

# POTTSTOWN CITIZENS FOR Enlightened LEADERSHIP

## Mustard Seed Malawi

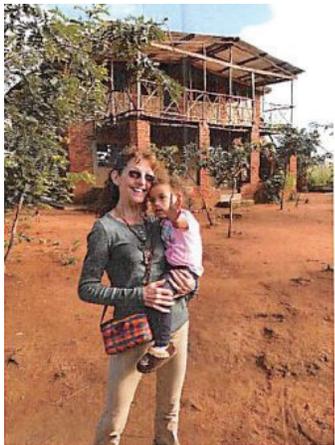
Shortly after Pottstown finance director Janice Lee retires next month, she'll be flying to Africa to visit her daughter, Angela, and son-in-law, Alex Ishmael, at a free pre-school they operate in Malawi, one of the world's most undeveloped countries.

Angela, a 2004 graduate of Pottsgrove High School, joined the Peace Corps in 2015 after earning her master's degree in international development at the University of Florida.

Prior to the Peace Corps, Angela served a year on *Africa Mercy*, a non-profit hospital ship that offers free surgery and other medical care to thousands of needy Africans who live near the ship's various ports of call.

"Angela doesn't like computers and cell phones," her mom says. "She does love to protect children and animals."

While working in the Peace Corps, she met her future husband in Malawi's capital city,



**JANICE LEE with her granddaughter, Ziona, in front of the pre-school her daughter, Angela, and son-in-law, Alex, operate in Malawi, far right. One of its classes is below.**



Lilongwe, while he was performing with a musical group. Alex, a native Malawian who speaks English, worked at his father's motorcycle shop, but his dream was to open a pre-school on some land he inherited about 30 miles south of the city. The school has become the couple's mission in life.

With start-

up funds of \$8,000, they were able to build a two-story brick school which serves about 60 children aged 3 to 6 who live near the school.



Commentary by  
Thomas Hylton

The Christian-based school, which has two teachers,

teaches the children English, math, art and music to prepare them for free public elementary school. They are fed porridge daily made from ground peanuts and maize.

Angela, Alex, and their 4-year-old daughter, Ziona, live on the floor above the school.

A non-profit called Mustard Seed Malawi was incorporated both in Malawi and the United States to raise money to operate the school.

It's hard for us in Pottstown to image how primitive their living standards are. There is no electricity and no plumbing. Donations from two Pottstown area churches paid to drill a well with a hand-operated pump.

A little money goes a long way in Malawi. "It costs \$600 a month to operate the school, including the teachers," Janice says.

Janice has visited the school four times, but she plans an extended stay of several months this time.

Mustard Seed Malawi has a website and a Facebook page. Donations may be made on-line or tax-deductible check c/o Janice Lee, 3009 Reifsnnyder Road, Gilbertsville PA 19525.

