

# KHOTSO

December 2011

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## Message from the Country Director



PCV Nate Landrum showing how heat is conducted to his Form D class

Dear Volunteers,

I hope you all had a nice Thanksgiving. Michael and I spent it zip-lining in the Drakensberg Mountains and while doing so I gave thanks for what has been so far a quiet year and having the opportunity to oversee a program with such a dedicated group of Volunteers and staff!

December marks the departure of most of the ED 10s, Phase III training for the CHED 11s, the end of PST and the beginning of a 2-year tour of service for the ED 12s. Let me take this opportunity to thank the ED10s for their hard work and dedication over the past 2 years. Best of luck to all of you in the next chapter of your life!

In November, I was happy to visit several Volunteers: ED10s Andrea Holmen, Adam Santos, Nate Landrum, Ryan McClaine, Dustin Tamsen, Haley Waggoner and Erica Rossi; CHED 10s Sarah Marlow and Danielle Sanni; and PCRV Lisa Dold. I also got to spend a little time with CHED 11s Maggie Day, Lyndsey Chaillé and Jasmine Smith at their sites and see the wonderful library that CHED 10 Lauren Deakin helped open. Seeing them teach; interact with their students, supervisors, counterparts, friends and host families; and hear about their work was truly rewarding. Ambassador Bond and Deputy Chief of Mission Carl Fox accompanied me on a few of the visits and were duly impressed with what they saw. Keep up the great work!

### Announcements

**HIV Testing:** Peace Corps has revised its policy on PCVs participating in community HIV testing events. Please read the following statement from the PC Office of Medical Services carefully: "We have no objection to Volunteers getting HIV testing in a clinic (static or mo-

bile) as a demonstration of the value of testing under the following circumstances:

1. It is strictly voluntary and there is absolutely no coercion by the APCD or counterpart.
2. The clinic collects material for analysis in a safe and sanitary manner. Processing of the test is done strictly according to instructions or laboratory protocols.
3. Confidentiality of results is strictly enforced. We do not want the entire community to know that one of the PCVs is positive.

This testing should under no circumstances be used by PCVs for routine testing. All health care of the PCV, including HIV testing, should be done with the full knowledge of the PCMO. In addition, scarce or special funding set up by the country for purposes of testing should not be spent on PCVs." If you have any questions, please contact Kathy.

### US Embassy Education Advising Resources

The following information was provided by the US Embassy about their education advising resources. Please feel free to share this information with promising students.

◇ Education USA has a very good website with detailed, step-by step info: [http://www.educationusa.info/5\\_steps\\_to\\_study/](http://www.educationusa.info/5_steps_to_study/). Education USA requires that students:

1. Have very high grades
2. Excellent English Skills
3. Can pay to take SAT Exam (700R)
4. Can travel to Joburg at their own cost to take the TOEFL Exam (1400R plus travel)
5. Have access to internet for the application process

◇ The Embassy has no funding/scholarships available, so are careful about expectations even for those who are admitted. Check out: <http://www.facebook.com/#!/pages/EducationUSA-Maseru/157520334287959>

Khotso,  
Kathy

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## From the Editor

Articles must be received by the 4th Monday of the month to be included in the following month's edition of the Khotso. **When submitting articles, please provide the name of the person making the submission and a contact person for follow-up questions.** The Newsletter will be emailed and a hardcopy made available in the office on or about the 1<sup>st</sup> of each month. Please make sure that your email address is on file with Peace Corps. Remember that it is your responsibility to read the Khotso Newsletter for updates from Peace Corps Lesotho.

