

From: Arthur B. Welwean

Subject: Annual Report 2020-2021

In April 2014 we had the opportunity to revamp the Association of Firestone Residents in the Americas. We were at the helm of the provisional leadership until 2017 when we were elected President. We have successfully served two consecutive terms as the President of this great organization. We could not do it without the support of many of you.

You trusted us with your time and money to achieve the goals of this organization. Had it not been for your support, we would not have achieved this much during our tenure. From zero dollar in 2014, we are proud that we were able to raise over \$50,000.00 during our tenure; we provided hundreds of copy books for students in lower Margibi County; we provided textbooks and other educational materials to one of the high schools in Cotton Tree; we provided shirts for female students at the three high schools in Cotton Tree, and fifty life jackets to the various river crossing points around the Firestone Plantation; and we received a donation of five laptops that are about to be sent to the Community Library in Camp 2 Firestone.

I want to thank the members for believing in me. One of our objectives is to encourage and promote educational and developmental initiatives among the people of the Firestone area. One way to achieve this objective is the construction of a modern public library in Cotton Tree, Margibi County. When we were tasked to construct this modern library in Cotton Tree, you backed me up and trusted me with your money. Thanks for your support. The construction project began in March and the building which when completed could cost about a hundred thousand dollars, has reached the roof's level.

I worked closely with the Project Committee with the advice and consent of Rev. Warner. Due to our farsightedness, we were able to rescue this organization from an individual who sought to extort money from the organization during implementation of our Library Project. We made some quick decisions in Liberia that have saved this organization thousands of dollars to date and would most like cut the construction cost by 50 percent when completed. We hired locals to do the construction of the library rather than Mr. Swaray's firm.

As per the bill of quantity (BOQ) provided by Mr. Swaray's firm, we should have spent about \$44,897.03 from the site preparation and layout of the building (library) to the completion of the Super Structure (roof level). The project began the first week of March 2021. When Sam Garwo and I arrived in Liberia, the organization had \$2,800.00 in the custody of Ms. Susan Welwean. The organization disbursed an additional \$25,000.00 to the Project Committee for the commencement of the Library Project. The total money allocated for the project as of the March 2021 to begin construction was \$27,800.00. Through our prudent judgement, negotiation skills, and leadership, we spent \$21,992.00 to construct the library from site preparation, layout of building, to the completion of the super structure (roof's level). We have a balance of \$5,808.00 in Liberia. The money is being kept by a gentleman that I have trusted all along to manage all cash sent to Liberia for the project. This gentleman also negotiated reduced prices for us when purchasing building materials.

In all, we saved the organization \$22,905.03 for the completion of this phase of the project. Not only that, but I also provided lodging for Mr. Isaac Logan, who was our Project Engineer until we fired him early July 2021 when we discovered that he was not an engineer. Additionally, his lack of knowledge cost some mistakes that were corrected but led to prolonging of the completion of the super structure and payment of additional expenses. Mr. Logan took away my air mattress which cost \$275.00 because he claimed the organization owes him money. For now, I will not be demanding refund from AFIRA for my loss, but if the organization decides to pay any funds to Mr. Logan, I will demand payment for the mattress from AFIRA. I want to encourage all members to continue to support this project until this Library is completed before the next Convention in 2022.

Congratulations to our in-coming leadership. We are glad that we can all witness this smooth transition of power. This is how true democracy works. We offer you our support and encourage all members to join hands with the leadership in continuing to build a strong AFIRA.

Long live AFIRA, long live the defiant spirit of our members to build a Liberian organization that is second to none. Thank you for allowing us to serve you.