



# THE MWEBAZA FOUNDATION, Inc.

December 2011

Issue: 3

## Education, Development, and Celebration!

Our third newsletter focuses on the "exchange" part of our cross-cultural exchange mission. There is an article about my recent trip to Africa, and another about the visit of Ms. Namatovu from Uganda to Colorado this December. You will find updates on some of the important development projects we are working on in Africa - and on the many presentations we are conducting for students here. We hope these articles will inspire you to want to join in the work we are doing! To find out how you can help, please take a look at the light blue section at the bottom of this newsletter.

Sincerely,  
Dale Peterson, President



*Mapampi students grateful for their new tables and benches*

## African Trip Yields Results and Insights

by Dale Peterson, President, Mwebaza Foundation

Last summer, I had the opportunity to visit the Mwebaza Foundation's three partner schools in Africa. It was my second visit to our Ugandan partner schools, Mwebaza and St. Paul, and my first visit to Mapampi School in Zambia. It was an amazing, affirming experience! I was treated so hospitably everywhere I went. Old friendships were strengthened, and new friendships developed.



It was a delight to see that the funds that were sent to each school for specific projects were used carefully and responsibly for the intended purposes.

Keyhole gardens are growing vegetables that are being fed to the children at the Ugandan schools. Mapampi students are using the tables and benches provided by Eagle Crest students. A new latrine is now constructed at St. Paul School, and Mwebaza students are drinking purified rainwater collected in large storage tanks. Eggs are being fed to Ugandan students as a result of the egg-laying chickens purchased with the assistance of the Heaven's Hope Foundation. It was a joy to see that real progress has taken place! In Africa, so much can be done for so little - if the contacts on the ground there are hard-working, frugal, honest, and committed as our contacts are!

I left Africa with a few insights or conclusions about our African partner schools that I would like to share with you:

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Please feel free to forward this newsletter to anyone you think would be interested in our organization and its work in Colorado and Africa. There is a link to do so at the bottom of this newsletter. And if this newsletter has been forwarded to you and you would like to join our mailing list, click on the button below.

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## About the Mwebaza Foundation

The *Mwebaza Foundation* was started by Colorado educators desiring to help their students develop an understanding of the world outside their own, insulated communities, and to inspire them to make a positive global difference by collectively working to assist select African partner schools in meeting the needs of their underprivileged students. Education and service-based relationships have been started between three U.S. schools and three African schools including Mwebaza Infant Primary School and St. Paul Infant Primary School in Uganda, and Mapampi School in Zambia.

1. Great improvements have been made at Mwebaza School. Mwebaza School has been our partner school longer than any other, and thus, our Foundation has put more resources into Mwebaza School. The investment is apparent.

The school has a van that it is using as a school bus. During off-hours, the van serves as a taxi to bring in income to benefit the students of the school.

The students are now being taught in sturdy classrooms with more (but still insufficient) space. The children are being fed fresh vegetables from the keyhole gardens, and eggs from the chickens. As a whole, they looked physically healthier than they did two years ago when I last visited. And seeing them drinking clean water that they can get right there at the school instead of having to hike miles to a questionable water source - that brought me considerable joy!

The work at Mwebaza School is still far from complete. We are currently trying to raise the \$25,000 or so needed to build a school for 10 to 14-year-olds in the community. Currently, few affordable schooling options exist for older students. With the help of the Mwebaza Foundation, Mwebaza School has purchased land in the nearby village of Nkatungule on which to build a school annex. The school, when completed, will serve "graduated" Mwebaza students and children in Nkatungule who currently are lacking a school.

