please Pray

- That registration of school will be passed very soon.
- That new dining room will be furnished next term
- That there will be good relations among all the staff and among the children
- That God will bless all the preparations for the visit of the Irish team