



Volume 5 Issue 1

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## ***Spotlight on Evans Kiriimi***

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused many problems in Meru, Kenya as well as worldwide. Some people just step up in times of crisis. One of those young people is Evans Kiriimi.

Evans was born on November 21, 1999. He arrived at the home in 2014. He attends Kirige Boys Secondary School and is currently in Form 4, the equivalent of senior year in the U.S. Before coming to the home, Evans' economic condition caused him to miss a great deal of school. Now, as a Form 4 student, he has been appointed captain of his class.

When the pandemic closed all Kenyan schools, Evans, like all of his brothers and sisters, were very worried about the national exams. The KCSE (Kenyan Comprehensive Secondary Examination) is a brutal thirteen subject, four-day exam. This year it will start on October 30. Evans, like all Form 4 youth, are busy trying to keep up with studying via distance learning.

With schools closed, the older boys focus on helping out with farming. Much of the food eaten at the home (maize, beans, onions and greens) is produced on the farm acreage. If there is a surplus, it is sold to provide a source of income.

Evans distinguished himself as the best farm worker. He helped prepare the land and planted many of the crops. His hard work and maximum focus on the farm has made him a role model to all of the children. Due to his efforts, barring calamity, a bumper crop of beans is expected.

The next major obstacle for Evans is the all-important KCSE. Unlike in the U.S., all post-secondary educational plans depend on the KCSE scoring. The pressure particularly this year is intense.

Unless the government postpones the exams, which is unlikely, Evans will face the exams head on. His scores will determine if he goes on to technical training college, college or university. We will update on Evans' scores along with the other nine youth taking the KCSE in late December.

Thank you, Evans, for all your exceptionally hard work on the farm.



# News from the Home

## Report on COVID-19 Sensitization Session

by Kelvin Koome

Meru County in Kenya has reported several cases of Covid-19 and several quarantine centers have been established. I had a chance to have a sensitization session at the Children's Home.

The session was conducted outside, which also served as a basis of the talk. This highlighted the importance of social distancing and the children were urged to ensure they maintain the practice even when they are out of the orphanage.

Other ways to curtail the spread of COVID-19 were discussed, with demonstrations on how to correctly

wear a mask and how to ensure hygiene is maintained. All the children at the orphanage also went through a practical hand washing with soap, and they unanimously were able to identify the key steps in keeping safe from the virus.

There was also an emphasis on why they shouldn't leave the orphanage unnecessarily. This was noted mostly by the older youths at the home, the high school and college going. They promised to ensure they stay at the home and in case they leave the home, to follow all the guidelines discussed during the session.

The session was broken down and discussed in the local Kimeru dialect to ensure it was understood well by even the smallest children at the Home.



**Kelvin with Yvette and Larry Hohler, Eloisy Kinya and Ed Hyshiver.**



# Operation Sleep Separation

Covid-19 precautions at the home



# News From the Board

The Board of Directors of Hope Children's Fund has been forced to react to the new normal facing our children in Meru, Kenya. The children have been isolated since March. The closure of inter-county commerce has put a great strain on the food supply chain. As a result, the cost of food staples has skyrocketed. The pandemic has required us to cancel many of our stateside fundraising activities.

Thankfully, a crisis appeal campaign has provided a much-needed new source of income. The campaign produced many concrete results:

1. Seven donors provided food for a week for the home
2. Eight donors provided food for a day
3. Eight mattresses were sponsored
4. Twenty-seven beds were sponsored
5. Four donors contributed \$1,000 or more
6. Almost \$4,000 was donated to the infrastructure fund.

We are pleased to announce the members of the Kenyan Board of Directors: Mrs. Veronica Kirima, Harriet Muturi, Nathan Ngiti, Judith Ntumbari, Anthony Muthuri, Elijah Mutea, Stephen Mwitii, Betty Gakii and Pastor Elias Kiogara. The two boards plan to work cooperatively to move the Home's mission forward.



**Rosie Gacheri holds a thank you to Julie Lindell for her recent donation of food for a week. Julie is Rosie's long-time mentor.**

The Board of Directors would like to thank all the donors for their continued support. As a grassroots, all-volunteer organization, we literally could not exist without your support.

*Hope Children's Fund is a 501 c (3) charitable non-profit organization. All gifts are tax deductible. EIN: 75-3065651*

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Please help our orphanage while shopping online. When shopping **AMAZON**, go to [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com) and choose **Hope Childrens' Fund** as the organization you want to support. For shopping at over 2400 online stores and services, other than Amazon, many of which you are probably already using, please go to our website, [www.hopechildrensfund.org](http://www.hopechildrensfund.org) and click "sign up" under **iGive**. It is free, makes shopping easier, and you even get a small tax deduction! Really, no kidding.

# News from the Heart



You have got to be kidding me!!

