
TANZANIA CONNECTIONS

Nancy Winters and Martin Werner

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It Takes A Village

As Marty and I prepared for four months in Tanzania (safari with the family then teaching the Pre-Form 1 English course) the first two weeks of August flew by in a flurry of last minute activities. I was humbled to think of all the people who came together to make this service trip possible.

We often quote an African proverb that “it takes a community to raise a child.” It also takes a community to get two volunteers to Manow, Tanzania to teach for 10 weeks. And my deep gratitude goes to each and every one of those involved – from all the people who worked at and sponsored the annual fundraiser as well as those purchased tickets and attended the event, to our diligent board members, those people who have agreed to sponsor a student for the 10-week session and those who are providing continuing scholarships at Manow Lutheran Junior Seminary for some of our graduates.

But when I think of the bigger picture, it also required the agreement from Ian Stoner to care for our “farmlet”, our wonderfully patient travel agent from All the World Travel, Laura Smith, as well as smiling service for a multitude of banking transactions at Olympia Federal by Trina Cruz. Sometimes, in our drive to be independent we forget that it really does take a whole community to accomplish almost everything. Thank you to all of you!

Nashukuru sana!

Nancy

Safari – Impressions and Hearsay

Nancy and I joined my two brothers, two sisters-in-law, niece, nephew and friend (Rob Kirkwood) for an amazing safari through the Arusha, Tarengiri, and Serengeti National Parks and Ngorongoro Conservation Area. I will give my impressions of two aspects of the trip and include a few facts and

figures from our guides and park posters. (I call the latter “hearsay” because I didn’t check the information.)

Big Predators: The parks offer much to describe; for example, sublime beauty of endless plains, sunrises, acacia, giraffes, and hundreds of grazing gazelles, but it’s hard not to go to the drama of the big guys.

Simba – One guide captured the lion perfectly in saying “Lions are very confident; they never look back when they walk.” Their manner of sleeping also exudes relaxed confidence. Our lion count was 86; mostly sleeping, but we saw two unsuccessful chases and a pride devouring a recent buffalo kill.

Duma – We saw a cheetah capture an impala 15 to 25 feet away! The initial ambush and short chase was so fast and frenzied my eye or brain or both couldn’t record the action. We saw another cheetah 10 feet away gnawing a recent gazelle kill. It was not at all relaxed like *simba*! Every few minutes its head would go up to search for incoming hyena, lion or any number of other animals that could chase it away from its kill, or worse. On the Serengeti, 1 of 20 cheetah cubs survives the savannah predator gauntlet to become an adult.

Chui – One leopard, with her two cubs, had carried a gazelle 15 feet up into an acacia tree; there they could feed in peace. What power! We heard that when a leopard keys in on a prey, it is very patient and 90% successful (as opposed to about 30% for lions and cheetahs). That is a chilling statistic if you happen to be the selected prey! Their craftiness and power are mysterious.

Serengeti: Other parks we visited seemed like amazing parts of something very grand. The Serengeti felt like the whole! The Serengeti, plus 5 or 6 adjacent wildlife

conservation areas, total 26,000 square kilometers. This area preserves the famous 1,000 km seasonal migration of millions of animals, most numerous being the wildebeest.

If it is admirable to preserve habitat to save a species, it is overwhelmingly amazing to preserve an entire ecosystem that supports a huge migration and entire communities of plants and animals to live as they have for millennia. Serengeti provides habitat for 27 species of hooved animals and 530 species of birds, not to mention the predators, scavengers, and other assemblages of animals. Truly a gift to the world! Twenty five percent of Tanzania is preserved in some form of wildlife conservation area providing habitat for an estimated 20% of the large animals in Africa live. Tanzania has done its part!

Marty

Impressions of a Water System

Prior to beginning our teaching, we had time to assess the water system of Manow. So on Thursday before classes began on Monday, we asked Martin Mwakaje and the Water System Master (aka plumber), Mwaikenda to take us to the source of the water. The impetus of this project was the fact that our water supply is often interrupted leaving us without water for anywhere from one hour to 36 hours. (Bob Wubbena is contemplating taking on a Rotary project to upgrade to the system.)

First, we met in the tea room to get a general idea of the system layout, find out whether there were as-builts of the system, and gain an understanding about the two sources and who was served by each.

