

**JOURNAL FOR OCTOBER 29-NOVEMBER 10, 2007**  
**Sister Rosita Aranita, CSJ**

October 29, 2007: We decided to allocate the household monies for the St. Joseph Workers to hooking up our large, cement cistern to the government water pipeline. The tank was repaired during the renovations but only one line of gutters fed this 15,000 liter tank so it never got enough rain water to fill it even a third of the way up.

Minutes from the first Abundu Water meeting arrived. The village in Kanam B have selected leaders. Evarist Diero is our liaison with the water committee.

Kokoth A and B Locations will hold a meeting in Miranga next Monday at the chief's camp. All the chiefs and subchiefs will meet with clan elders to select leaders for the water committee. Elijah Omolo from Give Us Wings will attend this meeting for me if I cannot get a ride up to Miranga or if the Pala Road is too muddy.

October 30-November 1, 2007: After failing to locate the old government water pipes near our home on the 30<sup>th</sup>, the water company workers dug trenches from our water tower to the cistern to lay new pipes from the feeder pipe to our overhead tank to the cistern. Mary and I prepared lunch for the workers the first two days. The men consumed everything served.

October 31, 2007: We held a follow up meeting for the various institutions for the Raruowa Mission Compound. We exacted top priorities for improvements for each of the institutions. St. Lucy's needs latrines and a decent bathroom, the clinic needs a working latrine (its latrine sunk) outside and a toilet and bathroom in the hospital, the convent needs more gutters and a water tank, the rectory needs more tanks and repair to leaky gutters, the church needs a set of new latrines for men and women, and the home craft center director's house needs to be connected to government water.. Each institution is to solicit Silvans Molo's assistance to do estimates. The institutions were divided among us to follow up progress. Mary will take St. Lucy's, Anika the rectory and church, Angie the clinic/hospital, and Sr. Rosita the convent.

November 2, 2007: Jack Ochola dropped in for a brief visit after lunch. He described their fund raising scheme of marketing sorghum to support the Homa Hills Community Center, their forestry program, and environmental education and efforts. Homa Hills are so denuded of trees because of fire wood collection over many years. Major erosion of the land and flooding has occurred down the slopes. Lake Victoria is now very polluted with run off and non point sources of pollution. The center is collaborating with the Kenya Forestry Division to replant trees particularly indigenous ones. After our visit at their facility, he now has second thoughts about the viability of their water tank distribution program. He realizes that the 4,500 liter tanks would not provide water for the dry months to ten families. He was still pondering what responsibilities for paying for parts of the rain catchment systems should be the participating families' contributions. He did not want to do everything for these families, but also realized how poor they were in Kanam A and B along the beach.

November 3-4, 2007: Nursed a bad case of bronchitis.

November 5, 2007: It rained heavily early in the morning. I decided against going to Miranga to the Kokoth A & B chiefs' meeting. I texted subchief Peter that Elijah Omolo would be there in my place. The Pala Road is almost impassable with the slick mud. The deep trenches along both sides of the road become treacherous traps if a vehicle slides into them. Only an oxen team with chains would be able to pull a vehicle out of the trench.

I spent the day writing a proposal for the homecraft center. Mary and I decided to name it the "Bishop Colin Davis Home Craft Center". Bishop contributed 80,000 ksh toward the renovation of the house that the director of the home craft center, Mary Lieta, would occupy.

November 6, 2007: Mary and I decided to catch a matatu to Homa Bay to do some banking and shopping. Mary had to confer with Samuel, her eldest, who manages their family stationery shop. We did light shopping because we had to take the bus back to Kadel and a pikipiki to Raruowa. Fortunately, the roads were dry all the way to and from our destination. Every pikipiki driver I've had wants to go to the United States someday. On the way to Raruowa, we ran across Sr. Frances' vehicle. She and her deputy were transporting Jacinta, a Form 4 student, to the Kandiege Clinic for what looked like a case of malaria and exam panic. The form 4 classes across Kenya have now been taking national exams for three weeks.

The Kenya Certificate for Secondary Exam(KCSE) is the passport to higher education. Those who excel win admission to the top universities in Kenya. The exam scores also determine the reputation of the secondary school. Selling answers to the various exams becomes a big temptation and underworld business. To prevent cheating, invigilators who deliver the tests and preside over exam taking are accompanied by armed military guard/s. Schools feed these invigilators and guards and cater to their demands.

Next week, the Kenya Certificate for Primary Exams will begin as well as the "mocks" for other secondary levels. The "mocks" build the test taking muscle for the Kenyan Exams.

November 7, 2007: Today, Mary and I accompany Sr. Frances to inventory all St. Lucy's property. This practice is called "Handing Over" when the outgoing principal witnesses the inventory by the incoming Head Mistress with an appointed committee. Two of the committee could not be present. Fr. Alloys had overbooked appointments and chose to take Angie and Anika to Kisumu to celebrate Angie's birthday. That was decided before the hand over date was set. Francis Ogola was stuck in Kosele with some political functions.

