

FRIENDS OF MALAWI

WEST COAST BOOK PROJECT

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A Trip To Malawi The Warm Heart of Africa

By Shannon Brown

Shannon Brown and Lance Cole visited Malawi in March 2000. While there, they visited many of schools and libraries supported by books shipments through the Friends of Malawi West Coast Book Project. Here are a few of Shannon's recollections of one of the schools.

Pirimiti Boys School, Jali

Pirimiti Boys School is located in rural, southern Malawi. The school had no library or books, before Friends of Malawi (FOM) started shipping books to the school 3 years ago. FOM has shipped more than 500 books to Pirimiti, and the school has a small, secure "library" closet established in one of its classrooms. The library is open to the students and community



each Tuesday and Thursday afternoon. The library serves not only the boys school, but the girls school, the secondary school and the surrounding villages as well. A meticulous checkout system has been established by Mr. K.D. Chikuse, the school's librarian. Passing test scores for secondary school entrance exams have more than doubled since the library's establishment, as evidenced by the graph in the headteachers office!! The number of books has outgrown the library space, so that at the end of the day, the teachers carry home the books that cannot fit into the

secured library closet, for safe-keeping. *Go to Pirimiti Page 2*

Facts about Malawi

- One of the 10 poorest countries in the world
- Population of 10-12 million
- About 600,000 books in the entire National Library system.
- Average school size is 1500 students, 15-30 teachers
- Most schools have no books or libraries
- English is the official language and is taught starting in kindergarten

"Our thanks are boundless and we don't know how we can express our appreciation. Everyone at this school is so thankful to you and you should see the change your book donations have caused in our pupils' reading habits. The teachers too are immensely benefiting from some of the books as reference materials."

Mr. W. Dakalira, Headmaster; Chimutu LEA School, Lilongwe

Coordinator
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Project

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**FRIENDS OF
MALAWI**

**The FOM West
Coast Book
Project**

has established relationships with many schools and libraries in the Portland, Oregon area, and have a constant supply of like-new text books and reading books. These books are sorted for appropriateness and quality and shipped to Malawian schools on a weekly basis. 100% of your tax-deductible cash donations are used on freight – there is no overhead.

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They are carried back to the school the next day. We were extremely impressed with Mr. Chikuse and the teachers and staff of the school. They are committed professionals, proud of their small library. We were treated with a typical courteous and gracious ceremony of students' dancing, gifts, speeches



and gratefulness by students and teachers alike. They send their warm greetings and precious thanks to their friends in the U.S. who have made their little library so successful.

A Simple Concept

What a simple concept. Malawian schools have few if any books. The teachers have few resources and are discouraged at the task before them – educating Malawi's children. We in the U.S. have books on our shelves we never read, our schools and libraries discard books when the new editions comes out. Why can't we just take the books we don't use here in the U.S. and send them to schools and libraries in Malawi, where they are treasured and used daily by those who otherwise wouldn't ever have access to a book? Please help us continue supporting Malawian childrens' desire to learn!

Book Shipments	1999 – 3,225 books	YTD 6/30/00 – 1,900 books
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“These books are the first books in our life to be donated to us. Books are scarce in Malawi. Pupils can hardly afford writing materials, let alone books. Thank you so much for your effort. Books give people more knowledge and are the bridge to solve any impossible problem.”

*Mrs. Rose Nyirenda,
Katowa School,
Katumbi*

Matching Gifts Program

Many businesses and corporations have Matching Gift Programs that match charitable donations. Please check with your employer – a doubling of your contribution by your employer would double the number of books we can send!

Your support is needed

_____ Yes, I want to support a child and help send discarded books to Malawi. I have enclosed a contribution of:
_____ \$30 (enough for one box of books) _____ \$100 _____ \$ Other

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State, _____ Zip _____

Please make check payable to Friends of Malawi West Coast Book Project. Your gift is tax-deductible.