



FRIENDS OF LESOTHO

# METSOALLE ea LESOTHO

Fourth Quarter 2023  
Newsletter

## A Word From Our President

Lumelang Metsoalle,

As the year comes to an end, I am reflecting on Friends of Lesotho's highlights for the year. New members have joined the board, bringing fresh perspectives and enthusiasm to our approaches. We continue to fund scholarships for the Tuition Assistance Program in partnership with Lesotho Rotary Programs. We have served as fiscal agents for those wishing to make significant donations towards specific projects, like building much needed dormitories. We continue to support literacy in Lesotho as we fundraise for two different literacy centers for Mokoko Primary School and the Molete Foundation. All of these projects were possible because of your generous donations. We continue to pursue opportunities that will support in-country Peace Corps Volunteers.

I want to extend my heartfelt gratitude to the long-serving gentlemen on our board- Scott Rosenberg, Kevin Freer, Richard Rowan, Bill Moore, and Kevin Caughlin. Your wisdom and experience has been invaluable to those of us gaining leadership roles on the board. I hope we continue to work together in the coming years to make a meaningful impact in Lesotho. I am grateful to serve on the board with some of my dearest friends that I completed my service with from 2017-2019. How lucky we are that the Peace Corps brought us together.

You may have received FOL's Annual Appeal in your inbox. I want to express my deepest appreciation to all who support and donate to Friends of Lesotho. Your generosity is the lifeblood of our organization, allowing us to fund scholarships and other small projects in Lesotho. I hope you will once again consider donating to our organization.

As we look ahead, I encourage you to share the story of Friends of Lesotho with any RPCVs you may know. We are actively seeking to expand our membership, particularly among those who have served in the past 10-15 years. Becoming a member automatically adds you to our quarterly newsletter mailing list, where you can stay up to date with our current projects. We also always invite our members to submit their own stories for the newsletter.

Thank you again for your support, dedication, and passion. The journey continues, and I am excited for the opportunities that lie ahead.

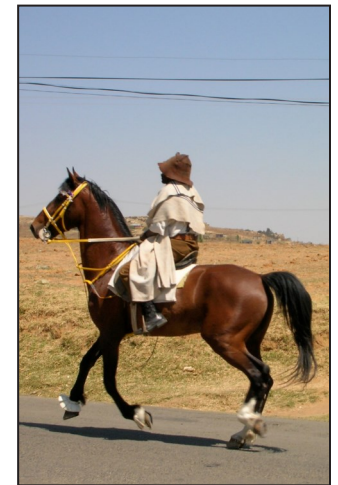


Photo courtesy:  
Dyann Van Dusen, RPCV Lesotho

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Sincerely,  
Meghan White  
President, FOL



Newsletter Features Clickable Links!!  
Download the newsletter from the FOL website [www.friendsoflesotho.org](http://www.friendsoflesotho.org) and you will be able to click on all the website addresses.



## FOL Organizational News

**Open Board and Committee Positions** There are openings for board service and committees in the coming year. Board commitment is for a two-year term. If you are interested or know of someone interested in serving on the Board or one of FOL's Committees, please feel free to complete the Board of Directors and Committee Application Form <https://www.friendsoflesotho.org/boardinfo>. For more information, refer to the Board Information at this same location on our website. You may also contact Meghan White, President, at [white.meghan0@gmail.com](mailto:white.meghan0@gmail.com)

**Annual Meeting Announcement** Mark your calendar for Sunday, March 10, 2024, for our Annual Meeting. The Annual Meeting is held to highlight our accomplishments in the prior year as presented in our Annual Report. The meeting includes an announcement of election results along with speakers of interest to members and friends. Contact Kevin Caughlan, Secretary, at [caughlan@earthlink.net](mailto:caughlan@earthlink.net) for call in information via Zoom if you do not receive the information in an email notification. Notification should occur automatically to all members. Moshoeshoe Day is the following day March 11, 2024.

**Newsletter Outreach** We have 35 years of newsletters archived on our website under Reports. Issue One, published in 1987, was created by the five founding board members. The newsletter was type-written and xeroxed in black and white. The paper copies were mailed out to 80 members. The current newsletters are created by a committee including a board member coordinator and two non-board members who serve as editors and a graphic designer. FOL has been publishing an Annual Report since 2004, also archived on our website. The color pdf issues are sent out via an email link to 848 members and friends. 

