



updates from ^{d.R} Congo!

AWIEF
PO Box 4303
Frederick, MD 21075

SPECIAL EDITION NEWSLETTER Able and Willing International Education Foundation

Hello, Friends!

Last year, we tried to keep you up to date with periodic e-mails detailing the progress that Puma and team were making abroad. This year, with Jim Carpenter (*Able and Willing* treasurer and backbone) recovering from a broken foot and eye surgery, communications will take a different format. I hope that you find the updates interesting, our requests concise, and that you will join us at our biannual dinner in November to hear more in person. May you all enjoy these last few weeks of summer . . .

Shannon Murphy, Secretary

Puma and the WAZA Alliance Arrive in the Congo



Puma arrived safely on July 16, and successfully met up with volunteers from the Waza Alliance. As described in our Spring newsletter, *Able and Willing* welcomed Sylvia Hyde and Faustin N'Tala to conduct training seminars for local teachers (including those from MYRT School) on instruction in math and sciences. The program sparked lively debate among participants and was well-received across the community. The following is an excerpt from Sylvia's journal:

. . . Faustin moves on to a science lesson, complete with demonstration. He takes a balloon filled with water and asks teacher to hypothesize the consequences of holding it over a lighted candle. "It will burn!" "It will explode!" "No, the water will keep it from burning!" There is a pandemonium of discussion, which pleases Faustin no end. He explains that this is exactly the reaction he elicits in the classroom. Following the summary of all hypotheses, he lights the candle and holds it under the balloon. Nothing happens, to the shock of most participants. They immediately begin to ask if there were something special about the balloon . . .

MYRT School teacher *Narcy Kantenga Warega* recently sent a note of personal appreciation for the seminar, noting that the opportunity "helped us to improve our way of teaching and to find didactic materials." Based on these successes, Sylvia and Faustin are working to establish an exchange program between MYRT and the International School of Indiana where Faustin both teaches and is working toward his PhD.

"[To] God we are praying [that He] will give you more than what you are doing for us. Tell [the staff of Able and Willing] that their works are visible to our eyes . . .

Narcy Kantenga Warega

O Container, Where Art Thou?

After leaving Baltimore three months ago and traveling some 4500+ miles, the container shipment carrying \$10,000 of new shop machinery, and hundreds of donated computers, bikes, books, culinary equipment and sewing machines has finally arrived in Lubumbashi – nearly a month later than anticipated. We thank Jeff Hoover, a Methodist missionary stationed in Congo (but on current sabbatical), for his diligence in helping to track the shipment.

Further challenges remain, though. Customs wants \$8000 to release the shipment, exceeding original estimates and based on fluctuating parameters that make figures difficult to gage in advance. Although half of the expense belongs to the Methodists with whom we share the container, AWIEF inherits a \$1000 shortfall in funds at a time when we can least afford it. Material and labor costs continue to escalate in DRC, and the shipping delay has made bikes, tents, and other items unavailable for the first month of construction . . . which, in turn, has complicated projects at the new Poleni campus by making transportation and accommodations more expensive.

The Board has wired Puma all cash on hand, and is working with the Methodists to borrow remaining shipping costs. We will eventually receive some reimbursement for the donated computers, but that timeline is uncertain and we have been forced to incur a short-term debt. We fervently hope that donations in the coming month will allow *Able & Willing* to repay its expenses.

Poleni, Wambuyu Tech on track

Most of Puma's time this year is dedicated to two projects: the new school in Poleni and installing new equipment at Wambuyu Tech (the primary workshop for MYRT School). Difficulties aside, Puma reports that physical construction on the 1st & 2nd grade school buildings, as well as a small office, should be completed at the Poleni by early September. Once shop equipment can be retrieved from the container shipment, installation of saws, drills and metal-working machinery can occur quickly at Wambuyu, allowing students to learn modern techniques for the production of goods. Those items can then be sold or leased to other schools, which a) benefits the community by improving physical plants throughout the area, and 2) enables the MYRT school to remain financially independent. Grants applications are pending in the US to establish larger scale projects through Wambuyu Tech in the future.