We quickly covered the immediate school facilities and decided to inventory only the more expensive equipment in the chemistry lab. The chemistry teacher will do the

minute inventory of supplies and equipment on the week end. Our last inventory was the teachers' cottages and apartments which Mary had renovated the past year. Each of the units was clean but Spartan. The teachers don't have a lot of money to spare for furnishings and niceties. We had decided not to enter the vacant dorm where the firewood and other junk is stored. It has become the domain of snakes. A small green mamba had emerged from it and entered one of the adjoining classrooms last week. The girls instinctively pick up stones and rocks to kill it. Never mind what is in the way. A classroom could lose windows in minutes.

The school buildings have good bones but are badly in need of renovation and painting. St. Lucy's was once the prima donna of girls secondary schools in the region, but time and previous bad management between the '80's and 90's have taken its toll. Africans in the rural areas have not had much experience in maintaining permanent buildings. They have lived in mud huts most of their lives. When the hut melts down with age and rain, the family simply abandons it and erects another mud hut. Times are beginning to change. Families with more means are now building stone and cement houses. The quality of cement available, however, also lend to deterioration. It is common to see pitted and cracked cement floors in different institutions.

November, 8, 2007: Completed most of the home craft center proposal. Mary will get more updated figures for some items on the budget particularly for the range/ovens and refrigerator. We are hoping that more efficient solar refrigerators will soon emerge from the European sector. Both appliances must otherwise be powered by propane. Our borrowed two burner propane range is presently incapacitated with worn out switches. We cook on pot frames on small gas cylinders for now.

Since I am an early riser, I usually have to boil tea and drinking water first thing in the morning. I also feed our two kittens who begin meowing for their breakfast. Our kitty litter is usually dirt from the yard or sand from the pile in back of our house. Lately, I've had to take Dragon's paws to cover his poop with dirt. He is the runt and is a little retarded in toilet habits.

November 9, 2007: Rose at 4:30 A.M. to perform the morning rituals and get ready to walk to Kandiege by 6:30 A.M.. Rain yesterday and early this morning has so muddied our immediate stretch that no bodaboda or pikipiki can navigate the mess to Raruowa. Mary and I took bodabodas to Kadel where we immediately boarded a bus to Kisumu. The trip took an extra half hour since our usual short cut from Katito to Ahero is under road and bridge construction. The detour passed through a very dry area north of our usual road. When we got to the Ahero to Kisumu road, we noticed that there had been no rains for several weeks along the stretch. Rice farmers had drained their paddies and already harvested their crops. The dry season has already started in the area.

We searched for switches for our two burner range with no luck so we walked to the Swan Center to Beamann's Communications where Mary spent futile hours trying to get her cable to connect with internet services. The phone that fit that cable was not available so Mary left disappointed. She had carried her laptop all through our

wanderings. We then took a tukutuku to the Mega City Nakumatt shopping center where we met Angie and Anika at Mon Ami Restaurant. They had arrived earlier so were finished with their pizzas and were watching the large TV in the lounge area. Mary and I ordered lunch while both young women recounted their holiday activities. Frs. Alloys and Paul had spent Wednesday celebrating Angie's birthday by bowling with them. Both priests wanted to make sure the women were safe for the night so took them to the "Imperial Hotel" which is the most expensive one in Kisumu (\$70-80/night for 2 beds). They moved to a cheaper hotel in town that is a tourist education facility so got lots of attention from students. The pool there was also filled so both went swimming. They both took trips to the Lake side, to Kisumu Museum and other places.

Angie looked so much better after her malaria siege last week. Both she and Anika had a longed for milk shakes for dessert while Mary and I had neopolitan flavored ice cream, a rare treat, in our part of the world. Since we could not connect with Fr. Alloys, Mary and I decided to do light personal shopping at Nakumatt and price appliances. We agreed that if Fr. Alloy's came later with his truck, Anika and Angie would do the food and household shopping later after they see an afternoon movie. Mary and I caught a bus back to Kadel and pikipikis to Raruowa since the sun had dried up the muddy roads and short cut through the fields. We got back by early evening.

November 7, 2007: Angie and Anika came in late last night since Fr. Alloys had miscalculated travel time from a place near the Ugandan border where he celebrated a memorial mass. They could not do all the shopping they wanted because Fr. Alloys had left the truck in Oyugis and caught a ride in a regular car with other passengers.

Today, I wrote a letter to the Kisumu Rotary Club requesting sponsorship of the Adiedo Borehole Project. Hope to e-mail it to the president this afternoon. I am finding that our internet network is usually not responsive in the mornings. I have better luck in the afternoons and nights.