



# Metsoalle ea Lesotho

Friends of Lesotho Newsletter  
December 2007

## President's Message

Wow! What a great Annual Meeting teleconference! Four speakers gave presentations at the October 7<sup>th</sup> meeting, including Ambassador Rapolaki from the Lesotho Embassy in Washington. It was an enlightening update, particularly for those of us who haven't been in Lesotho for a while. (For additional details, please see the Annual Meeting Report.) Also noted, was a commemoration of the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Peace Corps presence in Lesotho.

In addition, three new board members were elected at the Annual Meeting: **Mary Beth Kwenda**, Lawton, OK; **Paula Fitzpatrick**, Stehekin, WA; and **Scott Rosenberg**, Oakwood, OH. We're very happy to have Mary Beth, Paula and Scott join us and look forward to working with them.

Board activities during the last quarter have included a continuing discussion with the FOL/Lesotho NGO on a Memorandum of Understanding and work on a proposal

to assist the African Libraries Project. As of this writing, both initiatives are still in the works. We are investigating using an on-line banking service to get a better interest rate on funds waiting to go to Lesotho, as well as to allow for backup signatories if needed. In addition, there are many new items now on the Café Press web site, <http://www.cafepress.com/lesotho> (see the ad in this newsletter).

Some changes have been made in the composition of FOL committees, notably that Kevin Freer is assuming leadership of the Membership Committee and Mary Beth Kwenda will soon assume leadership of the Donations Committee. A new finance and audit committee has been formed to facilitate audits, develop financial policies and generally ease the job of Treasurer as much as possible. And, a thank you goes out to two new volunteers helping on committees - Janissa Balcomb (newsletter and fundraising) and Patricia Koehler (fundraising). There is always room to volunteer as a member of FOL. Contact information for these committee chairs is located on the cover of this newsletter.

Looking ahead over the next month, we'll be preparing 2008 budgets and doing a self evaluation of 2007 activities. These will be posted in the committee areas of the web site as they are developed. As we approach the end of the year, please take a moment to consider making a tax deductible donation for tuition assistance or any of the other programs we support in Lesotho. The work FOL does continues throughout the year.

Enjoy the holidays,

Bill

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# Some notes about Basotho hats

The conical grass hat known as Mokorotlo is considered to be part of the national dress of Lesotho. This brief essay will trace the physical and cultural evolution of the hat, as part of the emergence of a national identity in Lesotho during the twentieth century. The level of cultural prominence, which these hats have obtained, illustrates the process by which clothing achieves both cultural and national significance.

Contrary to popular belief the Basotho have not always worn these hats. There is no evidence of these hats existing during the nineteenth century. In the early part of the twentieth century, chiefs began to wear a hat that was the forerunner of the modern Mokorotlo. At this time men would wear this hat and sing a song known as Mokorotlo on their way to the chief's court. It is from this connection that the modern hat would become known as Mokorotlo.

The other name for the hats, Molianyeoe (which literally means case closed), is also closely linked with the chieftainship. The hats became known as Molianyeoe, because the chief and the members of his court would take them off before passing judgment in court.

In the years after the Second World War hat makers began to introduce new designs which drastically altered their position in Basotho society. Contrary to popular opinion and legend, the design of the hat was not influenced by the shape of the conical hill known as Qiloane, which is located directly behind Thaba-Bosiu.

Previously these hats had been exclusively the domain of men, but as new designs were created, women began to manufacture them for sale to Europeans. These new designs, which were mass-produced for commercial reasons, became increasingly popular with the general public in Lesotho.

During the 1950s, political figures adorned



themselves with these hats in an attempt to link themselves with Lesotho's traditional power structure, the chieftainship. By wearing these hats at rallies the politicians contributed to their growing popularity. These new designs developed cultural significance only after being harnessed as a symbol by political leaders.

Another factor that accelerated the emerging importance of these hats was their increasing association with Lesotho's founder, Moshoeshe. Even though they appeared several decades after his death, it was the plethora of myths connecting Moshoeshe with the Mokorotlo hat that solidified it as a national symbol.

