

A New Beginning

VOLUME 5

SPRING 2011

The Children of Sam's Place **Kenyan Deaf Orphans have arrived!**

In November 2010 Jerry Drennan, Ted Pemberton and Larry Conway arrived at Sam's Place for the fall oversight trip from Willis. Soon after their arrival, fourteen children were brought to Sam's Place by relatives, friends and guardians to consider this as their new home. Visitors toured the facilities and talked to staff. Formal presentations were made by Jerry Drennan and Simeon Ongiri Atanga. Community responses were made by tribal leaders, the children's guardians and church officials from the area. A large crowd was present in spite of a steady rain.

One grandfather (mzee) immediately arose to respond to the presentations. He said, "I came expecting to see a place similar to other homes for the Deaf: dirt floors and grass roofs. But this is a stone building with concrete floors, it is dry. The children have their own beds. They will be raised to become Christians.

They will be educated with computer technology. I want my granddaughter to be the first to live here. Where do I sign?"

One or two others made similar statements. Immediately every person there, except one, signed the papers to place the children with Sam's Place. One child was already enrolled in a Deaf boarding school, and they decided to let that child finish the term and then move her to Sam's Place. The ages of the children were from 5-13 years of age. Each child was given a special hand-made quilt created by the ladies at the 11th & Willis Church.

The fourteen children were assigned rooms, four beds per room. The next morning we noticed that 6 boys had slept in one bed. The beds are larger than the normally, small metal cots found in most orphanages in Kenya. We asked, "Why did you all sleep together?" Their response, "We were scared."

Much has happened with the orphans since Jerry and Ted departed Sam's Place in November.

First the orphans received new malaria netting for their bedrooms, something most had never seen before. Later Simeon went to Nairobi with Jerry and Ted to deal with the registration process and also to purchase supplies and clothing for the children. As soon as Simeon arrived back at Sam's Place, things began to change for the children. Each child received new uniforms and underclothing and three pairs of shoes: a dress pair, a pair of tennis shoes, and a pair of sandals. The clothing transformed the students and many had to learn how to walk with the dress shoes.

By the end of the year, eight more orphans arrived to live at Sam's Place. Two weeks later, in early January 2011, four more joined our household at Sam's Place—twenty-six children in all—thirteen boys and thirteen girls. Sam's Place has begun. We have room for fourteen more orphans.

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Who will they be? Where will they come from? We can not answer those questions, but we know that God is leading them here. We are ready.

Top, orphans studying their lessons in class; Bottom, Joshua Onyango, 7 years old.



Orphans playing ball in front of the new Multi-Purpose Building



New Buildings Complete the Education and Living Space Plan

At this writing all that is left to do on the new Multi-Purpose and Vocational Buildings is the finish work. All funding relating to the buildings has been raised and paid in full. Today the Dormitory, the Administration Building, the Multi-Purpose Building (dining/classroom/church), and the Vocational Building have been built and paid for in full. God has done so much in just three years!

At right is a sequence of photographs that show Jerry Drennan and Ted Pemberton, with a little help from their friends, breaking ground for the two new buildings in November 2010. As you can see, our Kenyan brothers and sisters wasted no time in getting to work on the final two buildings. Just five months later, they are completed and almost ready for use (see the complex below as it appeared in the first week of March 2011).

Staffing Plan

The staffing plan includes a gradual implementation based on the number of orphans at Sam's Place. We began hiring staff early on to assist our director, Simeon Ongiri Atanga, with the construction. Now that twenty-six orphans have arrived, some of the household staff and the faculty/staff have joined the team. When peak capacity is reached and forty orphans are in residence, the staff will be as follows:

- Director (Simeon Ongiri Atanga), Bible, Sign Language, English, Administration
- Headmaster—Academic Subjects, Bible, Sign Language, Administration Deputy
- Technology Teacher (Jenes Kerubo)—Academic Subjects, Bible, Sign Language
- Teacher, Academic Subjects, Bible, Sign Language
- Teacher, Vocational Subjects, Bible, Sign Language
- Widows (4), Caregivers, Cooks, Housekeeping
- Household Director (Naomi Nyaboke Ongiri), Supervision of Widows and Household Operations, Bible, Sign Language
- Gatemen (2), Security, Maintenance, Physical Plant

Since November 2010 our teachers and staff have been engaged in teaching Kenyan sign language and special classes designed to prepare our students for the kickoff of the full-fledged, technology-based academic program in June this year.

“...and if you spend yourselves in behalf of the hungry and satisfy the needs of the oppressed, then your light will rise in the darkness, and your night will become like the noonday. Isaiah 58:10



Our Goals for 2010-2011

Below is a bullet list of our goals for 2011. Over three years ago we began with a raw piece of land just outside Rongo, Kenya. In the months and years that have followed, much has been accomplished: buildings have been built, policies put into place, and orphan children have arrived at Sam's Place. The year 2011 will be special for the project because Sam's Place will now begin as a living, breathing place where hope and God's love will make a difference in the lives of many orphans. This is only the beginning.

We have two building projects still not funded that are essential to our operational security: the generator housed in a small brick building and the stone security fence to be built around the perimeter of the facility. In the beginning, the generator will provide electricity for our living spaces and our technology-based curriculum. Later when power is brought to Sam's Place, the generator will serve as backup power. Since electricity is very unreliable in Kenya, the generator will be essential for delivering power for our day-to-day operations. See Table 1 for a breakdown of funds needed for the generator and building and the stone fence.

When we began building improvements to the land, the best advice we received for fencing and security called for a wire fence with thorn bushes planted along the interior, circling the land. Since that time, the authorities who have befriended our project suggest that a stone fence with razor wire be built. They suggest that our technology resources and assets will make the school a target for thieves and gangs who would not be stopped by our present fencing strategy. While the stone fence will be expensive, it is essential for the safety of the children and for the protection of the specialized educational tools necessary for instruction and learning.

