

## **Proper Walk 2012**

### **Marcia Moore**

I have been supporting and reading about the children of Makindu in the newsletter for over 12 years. This past summer, I went to Kenya to be part of Proper Walk 2012. I finally got to meet those children, their guardians and see where the money is going that I have faithfully been donating every year. WOW, what an experience, I loved every second of it.

After leaving the Makindu Children's Centre, I asked Winnie, "how does one ever feel like they have done enough?" She said that sometimes just giving someone a warm smile or hug can make a difference in a life. I took that to heart on this Proper Walk!

Just thinking about a 10 day journey through the Kenya wilderness is intimidating. Now after actually having made it out alive I can say it was truly an "Adventure for a Cause"!

I started out hearing lions the first night of the Walk - unbelievable because one really couldn't even hear anything over the heavy rain blistering our tents. "Winnie... Michael...wake up, wake up", I yelled, "I hear a lion. Michael, wake up, I hear lions..." Michael irritatingly yelled back, "Marcia, go back to sleep, that's a camel". Ok, so having woken up the entire camp the first night and then asking the second day if anyone wanted to borrow my tent broom, I was "marked" as a real rookie.

The first day brought us to a village and right away I made friends - walking and holding hands with the children. They seemed unique to me and I was certainly more unique to them. How could a young girl hold 20 pounds of beads around her neck and never remove them? And how did she earn those beads? We didn't speak, just held hands and smiled.

Then we had to cross a flooded river. Good thing that we crossed before seeing the cattle get swept down river!

About day four I wanted a shower! In fact, I want it so badly that I ended up in a small river with a rather large male audience watching a mzungu woman (in a swimsuit) showering. I didn't panic, well, not until my hair was lathered and ready to be rinsed when a large herd of cattle, sheep and goats crossed the creek just 10 feet up river. "Just keep your mouth closed" was my mantra.

The 9th night of the Walk was a celebration! We were entertained by Turkana dancers, ate very fresh roasted lamb and took a 30 second shower. We went to sleep late that night with the sound of the tribe still dancing and singing and awoke at 4:00 am to Michael's harmonica, which was our wake up call.

We would attempt to reach our destination ... Lake Turkana. When we asked the locals how far it was to the lake, one would say six kilometers, another 26 kilometers, and yet another 46 kilometers. So when we saw the lake at about six miles we were elated. The

enthusiasm diminished after each hour and the lake appeared to be a mirage with the thermometer rising higher and higher to somewhere over 110 degrees

After another exhausting 12 hour hike, we reached the crocodile infested lake and we didn't hesitate, we just kept walking until we were knee deep in water, and then collapsed. It wasn't until the fish started jumping very close to us that we decided to get out quickly. Our wonderful Kenyan guide and camel owner, Amanda, told us that there are at least 14,000 crocodiles in Lake Turkana and some as long as 24 feet.

Lake Turkana was our destination and goal but in our hearts we were walking so the children of Makindu can count on over \$100,000 to keep the Makindu Children's Centre running - keeping their hope alive. I loved being part of Proper Walk 2012. Knowing that I actually can make a difference in someone's life is a journey of the soul.