



FRIENDS OF LESOTHO

METSOALLE ea LESOTHO

Second Quarter 2017
Newsletter

President's Letter

Newsletter Features Clickable Links!!

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Lumelang Metsoalle,

First I wanted like to thank our members who continue to support our work and the board members for all the hours they have put in. I am pleased to report that FOL continues to fulfill its mission to promote positive change and to assist the people of Lesotho.

As part of a concerted effort to more effectively support PCV projects in Lesotho, FOL adopted policy changes which allowed us to respond more quickly to funding requests posted on the PCPP website. As a result of this, we have been able to fund several projects this year. In addition to FOL's continued support of Peace Corps Volunteers' projects in Lesotho, FOL has also found other ways to make an impact in Lesotho, by supporting locally developed projects designed to help some of the most vulnerable children in Lesotho.

In response to the plight of chronic malnutrition and stunting that afflicts nearly 1/3 of children in Lesotho, FOL allocated funds to help the Lesotho Nutrition Initiative. That project recently shipped 142,000 meals containing nutritional supplements to Lesotho. I am excited that I am able to return to Lesotho this month with 20 Wittenberg students to undertake service projects in Ramabanta, Roma, and Motsekuoa. We have also been able to assist RCPV Mary Ladabouche in helping raise funds for Ketane Primary School to build some needed VIPs. In the next month or so I anticipate receiving a request to fund TAP scholarships. This program has grown tremendously over the last few years, and we are proud that our donations continue to help Basotho children attend high school.

As I write this letter, the Kingdom of Lesotho prepares to hold elections. Like the rest of you I hope for a peaceful process and outcome which will allow the Basotho people to tackle many of this issues that confront the nation.

At our Annual Meeting in March we elected three new board members, Riley Fore, Courtney McDermott, and Ben Todd. Please join me in welcoming them to the board. The three of them are recent returnees and it is essential to the functioning of FOL that we continue to invite volunteers who served recently to join the board as it helps us stay current on issues involving Peace Corps and Lesotho. I hope that some newly returned RCPVs consider joining FOL, as your recent experience in Lesotho is so important. Lastly, I would like to say a special thanks to Courtney McDermott who has agreed to take on the task of editing this newsletter.



Photo courtesy: RCPV Dyann Van Dusen



Sincerely,
Dr. Scott Rosenberg
President, FOL Scott.Rosenberg@friendsoflesotho.org
Honorary Consul, Kingdom of Lesotho



Inside this issue:

<i>President's Letter</i>	1
<i>Fulbright in Lesotho</i>	1
<i>Litaba tsa Lesotho</i>	3
<i>Lesotho's Night Sky</i>	4
<i>Reflections of a Queer PCV</i>	6
<i>Note from New Editor</i>	6
<i>Wisdom Does Not Live in One House</i>	7
<i>Running for Lesotho</i>	7
<i>Free FOL Membership</i>	8
<i>Membership Form</i>	9

Fulbright in Lesotho

By Patrick Smith, Fulbright Student

Each meandering blog post and letter home that crawls off my keyboard takes a lot of time to find its identity. For me—a nurse by training and a conversationalist only through practice—the creative writing process is not natural; it bears no resemblance to the bright, artistic boldness of Cape Town's colorful Bo-Kaap quarter and even less relation to the methodological efficiency of well-organized public transit systems I've encountered elsewhere in the world.

(Continued on page 2)



Fulbright in Lesotho (continued from page 1)

If I'm honest with myself, my writing is more like a rickety taxi filled past capacity with *banna* (men), *basali* (women), *bana* (children), and (just for fun) *linku* (sheep), stuck in a never-ending traffic jam in one moment and hurtling around the corners of perilous mountain roads in the next: an assemblage of slightly disorganized thoughts that eventually find a winding path to their destination. And for me, that process is an important act of reflection on my life abroad. In the last few months alone, I've felt compelled to write blog posts on no less than 20 topics, including:

- The vital importance of blankets (*kobo ke bophelo!*)
- My RMV experience is more chaotic than yours: the process of registering a car in Lesotho
- Imprints of colonialism in Lesotho and South Africa
- Cross-cultural and inter-continental variation in perceptions of International Women's Day
- The laughter that t-shirts with motivational slogans bring me
- The importance of saying yes to whatever opportunities are brought by a new day
- Political parties in election season
- Why the average nurse midwife in Lesotho is my hero

Of those topics (and innumerable others), just two have formed blog posts that have made it onto the web. The rest populate a growing catalogue of memories that I store away for rainy days and long chats with friends and family back home. I suspect that this is an experience shared by my fellow Friends of Lesotho: the stories that I'd like to tell about life here nearly always outnumber the minutes in a day that I have to tell them.

As a Fulbright student, I've been privileged to spend 9 months in Lesotho researching the impacts of the national village health worker (VHW) program on access to and quality of care in Berea, Butha-Buthe, Leribe, and Mohale's Hoek. In that time, I've met inspiring individuals and learned a great deal about how primary healthcare is provided in some of the most challenging contexts imaginable. Just as importantly, given an open-ended grant with no pre-determined deliverables, I've had a chance to build cross-cultural friendships that deepen my understanding of the world around me.

As a nurse and a researcher, I've seen how material resources, staff support, and responsive systems facilitate the delivery of care that would make any health professional proud. As a result of 2013 Millennium Challenge Corporation investments in country-led health infrastructure developments, a majority of Lesotho's health centers now feature solar panels, clean examination rooms, and clean running water. They provide family planning services, TB treatment, and ARVs upon HIV+ diagnosis. They have modest waiting shelters, so that rural-dwelling mothers can travel to the health center two weeks before their due date and be in the immediate vicinity of skilled medical care at the onset of labor. Most of the time, they have soap.

"Before the changes to the health center," one nurse recently told me, "pregnant women wouldn't come because they didn't see any reason to. Now, they come because they think the clinic looks like a hospital where they can get a free and safe delivery."

This is a positive change, one that means fewer preventable deaths, better population health, and less severe burnout among healthcare workers. But, of course, it doesn't solve all the nation's health systems problems.

A few weeks back, I listened quietly as 'M'e Monica, a nurse-midwife from Mohale's Hoek, discussed the challenges associated with her job. At the time, of the health center's three nurse-midwives, one was on leave and another was away at a professional development workshop, leaving Monica as the only nurse in charge of daily operations and emergent after-hours needs. Two days prior to our conversation, such an emergency occurred, when two women entered labor, each within an hour of the other, under the oversight Monica and a single nurse assistant. The next day, they returned to work as normal—but on an hour's sleep.

Both mothers gave birth to healthy infants, and all four patients are now receiving follow-up care. It's an outcome that inspires, and one that makes me grateful for the millions of health professionals—across Lesotho and the world—who devote their own lives to saving others.

Finding beauty in Lesotho is never too difficult: it's in the mountains, the rivers, and the waterfalls. It's in colorful monetary notes and brightly patterned Seshoeshoe clothing. It's in springtime's greenery, summertime's sunsets, autumn's falling leaves, and the snow adorning the highlands in winter. But for me, perhaps the most beautiful part of life here is in daily interactions with Basotho friends, colleagues, and mentors, such as Monica, who challenge me to learn more and to do more each day. Given a lifetime, I'd never be able to give back all that my time in Lesotho has given me, but given 9 months to learn in this role and more time working in Maseru in the year upcoming, I look forward to giving it a try.

Each year, the Fulbright Commission awards thousands of grants to Americans and citizens of 140 countries to further the ideals of cultural and educational exchange. If you know of anyone—whether Basotho or American—with an interest in the Fulbright Student or Fulbright Scholar program, please visit <https://eca.state.gov/fulbright> for more information. If you have any questions about the program, the application process or my experience in Lesotho, please feel welcome to contact me at pd94smith@gmail.com, or follow meandering thoughts at <https://pd94smith.wordpress.com/>.