## 25 Years on the Web

Bill Dunn, FOL's Membership Database Coordinator, launched our first website 25 years ago (*FOL Newsletter Summer 1998*). Bill continued to serve as webmaster from 1998 – 2009. Marty Smith then took on this role from 2009 – 2019. Meghan White and Ali Kukovich undertook a major redesign and development of our website and established our Facebook page, serving as webmasters from 2020 to the present. As always, we are requesting that you send us any posts or news you'd like to see on our website and Facebook page. Current events, nostalgia, development opportunities- share them with us! Visit our website that's being worked on every week! Contact Meghan White and Ali Kukovich at [white.meghan0@gmail.com](mailto:white.meghan0@gmail.com) and [ali.kukovich@gmail.com](mailto:ali.kukovich@gmail.com). 



### Expanding Our Circle of Friends

Add the FOL logo and website address on your personal Facebook page to solicit interest from family and friends to learn more about who we are and what we do.

<https://www.friendsoflesotho.org/>



### 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.

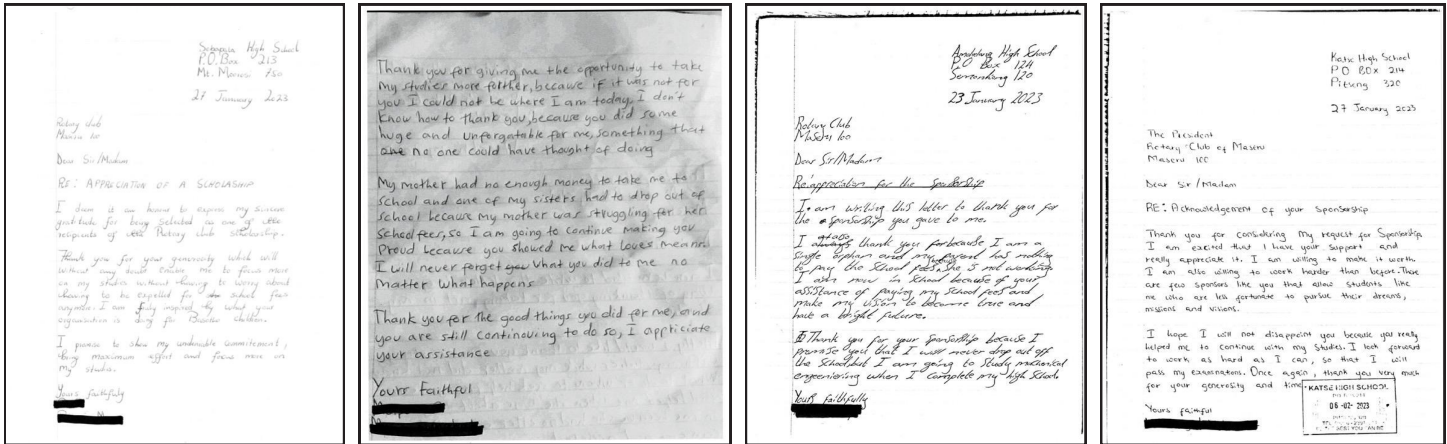
Please send your submissions for the next FOL Newsletter to Cassie Sheridan, [ccsheridan2@gmail.com](mailto:ccsheridan2@gmail.com).

The next deadline is May 15, 2024



## Tuition Assistance Program (TAP) Year in Review

Sixty Secondary School students were given the chance of continuing their education thanks to the FOL Tuition Assistance Program (TAP) that helps with school fees along with an additional 33 students that were approved at our most recent board meeting. Thank you letters from students that received TAP funds this year are below. 



## Projects Year in Review

**Help Save Lives: Mankoe Foundation:** FOL sent funds to the Mankoe Foundation to purchase chickens and pigs to feed orphans and other youth. The chickens and pigs are taken care of until they are ready to be sold in the market. The animals are replaced after every sale to sustain the programs and to pay for student fees, books, uniforms and other essentials.

FOL wired a \$4,000 donation made by William Stafford Noble (PCV1991-1993, **Mt. Tabor in Mafeteng**) for the building of new dormitories. The school currently has 900 students.

FOL has been facilitating fundraising led by Kenneth Tucceri for the construction of a new library. The \$25,000 project will benefit students at the **Mokoko Primary School in Thaba Tseka**.

