



Boniface & Hamisi Project

Kenya, Africa

Progress Report on the Boniface and Hamisi Project **Nov. 2, 2001**

Dear Friends of Boniface and Hamisi:

This report is long overdue, and we apologize for that!

We're finally getting through the immediate rush of returning home and attending to all the things that were involved in that. Although we're still not entirely unpacked yet, I've finished writing the first book, and we've now gone through all our slides, videotapes, and mail from our years away. So at last I can sit down and let you all know what has happened with the Boniface and Hamisi project since I last wrote, which was from Gibraltar, so far away!

On the Kenya side, we're very pleased to report that Boniface and Andrew's father, Kitsao, finally had his much-needed surgery on September 21. Delays in getting the funds transferred (the bank lost the cheque and then waited more than a month to clear it) delayed his surgery, but Kitsao is doing well after 10 days in hospital, and he's home now. He was operated on for kidney stones, as well as a tumor, presumably in his prostate. The stones and the mass were removed, and we still haven't heard the results of the testing. All the bills for the surgery are not yet in, but Andrew did report that the cost was somewhat higher than what we had anticipated. He has paid for it out of his own funds, but we have promised to reimburse him once the final bill is known.

Boniface is doing well at school, and has asked whether we would fund an extra summer course and some extra school books. We have agreed to do that, but are waiting to hear the amount needed. The school year is almost finished (it runs from January to December), so he wants to study during the Christmas break. He's still hoping to be able to go to university after finishing high school in a couple of years.

Hamisi's cow, Magic, is also doing well and is, as Andrew reported, "in a family way". This is excellent news, because as soon as she bears a calf and has weaned it, not only will Hamisi's herd have doubled, but he'll have milk to sell and begin earning income. Andrew's family has been providing water to Hamisi's cow, free of charge, until Magic begins producing milk. (Andrew's family has a single tap in their compound, while

Hamisi's does not, and Hamisi has to walk each day to get water for the cow as well as general family use.)

Meanwhile, on the home front, things have also been going very well. Thanks to the stellar efforts of the Homecoming Committee, more than \$10,000 was raised at our Petrie Island homecoming party, to be split between the Boniface and Hamisi fund and the Friends of the National Parks Foundation fund, our other special project in Indonesia. So many people participated in that wonderful event, but we must make special thanks to Diane King and Paul Couch, who organized it, the City of Ottawa and the Friends of Petrie Island, Capital Sound and Light, BeaverTails, Hershey's Chocolate Shoppe, Pierre and Mario's Independent Grocer in Orleans, the Orleans Lion's Club, Jean-Louis Grandmaitre, Fallingbrook School and Fallingbrook Community Association, OC Transpo, and many others who all participated in the event, and contributed to the money that was raised there. BeaverTails and Pierre and Mario's Independent Grocer both donated food free of charge, which raised most of the money collected that day. We'd also like to once again thank my father, Frank King, who took care of the donations and the account while we were away.

From those proceeds we have already sent \$5100 to Indonesia, which is a major contribution to their project caring for endangered species and helping protect the forest from illegal loggers. The remainder we have in a special account. We did get some funny looks at the bank when Herbert and I arrived with more than \$10,000 in bills and coins from the party! We had to make a special report to the RCMP to make it clear we were not in the money laundering business!

An Orleans lawyer, Raymond Leclair, has kindly offered to handle creating a non-profit charitable organization for our project, at no cost, for which we are extremely grateful. When that is in place, which may take some time, we will be in a position to give out tax receipts. Until then, however, we have a special interest-bearing account set up in our names for contributions.

Since our arrival home, we made the decision to use our frequent public speaking engagements for the purpose of raising funds for our two special projects - the Boniface and Hamisi Fund and the Friends of the National Parks. This has resulted in a steady flow of contributions, one that will increase as we pick up our speaking schedule once the book is published. At each speaking engagement, we sell "Northern Magic armchair T-shirts" and have a donation box for people to fill, and they do!

In addition, many organizations are voluntarily making contributions to the project. Hershey Canada sent in \$500, the Rockcliffe Yacht Club had a raffle and raised \$100, and people who came to our first slide show at the Ottawa Citizen donated more than \$300. Karen Hooper, who created the Northern Magic T-shirts, gave us a cheque for more than \$600, plus a supply of paid-for T-shirts (provided at cost, courtesy of Yvan Dubeau, of Safeguard Business Systems). We are selling the T-shirts for \$20, the entire proceeds of which go to the fund. If you would like to buy one, let us know by e-mail. The Ottawa Citizen has also promised a contribution. And cheques from individuals

continue to come in. The total amount in the fund is now in excess of \$14,000. We are still communicating with Andrew to decide on the very best use of these funds. If any of his brothers decide to go to university, we will need to have a large amount in reserve. In the meantime, everyone is going to school who should be, and we are pleased at their progress.

In addition, Karen Sharp, who owns Charly's Hair Salon on Richmond Rd. in the west end, continues to donate her profits from all haircuts she does on the first Tuesday of each month. Many friends of Northern Magic are making the effort to have their haircuts done on that day, and we thank them, and Karen, very much. The money from those haircuts is being set aside specifically to help Andrew and Boniface's brother, Mark Thuva, who has now finished his hairdressing course, be able to establish his own salon. Karen is an inspirational and wonderful woman, as well as an excellent hairstylist, so we do recommend you visit her salon, whether on the first Tuesday of each month, or any other day!

The Life Network has been spending many days filming us, for their cable TV program, "Things We Do For Love". They will be having a special half-hour documentary on us and the Boniface and Hamisi project, which will air in the next few months. We'll let you know when it's on. It will feature video footage of Boniface, Hamisi and their families. We hope that many more people will be motivated to contribute to the fund once they see everything you have done for it so far. We're hoping we can grow it much bigger, and begin to do some really interesting projects like twinning Canadian schools with Kenyan ones, and providing even more scholarship to deserving students.

Thank you again for your help and participation in the project, and we'll continue to keep you informed. And we have not forgotten about the party we promised you!

In closing, I've attached a number of photos of our - and your - friends in Kenya. They have been added to the Northern Magic slide shows which you can access from the link to the left or by clicking [here](#).

Best regards,

Diane and Herbert
Northern Magic