2. St. Paul School desperately needs a new school building. Last year was the first year that funds were provided to St. Paul School. Although it was exciting to see the keyhole gardens producing and the children showing off their new milk cow, it was disturbing to find 150 children still tightly crowded into two, tiny, crumbling classrooms. Light streams through holes in the wall. Only one wall has anything on it - a water-damaged poster and a broken chalkboard. The Board of the Mwebaza Foundation does not want to see kids continue to be taught in such unfit conditions - not when we collectively have the opportunity and responsibility to help. We have made building a new school building at St. Paul our top priority as a Foundation. The land for the new school was purchased last year with funds raised by Coyote Ridge staff, students, and family. Now is the time to start raising the approximately \$22,000 needed for an adequate school building for these beautiful children!



## New videos on [www.mwebaza.org](http://www.mwebaza.org)

At our website, [www.mwebaza.org](http://www.mwebaza.org), you can learn about what is happening at our Colorado and African partner schools, and view several new, powerful videos about the work being accomplished in Africa. See examples of how the cross-cultural exchange between schools is impacting young people here and on the other side of the Atlantic. You can also join in the work we are doing by donating to the Mwebaza Foundation on the website.

*Crowded classroom at St. Paul*

3. Educational presentations were well-received by the Ugandan schoolchildren. While in Uganda, I conducted classes for the student bodies of Mwebaza and St. Paul Schools about the importance of eating different-colored fruits and vegetables. The diet in Southern Uganda is heavy on starch: plantains, potatoes, corn, cassava. These foods fill up empty bellies, but do not provide sufficient nutrients. Now that keyhole gardens have been established at the Ugandan schools, we want the children there eating the nutritious blend of vegetables formulated for the schools by Send a Cow - Uganda.

4. There is great potential for the partnership with Mapampi School, but school control issues need to be settled. Mapampi School has a lot of needs. The school lacks a qualified teacher. Space is insufficient for all the students, so they attend in half day shifts. Like the other African partner schools, sanitation is very poor. Mapampi's latrine is but a shallow hole, and no hand washing station exists. Conditions at the school are so poor that the local chief has asked the American non-profit that runs the nearby orphanage, Global Orphan Relief, to take control of the school. The Mwebaza Foundation is excited about this prospect as Global Orphan Relief can help oversee projects that the Mwebaza Foundation undertakes at the school. Global Orphan Relief is waiting to officially receive the title deed to the school. Unfortunately, due to local government processing issues, this transfer has been delayed numerous times.

Until this transfer is finalized, the Board of the Mwebaza Foundation intends on only engaging in projects at the school that can easily be continued or expanded by Global Orphan Relief, if, and when, the transfer of control occurs.

The Mwebaza Foundation is excited about continuing to work with our African partner schools. My trip this summer has only increased my commitment to helping these poor, but dedicated, schools.



*A Mwebaza student enjoys an egg provided through the egg-layer program - a partnership between the Mwebaza and Heaven's Hope Foundations*

**Mwebaza Foundation President Recognized with Award from International Organization**

Dale Peterson, President and Founder of the Mwebaza Foundation, recently accepted an award from People to People International (PtPI).

Peterson received PtPI's "School and Classroom Community Service Project Award" for his work through the Mwebaza Foundation.

The award was presented at PtPI's Global Youth Forum in Kansas City on November 12.



## Welcome, Ms. Namatovu Catherine!

By Amy Dumler, Vice President, Mwebaza Foundation

After a long couple of years and two previous, frustrating attempts, Ms. Namatovu Catherine, the headmistress of Mwebaza School, will set foot in the U.S. for the very first time! On Monday, December 5th, she will arrive in Denver for a lengthy 3 ½ week stay in Colorado. After years of anticipation, so many teachers, staff members, students, and parents are eagerly waiting her arrival.



Several factors may have opened the way to finally securing a travel visa for Ms. Namatovu. These include Mwebaza Foundation President Dale Peterson's recent award from People to People International, Congressman Jared Polis's staff working to convince the U.S. embassy in Uganda of Ms. Namatovu's integrity, and the help of a generous immigration lawyer from Boulder (Megan Hall, Green & Gardner Law Firm) in assembling a portfolio showing Ms. Namatovu's

strong ties to her home country. Of course, much credit can be attributed to Ms. Namatovu's hard work, persistence, and faith.

