



Newsletter: July 2011 Douglas McFalls

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I returned to the United States in mid-April tired from the intensity of living and working in East Africa for so long. After eight years of functioning in a cultural strikingly different from my own, speaking a language as different from English as apples and dragon fruit, functioning in a land of constant Florida summer, and managing life on a lean budget it seemed the right time for a break for evaluation and restoration. This time in my homeland (the USA) is a welcome period for reflection, revitalization and reassessment as to the best way to move ahead with my work in Africa and ADEA. I count myself blessed to have lived the adventures I have, wondering what more await me?



Three weeks ago I found unexpected inspiration from Hollywood.

Uncovering the unsolved mysteries

In May, my host family invited me to order a movie from Netflix (for those of you reading this outside of the USA, this is a mail in DVD movie club). Still enamored with the wonders of the pharos after my 2010 visit to Egypt, I ordered the 1978 adaptation of Agatha Christie's, "Death on the Nile". Set in the 1920's, a young American heiress to a British fortune develops a string of adversaries who pursue her and

her recently acquired husband onto a sensuous first-class Nile cruise (just the type I dream of with linen suits, palm fedoras, crystal and glamorous evening attire). As to be expected in a murder mystery, this young heiress is soon found dead in her bed from a bullet wound to the head. Who did it, as all had motive, was the challenge for the French...excuse me, Belgian detective Inspector Poirot to solve. (I will leave it to you to watch the film to learn how the mystery was creatively solved).

After I had finished watching the film the most unexpected and exhilarating sensation came over me; not only did I thoroughly enjoy the film, but like the clever detective, I felt inspired to investigate the unsolved mysteries ADEA faces with the artisans, performers, teachers and others with whom I work. And so, happily filled with new gusto, I am examining our past efforts, paying special attention to areas where people seem reticent and unable to move forward. What were they missing? What had we failed to teach them? What did I fail to understand in their culture? Why were some of the teachings unheeded? What undetected obstacles do they still face? So, like an investigator, I am making a strong analysis of what has been left undone in Tanzania, and through carefully reviewing eight years of experience and efforts, I am formulating the most effective way to move forward. It's wonderful to feel so inspired!



MaKuYa Traditional Performing Arts Festival

LATE BREAKING NEWS – OUR DREAMS COMING TRUE!

Last week, I received a text message from my ADEA co-director in Tanzania, Philipo Lulale. He had been invited by the District Cultural Officer (DCO) of the Mtwara district of Maasai to a planning meeting for a traditional culture and performing arts festival. I could hardly believe it. Our hope that a local team would catch the passion to coordinate a festival inspired our MaKuYa festival was now happening! It seems the DCO gathered 200 elders to discuss the crisis of increasing loss of traditional culture in the region. Philipo, along with Dominc Chonde of our MaKuYa team, were invited to advise on a festival proposed for November. ADEA's 2010 MaKuYa festival was hosted in Maasai, so this DCO was deeply involved in the logistical planning and in the drama of striking performers (and what seemed would be the end of MaKuYa). He had great interest in what ADEA was doing, but I was doubtful that his interest would turn into action. I am glad to be proven wrong. As tempting as it is to want to contribute my own advice, I am restraining myself, leaving ADEA's contribution to my Tanzanian team members, and choosing to remain optimistic that the passion of the DCO of Mtwara can push the idea into a reality of a Tanzanian-produced festival.



FSOT (Foreign Service Officer Test)– Upon returning to the US in April I decided to take the Foreign Service Officers' Test to give me a short term goal to rest my mind from the challenges in Africa. This exam is the most common channel for entering work in the US State Department assignments in US Embassies throughout the world. The soonest exam date was June 7. It was a fascinating month of intensive study on the US government, national and world events and history and a myriad of other subjects. I loved it!

UPSET TO OPPORTUNITY: Last week, in early July, I was as pleased to learn that I had passed the intensive multiple-choice part of the exam, only to discover that my essay (for which I was given 30 minutes to process and write) did not receive high enough marks to allow me to continue the application process for this year. I was naturally a bit surprised at this letdown, because I know that my writing skills are not abysmal. As I am prayerfully recovering from this blow, the glow of opportunity is filling me. If one fails an essay writing exam, one should study. Here is a golden chance for me to learn to be a stronger (and faster) writer, and God knows I won't be for want of material. So get ready for a lot more stories out of Africa in future newsletter (some have you have even proposed a book!)



News from Rombo, Kenya ADEA's investment in Tipape

ADEA has committed to support the Maasai Boma School teachers through 2011 while Tipape Loomu (the director) and the community try to solve the crisis of the parents' inability to pay school fees due to their near complete loss of cattle in the recent drought. ADEA (USA) is adopting the strategy of better supporting its local leadership; by freeing Tipape from the burden of his tuition and school costs at DayStar University in Nairobi, he is being freed up to dedicate more

time to help his community address their crisis on their own in the context of Kenya. He is currently taking a break between terms to spend the month of July in Rombo; meeting with the families, school leaders, and teachers to assess the situation and determine what can be done.

Recently I have learned from Tipape that crops have failed again this year, and that a food crisis is foreseen for September. ADEA may be asked to support an emergency food program for students, like the one we implemented in 2010.

Some Emerging Plans for 2012

- 🐘 Mini Bus for Cholo to start his Street Kids and Elder Care program.
- 🐘 Marketing, Customer Care and Money Management Workshops
- 🐘 MaKuYa Photo Book – the Cultural Discoveries of ADEA in Mtwara, Tanzania –
- 🐘 Maasai Beadwork production linked with US Jewelry Designers (trying again).
- 🐘 Product Development for Mtwara Artisans and Maasai Beadworkers.
- 🐘 And surely more

Thank you for your interest and support,

Douglas, Kupikita, Oloikurrukurr

Spiritual Note: If anyone wishes to significantly change or advance his life, he must have the courage to look at it as it is, and himself as he really is, versus what he thought it should be, and who he expected he would be.

“History that is not true is not history” – Abraham Lincoln – 16th President of the USA