

KHOTSO

May 2009



Message from the Acting Country Director

Greetings from Acting CD

When the editor of Khotso, Mr. Deepak Pulanikkatil asked that I put a few lines on behalf of the Country Director, I was totally overwhelmed given that our CD has a special gift of putting together very intriguing, thought-provoking articles in this section of the Khotso. For this reason, let me be brief and concise so as not to spoil the trend that he has already set. The past few days we have been trying to make sense of the events that led to the foiled attempt to assassinate the PM. At this point, the police and authorities are deeply involved in their investigations. Whilst April 22 presented a scare in Maseru and without doubt the rest of the country, all has been quiet and near 'normal' since. We thank all the Volunteers who happened to be in Maseru for CHED COS and other business for keeping calm and wearing their safety 'gloves and helmets' during the unfolding of this chapter in Lesotho.

Today, we heard disturbing news that the much dreaded Swine Flu is slowly extending its tentacles across the globe...with approximately 150 casualties in Mexico and about 40 cases reported in the US and a few more in Canada and across the Atlantic in Europe, we can only hope that the Health fraternity will do their utmost to conquer and bring this potential epidemic under control.

Back at PC/headquarters in Maseru, we welcome two new staff members, 'm'e 'Masechaba Mapena, the new Training Director and Victoria Mpatesi Mofolo the Admin Assistant. Both bring with a wealth of experience in their respective fields of expertise, please join us in welcoming them into the Peace Corps family. Feel free to stop by when in town to get to know them more. On a sad note, however, we are also bidding farewell to Arlene Favaregh. Arlene served PC/Lesotho for a period of four years

and we all know the immense dedication and love she had for her job as PCMO. We wish her the best in her future endeavours.

Finally, let me wish you the best as we fight our way through this winter!

Khotso Pula Nala.
Clement Lephoto
Associate Director—Education
(Acting Country Director Until April 28, 2009)

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From the Editor's Desk

Articles must be received by the 4th Monday of the month to be included in the following month's edition of the Khotso. **When submitting articles, please list the name of the person making the submission and a contact person for follow-up questions.** The Newsletter will be emailed and snail mailed on or about the 1st of each month. Please make sure that your email and mailing address is on file at the Peace Corps office.

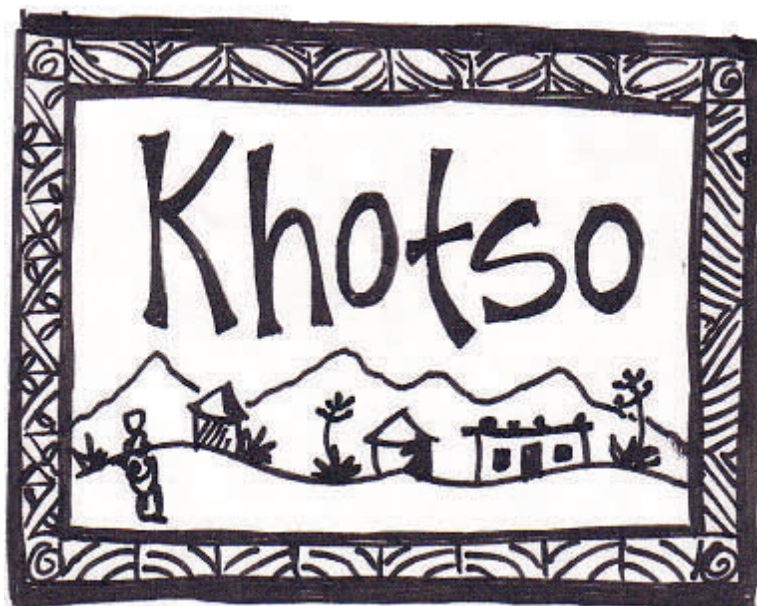
The editorial staff would like feedback from PCVs regarding the content. It is our desire to provide you with information that is useful, helpful, and encouraging. We would appreciate receiving constructive feedback from you as to whether the information contained in this newsletter met your needs.

By submitting articles, you are providing Peace Corps Lesotho with the right to reprint your article in full or part in any publication.

Deepak Pullanikkatil
Editor



Editorial



PCV Birthdays

Birthday greetings go out to the following PCVs. The Peace Corps Lesotho staff sends you greeting and hope that you have a very prosperous year.



May

Nosler, Merrill	May 13
Cuevas, Victor	May 19
Shasby, Benjamin	May 21
Krick, Kylie	May 25
Rogers, Pamela	May 25

June

Bartrem, Casey	June 5
Stone, Taralyn	June 6
Evans, Nicole	June 7
Schmale, Allison	June 9
Decker, Caroline	June 13
Malone, Kevin	June 15
Parker, Karrin	June 21
Smallwood, Tricia	June 21
Anhalt, John	June 25
Murphy, John	June 27

July

Gluck, David	July 5
Cozad, Madeline	July 12
Youngren, Phillip	July 12
Burns, James	July 20
Reilly, Rebecca	July 30

Diversity Committee meeting on May 16, 2009

Diversity is currently hosting camps around the country and creating a handbook for teaching diversity. The handbook will include activities, resources, statistics, and suggestions. If you are interested in joining diversity and participating in these activities please contact Caroline (58533033) or Clare (58810577). We are looking for two-three new members from the ED09 group, preferably a boy or two to add a little diversity to our group.

Upcoming camps: Mokhotlong April 17-19 and Quithing April 24-26

If you are stepping down from the committee, please let Caroline know.

Tax Stimulus Package

There is some good news from Congress concerning a tax stimulus package for those that

are patient. A credit has been passed for 2009, however, it will not be paid until you file your 2009 taxes in 2010. Under the "Making Work Pay Credit" PCVs are eligible for a credit of 6.2% of their earned income, up to \$400. For example, a PCV with \$2,000 on their W-2 and \$800 in other taxable income will receive a credit of \$173.60, (i.e. \$2,800 x 6.2%). I will try to remember to repeat this article in January 2010, however there is a lot of grey hair on top of my head. In the meantime, if you have any questions feel free to contact me.

Thanks,
Rich Carlson,
Administrative Officer.

To the CHED CoS'ers



The staff of Peace Corps Lesotho would like to thank all of you for throwing a party for us. The gesture truly made us feel loved and appreciated. We really enjoyed the wonderful American barbeque you prepared for us. Also, the non-work related time we spent with you that evening was amazing. Let us take this opportunity to congratulate you on being the wonderful people you are. All of you will be terribly missed.