During her stay in Colorado, Ms. Namatovu has a busy and exciting agenda planned. After a short time to recuperate from traveling, she will be visiting and observing classrooms at Niwot Elementary, as well as giving classroom presentations to Niwot students about Mwebaza School and Ugandan culture. Then, on December 15th, there will be a culminating, all-school, "All-American" celebration in honor of the cross-cultural friendship between Niwot and Mwebaza schools. In addition to spending time at Niwot Elementary, Ms. Namatovu will be visiting Coyote Ridge, Lyons, and Eagle Crest Elementary Schools, where she will conduct more classroom presentations.

Sprinkled amongst her work at schools will be a myriad of social events, including holiday gatherings, sight-seeing, dinners out, and even spending the holiday in Durango and Colorado Springs with the Peterson family. New experiences such as sledding, a Narrow Gauge Train ride, and a visit to Garden of the Gods and Seven Falls will culminate her travels.

It is with gratitude and warmth that we welcome Ms. Namatovu to Colorado!

## Mwebaza Foundation Conducts Presentations at Colorado Schools

One of the primary missions of the Mwebaza Foundation is to help the students at our Colorado partner schools develop a world awareness - a sensitivity towards and appreciation of different cultures, and an understanding that most peoples of the world live very differently than we do in the U. S. Towards this end, Mwebaza Foundation President, Dale Peterson, conducted classroom presentations at Niwot Elementary and a whole-school assembly at Eagle Crest Elementary this fall. Below is a letter from a Niwot parent about the impact of the presentation on her son, and an article written by two Eagle Crest students about the Mwebaza Foundation assembly at their school.

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### Letter About Niwot Presentations

E-MAIL FROM LORA NOESEN, PARENT OF NIWOT STUDENT, TO DALE PETERSON, September 2011

Dale,

I just had to share with you that my son, Sawyer, is in Mrs. Soole's kindergarten class. You spoke to his class yesterday about Mwebaza. Your talk had such an impact on him! He got into the car after school, asking if we could donate to Africa and that the kids there needed shoes. He went to karate, and even after that came home and said he wanted to donate to Africa again (normally he has a very short term memory!) He said he was going to set up a lemonade stand to raise money for Africa. I told him it was kind of late in the day for that...maybe on Saturday. He went ahead and made the Kool-aid, set up the table and chairs, and his older brother pitched in and made a sign, "Lemonade 50 cents or Free" and they did it all on their own. Sawyer got an envelope and asked me how to spell "Africa" and was impressed that a word had two "A"s in it. Then he asked me how to spell "To" so now he has an envelope that says "To Africa" and he earned over \$5 in his lemonade stand.

### *Peterson accepting award from Mary Jean Eisenhower*

The award is given to a teacher who has actively worked to develop student cross-cultural understandings through a connection with a foreign school. Peterson fostered a friendship between his first grade class and Mwebaza School in Uganda.

He was originally connected to Mwebaza School through PtPI's School Program. The international friendship that resulted eventually transformed into the Mwebaza Foundation, and now involves three Colorado schools, three African schools, and hundreds of children on two continents.

In presenting the award to Peterson, PtPI School and Classroom Program Coordinator, Paige Badgett, acknowledged that the Mwebaza Foundation has gone well beyond student cultural interaction, but has additionally encouraged and equipped students at its Colorado partner schools to work to improve conditions at their African partner schools.

Peterson was also acknowledged at the ceremony by Mary Jean Eisenhower, CEO of PtPI and granddaughter of the founder of PtPI, President Dwight Eisenhower.

In his acceptance speech, Peterson recognized the corresponding contributions of his Ugandan colleague, Namatovu Catherine, the headmistress of Mwebaza School. He expressed agreement with PtPI's philosophy that true, sustainable change can only happen if those involved really take the time to develop meaningful relationships with one another.