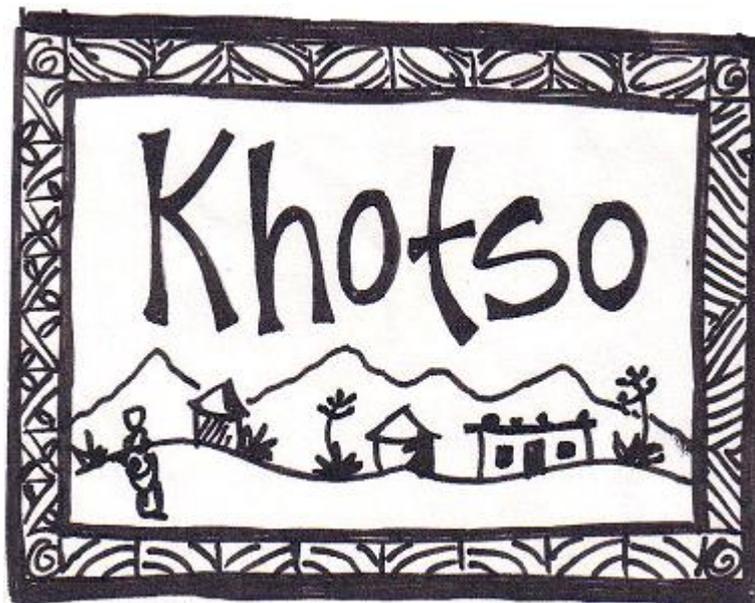
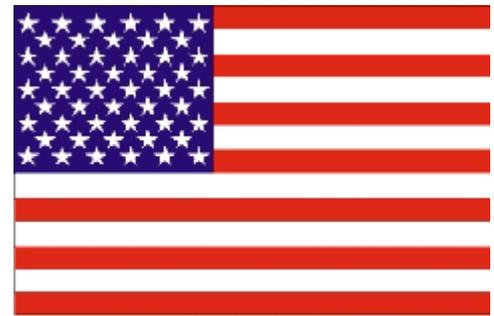
The editorial staff would like feedback from PCVs regarding the content. It is our desire to provide you with information that is useful, helpful, and encouraging. We would appreciate receiving constructive feedback from you.

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

Deepak Pullanikkatil, Editor



Editorial



**PCV & Staff Birthdays**

*Birthday greetings go out to the following Volunteers and staff!*

**December**

Comstock, Grant	- 4
Helie, Delia	- 8
Jayaraman, Aparna	- 15
Bechtold, Kali	- 19
Lehnhard, Joey	- 23
Tamsen, Dustin	- 25
Sanni, Danielle	- 28

**January**

Lawrence, Amanda	- 4
Bryant, Parker	- 7
Brunk, Katie	- 10
Glanville, Kate	- 11
Nelson, Sadie	- 22
Pullanikkatil, Deepak	- 22
Putsoa, Maggie	- 23
Magobet, Tab	- 30
Marsh, Kelsey	- 30

**Peace Corps Lesotho Holidays**

(PC office remains closed on these days)

**December**

Christmas (LS & US Holiday)	- 25
Boxing Day (LS Holiday)	- 26

**January**

New Year's Day (LS and US Holiday)	- 1
New Year's Day observed (US Holiday)	- 2
Martin Luther King Jr. Day (US Holiday)	- 16

**Calendar of Events and Staff Travel**

Nov 22 – Feb 23	'M'e Masechaba on maternity leave
Dec 3	Training for new PSN members
Dec 5-9	CHED 11 Phase III Workshop
Dec 9-21	'M'e Itumeleng on leave
Dec 12	ED12 Swearing-in
Dec 13-14	ED 12 Supervisors' Workshop
Dec 14-15	CHED Project Advisory Committee Meeting
Dec 14-30	'M'e Khubelu on leave
Dec 19-23	Nt. Tsatsi on leave
Dec 19-30	'M'e Victoria on leave
Dec 27 – Jan 18	Dr. Victor on leave
Dec 23 – Jan 1	Kathy on leave
Dec 27 – Jan 6	'M'e Selloane on leave
Dec 27 – Jan 6	'M'e Lebohang on leave
Dec 27 – Jan 11	Nt. Nthoalo on leave
Dec 29 – Jan 6	Nt. Clement on leave
Jan 1-13	'M'e Malisema on leave
Jan 9-20	Charles on leave
Jan 12-17	Kathy on leave

**Duty Officer Schedule**

Nov 28 – Dec 4	CHED PA
Dec 5 – 11	SSC

Dec 12 – 18	ITS
Dec 19 – 25	FA
Dec 26 – Jan 1	GSO
Jan 2 – 8	CD
Jan 9 – 15	DMO
Jan 16 – 22	APCD ED
Jan 23 – 29	APCD CHED

**STAFF MEMBER OF THE MONTH**

Ntate Clement worked tirelessly to facilitate sessions during the ED 12 PST, ensure that sites were ready, manage the site assignment process, organize and facilitate the Introductory Liaison workshop, and prepare the practice teaching exercise and supervisors' workshops. These tasks were made particularly challenging by the absence of the Program Assistant for Education who was attending a training out of the country for half the month.

