



Highlights

- An electric substation powered by hydroelectricity was built for Myrt 1 Campus and will serve the entire village.
- Puma raised over 70% of the money for the substation in Congo.
- Although way over our original budget, we hope to recover nearly all expenses for the substation and have cheap, clean, 24x7 electricity for shops, computer labs and classrooms.
- Night classes at Myrt 1 Campus for a nursing school are being planned with the University of Lubumbashi
- Enrollment for Myrt Schools is 583, enabling Myrt to fund most of the student aid to 51 students.
- Waza provided training to 250 teachers from schools in southern D. R. Congo.

A Brief Intro To Able & Willing

To orient our new readers and recap for our old friends, here is a quick overview of where we started, what we accomplished, and our current challenges. For more history and pictures, visit <http://AbleAndWilling.org>

Able & Willing began in 1995 with the construction of a two room school building in Tshamalale, Zaire (now, the Democratic Republic of Congo), a village with no electricity, wells, toilets or schools. Myrt School expanded each year to include all levels through high school as well as a technical school with fully equipped shops, computer labs and library powered by wind, solar and diesel generators. A second campus, Myrt 2, was started in 2007 in Poleni village a few miles further out, which now has an elementary school and the beginnings of a nursing school and clinic.

Our goals are to make the existing schools self-supporting and self-governing, provide quality education, and help disadvantaged students. Current work focuses on getting school workshops and computer labs up to speed to generate income for the schools so these goals can be

completed. In an unexpected turn of events, we find ourselves in a detour of time and money devoted to electrification of the campus and neighborhood. More on that later on.

A key to the success of Able & Willing and Myrt Schools is the talented and dedicated Mbuyu WaMbuyu (Puma). He is the eldest of 10 children of a poor family in nearby Lubumbashi where he earned a technical education and successful business experience. After moving to the U.S. in 1994, he has returned every year to design and organize the school expansion projects.

Another key is the dedication and expertise of our board members and friends who have worked in Congo and helped raise funds in U.S., nearly all of which is spent directly on projects in Congo.

A Word from Puma

My Dear Friends,

All I can say is thank you so much to all of you for your help. Without it, nothing could be done. Together we can.

I haven't got much to say at the moment except

that there is so much going on and much still left to do. With an unexpectedly large commitment of labor and money, electricity has finally come to Tshamalale. I have my hands full trying to make things work finish the work of electrifying every building on the campus, raise money, de-

velop a plan to use electricity at the school in a profitable way, advertising, looking for markets for products that the school can produce, finding good teachers,....

Bringing electricity to the school has also brought a big change into the village. Most people are excited about the end of darkness at night, no more witches, the potential for having tvs and other appliances. One woman had a somewhat different perspective, saying, as the first light came on in the village, "it is time to stop making too many babies, now we can distract ourself with tv." Another came to thank me, saying that since 1949 she had been living in the dark and now she can be outside at night and see light even when the moon is not there.

Perhaps more ominously, for the village chief, this development may mark the end of his influ-

ence. Electricity means that more people, some with a lot of money, will move in, while poorer village residents will move further out to cheaper land near our second campus in Poleni village. Signs that this is happening are already here. Authority of the village chief will surely be weakened in these changes. What will replace the functions performed by the chief, like keeping order in the village, I am not not able to predict.

Again thank you so much, and keep up the good work.

God bless you. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to you and yours. Once again, thank you for all your help.

Wa Mbuyu (Puma)



This electric substation on Myrt 1 Campus supplies economical green power to the campus and lights up the night.

Myrt Schools Update

After a slow start in September due to perennial government promise of free education and competition from a bare bones elementary school, Myrt Schools now have 583 students with 31 staff members. (Myrt 2 Campus in Poleni has 78 students in grades 1 - 4).

Financially, Myrt Schools are struggling but able to meet all expenses, including the cost of 44 of 51 students in the Student Aid Programs (See "Other Projects" article below.)

Thanks to Puma's extended stay in DRC, he was able to talk to parents individually and in groups. He spoke on radio and TV, stressing the need for quality education.

An Outstanding Year?

In all of the 16 years of work in the Congo, 2010 stands out due to:

- Largest budget
- Longest work schedule
- Most money raised within DRC
- Biggest potential impact
- Biggest financial risk
- Best laid plans
- Biggest deviation from plans

As Puma mentioned, bringing electricity to Myrt School was a top priority this year. So far, this has been a success, but only after a radical revision and expansion of original plans when the power company and government changed their requirements at the last minute. There are also uncertainties over the future of this project regarding scope, pricing, and administrative arrangements. Negotiations are underway.