No, we are not joking. In the middle of Meru Town is Red Tomato, a New York style wood-fired pizza restaurant. The owners, Paula Litondo and her husband, once ran a pizza parlor near the United Nations in New York City.

The Covid-19 pandemic forced the closure of schools as well as restaurants. The 97 children of the Jerusha Mwiraria Home and their 11 caretakers were sheltering in place on the hilltop where the home is located. More than 100 souls quarantined on the hilltop with no outside contact was very difficult.

In order to break the monotony and to reward the children for their tremendous patience and efforts with social distancing, two H.C.F. board members decided to fund a pizza party. The results were magnificent.

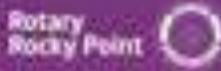
Red Tomato supplied 37 handmade NYC style pizzas, sodas and even cakes donated by a local hotel. The order infused much-needed revenue into the stagnant Meru economy.

Bruce Garrity, who was born in the U.S. and was a long-time resident of Prince Edward Island in Canada, now lives full time in Meru. He assisted with the logistics for the party. Bruce asked the children: "How many of you have had pizza before?" Not a single hand was raised. After the pizza party, he asked, "How many of you liked it?" A sea of hands were raised throughout the dining hall.

At least for one day, while trapped on a hilltop amidst a pandemic, a group of orphans and vulnerable children felt special.



The 4th Annual Douglas J. McDonough

 |  **Passion for Education**  
**2021 Gala**  
*to benefit*

*Brenda Mucenda today  
and back in 2014*

Hope Children's Fund

**January 9, 2021**

The Inn & Spa at East Wind,  
Wading River

Join us for an evening  
of live music by X-Session,  
cocktail hour, a plated dinner,  
raffles and silent auction—  
all supporting the education  
of the children  
of the Jerusha Mwiruria  
Hope Children's Home,  
Meru, Kenya

**6:00 - 11:00pm \$199 per person**

*Formal attire preferred. Discounted overnight accommodations available.*

Every ticket pays for a trimester of secondary school for a child from the home.

*Please rsvp:* [HCFgala@gmail.com](mailto:HCFgala@gmail.com)

Hope Children's Fund, P.O. Box 1345, East Northport, NY 11731

[hopechildrensfund.org](http://hopechildrensfund.org)

# Gala Sponsorships



Hope Children's Fund, Ltd. P.O. Box 1345, East Northport, NY 11731 USA 631-470-6351

## Dear Friend of Hope Children's Fund,

We are excited to announce our 3rd Annual Douglas J. McDonough Passion for Education Gala on **January 9, 2021** at the prestigious East Wind Long Island. Being a 100% volunteer organization (with no U.S. office, employees or overhead) the Gala is our largest fundraiser of the year. We are asking your help in making this year's event the most successful yet. 100% of all proceeds from the event support the Jerusha Mwiraria Children's Home in Meru, Kenya. In addition to attending our Gala event, this year there are more ways to help than ever!

### 1) Event Sponsorship\*

Hope Children's Fund is excited to offer sponsorship opportunities at every level, so giving is easier than ever!

<b>GOLD</b>	\$10,000	Name branding for dinner includes 10 tickets (one table) PLUS 3 pages in the journal.
<b>SILVER</b>	\$5,000	Name branding of cocktail hour includes 10 tickets (table) PLUS 2 pages in the journal.
<b>BRONZE</b>	\$2,500	Band sponsorship includes 2 tickets and one page in the journal.
<b>TABLE SPONSOR</b>	\$2,000	Table sponsor 10 tickets plus 1 full page in the journal.
<b>AUCTION SPONSOR</b>	\$1,500	Name branding Raffle/Auction plus 1 full page in the journal.
<b>CHILD MENTOR</b>	\$365	Child mentorship for 1 year
<b>FOOD SPONSOR</b>	\$210	Food for one week to feed 89 children at the Home.
<b>BED SPONSOR</b>	\$100	New bed/mattress for the children.

### 2) Journal Advertising\*

We are pleased to announce our 2nd Passion for Education Gala Journal. The journal is used for both promotion and publicity for Hope Children's Fund and its advertisers with a local Long Island circulation of over 1000+ unique impressions!

<b>JOURNAL SPONSOR</b>	\$2000	Name branding of journal plus two FULL page ads
<b>FULL PAGE AD</b>	\$250	8.5" x 5.5"
<b>HALF PAGE AD</b>	\$125	4.25" x 2.75"
<b>BUSINESS CARD AD</b>	\$75	3.5" x 2"

### 3) Raffle/Silent Auction Donations\*

We are seeking donations of items/services for our Raffle/Silent Auction at the event. If you would like to submit a donation, please contact Aida and Kevin Mann at kevinmannmail@gmail.com. In your email, please provide item description, retail \$ value, pickup/drop off needs & if you require a receipt for tax purposes. **All donations must be submitted by 12/15/20.**

Your support of our efforts on behalf of some of the world's most vulnerable children is greatly appreciated. As a 100% volunteer organization

On behalf of the Children of the Jerusha Mwiraria Home we THANK YOU,  
**Hope Children's Fund Gala Committee**

\* donations are 100% tax deductible under Tax Law



The 2020 gala included Rotarians from six clubs. In 2021 we hope to have many more Rotary clubs represented. The six clubs were Rocky Point, Port Jefferson, Stony Brook, Ronkonkoma, Eclub and Passport Club.



