

First Tanzanian Earth Day Celebrated at Gibb's Farm



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KARATU, TANZANIA - Believed to be the first community Earth Day for Tanzania, its 40th anniversary on April 22nd was marked at Gibb's Farm, itself a historic coffee plantation welcoming travelers starting 45 years ago. The occasion helped participants better understand how the historic coffee farm has been a leader in sustainable farming and tourism. Many examples found at Gibb's Farm were included in the daylong event of painting, athletics and awareness-based activities.

Founders Margaret and James Gibb concerned themselves with the ecological responsibility of the farm soon after they started to manage it in 1948. Their stewardship of the land, community and wildlife have long been a focus of the 80 year-old operation. Opportunities to advance these efforts continue to mature since recent renovations. Special Earth Day events were organized at the farm to mark the occasion and also to broaden the understanding for a cleaner, greener way of life.

Three events were designed by staff leadership that typically conducts twice annual employee Olympics. The first event was the Earth Relay. This was a test of ecology-knowledge runners shouted to answer questioning judges before sprinting their baton back to a teammate. Eighteen runners competed in three teams.

Questions included: ways to reduce carbon footprint, ways to reduce energy usage, preferred ways to dry cloths, plant water filtration facts, the purpose of large windows in every farm cottage, name four of the ten gardens at Gibb's Farm, solar water heating facts, steps for separating refuse, and recent environmental awards received.

In the estate's staff village traditional building technology and materials have been used to example sustainable and affordable housing. Within the walls of the dining hall Uhai (Swahili for life), three more teams engaged in the Earth Day Painting competition. The captains with their team of six were challenged to fine-tune their graffiti and painting skill carrying the theme of "reduce, reuse and recycle," judicious use of natural resources, and sustainable development. Each team was provided with paints, brushes, pencils, and erasers to finish their task in one and half hour. Locating the community art in a facility used daily by everyone was a clever way to extend the awareness beyond the day and past Earth Week scheduled a few months later. The walls are planned for repainting in time for the second annual Earth Day Wall Painting.

The Uhai lunch was followed by the Bachelors Vs Married Volleyball match which drew huge applause from staff who chose to support their team as per their marital status. Even though the “Bachelors” team won the day, the commitment to excel was praiseworthy from both teams.

The event concluded with prizes for all the three teams. On this occasion twenty chosen employees were gifted an indigenous tree sapling by Earth Day co-leader Lazaro Msasi. He is the leader of the Flower & Grounds Department that propagates seedlings as part of an on-going program that facilitates erosion control around the neighboring farms, many of which belong to the Gibb’s Farm employee’s or their families.

Gibb’s Farm, Tanzania, joins 190 countries to utilize the annual event to communicate the ecology mantra “reduce, reuse and recycle.” In the celebration of what is likely to be Tanzania’s first Earth Day event Gibb’s Farm serves to demonstrate its “triple top line” approach, a concept McDonough and Braugart advanced in 2002 which states that measurements are only meaningful when ecology, equality and the economy are in balance. This notion builds upon John Elkington’s 1994 “triple bottom line” thesis that measures economic goals with social and environmental concerns.

“The Ecology Walk has just been added to the many activities of Gibb’s Farm. Earth Day is a fun way to make this introduction for the general staff,” said Kuntal Kumar, co-organizer of the event.

In recognition of Gibb’s Farm sustainable development and responsible tourism efforts it received first place at the recent **Educational Travel Conference 2010 Responsible Tourism Showcase**, and one of the highest ratings in the **2009 World Savers Award** for the “Doing It All” category in **Condé Nast Traveler** annual World Savers Awards. The honor recognized Gibb’s Farm outstanding contributions to education, wildlife, preservation, and health initiatives in communities. Earlier, the **2008 Green Living Project** featured Gibb’s Farm in its sustainable living and travel project and lecture series, noting that the farm, “elevates environmentally and socially responsible practices in every level of their operations.” In-depth information for all these and related events and facts is available in the Ecology of Gibb’s Farm section of this website gibbsfarm.net.