**ADMIN CORNER by Jim**

I'll never forget my first Thanksgiving as a PCV. It was 31 years ago in a small village in the Northwest Province of Cameroon. I missed my family and felt so alone. If you have similar feelings during this Holiday Season take the time to reach out to family, other PCVs and Lesotho friends and take comfort in the fact that what you are doing here with Peace Corps in Lesotho is extremely important and is impacting lives. I know similar thoughts helped sustain me during that difficult time.

**Auction:** As mentioned in the November Khotso the Embassy will be holding an auction on Saturday, December 3<sup>rd</sup> at their warehouse (near the Chinese Embassy) in Maseru. Please inform your counterparts, supervisors and friends that a great deal of merchandise will be for sale. As previously mentioned we will be looking to sell all the computer equipment that was recently replaced as well as some old photocopiers and other sundry items. Neither the Embassy nor Peace Corps really wants to have items left at the end of the day so the pricing should be very flexible.

**Dress code:** Please remember when you are in Maseru that there is a "dress code" at the Peace Corps office. It is understood that after several hours on a taxi, it is often difficult to look professional but things like torn jeans or shirts, shorts or other "tattered" garments worn in the office reflects badly on all of us. If you have any questions about what is or isn't appropriate, please check with your APCD or any staff member. For me, I just look at how the local PC staff dresses and try and follow their lead. Thanks in advance for keeping this in mind.

**Peace Corps-issued equipment:** It should go without saying that Peace Corps assets that you are in possession of are for your use only. We have had reports of damaged bicycles and other items that as it turns out were "lent" to counterparts and other associates at site that came back less than 100%. We want to make sure that you have what you need to do your job, but we have a very limited budget to repair and replace things. Please

keep that in mind the next time someone asks to “borrow” something you really need.

**VRC:** The VRC is starting to accumulate items again. It usually happens when Volunteers are COSing, but lately it has been more frequent. If you are a COSing Volunteer or just a Volunteer who has things they no longer want/need, please sell or give them away at your site. We will be moving to a new office in the next few months and are looking to reduce what we have in the VRC. We will have to take a “hard line” on this if it continues. Anything (i.e., boxes of items, backpacks, clothes) observed there for more than a few days will be disposed of accordingly.

**Living Allowance Survey:** The Living Allowance Survey will be rolled out a little earlier this year. We are shooting for mid December. Again, it is an opportunity to “give yourself a raise” so please take the time to fill it out and get it back to us. More details will follow.

Having just read back what I have written so far in this edition I am sensing kind of a “parental tone” which was not my intent. In lieu of that let me close with a quote from President John F. Kennedy that often inspires me during challenging times. “Those who dare to fail miserably can achieve greatly.” Happy Holidays everyone!

### EDUCATION CORNER by Nt. Clement & M’e Malitaba

As Phase I of PST winds down, we can all breathe a sigh of relief that all 23 PCTs seem destined to pull through to the end! We again take this moment to thank the currently serving Volunteers for giving their all, particularly the COSers for playing a balancing act between their last minute wrap-up activities and sharing their experiences with the trainees. The trainees are assigned as follows:

Mabuleng Secondary	Mokhotlong	Caitlin Vincent
Sekonyela High	Mokhotlong	Nick Mast
‘Malefiloane High	Mokhotlong	Katie Buechel
Rehauhetsoe High	Botha Bothe	Caitlin Fisher
Qholaqhoe High	Botha Bothe	Kevin Koryto
Lepekola Secondary	Botha Bothe	Lauren Parks
Matukeng ECCD	Leribe	Teresa Severson
Katse High	Thaba Tseka	Tahira Taylor
Thaba Tseka HS	Thaba Tseka	James Forte
St. Lawrence HS	Berea	Ed Stocki
Lerotholi HS	Maseru	Heather Mangan
Mahloenyeng PS	Maseru	Hannah Campbell
Metlaeeng PS	Mafeteng	Maria Bruno
Phechela PS	Mafeteng	Katie Brunk
Qhalasi SS	Mohale’s Hoek	Aparna Jayaraman
‘Mabatho SS	Mohale’s Hoek	Maryjane Heckel
Masitise ECCD	Quthing	Nancy Feraco
Tiping SS	Quthing	Sadie Nelson
Moyeni HS	Quthing	Tishina Okegbe
Mphaki LCE	Quthing	Norma Lynn Hood
Sekake LCE	Qacha’s Nek	Shanelle France
Ratsoleli ECCD	Qacha’s Nek	Janelle Leza
Thoteng PS	Qacha’s Nek	Peggy Kang

Please let’s all welcome and help guide them through their set-

ting-in process.

