

Library In Uganda Honors Carlinville Man

by Tom Emery
December 9 2022 3:41 PM



CARLINVILLE – The legacy of a late Carlinville man is now felt all the way to eastern Africa.

The Jacob Library in Katovu, Uganda honors the memory of Jacob Glenn, a Carlinville resident who died at age 22 in October 2013. Construction of the library was spearheaded by Jacob's mother, Becky Miller Root.

Root provided a program at the Jacob Library at the Carlinville Public Library on Thursday, Dec. 8.

The free, half-hour program was open to the public and featured a brief slide/Power Point presentation on both the Jacob Library and the culture of Uganda. Root's visit to the site in October was emphasized. Cultural items and refreshments were featured during the program.

The idea for the Jacob Library originated during the 2012-13 school year, when Root served in Uganda as an English Language Teaching Fellow, coordinated by the U.S. State Department's exchange program. She saw that the area needed a library, and provided the seed money for the building in 2022.

A nation of some 41 million residents, Uganda is roughly twice the size of Illinois. It is one of the poorest countries in the world, with a per-capita gross domestic product of just \$2,400. Life expectancy for both males and females is less than 58 years old, and over 41 percent of residents are considered undernourished.

The Jacob Library is being constructed on the grounds of Shepherd Secondary School, and is intended to provide an adequate library for both the school, and the surrounding residents. Shepherd Secondary School serves 560 students.

The library will include books in areas designated for students from pre-school to secondary level, along with university-level students and adults. The building will include quarters for volunteers who visit the library or school.

Root says the 1,800-square-foot facility will be the first public library in several districts in that region of Uganda.