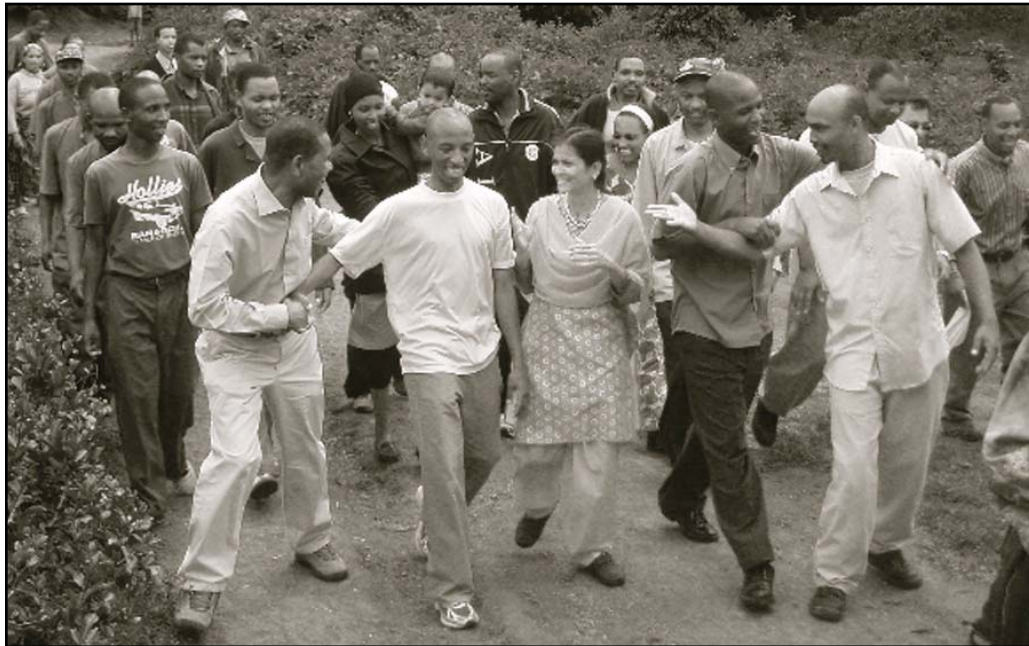
About Gibb’s Farm

Set beside the Ngorongoro Conservation Area, Gibb's Farm has a tradition that goes back more than 80 years, and it is the oldest coffee farm in the Ngorongoro Forest. The African Living Spa offers unparalleled spa, treatments, and healing services based on traditional Maasai techniques and medicines. As the world traveler's respite from the rigors of safari, Gibb's Farm allows one to discover a community of nature, people, culture, art, and beauty, providing a sense of place and history.

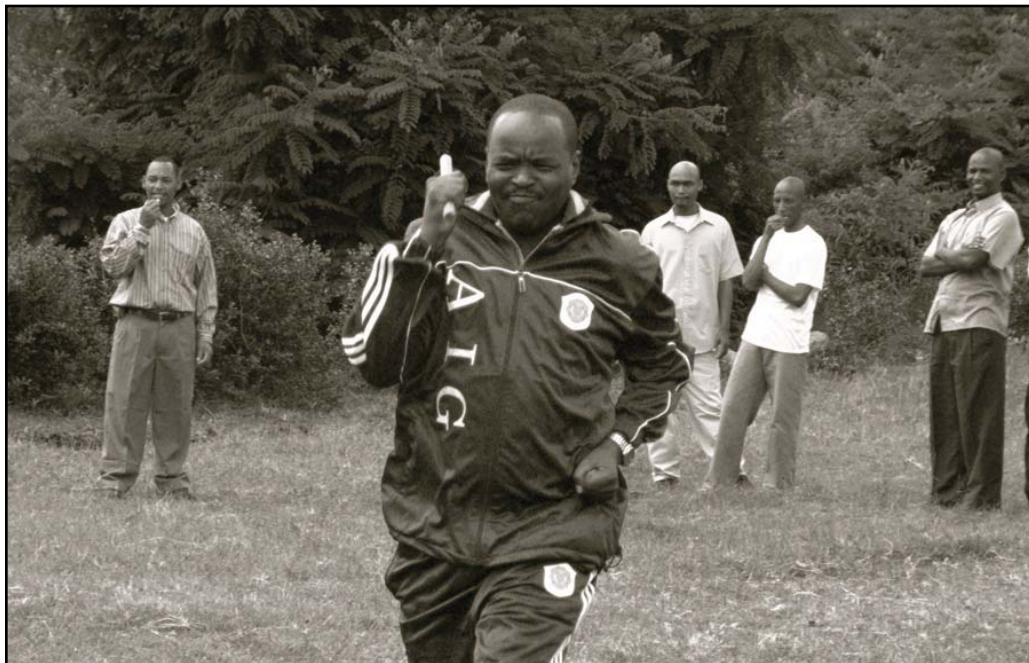
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Photographs



Caption
Captains Joseph Lohay and Nisha Sinha congratulate the winning contestants at the first annual Earth Day of Gibb's Farm.



Caption
Second Runner Up Earth Day Relay Captain Elias Matay sprinting to the finish line.



Caption: Volley Ball teams at the first annual Earth Day Gibb's Farm.



Caption: Earth Day Painting in staff dining room called Uhai, Swabili for life.