Then at 11:30, we took off for the source. Mwaikenda asked whether we wanted to follow the pipeline or just go to the source. I indicated that we wanted to follow the pipeline; he looked at my hiking shoes; and rolled his eyes. Obviously in hind sight this was my first mistake of the day.

We hiked up behind the school campus to look at the newer water storage tank and take elevation and lat/longs readings from Marty's GPS. We

then took numerous diversions to see three other major diversions of the system. A "shortcut" to one caused us to descend 200 feet then regain that elevation plus some climbing straight up (no paths). Along the way we took readings of most of the water kiosks (community spigots).

We left the main road, heading across freshly planted corn fields and through groves of bananas trees at about 1:30 – the heat of the day. We stopped while Mwaikenda inspected a break in the line, and gulped water, inhaled peanuts and took a short rest – not the first of many. We continued steeply up, up, up, and just as steeply down, down, down, a series of hills – each steeper than the last and each steeper than the portion of Mt. Kilimanjaro that we had climbed two weeks before. The Tanzanian landscape was stunningly beautiful, especially from the highpoints! I was losing hope after my 10th rest break, when Mwakaje told us that we were almost there.

Finally Mwaikenda started going down again and I asked where we were going. When he said that we were going down then up, I asked if we couldn't find a shortcut. My second and third mistakes of the day! The up part was okay – but the down part was a steep descent "a la butt" through densely vegetated jungle. (I had a skirt on – as required here. Shorts would have been the preferred attire of the day.) Even Mwakaje used the butt slide trick.

Another hour of hills, valleys, over and under logs, we arrived at the spring and the masterfully designed source control. It was an engineering beauty! – as much as an engineered structure can be in the beauty of the lush Tanzanian jungle. The structure was fed by a spring, coming right out of a steep hillside, and the water system's 3-inch influent pipe only took about 20% of the spring's volume.

I literally plopped myself down (more like gingerly lowered my aching self onto a rock) and just sat for about a half hour, while Marty and the others went to see a smaller, secondary source. Marty looked at the GPS and we had only come 3.6 miles. It was the hardest 3.6 miles I have ever hiked.

After taking the necessary measurements we headed back to Manow. Not uphill again? Yes but only a short way. We encountered the road found a small *duka* that revived us with sodas and cookies. While reviving, Mwakaje reminded me that I needed to be at choir practice in 45 minutes, and we were more than 2 miles away - over hills and through valleys. We high-tailed it back! I dropped onto the grass of choir practice drenched to the bone in sweat at 5:15. Another great Tanzanian adventure!

Nancy

It Took Two Villages

Our group joined Elizabeth Hudgin and David Mtui for a tour of Ngateo School. This is a school for secondary students in Arusha. It is supported by another Olympia-based non-profit organization – Safi Program, led by Mary Nelson.

Safi has done remarkable work at this school! Features I noted include building classrooms, living quarters and sanitary facilities; installing a 110-meter deep well, and a fuel-efficient cooking system; recruiting teachers; and supporting students. Of particular contrast was the clear, clean water from the well compared to water we saw local residents carrying from the local streams for their home use. Clean water means healthy students and staff. One result of the many Safi efforts is that Ngateo's Form 4 national exam ranking improved from 39th (of 39 schools in the district) to 3rd in Form 4 national exams.

Highlights of the tour included the following:

- A moving rendition of the Tanzanian National anthem sung by a Form 4 study group we encountered.
- A chemistry lab and computer lab both provided with reliable solar power (as is the well's water pump).
- Discussions with the chemistry and computer science teachers - both of whom were friendly, articulate, enthusiastic, and earnest about their positions.

The success of Ngateo would not be possible without Safi, and I don't think it could have been accomplished by Safi alone. It took two communities. It took leaders like Mary Nelson of Safi providing resources from generous donors, local leaders like David Mtui in Arusha ensuring quality workmanship and project management from his community, and coordinators like Elizabeth Hudgin sustaining the bridges between these two dynamic communities. Hats off to great results!

Marty

Send email!!

We would love to hear from you about how things are going for you. It keeps us in touch with life in the US. Please limit the size of the email as the system is still very slow here and crashes easily. Our email addresses are:

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