On a different note, please note that this month we are also bidding farewell to majority of the ED10 group. Please join us in saying many thanks to Nate, Adam, Haley, Shanthi, Rory, Leeza, Kimiko, Eric, Katie, Joey, Dustin, Kali, Ariel, Ryan, Sara and Parker for their successful Peace Corps service in Lesotho. We wish them well as they venture into new chapters in their lives. Hopefully we will see some of them in the near future!

### **Gold Star Activities**

**Leeza Salen (ED 10)** – I have been working with one of my best teachers, a Reception teacher, on a series of DVDs and other teaching aides that the school received from the Ministry of Education. She expressed some confusion regarding the teaching style and content that was being displayed in the DVDs. Each week, I went to the school when her class had access to the television and DVD player to observe her. If necessary, I would jump in throughout the lesson. Otherwise, I would just help with passing out materials and during group work and sit down with her after the lesson to share any feedback.

I have recently gone back to the school to observe one of the maths lessons that is on one of the DVDs. The lesson involved using manipulatives to count up to 10, as well as visualizing more, less, bigger, and smaller. 'M'e seemed to have a good grasp of how the DVD was there to guide her in her teaching. She was able to successfully complete the lesson without any guidance from me. Moreover, the students seemed to be extremely engaged in the lesson and exhibited understanding of the concept. Overall, the DVDs have been a great help to this particular teacher and I believe that her students are benefitting greatly.

**Rory Pulvino (ED 10)** – I realized that a lot of my high school students do not take advantage of the library that I started at the high school. Also I realized that many Basotho do not engage with their children much and certainly don't read to them. So working with the primary school principal and a teacher at the high school, we decided to organize a reading period once per week between the Form E students and the standard sevens. This activity ensures that the primary school actually uses its library. The two Basotho running the program make sure Form Es go to the primary school and actually reads and have seen that it makes has a huge impact. The students love teaching the younger students and the younger students have role models. The activity motivates and encourages standard sevens to read, while also forcing Form E students to read, try and comprehend what they are reading more, and gives them a skill they can use later in life as parents.

### CHED CORNER by Charles & M’e Selloane

Hi CHEDers. Let’s all join hands together to congratulate those who had their birthdays in November! And By the way...Ntate Charles, are you older than ‘Me’ ‘Masechaba’s daughter or is she older than you? Check the calendar...J

The past month has been quite busy with out of the office travel for the CHED APCD and the PA, for a good cause indeed as it opened more doors of learning how the CHED 11s are settling

into their new homes and how the CHED 10s are doing in their second year of service!

**Site Visits:** We would really like to thank all those PCVs who hosted us for site visits during the November month! Rea le-boha, baithaopi! The visits came right when they were mostly needed! Despite some hiccups that some of you expressed in their day to day work most of the CHED 11s seem to be doing very well both programmatically and your continued learning of Sesotho, much to the delight of 'M'e Mamokola. For those of you who have not identified a language tutor please make sure you identify one and inform 'Me' Mamokola. Remember language learning is required to help you integrate well in your communities and for safety and security purposes. The greatest success is that we are left with **ONLY** one CHED 11 PCV who, due to work-related assignments could not be visited before Phase III Training next week! Hang in there, Jasmine, you're top on our list in the next round of site visits, as are the remaining CHED 10s who haven't had a visit from us in the last few months.

**CHED 11 Phase II Assignments:** Congratulations to those who have managed to complete and submit their Phase II assignments on time. For those who are still behind...the clock is ticking! Remember leave request approval relies on successful completion and submission of these assignments.