MYRT Student Spotlight



Corrine Katepa (left) and mother Angela

Corrine thanks 'Mr Puma' for "a good education and for access to rare gifts like computers" Her goal: to become the Provincial Minister of Education
[Photo by Sylvia Hyde]

Corrine Katepa is one of eight siblings, and raised by a single mother who earns their family's income by working in local fields. Despite a lack of formal education during her childhood, Corrine was encouraged to study basic materials at home during her youth. With a goal of bettering her life and family, Corrine was eventually able to join the MYRT School as a 1st year student in secondary school— a partial scholarship helps to make the fees attainable. Although Corrine struggles with eye problems and malnourishment, she remains dedicated to her homework and studies. Her clear sense of direction (she plans to finish school and university studies in 10 years, followed by careers in teaching, politics and service) reflects the power of opportunity.

Help Wanted... Needed!



Time has seen the scope and vision of *Able & Willing* grow steadily—we are taking on larger projects, completing them in less time, and with little increase in our volunteer staffing or resources. We have also seen our list of friends grow and diversify. And as they say, it isn't what you know, but who.... So—free plantains to anyone who can help with the following:

Printing & Publication: our newsletters are typically printed at home, entailing hours of attention to collating, folding, labeling and stamping. We have felt that the impact of color is important, and lends a richness to the content that our supporters deserve—but makes the cost of outsourcing the job prohibitive. However, the cost of supplies and parts replacement for the home production line is significant, as well. **We need is a sponsor in the printing industry (or a dedicated volunteer with resources).**

So: does anyone work in printing? Or know any printers who might be willing to donate the cost of producing a newsletter? (about 500 copies, 2-3 times/year; could discuss advertising space). Or have a desire to help with home-based printing and assembly? Do tell. See our contact info below.

Professional Fundraising: marketing is a fulltime job—and one that has gone largely unfilled at *Able and Willing*. Anyone with a strong background in world of philanthropy and fundraising (or who knows someone in that arena) is encouraged to contact the Board with information or ideas.

Graphics & Web Design: we are looking to update our website and marketing materials—if interested and able to assist, let us know!

Donations & 'The Power of Now'

To all who have made contributions already—our continued and deepest thanks. We know that dollars don't go as far as they used to, and we are honored to remain on your list of priorities.

For those considering a donation: funds received between now and the end of September make the greatest impact for the current year. Project completion hinges on cash flow, and there is always a push to maximize the cost efficiency of our fieldwork. At the present, we need to repay our short-term debt and make sure that all of the time, effort and cost invested in the container shipment meet their ultimate purpose. While AWIEF does have a couple of substantial grant applications pending, those funds are tied to future projects and are unlikely to be approved before Puma's return.

Gifts of any size are greatly appreciate--and are, as always, tax deductible. Donations can be mailed or made online—see reverse for details.

Fall Calendar

Join us for *Puma's Kitchen* to enjoy a true African feast, and to hear further details about recent work!

WHEN: Sunday, November 16, 2008: 4:00 pm
WHERE: Way Station, Frederick MD



DONATION FORM

Help is needed for our new schools and exciting projects!

Thanks to you, our long-standing goal (to build self-supporting, quality schools that can produce human and financial resources to build more schools) is coming to realization.... And with it, the opportunity to break the demoralizing and self-perpetuating chain of dependency on foreign aid.

I would like to make a tax-deductible contribution of:

- \$50.00
- \$100.00
- \$500.00
- \$1000.00
- Other: _____

- Gift on behalf of:* _____

Mail check, cash or M.O to:

AWIEF
P.O. Box 4303
Frederick, MD 21705-4303

Or online (credit card):

www.ableandwilling.org, click on



Questions?

Call us at **301-685-3282**

THANK YOU!!!!

Able & Willing International Education Foundation, Inc is a 501(c) non-profit, non-religious, all-volunteer organization. All contributions are tax-deductible. For a copy of our current financial situation, please write to: AWIEF / P.O BOX 4303 / Frederick, MD 21705