

My dear friends and relations,

Following is an update on the book project: I apologize for the difficulty some people are having when they try to make an online donation. Our project is not yet posted on the Books for Africa website and therefore does not appear in the list of current projects. This should be fixed in a few weeks' time. In the meanwhile, if you'd like to donate before then, either by check (payable to Books for Africa and sent to: Books for Africa, 717 Prior Avenue North, Suite B, St. Paul, MN 55104) or online through the general donations link, please also send an email to alejandra@booksforafrica.org and inform her of the date, amount, and recipient (Kenya-Lirhandanda school project) of your donation.

And now for a bit of shameless begging: Many of you know that my 75th birthday is coming up soon. For anyone who would like to give me a birthday gift, please consider making a donation (perhaps in a multiple of 75?) to this project. Thank you!

Wishing you all a happy Easter, Passover, or whatever holiday you may be celebrating,

M/M

Greetings from Kenya!

Many of you have asked me about the book collection project, and now finally I have the necessary information to pass along. In March, I put forward a proposal at the quarterly meeting of the school's Board of Management, a group made up of community leaders who act as a Board of Directors/Trustees. The proposal (copied below) was approved. The principal and I then filled out an application to an American agency called Books for Africa, which will ship a container-load of books for the cost of shipping, import duties and fees, and transport to site. This will be the larger part of our project, and your help is very much needed for both parts. To book donors, I trust your judgment in picking good material appropriate for this setting. And to others, the cost of shipping a container is significant. I had hoped to qualify for a Peace Corps grant (up to \$10,000), but with the pause in foreign aid, the continuation of those grants is in doubt. We aim to raise about \$18,000, plus contributions from the local community, much of it "in kind" donations such as materials and labor to build bookshelves and to catalogue and affix call numbers to books. (We hope to employ students who struggle to pay school fees.)

So if any of you would like to help, please read below about how to give books, or make a donation in one of two ways:

1. Write a check payable to Books for Africa, and mail to: Books for Africa, 717 Prior Avenue North, Suite B, St. Paul, MN 55104. Please include a note indicating that the funds are for the Kenya-Lirhandu School project, so they are properly credited.
2. Make an online donation at www.booksforafrica.org/donate. Here also, please indicate that the funds are for the Kenya-Lirhandu School project, so they are properly credited.

If you are donating books, please keep size and weight to a minimum. The categories most needed are: 1. Fiction and nonfiction appropriate for youth; 2. Children's books; 3. General readership; 4. Magazines (National Geographic was mentioned); 5. Theology and Bible exposition. The last subject was requested by the principal – he has a personal interest, and our students are required to take Christian Religious Education. You can mail books to Nick Register, 2906 Montgomery Ave, Durham, NC 27705, or deliver books to Nick's house or to Grace Lutheran Church, 824 N. Buchanan Blvd, in Durham.

The photographs attached this month show some of the friends I meet on my walks. They populate every possible location: front yards, pathways, roadsides (or the middle of the road), and even the market place. Often they are noisy and talkative, but always lovable. A few friends live in the house with me, including a pair of lizards I have named Lewis and Lizzie. I am always happy to see them because they keep down the population of my other co-inhabitants, some very exotic and anatomically-interesting insects. All part of my life in Kenya!

Love to all, M/M

Book Collection Proposal

1. Friends and family in the U.S. are collecting new books and used books in good condition in requested categories and specific titles:

- a.) Youth books, especially STEM-related, health, and teen issues
- b.) Children's books
- c.) General readership, fiction and nonfiction
- d.) Theology and religion
- e.) Magazines, especially National Geographic

Books will be delivered to me by friends who visit Kenya, as part of their airplane luggage allowance.

2. Books for Africa (American non-profit agency) will deliver a 40-foot container load (approximately 20,000 books, depending on size and weight), in specified topics and categories:

- a) Categories listed above
- b) Set of encyclopedias
- c) National Geographic World Atlas, or its equivalent

Cost for shipment to Mombasa is approximately \$15,000, as well as duties, taxes, fees, and transport from Mombasa to Lirhandu (est. \$3000). Once the shipment fee is paid, it takes 6-8 weeks for delivery.

3. Money will be raised from American and Kenyan individual donors or organizations (such as Rotary Club, churches, merry-go-round groups) and grants available from the Peace Corps or other agencies. The local community will also contribute in-kind donations, listed below:

- a) Bookshelves, including construction materials and labor
- b) Card catalogue, inclusive of construction materials and labor, cards,

cost of cataloguing books and filing cards

c) Payment for labeling books and shelving

d) Payment of school fees for students who provide labor (as listed above) for the project, recruited from among those whose families have difficulty paying.

4. Bookshelves will be placed by category in the following locations: the School library (now used to house textbooks), the Computer lab, the Principal's office, and other available rooms and offices. The entire school will become a library, to be used by students and by the community at large, to encourage a reading culture.

5. During school days, the library will be for student use (both our students and those in the adjoining primary school). Community members may check out books on weekends and holidays.