



Reason2Smile Gazette

APRIL 2011

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A New Kind of Pen Pal



For the second year in a row, students at Robert C. Parker School outside of Albany, NY exchanged t-shirts with students at Jambo Jipya School. Led by art teacher, Susan Merrett, seventh and eighth grade students at Parker designed t-shirts for the 45 children who live at Jambo Jipya. They then gave me the t-shirts they made along with 30 blank t-shirts and marker pens. This is one of my

favorite projects to do with the students at Jambo Jipya because like all children, they get excited to create on a "canvas" that they aren't normally allowed to draw or paint on. They also love the idea of creating something for someone else. Not to mention the excitement that comes with receiving the t-shirt that their t-shirt pal from America made for them! This is a gift that they can wear often and feel like they are connected to someone on the other side of the world! Not long after returning from Kenya, I completed the circle by visiting the students at Parker School once again. Upon receiving the t-shirt made by her Kenyan t-shirt pal, a student from Parker School exclaimed that t-shirt exchange day was her favorite day of the year! What a neat way to use art to connect children thousands of miles apart! I certainly enjoy seeing the connection unfold!

Thank you for reading this month's Reason2Smile Gazette! I hope you enjoy hearing about activities that have and will take place. There are lots of ways you can get involved this spring! Don't worry, spring is coming!

Smiles,
Keela Dates
Executive Director,
Reason2Smile Inc.



Upcoming Event

The 4th annual Reason2Smile Art Sale is coming to the Adirondacks once again! This year's show will run from April 12th until May 13th at Bluseed Studios in Saranac Lake with a reception on Friday May 6th from 6-9pm. The artwork is created by a variety of artists and will be for sale anytime during the month long event. Kenyan crafts and art will also be available for sale on the evening of the reception. We hope you can stop by at some point during the show and that you can join us at the reception on May 6th!



Celebrating African Style!



Audience members join members of the Somabeats, Wulaba, and Top Cats in a community dance.

The North Country came out in support for Jambo Jipya School at the first ever Reason2Smile Arts Night held at the Lake Placid Center for the Arts in early March. Attendees enjoyed perusing the artwork made by professional and student artists, as well as the Kenyan marketplace which filled the lower lobby of the LPCA. The Saranac Lake High School Men and Women's Ensembles started off the evening and were soon followed by the UVM Top Cats (an all male a cappella group from the University of Vermont). The place was rocking as the Top Cats shared their talent and energy. To end the night with an African feel, Wulaba Drummers and Somabeats Dancers took the stage and got the blood pumping! There

wasn't a still foot in the theatre as the audience got into the African groove! Over \$3,000 was raised at the event and was sent straight to Jambo Jipya School! A very special thank you to the LPCA staff as well as to all the performers and volunteers! It was an incredibly successful evening! Thanks a lot to all who attended! We're looking forward to seeing you at next year's Reason2Smile Arts Night!

A Night of Family Fun!

After a little break in 2010, the African Festival returned to Cato-Meridian Elementary on March 25th. With a change in date, the African heat drew people in out of the March cold. Families came to enjoy the variety of games based around African animals, face-painting, portraits by Nip Rogers, a wide variety of Kenyan goods, and delicious root beer floats. Nearly \$1,600 was raised at this year's event!! Thank you to all who attended and a very special thank you to all the teachers, staff members, and parents who volunteered their time and energy! It was a huge success and a ton of fun!



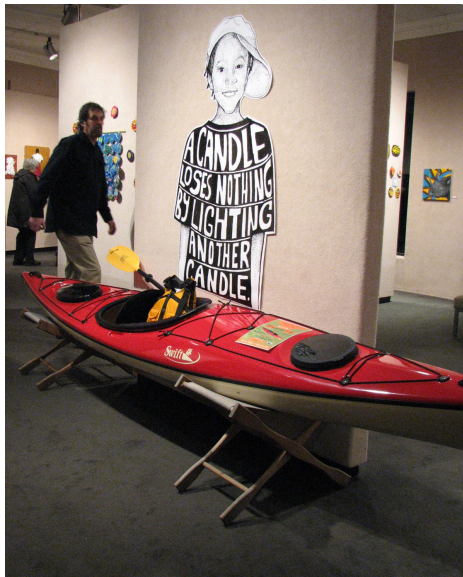
Right: One of the many games at the African Festival.

Students Show They Care

Many schools have participated in the Reason2Spell-Thons in support for Jambo Jipya School but recently, a group of third graders went above and beyond. Forty students at AA Cole Elementary School in Constantia, NY, led by teacher Carrie Felkner, proved their spelling skills as well as their willingness to care about others by raising \$900 for Jambo Jipya School (with the top student raising over \$200)! The students presented Keela with a check during their monthly character education assembly on Friday March 25th. A very special thank you to all the third grader students and teachers at AA Cole Elementary School!

Kayak for Kenya

Our "Kayak for Kenya" raffle continues this month. If you would like a chance at a beautiful kayak, paddle, and life-vest (total package valued at \$3,000) generously donated by Steve Doxzon at Adirondack Lakes and Trails in Saranac Lake, NY please let us know! Tickets are \$10 each or 3 for \$25.



The beautiful kayak made a live showing at the Reason2Smile Arts Night.

Give Them a Reason 2 Smile!

Tax deductible donations can be made by giving online via the website www.reason2smile.org or by making a check payable to "Reason2Smile Inc" and mailing it to:

Reason2Smile Inc.
151 Hillcrest Ave.
Lake Placid, NY 12946

For any questions or further information please contact Keela at: keela@reason2smile.org

Thank you for your continued support! You are truly making a difference in the lives of needy children!



Reagan worked on his t-shirt for two hours!
That's a long time for a five year old!