

# CharlesPaolino's Blog

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"A Proper Tea is much nicer than a Very Nearly Tea, which is one you forget about afterwards." — A.A. Milne

November 11, 2009



KENYAN CHILD  
ajirifoundation.org

On an unusually warm November day on the usually friendly streets of Frenchtown we were treated to cups of delicious black tea grown in the fertile Kisii Highlands of Kenya. This tea, which is sold under the name Ajiri, is processed at the Nyansiongo Tea Factory, which is jointly owned by more than 10,000 small-scale farmers.

The tea was being dispensed by folks from Upper Black Eddy, which is across the Delaware River from Milford, a little bit north and west of Frenchtown. Sixteen tea bags were presented in a little box decorated with designs fashioned by Kenyan women using dried

banana leaves from their own farms. The plastic bag inside is tied with twine — also made from banana leaves — decorated with colorful beads made from lacquered remnants of recycled magazine pages.

None of this is designed to be cute. The box top makes that clear from the outset: "100% of profits support orphan education in western Kenya."



KENYAN CHILDREN  
arjifoundation.org

In addition to proving schooling for the children, Ajiri Tea creates employment for the people of that region — in fact, the group's literature points out, "ajiri" is a Swahili word, the equivalent of the English phrase "to employ."

Kenya, like other parts of Africa, is especially beset by HIV/AIDS. Besides costing the lives of adult men and women, the epidemic leaves many children without one or both of their

parents, and those family members who are caring for those youngsters usually have no sustainable income and can't afford to buy the uniforms and books required in Kenya's primary schools.

The founders of Ajiri Tea and the Ajiri Foundation are trying to change that. You can read about their mission at [www.ajiritea.com](http://www.ajiritea.com) and [www.ajirifoundation.org](http://www.ajirifoundation.org)

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[www.ajirifoundation.org](http://www.ajirifoundation.org)

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"I will honor Christmas in my heart  
and try to keep it all the year." —  
Ebenezer Scrooge ("A  
Christmas Carol")

"To love at all is to be vulnerable" —  
C.S. Lewis

"OK, partner. Draw!"

". . . and in a manger cold and dark,  
Mary's little boy was born" —