

Trudy in Africa
July 29-31

Hello All,

We arrived in Africa at 9:00pm, went through a line to obtain our Visas, paid \$100.00, went through customs, gathered our luggage and we were on our way. David Mtui from Ngateu Secondary School and Elizabeth, a friend of Nelson's who now lives here, met us at the airport in a bus/van. All our personal (one bag each) and all the school supplies (packed in larger suitcases, one or two bags each) were tethered to the top of the van. The trip was dark as there are few street lights and it was cloudy so no stars (darn). The road to Arusha was paved, but then we turned off to go up toward our lodging and the school.



Now, I had Googled Google Earth to see the overview of the country and saw the city streets of Arusha, but Google Maps-Street View did not show this road! Oh my! I'll never complain about our gravel road again. I'll try to get a picture of the 45 degree hill complete with moguls, my words just can't describe it. The van went right up it and so did we, hanging on all the way.

We are staying at Freedom Lodge.
Here are a few pictures.

I'm on the second floor. Here is the view from the top of the steps. It is beautiful, lush and green with flowers blooming, topiary trees, hedges and walkways.

In the morning I can hear birds chirp and squawk, coo and crow. The rooster starts crowing at 4:30. The sun comes up at 7:00. I was up and walking around at 6:45 yesterday 7/31, with only the roosters, local cows, doves and other birds saying "good morning."



We ate breakfast together. There are 16 of us: David and Mary Nelson, Jennifer and Sarah (age 8) (Nelson's daughter and grand-daughter), Lauren (Jennifer's God daughter, age 14) Rob and Julianna Alspaugh, and their daughters Kahli and Mya (ages 18 and 15), John and Carrie and their kids Benjamin and Lesha (ages 14 and 11), Marilyn Ahlf (ageless), Dwan Bowen (a friend of Safi from Rotary) and me. (Yesterday was my b'day. My dear husband and daughters celebrated my b'day before I left and the group sang to me on the bus. But because of time zones, I lost several hours of birthday.....so I'm still ALMOST 61.)

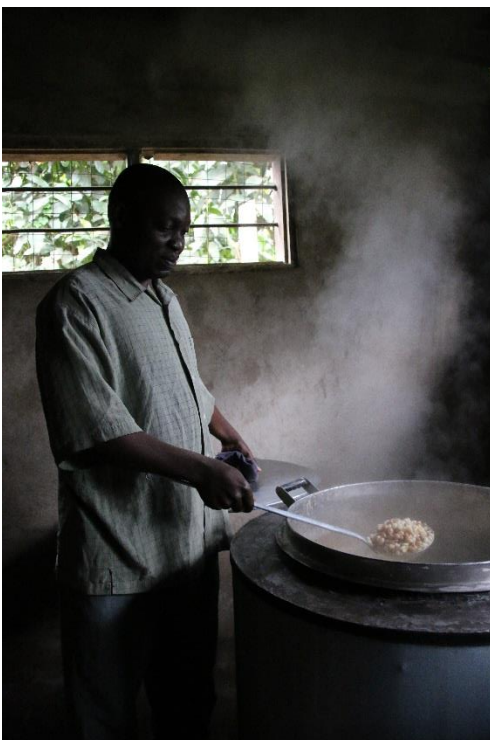
Then we walked to the school, through the community, about 20 minutes from Freedom Lodge and were greeted warmly by the staff and teachers at Ngateu. David, Mary, John, Carrie, Benjamin, Lesha and Marilyn have all been here 3 or more times before so they knew most of the staff, hugs and hugs and more hugs. Those of us newbies were also hugged and hugged and welcomed!

Tanzanians are gentle, soft spoken (for the most part), speak English or are learning the language, and laugh at my attempts to speak Swahili. And oh yes, they are patient! They repeat and repeat and repeat the words for me and break up the words or phrase into syllables. With eye contact and close personal contact (no personal bubble space) they communicate they are willing to hang in there with me until my mouth utters the sounds that are more correct than not.



Here are some of the people we met at the school.

Students in Form 3.



The cafeteria cook making beans and rice for 150 students, two huge vats of delicious smelling lunch.



A proud man and his transportation.

Students at Ngateu Secondary School.

(Check out the cool book bag!)



Here are a few students from the primary school across the street from Ngateu Secondary School. They were VERY willing to let me take their pictures.

I'll write more later,

Love to you All!

Trudy