Litaba tsa Lesotho (News from Lesotho)

Compiled by Ella Kwisnek, RPCV 1992-94, Lesotho Agricultural College. ekwisnek@msn.com

Lesotho held general election on June 3 after King dissolved parliament

The party of Lesotho's former Prime Minister, Thomas Thabane, won a national election at the weekend but failed to gain an outright majority in parliament and will now form a coalition government.

Read more online at <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-40185357> and <http://www.iol.co.za/news/africa/thabane-wins-most-seats-in-lesotho-elections-9575336>

In March, King Letsie III dissolved parliament and set June 3 as the date for the general election.

Reports indicated that Prime Minister Pakalitha Mosisili of the Democratic Congress (DC) party and head of the coalition government since 2015 lost a confidence vote in parliament. The coalition was recently fragmented, and parliament voted in favor of replacing Mosisili with Monyane Moleleki, whose Alliance of Democrats party split from the DC last year. Previous PM Tom Thabane of the All Basotho Convention (ABC) who had previously fled to South Africa recently returned to Lesotho with two other opposition leaders.

Other opposition leaders, Advocate Haae Phoofolo KC and Chief Joang, challenged the authority to dissolve the parliament, but they lost a case in the Constitutional Court, which found that the King acted lawfully as per Section 83 (4).



Photo: Deputy President Cyril Ramaphosa shares a light moment with Prime Minister Pakalitha Mosisili in Maseru. 22 June 2016. (Photo GCIS)

Read more at <http://www.thestar.com.my/news/world/2017/03/13/lesotho-to-hold-general-election-on-june-3/#JYowlHppQvLcc5R.99> and <http://allafrica.com/stories/201703080137.html> and http://www.publiceyenews.com/?p=article_details&category=news_local&topic=Njxc

Lesotho 'Ready for Peaceful Election' After Failed Coup

Deputy President Cyril Ramaphosa, who is also the Southern African Development Community (SADC) facilitator, recently visited Lesotho to "ensure 'a multi-stakeholder national dialogue' between his majesty King Letsie III, Prime Minister Phakalitha Mosisili and the Independent Electoral Commission" regarding the general election that is set for June 3.

Ramaphosa stated, "My visit here was to come and examine the state of preparedness of Lesotho, political parties for elections and my discussions with a number of stakeholders told me that indeed they are ready and prepared to roll out the democratic process once again."

Read more online at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201705110421.html> and <http://www.news24.com/Africa/News/ramaphosa-to-visit-lesotho-ahead-of-june-elections-20170509>



Photo: Deputy President Cyril Ramaphosa. (File: City Press)

For an article discussing the recent political history of Lesotho and recommending steps for moving forward, visit <https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2017-05-15-op-ed-lesotho-elections-maturing-democracy-or-a-failure-of-institutions/#.WRyVfWeV-po>

Some Lesotho Stamps have High Value

Lesotho produces numerous large, colorful topical stamps that are primarily for sale to collectors. Several stamps from a Bird series issued in the 1980s were overprinted and surcharged for postal use. Some of these surcharged Bird stamps are valued at \$40 in mint condition. One recently sold in an online auction for the equivalent of \$56.

Read more at <http://www.linns.com/news/world-stamps-postal-history/2017/april/lesotho-land-locked-african-nation-has-vigorous-history-stamp-production.html>



Lesotho aiming to be a major diamond producer in next few years

In 2015, Lesotho adopted the Minerals and Mining Policy focused on its mineral resources sector. Lesotho Mining Minister Lebohang Thotanyana stated that the government is also working to modernize minerals legislation.

The mining industry contributes 7.7% to Lesotho's gross domestic product; however, the country aims to increase this contribution to 10% over the next five years. Gem Diamonds' Letšeng mine, in the Maluti Mountains, was Lesotho's only diamond mine for many years. However, Namakwa's Kao diamond mine, in the Butha-Butha district, opened in 2012. Further, four new mines are set to open in the next year. The mining industry employs about 3,000 people and it is anticipated this number will double when the new mines open.