Photos for Picture(s) Perfect

PCVs, we are running out of submissions for the "Picture Perfect" corner that we use as a filler at the end of the "PCV Life" section when there is space available. Please send us any photo of you or your PCV friends (with their permission) that you feel is humorous or interesting to readers.



Staff Birthdays



May

Ralintoane Majara May 2
Makhauta Mokone May 26

June

Lereko Mofokeng June 15

July

Mamotena Phakoana July 7

Peace Corps Lesotho Holidays

May

May 1— Worker’s/Ascension Day (LS Holiday)*
May 25—Memorial/Africa Heroes’ Day (US/LS Holiday)*

June

No Holidays this month.

July

July 3— Independence Day (US Holiday)*
July 17—King’s Birthday (LS Holiday)*
* PC Lesotho remains closed on this day.

Education Corner By Clement and Malitaba

Litumeliso tse mofuthu ho tsoa Maseru!

Traditionally with winter almost knocking at our doors, your programming team is preparing for two things; ‘hibernation’ or ‘migration’ to the northern hemisphere. ‘M’e ‘Malitaba will be taking the first two weeks of June off, (most likely spending a few days in the Caribbean!) whilst Clement will take the first two weeks of July (although this could be one week depending on whether we receive Peace Corps Response Volunteers in July). Please find attached a copy of our complete calendars for June and July. During winter break we will be scheduling our site assessment trips for August and September months. ‘M’e ‘Malitaba will spend these months holding meetings with the communities.

Volunteer Reporting Tool

Once again we request that those who have not submitted their reports of Oct-Jan and Feb-May (Training Class 08) and Feb-May (Training Class 09) you do so. We plan to thoroughly go through your reports during the winter break and provide necessary feedback to you. Thank you in advance for attending to this matter!

Suggested Activities for Winter Break

For those who intend to remain at their sites in winter... please take a look at the ICE publication ‘Working with Youth...’ A brief preview is

provided below.

WHY A VOLUNTEER MANUAL ON WORKING WITH YOUTH?

Since the first Volunteer stepped off the airplane in Accra, Ghana, in 1961, and in other countries around the world since then, local youth have been watching and interacting with Peace Corps Volunteers. Local young people offer Volunteers opportunities to develop enriching relationships that can satisfy Volunteers’ aspirations to make a meaningful difference, participate in family life activities, and have fun.

Youth work crosses all sectors of Peace Corps projects. At various times during your Peace Corps experience, you will have opportunities to make a positive impact on the local young people. If your primary assignment is in the youth development area, we urge you to use this book to gather ideas for activities to support the goals and objectives of your Peace Corps Project Plan. If your primary responsibilities are in another sector, this book is for you too. Increasingly, youth are being recognized as an important and worthy group to target in development activities. This book can help you connect your project to young people.

Sustainable development must include young men and women. Helping youth build their knowledge and skills is an important investment in the future and should be part of every Volunteer’s work. Fortu-

nately, young women and men are like sponges. When given the opportunity, they can absorb and retain a wealth of information and experiences that can strongly influence their development and that of their families and communities.

This manual is intended to complement knowledge, intuition, and good intentions in your encounters with youth. It can support your efforts by helping you make more informed and thoughtful decisions as you engage young people in discussions and activities. Through advice and information from Volunteers, staff, and experts, this manual will provide you with creative and innovative Working With Youth: Approaches for Volunteers ideas for activities that are founded on development principles and gathered from experience throughout the world. This manual is not only an information resource, but we hope also a source of encouragement and inspiration.



Staff Corner
Education Corner



CHED Corner By Maria and Jimi

COS

Thanks to all of you who made our COS a success! I again apologize profusely that the room, the meal and everything else were not ready as they were supposed to be. I thank you all for your patience and flexibility. It was really fun to celebrate with all of you!

Congratulations on completing your service!!! You are all amazing and will soon be part of the RPCV network which is very special. Please be sure to keep in touch!

For those of you about to hit the one year mark, I'm really glad so many of you joined the celebration. Now you know what you have to look forward to!

New Trainees

Our new group will be arriving on June 5th. We are expecting 15 new people (that number may yet grow or shrink). It will be fun to welcome new arrivals and I hope you will all reach out a helping hand to them!

CHED TOT will be from May 11-15th. We would have loved to invite all of you to TOT but that would end up being too many cooks in the kitchen! Several of you have mentioned an interest in helping with training and we will definitely be utilizing your expertise in various sessions. If you have not already indicated an interest in helping with training to Maria or Jimi, please do so. The group will be at the Training Center until June 14th and then will head out to CBT.

Site Development

Thanks to the many of you out there who have been helping us with site development. Your perspectives, time and advice are invaluable and we are very grateful! We will be finalizing sites in the next couple months. We'll be placing people in all 10 districts.

Training Center Reservations

This is just a reminder that you must make T Center reservations 3 days in advance. I know there are times that is

not possible and that is OK, but please do your best. When you SMS us, please tell us arrival and departure dates and your reason for needing a reservation. Things will be a bit tight during PST. Please be prepared to stay at the Anglican or to minimize your trips to Maseru.

Are you coming close to the one year mark?

Forgive me for saying this very parental thing, but I'm really proud of each of you for getting to the one year mark! It is not uncommon (in the 45 years or so that PC has been in existence) for the one year mark to be a bit of a low point.

Facing another year may seem exciting and you may have lots you're looking forward to accomplishing or it may seem like climbing Mt. Everest again or somewhere in between. I think the second year is almost always better than the first and usually goes more quickly than you might anticipate.

So, if you are excited about your second year, great, full speed ahead! If you are daunted or feeling a bit low, take comfort in the fact that you are on the normal schedule of ups and downs in PC. Because we're heading into winter and you all know winter here can be tough, this is a really good time to plan a vacation! Be sure to take really good care of yourselves if you're feeling low. Cook your favorite foods; get plenty of exercise and sleep. Keep in touch with people who make you feel better. Visit another volunteer. Re-decorate your house. Hang new pictures. Try something different. Call Maria or Jimi.

I definitely had points in my own service when I thought about heading for home. But, I then managed to do something to shake up my life and that got me over that bump in the road, and you can too!

Maria's Musings

I know I talk about the follow-

ing a lot, but I think it's so important that I'll mention it again! I believe that each of us has a unique place in the world, in our work, in the people we come into contact with. For some people, they reach out to a very large circle, but for most of us, our best sphere of influence is right in front of us.

It can be really easy to set very lofty goals for oneself especially in undertaking a job like the Peace Corps, but that is all the more reason to reflect on where you realistically have influence.

