

The Rotary Foundation at Work

PROJECT HOPE

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District Governor Dave Gallagher promised all 32 of his fellow travelers an adventure and that is what they had. Their luggage arrived more than a week after they did, and, as frustrating as that was, they only had to walk out the door of their hotel to quickly realize that their problems were so minor and that they had so much to be thankful for. They were able to see giraffes, elephants, cheetahs, lions, the very rare leopard, and many, many others. Then they started the work of Project Hope.



Dave learning the African finger snap.

In their first Project Hope story, a bellman at their hotel in Kisumu delivered the luggage to Jamie Stout’s room. Many of the bags contained the donations that were sent from the Twain Harte Rotary Club. The bellman asked why so many bags. Jamie explained who they were and why they were there. She then opened one of the suitcases and showed one of the 120 blankets that she and her club had made. The bellman started to cry and said how he could not believe that people from so far away would come to Kisumu for this reason.

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~from Stanley Thomas: I am Stanley Thomas of Stockton East Rotary and one of 32 participants with Project HOPE. We are in Kisumu, Kenya, on the shores of Lake Victoria, to see Project HOPE in action. The project is beginning to spend the first \$60,000 of the \$210,000 that was raised last year. We are led by our wonderful D.G., Dave Gallagher. In brief, there are four interwoven organizations that are part

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of the ministry in the Kisumu area. Agape Children’s Ministry is rescuing 100 children who once were living on the streets of Kisumu. TEMAK (Teenage Mothers and Girls Association of Kenya) is rescuing stigmatized, single young women with children (there are 65 “on campus”). New Life is rescuing abandoned newborn babies (they are currently at capacity with 22). CHE (Community Health Evangelism) is a rural community about 30 minutes from Kisumu and CHE’s people are rescuing a whole scattered rural community by transforming it into a healthy, economically self-sustaining community. The Project HOPE team is involved in a combination of an observing

learning experience and a “sleeves rolled up” hands-on” work experience. We have painted exteriors and interiors of buildings, constructed water jars to filter water and make it clean and safe to drink, built a Kiosk for an 80 year-old grandmother to sell food and support 27 grandchildren, and re-roofed a small birthing clinic. We have cuddled babies that would have been dead had it not been for the rescuers. Our eyes have been open and our hearts warmed by what we have seen and done here. We hope to share more of our story with District 5220 when we return. The story of the role of Dr. Joe Serra, PDG, in the upcoming leg amputation of 19 year-old Eric is a chapter in itself.