



Boniface & Hamisi Project

Kenya, Africa

Progress Report on the Boniface and Hamisi Project May 26, 2001

Dear Friends of Boniface and Hamisi:

Northern Magic has arrived in Gibraltar, and before setting out to cross the North Atlantic, the last and scariest of the oceans we'll have to cross on this trip, I wanted to send you a brief update on our Boniface and Hamisi project in Kenya.

Since I last wrote, we experienced a few months of troubles transferring the money to Andrew in Kenya. Our Canadian bank had advised that they felt the electronic transfer was not the best route to go, and so instead the bank drew a draft and it was couriered directly to Andrew's bank in Kilifi. Well, predictably enough, the Kenya bank didn't deposit it, but just filed it away, so Andrew had to spend many weeks trying to track it down. It turned out the person who signed for it was a temporary staff and didn't know what to do with it, so he just put it away and forgot it! Finally, just last week Andrew located it, and so at last, three months after sending it and just days before we were preparing to cancel the draft and try again a different way, the money was finally received and deposited. All this was particularly troubling because Boniface and Andrew's father Kitsao, for whom the bulk of the money was intended to cover his medical treatment, remains on a support tube and was unable to progress with his treatment due to lack of funds. Andrew himself had the bad news of being put on a 38-day unpaid layoff from his job, due to tourism being low, which put further financial pressure on the family. We were pleased that Andrew's payment from the Ottawa Citizen, for the article he wrote for them, arrived in time to help support his family during the layoff.

In any event, that's all behind us now, and Kitsao has now been seen at the provincial hospital and we are awaiting the results of a new batch of tests. At last now the family can proceed as quickly as possible in curing his tumour. Thank you again, the two of you who specifically donated funds to save Kitsao's life. Andrew will keep us informed about the funds expended for his father's medical treatment and on his condition. Ironically, now that he's off work from his hotel and back in his home village, he's got more time to deal with his father's problem and also to communicate with us via e-mail

about his younger brothers, who are now in school thanks to your efforts. He also sends you his, and his family's heartfelt thanks for your generosity.

In other news, we heard from Kenneth at Plan International that he'd seen Boniface, and that Boniface had reported to him that he was sixth in his class at school. "Very encouraging," was Kenneth's comment. Andrew e-mailed Boniface's marks but we couldn't download the attachment so we can't include them with this report. We will in a future report.

Also, we have the delightful news to report that one of the donors to this fund, who has already been exceptionally generous in her contribution, has decided to donate some of the profits of her new hair salon for the purpose of helping Mark, who's just about to finish his course to become a hairstylist, establish his own salon. Her plan is to have a "Mark" day, one day per month, in which all her profits will be put aside to help him. We're really excited about this initiative, and will be helping tie her into the Citizen so that they will cover the story. We know where we're going to get our hair cut once we return to Ottawa! (Next time we're in Kenya, Mark has also promised to provide free hairstyling, so we'll be well coiffed from now on!)

Also, while we were in Greece, we spent a lot of time talking with Captain George Kotsovilis, who is also very interested in helping Africa, about our project and some of the things he wants to do, and has already done there. He is in the process of establishing a ferry service to Kenya and Tanzania and there is a possibility that if we ever wanted to send books or medical supplies, or other things to Africa, he'd be able to provide free transport. We're very much hoping to continue our contact with the good Captain on this topic of great mutual interest and enthusiasm. He was very interested in our project of buying a milk cow for Hamisi's family. Speaking of cows, Hamisi's cow "Magic" is doing fine. She should be ready for servicing soon, after which she'll start producing milk, and income.

So that's all the news for this update. We hope you are all well and enjoying the beginning of summer. It's warming up in the Med (we are now in bare feet again) and the weather is beautiful. But it's time to brave the stormy North Atlantic and make our way home, where we're looking forward to meeting all of you in person!

Cheers from the Rock,

Diane and Herbert
S/V Northern Magic