# Murphy Foundation to Award First International Scholarship to HCF Children

HCF is pleased to announce that we have secured a special scholarship. LT Murphy was a Navy Seal from Long Island who died in the war on terror. We can select youth whose tuitions total \$2,500 for the year. This is the FIRST international scholarship to be awarded by the Murphy Foundation. The winners will be selected after the KCPE and KCSE results are known and will be announced in January.



The LT Michael P. Murphy Memorial Scholarship Foundation was started in 2007 by Michael's parents, Dan and Maureen, and Michael's brother, John.

Michael was an avid reader and felt that education was key. In fact, his favorite saying was "Education will set you free." That is why the Murphy family used their own funds to start the Foundation.

The Foundation Board started with family and now seats nine members consisting of Dan, Maureen and John Murphy as well as other close family and friends committed to keeping Michael's life, service, sacrifice and legacy alive as well as that of his SEAL teammates.



## SCHOLARSHIP AGREEMENT

**Name of Scholarship:** The Jerusha Mwiraria Hope Children's Scholarship

### Background Information:

- The Scholarship (s) is (are) provided to children from the Hope Children's Funds Jerusha Mwiraria Children's Home (orphanage) to fulfill their educational potential. The slogan of the orphanage is "EDUCATION IS THE KEY".
- In alignment with Rotary International's mission to bring together business and professional leaders in order to provide humanitarian services, encourage high ethical standards in all vocations, help build peace and goodwill in the world. Rotary International is open to all persons regardless of race, color, creed, religion, gender, or political preference. The Rotary Club of the Ronkonkoma's has created a scholarship in support of a child who has demonstrated the eligibility criteria listed below.

**Donor/Contributor or Contact Person:** Rotary Club of the Ronkonkoma's

**Contact Name:** Rose Quaranta, PO Box 2717, Ronkonkoma, New York 11779, 516.617-2316, [roseq40@aol.com](mailto:roseq40@aol.com)

**Financial Considerations:** Due to cost of education in Kenya, \$2500 would fund multiple youth for the year. The selection committee would try to fund as many youth as possible.

### Scholarship Eligibility Criteria:

- Receive high grades on the Kenya Comprehensive Primary Examination (KCPE).
- Receive high grades on the Kenya Comprehensive Secondary Examination (KCSE).
- Exhibit High Moral Character as evaluated by the home's staff, teachers, brothers and sisters.
- Provide service to their home, school and community.

# A LIFE WELL-LIVED: JOSEPH RWITO KIRIMA

When Joseph Rwito Kirima passed on Friday, January 31, Hope Children's Fund and the Jerusha Mwiraria Children's Fund Home changed forever.

In many ways, Hope Children's Fund has been directly related to the friendship between Joseph Kirima and Lawrence Hohler. They met when Larry was a visiting teacher at Gikumene Harambee Secondary School and Joseph was an 18-year-old sophomore. Later Joseph attended St. Mark's Teachers Training College in Embu, Kenya. Larry and Yvette Hohler paid for his tuition—it was the best investment they ever made.

Joseph Kirima became a primary school teacher, headmaster, and eventually president of the Meru branch of the Kenya National Union of Teachers. He became a respected community leader and a Church Elder. He married Veronica and had three children.

Joseph came to the USA in 1999 to pitch the idea of an orphanage. Soon the momentum started that led to the formation of Hope Children's Fund as a 501 c(3) charity and the formation of the Hope Children's Fund Board of Directors. The orphanage opened in 2005 with

18 children. Over the last 15 years, the children of Hope Children's Fund have thrived.

Joseph lived a full and meaningful life. It is difficult to describe fully his impact on the Home and each child who resided there over the years.

A typical day for Joseph would be meeting the Home staff to plan for the day, shopping for daily food needs, speaking to the children who needed some TLC, arranging work at the home's farms, and arranging for educational placements. All this while juggling many conversations and at least two cell phones in his hands.

Many of us have had the pleasure of having Joseph Kirima in our lives. For those who did not, it is truly an experience you were deprived of.

We must not mourn and be sad over Joseph's passing. We should celebrate a life well-lived. He was at peace with his passing as a man of God.

Joseph leaves behind a legacy of compassion for children in need, a true understanding of the value of education, and an example of making a difference.

We ask that each of us try to keep his legacy alive by continuing the work of the orphanage. As Joseph so firmly believed: **EDUCATION IS THE KEY!**