The process by which these hats became associated with Moshoeshe is reflective of the construction of national identity in Lesotho. The hat had become a powerful symbol of the nation, as one Mosotho stated, "every-time we see that hat on the flag or on the automotive license plates we are reminded of Moshoeshe."

Scott Rosenberg, Board Member



40th Anniversary Party at Lesotho Country Director Ted Mooney's residence



# Lesotho News

## \$8.7 Million in Support from U.N.

In early November, the United Nations International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) announced that it launched an \$8.7 million program to help those in rural areas in Lesotho have access to financial services. The funds will enable beneficiaries to invest in on-farm or off-farm microenterprises. The program will help financial institutions develop financial services to support the enterprises.

## Food Subsidies

In October, the Lesotho government announced that it will provide food subsidies of up to 20% on certain items. The government initiative was spurred by several years of drought, which have made it difficult for some to purchase basic items such as maize, beans, and milk.

## Anti-Measles Drive

With funding from the United Nations Children’s Fund

(UNICEF), the government of Lesotho recently launched a major drive against measles. More than 530 volunteer teams will vaccinate children and provide them with Vitamin A and de-worming tablets. Nationwide, more than 1,000 vaccinators are working at approximately 1,800 immunization sites in health centers. The aim is to reach as many as 221,700 children under the age of five. Measles is still the leading cause of child death in many developing countries. The initiative in Lesotho seeks to spur the development of regular child health days that would help to ensure routine vaccination and to detect communicable diseases in the early stages.

## United Nations Role

Lesotho’s Deputy Prime Minister, Archibald Lesao Lehohla, recently urged the U.N. to adopt an instrument to introduce sanctions when a member state has an unconstitutional change of government. Lehohla noted

*(Continued on page 4)*

## Annual Meeting Regional Meeting, Fla.



Four decades of RPCVs gathered at the home of Patricia Koehler (1993-1995) in Zephyrhills, Florida for the October 2007 Friends of Lesotho Annual Meeting. The group included Scarlet Hoody (2000-2005) and Tanki Hoody with their son, Damon P. “Rearabetsoe” Hoody (8 months old and future PCV-Lesotho), Mark and Sheila Woods (1981-1989), Jan Kalnback (1977-1979) and Kevin Freer (1976-1978). Everyone enjoyed sharing stories and reliving fond memories of their time in Lesotho. The group plans on gathering again next year as well as a barbeque in between. If you’re interested in hosting or participating in a regional meeting for our next annual meeting, contact Martha Munson, board member.







# Lesotho News

*(Continued from page 3)*

that in poorer countries, losing parties often resort to violence and dispute results. He noted that the U.N. has played an important role in world economic development, and urged it to play a similar role and to work toward inculcating a culture of democracy in all nations.

## **World Food Program Buys Locally**

In July, the Lesotho Government declared a state of emergency following a hot, dry period that devastated the maize crop throughout the country. However, a group of farmers in Qacha's Nek, who utilized conservation methods learned in a World Food Program (WFP) food-for-training program, produced a surplus of the crop. WFP then purchased the maize directly from the small farmers rather than from South Africa. This was WFP's first ever direct purchase in Lesotho. Through the purchase, WFP saved \$45 per ton and helped to stimulate the local agricultural economy. The maize will be used to help feed thousands of primary school children in Qacha's Nek.

## **Churches Join HIV/AIDS Fight**

In July, a group of church leaders in Lesotho pledged to openly discuss HIV/AIDS treatment and to dispute assertions that the disease is a divine punishment. The pledge was significant, because, as Reverend Daniel Rantle from the Methodist Church of Africa said, "This is the first time that the ecumenical society has spoken out with one powerful voice, and we are strategically placed to reach people from all walks of life and be catalysts for positive and lasting action." This is especially true in Lesotho where churches own 90% of schools and 50% of hospitals. Church leaders vowed to implement policies, strategies and frameworks within religious institutions and structures to combat any marginalization of people living with or affected by HIV.