Lesotho's Mining Ministry will establish the Lesotho Diamonds Centre (LDC), in Maseru, which will be a diamonds exchange platform. The issue of illegal mining in Lesotho is currently very serious as the country has one of the highest concentrations of kimberlite intrusions worldwide. Therefore, the plan is to formalize the small-scale sector so they can sell the diamonds they discover legally in Lesotho. To read more about the diamond mining industry in Lesotho, visit: http://www.miningweekly.com/article/lesotho-aiming-to-be-a-major-diamond-producer-in-next-few-years-2016-05-06/rep_id:3650





The Wonders of the Night Sky in Lesotho

By Kevin Freer, RPCV Lesotho

Lesotho is known as the Kingdom in the Sky. The lowest point of elevation of Lesotho is at 1,400 meters (4,593 ft.). The highest point is the peak of the Thabana Ntlenyana mountain, which reaches an elevation of 3,482 meters (11,424 ft.). Anyone living in the higher elevations would likely have quite a remarkable view of the night sky.



Night sky in Roma, Lesotho. A view of the Milky Way from The Trading Post in Roma, Lesotho. Also visible are three shooting stars.

While living in the Maluti Mountains in Mashai Ha Theko, this appellation of “Kingdom in the Sky” had significant meaning for me. Without ambient light to dim the view of the heavens, the sky was full of the most incredible panorama, from mountain top to mountain top. I observed that the southern hemisphere is a reverse or “flipped” view of the night sky we are familiar with in North America.

The Basotho developed their own names and traditional beliefs for the stars, their constellations and other heavenly bodies over time.

For example, where we see the “Man in the Moon”, the Basotho may see a woman carrying a bundle of firewood on her head. When the moon is half full and facing up, rain is not predicted, because the moon will catch the rain. When the moon is half full and facing down, it can dump the rain at any time (There may be a promise of rain.) If the sun rises before the moon goes down, it will be windy.

Stars (*linaleli*), the moon (*khoeli*), and comets (*naleli tsa mesela*) have been part of the traditions of the peoples of Southern Africa. The stars were used for direction. The appearance and movement of stars and their constellations signaled the passage of the seasons for planting and cultivation. It was believed that the stars may have brought good fortune in the coming year.

The Basotho knew Venus, the evening star, as *Kopa-lilallo*. Venus was also known as *Se falabooho* (‘crust scrapings’), the idea is that someone who arrives for supper by the light of the evening star will do rather badly!

I wish I had asked more about what people thought about when they gazed up at the heavens each night. Many of the traditions and beliefs regarding the night sky may have faded over the years. There may still be people in the rural villages in the mountains who are familiar with them.

I have since tried to learn more about the traditional beliefs of the Basotho since my frame of reference has been totally from the mythology of Greece and Rome. The following are just a few of examples of what I have learned. Please note that the examples come from Sotho-Tswana traditions in both Lesotho and South Africa. I’ve used the orthography of the source material since I was not able to make everything uniform. Perhaps the Sotho-Tswana across Lesotho and South Africa shared a common tradition about the sky back in the time of Moshoeshoe.

The Milky Way

On a dark night, the Milky Way can be seen as a dim band of light stretching from horizon to horizon. The Basotho saw it as Molalatlali, the place where lightning rests. It also kept the sky from collapsing, and showed the movement of time. Some said it turned the Sun to the east.

The Basotho described the Milky Way as a supernatural foot path across the sky along which the ancestor spirits walked. Many peoples referred to it as “Night’s backbone”, “Sky’s spine” and “God’s back”, suggesting the idea that the Milky Way held up the sky, or maybe held it together.



