



Spring 2015 Newsletter



Looking back... Art and Linda Milton (on the left), participants on the first Mwangaza teacher exchange in 1996, returned to Arusha in 2015 for a visit.

"We were so happy to see how the unfinished renovation of a German bungalow with no fence or yard had grown into a campus with specialized teaching spaces, dormitories and guest housing, library and multimedia resources...all the developments we had heard about and contributed to since 1996. We were so pleased when John and Salome, Tanzanian leaders, showed us around. Our memory was overlaid by the reality of 2015!"

Looking ahead...

Mwangaza is going digital! This will be the last printed newsletter that we produce. The next newsletter will be sent electronically. **Not sure we have your e-mail address? Send it to sarahgioe@yahoo.com to stay in touch.** If you would like to receive a printed copy of the e-newsletter, please contact Sarah Gieo at sarahgioe@yahoo.com.



Outgoing and incoming Mwangaza Board members gathered in March 2015. Seated are the outgoing chair, Rev. Gabriel Kimirei (left), and incoming chair, Rev. Dr. Msafiri Mbilu (right). We are so grateful for all!

New science lab offers practical training

Science instructor Michael Moshi discusses the impact of Mwangaza's new addition

By David Neale

One of the most exciting changes at Mwangaza over the past couple of years has been the addition of the science instructional lab. This space, paid for largely by people like you, allows groups of science teachers to receive practical training on site at Mwangaza.

Michael Moshi, a science teacher from Kimandolu Secondary School in Arusha, has worked extensively with Mwangaza. He has been the science facilitator at each of the last two June instructional seminars, and he has helped coordinate several science-only training seminars. He commented on the impact of the new science lab, especially since the Tanzanian educational

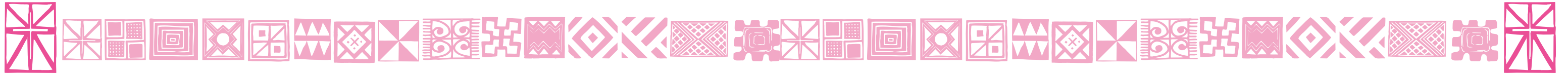
system is emphasizing more science training in their schools.

"The science lab project has been very beneficial to me specifically and to my students generally. In each of my lessons, I have to do some practical [Tanzanian educational speak for labs]. Formerly, we thought we had to have 80 minutes to perform a practical, but Mwangaza has changed this view. Practicals, well-prepared, can just last for 5-10 minutes and then the lesson carries on."

"The Mwangaza lab can accommodate at most 10 people at once, and the Mwangaza hall can accommodate up to 33 people at a time, so if the seminar is organized for one week in a year, about



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New science lab, continued

30 teachers from 10 schools will benefit. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania has over 60 schools—it will take years to cover all of them.”

The lab offers extensive training to science teachers, and it also allows teachers an opportunity to perform experiments themselves before attempting to set them up at their own schools. Michael continued to praise the benefits of the lab:

“What is good with the Mwangaza lab is that it consists of student-centered teaching, so while the teachers are planning for the execution of practical work, they need to remember that the student is the main target and needs to be involved in each stage. This reduces teachers’ load and also arouses students’ interests, especially as they realize that science can be simple. For this reason, difficult concepts are made very simple for students to comprehend when teachers have experience using a lab.”

Michael also explained how his experience in working in the new lab has helped him in his own classroom:

“The lab has made me a much better teacher as my students now use multiple senses in my lessons, hence becoming very interested. In my classes, a student sees, touches, feels, hears, and even tastes. For sure, the class becomes very active, a lot of movement, interactions and hence learning becomes more meaningful.”

Finally, Michael discussed how the lab at Mwangaza helps teachers get over their preconceived misconceptions about teaching science:



Michael Moshi, center, instructs teachers in the new laboratory

“Many teachers who attended the practical seminars are coming thinking of a challenge of time, but finally they realize time is not an obstacle. Prior planning is the most important thing. A teacher from a neighboring school told me that science is made difficult by ineffective teachers who struggle to teach science on a theoretical level, something which doesn’t work in our schools. My friend [Mwangaza volunteer] Mike Wadle responded to my question as to why math and science are becoming difficult all over the world with a one-sentence answer: “It is because teachers have ignored practical math.” Practicals (labs) give opportunities for students to see, and ‘seeing is believing.”

Mwangaza’s emphasis on training teachers in lab sciences allows those teachers to gain knowledge and confidence, practice experiments in advance, and learn the planning and preparation needed to instruct their students effectively. Mwangaza is constantly adapting to meet the needs of the teachers and students of Tanzania, and the addition of the science lab at the Mwangaza Centre has made a measurable impact on the teachers at Mwangaza-supported schools.

Miltons bring love and energy to volunteer operations

When Mwangaza Education for Partnership began in 1996, Art Milton was one of two teachers in the Northern Illinois Synod selected to host Lutheran educators from Tanzania. One chilly April night, Emmanuel Mainoya, a Tanzanian teacher, arrived at Chicago’s O’Hare airport, ready to participate in this first teacher exchange. He was warmly welcomed by both Art and his wife, Linda—and from that point on, much learning transpired on both fronts.

Once June arrived, Art and Linda headed for Arusha to meet with their Tanzanian cohort once again and co-conduct a weeklong teacher training seminar for Lutheran secondary school teachers in Tanzania. The experience was memorable for the Miltons, the future of Mwangaza, and the host teacher, Emmanuel.

“They changed my life,” Mainoya said. “(Both) the experience of being an exchange teacher and the experience of knowing these extraordinary people.” Mainoya went on from the exchange to become a headmaster at Lutheran secondary schools in Tanzania.

Through the Miltons’ experience, other American volunteers have gained. On their first trip to work with Mwangaza, Mike and Sharon Wadle worked hard to prepare. But Tanzania is not a place where you can plan and everything will go the way you want, explains Mike: “You leave yourself open, and God will take care of the rest.”

“I went in there with all these plans. Art took me out for 15 minutes and he conveyed the spiritual experience that it was, and he helped prepare us,” he says. Mike was ready with lesson plans, but Art’s guidance helped him prepare for the spiritual and cultural experience of working with Mwangaza.

Art and Linda are retired educators, though the pace of their retirement is anything but slow. Art is actively involved in the companion Northern Illinois Synod, where he is chair of the Global Mission Committee and advocates for Mwangaza.

Linda has likewise contributed her skills to the lifeblood of Mwangaza, serving as treasurer for some time, maintaining the database, and seeing that the Friends of Mwangaza constituents receive their newsletters and updates. For many years, Linda has assembled a loyal team of Mwangaza supporters in Rock Island who have assembled and prepared Friends of Mwangaza mailings several



times a year. Those of you reading these words at this moment have Art and Linda Milton to thank—though, to be sure, neither is looking for accolades.

Mwangaza has been blessed by the love and energy that Art and Linda have brought to Mwangaza for nearly 20 years, another testament to their belief in Mwangaza’s programs, all forces for good in the world.

Mwangaza in the news

The Miltons’ first return trip to Tanzania in 19 years was featured in the Quad City Times article “Rock Island teachers return to African mission.” Read it at tinyurl.com/mdj57vd.