



FRIENDS OF LESOTHO

METSOALLE ea LESOTHO

Third Quarter 2017
Newsletter

President's Letter

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.

This month FOL launched a Back to School: Education Assistance for Basotho Youth fundraiser, as of writing this letter over \$2,000 had been raised. The funds raised will help pay for scholarships, school supplies, and projects to improve the quality of education at various schools in Lesotho. Thanks to the generous support from the American School in Taipei, FOL was able to provide \$10,400 worth of TAP scholarships. This will allow 45 deserving Basotho youth to attend high school this year. The scholarship money was requested by 17 volunteers across 9 districts in Lesotho.

On a personal note, with assistance from FOL, my students were able during our June trip to Lesotho to: build one house, one greenhouse, 2 playgrounds, 2 gardens, and plant over 100 fruit trees. We were also able to paint 2 classrooms in Ramabanta and a dining hall at an orphanage in Mafeteng. We were also able to prepare over 100 meals for children suffering from malnutrition and stunting in Ramabanta. The 142,000 meals containing nutritional supplements packed by the Lesotho Nutrition Initiative, shipped at the end of May with support from FOL, arrived in Lesotho in early July. The meals will help over 1,500 children at seven different centers from Mokhotlong to Mophale's Hoek. While in Lesotho my students and I were invited to the Royal Palace and we had the pleasure of spending a hour with his Majesty, King Letsie III. I would like to share with FOL members how incredibly gracious I found his excellency to be. He was very appreciative of the efforts of groups such as FOL to help the Basotho. It is a day that I will never forget.

I am pleased to report that our new free membership policy has led to an increase in FOL members, and especially an increase in the number of Basotho living in Lesotho who have joined. Lastly, I would like to thank Stacey McKeever for her work on the crowdfunding campaign, and on a sadder note I would like to thank Courtney McDermott for her hard work on the newsletter and how much her dedication will be missed. If anybody is interested in taking over the newsletter, please contact either Courtney (courtmcdermott@gmail.com) or myself (rosenberg@wittenberg.edu).



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

Newsletter Features Clickable Links!!

Download the newsletter from the FOL website www.friendsoflesotho.org and you will be able to click on all the website addresses.

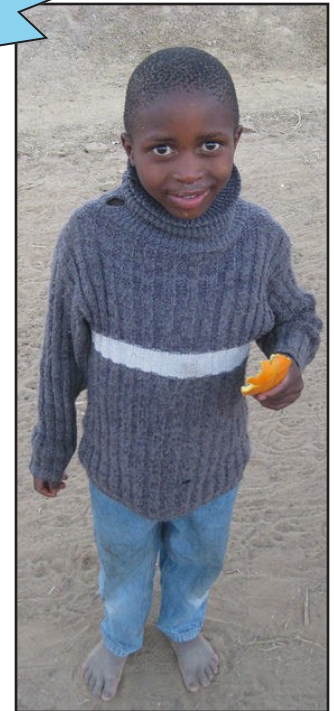


Photo courtesy: RPCV Nicole Potsane

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Back to School: Education Assistance for Lesotho's Youth

By Stacy McKeever, RPCV Education, Maseru 2003-2005

All over the world, education is the key to health, prosperity, stability, and choice. In Lesotho, women with more education marry later and have fewer children. Men with more education have lower HIV prevalence. All Basotho with more education are healthier, wealthier, more likely to know their HIV status, and more accepting of people living with HIV/AIDS.

(Continued on page 2)



Education Assistance for Lesotho's Youth (continued from page 1)

In Lesotho, participation in primary school is free and almost universal, and 92% of boys and 95% of girls attend. However, secondary school fees are not covered by the government and attendance drops off. Only 51% of girls and 35% of boys attend secondary school and only 10% of Basotho men and women have completed secondary school.

The school fees, books and exam costs--which can cost over \$200 a year--are beyond the reach of many in a nation where over half live below the international poverty line (\$1.90 per day).

Since 1992, Friends of Lesotho have been providing scholarships and tuition assistance to needy students in Lesotho. This year we are embarking on our first ever crowdfunding campaign to increase our ability to support students in Lesotho.