FOL is serving as Fiscal Agent on behalf of Jan Brabham and Keefe Kalil for a project to collect and distribute funds for the **Molete Foundation** to buy land to build a literacy center directed by Monica Letsoha.



**Lesotho voted in favor of UN resolution to end the war in Ukraine and an immediate humanitarian truce in Israel-Gaza.**

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/2/24/un-tells-russia-to-leave-ukraine-how-did-countries-vote>

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/10/27/unga-calls-for-humanitarian-truce-in-israel-hamas-war-how-countries-voted#:~:text=The%20United%20Nations%20General%20Assembly,States%2C%20while%2045%20others%20abstained>

**KFC has announced it is closing all its restaurants in Lesotho amid a severe outbreak of bird flu in neighboring South Africa.**

Lesotho government has banned all poultry imports from the country, which KFC says has severely impacted it's supply of chicken and forced them to close their restaurants. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-67226071>






# METSOALLE ea LESOTHO

## Donations



**Tuition Assistance Program (TAP)** - TAP funds were approved totaling \$6,600 to be distributed to Maseru Rotary Project for sponsorship of 33 students tuition fees.



**Paleng Place of Stories** – an MOU was approved by the board to send a \$3,000 donation to Paleng place of stories. Paleng is a children’s library in Malealea valley, Lesotho. At Paleng they create bilingual picture storybooks specifically for children in rural communities. All of our books are written, illustrated, translated, and produced by our team. We give out our books for free, directly to children in both Sesotho and English. <https://palengplaceofstories.org/palengs-> 

## Fundraising

### Annual Appeal for Donations

Emails and letters have been sent to members and friends for our Annual Appeal for donations.

Friends of Lesotho Inc. (FOL) is fortunate to have a generous donation support base. Board members review new project proposals as well as ongoing projects in Lesotho on a bi-monthly basis. With your financial support, FOL is able to fund requests for scholarships, grants, and community development projects.

To join our impactful work, you can make a gift in the following ways:

- Via secure web link ( <https://www.friendsoflesotho.org/donate> ), or
- By check to *Friends of Lesotho, 115 Monterey Ave., Oakwood, OH 45419 U.S.A.*


Visit our website [www.friendsoflesotho.org](http://www.friendsoflesotho.org) for more information on **Ways to Give** under the heading of **Donations**:

- Online or mailing donations
- Employer Matching Gifts
- Lifetime Member Contributions
- Wills & Estate Planning
- Memorial Gifts

All donations, big and small, will be acknowledged by receipt, as well as in the 2023 Annual Report. Donations to our 501(c)(3) non-profit organization may be tax-deductible as permitted by law.



Looking for ways to help? Forward this email to someone who you think might care about our mission. FOL is always looking to expand its [membership](#). Becoming a member automatically adds you to our quarterly newsletter mailing list, where you can stay up to date with our current projects. I welcome you to contact me with any questions about further opportunities with Friends of Lesotho such as serving on the board or other committees.


With much appreciation for your support,  
Meghan White, President  
[friendsoflesotho@gmail.com](mailto:friendsoflesotho@gmail.com) 





## Peace Corps News

### New Peace Corps Volunteers Arrived in Lesotho on September 29, 2023

37 Peace Corps Volunteers began their 11 week Pre Service Training in preparation for their 2 year service in the Mountain Kingdom on September 29, 2023. Twenty will work in primary schools and 17 will be in health centers. Rea le amohela. Welcome to the Mountain Kingdom. 



Peace Corps Lesotho trainees at Thaba Bosiu, 2023

## In Memoriam



### Mourning the Loss of Margaret 'Malebona Putsoa, Peace Corps Lesotho Staff

Known as 'M'e Maggie to those close to her, she . joined Peace Corps/Lesotho in June 1990 as a cashier. She experienced the evolution of Peace Corps finance from paper receipts and calculators to ForPost, electronic transfers, and mobile money. After serving for almost 34 years, 'M'e Maggie retired from the Peace Corps earlier this year. She was known at Post and throughout the Africa Region for her dedication, attention to detail, and vast knowledge of cashing.

Her experience and longevity with Peace Corps/Lesotho made her a tremendous resource for institutional memory. 'M'e Maggie worked with 12 country directors, even more directors of management and operations, and connected with over 2,000 Volunteers. The Volunteers lovingly referred to her as 'Money Margaret.' She will be missed for her positive attitude, kindness, great mentorship, and melodious singing that brought joy to the entire Peace Corps/Lesotho team. Margaret 'Malebona Putsoa, passed away on October 20.