Canopus

Canopus is one of the brightest stars in the night sky. It is widely known in southern Africa as *Naka*, “The Horn Star”. Or *E a dishwa* (it is carefully watched). Sotho men would camp in the mountains, where they made fires and watched the early morning skies in the South. It was believed that the first person to see the star would be very prosperous that year, with a rich harvest and good luck to the end of his life. In olden times the chief would give the lucky man a heifer. The day after *Naka* was sighted was the time for the men to predict the tribe’s luck for the coming year. The appearance of *Naka* also heralds the coming of winter and browning of the veld.

If the *senakane* (the little horn) (Achernar) when rising in the East is very bright and giving off little lightning, and the bulrushes are still in flower, men fear an early frost. If Canopus is seen in May with a very intense light, the frost would be very hard.

The Magellanic Clouds

On a moonless night under a dark sky, two interesting “clouds” can be seen to the south, one cloud much larger and brighter than the other. These are the Magellanic Clouds, or the “Cape Clouds”, and are actually entire galaxies, thousands of light years away.

(Continued on page 5)



The Wonders of the Night Sky in Lesotho (continued from page 4)

The Basotho saw the clouds as the spoor of two celestial animals. The large cloud was *Setlhako sa Naka*, "The Spoor of the Horn Star" (*Naka*, Canopus) and the smaller cloud was *Setlhako sa Senakane*, "The Spoor of the Little Horn Star" (*Senakane*, Achernar).

The shield of the little horn is the Small Magellanic Cloud, known as *mo'hora le tlala*, 'plenty and famine'. If dry dusty air made it appear dim, famine was to be expected.



The Southern Cross

The Basotho Bushmen saw the bright stars of the pointers and the southern cross as giraffes

Sotho lore tells that when the giraffe stars are seen close to the south-western horizon just after sunset, they indicate the beginning of cultivating season.

The Pleiades

The Basotho call the Pleiades, *Seleme se setsehali*, meaning the "female planter." The Pleiades were the 'digging stars', whose appearance in southern Africa warned of the coming need to begin hoeing the ground. All over Southern Africa, these stars were used as a marker of the growing season.

When the Pleiades leave the night sky around April, the Basotho's tenth month, along with the appearance of the star Achernar marks the beginning of their cold season. Like many South African cultures, the Pleiades are associated with agriculture and plenty.

When *selomela* (the Pleiades) rose in the east, frost was at hand and the leaves fell from the trees in the river beds.

The Stars Around Orion

On summer nights, the brilliant constellation of Orion, with Taurus the Bull on one side, and bright Sirius on the other, grace the southern night skies. Orion is instantly recognizable by its three bright stars in a short line (Orion's Belt). Roughly between Rigel and the Belt Stars lies Orion's Sword, which appear as three fuzzy stars. Several African cultures identify the Belt Stars as animals. They are seen as three pigs by the Basotho (*Makolobe*). The Basotho called Orion's Sword, *Lintswa*.

The Basotho had a rule for finding direction at night: if you want to travel west, keep the Southern Cross on your left hand, and *Selemela* (the Pleiades) on the right.

Stargazing Apps

Whether you are living in North America or Southern Africa, you can enjoy the wonders of the night sky using free stargazing apps such as Stargazer, StarView and others at <http://www.hongkiat.com/blog/stargazing-apps/>. Look up in the night sky – do you see the "Man in the Moon" or a woman carrying a bundle of firewood on her head?



Sources

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Submitted by Kevin Freer (RPCV-Lesotho) with acknowledgements to Richard (RPCV-Lesotho) and Tlotlisang Rowan for their cultural and linguistic contributions.

SHOPPING?? PLEASE USE FOL'S LINK TO AMAZON.

Amazon donates a small percent of purchases made by Friends of Lesotho year round, with no extra charge to the customer, if you access their site through

Friends of Lesotho's Web page, <http://FriendsOfLesotho.org>

One extra click by you enables FOL to send hundreds of dollars of donations to Lesotho each year.



Reflections of a Queer Volunteer

By **Darrin Adams**, RPCV Education, 2007-2010

In 2010 I left Lesotho after over three years as a Peace Corps Volunteer. I was leaving a tight community and a place I considered my second home. I didn't know if I would ever return. Since 2013, I have been to Lesotho at least once a year and continue to work with the Basotho people, particularly the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI) communities.