As we head back to school ourselves this fall, let's help students in Lesotho build a better future for themselves and their country. As little as \$25 can pay school fees for three months for a secondary student, \$100 will send a child to school for a year, and \$200 will cover books, exam fees, and transportation for a year.

Please join FOL in sending our friends in Lesotho Back to School! The campaign runs through September 30th.

To donate and learn more: <https://chuffed.org/project/friends-of-lesotho> 

The Importance of Tuition Assistance: Spotlight on Kabelo Setala

By Ariel Simons, RPCV Education, Quthing 2009-2011



Colin and Corinne in Lesotho in 2008


RPCVs Corinne and Colin Hoag sponsored Kabelo's secondary education, and it made all the difference. Corinne says, *"As a PCV, I met Kabelo when he was about 13 and living with the family next door to me. Both of his parents had died when he was young and in exchange for his room and board, he cared for this family's cattle. He would visit me regularly for tutoring help with English and math and I could see he enjoyed school. Once he was ready to begin secondary school, it became clear that the family he stayed with could not afford to pay his school fees. Without further education or a family for support, his only real path was to quit school and care for this family's cattle.*

We decided to support him through secondary school because he deserved more education and the opportunities that might come from that. He performed well in school and enjoyed learning, especially science. He also played football and continued to help care for the cattle at his home. At the end of secondary school, he saw that there were other opportunities in the world for him. He applied to a vocational college and was accepted into a program to learn computer science. He was awarded a partial scholarship and we contributed additional money to make up the difference.



Kabelo at his recent graduation

Last year, he completed his AA degree in computer science from a vocational school in Maseru. He now lives in Maseru and has a computer programming job with a small company there. He is able to support himself now, living in the capital, which is more than I would have thought possible when we first started helping. I'm really proud of him for his accomplishments."

When asked about this experience, Kabelo wrote that *"this has been a really help for me. I would very much thank everybody who gave their money on somebody whom they did not even see his potential. Thanks a lot!"* 



Corinne and son Eamon with Kabelo in 2013



Lesotho Defence Force Commander Killed

By Charles Fogelman, RPCV Education, 2003-2005


Lesotho Defence Force Commander [Khoantle Paul Motšomotšo](#) was [killed](#) on Tuesday, 5 September, in his Maseru office. His assailants have been identified as two of Motšomotšo's high-ranking colleagues, Tefo [Hashatsi](#) and Bulane [Sechele](#). Both Hashatsi and Sechele were killed by Motšomotšo's bodyguards moments later. A career soldier, Motšomotšo served nearly four decades in the LDF, reaching the rank of Lieutenant General. He is survived by his wife and five children.

Motšomotšo's murder is the latest in the ongoing political crisis in Lesotho, dating to (at least) January 2014, when the homes of both the Lesotho Mounted Police Service commander and Prime Minister Thabane's then-girlfriend were bombed. Suspicion over those bombings centered on Sechele and Hashatsi, as well as former LDF commander Tlali Kamoli. That trio has also been implicated in the attempted coup of August 2014 that led Thabane to flee the country, as well as the killing of former LDF commander Maaparankoe Mahao.

Remarkably, the Lesotho Times reports that Sechele and Hashatsi confronted Motšomotšo about his failure to protect them from police investigation into another killing, that of Lisebo Tang, an unarmed civilian, in 2014.

Security forces and politicians are often intertwined in Lesotho. Kamoli, Hashatsi, and Sechele are no exception; they are deeply aligned with Lesotho Congress for Democracy leader and former Deputy Prime Minister Mothetjoa Metsing. Metsing [fled](#) to South Africa in late August, claiming that he feared for his well-being. His fears are not unjustified; Tšeliso Mokhosi, the deputy LCD leader, was arrested for his alleged role in yet another murder, that of Mokhotlong police constable Mokalekale Khetheng. Mokhosi claims that he was tortured by LMPS officers while in custody.

SADC has sent an undisclosed number of troops into the Mountain Kingdom, and RSA Deputy President Cyril Ramaphosa will continue in his role as negotiator.

Security forces are deeply politicized in Lesotho, and [further reforms are needed](#) to separate politicians and the political process from soldiers. Without substantive reforms, it is hard to imagine the recent years of violence ending. 