See Table 2 for breakdown of funds needed to build the double face stone fence around Sam's Place.

2011 Goals and Objectives Recap

- Full subscription to Friends of Sam's Place
- Full subscription to Orphan Sponsorship
- Establish November 2010 to June 1, 2011 Kenya Sign Language Prep School
- Establish November 2010 to June 1, 2011 Bible studies for deaf orphans
- Inaugurate the annual Teacher's Equipping Workshop
- Inaugurate the annual Computer/Bible Camp for Deaf Orphans
- Purchase and install a generator and building
- Install a double face stone security fence around perimeter
- Begin Pre-Level One curriculum July-Dec. 2011
- Establish relationships with area deaf schools and orphanages and develop an organization or association of those similar institutions like Sam's Place that operate in the Rongo-Kisii region



Robert Ochako, deaf carpenter, and Director Simeon Ongiri work on the furnishings for the Family Room



A chai and snack break

Help Build the Stone Fence & Purchase the Generator

Table 1	Kirloskar KG125W/WS Generator with Auto Panel (Installed)	10 x 14 Brick Building on Concrete Slab	Water Treatment System Global Samaritan	Total Cost of Generator System and Water Treatment System
Pricing	27600	3000	2700	33300

Note for Table 2 below—We have received a challenge grant for \$13,230, half the cost of the stone security fence. Help us match this generous gift. Send your tax-deductible gifts to Willis today (see page 4). See the chart below for a breakdown of funds needed to build the double face stone fence around Sam's Place.

Table 2	Double Face Stone Perimeter Fence Around Boundary Lines, 10 Ft. High	Razor Wire Treatment for Top of Stone Fence, 18" Razor Wire, Made with Galvanized Steel	Total Cost of Double Face Stone Perimeter Fence
Pricing	24960	1500	26460



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- Eileen Stephen
- Jeff Wilhite

Elders

- Raymond Blasingame
- Joe Cardot
- Gary Stephen
- Roger Thomas
- Steve Willingham

We're on the web!
www.willismissions.org

Send your tax-deductible donations to:

Sam's Place

S. 11th & Willis Church of Christ
3309 S. 11th Street
Abilene, Texas 79605

Our Mission at Sam's Place

Sam's Place will provide an environment for deaf orphans in Kenya that is conducive to spiritual and academic growth. Important values will be emphasized that focus on:

- stewardship
- emotional stability
- spiritual maturity
- integrity
- honesty
- self-control
- compassion and respect



Taught within the context of a Christian world view, each child will grow to maturity equipped with the tools they will need to make their way in life and make a difference for God wherever they may go.

Technology & Academic Program to Begin in June 2011

Sam's Place will follow a 8-4-4 grade system which will mirror most of the public schools in Kenya.

Since our orphans will come to us at various ages and with some variation in terms of their education background (although most will have no education background), the staff will take care to evaluate and assess each child to determine at what level that child will enter the Sam's Place curriculum. The decision for the entry point will be determined by current knowledge and not age. Older students will begin at the first level unless they can demonstrate knowledge that will place them at a higher grade level.

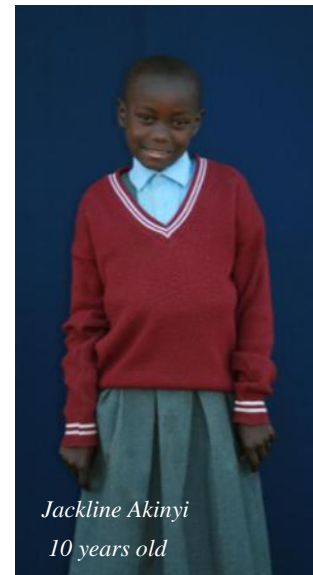
Another consideration is the nature of our technological delivery system for education. Regardless of previous educational experience by some orphans, it is anticipated that no student will have adequate preparation in the basics of technology. All students will begin with level one in terms of computer keyboarding and the introduction of the digital elements in the curriculum at Sam's Place.

During the period November 2010 to May 31, 2011, the children will receive instruction in Kenyan sign language and Bible. Using these two subjects, the

children will acquire basic communication skills, knowledge of the English alphabet, and familiarity with the Bible and Bible stories. During this preliminary study, the student will prepare for the summer educational activities that will begin a broad offering of subjects at their level. Each year the Mission Team will teach a Bible/Computer Camp for the children that will equip them for the months to follow.

Each summer mission season, the Willis Mission Team will bring educators to Sam's Place to teach equipping workshops for the teaching staff. These equipping workshops will provide instruction in the technology tools, the curriculum for the next year, and the books and study materials that will support the curriculum over the next twelve months.

The technology lab and classroom will be equipped fully in June 2011. All computers, peripherals, and supplies will be brought to Sam's Place in June with the Willis Mission Team. Each year one or more members of the Mission Team will be responsible for repair, hard drive renewal, and other maintenance that is required on a regular basis. A contract with a local Kenyan technician from Kisii will be established for maintenance of the



Jackline Akinyi
10 years old

computer lab during the year.

Support Orphans on a Monthly Basis

There are two programs designed to provide for the monthly support of each deaf orphan who lives at Sam's Place—the Orphan Sponsorship (\$35/mo.) and the Friends of Sam's Place Program (\$50/mo.)

It takes one sponsor and three Friends of Sam's Place to support one deaf orphan—\$185 per month. Go to the website or call the church office for program descriptions and sign up instructions.

Make a difference in the lives of our deaf children and make a pledge today to sponsor a child or become a Friends of Sam's Place member.