

RUNNING WITH THE DUBBERS

DECEMBER 2009

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2009—Reflection

This past year has brought about many new things for us. We began this year with a dorm full of grade seven girls. We feel like God has had us on a journey of growth through our experiences as dorm parents these past six years. We had come to a place of understanding and comfort with this role and enjoyed a fabulous time with this group of girls. God rarely allows us to be comfortable for too long though :). So he began to move our hearts on to other things. In July, we moved out of the dorm and into a small house here on campus. In September Kylie joined the administrative team at RVA as Dean of

Women. It has been a very rewarding and challenging experience for her. Todd took on a Canadian Studies class in addition to his PE classes and role as PE department head. Todd also continues to be involved in sports ministry outside of RVA and both of us continue to love coaching. The longer that we are here in Kenya, the deeper our relationships become with staff and students at RVA as well as with friends in the Kenyan community that surrounds us. Pray for us specifically as God has given us specific people to invest our time in.

- from Muslim families in Nairobi to Kenyan friends in our community to students at RVA to teachers and coaches at international and Kenyan schools. Todd recently had an opportunity to share his faith with a man who travels the world promoting the sport of tchoukball. It has been a great year!



TODD & TITUS AT THE LAUNCHING OF THE TCHOUKBALL FEDERATION HERE IN KENYA.



Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

This year we celebrated Christmas in Kenya with Kylie's dad and mom. This was their last Christmas in Kenya. Todd's sister, Joelle, joined us along with our neighbours—a retired couple from Georgia and a family from Mississippi. This is the hottest time of year so it feels a little strange to have a Christmas tree in our living room and "I'm Dreaming of a White Christmas" playing in the background. The picture is of us and some friends delivering food and Christmas gifts to widows in our community. Best wishes to all of you this holiday season!

Uncertain Future?

"For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord..." Jeremiah 29:11 These are words of great comfort for us at this point in our lives. After six years at Rift Valley Academy we are in need of a rest and a chance to reconnect with family and friends in Canada. We plan on returning to Canada in July 2010. At this time we do not know where we will live, what Todd will do for work, etc. Admittedly, we are a little nervous. We are having to daily put our full trust in the Lord and not worry about the details of how God will provide for our family. We would like to reassess our calling to this ministry and

explore what else God may have for us. We do feel a sure calling to full time ministry, we just do not know what that may look like. We love RVA and would like to continue here but we do not want to make our plans. We want to be in God's plans. If anyone has any suggestions or job ideas of any kind, we would be more than open to hear about them. Our financial support is averaging around 88% and the trend seems to be going down. We have heard discouraging little from anyone in Canada. Please pray for us as we face this home assignment time with so much uncertainty.

FAMILY NEWS:

- ◆ Kylie's parents will be retiring from Africa Inland Mission and returning to Canada in July 2010.
- ◆ Kylie's brother Peter was married to Ashley King in Edmonton on April 11, 2009.
- ◆ Todd's sister, Jennine, is engaged and will be married to Rick Lewis in July 2011.
- ◆ Todd's sister, Joelle, has been working in Nairobi and will be returning to Canada in May 2010.

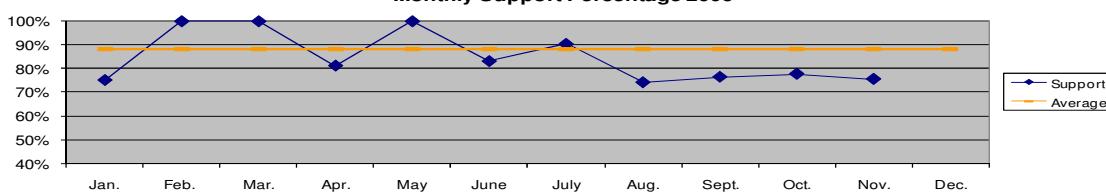
COMPUTER WOES:

We have been having a lot of trouble with our internet server over the past few months. Often times we can receive e-mails but not send. Other times we cannot do either. If you do write, we will receive your e-mails—they may just be a little late. Kylie is on Facebook now but because of the small bandwidth at the school we are not able to be on it very often. Feel free to leave messages there and they will be checked about once a month. We would LOVE to hear from anyone there in Canada!