## **Journalist Jailed**

Journalist Thabo Thakalekoala was arrested on June 22, shortly after completing his morning "Rise and Shine" radio broadcast. His arrest followed his reading on the air of an open letter to the Commissioner of Police, which argued for the arrest of Lesotho's Prime Minister, his entire Cabinet and Principal Secretaries on corruption charges. Members of the Lesotho Defense

Force reportedly gave him the letter. The letter described Prime Minister Pakalitha Mosisili as the "unwanted ruler of Lesotho" and said he deserved to be arrested because, as a person of South African origin, he had broken the law by running for office and holding the position of head of government. The letter further referred to corruption accusations made against Lesotho's governing elite for selling themselves luxury vehicles at substantially reduced prices. Some cabinet ministers and members of Parliament were also accused of giving themselves interest free loans of up to 650,000 Rand.

Mr. Thakalekoala was released on bail after three days and the charges changed from high treason to "failing to report subversive activity".

The Government has asserted that Harvest FM is the headquarters of the All Lesotho Convention, the main opposition party. The station's editor and presenter, Reverend Adam Lekhoaba, was deported to South Africa after February's general elections, on the grounds that he had no work permit and had tried to "incite revolt" and "disturb the peace". In July, the government ordered all state and parastatal agencies to not advertise in the privately-owned "Public Eye" newspaper or on Harvest FM.

## **Human Trafficking**

Lesotho is a signatory to the United Nations Protocol against trafficking in persons, however, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) has described Lesotho as "the origin for trafficking in women and children, mainly to South Africa."

The 20-km route from Maseru, Lesotho's capital, to South Africa's Ladybrand, "may constitute the world's shortest international trafficking route." Bridges of Maseru and Ficksburg are considered as the two most popular border crossing points for human traffickers.

Southern Africa takes advantage of the vulnerabilities created by war, endemic poverty, minimal education, unemployment, HIV/AIDS and a general lack of opportunity of children and women. An estimated 100,000 children of Lesotho have been orphaned by HIV/AIDS. Without parents these children, many of whom are on the

*(Continued on page 5)*



# Lesotho News

(Continued from page 4)

streets, are vulnerable to exploitation and trafficking. Desperate, young girls are lured abroad with promises of great jobs, only to be forced to become sex slaves. The Government and various aids organizations are seeking to raise awareness and are considering enacting laws to criminalize trafficking. Migrants are being advised to ensure that job offers are genuine, obtain a work permit, sign a contract, have contacts who can provide assistance, and know their rights as employees. Once arriving, migrants are instructed not to give their passports to anyone and to contact the Lesotho embassy to inform them that they are in the country.

## Funding for Pediatric Care

In late summer, Prime Minister Pakalitha Mosisili toured the U.S. and signed the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) compact. While in the U.S., Mosisili received a grant of M14 million and the commitment of four pediatricians. The funds are to be used to build 150 health centers nationwide and fourteen centers focused on HIV/Aids. A blood research center is also planned. The pediatricians are also quite welcome, because according to Mphu Ramatlapeng, Minister of Health and Social Welfare, Lesotho currently has only one practicing pediatrician.

## Millennium Challenge Grant

On June 23, 2007, John Danilovich, Chief Executive Officer of Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) signed a compact with Lesotho Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Relations, Hohlabi Tsekoa. MCC is a United States Government corporation. \$164 million of the grant is for a dam project in the Metolong region. The dam is anticipated to improve the water supply to residents and garment manufacturing companies. The goal of the project is to preserve 28,000 existing jobs in the garment factories and to create 6,000 new jobs.

In addition to funding for the dam, the MCC Compact also included \$122.4 million health sector project. Specifically, funds were earmarked to increase access to anti-retroviral therapy, to renovate up to 150 health centers, and to construct a central facility for collecting and processing blood.