### Jean M Greenway

RPCV Lesotho 1988-1990

June 18, 1927- November 27, 2018

<https://www.andersonfuneralhomegcwi.com/obituaries/Jean-M-Greenway?obId=3841819>

Jean was a Peace Corps volunteer from 1988-1990 after retiring from her career. She and her husband Lloyd were married for 72 years and served in Lesotho together. She enjoyed reading, puzzles, gardening, and traveling throughout the world. Jean passed away in 2018.

### Lloyd E Greenway

RPCV Lesotho 1988-1990

May 3, 1924- January 22, 2018

<https://www.tributearchive.com/obituaries/2927328/Lloyd-Edward-Greenway>

Lloyd was a Peace Corps volunteer from 1988-1990 after retiring from his career. He and his wife Jean were married for 72 years and served in Lesotho together. He enjoyed hunting, fishing, and traveling throughout the world. Lloyd passed away in 2018.





## Litaba tsa Lesotho

(News from Lesotho)

Compiled by Ella Kwisnek

### **Checkers Opens at Maseru Mall**

The first-ever Checkers FreshX store in Lesotho opened recently at Masearu Mall. Checkers is a supermarket chain that emphasizes fresh produce and offers a diverse selection of high-quality food items. With such options, some Basotho indicated they will no longer need to go to South Africa to shop.

Read the full story at: <https://publiceyenews.com/pomp-and-fanfare-as-checkers-debuts-in-lesotho/>

### **Lesotho Firms Attend AGOA**

Eight indigenous Basotho businesses attended the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) Made in Africa Exhibition to showcase their products. By attending they hope to interest investors, explore new markets, and find raw materials suppliers. To read more about the businesses and what they hope to gain by attending, read the full story at <https://publiceyenews.com/8-lesotho-firms-showcase-at-agoa-venue/>

### **Opposition Efforts to Oust PM**

The commanders of the three wings of Lesotho's security forces have declared they will defend the government of Prime Minister Sam Matekane against a no confidence motion by the opposition.

The motion of no confidence was filed by Basotho National Party leader Machesetsa Mofomobe. The motion was stopped when the government filed a constitutional case challenging the motion.

Read more about the challenge and the response of the government and the security forces at:

<https://www.news24.com/news24/africa/news/lesothos-military-warns-opposition-not-to-go-ahead-with-no-confidence-motion-in-pm-20231017>

<https://informativenews.co.ls/2023/10/18/speaker-suspends-no-confidence-motion/>

<https://lestimes.com/lesotho-plunges-into-constitutional-crisis/>

<https://lestimes.com/opposition-vows-to-oust-matekane/>

### **Gin and Trout Festival**

The second Lesotho Gin & Trout Tourism Festival, a premier food and beverage tourism festival. The festival will begin with a camping experience at Mohale Dam from December 8-10. That will be followed on December 16 by an event at Botleng Guest House that will feature eight different gin houses and five to six high class food stalls, where trout would be prepared in various ways, each with a distinctive taste.

Read the full story at <https://lestimes.com/gin-trout-festival-next-month/>

### **US Ambassador Urges Basotho to Explore US Markets**

United States Ambassador to Lesotho, Maria Brewer, encouraged Basotho to explore products to sell duty free to the US market under the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA), to lessen the economic setbacks resulting from the drop in textile and apparel production.

Since 2020, the textile and apparel manufacturing industry has laid off up to 22 000 employees.

It is under this background that economists and the US Embassy in Lesotho have encouraged the country to explore more export options to take full advantage of AGOA.

*(Continued on page 7)*



## News from Lesotho (continued from page 6)

However, to remain eligible, countries must uphold several values that are core to free and fair societies, which included the rule of law, respect for human rights, combating corruption, and protecting workers' rights.

Read the full story at <https://lestimes.com/us-urges-basotho-to-exploit-more-agoa-benefits/>

### **Prison Death Toll**

According to Lesotho Correctional Services (LCS) records, 68 inmates have died in incarceration between 2017 and 2023.

This data was included in Ombudsman, Advocate Tlotliso Polaki's report on the condition of Lesotho's prisons and hospitals titled 'Hospitals, Human Rights Inspection Reports'.

