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MAY 2010

ISSUE 10



Ed and James (Maasai Education Committee Member)

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### BEADWORK

## Half Way Home

Dear Ed,

I passed the halfway point of this trip to Kenya. I set off for Africa on March 1st and will return to the States on June 23rd of this year. I made the dreaded visit to Immigration to extend my visa quite easily. The time has flown by so quickly.

We have accomplished so much during these two months here. One of my goals this trip was to connect students in Africa with students in the States. That goal is slowly being realized by way of school visits, pen pals, and Skype.

We received two large orders for beadwork necklaces, key chains etc. and that is helping the women to pay the school fees for their children. If you have other outlets from which to sell our items, please let me know.

We have also publicly announced our plans to transfer the day-to-day management of Esarunoto Preschool to the local Maasai Education Committee. Sustainability and "phasing out" of certain aspects of our projects is quite a challenge.

The Maasai beadwork is currently on sale on both coasts in the U.S. Our items are being featured at five Craft Fairs in the San Francisco Bay area this summer and continue to be offered through Hopecraft as well. We are hoping to ship some of the jewelry, etc. to the UK soon. We have added new items such as key chains and sandals!

The women are very busy these days and excited to use the small amounts of money they receive for paying school fees and buying food items. This adds to the sustainability of the project and aides in the

While the world celebrated World Malaria Day on April 25th, sadly we are dealing with the illness big time in the Maasai manyattas. So many of our friends have been sick with both malaria and typhoid.

So, please read further for details. As always, I thank you for your continued prayers and support for our work here in Kenya. I would also like you to consider forwarding this eNewsletter to friends and family, encouraging them to sign up to receive this monthly update. The FORWARD button is on the bottom left side of this email. Thanks!

Sincerely,  
ED

## Update on New Kajiado (Bisil) Preschool

Construction was completed on the new ECDE Centre/Preschool in a remote area outside Kajiado town. The town is actually called Bisil. Building materials, a water tank etc. were purchased from nearby towns and hauled to the site. We hired a "fund" (builder) to complete the construction, pour the cement floor and install the tank and gutters. Believe it or not, school began on May 4th. We expected forty students to show up on the first day. We received a call saying that seventy-plus students appeared, all prepared to attend the new school! After some interviews with parents and students, we reduced the number to a workable fifty students. We hired two teachers and are currently having desks built, blackboards painted and utensils for the food program are being purchased in Nairobi.

*The opening picture above shows James, an elder in the Bisil Maasai Community. He is a member of the Education Committee and, as is shown in the photo, shared some of his goat with Ed.*

*Below are some of the 50 children who have never before attended school. They began at our newschool on May 5th!*



## Sustainability and Phasing Out

We began the preschool in Athi River, Esarunoto, about a year and a half ago. Our goal was never to operate a school but to adequately train those involved so that they could one day, assume ownership and responsibility

phase-out of our management of the projects in Athi River.

### Malaria and Other Diseases

We are investigating options for obtaining mosquito nets for the people with whom we work and provide services at Athi River. The children especially, are in need of some layer of protection from malaria. Lately, in both the Maasai manyatta and the Kamba village nearby, many are becoming sick from malaria and typhoid. With the blessing of the rains comes the problem of runoff water entering the river; bringing with it diseases from dead animals and refuse. There are sometimes nets available through the Ministry of Health, but often these nets do not reach the people. The Ministry charges a fee for these "free" nets and will give them only to pregnant women or those under five years. If you know of net programs that are available in Kenya, please drop me an email.

### Youth Activity Day

175 Students walked for many miles to celebrate their school break and the end of the first school term. During each of the three 1 month-long vacations, students in our area gather to sing, dance, recite poetry and eat some great food. This time was no exception. The children came and ate their fill of chapattis, prepared by the women in the manyatta.

Also joining us were the students we support from nearby Ngelani. This is one of the activities which will eventually be turned over to the Maasai to

conduct.

## SCHOOL VISITS

Ed spent some days in January and February visiting local elementary schools when he was in the States. Since then, a number of elementary and high schools have generously contributed to his causes and supported his work. If you would like Ed to come and visit your school, drop us an email. Ed returns home at the end of June but perhaps a visit can be scheduled when the new school year begins in August.

## Global Youth Service

Board members Chris Goddard and Kathleen Sanfilippo joined in the celebration of Global Youth Service Day in Cincinnati, Ohio. The day was a great success and Chris and Kathleen were able to talk about the Foundation and sign up many for the eNewsletter. Thanks to all who attended and to all those Board Members who helped out.

