



Newsletter: August 2010 Part 1 Douglas McFalls

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Dear Friends and supporters:

It is August 14th, and my plate is full. So much is going on, so much to do and so much to share. To make this manageable for all of us, I am going to break August's Newsletter into two that I intend to send out over the next three weeks. They'll start with a summary of the three major components of my work in East Africa, as well as a section on my upcoming visit to the US. Let's get started! Enjoy the read.

MaKuYa 2010 – The third annual MaKuYa Traditional Culture and Performing Festival – named for the Makonde, Makua and Yao tribes it celebrates - has taken place.

From the public perspective it was a glorious success – an estimated 3500 – 4000 visitor, 500+ performers, 27 dance groups with new dances, more traditional costumes, and energy for three days of non-stop performances. The government was pleased, the media impressed, and the donors satisfied. The pictures will speak for themselves...*but they won't show the challenges of performers led to strike by two "rebel" groups for higher compensation, the stress of negotiations and the pain of ingratitude.* That's show biz! The show must go on!

For more details and great pictures, tune into an upcoming Newsletter!



Maasai Boma Schools – Hope in beadwork

In three weeks I'll be traveling north to visit the Maasai in Rombo, Kenya. This time I will be traveling with Natalie Everett, a jewelry designer and friend from Seattle who is coming to partner with me and the Maasai women in a jewelry design and production initiative to develop a steady, sustainable, non-weather related (i.e. drought resistant), income source. If successful, this project will support families through jewelry sales income and the school through available school fees.

Also connected with this initiative is Alison Nagasue and Ivy Chang – Jewelry Designer in NYC. I have a meeting with the Ford Foundation in September about support for this desperately needed project. I am grateful to have partners in this effort.



FEATURE STORY

The Artisans of ADEA TZ prepare to stand on their own.

It was working with artisans in Mtwara that initially lured me to Tanzania to partner with Philipo Lulale. That was over seven years ago! From day one it was our intent that the artisans be ultimately independent; prepared with the training to make quality craft, the discipline to produce it dependably, the connections to access national and international markets and the confidence to keep things going. Though we never expected it to take quite so long, December 1 is the target date for the “break up” of the center for African Development through Economics and the Arts and the artisans formally known as ADEA.



Will they succeed? Are they prepared? What are their prospects? What are their challenges? Keep on reading.

THE LEAD UP TO THIS EVENT:

Since its inception in 2003, it has always been the goal of ADEA in Tanzania for the artisans to eventually break away from ADEA to earn greater returns and establish their own gift production and sales business. The road to reach this day was much longer than I had imagined it would be, naively believing that they merely lacked market access and appealing designs. Along with these two elements, an entirely new and previously unknown discipline of production, quality and transparency was required for them to understand to succeed in the national (and potentially international) gift marketplace. Now after seven Skill Training Workshops, numerous weekly and monthly artisan meetings, countless hours of one-on-one training, a strong repertoire of gift products unique in Tanzania, and a handful of active clients internationally – it is time to cut the umbilical chord; to kick the chicks out of the nest to see if they can fly.



Though we have been talking about taking this step for years, we broke the news to the artisans in June. We were careful to assure them that ADEA was not dumping them, but that we would be nearby to be their advisors and monitor their progress over the year(s) ahead. This relieved them of their greatest fear, being left to swim on their own without a lifeguard on duty. Philipo then proceeded to explain to them their options related to forming a legally recognized group/business: A Cooperative, a CBO (Community

Based Organization), or a company limited by shares. They discussed these options over the following week and came together for a vote. A cooperative it is! The next step was to elect a leadership team. Ten nominations were put forward. A vote was cast for a five member team. Msuao Tiago, Charles Msoga, Sarah Ligomgadji, Filbert Emanuely, and Nassoro Seulemani were elected.



A Gift from Chicago (and God): In 2008 (I think) - While visit in a dear friend in Chicago I met Stacy McCaskill (a friend of my friend). Stacy is a professor of international business at Rock Valley College, and the advisor for SIFE (Students in Free Enterprise). SIFE has supported us with the purchase of products over the past two years, but the greatest gift to date was Stacy's recent two week visit to Mtwara. She worked closely with Philipo and me, the artisans and the new leadership team. Stacy gave full day workshops on leadership strategies, lead group discussions breaking the 35+ artisans into small groups to challenge their sharing and listening skills. She sat with our accountant to see how he was managing.



(Fortunately, she was pleased with what we are doing, with just a few suggestions.) She sat in the weekly artisan division meeting and challenged them to be more decisive – and wonderfully pushed them to that point. Stacy's professional experience, loving personality, and teaching skill came at a perfect time for the artisan's new start. Stacy is committed to continue working with ADEA and the artisans over the years ahead to ensure their successful transition to independence and professionalism.

(Her being an American, an English speaker, the same age, a devoted Christian and active in cross-cultural work made her a refreshing and healing house guest for me as well – not to mention an amazing cook!!!!)



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Power Point by Stacy New leaders enjoyin the challenge – List out traits of good leadership

Last week the artisans arranged a meeting with the government officers related to Cooperatives. The representatives explained the procedures required to establish a cooperative, and the challenges to maintaining one. Since our leadership team has already been selected, this week they will begin the registration process immediately. This is very exciting.

They will have a strong start with a new order in from Germany valued at \$1500, a new shop opening in Dar es Salaam to consign our products, a few new interested buyers, and the Christmas orders beginning from shops in Tanzania.



On September 1st – the ADEA Gift Shop will close, to reopen under new management when all is in place. We pray for the best, and will keep a distant eye on them and I'll let you know what happens.



A visit to the USA: To reconnect and consider the shape of things to come.

If all goes as planned, I'll be taking a break from East Africa beginning September 21. With the MaKuYa Festival wrapped up, and the artisans soon to be fending for themselves, I need time on the home front to regroup myself, to reflect on all that has transpired over the past seven years, and to gain wise council and prayer on how best to

move forward with the Maasai project. I see it as a sort of sabbatical (has it really been that long? Well, I guess it does feel like it). I've grown a lot and changed. My worldview has changed. My faith in God has matured. My view of East Africa and development sobered.

I will begin my trip in New Hampshire for a week-long seminar at His Mansion where my college friends Michael and Emily Tso serve. I have forgotten the precise subject of the training, but I am happy I'll be in community with time to talk, listen, share and learn (in English) as well as the welcome company of dear friends, and experiencing the splendor of fall in New England. From there I plan to buy a train pass and cross the country giving me time to reflect, and meet with some of you along the way to share what's going on, to get your wisdom, perspective and prayers, and catch up with your lives. *So if you are interested in a houseguest – let me know, I'll try to route my trip accordingly.*

I plan a return visit to East Africa in January to monitor progress on the various projects and the formal wrapping up of artisan work in Mtwara...whether I return to the USA or not has yet to be seen...(sabbaticals normally last a year don't they?).

Spiritual Note: All I have to say is that I was recently haggard and overwhelmed with the immensity of all there is and was to do here – but, I thank God, I am doing so much better with the support and prayers of friends, and a faith that grounds me even in the storms. I truly have lead a blessed life.

Recommendation: Love Talk by Les and Leslie Parrott – I don't have a partner, but I leaned a lot about myself, how I'm wire conversationally, and how others are different. If you have a partner, (and even if you don't) I'd recommend it! It feels great to improve with age!

I hope you've had a wonderful summer (assuming you're in the northern hemisphere)

- Douglas



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