



Sakila Sponsorship Program

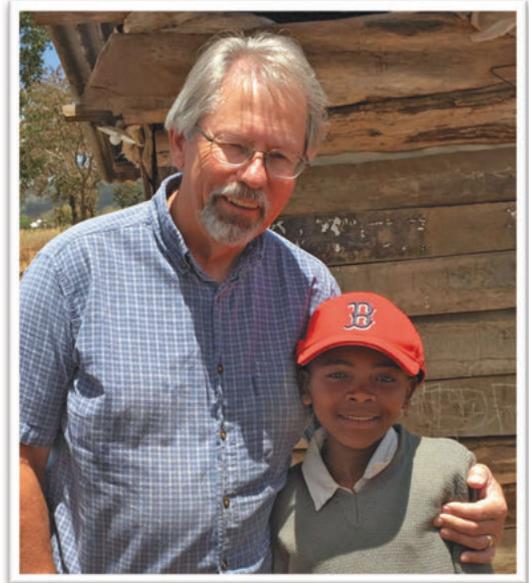
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Dear Sponsors and Supporters,

January 2017

It's always fun to take people with us and have them experience Sakila for the first time. Bill and his son, Daniel, (Bill pictured below), are two first-timers who went in October. They had to travel to Seattle from their home in Montana to meet up with us — then they boarded the plane to Tanzania by way of Amsterdam. The photo shows Bill and the boy he sponsors proudly wearing Bill's gift of a new hat. This child walks one and a half hours up the hill every weekday to get to school. That's his one-room house in the background. There are six family members living in that one room. Bill writes to us about Sakila from his perspective:

"Our plans for my trip to Sakila had been two years in the making. In the beginning my wife and I were looking forward to seeing the Ministries and meeting the people doing God's work in Tanzania. Then, six months into our wait, our first grandchild was born. I was pretty sure our plans had changed. Sure enough there weren't enough Elephants in Africa to drag Grandma halfway around the world. So I invited my son to go along. He had just taken a new job as a pastor; the church was completely on board with him taking the time. With new plans in place I began to get excited for the trip, but what was I going to contribute? What did I have to give the people in Sakila? Maybe I should just stay home and send the money. I was sure the sponsorship program would put it to good use. I began to bring the trip into my devotion time to let God know my heart. The first thing I heard was that I was not to have any expectations. Don't let my American mindset get in the way. I don't have to be DOING something all the time. Ya-but if I'm not pulling my weight by doing something why does He want me to go to Africa? I have to admit that, in a way, I felt guilty. I loved the thought of going to Africa. What a vacation! This was not some sacrifice I was making. I wasn't going to be 'suffering' for the Gospel's sake. Man, this was Africa! There are places, and people, and animals that I have never been around. I was excited. Ya-but don't you have to do something for the Kingdom? Don't you have to make a contribution? I heard it again; I was not to have any expectations. Gene and Lorraine told me as much, 'We just want you to come and see what God is doing in Sakila.' Ok, but I'm going to do something.



"Then I had the idea that maybe I could do something with my daughter's third grade class, help them form a relationship with a class in Sakila. Gene & Lorraine thought it was something we could try. The school gave us their blessing, so we made plans for her next year's class to learn a little about Tanzania and write letters to children of a third grade class living there. They'd ask questions, share their favorite sports, activities, & animals, and tell about their families. We had them color some pictures of animals found in Montana to share with the class in Sakila. The plan was to have the class in Sakila do the same. But, Lorraine pointed out that some kids in Sakila have never had the opportunity to see the animals that Africa is so famous for. Reality began to sink in. These kids don't have the same life our kids have. There are no summer vacations to Yellowstone Park, no field trips to the zoo. The animals they see are the ones that provide a living for their family. A topic our kids asked about was, 'What do you like to do after school?' One Sakila child replied, 'After school I go to goat.' These third graders all have responsibilities before and after school that most of our kids didn't comprehend. So, with letters, pictures and a quick little video saying hello and asking the kids on the other side of the world if they would like to be friends, I made my way to Sakila.

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"We set up a time with Patrick, the Headmaster of the Primary School, for us to share with a third grade class. The teacher, Mathew, was very gracious and had his class on board with the plan. I was very impressed with the students and with Mathew. We passed out the letters and pictures and made a video of the class greeting the American students. The Sakila third-graders even sang a song for their new Montana friends. Mathew took the class time that week to have the students respond to the letters that were written. Headmaster, Patrick, delivered a packet of letters and pictures the students put together. I opened the package and there were over 30 letters written in English! I never imagined a third grade class would be able to respond in English. It was yet another example of the quality education they are receiving. You never know what you're going to learn when you venture into another culture, what you will bring that leaves a lasting impression or what surprises are in store. When Patrick viewed the greeting video from the American students his face couldn't hide the shock when he heard our students didn't wear uniforms. And when I got home with the video for my daughter's class they were so excited to see their new friends and learn about their lives. Since my return I've had many opportunities to visit the class and talk to them about Sakila.

"My trip was so full of good experiences and opportunities for new relationships there isn't enough room to begin that discussion. But, what I want to say about the school is that it is changing people's lives. It is changing the whole village. People are better for the ministry being there, it is evident that the Lord has His hand in the lives of the people."
~ Bill Turnquist

The annual POTLUCK for this year is on Saturday, February 4th, at Gateway Fellowship on the corner of 8th and Hostmark in Poulsbo, WA. Godwin and Gene will have the latest news from Sakila. They return from their January trip just a few days prior to the Potluck. If your last name begins with A-L please bring a salad or dessert. If it begins with M-Z please bring a main dish, hot or cold. Looking forward to seeing you at 2:00 PM in the Pearson Fellowship Hall.

We know this newsletter is a bit longer than usual, but we couldn't think of anything we would leave out. Hope you enjoy it. At the end of this month we will be sending out your giving statements for the 2016 tax year. Be sure to watch for yours! It will include the February newsletter. Have a wonderful 2017 and may our Lord bless you as He has blessed the children and families of Sakila through your faithfulness.

Blessings,



The Sakila Sponsorship Program is a U.S. Federally recognized 501(c)(3) charity. All donations are tax deductible. Please make checks payable to the Sakila Sponsorship Program (S.S.P.) or pay securely using your credit or debit card by going to www.sakilasponsorship.org and clicking on the 'CONTACT INFO & DONATIONS' button.