One of the big challenges of being in another culture is understanding cultural norms that are very different from American cultural norms and which may be offensive or even incomprehensible. You are here for a short period of time in the grand scheme of life and your ability to influence big issues is very limited. But, your ability to have an extremely positive influence on one person is important and achievable. That influence can build and ultimately result in bigger changes for the better. As I know I've said before, try to measure your own success in very small increments. Just because an increment is small does not mean it is unimportant or will not lead to a much bigger gain in the future.

For those of you about to COS, I consider each and every one of you to have contributed significantly to Lesotho, to your circles of friends and family and to world peace. Please speak highly of your accomplishments when you get out there and job search—you deserve to! For those of you at the one year mark, you are definitely making an important difference and you will continue to do so! Reward yourself for the small gains and trust that the bigger ones will happen as they should.

I will conclude by simply saying, "CHED rules." (No offense, ED, you rule too! :))



CHED Corner
Health Corner



I'm proud to say that my baby is now over 100lbs. Here is her official weigh-in at 100!

Health Corner By Arlene & Dr. J

Greatness exists in every one of us. We just need to learn how to apply it.

So this will be my last newsletter as most of you have heard that I will be leaving Peace Corps for another position. When I joined Peace Corps I had only planned to stay for two years. Eight years and three countries later I have decided that it is time to move on to a new adventure. I will be working as Country Manager for the One Love Campaign in Lesotho. It will be a new and challenging position but I'm looking forward to it.

You all are very unique inspiring individuals and I have been blessed knowing you. Keep up the good work even when things get tough and you wonder what the hell am I doing here. You do make a difference and being a Volunteer in Lesotho will make a difference in you.

Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD)

What is seasonal affective disorder?

SAD is depression that affects some people during the winter. If you have SAD you begin to feel depressed in the late fall and then feel much better as spring arrives. In the southern hemisphere, June and July are usually the months with the greatest symptoms.

How does it occur?

Seasonal **affective disorder** (SAD) usually comes on gradually during fall each year. It seems to lift much faster in the spring than it begins in the fall. More people experience SAD the further north they live. In the northern United States up to 25% of people report some features of SAD. Only 2 or 3% of people are severe enough to need treatment. Women are more likely to develop SAD. It usually begins during the young adult years and continues throughout life.

What causes SAD is unclear. There are several theories about hormone and brain patterns and the amount of sunlight received through the eyes and skin. To date, none of the theories fully explains SAD. We do know that exposure to light is linked to certain natural rhythms in the body. These are called circadian rhythms. These rhythms regulate body changes such as changes in mood.

What are the symptoms?

The symptoms of SAD are more specific and somewhat different from other depressions. If you have SAD, in the fall you are likely to:

- Feel uninterested in doing usually fun things
- Have an increased appetite with a craving for foods with starch (like potatoes and bread).
- Gain weight.
- Have trouble getting up in the morning and often want an afternoon nap.



- Feel tired and slowed down much of the time.
- Have lower sexual desire and function.
- Have trouble concentrating.

- Have worse than usual premenstrual symptoms if you are a woman.

When spring arrives each year, you are likely to feel a "high" and have a rush of energy. For a few people, the springtime "high" borders on mania. These symptoms must be a pattern for at least 2 years before they are considered **seasonal affective disorder**.

How is it diagnosed?

Your health care provider or a mental health professional can tell you if your symptoms are **seasonal affective disorder**. He or she will ask about your symptoms, history and any drug or alcohol use. You may be asked to have some lab tests to rule out medical problems such as hormone imbalances. There are no lab tests to diagnose **seasonal affective disorder**.

How is it treated?

The most effective treatment for SAD is increasing exposure to sunlight or artificial light that is like sunlight. Treatment for depression, such as medicine and psychotherapy, are also helpful.

Light Therapy

Special fluorescent light bulbs that imitate sunlight are used. These are up to 25 times as bright as normal fluorescent bulbs. Such bulbs range in the amount of light (measured in lux) from 2,500 to 10,000 lux. For treatment, you should be about three feet from the light. If a 2,500 lux source is used, then you should be in the light for 2 hours or more. If 10,000 lux is used, then around 30 minutes. It is best to use the lights in the morning. The light helps with waking up in the morning. It also lessens the desire for a nap. For some, using the lights in the evening causes trouble with getting to sleep. You do not need to expose a lot of skin to the light.

Medicine

Antidepressant medicines can help treat **seasonal affective disorder**. Your health care provider will work with you to select the best medicine for your symptoms.

You must take antidepressant medicines daily for 3 to 6 weeks to get full benefit from them.

There are no nonprescription medicines available to treat **seasonal affective disorder**.

Psychotherapy

Seeing a psychologist, psychiatrist, or psychotherapist in addition to light therapy may be helpful with **seasonal affective disorder**. Therapy may last a short time or may need to go on for many months. Cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) is a form of psychotherapy that is especially helpful. CBT is a way to help you identify and change thought processes that lead to depression. Replacing negative thoughts with more positive ones can help your depression. Interpersonal therapy may also be very helpful.

Complementary Treatments

Diets rich in fruits and vegetables are recommended for people with depression. A multivitamin and mineral supplement may also be recommended.

Studies suggest that eating fatty fish 2 to 3 times per week may reduce feelings of depression and anxiety. These fish contain omega-3 polyunsaturated fatty acids. Fatty fish include salmon, tuna, mackerel, herring, and sardines. For people who dislike fish, flaxseed, pumpkin seed, walnuts, and olive oil are also sources of omega-3 fatty acids. Fish oil supplements are available.

Taken in appropriate doses, St. John's wort may help with some forms of mild depression. It does not help with severe depression, and may cause side effects, such as sun sensitivity, anxiety, or sleeplessness.

Other supplements that may be helpful in treating depression include SAME, DHEA, and 5-

hydroxytryptophan.

Be careful which products you use. "Natural" products are not standardized. They may have different strengths and effects. Some may be contaminated. Herbs and supplements affect your body and may interact with prescription medicines. Talk to your health care provider or pharmacist about any supplements that you are using or considering.

How long will the effects last?

Usually **seasonal affective disorder** is a lifelong condition. For this reason, you should seek professional help. The treatments listed above most often will help you to overcome SAD or at least reduce it.

What can I do to help myself or my loved one?

Maintaining a healthy lifestyle is crucial to helping to control **seasonal affective disorder**. Staying physically and socially active is very important. Maintaining regular sleep and eating patterns will also help you.