**Phase III Training:** The plan is have the Phase III Training on December 5 – 9. The CHED 11s are expected to take public transportation to their respective CBT villages and will be accommodated by your host families on Sunday, December 4. The workshop will begin on Monday, December 5. Host families will prepare meals for the Volunteers. Please remember to travel with your passports in case of an emergency – and we'll be having a special treat for you at Living Life Café in Ladybrand. So, no passport equals no delightful lunch in a beautiful garden setting for you.

**Project Advisory Committee (PAC):** Plans are under way to finalize the list of nominees who will constitute the CHED PAC for which some of the PCVs may be considered and notified in due course to enhance effective planning for vacations. In order to make the process as objective as possible, We have set a criterion that will guide the selection process which has taken much consideration the potential face lift of the CHED project for the next five years; following the recent portfolio review. The tentative date for the first PAC meeting is December 14-15, 2011.

#### Gold Star Activities

**Lewis Simmons** (CHED 11) – The Catholic Training Center hosted Lewis for most part of his Phase II, which made it more like a second home for him. He took an opportunity to identify the gaps in skills that the Nuns had and computer literacy came amongst the top priority. He therefore engaged the nuns in a capacity building program whereby he assisted and taught them how to upload and digitize documents on their computers.

**Delia Helie** (CHED 10) – The Nohana Primary School has a small IGA of charging cell phones with a solar panel at the school. However, they have never kept records of the amount of phones they charge and how much money they collected. Delia has be-

gun a record book for the school. She has not only taught the Principal how to use the record book but also how to track the number of phones, amount of money earned, and also to see if money has not been paid. Also the school occasionally takes money to be used in other places so she has taught the principal how to record the money and keep track of where the money goes.

**Shane McFarland** (CHED 11) – Shane was invited by CHED 10 Lee Niang to provide assistance in a Baylor-hosted workshop on human trafficking for members of its Teen Club. His role was to present escape training for the girls and boys of teen club. The core of the presentation focused on the relationship between human trafficking and sexual assault with emphasis on empowering both boys and girls on the reduction of the risk of assault, reporting abduction and stressing escape as the last resort. Sentebale was also present at the workshop to translate the content presented to the kids. Boys were particularly sensitized on the significance of reporting abduction and the legal consequences of witnessing/committing sexual assault. The boys were also taught the skills to use in protecting the women in their lives or escaping an assault/abduction. A total of 150 kids attended per day. The presentation was received well and was reported to be fun for the kids. Shane was invited back for the second Teen Club and to present to the Baylor staff.

#### SAFETY & SECURITY CORNER by Nt. Nthoalo

**Emergency Action Plan:** Thank you all for your participation in the EAP exercise conducted on September 28<sup>th</sup> to ensure that Volunteers understood the EAP status (ALERT PHASE) for October 1<sup>st</sup>, the date of local government elections held throughout the country. Following our EAP, designated staff contacted Volunteers by cell phone and gave the EAP message directly to them. We were pleased that all Volunteers contacted understood the message and took the exercise seriously. We also took note of good practice adopted by Volunteers who reported their whereabouts to either their counterparts or supervisors. This helped us in relaying the message to Volunteers who were not immediately reached. Below are the results of the EAP exercise:

- ◇ 61 Volunteers who were in the country at the time of the exercise were successfully contacted in under 4 hours.
- ◇ 2 Volunteers were out of the country on vacation and were not contacted.

#### Lessons Learned

- ◇ Correctly completed Site Locator Forms (SLF) with a wide pool of updated contact numbers facilitated the EAP exercise. Volunteers temporarily out of cell phone reach had notified other community members on their SLF of their whereabouts.
- ◇ Commitment and understanding of the EAP by staff members helped the timely completion of the exercise.
- ◇ Periodic EAP exercise is good refresher training for both staff and Volunteers.
- ◇ Majority of Volunteers keep their phones charged and this facilitated communication whenever needed.

**Reporting Incidents:** I would like to take this opportunity to kindly encourage Volunteers to report any safety and security related issues that cause them any concern or discomfort in their com-

munities. Examples of these incidents could include demonstrations, school strikes, broken door locks or windows, and crime-related issues whether directly or indirectly affecting Volunteers. These should be reported so that Peace Corps can follow up and assess risks to Volunteers.

**Travel warnings:** Due to security concerns, no PCV travel to Kenya will be approved until further notice. Volunteers are also discouraged from traveling to Egypt until further notice. As we approach the "festive season," please be particularly vigilant wherever you are. Let's all finish 2011 safely!