Photos courtesy: RPCV Nicole Potsane

OPENING ON THE FOL BOARD: NEWSLETTER EDITOR

The FOL Board is looking for someone to join the board and take on the newsletter editor position. The editor solicits articles and photographs for the FOL Newsletter which comes out three times a year. The editor also participates in bi-monthly board phone calls. If you are interested in volunteering as the editor, please reach out to FOL President Scott Rosenberg, srosenberg@wittenberg.edu.





Litaba tsa Lesotho (News from Lesotho)

Compiled by Ella Kwisnek, RPCV Education, 1992-1994

Investigation of Bidvest Fleet Contract

A controversial fleet contract with Bidvest was one of the causes of the split in the Dr. Mosisili's Democratic Congress in November 2016. The Directorate on Corruption and Economic Offences is investigating the fleet contract and recently interviewed former ministers who were members of a subcommittee that awarded the tender to Bidvest.

See the full story at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201708230574.html>

New Prime Minister Promises to Work for Stability

When speaking to a SADC delegation, recently-elected Prime Minister Tom Thabane vowed that Lesotho will stop being the "bad boys" of southern Africa. The head of the delegation, South African Deputy President Cyril Ramaphosa, said Thabane had reported that his government would strive to communicate with all stakeholders. Read the full story at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201708090732.html>

Electronic Visa Program

Lesotho now has a top-tier electronic visa program, joining only 13 other countries on the continent, according to the African Development Bank's Visa Openness Index. Launched on May 5, the platform was created by the Lesotho government in partnership with a U.S.-based, privately owned IT company, Computer Frontiers. The new system is hoped to facilitate tourism, as one can now get a visa for Lesotho in 48 hours. Read the full story at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201707100008.html>

Thabane Disbands 'Mutiny' Court-Martial

Prime Minister Thomas Thabane disbanded the court-martial of 23 Lesotho Defense Force officers accused of mutiny. South African Deputy President Cyril Ramaphosa is helping to facilitate the return to Lesotho of the exiled officers. See the full story online at

<http://allafrica.com/stories/201708250197.html>

MP Loan Write-Off Criticized

Legislators in the prior administration were able to borrow M500,000 interest free. The government underwrote the loans and paid the interest; however, the loans were to be paid off over

a five-year period. When their terms ended prematurely, however, the government wrote off M43.54 million in loans still owed by members of the Ninth Parliament. Read the full story online at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201708250793.html>

See also <http://allafrica.com/stories/201708250349.html>

Lesotho Products Showed at World Expo

At World Expo Astana 2017 in Kazakhstan, Lesotho organic products such as honey, cosmetics and ornaments were well received. Lesotho also presented investment opportunities related to the textile industry, such as re-use of the off-cuts from the factory floor to manufacture other products such as pillows. Wind farm and solar energy investors were also sought. Read the full story online at

<http://allafrica.com/stories/201708230906.html>

M9M Solar Project for Lesotho

The African Development Bank approved a \$695,500 (M9.1 million) grant towards the development of 20 megawatt solar Photo Voltaic (PV) plant, the first utility-scale solar PV project in the country. The development of the plant is designed to reduce the need to import power from Mozambique and reduce dependence on coal-generated power from South Africa.

Read the full story online at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201708250169.html>

Ministry Finalizes Gender-Based Violence Policy

The Ministry of Education and Training is developing a school health and nutrition policy to serve as a guideline on reproductive health, early marriage, unintended pregnancies, and gender-based violence. Read the full story online at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201708250190.html>



Litaba tsa Lesotho (continued from page 4)

SADC Rejects Opposition Rigging Claims

THE Southern African Development Community has rejected the former coalition government's claim that the June 2017 elections were rigged. Among other things, they alleged that people were registered after the deadline and that "busloads" of South Africans were ferried into Lesotho to illegally vote. Read the full story online at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201708250198.html>

The Murder of Police Officer Mokalekale Khetheng

The new Acting Commissioner of Police Holomo Molibeli had suspects arrested and charged for the murder of Police Constable (PC) Mokalekale Khetheng. He also had the body exhumed.