To help prevent or reduce the effects of **seasonal affective disorder**:

- Between fall and spring get outside or near a window frequently each day.
- Exercise for at least 20 minutes every day, for example a brisk walk.
- Learn which activities make you feel better and do them.
- Talk to your family and friends.
- Eat a healthy diet with a low amount of starch (found in potatoes and bread).
- Do not drink a lot of caffeine.
- Do not abuse alcohol or drugs.

Learn ways to lower stress, such as breathing and muscle relaxation exercises.

When should I seek help

Seek professional help if you have symptoms that keep you from doing daily tasks such as work and family responsi-



Health Corner

bilities.

When should I seek immediate help? Get emergency care if you or a loved one have serious thoughts of suicide or harming others

Reminder for COS in case you were asleep during the session : Prior to your departure from Lesotho, you will need to have a COS medical clearance.

It takes at least three days to complete the medical aspect of COS. Please keep this in mind when scheduling your appointment.

There are three time specific medical issues for COS— HIV test must be done within 7 days of your COS date, tuberculin skin tests must be read between 48-72 hrs and you must check out with the PCMO within 72 hour of your COS date.

The medical aspect of COS encompasses a physical examination, Pap smear, laboratory studies of your stool, urine, and drawing blood for anemia (low red blood cell count), Schistosomiasis (worms found in fresh water) and HIV.

Urine is tested for blood, sugar, and protein; 3 stool samples are needed to test for worms and parasites. If any of your stool results are positive you will need treatment prior to leaving Lesotho. **Nothing makes parasites happier than a free trip to the US.**

TB skin test will also be done unless you are positive, let us know.

Your COS physical examination can be scheduled 60 days before your COS date or no later than 1 week before departure. Please schedule an appointment with the health unit.

You will need a second appointment after the initial visit. The second appointment is the medical Exit Exam/interview which must be made within 72 hours of your COS date. Any change in your health since the COS physical

examination should be brought to the PCMO's attention at this time. All parts of the Volunteer Health Program COS Checklist will be reviewed and your final clearance will be given.

If you believe you have had an illness or injury during your Peace Corps service that may require future medical care or may have a long-term effect on your health, be sure to discuss this with the PCMO and have your concern documented in your medical record.

If this is as clear as mud call the health unit J

So here is my final food for thought: As we grow up, we learn that even the one person that wasn't supposed to ever let you down probably will. You will have your heart broken probably more than once and it's harder every time. You'll break hearts too, so remember how it felt when yours was broken. You'll fight with your best friend. You'll blame a new love for things an old one did. You'll cry because time is passing too fast, and you'll eventually lose someone you love. So take too many pictures, laugh too much, and love like you've never been hurt because every sixty seconds you spend upset is a minute of happiness you'll never get back. Don't be afraid that your life will end, be afraid that it will never begin.

5 MINUTE CHOCOLATE MUG CAKE FOR THE TRAINING CENTER

- 4 tablespoons flour
- 4 tablespoons sugar
- 2 tablespoons cocoa
- 1 egg
- 3 tablespoons milk
- 3 tablespoons oil
- 3 tablespoons chocolate hips (optional)
- A small splash of vanilla extract
- 1 large coffee mug (MicroSafe)

Add dry ingredients to mug, and mix well.

Add the egg and mix thoroughly.

Pour in the milk and oil and mix well..

Add the chocolate chips (if using) and vanilla extract, and mix again.

Put your mug in the microwave and cook for 3 minutes at 1000 watts.

The cake will rise over the top of the mug, but don't be alarmed!

Allow to cool a little, and tip out onto a plate if desired. EAT ! (this can serve 2 if you want to feel slightly more virtuous).

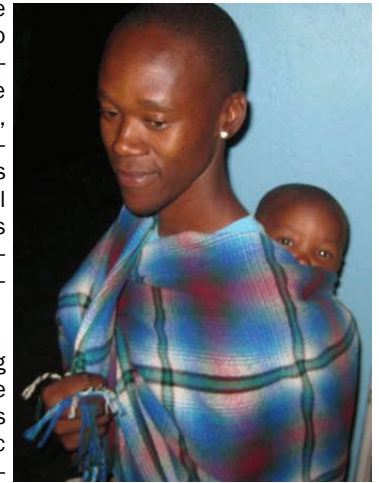


Ha Tsepo, Mochales Hoek – Truly the Village of Hope

By PCV Denni Klisch

The significance of a photo of a young Ntate with his child on his back is evident to those of us here, walking around and working for a change. Once can question the sincerity of those talking the talk; however, to see a father walking the walk brings shivers up arms, smiles to the face and hope to the heart. This phenomenal father is encouraging his son to bend the typical gender norms through example. Interactions between villagers and PCVs often revolve around questioning one another's lifestyle and Ha Tsepo is no exception to this line of communication.

The conversation doesn't end there, for Ntate in turn willing displays his open-mindedness for all of Ha Tsepo to see. Hope intensifies as the next generation of males see such models and begin to act upon erasing the division of gender specific behaviours in Lesotho. Its is often difficult for many to encourage



a small boy to play with dolls and wrap then upon their backs. Due to this, it is astonishing to see a young father rationally put his child on his back at the briskness of twilight while his wife is pre-occupied.



Being raised in ha Tsepo, this young man grew up with very well defined gender roles yet his actions have surpassed these gender specific limitations. This young Ntate symbolizes hope to those who wish for change.

I was inspired to share this vignette die to appreciation of Kaye Thompson's spotlight on hope. After reading her article (The Taxi Rank by PCV Kay Thompson published in the April 2009 edition of Khotso), my initial thought was, "right on, this is the stuff we need to hear about to keep our fires lit".

So... let's share more than photos, let's share the stories that will bring hope!

PCV Life



My Submission to the Peace Corps Times, April 2009

By PCV Madeline Uranek

Lesotho's Contradictions

A 60-plus PCV has more questions than answers at the end of her stay in Africa's Mountain Kingdom.

How do you tell friends you gave up a nice job and will return jobless, an older woman in a lynch-tight recession, yet have no regrets?

How do you explain to family you've attended 9 funeral services for friends you met, 3 of them violently murdered, and are having a happy time?

How do you tell colleagues you trudge long miles to isolated mountain schools, see crowded classrooms with kids sitting on paint cans, yet learn more than you teach?

How do you explain you live among poverty and see beauty; live amongst HIV and see elegance; live where time is slow yet have rich, full days?

PCV's and RPCV's understand these contradictions. They are the ties that bind us.

