

International

Development
Orphanages
Vocational
Education



Association Inc.

Working with Orphaned & Abandoned Children in Sierra Leone, West Africa

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“I CAN'T BELIEVE I'M IN AFRICA”

On March 22 we left snowy Alberta behind and 34 hours later arrived at the DOVE compound late at night in +30 degree temperatures. We were greeted warmly by Judy Nelson, Executive Director of International DOVE and our hostess for the next 16 days. A day of rest and orientation was followed on the second day by a tour of the compound, 12 acres completely surrounded by a 10 foot high security wall and comprised of Judy's home, the Children's Home, a modern school, tool storehouse and various other buildings as well as a large orchard and garden area, and jungle complete with monkeys. We met the “DOVE kids”, all now teenagers, 11 girls and 2 boys living onsite with the others now living on their own in the community.

Before arriving we knew our purpose was to work at some of the tasks and projects that needed to be completed but we had no idea what is required to maintain and operate such a compound. After one week we have as a team performed maintenance on Judy's vehicle and the water system, painted dorm rooms, hung mosquito nets, cooked and cleaned, repaired window screens, sharpened knives, completed minor electrical repairs, serviced the septic system, shopped for supplies and run errands, took part in a family meeting involving the kids and staff, and supported Judy in as many ways as possible as she recovers from surgery. We are ready to take on whatever comes our way in the next 10 days.

It is not all work. We have dined on a picnic lunch by a dam, and on delicious Lebanese food in a nice restaurant. We are bonding with young people who are being educated and trained in preparation for a successful future. We have enjoyed times of fellowship and encouragement together over meals and relaxation. We have appreciated the opportunity to work with two young men who are teaching the home school based education program.

We have been pleasantly surprised by the availability of good food, familiar and traditional African. We have become acquainted with new tastes, smells and sounds, sleeping under a mosquito net, traveling on dusty roads and on busy streets where different rules apply. We are acutely aware of being surrounded by people in need. We have learned how to take care of cockroaches and other unusual pests with a minimum of fuss.

There have been many “I can't believe I'm in Africa” moments. We look forward to many more.

Amy & Robert Jackson Anne Archer Angela Numan Don Oldridge



Don & Robert discussing the water system with Judy.



Anne & Angela painting a girl's room.

JUDY'S JOYS

- Living in a tropical climate.
- The pleasure that comes with raising a group of teenagers.
- Contact with friends and family at home who care for her and support her.

JUDY'S CHALLENGES

- Working in a culture in which high quality in workmanship and materials is not valued, and in which standards for living are low.
- Working in a harsh climate in which materials quickly deteriorate and in which high performance, by people or equipment, is not always possible.
- The challenges that come with raising a group of teenagers.
- Shortages of workers and funds to manage upkeep and projects.

DOVE'S NEEDS

- Prayer support for good health, wisdom, patience, and safety for Judy.
- Prayer for the young people in her care as they grow to maturity, that they will become the men and women God wants them to be.
- Workers and funds to manage upkeep and projects.

•UPDATE: WE PRAISE GOD THAT JUDY'S TUMOR IS BENIGN. OUR SINCERE THANKS TO DR.BEN, DR. KAREN AND DR.TOM FOR THEIR GENEROSITY AND EXCELLENT CARE OF JUDY DURING THIS DIFFICULT TIME.



Don and Robert replacing tile in boys' washroom.



Anne, Amy & Robert hanging mosquito nets.