The Global Youth Forum

Thank you for sharing the importance of giving to others and obviously doing it in such a way that you motivated my 5-year-old to give!

Lora Noesen

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## Mr. Peterson Visits Eagle Crest

Written by Lily McCumber and Anna Adler  
5th Grade students in Mrs. Dumler's class  
Eagle Crest Elementary, Longmont, CO

On November 2nd, Mr. Peterson, president of Mwebaza Foundation, visited our school, Eagle Crest Elementary. While he was here he talked about Mapampi School in Zambia, Africa. That's Eagle Crest's sister school! Mapampi School has 200 children, ages 5-14. Our school has already helped them by buying soccer balls to practice their favorite sport, benches and tables to do their school work on, and sending school supplies to help them learn. Right now we have an additional \$4000 to help our sister school. Eagle Crest students have some choices for our next steps in helping Mapampi students.

Mapampi students face many challenges. They have to use a dirt hole for a restroom, use an outdoor classroom no matter the weather, kids can only attend school a half day because there are so many children, and the teachers at the school are not trained educators. Pupils at Eagle Crest are going to help determine how we should help first, or what's the most important. Some of the possible projects are: helping the school to get trained teachers, improving sanitation, building additional classrooms, sending textbooks and supplies, or installing a solar powered computer lab.

Other challenges are that they don't have a secondary school. Speaking of secondary school, when they get into 8th Grade the kids have to take a test to determine if they descend down the path to secondary School (9th Grade). The only catch is the test is in English and Mapampi School's native language is Chitonga. Some of the kids that attend our sister school live in the orphanage. At the orphanage, they attend "catch-up school" and have a trained teacher. Furthermore, AIDS, a common sickness in Africa has killed many of the orphan's parents. Some of the kids in Mapampi School have this disease but take special medication so it keeps the sickness from getting too bad.

These kids love to sing for entertainment. Unlike kids in America, they aren't shy to sing in public. They are happy people, and don't want us to feel sad for them. All in all, Eagle Crest wants to improve the Mapampi School students' lives, and have them continue to sing with happiness.

involved over 100 youth from many different countries, learning communication and teamwork skills while developing cultural sensitivity through formal and informal interaction with one another.

Ms. Eisenhower ended the Global Youth Forum by urging those present to strive to make a difference in the world, even if it seems that one's efforts are in vain. She concluded her speech with this powerful quote from Mother Teresa:

People are often unreasonable and self-centered. Forgive them anyway.

If you are kind, people may accuse you of ulterior motives.

Be kind anyway.

If you are honest, people may cheat you. Be honest anyway.

If you find happiness, people may be jealous. Be happy anyway.

The good you do today may be forgotten tomorrow. Do good anyway.

Give the world the best you have and it may never be enough. Give your best anyway.

For you see, in the end, it is between you and God. It was never between you and them anyway."

Peterson and the Mwebaza Foundation are delighted to be recognized by such an established, respected, and dedicated organization as People to People International.

## Children and Service Learning

By Christa Keppler, Secretary, Mwebaza Foundation

With the holidays upon us, I often question how to best teach my children the spirit of giving and receiving, not only during the holiday rush, but also throughout the year. Is it really necessary to have one more doll for our already full playroom, or be drawn to all the sale tags for seemingly good deals? (Yes, I've been known to be an impulsive "sale" shopper - just ask my husband.) Living in a society full of abundance, how can lessons of giving be fostered in my own children?

I have always been a strong advocate of service learning projects, particularly

## Country Facts - At a Glance

### Uganda

Location: Eastern Africa, west of Kenya, east of the Democratic Republic of the

when a child inspires them. Just over a month ago, circling the corner on my way home from work, I was surprised to find my seven-year-old daughter, Aleah, in our driveway. She was smiling ear to ear with her usual warm-hearted greeting while standing behind a lemonade stand. Mind you, this wasn't a typical July afternoon. Instead, it was late October and already the sun was setting and a crisp fall chill was in the air. Regardless of what some might perceive as limitations, this did not deter Aleah in the slightest. In fact, pulling partly up the driveway, I stopped to admire her neatly written signs, cash box, and listen to her excitement as she explained what inspired her to rush home after school and set up her lemonade stand. Hmm...maybe she had grasped the true value of giving after all.