Like almost everyone, I was perplexed that Peace Corps Washington ignored my language skills and regional request (French/West Africa). I was assigned to Lesotho. Where? How did one pronounce it? With grace becoming my age, I decided to see why Lesotho (less-UUU'-2) had chosen me.



PCV Life

Even after 2 ½ years (I've added a ½ year extension), I don't have the answers. I've certainly never come to love Mount Moorosi, the dirty, Wild West town where unemployed men lounge against the walls and sullenly watch me walk by. Mt. Moorosi, the toilet stop for cross-country busses, where ladies I don't know enthusiastically beckon me to bus windows, demanding to know my name, how many children I have, where my husband is, what I might do for them. (MORE)

Lesotho is a tiny country the size of Maryland, surrounded on all sides by South Africa. Outside its wanna-be-sophisticated capital Maseru, it's a series of tiny villages with thatched roof huts, herds of sheep, cows, and goats. A few tar roads circle the country. Infrequent traffic consists mostly of combi's – 16-person vans stuffed with 21 adults, plus children pressed in small spaces against canisters of gas, 50-pound bags of corn meal, and a jumble of cheap suitcases.

Holding the dubious distinction as the world's #3 HIV country, Lesotho looks forward and backwards – one high heel shoe toeing the prosperity of South Africa, the other gum boot (shepherd's rubber boot) stuck in poverty.

I am a teacher trainer at Lesotho College of Education. Since the day I've arrived, I've tried to understand why our 2,000 teachers are afraid to test for HIV. I struggle – and fail – to break stubborn barriers of misunderstanding. Lesotho's HIV rates, despite millions of dollars of contributions and Herculean efforts of the UN and NGO's, hold steady, refusing to show needed decreases.

How do you tell future employers you failed, yet treasure this failure more than all the successes on your resume?

How do you explain to myself as I plant flowers on graves, tears in my eyes, that I'm laughing more than I have in years?

How will I leave, my heart in my throat? The people I wave to have no idea of the distance I'll travel away from them, the improbability of my return, and no idea they'll travel with me, to inhabit daily memories and dreams.

Tsumeya hantle (go well), beloved Lesotho. My questions add no weight to my luggage; it's my heart that's heavy.

News From

Friends of Lesotho

4110 Denfeld Ave.
Kensington, MD 20895
Tel (301) 942-2751



FOL Representative in Lesotho during May/June

Scott Rosenberg, a member of the Friends of Lesotho board, RPCV, and Associate Professor of History at Wittenberg University will be in country May 13-June 11. This is his fifth trip in seven years bringing a group of Wittenberg students to Lesotho to do volunteer work. This year there will be a total of 43 students in two different groups. Their projects will include building houses with Habitat for Humanity at the Khubelu Village just south of Maseru, building a playground and improving the garden at the Maseru Children's Village, hosting a carnival (with over 200 children expected) and building a playground at the Baylor Pediatric AIDS clinic in Maseru, and assisting Little Angels DayCare with the construction of a chicken house.

Several PCVs have already connected with Scott to work on these projects, but others of you may see him and his students in and around the lowlands as well. He will also be visiting with PC administration and other in-country contacts to streamline FOL's funding of projects. Take time to welcome Scott and his students to the Mountain Kingdom.

Reminder from FOL Donations Committee (centered)

Please remember to provide copies of thank you letters, reports, and pictures of your projects to the Friends of Lesotho. VAC and TAP committees are requested to provide a report as to how the funds they receive from FOL are used. This information is very important for the sustaining of FOL's ability to fund projects and show our donors where and how their money is benefitting the Basotho. You can forward this information to the Donations Committee Chair, Martha Munson, at [HYPERLINK "mailto:khotsocv@hotmail.com" khotsocv@hotmail.com](mailto:khotsocv@hotmail.com).

FOL Membership Committee News--Attention COSing PCVs (centered)

At its March meeting, the FOL Board of Directors approved a proposal to grant 1 year free membership to PCVs when they complete their service. Please send your name, e-mail address, years of service, village and project area to: Membership Committee Chair, Dyann Van Dusen, at: HYPERLINK "mailto:dyvandusen@yahoo.com" dyvandusen@yahoo.com.

A Membership Directory is being compiled specifically for use by current PCVs. The directory will include village and project information, years of service, and e-mail addresses of RPCVs. Look for it in the Resource Office by May 15th. You just may find a few RPCVs who served in your village during the 1970s, 80s or 90s.

Khotso, Pula, Nala.

"In Loving Memory"

RPCV Sandy Puckett passed away in March. He was a volunteer in Lesotho from 1972 to 74. From 1991 until his death Sandy was a much-loved Math teacher at the Taipei American School in Taiwan. After he started teaching in Taiwan Sandy organized an annual 'Lesotho Walk-a-Thon' where he combined teaching about Lesotho with fundraising. In one letter he wrote how much he enjoyed watching his Taiwanese seventh graders doing their walks and greeting people in Sesotho. You can see photos and remembrances about Sandy on the "RIP Mr. Sandy Puckett" Facebook page.

Over the years he and his students raised many thousands of dollars which were donated to Friends of Lesotho for the benefit of the Tuition Assistance Program (TAP). This money helped hundreds of Basotho students pay their tuition and through his generous efforts he helped many toward a better life. We are very thankful for everything Sandy did over the years as a PCV, teacher and philanthropist.

PCV Life



From the HIV Committee (DAR)

By PCV Sara Zizzo

On behalf of the HIV Committee, I would like to congratulate all the CHED 07 Volunteers for reaching their close of service! This is an amazing group of volunteers that has done a lot of work specifically regarding HIV in Lesotho. The Committee itself will be directly affected by the loss of three members from this COSing group, Casey, Christina and Amber. These three women have endured countless numbers of Vast and FOL grant reviews, various trainings, long Friday meetings, and have significantly contributed to the positive direction, tremendous growth and increasing effectiveness of the committee. Rea leboha haholo! Your hard work and dedication are greatly appreciated and will be missed. Good luck with your future endeavors as RPCVs! A special shout out to Amber Staudacher who has been an amazing Co-chair. Amber's dedication, leadership and professionalism have helped to guide the committee over this past year, and her fine attention to detail has been most valuable in all the materials she has created for PCVs to utilize throughout their service! These are big shoes to fill, but luckily three very capable members of CHED 08 have stepped up to the challenge! Welcome to Trish Smallwood of Leribe, Maya Washington of Maseru and Megan Kelly of Qacha's Nek, our newest members. A special congratulations goes out to Megan Kelley who was elected Co-chair at her first meeting! I look forward to working with these three over the next several months.