The report highlights indicates the following conditions in correctional facilities: inhumane living conditions, underfeeding, inadequate ablution facilities, poor ventilation, poor healthcare services, lack of sanitation and privacy, and shortage of mattresses and blankets.

The report says inmates are served porridge (sometimes without sugar) for breakfast, while hard porridge (pap) with beans or peas are served for lunch and dinner daily all year round. They only have varieties of eggs, vegetables, milk, and meat on Christmas Day.

Read the full story at <https://lestimes.com/shocking-death-statistics-in-lesothos-prisons/>

### **Impact of Avian Flu Chicken Import Ban**

The government's imposed a ban on chicken imports following the outbreak of Avian Influenza in South Africa in June this year. As a result, restaurants and retailers have temporarily closed or have notified customers that they do not have chicken products. Most of the chickens and chicken products consumed in Lesotho are imported from South Africa.

Read the full story at <https://lestimes.com/snowball-effects-of-poultry-ban-adversely-affecting-retailers/>

### **Basotho Trafficked to Work in Illegal Mines**

The South African Police Service (SAPS) arrested ten people suspected of kidnapping and trafficking Basotho to work in illegal mining operations. The arrests came after a Mosotho man reported that he had been kidnapped in Lesotho and taken to Nelspruit where he was forced to work in illegal mining operations run by illegal miners that are known as zama zamas.

Read the full story at <https://lestimes.com/basotho-trafficked-to-sa-illegal-mines/>

### **Vodacom Donates Shoes for Children**

Telecommunication provider Vodacom Lesotho has donated more than 2,000 pairs of school shoes to the Ministry of Education for vulnerable children in Mokhotlong, Thaba-Tseka, Leribe, Quthing and Qacha's Nek. Each district will get 400 pairs of shoes.

Read the full story at <https://lestimes.com/vodacom-donates-shoes-to-vulnerable-children/>

### **QE II Replacement Near Completion**

The construction of Maseru District Hospital has reached 90 percent completion. The hospital is expected to be completed in March 2024 and is slated to open in April 2024.

Since the hospital is being constructed under Chinese government aid, a Chinese construction company, Shanghai Construction Company, has been commissioned to build the facility.

*(Continued on page 8)*



## News from Lesotho (continued from page 7)

Read more about this new facility at <https://publiceyenews.com/queen-ii-replacement-nears-completion/>

### US Investments in Lesotho

The US has awarded a \$300 million Health and Horticulture Compact grant through the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC). The funds are part of the USA Assistance Strategy for Lesotho and will be used to improve the quality of life for Basotho, strengthen the business environment, and promote economic diversification for inclusive and job-creating growth.

Prime Minister Ntsokoane Matekane stated that, "In the upcoming year, the government will prioritise/prioritize policies to address the shortcomings in fiscal policy, trade policy, land rights, and access . . ." He further commented on efforts towards gender equality, technology and innovation, and elimination of corruption.

Read the full story at <https://publiceyenews.com/us-invests-in-growing-lesothos-economy/> 

## FOL Financial Report

YTD 11/19/2023

<b>Sept 7, 2023</b>	
J.P. Morgan Chase balance	<b>\$77,523.58</b>

### Deposits from 09/07/23 to 11/19/23

Revenue type	Total Revenue
Donations (Checks, Online, Other)	\$9,490.17
Donation in kind - Postal Letter Mailing Expenses for Annual Appeal (K Freer)	\$74.67
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$9,564.84</b>

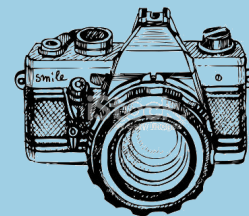
### Expenses from 09/07/23 to 11/19/23

Expense type	Total Expense
Project related fees (e.g. wire transfers)	\$0.00
Expenses other - Postal Letter Mailing Expenses for Annual Appeal (K Freer)	\$74.67
Tax and Registration	\$50.00
Bank Fees	\$0.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$124.67</b>

### Projects Overview

Project name	Amount
Molete Project	\$2,397.64
Makoko Library Project	\$5,432.64
General Fund donations	\$4,238.81
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$12,069.09</b>

<b>Balance 11/19/2023</b>	<b>\$86,963.75</b>
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## GOT PHOTOS?

Do you have photos from Lesotho?

We would love to feature them in the newsletter!

