

BOOKS FOR AFRICA

FALL 2003

NEWSLETTER

Books For Africa Partners With the Sullivan Foundation

The Leon H. Sullivan Foundation and Books For Africa recently teamed up in a project that will send one million books to Nigeria over the course of 24 months. A formal Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the two organizations in July in Abuja, Nigeria. Former U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Andrew Young; Sullivan Foundation President and CEO Hope Sullivan; and BFA Executive Director Pat Plonski participated in the special signing ceremony. The Sullivan Foundation will arrange



BFA Director Pat Plonski at a school in Abuja, Nigeria, at a book presentation ceremony.

financing and will organize distribution in Nigeria. BFA will provide delivery of books to Nigeria. This agreement to send 40 containers of books to Nigeria is the single largest book sponsorship in BFA's history.

"The scope and vision of this major project shows that Books For Africa is gaining in recognition as an organization that can successfully execute large-scale initiatives of this sort," said BFA Executive Director Pat Plonski.

Books For Africa Sends 1.4 million Books in FY 03

It was another exciting year as Books For Africa exceeded its shipping goal for fiscal year 2002-03 by sending a total of 55 containers of books and bringing the total number of countries served by BFA up to 23. These books were valued at over \$17 million. The shipment of large quantities of donated books for distribution where they are needed in Africa is the core mission

of BFA, and serves as the key measure of the organization's success. Funding from individuals, organizations, and key sponsors allows BFA to pay the costs of approximately \$14,000 per container. Thank you to all BFA donors for helping make this effort possible. Without the large and small donations by BFA donors none of this would be possible.

Warth Walk Update

BFA founder Tom Warth continues his walk across Minnesota from the Canadian border to Iowa. Beginning in May of 2003, this walk in stages has already raised over \$19,000 For BFA. Thanks to Tom, and to all who have pledged a donation to support this effort. And if you haven't yet pledged, there's still time. Call BFA offices at 651-602-9844 for more information about how you can help.



African Round-table With the Governor – Minnesota Governor Tim Pawlenty recently hosted a September meeting in his office to discuss issues pertaining to Africa and Minnesota. Among those meeting with Governor Pawlenty were Channel Afrique founders Wil Ofori and Comfort Lartey-Ofori; State Representative Alice Seagren; and BFA Executive Director Pat Plonski.



BFA's first EDDI shipment to Botswana was well-received.

USAID Funds BFA Initiative

BFA was the recipient of a \$96,000 grant by the EDDI Division of the U.S. Agency For International Development (USAID). This grant has allowed BFA to send 12 containers of books

(approximately 300,000 books) to the following African countries: Botswana, Cameroon, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Namibia, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zambia. BFA hopes to continue the working partnership that has been developed with USAID to ship many more donated books to Africa in the future.

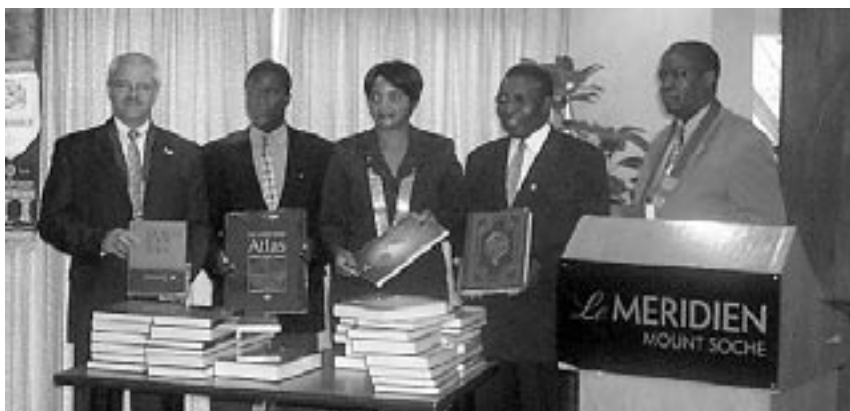
Staff Corner

You may have noticed a few new faces at BFA. BFA welcomes its new Assistant Director Deb McDonald who has taken over for Amy Sundberg O'Brien. Amy has left BFA to take time off to take care of her new baby. Deb previously worked with a legislative council at the University of Minnesota and also worked for the Minnesota Legislature. BFA also welcomes its new Program Associate for Development, Ginger Wange. Ginger, who served in the Peace Corps for one year in Zambia, takes over for Suzanne Koepplinger and will be leading BFA's new "Raising More Money" fundraising initiative. This initiative is a strategic undertaking by BFA to expand and diversify its funding base with individual donors. Finally, Books For Africa is proud to announce that BFA Warehouse Manager Tom Parry was recently honored by the Golden Valley Rotary Club as its "Rotarian of the Year." Congratulations Tom, and welcome to Deb and Ginger.