\$36.1 million will be dedicated to increasing private

economic sector activities by improving access to credit, reducing transaction costs and increasing participation of women in the economy. The Private Sector Development Project activities also include: reforming the civil legal system through development of a commercial court and various other provisions related to facilitating commercial transactions and small business development. Interestingly, MCC worked with the government of Lesotho to ensure gender equality was guaranteed before approving the Compact. Thus, in late 2006, the Lesotho Parliament enacted a law ending the minority status of married women (i.e., married women are no longer considered minors).

## Drought

This year a combination of high temperatures and low rainfall has resulted in one of the worst droughts in Lesotho in 30 years. Particularly hard hit was the southwest, which received no rainfall. As a result of the drought, maize production dropped by more than 50% compared to 2006. For Basotho, the resulting shortage of maize has been exacerbated by rapidly rising cereal prices, which in June were estimated to be 50% higher than the prior year. In July, the government declared a state of emergency and appealed for international assistance.

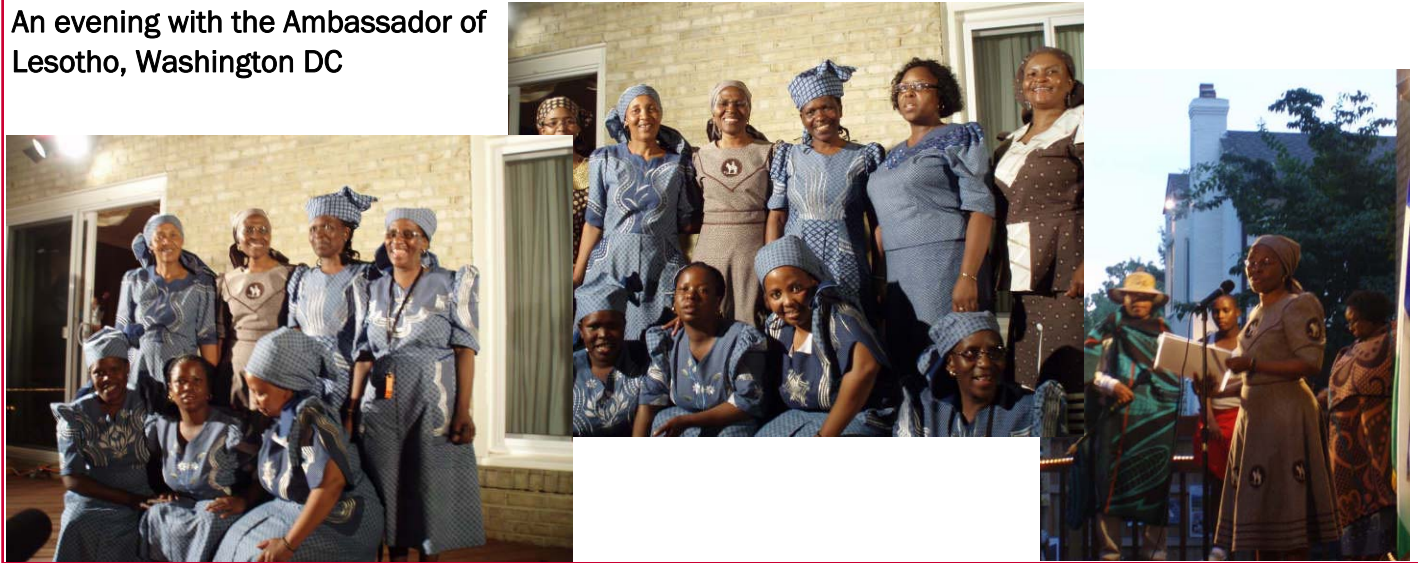
## Industry Update

Currently, there are 35 textile factories in Lesotho. Clothing exports now account for more than 90% of Lesotho's manufactured exports (topping \$500 million last year) and employs about 55,000 workers. The growth of the textile industry is due to the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA), which offers liberal access to the U.S. market. However, the industry in Lesotho still faces challenges. For example, when compared to some Asian countries, Lesotho labor costs more and produces less. The lack of skilled workers has limited the growth of the industry. Also, lack of skills and capital have prevented the anticipated development of medium-sized, family owned business that would provide links in the supply chain. Dr. Greg Mills of the Brenthurst Foundation suggests that the Lesotho Government will need to take an active role and work to limit investors' costs in order to maintain this industry.



