



friends of **African**
Village libraries

Fundraising priorities:

- Building an endowment for each FAVL-managed community library;
- Hosting summer reading camps in all libraries;
- Producing more microbooks in local languages and the language of instruction;
- Continuing to build staff capacity to prepare for expansion.

Friends of African Village Libraries is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt non-profit.

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FAVL opens two new libraries in Burkina Faso

FAVL's new library in Boni, Burkina Faso, opened on March 2, 2009. Boni is famous for its culture of masks, where spirits of the bush appear in special ceremonies marking the beginning of the rainy season and other occasions. They wear elaborately carved wooden masks, and each spirit performs its own amazing dance. The library in Boni will complement this already vibrant local cultural scene. The library was established thanks to sizable gifts from *St. Jude's Episcopal Church in Cupertino* and *Matt Powers* and members of his family. Special guests at the opening ceremony included U.S. Ambassador Jeanine Jackson and her husband, Mark Jackson. After being welcomed by Patrick Bondé, mayor of Boni, and Yacouba Bondé, the village chief, Amb. Jackson gave a short talk emphasizing the importance of education to the future of the country. She presented a donation of courtesy of the embassy, including books about the United States, dictionaries, and a French translation of *The Audacity of Hope* by Barack Obama. It was Amb. Jackson's third visit to a FAVL-supported library. Sadly for us, she has completed her tour in Burkina Faso and has taken up a new posting in Iraq.

A second library opened in the village of Dimikuy in Burkina Faso in July 2009. This library is oriented toward children and has been funded by friends and family of *Steve Cisler*, a digital library pioneer who worked at Santa Clara University's Center for Science, Technology and Society. Prior to coming to SCU, Steve had spent many years as a librarian, and then as a digital librarian, with Apple. More details and photos will be forthcoming on the FAVL blog.

A grant from the *New Field Foundation Fund of Tides Foundation* has helped make these new libraries in Burkina Faso more girl-friendly. The libraries will have special reading corners that will target girls in primary and secondary school. Girls in the community will help work with volunteers to develop and print four "microbooks" featuring themes relating to the lives of girls in villages. The libraries will be equipped with outdoor reading circles and two latrines outside of each library (a first for the village: one for girls and one for boys). Finally, two female reading coaches per library will be hired to tutor children.



FAVL organizes library workshops in Uganda

FAVL's affiliate in Uganda, the Uganda Community Libraries Association (UgCLA), has conducted three workshops since its inception in August 2007. The first, held in January 2008, trained attendees in proposal writing, specifically for six small grants that UgCLA would be distributing. Thirty representatives of 17 member libraries attended the workshop, which resulted in 12 completed proposals. UgCLA funded six of those projects. The second workshop, held in July 2008, discussed how to initiate a community library. It was attended by representatives of the six libraries that had won small grants together with 16 prospective initiators of libraries. As a result of the workshop, four new libraries were started. The third workshop, in February 2009, was on the theme of "Libraries for Education and Development." It was attended by numerous representatives of local libraries as well as by members of UgCLA's Board, all of whom facilitated sessions. Aaron Chomolla, from the FAVL library at Chalula in Tanzania, was one of the participants—the first time that UgCLA has extended its services beyond Uganda. Another "first" was that the workshop included exhibits by two organizations, one by an AIDS support organization, TASO, and the other by Information Center at the American Embassy. Those who attended were motivated and energized by the sessions, and we expect to hear more in the coming months about programs initiated in the different libraries.



On April 9, UgCLA helped Under the Reading Tree organize a workshop at the Caezaria Public Library, which is a member of UgCLA and is supported by UTRT. The workshop was attended by all the UTRT-supported librarians, from the Mpigi and Inforall libraries as well as Caezaria, by Kate Parry and Grace Musoke from UgCLA, by Jennifer Nalwanga representing the National Library of Uganda, and by Nathan Lepp and Johathan Nichol, both directors of UTRT. The workshop focused first on reporting requirements for institutions supported by a Canadian charity, then moved to discussion of the libraries' successes and challenges and of ways to encourage community engagement in libraries. The workshop was short but productive and stimulating, and it was ably hosted by Francis Kigobe, the director of the Caezaria Library—and the visitors could see in the library itself just how much can be achieved through dedicated work.

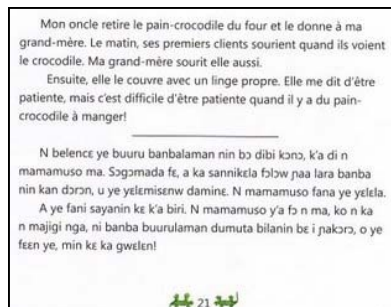


Enmeshing African community libraries in a network of support: Some recent advances

To create a larger network supporting African village libraries, Anne-Reed Angino, a Santa Clara University student, has been working to create a Google Earth Community to pinpoint existing community libraries using Google maps. Each library location is linked to individuals or nonprofit organizations responsible for establishing, managing or simply helping fund the library, including FAVL. The Google Earth map will provide links to an online network, which is currently being built on the Ning networking site. You can access the map through the FAVL website. Currently, there are about 100 libraries listed and embedded with photos and links! It is a step toward furthering awareness and providing a more concrete network capacity for community libraries in Africa.