Ben Klein and Trish Smallwood attended the March Learn and Share Forum at the Lehakoe Club in Maseru. The topic was HIV and nutrition and there were three presentations at this forum: Can Nutrition Alter the Course of HIV/AIDS? Micronutrient Supplements and PMTCT Micronutrients & Breast feeding. Nutrition is a very important part of patient care as weight loss in an HIV positive person is the strongest independent predictor of mortality. HIV infection and nutritional disorder are interrelated. For example, a nutritional disorder increases the severity of the HIV infection. Patients are more susceptible to opportunistic infections when malnourished. Anemia increases mortality during HIV by 40%.

Malnourishment has a synergistic effect on the immune system of an HIV positive person. Simply increasing the caloric intake has does not reverse the effects

"How does nutrition affect HIV?"

- The food on a person's plate can influence the following:
- Immunity
 - Healing processes
 - Energy levels
 - Drug (ARV) effectiveness
 - Absorption of micronutrients (Vitamin A, C, D, E, etc)



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of malnourishment on the immune system. Simply eating is not sufficient to replenish body cell mass.

The effectiveness of ART is directly affected by the absorption of food and micronutrients. The success of maintaining the perfect balance in the body is challenging as it varies from patient as well as to type of ART prescribed. A key fact to remember is that the human body only has ONE system to process EVERYTHING. So everything that goes through the systems consequently has an effect on one another. One of the interesting facts noted in the first presentation is that there has been an increase in HIV positive patients becoming insulin resistant, or diabetic.

Good Nutrition equals an increase in immunity. There should be a specific, personal dietary prescription to each individual patient because every single person has a different nutritional status and at different stages of HIV/AIDS.

Breastfeeding:

- ◆ The purpose = to build up the infant's immune system.
- ◆ Highest risk of HIV transmission from mother to infant is during the first 8 weeks of breastfeeding.
- ◆ The lower the mother's CD4 count, the higher the risk of transmission.
- ◆ EXCLUSIVE breastfeeding should be encouraged for an infant's first 6 months; after 6 months, switch to weaning foods only (no more breast milk).

(Never mixed feeding i.e. breast milk mixed with anything else: formula, water, any food)

GUEST SPEAKER

Dr Jim Creighton, Country Director of the CDC, stopped by the meeting as he wants to maintain communication with Peace Corps and specifically PCVs. He is an RPCV and former Lesotho PCMO. Dr. Creighton discussed some of the current developments that PEPFAR is undertaking in Lesotho, how the CDC is involved and what the future may hold. He enthusiastically discussed various activities taking place with PEPFAR and mentioned that the team hopes to be doing more field visits after December.

BEST PRACTICES:

Thaba-Tseka: Pamela made HIV prayer flags with Form C students, encouraging creativity and expression of HIV's emotional impact on their lives.

Quthing: Ashley, Julie, and Karrin conducted informal HIV outreach with herdboys during their Sani Pass hiking adventure. Gwen started an HIV/AIDS club with some of her students, who are also attending Quthing's Speak Aloud and GAD's diversity camp. Clare is using PEPFAR money to have library workshops with teachers, including a focus on HIV resources (JAWS and Sara Books) and utilizing them to facilitate discussion.

Butha-Buthe: Nicole distributed anonymous teacher surveys regarding their knowledge of HIV. In Kristan's piggery workshop, she included discussions about HIV's effects on the community.

Mafeteng: Janice distributed over 200 condoms to local bars and pay-by-the-hour hotel rooms. Merrill introduced HIV-related games to Ashley's local youth. Anne Marie is ensuring that the JAWS HIV books are being incorporated into the classroom.

Mohale's Hoek: Alyssa has continued workshops with her ECCD teachers, successfully using a question box as a guide for discussion. Anne collaborated with NAC to paint HIV prevention messages on her camptown's garbage cans.

Qachas Nek: Megan has gotten an enthusiastic response from Qacha's hospital staff in their involvement with the ARV Defaulter Committee. Kylie has encouraged condom usage by distributing them. Tina has continued to educate her prisoners about HIV.

Berea: Akoua is involved in implementing a PEPFAR-funded male engagement campaign at Mapoteng Hospital with Darrin and Becky. Merrill has played games related to the emotional aspect of HIV to youth group members. With the help of some likonyana and ECCD teachers, Ben has developed a BIG BOOK addressing topics such as life skills, nutrition and basic HIV education.

Mokhotlong: James has started an HIV club with his secondary students. Ben's HIV club members have finally finished posters addressing topics such as: diversity, sugar daddies, HIV transmission, and condom use. They have been approved by the principal to be displayed in the community.



Leribe: Tricia has been working with Help Lesotho in the development of their Youth HIV/AIDS manual. Tara, Elizabeth and Nora have been helping local teachers with life skills activities. Amber had a very successful Nutrition workshop, including happy sample-age of pumpkin makoonya and bean soup, with local support group members that attended the prior keyhole garden workshop.

Maseru: Allison had engaged in discussions about Lesotho's testing confidentiality laws and plans to co-lead nutrition workshops for ARV-dependent people with fellow PCV's throughout the country. With her support group members, Casey attended the HIV/AIDS day put on by Ministry of Health in Ramabanta, which had poorer than expected results.

VAST GRANTS: Committee members reviewed five (5) applications this round. However, they must still undergo senior staff review. Next and final chance for 2009 VAST application submission is TBA, but M'e Jimi is tentatively planning on a date in early October.

HIV FOL GRANTS:

- ◆ Tricia is purchasing food for a nutrition workshop which will consist of a three hour cooking demonstration and nutritional instruction. It will be held at the Maputsoe filter clinic in Leribe for HIV positive/ARV adherent patients and clinic staff.
- ◆ Akoua is purchasing supplies for a Men As Partners & Male Engagement Workshop for clinicians, counselors, and community health workers at Mapoteng Hospital and satellite clinics. It is the second in a series of four workshops.
- ◆ Madeline is purchasing supplies for a Quthing Life Skills Workshop, where 20 primary school teachers will learn the basics of teaching life skills.
- ◆ Lindsey is purchasing supplies in effort to conduct an HIV/AIDS Positive Living Workshop for 15 PLWHA and community health workers. Presentation topics include mental health, disease progression, and healthy alternatives for winter living.
- ◆ Ben is purchasing flip charts and markers for his project Big Book O' Life-Skills Fun-ness. Students and teachers alike will author their very own Big Books that will be incorporated into the ECCD curriculum.

