

The Red Hippo Arts Project

Micah McGough's Web Log

Ready for Africa?

Jun 6, 2008 in Uncategorized

When it was suggested that we have a blog portion of the website, I was fully on board. "Of course," I thought, "our friends, family, and supporters will want to know about our progress and planning." If that's the case, and one of the aforementioned is reading this...then...I was right (HA!). If you are a team member or site admin (Sam), then it won't hurt to know how a fellow traveler is dealing with this adventure. And, if you've stumbled on this by accident, the following probably won't make a lot of sense.

I think if anyone at all reads this, and wants an update on the project through the eyes of RHAParticipant...here's how I see it. We've held several, very successful fund raisers that were well attended. We've been spreading the word in our community, to our friends and family, and...if you're reading this...the word has reached you. Thank you for your interest, btw. Our different roles in the project have been made clear and I think each RHAPer is dealing with their roles accordingly. We're mostly separated at this point, with the summer being when many students are traveling...but every member I've talked to is very excited.

I'm still coming to grips with the whole thing, honestly. It's hard to believe that in two months I'll be the furthest from home I've ever been (or, I think, geographically could be). Normally, I travel well...been doing it all my life. I like planes, trains and new people...but this is HUGE. Especially because I'll be entrusted to document this trip, I don't want to miss a thing. And I don't want the fact that I have to record it, diminish my ability to see it or participate in it, you know? I know through Sue that the area we'll be in and around will probably be the most economically depressed I've seen or heard of. However, I fully expect to meet many extraordinary people with many extraordinary stories of survival. From my understanding, Namuwongo is home to many refugees from the north of Uganda who have been displaced due to years of violence. The children we will be working for will have a history and home unlike anything we could imagine. Of course, I'll be able to find this out first hand in only a couple months and I'm so honored to be a part of this group.

I'll do my very best to remember to update this and keep you posted...

5 Replies

1. Samuel

Jul 2nd, 2008 at 12:39 am

Micah,

I feel as you say it a bite detach due to the summer but let me tell you first of all that I'm happy to read you and will be even happier o spend thos weeks overseas with the wonderfull you, your wonderfull wife and the wonderfull group we are part of.

miss you guys

2. admin

Jul 2nd, 2008 at 1:53 pm

Can't wait to see you and Noelle in Uganda!

-Leah

3. Kelly

Jul 11th, 2008 at 7:24 pm

Hey Micah!

You and Noelle are amazing people. You guys inspire me , truly. I know you will do an incredible job documenting this project and I can't wait for you guys to be able to share this life changing experience with us.

The Hazeltons

4. Helen

Aug 1st, 2008 at 10:12 pm

Hi Micah !

I am anxiously awaiting news of your adventure !

It's only day 1 and I find myself thinking of you and Noelle constantly. It will be so wonderful to make a difference in the people's lives that you encounter as I'm sure they will make a lasting impression on all of you as well.

My prayers are with you ...

5. Sharon & Eric and the stinkettes!!

Aug 3rd, 2008 at 11:20 pm

Hey Micah!

Hope all is well and you are having a life experience that words can not explain. Can not wait to see you again. The girls are sure missing you! They are on the playset each and everyday. Thank you !

Take care and be well. Luv yah!

Here

Aug 5, 2008 in Uncategorized

We arrived last night around 9 local time. The ride to the hotel was quite an experience in itself. About every kilometer or so there was a series of small shops (like a dark, mysterious midway at a local fair) next to a bar and a barber shop. I'm serious, I must have seen 8 or so different sets of barber chairs, men reading papers or magazines, and mirrored walls. With no street lights, each of these little enclaves were like little lit stages...but I always feel like a bit of an audience member when I'm travelling. The reality of there being so much going on outside of our own realm of experiences is overwhelming, though something I'm convinced everyone should experience for themselves as often as possible. I'm put in my place in the world...just one of 6 billion or so. What a priveledge to interact with these people, to make friends literally halfway around the world.

At Emerge the Sunday evening before we left, we looked at the trip and with the help of Joan (my film guru), decided to think of it as a "Friendship Trip" as opposed to the Mission Trip we had been thinking of. We're breaking bread with another culture, and so far, this new mindset has helped me focus on what it is we're doing here.

