



Libraries For Kids®
INTERNATIONAL

Books Open Opportunities 4 Kids®

January 2026 Newsletter

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Great news from Kenya!

Libraries for Kids International shipped 297,000 books to Kenya in October 2025. **Wanjiku Francis**, coordinator for Libraries For Kids International contracts in Kenya, will soon begin a journey to deliver those books to primary schools in the country, a trip expected to take 8-to-10 days. Watch for an update from on the ground in Kenya in next month's newsletter!



Building partnerships in Ghana

This month, our board member, **Steve Arthur**, center, visited family in Ghana and met with Samuel Thompson, left, president of the [Rotary Club of Accra, Ghana](#). They discussed how the Rotary Club there could support a new partnership/relationship with Libraries For Kids, International in Ghana. Ideally, the club could help open and build relations in West Africa for future expansion of Libraries for Kids International and its mission to serve students in rural schools. This meeting was arranged by Geoffrey Lartey, right, who volunteers on the ground in Ghana on behalf of Libraries for Kids International.

Uganda update

Laura Winkel, chief executive officer of Libraries for Kids International, meets weekly with David Mabonga, right, executive director the YMCA Mbale Branch in Uganda. Those meetings are intended to facilitate a smooth expansion in Uganda, Winkel said. The first shipment of books is expected to arrive there between Feb. 20 and March 10.



Libraries for Kids International partnered with the Global YMCA to ship 21,000 books to Uganda. To start, books will be sent to schools in Mbale (Eastern Region), Gula (Northern Region), Arua (West Nile Region), Kasese (Southwestern Region) and Kampala (Central Region).

Join us April 25 for 'Dreams Under the Serengeti'

[You are invited to attend](#) Libraries for Kids International's 5th annual charity event, "Dreams Under the Serengeti," Saturday, April 25, at Port Royal Sound Foundation, Okatie, South Carolina. The annual event – held in conjunction with World Book Day the same week -- promises attendees an immersive journey "to Africa" for the evening, including the artistry of dreams, sound and visuals.



The event is aimed at building momentum and raising funds for Libraries for Kids International's mission to provide books to help establish libraries in publicly funded rural schools across Africa. Goals for "Dreams Under the Serengeti" include raising \$200,000 to fund eight containers which hold 336,000 books for more than 2,200 school libraries, reaching some 560,000 students.

The event includes a seated dinner, music and open bar, plus presentations, testimonies and more. An online auction, which opens April 18, provides opportunities for bidders seeking art, dining, experiences, gift baskets, private events and travel. Some items are now available for viewing on [the event website](#).

Tickets are available for purchase on the [event website](#) for individuals, couples and tables for 10 attendees. Sponsorships are also available on the site, ranging for \$500 to \$20,000 and above.

Books Shipped to Primary Schools in Kenya and Uganda

Libraries for Kids International [reported](#) shipping 297,000 books to Kenya in mid-October 2025 and a shipment of 21,000 books to Uganda in December. All told, the organization has sent more than 1.4 million total books to Africa from 2020 through 2025, said **Laura Winkel**, chief executive officer, Libraries for Kids International.



Books are now being delivered in Kenya (see story above). For Uganda, Libraries for Kids International the organization partnered with the Global YMCA to ship books there.

"I am very pleased with the progress we have made, and I am happy to share that we have over 300,000 books ready to be distributed in early 2026," said **H. Roy Austin**, founder and board president. "These books will make a lot of kids happy."

In its six-year history, Libraries for Kids International has delivered much-needed books to some 10,177 primary schools in parts of Africa. The organization's vision is to send books to rural schools throughout the continent.

Welcome 2026 board members!



Libraries for Kids International, based in Bluffton, South Carolina, [announced](#) its 2026 board of directors this month, including at least eight members from South Carolina.

Leading the organization is **H. Roy Austin**, CPA, CMA, MBA, of Bluffton, who serves as board president. Austin is a speaker, author and business coach providing strategic and financial leadership.

He formerly was managing principal of Rockwell Business Solutions. **Laura Winkel**, Beaufort, South Carolina, is chief executive officer and board member. Winkel provides leadership in operations, partnerships, fundraising and international expansion for Libraries for Kids. She is a former law enforcement officer and business owner.

Other board members include:

+ **Erich Schmid**, vice president, Little River, South Carolina, a corporate development consultant supporting organizational strategy and growth.

- + **Mark Sprosty**, treasurer, Savannah, Georgia, chief financial officer of the Savannah Economic Development Authority (SEDA), providing financial oversight and fiduciary leadership.
- + **Dorothy Patterson**, secretary, Bluffton, a retired office executive who brings administrative leadership and governance support.
- + **Steve Arthur**, board member, Bluffton, a financial advisor at GWN Securities, Inc., who supports and builds relations in West Africa.
- + **John R. Brooks**, APR, board member, Beaufort, editor, writer, and public relations specialist specializing in nonprofit organizations.
- + **Jean-Marie Cote**, BA, MBA, board member, Hilton Head Island, South Carolina, owner of The French Guy Studio and professional photographer supporting storytelling and branding.
- + **Caitlyn Kasper**, board member, Washington, D.C., is a senior financial economist who provides website support.
- + **Tamela Maxim**, board member, Bluffton, art teacher at May River Montessori, owner of Tamela's Creative Hub, and organizer for the free author talk series.
- + **Ng'ang'a Wanjohi**, board member, Nairobi, Kenya, CEO of Kaskazi Network, Ltd., who provides regional leadership and East Africa insight.

The organization is seeking additional board members to fill remaining roles. In addition, Libraries for Kids is supported by a growing network of advisors who provide expertise, advocacy, and community leadership across the United States, Africa, and globally.

☀ Discover the Heart of Our Organization! ☀

Explore the incredible impact you've helped us achieve. Visit [our website](#) to learn more about these key areas by following the links below:

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How You Can Help Move Our Mission Forward?

Many of you ask how to support our mission. Here are a just few ways you can truly create an impact with us:

- **Forward this newsletter** to at least one person you know
- **Support** our program directly
- **Volunteer your time** to join us in our efforts
- **Share our story** on social media and tell friends and family

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