Next HIV Committee Meeting: August 27-28.

PCV Life



AFRICAN LIBRARY PROJECT APPLICATION 2009

By PCV Becky Banton

Guidelines for Peace Corps Volunteers in Africa (Version 6 revised March 2009).

Introduction:

The African Library Project acknowledges you as a Peace Corps volunteer for your contribution in developing African communities. We share your commitment to make a difference in the world.

While we are also actively developing libraries in Botswana, Swaziland, and Malawi, it is only in Lesotho that we are working with the Peace Corps. We are expanding into other countries as our U.S. capacity permits.

Requirements:

African Library Project provides support to African schools/communities who meet the following requirements:

Local sponsorship - A mix of teachers, students and/or community leaders are committed to sponsoring a library through a library committee.

Facilities - There is a **clean, dry, secure** area with adequate shelving to display the books, and with easy access to borrowers. This can even be a couple of bookshelves in each classroom which is recommended for primary schools.

Leadership - One or more people can be counted on to organize the books into a library and to train others to maintain and operate the library.

Borrowers - There is a community of beginning, intermediate and/or advanced English language readers who will actively use the library.

How to Explore a Partnership:

African Library Project is committed to creating sustainable libraries and is not just a source of books. If you meet the above criteria, we will welcome you as our on-the-ground-partner in estab-



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lishing or improving a small library. We have folks on this end who have been through what you are going through now and understand your challenges. Using evaluations and questionnaires, we follow up with our libraries to document a project's strengths and weaknesses. We will share our librarians' best practices so that you do not have to re-invent the wheel.

1. Name of school or community where library will be located. What is the address of the school? Contact information of local person(s) responsible for library.
2. An informal description of your school or community and any supporting materials that you have available (e.g., personal stories, digital pictures) so we can promote book donations specifically for your community. Your book drive organizer will use this description to help educate book donors about life in Lesotho.
3. Whom will the library serve, e.g., school, community, clinic? How many readers do you expect, e.g., number of students and teachers at school, number of community members that could access the library?
4. Where in the school or community will the library be located? Will it be in a separate room or building or will you have a small library in each classroom?
5. Who in the community will actively support and staff the library? What are their names and what roles will they play in managing/developing the library? Who will be on the library committee?
6. Include at least 3 letters from local leaders who have committed to participate in the development of the library. These stakeholders may include: chiefs or government officials, school principals, teachers, students, parents, or other interested citizens. Choose carefully as these people will become the core of your library committee and continue the work after your COS. Try to include both men and women.

The purpose of these letters is to help your community own the library project by thinking through how they will **actively help** to develop and manage the library. **Please refer to the African Library Project's Action Plan (attached at end of application) to make community members aware of things they will be responsible for in starting a library.**

1. Each letter should specify how the person plans to contribute to the library project. The application should be emailed to Becky Banton, African Library Project's Field Coordinator at beckybanton@yahoo.com. The letters may be sent to Becky Banton via email or standard mail to: PCV Becky Banton, PO Box 554, Maseru 100, Lesotho, or you may place the letters in the VRC Maseru Box.

7. What kinds of books would be most useful? How many? Be explicit about the reading levels and types of books desired, e.g., Sweet Valley High, Harry Potter, Junie B. Jones, Dr. Seuss, to give your book drive organizer examples of appropriate reading levels. (Refer to the types of books below that we can collect. Please remember, African Library Project's intent is to build libraries not provide classroom sets of textbooks for schools. However, a handful of textbooks in different subjects MAY be available depending on the donor.)

Most book drive organizers will send gently used, English language, soft cover books. Most of our books are for readers from preschool age through eighth grade reading levels. A typical ALP book drive will usually provide the following type of books:

PRESCHOOL (ECCD Center):

- ◆ Baby Board Books
- ◆ Children's picture books
- ◆ BIG books

If you are receiving books for a PRIMARY SCHOOL, you can expect:

- ◆ Baby Board Books
- ◆ Children's picture books
- ◆ Children's fiction and non-fiction
- ◆ Early readers
- ◆ BIG books
- ◆ Teacher books for school libraries
- ◆ Children's dictionaries/Picture Dictionaries
- ◆ Encyclopedias less than 15 years old
- ◆ Children's Encyclopedia/Picture Encyclopedia
- ◆ Children's thesauruses
- ◆ Paperback textbooks in math, English, geography, health, and science at appropriate level (Kindergarten to 6th grade)
- ◆ Books with universal themes (friendships, animals, love)

- ◆ Children's Health Books
- ◆ Accurate up-to-date atlases
- ◆ Books about Africa or African Americans
- ◆ Brain teasers, flash cards, educational games and puzzles

If you are receiving books for a SECONDARY or HIGH SCHOOL, you can expect:

- ◆ Juvenile literature
- ◆ Children's fiction and non-fiction
- ◆ Teacher books for school libraries
- ◆ Dictionaries
- ◆ Encyclopedias less than 15 years old
- ◆ Accurate up-to-date atlases
- ◆ Thesauruses
- ◆ Math books from 6th grade up, including Algebra, Geometry, and Pre-Calculus, English books (focusing on grammar or comprehension), Geography books, Health books, Science books including general science, Biology, Chemistry, and Physics books at appropriate levels
- ◆ Books with universal themes (friendships, animals, love)
- ◆ Books like Chicken Soup for the Soul (inspiring stories with life skills lessons)
- ◆ Books about Africa or African Americans
- ◆ Brain teasers, flash cards, educational games and puzzles

If you are donation to a COMMUNITY LIBRARY:

- ◆ Any of the books listed for preschools, primary schools, or high schools
- ◆ Agriculture
- ◆ Animal husbandry
- ◆ Gardening
- ◆ Health
- ◆ Business
- ◆ Current events
- ◆ Ecology
- ◆ National Geographic, less than 5 years old
- ◆ Books about African or African Americans

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8. The African Library Project needs help from PCVs. Please contact friends, family, your elementary or high school, churches, etc from the United States who might be interested in organizing a book drive for your new library. The donors should be willing to collect approximately 1,000 books and \$500 for domestic and international shipping costs. Please supply the name, email address, mailing address and phone numbers of potential donors to Becky. Finding your own donor in the US is the best way to guarantee your school or community receives books from the African Library Project. However, if you are not successful in your attempt to secure a book drive, the African Library Project can help with finding a book drive organizer.
9. With your application please submit digital photos of the prospective library. You MUST include a photo of the room or rooms where the library will be located. Other photos of students and community members are highly recommended. Photos of Lesotho and your community could be included as well. Please email photos to beckybanton@yahoo.com.
10. PCV contact information in Africa (name, location, postal address, email, phone if any, etc.)
11. PCV COS date.

