

Greetings from Kenya!

This has been a month of adjustments. As the new principal, Mr. Rombosia, settles into his job, we are learning that the school is in very poor shape financially. Support staff (cook, lab technician, gate guard, and 4 others) have not been paid for three months. They still come to school and do their work, but morale is low. Teachers (who are paid directly by the government) feel the pinch only at tea break and lunch: no milk for the tea, and simpler midday meals, often without meat or legumes. Tasks and projects that should have been completed are now left hanging. Mr. Ogutu is helping (from afar) to finish the library building – he has found a donor to pay for some of the materials still needed.



Mr. Rombosia has expressed support for our library project. Just now his resources are limited, but in the long term he will help us get everything accomplished. I believe he is already having a positive effect at the school. He has introduced new discipline among students and teachers regarding attendance and performance of duties. Regular staff meetings that start and end on time have taken place. Dates and times for assemblies, exams, and work reports have been set early, so that everything is more organized.



Most of my free time is now devoted to library work. The librarian, Madam Evelyn, and I have sorted through many hundreds of textbooks, medical volumes, reference works, fiction and nonfiction for adults and youth, and children's books. Some we are giving away to other schools or medical colleges. Those we are keeping Evelyn stamps, numbers, and enters into our accession register. We will continue working through most of our August school holiday, with help from a few students and a staff member.

As my service with the Peace Corps draws to a close, our official duties and conferences are also winding down. I am very happy to have submitted the second-to-last quarterly report to PC of my work at school and extra activities (one of my least favorite parts of the job). Our last gathering, the Close of Service (COS) conference for our 2024-26 cohort, takes place in early August, at which time we will receive instructions for moving out of our houses, traveling home, and submitting final evaluations of all aspects of our 2+ years in Kenya. A related matter: anyone who would like to send "snail mail" through the very slow Kenyan snail, please do so this month, as I will be closing my P.O. Box at the end of October. The photos this month are of store fronts with interesting names, often having a religious theme.



My official COS date is November 4th, and I'll arrive in Durham about 3 days later. My friend Laurel and I are planning to spend a couple of days in Nairobi before flying home, since the city is off limits to PC volunteers during their service. (Political demonstrations in the capital can sometimes become violent.) We will, of course, be cautious and vigilant.

Love to all,
M/M