

THANK YOU'S!

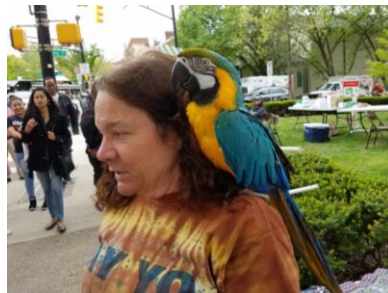
J&J CaringCrowd successful! Thank you to all who participated in this match challenge to furnish our new Tomisunga Women's Center! We met the goal of \$7000 + 10%, so \$7700 is providing for tables & chairs, beds & cupboards, pots & pans & dishes, a freezer, & furnishings for office & counseling room. THANK YOU!

English lessons, from Nassau Presbyterian Church! Over the past 18 months, Nassau has enabled two leaders of FEBA to take English lessons; now they have generously funded six months of group lessons for eight leaders. English is a necessary tool; only Maman Monique is fluent. Maman Antoinette et Maman Denise are continuing to improve, & six others are beginning lessons. THANK YOU!

Sewing machines! Thanks to Witherspoon Presbyterian, funding for four new treadle machines & pairs of sturdy scissors is on its way to Congo for the school. Treadle machines are more expensive but last much longer. Thanks to other individuals: Valerie Smith, Jean Escarpeta, Nancy Beatty, for giving manual machines this year. Every one helps. THANK YOU!



HAW & Fascination in Feathers! Members of Hands Across the Water at West Windsor-Plainsboro HS joined Cheryl & Joe Ciaranca's exotic birds for a wonderful display at Princeton's Communiversities on April 30. The birds drew a delighted crowd, especially young & young at heart. Thanks to HAW, to the Ciaranca's, to PUMC for space. THANK YOU!



5K



Second Annual 5K #RunAgainstRape: Join us to run – or walk, or row, or rock, or _____. Map out your 5k & post the image to our Facebook page. Make your \$25 donation online (link below). Your money will be matched by a generous donor to FURNISH the women's center you helped us build over the last year (check out the details & progress on the website!). I hope you'll join me (Shari Oosting) & the bunch for our second Run Against Rape 5k (remote edition)!

<http://www.womancradleofabundance.org>

A Visit to Congo

In July Elsie McKee plans to visit our sisters in Congo, for the inauguration of the Tomisunga Center, to hear the English students demonstrate their new knowledge, and to continue research on Maman Monique's story. We hope all will go well... If you would like to send a small gift for English books for the students, or vitamins, calcium, etc. for elderly women, please make a donation online.

CONGO's TRIALS

Update on Political Situation: Congo has been in turmoil since last fall when it became clear that president Kabila intended to hang on to power after his second & last constitutional term. The Catholic bishops served their country well by negotiating an agreement for a transitional government to be led by the opposition, to prepare for elections by Dec. 2017. Mr. Etienne Tshisekedi, advocate of non-violence & leader of resistance to dictators for more than 35 years, & the one political figure most Congolese trusted, was expected to oversee the transition. Tragically for Congo, the Dec. 31 agreement has unraveled in part because 84-year-old Tshisekedi died on Feb. 1.

Violence has punctuated life in Kinshasa. Semi-continuous fighting between Kabila's army & followers of a local chieftain have torn apart the usually peaceful Kasai province. Hundreds have been killed, including women & children & unarmed men; many thousands have been displaced, robbed, raped, driven into the forest to hide. Mass graveyards have been found; two UN experts sent to find out more about the massacres were kidnapped & murdered. Children have missed months of school: & they are the lucky ones; many hundreds are orphaned & destitute. FEBA's leaders in Kinshasa & the US are seeking ways to respond. And eastern Congo continues to be ravaged by guerilla war, & rape & destruction go on (see across for story from our partners).



Update on Economic Situation: Inflation has passed 300%; each day is worse. The dollar economy functions but no one can buy; the informal economy (based mostly on the tiny businesses of poor women) has almost ground to a halt. People are starving. FEBA has been able to sell only a fraction of its usual volume of sewing products. Usually Christmas-New Year's or Easter (most Congolese are Christians), & fall or spring for beginning or end of school, are good seasons for sales, but this year there has been pitifully little. Thanks to donations, FEBA's school continues & its members are eating, & they pray for peace.

Violence, Rape & Murder

In Kinshasa at least ten victims of violence (domestic, war/ disease-related) come to FEBA each week. Just a few weeks ago a car (apparently deliberately) ran into one of the students at the sewing school, breaking many bones (clavicle, ribs, arm). Pursuing justice is practically impossible & exorbitantly expensive, so the best FEBA can do is help with medical care & counseling.

In eastern Congo our partner CENEDI has focused primarily on educating children, but they also work with the families & villages of students. Over the years, 80 women & girls have been raped. Trauma & destitution, with all the attendant ills, are the fruit.

Just a few weeks ago, this became worse. Five survivors of rape were working in the field of one woman (they agreed to go as a group to each one's field in turn, so no one would be alone). A guerilla came out of the forest & attacked one woman (whose field it was); the other four tried to fend him off, but he called for reinforcements & the women fled, barely escaping by taking different ways through the forest, as shots were fired at them. They were bleeding & hurt when got to the village but they called for help; they returned to find the first woman had been raped (again) & shot to death. Some financial assistance has been sent for medical & counseling treatment. Any gifts for these women will be gratefully received.

CONTRIBUTE OR GET INVOLVED

Contribute: Donate securely via Stripe at www.WomanCradleofAbundance.org/get-involved.

Please designate "Capital Campaign" in the purpose line to contribute to equipping the Women's Center, or "Sustaining Gift" to support ongoing work.

Checks payable to Woman, Cradle of Abundance can be mailed to the following address:

Woman, Cradle of Abundance
attn: Cheryl Ciaranca, Treasurer
25 Alexander St.
Princeton, NJ 08525

Volunteer: Contact Cheryl Ciaranca, Community Outreach Coordinator, at cciaranca@gmail.com or 215.292.3290 to discuss ways to partner with Woman Cradle of Abundance.