Kathy Knowles helps out!

Kathy Knowles, of Osu Children's Library Fund, has published another book, *Crocodile Bread*. FAVL Ouagadougou representative Elisée Sare did a French translation and coordinated the Dioula translation. With financial help from OCLF, several hundred copies of the book were printed for distribution in Burkina Faso. Kathy did another superb job in conceiving and creating a book that will inspire children to read. Kathy also generously donated her time to visit the libraries in northern Ghana and lead a workshop on library issues, hosted by the Sumbrungu Community Library.



Volunteers and visitors in FAVL libraries

Volunteers help librarians learn new ways of interacting with readers. And when they return, volunteers and visitors spread the word about the importance of providing opportunities for children and adults to improve their reading skills.

Making dictionaries in Uganda village libraries

In fall 2008, Espen Stranger-Johannessen travelled to Caezaria Library in Uganda to do research for his master's degree in Comparative and International Education at the University of Oslo, Norway (the thesis will be published online by the end of May). Caezaria Library is well-stocked and used especially by primary and secondary students and their teachers, who borrow about eight books on average every day. In addition to collecting data for his thesis, Espen initiated a project to make dictionaries, reading materials and games in local languages. With the help of others, Espen managed to print and sell 1,500 English-Luganda dictionaries at 15 cents each; the price for photocopying them. He also developed small storybooks and instructions for making a homemade version of a well-known word game. You can read more about these projects at <http://espensj.net/>.



The library recently hosted a reading competition. Pictured at right is second place winner, Yasia Ganame, who read seven books. His favorite book was *Les Trois Jumeaux* because it was a funny story about triplet brothers with the moral that you shouldn't mock other people because you never know what might happen to you.

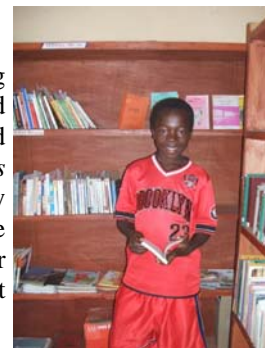
Adventure capitalists visit FAVL Burkina Faso

Santa Clara University graduates Austin Woody and Sam Baker have been traveling the world looking at development projects and issues. They spent time in Ghana and Burkina Faso, visiting and volunteering in the FAVL libraries there. In their transition from one country to the next, Sam noted: *With time it became clear that not only would our tea and sweet breads from Ghana be replaced by homemade alcohol and crispy French bread, but also that, in important matters, the English tradition of passive governance in Ghana would be rivaled by Burkina's inheritance of the French "fonctionnaire."* These subtle differences were easily lost in the perhaps more striking realization that Burkina Faso is undeniably, statistically and in our personal experience, among the five poorest countries in the world. In their blog they also raised some interesting questions about "development tourism" that are pertinent to consider.



Continuing support for Niankorodougou Library in Burkina Faso

Peace Corps volunteer Adelaide Schwartz has taken over supporting the library initiated by Meghan Coughlin. Adelaide writes: *Within my first month at site, it was easy to understand how the library continues to expand in members and projects... this strong sense of community is a big reason. The library is amazing. I cannot stress what a phenomenal impact it is having on the community, myself included. The library acts as a central location for all ages, regardless of native tongue or reading level, to congregate and interact. For a country with one of the lowest literacy rates in the world, it is inspiring to see how much pride Niankorodougou has for its library and associated events. The great news is that now the library won't be the only place for readers to gather in Niankorodougou. We broke ground for the reading hangar the first week of the new year, which was an excellent way to put yet another foot forward in increasing Niankorodougou's literacy rate. Located directly adjacent to the library, the expansion can now host a slew of community activities, including weekly story time.*



University of Illinois students visit library of Béréba in Burkina Faso

One student, Austin Leefers, wrote about the trip: *We were extremely fortunate to be able to spend three days and two nights with the welcoming people of Béréba. Despite our short visit, the villagers welcomed us with open arms, arranging a village tour, a mask dance, and a New Year's Eve party. We were immediately immersed in the daily lives of the villagers, moving into their homes and sharing meals with the family. We were welcomed in every step of the celebration process, helping prepare the New Year's meal, brewing Dolo, and finally partaking in a New Year's Eve dance party that was complete with a live band. We also visited the FAVL library in Béréba. We learned how the library system worked in a village setting and heard from villagers how much it affected their lives. We learned of the impact that the library is having on students in the village. The library is very much appreciated in the village, as everyone we met made a point to stress.*



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Friends of African Village Libraries: Enriching the Lives of Children

Photographer David Pace from Santa Clara University captures three young boys playing checkers outside the FAVL library in Dohoun, Burkina Faso, on Aug. 31, 2008. Playing games, doing puzzles, and engaging in coloring are favorite complementary activities of the libraries.

