

EARLY BIRD WEEKLY



NewbergRotaryEarlybirds.org

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RISE International was our topic last week, introduced by Early Bird, Jim Vogler.

Jim has been involved with RISE for twenty years and serves as its legal counsel and Director Emeritus.

In 1998 Andrew and Lynn Cole celebrated their 25th anniversary with a trip to Angola.

They were deeply impacted by the crushing effect of 27 years' of civil war on the Angolan people.

As believers in the importance of education for every child they saw that many schools had been damaged or completely destroyed in the decades old conflict.

The kids that were getting educated were being done so under the shade of large trees or the lees of still standing structures.

They led mission trips to Namibia, Zambia and Angola and co-founded the African Refugee Committee, now known as [RISE International](https://www.riseinternational.org).

In 2000-2002 most refugees had to leave their homes. Peace, was thought to have begun in 2002 but the land was littered with landmines.



A small group of friends met in 2003 in one of their living rooms when someone mentioned rebuilding the destroyed schools.

They raised \$40,000 and built their first four schools. That's the good news.

The bad news was when Jim was at his son's ball game in 2004 and checking his Blackberry and saw a message that Andrew Cole had died in his sleep.

However, even with the devastating loss

of Andrew's untimely death in 2004 Lynn remained resolute and impassioned about continuing the work they'd started with elementary schools for Angolan youth.

They had never asked permission from the government to build the schools. Rather than toil through politics and red tape, they just did the work.

Then the government found out.

If that feels like a cliffhanger, it kind of is. What they got from the government was more like, "If you build nicer schools we will supply desks, books and teachers.

So they did!

And much of the construction success can be placed at the feet of Adriano Huambo. Named Ongende by his mother, Adriano is the Portuguese name he assumed to enroll in school.



Adriano's backstory is as tragic as civil war suggests. While he was out picking mangoes troops entered the village and killed his father.

Suffering a blow to the head by militiamen, he himself is now blind in one eye. Over the next few years of hunger for he and his family (wife and eight children) he would become involved with RISE during a stay in a Namibian refugee camp in 2000.

As a teacher and businessman he and his family returned to Angola in 2004 to eventually become part of the RISE executive team and is now its Angola Country Director.

Adriano is now in charge of building all the "nicer" schools. Where the original schools cost about \$10,000 each, the new ones run about \$200,000 each.

It helps a lot that BP came along with millions of dollars in funding.

The Queen Mother, Sheikha Moza bint Nasser Al-Missned offered to match funds with BP. Jim Jones from Exxon sweetened the pot with a check for \$1 million handed

directly to Lynn Cole.

Between 2016-19 another 25 much nicer schools were built.

Between 2003 and 2022 RISE has built 195 elementary schools.



So far we've had about 1.6 million "kids in seats." For perspective, that's OSU's Reser Stadium capacity seating x5 and all become of Lynn's devotion to!

[RISE International on Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/RISEInternational)

Lynn Cole as the [Red Cross' Global Citizenship Hero](https://www.redcross.org/global-citizenship).

Feed the hungry, and help those in trouble.

Then your light will shine out from the darkness, and the darkness around you will be as bright as noon.

~ Isaiah 58:10



CUBAL GANHA ESCOLA DE 10 SALAS DE AULA