

AMAKURU

SUMMER 2022 NEWSLETTER

ONE DREAM

Dear Friends,

We are excited to welcome you to “Amakuru”, our first AFJHAR newsletter. Amakuru translates to “News” in Kinyarwanda and is also commonly used as a greeting “How are you?” It has been one year since we formed AFJHAR to support & help fund the work of our friends at Journey House Actions in rural Gashora, Rwanda. Thanks to the encouragement & financial support of our friends & donors we were able to greatly impact the lives of the most vulnerable children & women in Gashora. I hope you enjoy the stories in our first edition of Amakuru.

Best wishes,

Greg Herrle, AFJHAR President



ONE TEAM

A message from Gashora!

“I would like to send my thanks & love to all our friends at AFJHAR & congratulate them on completing their first year of operations.

Thanks to your investment of over \$270,000 in Journey House Actions Rwanda (JHA) we were able to feed our children, provide clean drinking water to our community, build & stock our JHA Farm & purchase valuable land for expansion.”

Rogers Kimuli, JHA Executive Director



New Developments

ADDITIONS TO THE GUEST HOUSE

Four new bedrooms were added this past month to the JHA Guesthouse. JHA has been receiving lots of guests as of late, and looks forward to hosting many more in 2022 including some AFJHAR Board members.

Now, JHA has four cozy bedrooms to accommodate guests.



NEW LAND PURCHASE

AFJHAR is pleased to recently fund the purchase of 2.7 acres of land to nearly double the existing operations of the Journey House Actions Farm in Gashora, Rwanda.

The Farm now includes more than 20 cows, 13 pigs, dozens of goats & hundreds of chickens as well as crops. The Farm has greatly reduced both child malnutrition & hunger in the elderly. It also provides paying jobs to many in the community.



NUTRITION & EDUCATION

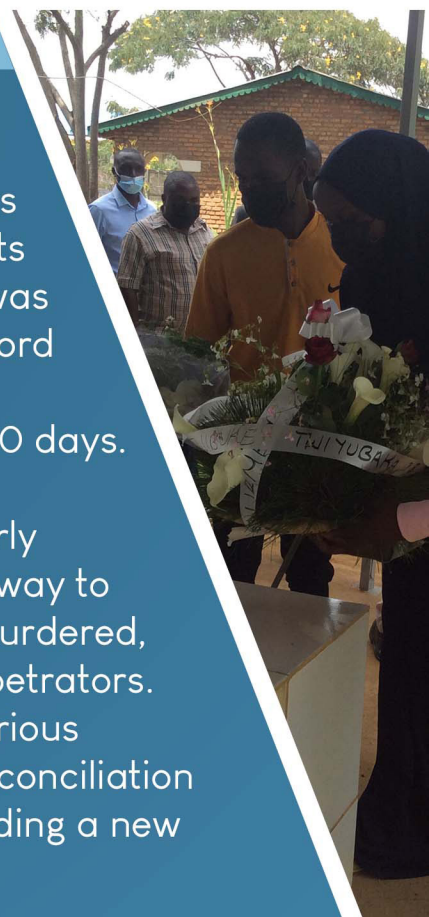
In April, AFJHAR funded the purchase of 22,000 pounds of grains & beans for the JHA Food Basket Program & for salt, supplements & vitamins to keep the JHA livestock healthy.

We also provided stipends to the staff at the Norman & Marlyn Herrle Early Childhood Development Center to cover the first half of the year.

KWIBUKA 28

On April 7th, 2022, the 28th commemoration of the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi was held across Rwanda. Now in its 28th year, this year's theme was Kwibuka -- a Kinyarwanda word for remember. As a sign of its significance, Kwibuka lasts 100 days.

For those in Rwanda, this yearly commemoration serves as a way to remember those that were murdered, and forgive the surviving perpetrators. JHA hosted events among various communities to further the reconciliation process, with the hope of building a new future in Rwanda.



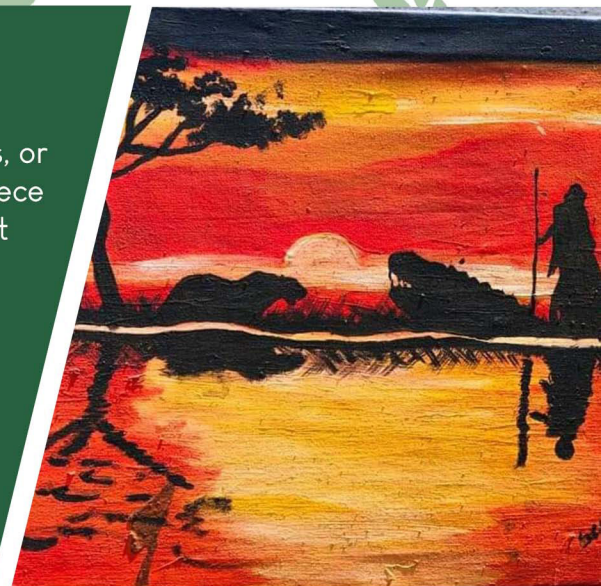
Recent events

THE IKIREBE ART GALLERY

The incredible Ikirebe Art Gallery is up and running!! The art gallery is the first ever art gallery in Rwanda to use Hy-Crylic (water Hyacinths & acrylic) on canvas, and each of these stunning pieces are produced by residents of Gashora to be sold across the world!