### (Amherst College) Jeffs Earn Tournament Title with 93-63 win over Saint Lawrence; Atanga McCormick Named MVP

(Contact: *Justin Long*)

AMHERST, Mass. – The Amherst College women's basketball team won its own Tip-Off Tournament by earning a 93-63 victory over Saint Lawrence University on November 20. Six players scored in double figures to help the Lord Jeffs (2-0) bump their home winning streak to 51 games, while the Saints moved to 1-1 on the season.

Amherst shot 83.3 percent from behind the arc (11-for-16), with Caroline Stedman '12 hitting all three of her attempts from long range en route to 15 points and a selection to the All-Tournament Team. Lem Atanga McCormick '12 was named the weekend's MVP after recording 16 points, four rebounds, two assists, three blocks and two steals on Sunday.

The teams combined for only 12 points in the opening four and a half minutes and the Saints trailed by only seven (16-9) with 12:30 remaining in the half. The Jeffs took charge from there and accounted for the next 15 points, all of which were scored by Bridget Crowley '13, Kim Fiorentino '12 and Shannon Finucane '12.

Amherst took a 45-24 advantage into halftime and led by at least 21 the rest of the way. The hosts went ahead by 31 (73-42) on a three-point play by Crowley midway through the second half, and their biggest lead (81-45) came when Jackie Renner '12 knocked down a three with 8:47 to go. The Saints outscored the Jeffs by an 18-12 in the final 8:47, with Maddy Wetterhahn '15 accounting for nine of her team's points during the stretch. Wetterhahn finished with 12 points and five rebounds off the bench, while Legg had seven boards and two blocks to go along with her 21 points.

Finishing in double figures for Amherst were Atanga McCormick (16), Stedman (15), Fiorentino (13), Megan Robertson '15 (13), Crowley (13) and Finucane (12). Fiorentino and Renner combined for 10 assists and each had a team-high six rebounds, with Fiorentino also contributing two blocks and three steals.

*(Lem Atanga McCormick is a senior at Amherst and daughter of our very own DMO Jim McCormick! The Jeffs won the 2011 national championship for their division.)*

### PCV CORNER

#### Coping With Depression during the Holidays

Submitted by Amy Jo Carson (CHED 10)

It's a disappointing truth: Holiday cheer can be difficult to come by if you're facing emotional pain caused by a loss. If you have lost a loved one, suffered a setback, or are far away from home and family, the holidays can be hollow. Even at the best of

times, the holidays are stressful – but when there's an additional emotional burden, they are especially difficult. But it is possible to muster your inner strength and find bits of holiday joy amid the grief. Here are a few tips that might help you to beat some of the holiday blues:

\* Be realistic. When there's a loss or a change in our lives, our traditions must change – and that's hard because we will miss our favorite things. People do well to anticipate how changes will affect those traditions. It's important to be open to new traditions. Take the best of the old, borrow from new people in your life, and create some new traditions.

\* Acknowledge your feelings and accept the sadness. If someone close to you has recently died or you can't be with loved ones, realize that it's normal to feel sadness and grief. If we allow ourselves to have those emotions, they will actually pass more quickly than if we push them away. It is important to feel safe when facing your sadness, by letting yourself cry or expressing your feelings when you need to. You can't force yourself to be happy just because it's the holiday season.

\* Reach out. If you feel lonely or isolated, seek out community, religious, spiritual or other social events. They can offer support and companionship. As Peace Corps volunteers, you are already volunteering your time to help others, but it can still continue to be a good way to lift your spirits and broaden your friendships.

\* Open your heart. Indeed, the traditions are what tug at our hearts, as holidays symbolize a time when people come together. They represent countless memories accumulated during your lifetime. Though the holidays can be difficult, they can also be a time of healing. Allow little miracles by opening your heart and experiencing connections with those around you that are closest to you or even to those who are perhaps not so close. You are entitled to find some joy.

\* Try not to abandon healthy habits and try not to let the holidays become a free-for-all. Overindulgence only adds to your stress and guilt. Have a healthy snack before holiday feasts so that you don't go overboard on sweets and drinks. Continue to get plenty of sleep and physical activity as much as possible.