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Below are websites of some of those who support our work.

[ECFoundation Blog](#)

[ECFoundation on Facebook](#)

[Florence Rotary](#)

[Grace Church](#)

for their own facility. We recently presented the Maasai Education Committee at Athi River a comprehensive a process for transferring the day-to-day management of Esarunoto preschool to the local leadership. The objective of this "phase out" plan is to handover the projects developed for and with the Masai to a responsible and well-prepared community. The Maasai Education Committee will eventually manage these educational programs themselves. In layman's terms, the project entitled the Masai Women's Empowerment Project (MWEPE) staff realized that the community is mature and responsible enough to oversee these projects. MWEPE will carry out this phase out systematically, slowly and amicably. We will continue to support the Maasai community with sufficient funding (where there remains a need), provide expertise and capital resources. The **Ed Colina Foundation** is confident that the community is slowly becoming more independent, self-sustaining and adequately developed. This has been an underlying goal of all our endeavors since the beginning in 2008.

At this point there are many signs that the community is ready to manage the school. They mobilized and advertised for school enrollment so that enrollment was increased from 45 to 91 students. We began with two preschool classes but now operate four - having recently added a Toddlers and Standard One (First Grade) class. We look forward to adding an additional class next year. The Education Committee has taken over the responsibility of paying for two of our teachers, a cook and a watchman. This shows the financial empowerment of the community. The Maasai Education Committee oversees the collection of school fees (\$2.50 a month!).and have also been accepting of non-Masai children in the school and youth days, This shows movement beyond tribalism and moving forward together as neighbors.

Any change is difficult but so very necessary in order to strengthen the components of sustainability and responsibility. This is an exciting time for us although the Maasai are hesitant and reluctant to take the reigns. But we have convinced the leadership that we will not be leaving them but will continue to be around to support them and fill in any gaps.

## SKYPE and New Pen Pal Project

One of the goals of the **Ed Colina Foundation** is to draw students together from various cultures. We believe that once a student hears the accent of someone from the other side of the world; once the student sees the home or landscape; once the students share stories of life in both the First World and the Third World, lives are changed for the better. You can imagine then, the excitement that surrounded our first real-time video conferencing between a class of eighth graders at IHM in Burlington Kentucky and a dozen or so Maasai students and adults watching from outside their Kenyan huts. We had our first SKYPE session last week. The highlight of the twenty-minute live video session was the Maasai children singing the familiar song "Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes" being followed by the US students singing the same song back to them. It was very cool.

Another project designed to bring students together is the new **Journey Pen Pal Project**. In this project too, students are able to share their culture, this time by way of the written word. The Foundation's Pen Pal Project provides an important tool for educators to promote writing skills across disciplines. In the first person, students convey information about their culture and absorb knowledge of a distant one, while also gaining mastery over the art of communication. Here is our Pen Pal [website](#). Students and teachers are invited to participate in both the SKYPE and

Pen Pal projects.

*Pictured below are students at St. Timothy Academy, Athi River, as they write their new pen pals in the U.S.*



Hopecraft

Kenya Connect

IHM Church

KEST

Nyumbani

Take Notice



## Ed Colina Foundation Now a Public Charity

We are pleased to announce that **Journey: The Ed Colina Foundation** has received its 501(c)3 tax determination. We are now a tax-exempt Public Charity. As such, we are able to receive certain grants and donations previously unavailable to us. For example, some businesses participate in matching contribution programs. We are now eligible, whereas before, businesses were not permitted to match employees' church donations.

I cannot express to you how grateful we are to have been sponsored by Immaculate Heart of Mary Mission Fund for these past years. The financial support, prayers and organizational structures helped the Foundation get started. Without IHM staff, school community and church families, we simply would not have been able to do what we do! I hope that support continues for many years to come.

Specifically we would like to thank Fr. Michael Comer, Gwen Wolf, Mike Jacks and Pat Klingenberg for their assistance over these years. They, together with board members Kathy Nienaber, Karen Cesco and Kathleen Sanfilippo (and other IHM staff) have kept the Foundation closely connected with IHM and have helped us tremendously. There are many, many more IHM families and friends who continue to walk this journey with us. Thank you!! This connection with IHM will not change but will continue to grow in the years to come. Thank you again!

We are currently researching tools for online donations via the website and will publicize these tools in the near future.

Donations may be sent to:  
Immaculate Heart of Mary Mission Fund  
Ed Colina Projects  
5876 Veterans Way  
Burlington, KY 41005

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