



Date: January 7, 2005  
To: Assistant Governors, District Leadership Team, Presidents,  
Secretaries, ICO's  
District Committee Chairs, PDGs, District Rotarians  
From: Dave Gallagher, District Governor  
Subject: Weekly District Update



Rotary District 5220 "Friday Facts"

## ROTARY DISTRICT 5220 FRIDAY FACTS Celebrate Rotary

### [Project HOPE - Kenya 2005](#)

We are preparing for our final day in Africa before we begin our long journey home. All 32 members of our team are doing fine and having a great experience. They have all been working very hard. District 5220 should be very proud of Project HOPE and of the 32 men and women who are representing you here in Kisumu, Kenya. You have heard me talk to you about Project HOPE for over 18 months. Now it is time to hear from the members of our team. This week we will hear from Lou Wiebe, Stanley Thomas and Nick Mascitelli. We will hear from others in the next few issues of Friday Facts.

### [Project HOPE - Lou Wiebe](#)

"Project Hope." Two small words which for months has meant to me a trip to Kenya....And now? After seeing the street boys with their glue bottles literally living in a trash dump. After shaking hands with their sticky fingers....And now? After building a new kiosk for Margaret (a grandmother caring for her 27 grandchildren.) After sitting in her living room with 19 of her grandchildren. After seeing her sons graves....And now? After visiting the CHE project in the nearby mountains and seeing how it is changing lives and making unbelievable progress....And now? After meeting the boys of the Agape home, seeing their transformation firsthand, singing and playing music with them into the wee hours of the night...And now? After working at TEMAK, seeing the finished classrooms, hearing the 3 and four year olds sing "Jesus Loves Me, This I Know"....And now? After meeting Bob, Kevin, Daniel, George, Isaiah, Evan, Musa, Victor, Ambrose, Patrick....And now? Now it has become real! The faces, the words, the pictures, the people...They all have become real! I have touched them, sweat with them, laughed with them, sat quietly with them, and cried inside with them. These two words "Project Hope" have taken shape as real living flesh and blood, real hopes, real dreams, real people. "Project Hope" was designed to change lives in Kenya which it has undeniably done. But it has changed one more life forever. It has changed mine!

### **Project HOPE- 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 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.

### **Project HOPE- Nick Mascitelli**

There are so many experiences Cathy and I would like to share with you about our Project HOPE trip. Our very special experience was a one and a half day project we worked at in the slum area of Ubounga, a neighborhood of Kisumu. The project was to help Margaret, an 82 year-old grandmother of 27. Margaret, a widow, lost all five of her children and several grandchildren to AIDS.

Margaret provides food and housing for her 27 grandchildren by selling a porridge made of corn meal millet. She also prepared a mixture of beans and corn that she sells or unselfishly gives to the children of the slum.

The small stall she worked for was destroyed by the local government. When this happened she had no place to sell her food and had to sit on the ground in a spot that she found away from the main street area. Our project was to build her a kiosk to sell from right in the main village market area. The

structure was made from wood limbs, very hard wood, and tin siding and roof. She now has her own enlarged area with walls and a roof which will protect her from the sun and rain. She will be able to serve her customers and increase her business and make enough money to feed the 27 children that live with her. We cannot wait to get back home so we can show you some pictures of Project HOPE.

*David Gallagher*

District Governor

**A quick contact list update for you – our District Governor Nominee Bob Hobbs has a new email address: [rbbhobbs@comcast.net](mailto:rbbhobbs@comcast.net).**