\* Take a breather. Make some time for yourself. Spending just 15 minutes alone, without distractions, may refresh you enough to handle everything you need to do. Take a walk. Stargaze, if you are in a place where you can. Listen to soothing music. Find something that reduces stress by clearing your mind, slowing your breathing and restoring inner calm.  
.....and lastly,

\* Seek help if you need it. Despite your best efforts, you may find yourself feeling persistently sad or anxious, plagued by physical complaints, unable to sleep, irritable and hopeless. Reach out to a friend or a PSN member, and if these feelings last for a while, the PCMO.

So if you do find yourself depressed during the holiday season, these are just a few things that might help you to beat those holiday blues. Just remember that the best holiday gift you can give yourself and others is some of that good old-fashioned tender loving care.

#### From the DAR committee

Submitted by Matt Deakin (CHED 10)

Has anyone else felt this disconnect? Such a huge chunk of our attention as PCVs goes into addressing the HIV/AIDS crisis—hours of training, teaching Life Skills, working with clinics, part-

nering with a hundred different organizations around Lesotho. But how often do we actually have a window into the everyday physical battle raging in the lives of our communities? If your experience is anything like mine, HIV is good at hiding. Perhaps it's rebuked for so many funerals and orphans, but rarely is it exposed as a common struggle. Indeed, the disconnect from real life may be one of stigma's most powerful weapons; people living with HIV/AIDS are too often either shamed or scared into silence. A neighbor of ours is a wonderful exception. A single mother with 3 children, she wears her positive status and healthy lifestyle as badges of honor, confidence and courage. I sat down with her to find out a bit of her story:

**Matt:** Tell me a little about when you tested positive. How did you feel and whom did you tell?

**'Me Manthebe:** I tested positive in 2003 after months of feeling very sick. When I found out I was positive, I was very worried about what it would mean for my family, but also relieved that I now knew the cause of my sickness. At first, I only told my oldest son and a close friend that had encouraged me to test. I was worried about how most people would view me if they knew I was positive.

**Matt:** How did more people in the community find out and how did they treat you?

**'Me 'Manthebe:** Many people had noticed that my body was weak and they saw me go to the clinic every month starting in 2004 to get my ARVs. At first, everyone gossiped about me and even old friends insulted me. It was difficult and hurt me very much. They didn't treat me as a friend they knew, but only saw the HIV.

**Matt:** Has anything changed in the last few years?

**'Me 'Manthebe:** I have been living with HIV for 8 years now and I have a healthy life. I work as a sitter, keep a tidy home, support my children who are doing well in school, and am even building a new addition to my house. People see that HIV has not stopped me from living. I think I am an example of that to my neighbors. Most people know my status now, but they see me for more than HIV. I still get insulted sometimes, but I feel confident that knowing my status is better than so many people that don't know theirs.

**Matt:** Do you get any kind of support from the village or the clinic for living with HIV?

**'Me 'Manthebe:** The nurses at the clinic are very helpful. They answer all of my questions and check to see that I'm taking the ARVs correctly (which was difficult to remember at first). My close friend that encouraged me to test is still a huge support for my family and me. My children also help a lot around the home because sometimes the ARVs can take away my energy.

**Matt:** What would make Ha Khabo a better place for people living with HIV?

**'Me 'Manthebe:** I wish people would test more often. I know personally how scary it can be, but it is truly better to know your status so that you can take action. I also wish there was a group of HIV positive people that could meet to talk about our problems together. Sometimes I feel lonely because so many people keep their status private. It would be a good thing for HIV positive people and the whole community to be more honest and supportive of each other.

### **Who Says Angels Can't Be Bought?**

Submitted by Kelsey Marsh (CHED 10)

With winter's icy grip and school holiday's fast approaching, volunteers in Sehlabathebe, Qacha's Nek started a youth group at Leqooa Primary School facilitating activities ranging from sports

to drama and singing to handicrafts. During one such session, students were taught how to make beaded angels using donated wire and beads. Results ranged from Picasso to Michaelangelo, but students were proud and enthusiastic of their creations. Their eagerness to continue coupled with support from the Principal and teachers led to the beginnings of an income generation activity for the Primary School.

While displaying examples made by students, community members' interests were peaked especially due to the versatility of the angels' use. So began the creative process of designing unique beaded angels in art class. With each angel produced for Peace Angles of Lesotho (PAL), Leqooa Primary School is learning how to take an idea and turn it into a business.