Read the full story online at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201708240251.html>

See also <http://www.sabc.co.za/news/a/6c6da280426b899ba895beac3e7f11f7/Lesothos-former-Defence-Minister-released---20170829>

Changes in Security Sector

Since its inauguration in June 2017, the Dr. Thabane-led government has made changes in the security sector, including the mounted police, Lesotho Correctional Service, and the National Security Service. The government asserts that the changes in the security sector and other areas are aimed at deepening democracy and creating last stability which is conducive to economic growth.

Read the full story online at <http://www.lestimes.com/army-shakeup-looms/>

M10m earmarked for small businesses

Small Business Development, Co-operatives and Marketing Minister, Chalane Phori, stated that the government has set aside M10 million to facilitate the growth of small businesses. Read the full story online at <http://www.lestimes.com/m10m-earmarked-for-small-businesses/>



The Nala Project

Photos by Darrin Adams, RPCV Education, 2007-2010

The Nala Project is a monthly outdoor market in Maseru. It is a community development initiative that promotes local crafts and music. RPCV Darrin Adams visited the market on a recent trip back to Lesotho. It is organized by one of his good friends, Ma-Lord Mefane.



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.



METSOALLE ea LESOTHO

Blast to the Past: 10 Years Ago in Lesotho

By Courtney McDermott, RPCV Education, Mokhotlong 2006-2007

It was 10 years ago that I was a secondary school teacher in the village of Maluba-lube, high up in the mountains of Mokhotlong District. I taught English, math, and development studies to 64 students in Forms A, B, and C. As I was putting together this newsletter, I was compelled to pull out some of my old photos (taken on a regular 35mm camera!). 



On my walk back to Maluba-lube from the Janteau Junction. It took me three hours to walk from my village to Janteau Junction where I could pick up a taxi to Mokhotlong.



My rondavel.



Maluba-lube Secondary School



My Form A class.



SUBMISSIONS WANTED!!

Help us create our awesome newsletter! We are looking for photographs, articles, news from the front, creative writing, reflections from your volunteer experience, travel essays, and anything else Lesotho-related.

Please send your submissions for the next FOL Newsletter to Courtney McDermott, courtmcdermott@gmail.com.

The next deadline is November 1st

Treasurer's Report

Request detailed report from Treasurer John Hollister
JohnHollister@friendsoflesotho.org RPCV Thaba-Tseka, 1986-1988

Friends of Lesotho - 2017 Treasurer's Summary for Board: September 17, 2017

	Jul-2017	9/7/2017	Difference
Current Bank Balance (checking):	\$10,144.47	\$7,640.91	-\$2,503.56
Current Bank Balance (savings):	\$56,411.72	\$48,429.88	-\$7,981.84
Paypal (pending transfer):	\$0.00	\$475.00	\$475.00
Total (both accounts excluding Paypal pending)	\$66,556.19	\$56,070.79	-\$10,485.40
Interest Earned CY to Date (incl. above)	\$55.92	\$74.08	\$18.16
2017 Project Fund Status:	Amount in Fund (1)	Amount sent to Lesotho	Amount Pending Future Disbursement
Start Calendar Year =	\$42,854.26		
Project donations received year to date=	\$20,772.45	(note - \$13,772.45 from TAS on 5/10/2017)	
Totals	\$63,626.71	\$41,680.00	\$21,946.71
Total difference from Prior report:	\$3,775.00	\$14,380.00	-\$10,605.00
Breakout project cash sent (all fees under operating):		\$41,680.00	
2017 Operating Expense Status:			
Current Cash in Accounts (as above, excluding Paypal pending):		\$56,070.79	
Subtract out:			
Project Expenditure Obligations (per above, incl. interest)		-\$21,946.71	
Life Membership Fund (incl. interest)		-\$23,313.20	
Cash Available for FOL Expenses =		\$10,810.87	
Unused Expenses in 2017 Budget -		\$5,042.29	
Current Cash Reserve (after budget) =		\$5,768.58	excludes unspent budget
(Total operating cash expenses, incl. NPCA pass thru):		\$567.71	
(Total operating inkind expenses to date):		\$150.07	operating expenses only



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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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

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Third Quarter 2017
Newsletter



FRIENDS OF LESOTHO

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