What to Expect:

After your application, photos, and 3 letters from community members are turned into Becky, the likely sequence of events are:

- ◆ Your application will be evaluated and any follow-up questions will need to be answered.
- ◆ You will develop a plan to start the library and will organize a library committee to help you fine-tune and implement the plan.
- ◆ We will send you an excellent book, *Setting Up and Running A School Library*. This is published by the VSO (British equivalent of the Peace Corps) specifically to help volunteers organize libraries in developing countries.
- ◆ The contact information of your potential book drive organizer in the US will be forwarded to the African Library Project. Please ask your book drive organizer to first read the book drive guidelines in the How to Help section of the African Library Project website

(www.africanlibraryproject.org), then contact Chris Bradshaw, Founder and President of African Library Project at chris@africanlibraryproject.org.

- ◆ We will send between 250-1000 books, depending on the size of your reader population.
- ◆ The books will be shipped in large containers with all the libraries for Lesotho shipped together at the same time. All books will be mailed by the book drive organizer to our shipping agent in New Orleans, LA. Then the books will be loaded onto a container and shipped to Durban, South Africa. They will come by train from Durban to Maseru.
- ◆ Your school or community is responsible for getting the books from Maseru to the library location in your area. Once the books have arrived, you will have THREE weeks to pick them up from Maseru. Do NOT rely on Peace Corps for transport.
- ◆ **Deadline for applications to Becky is September 1, 2009.**
- ◆ **Deadline for donors to ship books to the container is November 20, 2009.**
- ◆ **The expected arrival date of the container to Lesotho is March 2010.**

How You Can Help Us:

The best way to help is, of course, to create a small, sustainable library in your community. We understand your access to internet service is probably limited, but please complete our application and evaluation procedures to the best of your ability as they are crucial to our overall success. The all-volunteer African Library Project is still young, and we welcome your ideas and feedback.

We look forward to hearing from you.



PCV Life

Picture Perfect

Photo Submitted by PCV Pam Rogers



**Life is Calling!
How far will you go...**

Peace Corps Volunteers' Work Raises Awareness about Malaria

Volunteers are Active in Promoting Malaria Control and Prevention

WASHINGTON, D.C., April 23, 2009 - Peace Corps Volunteers will join thousands of people around the world to commemorate World Malaria Day on April 25. The Peace Corps will participate with other Roll Back Malaria (RBM) partners to launch "Counting Malaria Out." This is a two-year campaign aimed toward delivering effective and affordable protection and treatment to all people at risk of malaria, as called for by U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon.

In support of the launch of the Counting Malaria Out campaign, Peace Corps staff and Volunteers are participating in key local and national activities in many countries. For example, in Benin, Volunteers and staff, as well as several hundred students, will join in the National Malaria Control Caravan on Saturday, April 25, marching to the National Stadium for the official campaign launch.

Malaria is an infectious disease caused by a parasite (plasmodium) that is transmitted from human to human by the bite of infected female Anopheles mosquitoes. Young children, pregnant women, and people living with HIV/AIDS are at highest risk for malaria morbidity and mortality. Ninety percent of all malaria deaths in Africa occur in young children, with those under the age of 5 being particularly vulnerable.

Peace Corps Volunteers are working to mitigate the devastating impact that malaria has on these groups in Africa and elsewhere around the world. Volunteers play a key role in carrying out grass-roots community-based education and activities focused on malaria control. In Africa, health sector Volunteers work alongside their counterparts (health agents, youth groups, women's groups and others) to train local community members on the prevention of malaria.

"Malaria is a serious health problem in so many parts of the world, even though we know it is treatable and preventable," Peace Corps acting Director Dr. Jody K. Olsen said, adding, "I am proud of the work Volunteers are doing in the area of prevention of and education about malaria, with the goal of reducing and eventually eradicating the disease once and for all."

Here are a few examples of what Volunteers are doing:

In Senegal, Volunteers, assisted by local President Malaria Initiative (PMI) partners, have organized and facilitated radio shows, theater groups and net dippings (impregnating mosquito nets with insecticide). Volunteer Ashley Goodson of La Porte, Ind., performed a radio show focusing on the importance of preventing malaria during pregnancy by stressing the importance of sleeping under an impregnated mosquito net. Volunteer Adrien Thelin of New Orleans, La., discovered that people often sleep outdoors without the protection of their mosquito nets, so he helped introduce the Legs Project, which provides portable "legs" to suspend mosquito nets.

In Benin and Niger, Volunteers conducted bike tours to raise awareness about malaria prevention education and to increase demand for bed net utilization, an effective malaria prevention strategy.

In Mali, 27 Volunteers and their counterparts carried out health education sessions in their communities, including malaria prevention and treatment methods.

In Ecuador, eight Volunteers led workshops that focused on the symptoms and risks of malaria and measures to take in order to eradicate mosquito-breeding pools.

In Guinea, three Volunteers organized a malaria message contest involving 300 children from three primary schools.

General Peace Corps
News



Friends of Lesotho Grant Application Form

FOL funds are sent from the states by a network of returned volunteers and other Friends of Lesotho. FOL grants have a maximum disbursement of R500 per quarter per volunteer and are for all projects that do not consist of HIV/AIDS work (See HIV/AIDS committee.) The application requires that you describe your project, its beneficiaries, a detailed estimate of the cost of materials and the intended follow-up actions.

If your application is approved you will receive a check and be required to return receipts, any left-over money, 2 photos, and a thank you note that will be sent to FOL in the states. These thank you notes are a way of ensuring continuing funding and are required. Place receipts and thank you notes in committee box and place digital photos in the VAC folder under FOL Grant Photos. Completed forms should be sent to Peace Corps office addressed to FOL, given to a VAC member, put in the committee box in the IRC, or brought to the quarterly VAC meeting. Please feel free to use the back of the application form to complete any questions at length. Please include your full name as it appears on your bank account.

PCV Name: _____

Project Title: _____

Item	Unit Price	Quantity	Total
Project Total			

1) Project Description:

2) Project Beneficiaries:

3) Community Contributions (additional funding, time, space, etc.):

4) Intended follow-up action. Also include any other comments here:

Signature: _____

Date: _____



Attachment