

We have received fantastic news from Books for Africa about our school library project. Thanks to a grant from a generous donor (foundation or individual, I do not know), the shipping cost for a container load of books is now fully paid! Thousands of books will soon be on their way to Friends Secondary School, Lirhandu. On a smaller scale, the books delivered to me in August by my brother are wonderful selections (by Scott O'Dell, Beverly Cleary, Betsy Byars, Jason Reynolds, Paula Fox, C.S. Lewis and others) that I have enjoyed reading. I had forgotten how engaging books for youth can be. In addition, my sister put in a book of NYT crossword puzzles, so every evening I can relax and tackle a different sort (non-mathematical) of mental exercise. Thank you so much to everyone who supported the project in any way. Now the work begins at this end: preparing library space, building bookshelves, making a catalogue, establishing a lending policy, and, of course, celebrating.

Term 3 began on August 25th and classes end on October 3. It's a very short term, with only six weeks to teach, followed by several weeks of exams for Forms 2 & 3 and intensive review and exams for Form 4 students (seniors). National exams for seniors are a big deal here, the sole determinant of whether they receive a secondary school certificate and earn a place at university. In order to cover more material on the (quite long) Form 2 syllabus, I have added 7:00am classes four days a week (two for each math class). This works well for students because they are required to be here at 6:45 anyway. I am hoping the extra time in class will help the weaker students keep up with difficult topics in the curriculum.

I've made a discovery about mail delivery. Packages, even thick envelopes, require a tracking number and payment of an import fee. An envelope containing several personal letters and small booklets was mailed to me last April, arrived at the post office in May, and sat in a storage room until last week. When I presented the tracking number and paid 100 Ksh (less than \$1), the envelope was handed over to me. No indication or notice had been given of its arrival. Now that I know this, it is again possible for you to send mail (with tracking number) to my local address: P.O. Box 1246-50100, Kakamega, KENYA. Thanks.

The photographs this month (like those I sent last month) were taken in Lake Nakuru National Park. Many lakes in Kenya, including Lake Nakuru and Lake Victoria, are rising at alarmingly fast rates, swallowing fishing villages and other shoreline communities as well as animal habitats. This is happening due to intensely heavy and prolonged rainfall related to overall changes in weather patterns. One hopes this beautiful country and its inhabitants will not suffer irreparable damage.

One final note: I have now lived in Kenya for more than a year!

***Love to all,
M/M***

