

Steeves Summary #22: A Bumpy Safari

October 2005



Midterm is here! After 6 weeks of intense on-the-job training as dorm parents among a few other roles we've played at RVA, we have had our first official breathing time. The dorm girls went to Tanzania, Uganda, and other parts of Kenya for a five day break. Many staff also expressed a need for a break. We left for Nakuru National Park with two other new families at RVA, as well as a student teacher from Minnesota. There were seven adults and seven children ranging from preschool to Grade five. We headed for Nakuru Saturday. It took three hours driving on vibrating road with endless potholes. The main highway across Kenya is a two lane highway which is theoretically paved but in reality is far rougher than most dirt roads. There are many slow trucks and vehicles are continuously passing each other. Passing in Kenya is an art form with disaster always a few seconds away. Seeing cars approaching in your lane is normal. I must say I am getting use to it...a bit. Due to the bumpy roads, one of the youngest girls was sick on the way. On the way back, the student teacher was extremely ill possibly due to side effects of malarial medicine. We had to stop several times.



Regardless of the stress we endured for the night away, we can not forget the thousands of flamingos along the edge of the lake. If we hadn't gone, we wouldn't of witnessed the beautiful pink sunset over the lake. Our children couldn't even remember being at Lake Nakuru four years ago. It was the other children's first safari. They got to see their first well-known African animals like the giraffe, baboon, rhino and zebra in the wild. The trip also helped the families get to know each another better.

On the way home from a far-from-perfect safari, it occurred to me that our safari was similar to our overall experiences working at RVA. As we work here we experience a bumpy road with pot holes and numerous obstacles coming directly towards us. With the dorm girls, we have dealt with homesickness, fear of the unknown, jealousy, stealing, minor health issues, spreading possessions all over campus and failing tests. On the flip side, we have seen them become more responsible as they adjust to grade seven. They have learned to have concern for each other, including how to forgive and truly forget. They are learning to study ahead of time and pass tests due to their extra efforts. They are learning that their actions have consequences.

The Canadians of Kijabe got together for a Thanksgiving meal before mid-term. There were about 45 of us there. It seems so different not to have leaves changing colour and the cool autumn days! We are thankful that we are supporting the work of so many missionaries, and have the opportunity to see some of the marvelous beauty of Africa. Thank you for standing behind us.

Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; his love endures forever. Psalm 107:1

Blessings,

Bernadine, Michael, Julianne and Evan

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