My interaction with LGBTI people happened in the first month of Peace Corps training, I had met other gay men in Maseru through a friend, and even made out with a guy in the parking lot of a restaurant. Within six months of placement, I had a Mosotho boyfriend and knew over 100 LGBTI Basotho. These people were pivotal in my own growth and development and contributed to my pure love for the country.

We met in bars—mostly one bar called Olympic, where I saw a few fist and knife fights. There was a fascinating juxtaposition between the rough, hyper-masculine nature of the bar and the scores of gay men who frequented it. There was a clear separation between the two groups with very little crossover. I never felt afraid for myself or endangered, and was told many times by the patrons and the owner that I was safe there.

Yet, this bar was the safest space for gay men to gather. I began to question the group of guys if they wanted something more, a place to talk and be and share. A bar with non-stop Famu-Kwaito-House music and heavy drinking isn't the most conducive space to talk about sexual identity. Through Friends of Lesotho grants, and the support of Peace Corps Lesotho, we created safe spaces for people to meet and talk about being LGBTI and Mosotho.

These meetings were the seeds that would revolutionize the country towns' sexual and gender identity. The group, called Matrix Support Group and now called the People's Matrix Association, grew so quickly that by the time I left, they had an established national office. Now, ten years later, they continue to grow. They are implementing Global Fund and PEPFAR grants in all ten districts, have Pride parades, tout an expanding membership of transgender women and men, and continue to advocate for the health and human rights of LGBTI in Lesotho and at global fora.

LGBTI Basotho deserve the accolades for their bravery. I feel proud and thankful to have been a part of this movement from the very beginning and continue to support it however I can. My current work as a consultant for a development partner affords me the opportunity to continue to support the Lesotho HIV response with LGBTI Basotho. I greatly anticipate the next decade of evolution for the LGBTI community in Lesotho.



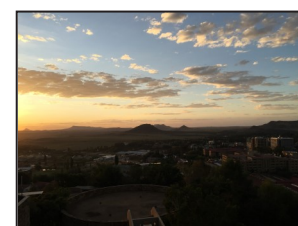
Cultural Village at Thaba Bosiu. The stones in the picture were a historical numbering system used to keep track of and count cattle.



Adams and friends happened upon a VW Polo Golf club meeting. There is a large membership of people who own and love Polo Golf cars and have social events around them.



Darrin Adams (RPCV 2007-2010) and his friend John Williams (left) pose under the Molimo Nthuse sign



Sunset view from Avani Hotel in Maseru



Big Lesotho sky on the way to Mohale Dam



Adams at the Mohale Dam in 2015 (during the drought)

All photos taken November 2015



Editor's Note

When former editor of the FOL newsletter, Madeline Uranek, first asked me to take over as editor of this Newsletter, I was hesitant. It has been almost 10 years since I was a PCV in Lesotho. Since my first job teaching English, maths, and development studies at Maluba-lube Secondary School in Mokhotlong district, I have gone on to graduate school, gotten married, moved across the country, wrote an award-nominated short story collection about Lesotho, and am now embarking on a new job. Am I too far-removed from Peace Corps to be useful to this organization? I wondered.

I was also hesitant to take on this role, because after 13 months of service in the Peace Corps, I ETed (early termination). Departing early is still a decision I struggle with, and I admire those volunteers who stay until the end of their service. You will read some of their stories in this issue.

In the end, though, with Madeline's encouragement and support, I accepted the challenge. I am honored to be editing this newsletter, as it keeps me in touch with the country and the people that changed the course of my life. Without Peace Corps, I may have never gone into teaching, and I would have certainly never written my book.

In this newsletter, you will encounter stories of RPCVs who have been pulled back to the Mountain Kingdom; of students in Taiwan who are raising money for students in Lesotho; and of a Fulbright student and nurse who is continuing to be inspired by the people he meets. May their stories remind you of what makes Lesotho unique.