Filming is going well. I need to find a firewire to connect the laptop to the camera. But in the meantime, I think we'll be able to upload a short welcome video either tonight or tomorrow

3 Replies

1. Helen

Aug 5th, 2008 at 9:56 pm

Hi Micah !

Really looking forward to seeing your filming. Hope we'll be able to see it with dialup !! Sure looks like you folks are making lots of new friends - it's so exciting - I am so happy for you. Stay together and stay safe.

Helen

2. Paul

Aug 7th, 2008 at 12:18 pm

*Yes! Friendship Trip! Mission Trip makes me nervous.
Glad your all safely there and it sounds like you're already having some life-changing experiences..*

Peace

3. Brother Paul

Aug 8th, 2008 at 7:18 am

Hey Micah.

glad to hear you guys are getting into the groove. Looking forward to the vids.

I think a "friendship trip" is a good idea. Gets away from some of the not so positive connotations of a mission trip...

Cheers

NESCO boys

Aug 19, 2008 in Uncategorized

Yesterday Sam and I played football with the NESCO boys. We played for hours...until our shadows stretched out quite far on the dusty red pitch and we were thoroughly exhausted. The boys said a friendly goodbye and continued playing, probably until there was no more light. The graciousness of our hosts humbles me more than I can express. They give us food they can hardly afford. They give us the best seats in their respective dwellings. They dust off their best English and are thrilled with our own simple attempts at Luganda. They pass us the ball though we are the worst players on the team. They ask our advice as if we had the answers to this strange world's problems. As you may have read from other team blogs, NESCO stands for Nsambya Ex-Street Children Organization. This is a group of boys who got together and helped each other get off the streets. They make baskets, beads, and strangely enough, found they are quite adept at acrobatics. They put together a troupe and perform to raise money and awareness about their plight and the plight of others. There is a show this Saturday...I'll be there for video and stay tuned because I've been told to expect "Fi-Yah." They never stopped taking in street children and now are 30 or so packed into a tiny house in the poor Nsambya area of Kampala. They basically hustle all day every day and the older ones care for the younger ones in the most generous display of humanity you've ever seen. Check out Sam's blog for photos soon.

2 Replies

1. Edith

Aug 24th, 2008 at 7:55 pm

Hi Micah & Noelle:

We seem to be unable to add a comment on Noelle's last message. Your Mom, Noelle, has had the same problem. However, we are all still following your adventures and achievements with awe. Look forward to hearing from you when you arrive back.

Take care. Love you lots, Edith

2. Aunt Rhonda

Aug 25th, 2008 at 4:32 pm

Micah & Noelle,

It's been wonderful to walk with you through your adventures via the internet. What an amazing journey! We're so proud of you. We speak of you often and pray for you daily. May God continue to bless you as you near the end of this journey and begin a new one.

*We love you both,
Aunt Rhonda & Family*

Home.

Sep 5, 2008 in Uncategorized

Some of the team (those not continuing on to fabulous destinations in Europe) got home last week. I've heard a few have experienced some unpleasant health issues, but I'm sure everyone is happy to be back with loved ones. Noelle and I have spent the week at the farm with her parents and the now lone remaining sibling Nicolas (Marc just moved out to attend CEGEP). We went back and forth to Montreal a few times, mainly to see friends, run last minute errands and, sadly, to say goodbye. I hate goodbyes. I've said many in my life, moving around as I have. It doesn't get easier, but I have found some good coping techniques. Ronah, one of the teachers at the In Need Home in Namuwongo, summed up the best of these as she explained our departure to the children like this...

"In a sentence, you have commas and full stops (periods). A comma means that there is more to come. Mu-lee-dey? (Understand?) That means when we say goodbye it is like a comma and not a full stop. No, we will see them again."

Ronah is a fantastic teacher and always has the right thing to say. She was absolutely right in our case. Noelle and I will see them again. Maybe not next year, but soon. "No full stops" is my new motto. "See ya later", and meaning it, is much easier.

So, we're off to Vancouver. We love all of you who journeyed with us, read our blogs and prayed for our safety. I will eventually post the videos that come of all the footage I took on the website and email the link to as many people as possible. It really was an amazing trip and I would no more say a full stop goodbye to anyone there as I would to anyone here. True friendships have nothing to do with distance.

Jah bless.

Micah ,,,