# Celebrate Lesotho!!

An evening with the Ambassador of Lesotho, Washington DC



## 2007 Annual Meeting Report

FOL held their annual meeting on October 7, 2007 via teleconference. The meeting opened with a minimal amount of business and then the Lesotho Ambassador Rapolaki sent greetings from the Mountain Kingdom and an update on recent issues. The balance of the meeting consisted of three speakers who had recently visited Lesotho working with and studying the effects of HIV/AIDS on the Basotho. If you were unable to attend and would like to hear the speakers' presentations you can find them on the FOL website

([www.friendsoflesotho.org](http://www.friendsoflesotho.org)). Finally we took time to commemorate the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Peace Corps in Lesotho and remember those who have died during or since their service.

Thanks to all who participated in to make this 2007 Annual Meeting one of the best ever. If you have any feedback from the 2007 meeting or suggestions for the 2008 annual meeting, please contact Board Director Martha Munson.

## More 40th Anniversary Photos

Party at the Country Director Ted Mooney's residence







# FOL Projects

Becky Banton  
Peace Corps Lesotho, 2007  
St. Agnes High School



Hello!

Here're the photos of the school-fence from the grant you awarded my community back in FEBRUARY. I'm awfully sorry it's so late!

The garden is doing great, and the kids should be eating vegetables starting next week!

Thanks again very, very much,

Cheers!  
Lizbeth Latham



# Thank you FOL!

November 11, 2007

Dear Friends of Lesotho:

Thank you so much for providing the funds for the library organization and classroom map project at Maseribane High School. The new student section of the library is functioning now, and there are materials available for the school to include additional books. It is exciting to see the students reading books at their level in English.

Also, the classroom map project has progressed well. Six classrooms have



printed world maps, and it is my hope that teachers will utilize them to improve students' knowledge of the world. The paint and other materials your funds provided enabled me, with the help of my students, to add permanent teaching aids to these classrooms (photos of both projects have been emailed to FOL).

As I reach the end of my service, I just want to add a personal note of thanks for all the support you give Peace Corps Lesotho. It is wonderful to have access to small grants that are simple and practical

for use in the field. I plan to be a part of FOL as an RPCV.

Thank you again for your generosity.

Sincerely,

Sara C. Anderson Douglas, Peace Corps Lesotho





# Treasurer's Report

**Friends of Lesotho - Treasurer's Summary for Board Meeting of: November 18, 2007**

	<u>9/15/2007</u>	<u>11/18/2007</u>	<u>Difference</u>
Current Bank Balance:	\$24,551.36	\$23,484.89	-\$1,066.47
Paid Membership (Incl. Advance Dues):	122	141	19
New members this Year to date:	11	12	1
Non-member cash donors Year to date:	26	26	0

**2007 Extra Donation Fund Status:**

<u>Donation Fund</u>	<u>Amount in Fund</u>	<u>Amount sent to Lesotho (*)</u>	<u>Amount remaining to be sent</u>
Undesignated Fund (\$250 min balance)	\$6,952.89	\$2,700.00	\$4,252.89
Tuition Assistance Program (TAP) Fund	\$13,619.99	\$5,130.50	\$8,489.49
HIV/AIDS Fund	\$535.00	\$0.00	\$535.00
Morija Museum Fund	\$18.00	\$0.00	\$18.00
Orphanages Fund	\$636.50	\$0.00	\$636.50
Save the Children - Lesotho (Wilkens)	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00	\$0.00
Sharon Zeiden's PCV Projects	\$200.00	\$200.00	\$0.00
Memorial Scholarship Fund	\$700.00	\$0.00	\$700.00
Village Hope Project (PCV)	\$346.00	\$1.56	\$344.44
LCCU (Lesotho Child Counseling Unit)	\$8,675.00	\$8,075.00	\$600.00
CNL/Mbeya Clinic (UVA)	\$1,598.00	\$1,598.00	\$0.00
new fund 2	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$34,281.38</b>	<b>\$18,705.06</b>	<b>\$15,576.32</b>

Note (\*) - These include donation collection fees from Just Give and transfer fees in sending funds.