Courtney McDermott, RPCV Education, 2007
Author of *How They Spend Their Sundays* (Whitepoint Press 2013)





Wisdom Does Not Live in One House

By Christopher R. Conz, Ph.D. crconz@bu.edu
RPCV, Ha Makhaola/Auplaas, Qacha's Nek (Ed. 2008-2009)

On May 21st of this year I received my Ph.D. in African History from Boston University which marked an important point along a journey that began, at least to some extent, when Clement Lephoto informed me in December 2007 that I would be teaching secondary school in Qacha's Nek district.

Fast forward nearly ten years. My completed dissertation is titled, "Wisdom Does Not Live in One House": Compiling Environmental Knowledge in Lesotho, southern Africa, c. 1880-1965." In short, the dissertation reconstructs a history of the greater Qacha's Nek district from around 1880 when farmers first settled the area, until 1965 on the eve of independence from Great Britain. I use this place-based study to speak to broader historical questions. How have people incorporated new and often foreign ideas into existing beliefs and practices? How did a person's social position affect how they interacted with new ideas? How have people applied knowledge to make and remake environments such as in gardens, fields, and pastures?

To pursue these questions I undertook research in Lesotho, South Africa, and the United Kingdom in 2012 and again in 2014-2015 with support from a Fulbright Student Grant. I examined archival materials such as colonial records, agricultural reports and surveys, national council proceedings, and local newspapers. During several months of rural fieldwork in Qacha's Nek, during which I stayed with my PC host family, I collected oral histories, took photographs, and participated in village life, especially farming. The dissertation argues that we must understand the compilation of environmental knowledge as a historical process. This process encapsulates the meanings that people imbue the landscape with, for example, by building homesteads. It also shows how people understand the landscape as a system of resources to be used economically for subsistence and market purposes. These two aspects of knowing are part of a single process that has unfolded, and continues to unfold, along a historical trajectory that has varied across social groups, such as women and men, chiefs and commoners.

To build on my Ph.D. studies, in September 2017 I will begin a 1-year post-doctoral research fellowship under the auspices of a Tufts University co-sponsored program called Innovative Methods and Metrics for Agriculture and Nutrition Actions (IMMANA), a program whose stated goal is to "create a cadre of emerging leaders in agriculture, nutrition, and health research." I will be living in Boston for most of the year, except for 3-4 months of field research in Lesotho and South Africa after the New Year 2018. My project for IMMANA will examine the period between 1955-1965 when the nutritional deficiency disease called pellagra flourished as a way to shed light on current relationships between maize-based agriculture, climate change, dietary shifts, public health, and the political-economy of food systems. I would welcome comments and correspondence from RPCVs who worked in capacities related to the concerns of my research from the late-1960s to 1980 or so, in any district.



Ntate Mokhafisi Kena (left), a dear friend in my PC village (Ha Makhaola/Auplaas, Qacha's Nek) who became an important oral history source for me during my field research in 2014-15. Kena passed away in 2016 at the age of 91.

Running for Lesotho: TAS Walkathon 2017

By Hoang Huy, Organizer

The 7th grade at Taipei American School in Taiwan hosts a service project each year to raise money to assist students in Africa. Every year since 1999, their 7th grade students have walked around the TAS track to raise money to help impoverished students in the country of Lesotho pay for education and other basic needs. This year they did so again, not only to serve needy students in Lesotho, but also to remember Sandy Puckett, the former TAS teacher who began this project.

In the week leading up to the event, the students learned about Lesotho in their homeroom classes, bridging the distance between these two countries. The walkathon was held on April 20, 2017. TAS broke their record and raised \$13,772.45 USD.

In all, more than US\$123,480 has been raised and sent to Peace Corps volunteers in Lesotho, who distribute the funds for education-related expenses. One hundred percent of the money goes to help the students in Lesotho.





METSOALLE ea LESOTHO

Be an FOL Member for FREE!