If you want to view more of the pieces, or are interested in purchasing an art piece visit Rogers Kimuli's Facebook page at facebook.com/kifiower

Every art piece purchased from the gallery is another fantastic way to support JHA's children's education and health programs.

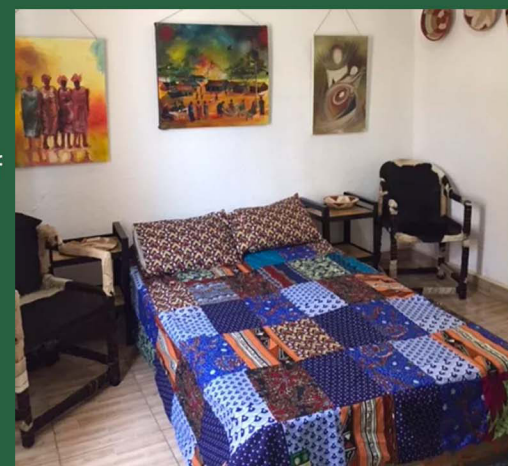


A VISIT TO RWANDA

This past March, our Canadian friends Gabriele and Neil Matheson from Friends of Gashora had the opportunity to visit Gashora! They stayed for 6 weeks, during which time Gabriele was able to meet each JHA staff member to understand what they do, and Neil oversaw the design and construction of furniture for the new Gallery Guesthouse.

They both attended the Kwibuka commencement, participated in a handful of fun activities, and accomplished a lot of hard work.

Gabriele wrote a fantastic blog covering the trip which can be found at gabrieleingashora.wordpress.com/





A SPOTLIGHT ON GASHORA

Nayikhiki Shemsa

In order to fully understand the mission of Journey House Actions Rwanda, it is imperative to understand the people and stories of Gashora, and the impact that JHA has on their lives. For this issue of Amakuru, we spoke to a member of the community named Nayihiki Shemsa – or, Mama Babu as she’s known to many in Gashora. What follows is the incredible story of Mama Babu, and a brief summary of the profound effects that JHA has had on her life.

“My story is like many other children born and raised in Gashora – children from a family of genocide victims as well as the genocide perpetrators.

I was born by a Tutsi father, and a Hutu mother. This made me a child born with neglect from both sides of my family. Never loved by my father’s side. Never loved by my mother’s side.

I will never forget during the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi, my mother stood by my side and talked to every family member of hers who wished to kill all Tutsi in her family. She begged them to spare my life, because I was her daughter.

My uncles were my only rescue. I went to seek refuge to my uncle amidst the mass killings, and my uncle told me “I would advise you not to come to my house to seek protection, this would make me kill you with an arrow. Why don’t you just go to your other uncle, who will kill you better with a gun. Since we will kill your father, you are next.”

It was not possible for a young girl like me to understand. But later, after they killed my father, I understood how serious they were. I truly was next.

I walked through the forest for days looking for somewhere to hide. I survived, and went to a refugee camp with other uncles of mine. Eventually I came back home, and found nothing. No home, no family, nothing to eat.

I was hungry, devastated, and hopeless.

But JHA is home for pretty much all of us now. It gave me more reasons to forgive. I forgave my uncles, one of them even works at JHA with us now as our security man.

JHA has given my children support to go to school.

JHA has given food for me and my children. JHA has led to understanding that I should be hopeful.

JHA has reminded me that love can be found even when sometimes it might seem so far away and lost.

JHA is my new home.

Thank you JHA for building me a new home. Thank you to all lovers and great friends of Journey House that support all these amazing projects.

You bring a sense of love to all of us.

Thank you for bringing love to our community.

You bring a sense of love to all of us.

Thank you for bringing love to our community.

I love you all”



2022 Summer Appeal

How can young children experiencing poverty develop without access to a school or without teachers, books, uniforms, books & supplies? The most vulnerable children in rural Gashora,

Rwanda did not have access to these basic human rights due to the extreme poverty in their community. However, in early 2021 Journey House Actions Rwanda (JHA), with the help of American & Canadian donors, completed the construction of the Norman & Marlyn Herrle "Journey of Success" Early Childhood Development Center in Gashora. The Journey of Success Center provides early childhood development & child protection services to 250 of the most vulnerable children in Gashora. The Center also feeds over 500 malnourished children two nutritious meals per day, which has reduced malnutrition rates by 80% on the children enrolled at the Center.

In June, AFJHAR will hold our Summer Appeal to support & help fund the critical & life-changing programs & services offered at the Journey of Success Center. This Center has become a model for effective early childhood education in Rwanda & JHA envisions its model will be replicated across the country.

Any heartfelt donation will make a difference!

[CLICK HERE TO DONATE!](#)

OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Board Chair
Charles Brown

President
Greg Herrle

Treasurer
Chris Calvelli

Secretary
Dawn Helwig

John Cantieri

Jaron Crawford

Gregory J. Herrle

Myra Rosario Herrle

Marie Hynek

Silvio Ingui

Tracy Josetti

Rogers Kimuli

Liz Kolb

Mary Wirka Mantilla

Bill Pollock

Sarah Ripp

Joan Sturm

Connie Wheeler

For more information, please visit our website at www.afjhar.org