Internet Book Sales Benefit BFA

How'd you like to buy a used book and help BFA at the same time? Answer: Buy a book through Campus Community Outreach (CCO) on Amazon.com or any other online book venue and some of the proceeds will go to BFA. BFA is proud to announce a partnership with CCO to help end the African book famine. Campus Community Outreach was founded by three recent college graduates with too many books on their hands and too little money in their pockets. Kreece Fuchs, Jeff Kurtzman and Xavier Helgesen had a bunch of books left over from college that the local bookstore would not buy back. Instead of throwing them away, they tried using the Internet to find buyers, and were delighted when these "no-value" books sold for over \$1,000. That was the epiphany: if they could raise this much for themselves, imagine what they could raise for others!

Soon they ran a book drive that yielded 2,000 books from Notre Dame alone, and it became clear that their idea could work on a national level. Looking for a partner with nationwide appeal, they contacted Books For Africa in late 2002. In just a few months, college students throughout the Midwest were donating their books to benefit Books For Africa. Acting as a kind of on-line Goodwill store, CCO turns these unwanted books into bargains for other students, raising funds for Books For Africa the whole time. CCO plans to become Books For Africa's largest source of unrestricted funds in the near future, and will also provide a large supply of college-level textbooks to be shipped to Africa. Please contact info@campuscommunityoutreach.com to learn more about how you can help.



Malawi project book presentation at Lilongwe/Blantyre/Limbe rotary lunch with Malawi Minister of Education.

Malawi Project Completed

Books For Africa recently provided a final report on its Malawi project with reference libraries placed (or in the process of being placed) in 800 secondary schools throughout this Southern African country. This joint partnership with the Fridley Rotary Club, Rotary International, World Book Inc., the U.S. State Department, and three Rotary clubs in Malawi (Blantyre, Limbe, and Lilongwe) was coordinated by BFA. Two 20-foot sea containers loaded with new reference libraries left Chicago, Illinois in December of 2002. Reports from the Rotarians in Malawi indicated that the

books were distributed this summer. BFA volunteer Henry Bromelkamp of Minneapolis was in Malawi this past summer and visited several project sites. "I had the opportunity to meet Lilongwe Rotarians Dr. Anoush Mazloun and Mr. Smile Namagonya ... in Lilongwe ... It was good to hear the Lilongwe Rotary Club books committee's success and plans for the books recently received," Bromelkamp said. "Thanks to ... all the Malawi Rotarians for sponsoring such a worthwhile project. We can find the books, but it's your work that makes them truly useful to the students."

Tanzania / Minnesota Peace Corp Connection

When the Dahlheimer family of Rogers, Minnesota wanted to find a way to help family member Kelly Paige Stenhoff they came to Books For Africa. Kelly is serving in the Peace Corps in a rural village in Tanzania, East Africa and received a Peace Corp grant for building a much-needed village library. Only one problem. How to get the 5,000 books needed to fill the library? "The students have no books whatsoever to use," Kelly wrote home. "I hope to bring the books into the library and make it functional and useable." Family members Howard

Dahlheimer and George Gmach visited with Books For Africa and raised over \$3,500 to co-sponsor a container of books to Tanzania. As this newsletter goes to press, the books for Kelly's library are in Tanzania and this project – connecting one family and two continents – is coming to fruition. "This is one small way the rest of us can make an impact," George wrote in a letter to family members. "The students we help in Tanzania may eventually make an impact on their country, much like our Dahlheimer family has impacted the United States and the world."

If you would like to learn more about Books For Africa please call 651-602-9844 (fax 651-602-9848).

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You might have noticed a change in our newsletter. Contributors are now listed once a year in our annual report. A complete list of contributors from the most recently completed fiscal year can also be found on our website: www.booksforafrica.org. Just click on PEOPLE at the left side of the screen, and then CONTRIBUTORS at the top of the screen.

Thank you to all our contributors. You are the ones who allow Books For Africa to continue its mission.

Join us on Saturday, November 22 at our Warehouse Open House

From 7-9:30 p.m. Books For Africa invites everyone to join us for a free open house featuring good food, refreshments, African music, and fellowship as we celebrate the first year of the United Nations "Decade of Literacy." St. Paul Mayor Randy Kelly will be the featured speaker at a program beginning at 8 p.m. Move to the sounds of Wayne McFarland of Ipso Facto.

African attire is encouraged!

Our warehouse is located at 253 East 4th Street in St. Paul (near the Farmer's Market and the Depot in Lowertown).

See you on November 22!

Mark November 22nd in your calendar

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