



Aug 10, 2023 Newsletter

A SAD / GOOD NEWS NEWSLETTER!!

In our last newsletter we shared briefly about the June team trip, focusing on the work done by Tom Sterk to initiate a dairy cow business as a fund and food producer by and for the students, faculty and staff of Kibbuse's Nyamarwa Vocational Training Center.



This month we have some exciting new news, some sobering news, and a number of wonderful photos provided by Principal Stella Nabatosi and other staff members.

However, we first want to share some sad news. We told you that the "dairy cow man" Tom Sterk had interrupted chemo therapy against pancreatic cancer to join the June mission. In doing so, he literally laid down his life as a true friend of Kibbuse. Only God knows whether he would have dodged the bullet by staying at home. His selfless decision has already blessed the school community, and the blessings have just begun, as you will soon see.

Since then, Tom has learned the cancer has spread to a number of other organs and can no longer be eliminated by surgery or chemo. He was given the choice of continuing on chemo or to discontinue it for the sake of a better quality of life for the time he has remaining and throw himself on the mercy of God. He has chosen the latter. In fact, he has already packed his van and is making a trip to Montana to be with close relatives for a while. Then, he would like to return to Uganda one more time if the Lord permits. He welcomes your prayers.



The fruit of his ministry has already appeared in a wonderful way. Both cows have delivered healthy calves, actually a month sooner than expected. As you can see in the photo both calves appear healthy and they are beautiful to look at! We do not yet have information about milk production, but will get to that in our next newsletter.

We have just learned that the staff and students who are caring for the calves have named them "Faith" and "Hope!" What appropriate names. They are by name a very fitting prayer for our friend Tom. May God bless him every day with a double portion of faith and hope, through Christ who strengthens him.

As to Tom Sterk's desire to return, Board Chair Nate Kamps would love to go with him if he is well enough after his Montana trip. Nate wants to see the dormitory first-hand, track progress with the dairy business, get a better handle on what the priorities of the Foundation are for the school, the faculty (most haven't had a raise since before Covid) and the Good Samaritan Clinic.

The dormitory, now fully enclosed roofed and plastered inside and out, with window frames installed (panes are due to be soon). All that remains to be done is landscaping, painting (inside and out) and furnishing. Money has been donated toward new metal-frame beds and an order for at least 48 will soon be made.



There are presently 30 male and 23 female students enrolled in the school's five programs: Auto Mechanics and Metal-working, Construction, Driver's Training, Agriculture, Sewing and Tailoring.

Hair-braiding Suggested as New Program

Recently, it has been brilliantly suggested that we recommend and support the start of a hair-styling program. This is not a hair-brained idea (pun definitely intended). Even in rural areas, one of the first luxuries that women pursue is the styling of their hair. It is an honorable and time-tested business, especially in the larger towns and cities, and could promise a good career for those who have the talent and inclination. It also pays well. We don't know what the local market would command, but the lady who braided the hair of all but one or two of the 2023 team's younger women, made more than three times as much per hour as is paid to local construction workers! Of course, the girls on the team were able to be more generous than a local client would be.

Next Construction Goal

Our next major construction goal is to transform the never-completed "Hill House" (Also known as the Spense House, for its original donors) into a faculty residence. We have raised about 60% of what is needed to start and finish that job with one concerted effort. Having this done will greatly reduce monthly overhead by eliminating most of the need to rent faculty housing (paid by the school as part of faculty compensation). We'd love to see it done by start of classes next March.

In Closing

SO, FRIENDS, please continue to pray for Tom Sterk as he travels and God's care for him on his travels. Pray for his family, particularly his daughter Nikki, an RN, who wants to return to Uganda to follow up with the dairy project and help at the clinic. Pray for God's guidance for the faculty and students who are caring for the cows and other school livestock. Pray for wisdom about staff salaries. And finally, pray for God's provision for salary increases and ongoing construction projects.

Much love and many thanks to all of you who give, have given and will give to this great local ministry. Through you we are lifting Jesus to a community and lifting the community out of poverty. God bless you all!

Contact Us:

Email: Info@friendsofkibbuse.org
Postal: Friends of Kibbuse, PO Box 592, Jenison, MI 49429
Website: www.friendsofkibbuse.org

Click [unsubscribe](#) if you no longer want to receive this newsletter.

Donate