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Monthly Support Percentage 2009



A couple of weeks ago we had several interesting experiences that reminded us that we definitely live in Africa. Our neighbours were home one morning enjoying breakfast when we all heard an enormous crash. A full size male baboon had jumped from a tree onto their roof and gone right through into the attic. It quickly got out and ran away but left behind a gapping hole that had to be repaired. Later in the week we came across a large black snake in the garden where some friends live. We were feeding their chickens while they were away. Normally we do not have snakes at this altitude but it has been so dry and hot recently many are coming up the side of the escarpment. We did not know if it was dead or alive so we poked it with a stick. Thankfully it was dead. During that same week there was an armed robbery on one of the roads leading away from the school. A couple days later we were driving the same road. As we rounded the corner there was a man in plain cloths standing there with a machine gun. We had no chance to turn around and so we cautiously drove past him in full alert. We later came upon a truck coming up the road. They had sent the man ahead as a guard to protect the cargo they were bringing up the hill. It was good to see our kids respond so well in all of these situations.

Answering Some Tough Questions—Part II

We know that this looks long and boring but we would encourage you to read it, especially if you have been wondering about the necessity of our ministry and what role missions should play in this modern day and age.

As you may recall from our last prayer letter we thought that we would present some tough questions that we have been asked while working here at Rift Valley

Academy. Here are a few more.

Are foreign missionaries still needed?

We have worked at RVA for about seven years and we have gained a whole new perspective on missions and the future of missions in Africa. Our mission organization, Africa Inland Mission, along with many other mission organizations are still committed to reaching the unreached peoples of Africa. There are still over 900 unreached people groups in Africa alone. We are committed to seeing our African brothers and sisters participate fully in that goal, so... are foreign missionaries still needed here? This question should be asked of God rather than us—He is still sending foreign missionaries and He is still certainly using them here. During recent leadership meetings in Uganda we were met with incredible stories of people coming to the Lord through the work of both national and foreign missionaries.

Shouldn't we be supporting "front line" missionaries rather than those working in mission offices, MK schools, & member care centers (ie. counselling)?

Our mission and others are committed to reaching countries that are hostile to missionaries and the Gospel. We feel like we are entering a new time in missions when persecution and martyrs will become more common. We wish that we could share more with you regarding the incredible ministries that people are having in these closed countries. God is working wonders! Please do support these missionar-

ies—a lot! But consider this too...

As you know, Canada and the US are not the only countries that send missionaries to Africa. Right now there are about 2,000 South Korean missionaries in Africa. The churches of South Korea plan to have 100,000 missionaries in Africa alone by the year 2030. About 13% of our students at RVA right now are South Korean.

The Korean church is facing a big dilemma right now though—missionary family dynamics. It is a big enough issue that they have flown representatives from RVA to Korea twice and also representatives from other MK schools like Black Forest Academy in Germany.

With missionaries working in increasingly dangerous and completely Muslim areas more and more support is needed for families. God has called these families but what about their children's safety, education, emotional well-being, etc? Where do the missionaries go when they face trauma? How can they be a strong family under such difficult circumstances? With no support families become discouraged and burn out.

We are seeing that "support missionaries" are becoming more and more necessary. Unfortunately churches in the west are less likely to partner with missionaries in support roles. Without meaning to, this is hurting the very ones we are all wanting to support and have on the mission field.

How can a boarding school foster a close family atmosphere?

As Dean of Women, Kylie is involved in the well being of all of the girls that attend RVA. It is our goal not just to see the outward but to see the heart. We always involve the parents in any issues that come up, sometimes recommending that the child go home for a compassionate leave or the parents to come for a couple weeks. We work with families and require any

family that sends their kids to RVA to go through an orientation on how to maintain a close family atmosphere when a child is at boarding school.

RVA supports families that are able to home school and once a year tests the kids to make sure their education is on track. RVA also helps families get in contact with counselling services when their family has experienced traumatic or difficult experiences. When we feel like a kid is just surviving and not thriving here then we help families find a better educational situation other than a boarding school. Boarding is not for every child.

In addition, RVA is a great retreat for families that are working in difficult countries. They can come and relax, enjoy time with their children, gain spiritual input and encouragement, and be refreshed and renewed.

Part III...

Hopefully by answering these tough questions we will be able to give a clear understanding to the reality of life for missionaries on the field. If you have any questions that you would like to ask us please feel free to send us an email.

Our Kids



Cassidy (9) & Ella (2) decorating our Christmas tree.



Titus (7) as an angel in the elementary Christmas concert.