Aparna Jayaraman, RPCV Education, 2011-13, aparnaay@gmail.com

Hello, Bakhotsi! Your friendly FOL Membership Committee Chair Aparna here.

As mentioned in the last FOL newsletter, Friends of Lesotho stopped collecting the mandatory \$15 yearly membership dues starting in January 2017.

What do FOL's free dues mean for you?

If you're currently a member of Friends of Lesotho: You don't have to do anything. Your membership automatically renewed.

If you used to be a member but are no longer a member: Take two minutes to fill out the updated membership form either online or on the last page of this newsletter.

If you've never been a member: What are you waiting for? There's never been a better time to start getting involved!

With membership fees in the rear view mirror, we need your help more than ever to continue doing the amazing work Friends of Lesotho does in Lesotho.

- Amazon will donate money to Friends of Lesotho when you shop. Join Amazon Smile (smile.amazon.com) and add Friends of Lesotho as a beneficiary. Remember to use Amazon Smile when you shop on-line.
- Get involved with one of the many committees in FOL.
- Donate generously to our many projects, using the form online or the donation form attached.



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<http://www.friendsoflesotho.org>



Newsletters Past and Present—The FOL Newsletter, *Metsoalle ea Lesotho* is posted on our website homepage (<http://friendsoflesotho.org>) each quarter of the year. The complete set of newsletters is available on our website from Issue Number One, Summer, 1987 to the present. Go to Membership >Newsletters for the archives.

Submit Newsletter Articles—Pass on RPCV updates. Recommend a Mt. Kingdom movie, music, book or Website. Share new or old photos. Been to Lesotho lately? Share it!

Submit articles, photos, or information of interest to our members to:

Courtney McDermott, FOL Newsletter Coordinator courtmcdermott@gmail.com



FRIENDS OF LESOTHO

Making a difference at the grassroots level

Mail to:
4110 Denfeld Avenue
Kensington, MD 20895

MEMBERSHIP AND DONATION FORM

Instructions: Mail this form and/or checks to Friends of Lesotho to the address above.
Or complete it online at our website • www.friendsoflesotho.org

Name (First and Last):

Email Address:

MEMBERSHIP FORM

(not required if you are only making a donation)

Mailing Address (optional*):

*required if you'd like the newsletter mailed to you

What is your relationship to Lesotho?

- PCV, RPCV, or PC Staff in Lesotho
- Worked/Volunteered in an NGO supporting Lesotho
- Lived in Lesotho
- Friend or family of someone connected to Lesotho
- Other

How did you hear about Friends of Lesotho?

- Social Media (Facebook, Twitter, etc.)
- During PC Service
- From a friend
- Google or another search engine
- Other

If you are or were a PCV in Lesotho please fill out the following information:

Cohort (ex. ED12):

District/Village you served:

COS Date:

DONATIONS FORM

Amount Donating:

\$ _____

Use my donation towards:

- Greatest Need
- Tuition Assistance Program
- Memorial Scholarship Fund

Friends of Lesotho (FOL) is registered 501(c)(3) organization. Contributions are tax deductible to the extent permitted by law. A copy of the current financial of Friends of Lesotho is available by writing 4110 Denfeld Avenue, Kensington, MD 20895, or by emailing 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.

- Check here to receive a physical copy of the newsletter in addition to email
- Check here if you do not wish to be listed in the directory (only accessible to other members)

Privacy Policy: FOL will not release member information to any organization except the National Peace Corps Association, upon implied consent when a member joins both FOL and NPCA. FOL may share membership information with other FOL members and prospective PCVs seeking information about Lesotho. Please note that NPCA membership is free (www.peacecorpsconnect.org). FOL is affiliated with NPCA.

FOR FOL USE ONLY

Check # _____ Amount _____

Member Since _____ Source _____

No. Of Members _____



FRIENDS OF LESOTHO

4110 Denfeld Avenue
Kensington, MD 20895

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board2@friendsoflesotho.org



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Second Quarter 2017
Newsletter



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