



The Magic Penny Newsletter

Fall 2011

You did it!

Congratulations to The Magic Penny, and its many volunteers and generous donors on the completion and dedication of The Magic Penny School. This has been a long and challenging journey for all of us but what a rewarding experience - I traveled to Sierra Leone to participate in the opening and dedication of the K-5 Magic Penny School in Bompheptoke, Sierra Leone on April 16, 2011!

What an exciting opening day it was for the children and parents! In attendance were the local Paramount Chief, Madam Doris Lenga Gbabor Caulker II, Bishop John Yambasu of the United Methodist Church, a representative from the Ministry of Education, and many others from across Sierra Leone. Mrs. Annie Bangura, Managing Director of Sierra Leone Magic Penny and I made brief presentations to the guests and children about the history of TMP, our donors in the United States and about the importance of education in one's life. After the formal ceremonies, refreshments provided by the villagers were served to all 250 children and approximately 100 guests, followed by a party with music and dancing. The school opening ceremonies, which started at 10 am, ended with dancing into the wee hours of the night.

With the opening dedication of the school, The Magic Penny has achieved a most significant milestone. But much still remains to be done. Parents from across the water now want their children to attend our school, greatly increasing the size of classes. Immediate needs include paving the grounds around the school, building a playground and providing sporting equipment. It has also long been The Magic Penny's mission to provide the school children with regular hot lunches, and to promote sustainable food sufficiency in the larger community. Toward these ends, we plan a one-acre school garden where the children will grow vegetables and raise livestock for the lunch program. The garden will also serve as a showcase to encourage community garden initiatives, while also providing for rudimentary science and math lessons. All of these ambitious endeavors serve to highlight the need for continued vigorous fundraising.

The difference your donations are making in the lives of The Magic Penny School children and in rural Sierra Leonean communities cannot be overstated. I want to thank you most sincerely for your selfless generosity. I trust that we can continue to count on your generosity.

Lucy Sumner, President, The Magic Penny, Inc.



THE MAGIC PENNY SCHOOL DEDICATION



Cutting the ribbon.



Watching the ceremonies in new school uniforms.



Proceeds from The Magic Penny Annual Fundraiser at The John W. Engeman Theater paid for the construction of new desks, tables, and chairs that were built by local carpenters.

Smithtown H.S. Symphonic Band raised the money for 250 uniforms, and local tailors made them on sewing machines donated by TMP. The machines will remain in the community center to provide sewing lessons for local women.



Time to celebrate!