



EMERALD'S JEWELS NIAMEY, NIGER



WE PRESS TOWARD THE GOAL

Yolanda Zimmerman

JULY 2020

JOSEPH'S PLACE

Children

The children finished school on July 3rd, except the 6th graders, who have an additional week and a standardized test to complete. The other children have returned to their villages. Schools were scheduled to end on July 15th, but the government shortened the schedule for the younger children. We had to quickly adjust and there was no time for the usual end of school year presentation of awards and festivities.



Joseph's Place students waiting for the school van to take them to school

Since many of the children are needed on the family farms, and because the school year extended into the planting season due to the coronavirus, we sent most of the children home the day after school finished. There was a bustle of activity: washing clothes, packing bags and quick goodbyes before departing for home.



See you in September!

Education

Testing for grades 1 through 5 ended on Friday, so we are still awaiting the final grades. The 6th graders will attend half day classes next week followed by more testing. We are looking forward to seeing them again when the new 7th grade class offering starts in the fall.



Last day of school for 1st – 5th grades

We will adjust the tutoring program next year. One of the difficulties we encountered is that the curriculum is taught in French, and some of the children come to us without knowing the French language. For those of you who have studied French, you know that written French is not intuitive.



For example, the following combination of letters all make the sound of the letter “o”: au = eau = eaux = aux = aud = ho = ot. Also, since the last letter of most words is not pronounced, the spoken and written word are sufficiently different to require a lot more memorization.

So, the new children and I have been struggling with the French language. I am happy to say that we made progress, but I think we could have made more if we had divided the children up by language proficiency (not grade level) and concentrated on language skills more than homework. We will try another approach next year.

Staff

House father Pastor Omar spent some time planting at his farm in Nicoye, while his wife, Mama Aissa, cared for the Joseph's Place children here in Niamey. The Pastor reports that the Joseph's Place farmers were very happy about having the donkeys and plows in time for planting and were grateful for the millet and rice at the discounted price. **Praise God and thank you to all those who supported Joseph's Place and the Millet Fund.**



Health

We are in good health overall. The latest Worldometer coronavirus count indicates there were only 120 new cases since this time last month. We continue to pray for protection against this disease. At Joseph's Place, we had a few colds and one suspected case of malaria, but the children recovered and are well.

Housing

Our lease ends in September. So, we are looking for a larger facility now and praying that God will send more people who have pastors' hearts, a love for children, and have some formal education. **We remain grateful to everyone who has shared their resources (time, talent, and treasure) with these children and their families.**

VIE ABONDANTE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Themes

The themes for this year were "Pressing toward the goal" from Philippians 3:14, and "God has a plan for your life" from Jeremiah 29:11.

Activities

Emerald's Jewels has been partnering with the Vie Abondante Mission School for the past 2 years. A couple of years ago, I started a Savings Plan for the teachers and staff to help them put aside money for emergencies or personal needs. Participants save a small amount each month and I match it. At the end of the school year, or as requested, I return their savings along with the matching funds.

This past month, we donated funds to replace the clutch on the school van and buy fuel for the van. We paid for report card forms for all the students, and we donated funds for a welder to fix some broken playground equipment.



If you would like to participate in this ministry, we welcome your prayers, and your donations to ejewels.org.