This will take some explanation, so let's start at the beginning.

Priority 1: Electricity

Bequest and Planning

Able & Willing started the year with ambitious plans for electrification when we received a generous bequest from the will of Roberta Sangster, who died in August 2008 of ALS. This allowed us to proceed with more certainty regarding funds availability than we usually have.

Connecting our Myrt 1 Campus to Congo's hydroelectric grid would solve our long term objective of making our schools self-supporting by lowering the cost of operating the shops and other school facilities, and allowing them to operate for longer hours, even making night classes possible. In addition, the cheaper electricity means that the shops could produce more goods for sale at higher profits. The school would also be powered by green hydroelectricity.

Installation and grid hook-up costs were originally estimated at \$15,000, which is less than the cost of our existing diesel generator. In addition, operating costs of electricity are expected to be a fraction of the monthly cost of diesel fuel.

Change of Plans

Soon after Puma arrived in Congo on July 8, he learned that the government was planning great

improvements along the road where the two Myrt campuses are located. The government and power company officials, originally agreeing to electricity just to Myrt School, now wanted to expand to more customers. New specifications called for a large substation at Myrt School, which would serve nearly 100 customers. This meant more work for Puma, who has been the prime mover in the project.

Board Reallocates Money

The final cost of the substation turned out to be nine times the estimate in the original plan. Clearly Able & Willing neither could nor should fund these dramatic increases to the extent they are unrelated to Myrt School. So, Puma worked hard to find people in Congo to either donate money or invest in the project. Investors, including Able & Willing, Myrt School and the wealthier neighbors, would recoup their money when new customers subscribed to the service. In addition, the approaching election served as an incentive for Senator Kisimba to donate \$31,000, or 20% of the new total cost.

The Able & Willing board agreed to the new project plans, to reprioritize the budget, and to postpone other projects. Table 2 shows how Able & Willing's money was reallocated. Not shown is

1 Electrification	\$15,000
2 Shop Production	\$ 3,000
3 Workers Food & Medical	\$ 2,000
4 Medical Complex	\$10,000
5 Preschool	\$ 2,000
6 Teacher Training	\$ 1,600
7 Student Aid	\$ 5,000
8 School Supplies	\$ 6,600
9 Other (Scout contests, health education, internet connection)	\$ 1,000
Total	\$46,700

Table 1: Able & Willing's budget (as of July 1) included expected income from donations in July - December.

1 Electrification	
2 Shop Production	\$40,300
3 Workers Food & Medical	
4 Medical Complex	\$ 0
5 Preschool	\$ 0
6 Teacher Training	\$ 1,600
7 Student Aid	\$ 2,000
8 School Supplies	\$ 6,000
9 Other (Scout contests, health education, internet connection)	\$ 0
Total	\$49,900

Table 2: All income received as of Nov. 15 was reallocated as above. Income from Nov. 15 - Dec. 31 will be allocated to projects as it is received.

several thousand dollars earned - and donated - by Puma making windows, stairs and iron railing for nearby home construction sites. He also made a distribution panel for the power company for \$500 profit. (See also Bus article below.) So shop production, still powered by diesel generators, helped to finance the electrification project.

The substation was completed on November 8 and the whole village of Tshamalale celebrated all night by the light of two 400 watt flood lamps atop our two wind generator towers. A picture show of the progress is available on our website photo gallery:

http://ableandwilling.org/AWIEF/photo_gallery.

Next Steps

The next critical stage of the electrification project is to negotiate a binding contract with the power company, which will cover terms of recovering investment from the new subscribers and the monthly electricity bill for Myrt School. Since power meters are not used in Congo at subscriber sites, monthly bills are based on a survey of electrical appliances and estimating demand.

The next step is to finish wiring the shops and start full utilization of the new power source to earn income to complete the unfinished projects in the original plan. At this time, the finances of Able & Willing and Myrt Schools are nearly exhausted. We hope that readers will see the need and benefits to jump starting shop production and other projects and contribute during this holiday season.

Other Projects Priorities 2 - 9

Because of the unexpected new costs for the electrification project, money originally allocated to other projects fell short. Described below are the modifications we made as necessary. (Compare Tables 1 and 2.)

2. Shop Production

The \$3,000 budgeted July 1 for Shop Production was seed money to buy materials to make goods for the local market. This project was key to making Myrt Schools self-sufficient and teaching job skills to students. The money was in fact used to make and sell goods. The profits were invested in the electrification project and are not included in Able & Willing income and expense accounts.

3. Workers Food & Medical

Puma donated the \$2,000 to buy food for workers so they could remain on the job longer and for their medical needs. This overhead account was folded into the electrification project.

