

INVENTION
CORNER

Air horns



An air horn is a device designed to create a very loud noise for signaling. It uses compressed air that passes through a small opening and causes a reed or diaphragm to vibrate, creating sound waves. The horn then amplifies the sound, making it even louder. Air horns are commonly found on large vehicles like buses, trucks, fire trucks, trains, and ships. They are also popular at sporting events and protests.

Portable air horns are small and easy to carry. They are usually powered by a can of compressed gas and are operated by pressing a button on top. These portable horns are often used by fans at sporting events, at boating events for safety, and even at political rallies.

The first person to patent the air horn was Robert Swann, who received a patent for his design in 1908. They were originally used on ships to signal other vessels at sea. The loud sound of an air horn could be heard over long distances, making it an effective way to communicate in the noisy marine environment. Ships could also use air horns to signal their presence and intentions to other vessels, especially in foggy conditions where visibility was poor.

Today, air horns are used in many different ways. They are essential on large vehicles like buses, trucks, and emergency vehicles, construction sites and factories. Modern versions often have electronic controls and adjustable volume settings.

Recently, air horns have become a popular tool in protests. In Kenya, for example, people used air horns during the Finance Bill protests to make their voices heard. The loud noise of the air horns helped draw attention to their cause and disrupted normal activities.

Compiled by Meshack Yobby

Alice, 10, set to address 8,000 delegates on climate change in UK

She has planted 5,000 trees and hopes to hit the 10-million mark by 2032

BY ALBERT MWAZIGHE

On the morning of June 8, 2024, Alice Wanjiru joined other environmentalists at the shores of Mazingira Beach in Kilifi County for a clean-up exercise in commemoration of the World Ocean Day.

Barely three days ago, the 10-year-old was in Embu participating in a tree-planting exercise led by Environment Cabinet Secretary Soipan Tuya, to mark World Environment Day.

"Climate change effects are sparing no one including the children. When we had floods recently, we lost children, some were displaced, and education was disrupted. Something must be done to tackle climate change," Alice remarked, during the event.

Since she was five, the young girl has been engaging in activities aimed at conserving the environment and addressing climate change, drawing her inspiration from Nobel Peace Prize winner, the late Prof. Wangari Maathai.

"Wangari narrated a story of a little hummingbird that saw the forest on fire. The bird didn't watch but tried to put in small efforts to save the forest from the fire. The hummingbird did what the big animals were scared of doing."

It is for this reason that in 2020, she launched an organisation by the name of Green Hummingbird Movement, which encourages environmental conservation, from an early age.

"We aim to inspire the current generation of children and those younger than us so that we can have an environmentally responsible generation," posits Wanjiru.

With the help of other children, she hopes to achieve an objective of planting 10 million trees by 2032, having already grown over 5,000 trees at the Afro Forest along Nairobi's Ruai area.

"To convince as many children as possible to plant a tree, the movement encourages them to plant trees during



their birthdays and provides them with free seedlings for this exercise," notes Wanjiru.

Every year, on World environmental day, people plant trees but fail to follow up on whether the trees still exist or whether they dried up, after that day

Any tree you plant, you should adopt it for three years to make sure it has matured enough and cannot dry up

Alice



passes.

Wanjiru's Green Hummingbird movement encourages people to not only plant trees, but also to adopt and maintain them until they reach a stage of maturity.

"Any tree you plant, you should adopt it for three years to make sure it has matured enough to a point where it cannot dry up because of the weather. If possible, make sure it grows until you're 50/60 years old so that you can tell your grandchildren this is a tree I planted," said Alice.

For her efforts towards environmental conservation, she was recently appointed by the Kenya Scouts Association as their Climate Action Ambassador, during World Environment Day.

The appointment will see Wanjiru address over 8,000 delegates at the World-wide Scouts' Conference in Sussex, United Kingdom, sometime in July this year, on the climate action agenda.

To enable them to achieve their con-

servation objectives, the father, James Gitundu, appeals to partners such as the county government and environmental organisations to support the kids with much needed resources, including seedlings.

"They have a very good slogan that we don't have another planet to live, so we better make this one better for us. If Alice plants a certain number of trees, and another kid plants a certain number of trees, they could change the world," notes Gitundu.

Meanwhile Nancy Muiruri, the Green Hummingbird Foundation's Project Manager, calls on parents and indeed all adults to be actively involved in nurturing the young ones on matters of the environment.

"Let us be the generation that rose to the challenge and wrote a new chapter of sustainability in the history of our planet," posed Ms Muiruri.

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Reading List

BOOK: Miti ni Mali

AUTHOR: Mohamed Said Bambanya
PUBLISHER: The Jomo Kenyatta Foundation

REVIEWER: Rev. Kariuki wa Nyamu

What are the benefits of tree planting? How often do you plant trees?

The story highlights the benefits of tree planting. As a matter of fact, it is beneficial to plant a tree every rainy season.

From the start of the story, we learn the names of different type of fruit trees and their benefits. The fruits include em-

be (mango), papai (pawpaw), nazi (coconut), fenesi (jackfruit) and others like ndizi (bananas), nanasi (pineapples) and nyanya (tomatoes). It is interesting to learn their Kiswahili names, isn't it?

The author basically uses simple Kiswahili with a few new words including kushambua, ganda, dafu, ulimbo, mche and korosho. The questions within the story make the story enjoyable to read. For example: Je, unajua mkwanju?

At the end of the book, there are a few new Kiswahili words alongside their meanings. They enhance a reader's comprehension of the story. State any five

benefits of trees and fruit trees. You can do it, can't you? Well, what does the author mean by Miti ni Mali/Trees are a Treasure? Read the story to find out.

The story also teaches children about environmental conservation. The book is suitable for all lower primary school-children who need to learn about their surroundings.

The book has beautiful pictures on every other page. They make the story more enjoyable and easier to understand. In fact, preschool children can understand the story by just looking at the pictures.

ACTIVITY TIME

Please complete the following sentences with the most suitable word given below.

vivuli, katika, na
Matundani muhimu mwili wa binadamu.
Shamba lake lina mimea matunda mengi.
Miti hutupatia wakati wa jua kali.

Storybook cover photo by Rev. Kariuki wa Nyamu

