

# Lana AND Larry Lynn



Larry and Lana at the Susu Community School

Elizabeth's Library International and founders,

better than ever

As told by Lana Lynn, Las Palmas II

**Lana and Larry Lynn met at a church in Pacific Grove almost 43 years ago. The two were from the Midwest and both were nurses, a career beginning that would lead to amazing opportunities for service around the world.**

In 1989, Lana began working in the field of humanitarian relief missions in Cambodian refugee camps on the Thailand border. She went on to work in Somalia, Bosnia, Afghanistan, and other crisis locations but also took time to earn a master's in public administration from MIIS.

served and in the most difficult circumstances, people remained hungry to learn and hope for a future," she shared. "So, in addition to my other responsibilities, I started classes in order to teach literacy. It was a joy to watch an adult sign his name for the first time or read a simple book."

In 2011, Lana was working in Malawi (Africa) and met a minister with a vision to start literacy classes for the widows in his congregation and build a school for the orphans in his community. For her 60th birthday, Lana's friends raised funding to build a school and start literacy classes. The school began to grow and a library open to the community was established. People traveled long distances to use the only library for miles.

Lana's professional career had taken her to other African countries, and African colleagues urged her to start libraries in their communities. "There are very few libraries available to the general population – maybe in the larger cities, but not the villages," Lana says. "I have visited many villages and know how few educational resources are available. Better resourced schools are important, but a community library will support educational needs of the entire community."

Lana has been an avid reader since childhood and is passionate about literacy and educational opportunities. "Where ever I

Lana shared her vision with others and Elizabeth's Library International (ELI) became a reality. Thanks to the support of many individuals, service groups, churches, organizations, and Lana's hometown (Britton, SD), there is now a solar-powered community library in Susu Village, Zambia. The library sponsors many programs including four adult literacy classes, children's story-time, and a mobile library program reaching 18 rural schools with 9,000 students. Several income-generating projects are underway so that the community will eventually support the library and programs. This is a very important component of the ELI model.

In December 2020, a new mobile library program began in three rural villages in Malawi. In addition to books and other educational resources, teachers lead educational activities. Children without access to school are learning the alphabet, shapes, colors, and reading simple books. Mothers have watched their children learn and are also requesting literacy classes. Soon, income-generating projects will begin in these villages.

"Our libraries have become a community center and impetus for personal and community development," Lana says. "The ELI Board of Directors is thrilled that this vision has met such an important need, and we hope to expand the Malawi program and move into additional countries."

If you'd like to learn more about Elizabeth's Library International or make a monetary donation, please visit [elizabethslibrary.org](http://elizabethslibrary.org). Send comments or questions to [elizabethslibraries@gmail.com](mailto:elizabethslibraries@gmail.com)



**SALAD SHOPPE**  
— SALADS - SOUPS - SANDWICHES —  
ESTABLISHED 1986



**ARTISAN  
DELI BOARDS**

Make an impression at your next gathering with a Salad Shoppe deli board. Premium cheeses, meats, fruits & spreads. All complimented with assorted toasts & crisps.

[www.saladshoppe.com](http://www.saladshoppe.com) 831-422-9600



**Living life to the fullest and being better than ever in the 50+ crowd is celebrated on this page.** Contact [Laurie.Martin@n2pub.com](mailto:Laurie.Martin@n2pub.com) or phone 272-4620 to share your accomplishments.