4. Medical Complex

The \$10,000 for the Medical Complex, started last year in Poleni Village, was enough to build classrooms for the nursing school but was contingent on raising more money after July 1. Plans for the clinic are on hold. See article below about the nursing school.

5. Preschool

The \$2,500 for the preschool classroom built last year was enough to finish the interior and make school furniture. This project will be completed when funds are available.

6. Teacher Training

The \$1,600 for Teacher Training was to provide food and lodging for the instructors from Waza Alliance to conduct their third annual Teacher Training Seminar at Myrt School. See article below on Waza Teacher Training.

7. Student Aid

The \$5,000 in Table 1 was for three student aid programs. Myrt School more than made up the shortfall and now 51 students benefit from the programs: 22 in Parents Work for Tuition Program, 12 in Orphans Scholarship Program, 17 in Student/Scout Apprentice Program.

8. School Supplies

62% of the \$6,600 for School Supplies was the value of in-kind donations and the remainder included purchased books and microscopes and shipping expense. \$6,000 was spent before July.

9. Other

The remaining \$1,000 was to pay for the annual Scout competitions and health education programs hosted by Myrt School in addition to monthly cost of Internet service.

The Scout competitions and health education classes will be conducted during the school December vacation although funding sources for these low budget activities are yet to be determined.

Internet connection is on hold until funding is available.

Night Classes for Nursing School

One huge benefit of access to electricity is that classrooms with lighting can be used for night classes. Arrangements are being made with the University of Lubumbashi to teach evening classes in nursing at Myrt School. With the improved roads, public bus transportation now runs

until 11 pm.

The classes will be equipped with our new microscopes, prepared slides and medical textbooks donated last spring. We still have five boxes of biology textbooks to ship but that will cost about \$600.

Waza Trains 250 Teachers

For the third consecutive year, Myrt School hosted teacher training seminars. Three members of Waza Alliance, a non-profit based in Indianapolis, conducted training seminars for 250 teachers from southern provinces of DRC.

Ministers of Education from both Katanga and

Kasai Occidental spoke at the opening ceremony which kicked off three weeks of intensive training with three seminars. Seminar 1 focused on the teaching of Math and Science. Seminar 2 focused on the writers' workshop, while Seminar 3 was on technology integration.

Welcome New Board Members

Maggie Nato Lusweti

Maggie lives with her husband and two sons in Frederick, Maryland and works full time as a certified Microsoft Engineer for a government contractor. She was born and raised in Kenya. She comes from a family dedicated to education in Kenya. She has a Masters Degree in International Trade from George Mason University. She is working on plans to supply schools in Africa with computers.



April Adams

April has a Master's in International Affairs from Johns Hopkins. She is a special education teaching assistant in Frederick County and has prior experience working with a variety of international development organizations, both governmental and non-governmental, ranging from the World Bank to USAID to local grassroots organizations. She lived and worked in Egypt for four years and speaks five languages.



Thanks For Help at Puma's Kitchen

Able & Willing extends our thanks to Gerald Lohnas and Ted O'Donnell for their excellent interpretation of Puma's famous African cuisine at our benefit dinner on November 14 in Frederick, Md. We were fortunate to have Puma's traditional menu prepared by two accomplished chefs.

Thanks also to Ted's family and other volunteers who helped make the dinner a success.

Thanks to Way Station for use of their great kitchen and dining facilities.

Puma Donates Bus To Myrt School

The bus in the picture is now earning money for Myrt Schools by routes between bus stations in Lubumbashi and Likasi (about 140 miles round trip).

The bus was given to Puma in exchange for work done for a building contractor. Puma donated the bus to Myrt School to earn extra revenue. The bus just needed a couple of spare tires, a toolbox and, of course, insurance.



Please Help

Next year, with cheap, clean, 24 x 7 hydropowered electricity in place, we will resume our usual development activities.

The parents in these villages are able and willing to work on building the schools. The students are able and eager to learn. The Myrt School staff is able and working hard. Puma is willing to commit more time to developing human resources in Congo.

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

- \$50.00** Pays for 2 bags of cement
- \$150.00** Pays for a 3'x3' classroom window
- \$1500.00** Buys desks for an entire classroom
- Other** _____

Send to: AWIEF
 P.O. Box 4303
 Frederick, MD 21705-4303

My Address: _____

- Please send newsletters
- Please send year-end summary of my donations.

Please use my email to save postage and printing: _____

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AskUs@AbleAndWilling.org

301-685-3282

<http://AbleAndWilling.org>