**2007 Operating Expense Status:**

Current Cash in Account (as above):	\$23,484.89
<b>Subtract out:</b>	
Project Expenditure Obligations (per above)	-\$15,576.32
Future Dues for Carryover	-\$210.00
Life Membership Fund (under Board consideration)	-\$1,780.00
Cash Available for FOL Expenses =	\$5,918.57
Unused Expenses in 2007 Budget -	-\$2,445.94
<b>Current Cash Reserve =</b>	<b>\$3,472.63</b>
(Total operating cash expenses, incl. NPCA pass thru):	\$1,110.06
(Total operating inkind expenses to date):	\$815.23

## Committee Updates

Dear Friends,

As we end yet another successful year, we would like to ask you to consider remembering FOL and make a donation to one of the projects we support in Lesotho. Many of us make end of the year contributions to worthy causes such as FOL to take full advantage of the tax benefits. We also know that your financial support of FOL is greatly needed and appreciated by the Basotho who benefit from the projects we support.

FOL held our Annual Meeting via a conference bridge on October 7. In addition to electing new board members, we heard news from the Lesotho Embassy in Washington DC as well as panel of speakers who have recently traveled and worked on projects in Lesotho.

We were all pleased to hear that each of the speakers valued and appreciated the work of FOL. Of course,

they each also told us much more needs to be done in the areas of Tuition Assistance, HIV/AIDS education, orphanages, and other special projects (which we support).

Thank you for considering a special end of the year contribution to FOL.

Kevin Freer, FOL Fundraising Committee

Mp3 audio files of the Annual Meeting presentations are available on the FOL web site under "Recent Updates" on the main page. Board teleconferences are open to all members and occur on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of odd numbered months. Please contact any Board member for information about how to participate.



# FOL Marketplace

Introducing New Products!!

Purchase apparel and merchandise at FOL's new online store!

<http://www.cafepress.com/lesotho>

Thanks to CafePress.com, we are now selling a number of products with unique graphics on them. Please feel free to browse our store and buy these products to support our projects in Lesotho. Contact the fundraising committee with requests for new designs (kfreer@alcatel-lucent.com). Dozens of products with new designs introduced throughout the year.



**Notecards**

*Long sleeve apparel*



**2008 Calendars**



**Cups and mugs**



**Hats and caps**

Purchase T-shirts and Basotho CDs at FOL's website!

<http://www.friendsoflesotho.org>

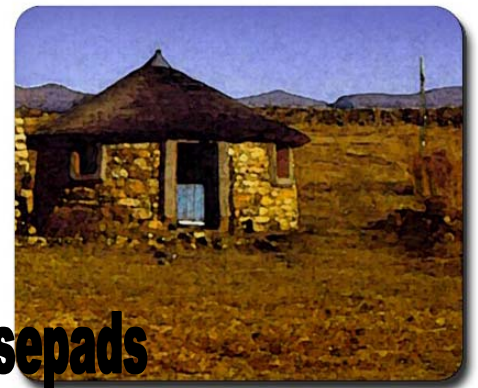
Also download free note cards for Alternative Gift-Giving or Memorial Gifts at this site.



**Totes and bags**

## 2008 Lesotho Calendar

A colorful, unique and educational display of twelve monthly themes. Photos submitted by RPCVs with interesting captions and background information on topics as varied as children, US Peace Corps in Lesotho, traditional crafts, health, music, herd boy culture, national holidays and much more. A great gift idea family and friends will enjoy all year.