"Mom," she started. "You know the students you visited in Uganda? Well, Mr. Peterson came to visit our class today and I really want to help them," she readily explained. It had only been an hour since she opened her stand and already she earned close to \$40. There was no doubt that this was Aleah's inspired service project and it was completely initiated on her own accord. In the past, money has been raised for the Mwebaza Foundation through service-learning projects developed by students and/or adults. Hosting birthday parties (making monetary donations in exchange for gifts), holiday benefit parties, or even donating the proceeds raised from garage sales are few examples of service projects that have transpired over the past few years. Below are some of the needs of our African partner schools, along with the amounts of money necessary to meet those needs. Every little bit adds up to make a difference.

\$25,000 can build a 3-room schoolhouse

\$15,000 can purchase a van to be used for student transport

\$500 can build a latrine

\$500 can purchase a pregnant milk cow to provide milk for the children and manure for composting

\$400 can purchase a 5000-liter plastic storage tank for collecting and sterilizing rainwater

\$45 can put a student through school for a year

\$25 can pay a teacher's salary for a month

\$1.50 will purchase an egg-laying chicken

This holiday season, as our children craft their own Santa "wish lists," what life lessons might we teach our children by helping our African friends with some basic necessities?

If you have a desire to make a difference in the lives of African children, here are some first steps for hosting a birthday or benefit party:

- Send out an Evite
- Contact the Mwebaza Foundation for tax deductible donation slips and a Mwebaza video

May Aleah's lemonade stand be a source of inspiration to us all, as we consider what we teach our children about the gift of giving and receiving. It is my daughter who reminds me of the value of both, even today when she stopped me three different times to re-read a quote by the Dalai Lama: "Never give up. No matter what is going on, develop the heart." I am humbled by the lessons she teaches me daily.

## Congo

Area comparative: slightly smaller than Oregon

Climate: tropical; generally rainy with two dry seasons

(December to February, June to August); semiarid in northeast

Terrain: mostly plateau with rim of mountains

Natural Resources: copper, cobalt, hydropower, limestone, salt, arable land, gold

Population: 34,612,250 (July 2011 est.)

Literacy: (definition: age 15 and over can read and write) 66.8%

Life Expectancy at birth: 53.24 years

## Zambia

Location: Location: Eastern Africa, west of Kenya, east of the Democratic Republic of the Congo

Area comparative: slightly larger than Texas

Climate: tropical; modified by altitude; rainy season (October to April)

Terrain: mostly high plateau with some hills and mountains

Natural Resources: copper, cobalt, zinc, lead, coal, emeralds, gold, silver, uranium, hydropower

Population: 13,881,336 (July 2011 est.)

Literacy: (definition: age 15 and over can read and write) 80.6%

Life Expectancy at birth: 52.36 years

-Central Intelligence Agency, The World Fact Book, online, November 2011



*Aleah and her lemonade stand for Mwebaza School*

In the spirit of giving, please consider how you too may help support the school children of our partner schools.

May your holiday season be filled with blessings.

With gratitude,  
Christa Keppler



*A student prepares to perform a traditional dance at a "Parent Day" luncheon, hosted by Mwebaza School and funded by the Mwebaza Foundation*

## How You Can Help the Mwebaza Foundation

The Mwebaza Foundation is administered by a volunteer Board of Directors and run with the generous help of dozens of adult and student volunteers. If you would like to join in the work of the Mwebaza Foundation by making a donation or volunteering, please visit our website, [www.mwebaza.org](http://www.mwebaza.org). Thank you for your support!