Send your photos to the editor [ccsherdan2@gmail.com](mailto:ccsherdan2@gmail.com)





Making a difference at the grassroots level

## Ways to Support FOL

### HELP FOL WITH YOUR EXPERTISE AND TIME

#### Board Service

- ◆ If you've always wondered how you could give a little more to FOL, now is the chance to volunteer your time, special skills, and enthusiasm. The members of the Board of Directors of Friends of Lesotho are elected based on their ability and willingness to contribute to the achievement of the organization's goals and objectives.
- ◆ Directors are members in good standing who are elected on their ability and willingness to support the purpose of FOL
- ◆ Nominations are welcome year round
- ◆ Elections are held at the Annual Meeting in March
- ◆ Directors serve for two-year terms

#### Committees and Task Forces

FOL members who do not wish to make a long-term commitment to the board are encouraged to:

- ◆ Join standing committees, or
- ◆ Work on special projects which match their skills and interests to the needs of the organization

There are also committees and task forces that help carry out the Board work. These committees include Donation Distribution, Membership, Fundraising and Board Nominations & Development.

Check out the [Board Information](#) page. Also, for a summary of the expected level of commitment see the Board and Committee description of work. If you're interested in application or nomination, please complete the [Board and Committee Application Form](#) and email it to the address shown within the form. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact any of the committee members.

### ATTEND FOL MEETINGS

#### Board Meetings

- ◆ Zoom meetings are held at 12:30pm Eastern time on the third Sunday of odd numbered months.
- ◆ Meetings are open to all FOL members, please contact Kevin Caughlan ([caughlan@earthlink.net](mailto:caughlan@earthlink.net)) for call-in information.

#### FOL Annual Meeting

- ◆ Scheduled close to Moshoeshoe Day in March, via Zoom more information to follow on our website. Be on the lookout for your FOL Annual Report posted on our website following the Annual Meeting.





## Be an FOL Member for FREE!

Richard Rowan, RPCV Lesotho, [qhomaki@gmail.com](mailto:qhomaki@gmail.com)

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

Membership in Friends of Lesotho is free. 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](#) online.

**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.

Get involved with one of the many committees in FOL.

**Donate generously to our many projects** using the [online form](#) or mail a check to Friends of Lesotho. <https://www.friendsoflesotho.org/donate/>



Follow us on Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/FriendsofLesotho>



Share your photos!

Send to the editor at:

[ccsheridan2@gmail.com](mailto:ccsheridan2@gmail.com)



Visit our website:

<http://www.friendsoflesotho.org>



## And Remember :

We couldn't do and support the work, have the impact, and save the lives we do without your financial support. Your contributions support our work in:

- ◆ HIV/AIDS
- ◆ Orphanages
- ◆ Tuition Assistance including Memorial Scholarships
- ◆ The Morija Museum
- ◆ Peace Corps Volunteer Projects
- ◆ Community Development Projects
- ◆ Other types of projects as new opportunities arise

## We work because you give.

Whether it's \$5 or \$5,000, all donations help us reach further and save more lives and because we're a registered 501(c)3, your donation is tax deductible!

If you'd like to give, please go to: <http://www.friendsoflesotho.org/donate/>

**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 Newsletters at the bottom of the home page 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: Cassie Sheridan, FOL Newsletter Coordinator [ccsheridan2@gmail.com](mailto:ccsheridan2@gmail.com)



## Useful Links



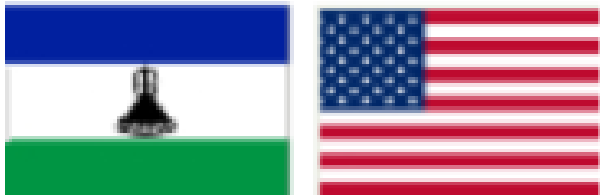
### National Peace Corps Association

<https://www.peacecorpsconnect.org/cpages/home>



### Lesotho - adventure awaits in the Kingdom in the Sky

<https://www.visitlesotho.travel/>



### Embassy of the Kingdom of Lesotho, USA

<http://www.lesothoemb-usa.gov.ls/>



### U.S. Embassy in Lesotho

<https://ls.usembassy.gov/>



### U.S. Relations with Lesotho

<https://www.state.gov/u-s-relations-with-lesotho/>



FRIENDS OF LESOTHO

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Oakwood, OH 45419



METSOALLE ea LESOTHO

Fourth Quarter 2023  
Newsletter



FRIENDS OF LESOTHO

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