**Mousepads**



Friends of Lesotho



MEMBERSHIP FORM

Why join FOL?

- Make a difference in the lives of Basotho
- Keep abreast of the latest news about Lesotho via a quarterly newsletter
- Join a group of likeminded people

Friends of Lesotho is a non-profit organization promoting friendship between the peoples of Lesotho and North America. Friends of Lesotho (FOL) provides scholarships and grants to small development projects in Lesotho, assists in locating old friends from Lesotho, and provides information about current events in Lesotho.

Name:<sup>1</sup> \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Email: \_\_\_\_\_

List email on website?  Yes  No  
 Years in Lesotho: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Village: \_\_\_\_\_

Information for FOL Directory:

Current Occupation/Employer: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Family Members: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**Check to receive the newsletter via e-mail link. (This saves postage costs and results in more money being available to be sent to Lesotho!)**

A copy of the current financial statement of Friends of Lesotho is available by writing 4110 Denfeld Ave., Kensington, MD 20895 or by emailing [treas@friendsoflesotho.org](mailto:treas@friendsoflesotho.org) Documents and information submitted under the Maryland Solicitations Act are also available, for the cost of postage and copies, from the Maryland Secretary of State, State House, Annapolis MD 21401, (410) 974-5534.

Annual Membership: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (\$15.00/person)

Additional Contribution: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Additional Contribution Designation:

HIV/AIDS                       Tuition Assistance Program  
 Orphanages                       Volunteer Advisory Committee  
 Memorial Scholarship Fund  
 (In honor of: \_\_\_\_\_)  
 Greatest need                       Morija Museum

Total to FOL: \$ \_\_\_\_\_<sup>2</sup>

Annual Membership in the National Peace Corps Association is \$35/individual.<sup>3</sup> \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Matching gifts can enable you to double or even triple the value of your contribution. Many companies match their employees' personal donations. If your company is eligible, request a matching gift form from your employer and send it completed and signed with your gift, we'll do the rest.

- Please check if you would like more information on other ways to give, such as wills, estate planning, IRAs, or listing FOL as an insurance policy beneficiary.
- Please check to receive information on Lifetime Membership in FOL.

Please mail your completed membership form to:

Friends of Lesotho  
4110 Denfeld Avenue  
Kensington, MD 20895

- 1) Unless you specify otherwise, FOL will provide your name and address to an individual asking about an old friend or to a prospective volunteer to Lesotho. If you do not want your name released to organizations, please mark as appropriate here:  
 a) Organizations selling merchandise and publications     b) Professional organizations concerning employment  
 c) Other non-profit organizations
- 2) Friends of Lesotho is a registered 501(c)(3) organization. Contributions are tax deductible to the extent permitted by law.
- 3) Friends of Lesotho (FOL) is affiliated with the National Peace Corps Association (NPCA). If you have included NPCA dues in your payment, we will forward them to NPCA. If, however, you choose to send your FOL dues directly to NPCA in response to their membership solicitation, you must specify FOL as your choice of affiliated group to receive the credit for dues. NPCA membership is optional. NPCA multi-year discount available, see [www.rpcv.org](http://www.rpcv.org).

For FOL use, please do not complete this information:

Check # \_\_\_\_\_ Amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Member Since \_\_\_\_\_ New \_\_\_\_\_ Source \_\_\_\_\_ Renew Date \_\_\_\_\_ Expires \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ No. of Members \_\_\_\_\_ NPCA \_\_\_\_\_ ver. 12/01/07

# Friends of Lesotho Newsletter

## December 2007

Friends of Lesotho  
4110 Denfeld Ave  
Kensington, MD 20895

301 942-2751  
Www.friendsoflesotho.org  
wdunn@friendsoflesotho.org

We're on the Web!

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

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## Friends of Lesotho

### Board Members:

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(wdunn@friendsoflesotho.org)

Richard Rowan, Vice President  
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John Hollister, Treasurer  
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Scott Rosenberg  
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### With additional help from...

#### Memorial Scholarships:

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