



Expanding
Opportunities

www.exop.org

ANNUAL ACTIVITIES REPORT 2017



For our Fiscal Report:

See the Annual Audit of Accounts for Kenya.
and/or
the 990 for USA

Expanding Opportunities

Highlights:

- ***All children in JWHS found sponsors***
- ***Continued sponsorship of children in education***
 - ***A sad tragedy***
 - ***Lots of wonderful visitors***

JWHS, a Children's Home

Thanks to a wonderful volunteer in the USA, most of the donors to Expanding Opportunities have been permanently recorded in hanging quilts! The last three were hung in 2016. In 2017, a group of visitors arrived and as they were looking over the quilts one exclaimed, "That is my father!! How did his name get there!" I guess he was one of the "silent" donors who give and don't tell. We are very grateful. Not only is it good for the children to see how many people it takes to make it possible for them to have food, shelter, clothing medical care, and education, but even give pleasant surprises to our visitors.



January is back to school month in Kenya. Students enter their new classes. Uniforms and shoes are new or repaired, books and backpacks. Just as September in the USA is a bit costly and exciting, so January is in Kenya. There are three terms in schools in Kenya. January starts the first term, followed by May, and August. November is the time of stress and testing to see if you just crammed or studied.

During holidays visitors come and enrich the children with art projects, first aid lessons or a bit of fun with where in the world and what do you eat? Once in a while we get to do a small improvement project.

We were looking forward to a partnership with another home. That didn't work but both organizations were enriched by the effort to try.



In 2017 we had two candidates for their KCPE. That is the examination that they take at the end of primary school. Michael Ngugi and Jon Eren have been with us for many years, Mike at JWHS and Jon living with his grandmother. Michael will enter high school in 2018 and Jon will enter a vocational school.

Otieno completed his KCSE, graduating secondary school. He is hoping for college in 2018.



At the end of 2017, the children's department was seeking homes for some children that were housed in the jail for lack of space. They were to seek their families but the year was running out and they needed a better place than jail. So we accepted two boys. They were to stay until December 31 but of course our hearts were captured so when the government was still unable to seek their families, we accepted them. As our other children all finally had



sponsors the search for sponsors began. Early 2018 found them almost fully sponsored. THANK YOU

Welcome to JWHS Issac and Mushangi. We will continue to seek what relatives they have and attempt any type of reconciliation that is safe and uplifting for the boys.

STEMS:

Success Through Education Money and Support

Expanding Opportunities accepts children and carries them through High School and often a short course after that. Sponsors that have become attached to their sponsored child will often carry them beyond. This year we were blessed to have one of our long term children graduate from college.

BUT a horrible tragedy almost took away the joy! Three attackers got Jon on his way home. They cut him with machetes, stole his phone and small money he had and left him to bleed. Thanks to a local well-wisher and a "brother" from JWHS who rushed to his aide he was taken to a hospital. Thanks to generous donors, he was able to get the necessary surgery on his hand. He has gained almost full use of the hand. He was healed enough to attend his graduation in November. Jon's sponsor has assisted him since 2007 and her pride in being able to contribute to his success was overflowing!



Often a residential placement may not be the best thing for a child or the best use of donor funds. There may be a Grandmother, Aunt, Uncle or other relative willing to lovingly provide a home for their family's children but they do not have enough resources to pay for their education. Public education exists but it is not free and uniforms are required.



Expanding Opportunities assists many children with their school fees, uniforms, books etc. so they may remain in the love and nurture of their relatives while we assist with one of the greatest expenses in raising children in Kenya.

These two children are brother and sister. They are orphans being raised by their aunt who is a single parent with 4 children. Uniforms and books are a huge extra expense. Expanding Opportunities has placed these children on a waiting list.



The government of Kenya does not allow students to continue in a children's home after the age of 18. Some sponsors wish to continue the support of the child through high school and some on to college. Boarding school becomes the common solution to this problem. They no longer live at the children's home but receive support assistance through their education. They come home to visit on their holidays and catch us all up on boarding school life.

Expanding Opportunities has been assisting a young orphan in primary school for several years. He lives with his aunt who is a small farmer. Most of his primary years he was Number One in his class. This year he entered high school. His performance was A- throughout his first year in high school!!

We serve many children and would enjoy telling you about all of them but the book would be quite large.

Gordon Clem Academy



Gordon Clem Academy

Beleagured by financial and political troubles, Gordon Clem Academy was not reopened in 2017. Behind the scenes negotiations were going on to turn the school over to another entity. The Anglican Church of Kenya Marsabit Diocese was interested.

While the school sleeps, Expanding Opportunities is assisting some students with school fees in other schools and establishing Gordon Clem Scholars to assist students with their educational expenses. .

Books for Kenya

Expanding Opportunities plays a small role in purchasing and delivering text books to students.

In addition to purchasing textbooks, Expanding Opportunities distributes small devotional books donated by churches in the USA and reading and text books carried from the USA.

Expanding Opportunities is exploring the option of establishing a small Study Center which would provide access to text books, enrichment materials and a place to study until 9 pm.

Friends Across the Ocean

2017 brought several visitors to Kenya. Starting the year off was a family journey.

This family brought the shoes collected by another



volunteer. To that collection they added backpacks and uniforms and spent a few days at the local school blessing the many children who would have been sent home to get a proper uniform. In addition to being able

to bless many children, they also taught FIRST AID to several schools and an Equine therapy program.



A regular annual visitor brings her wonderful projects for the children to exercise their creative side. Art on Burlap, math challenges and lots of other fun was brought by Maggie!



Visitors often see a need and fill it for us. Maggie always buys WATER!! It is hard for the places in this world with sufficient water to understand the difficulties capturing and meting out the blessing of rainfall. Maggie visits during the dry season, less bugs and less water. She often purchases trucks of water to fill the cisterns and get us through until the rains come.

Another volunteer this year saw many needs and one that we constantly grateful for is a "REAL" ladder. The blue gum pole ladder with many rungs rickety or missing was a bit much for those that are aware and teach emergency medicine. We are ever grateful for the aluminum ladder that is used almost daily.



It would be a lot to mention all the gifts. But I would like to mention here that we also have several generous Kenyans who bring some gifts from their gardens, eggs, red peppers, sugar. We so much appreciate it as we understand the sacrifice made to bring your gifts.

Volunteers and donors are such special people. Some international visitors cannot travel all the way to Kenya but they work at home. A volunteer collected many pairs of shoes for distribution in Kenya, church people donated books and Bibles.

A volunteer spends countless hours entering bookkeeping data and working on the websites. Funds donated create independent men and women with hearts to give back.

Artisan Support

This year we continued our visits with and purchases from many of our regular artisans.



Our artwork is purchased at Fair Market value, or a listing arrangement made, shipped and sold through ecommerce, fairs and festivals and a brick and mortar shop in Belfast, Maine.

Profits are used to support the projects of

the organization.



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Camp Forest USA



Camp Forest is a wilderness Day and expedition camp teaching a love of nature and preserving indigenous skills from three continents.

It is a place to be active: A place to be quiet: a place to work alone: place to work as a team.

The skills and character building that happens here lasts a life time and beyond.



Camp Forest Kenya:

Expanding Opportunities continues to seek funding to begin Camp Forest Kenya with the vision to create peace and understanding through positive ethnic pride while honoring native tribal skills in an alternative rite of passage program.

Expanding Opportunities looks forward to a NEW 2018!

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