If you are interested in supporting PAL by purchasing an angel for LSL 20, or in any other capacity contact Kelsey Marsh at 59794159 or Benja Davies at 59798085.

Charles and 'M'e Selloane have angels in case you're interested in purchasing for friends or family. The angels also make great stocking stuffers for that Secret Santa!

### **From Friends of Lesotho**

Congratulations and welcome from Friends of Lesotho (FOL) to all the new Education PCVs. You have a couple of challenging and exciting years ahead of you in a country all of our members love and remember with fondness.

**TAP follow-up:** FOL extends a very big Thank You to all the volunteers who sent pictures and thank you letters from their 2011 scholarship awardees. These are a terrific help with future fundraising. To all of you continuing your service in 2012 and to all the new Education PCVs, please assured that FOL looks forward to supporting another group of students this coming year. *NOTE: Once the new TAP Committee is established, please send the names and contact information to Dyann Van Dusen at [dyvandusen@yahoo.com](mailto:dyvandusen@yahoo.com).*

**Complimentary membership reminder:** Just a quick note to remind you all that you are entitled to free membership in FOL while serving in Lesotho and for one year from your COS date. We will send you our newsletters, annual report and other communications via e-mail if you simply sign up on our website <http://www.friendsoflesotho.org/>.

**Holiday FOL fundraising reminders:** FOL has created a beautiful 2012 calendar, thanks to photos provided by Jeremy Shockley (RPCV 2003-2005). These make great gifts for family and friends eager to see professional images of Lesotho and its people. They can be ordered from Pete Neumann, Fundraising Chair. Just drop him an e-mail at: [pneumann1947@yahoo.com](mailto:pneumann1947@yahoo.com). For all you Amazon shoppers, remember that FOL gets a 6% percent donation on purchases made via the FOL link to Amazon on our website. So please tell family and friends to go to the FOL Shop page on our website.

**FOL well represented in D.C.:** Nearly 100 Lesotho RPCVs gathered in Washington, D.C. at the end of September for the 50<sup>th</sup> Peace Corps anniversary and 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Friends of Lesotho. FOL attendees received lots of attention during the Walk of Flags as we gathered on the bridge to sing the Lesotho National Anthem and wave our individual Lesotho flags.

We even had other "Friends Of" groups asking for the name of the designer of our t-shirts. The t-shirts were designed by FOL member Janissa Balcomb (RPCV 1977-1980), who is also the founder of Laptops to Lesotho. Janissa is in Lesotho now following up on this very unique educational project in Ketane. T-shirts

are available from <http://www.CafePress.com/Lesotho>

**A day of service:** As part of the recent 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration for the Peace Corps, FOL partnered with The National Park Service and Ben and Jerry's for a landscaping service project at the World War II Memorial on the National Mall in Washington D.C.

Despite the rainy weather, 27 former Peace Corps volunteers from Lesotho, with a few of their friends and fellow volunteers from Ecuador and Uzbekistan, spent the morning of September 23, 2011, working on a landscape project to beautify the World War II Memorial. In the Peace Corps spirit of friendliness and inclusiveness, the group even recruited two parents of a current PCV in Guatemala to join them on their way to the metro!

The day of service was particularly meaningful for RPCV Lesotho and FOL member Gary Gilbert of Defiance, Ohio.

"I was truly honored to work with my fellow RPCVs from Lesotho at the World War II Memorial. My father, Howard M. Gilbert, served in the 10th Mountain Division in Italy during WWII and never had a chance to visit the memorial before his death in 2008. To help beautify the Memorial in the pouring rain and have WWII vets thank us for our service is an experience I will not soon forget. When we finished with our work, I felt like I had honored my dad's memory and his service," said Gary.

Many thanks to Miriam Hornstein, Acting Volunteer Program Manager for the National Mall and Memorial Parks for providing gloves, tools, and supervision! A special thanks also to Ben and Jerry's who provided our blue service day t-shirts, which were more brown than blue by the end of the project. Soaking wet and muddy, the volunteers headed off to clean up for the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary gathering of the Friends of Lesotho.

After attending a program filled with speakers, food, and a fund-raising raffle on both Friday evening and Saturday morning, most of the RPCV from Lesotho attended the march from the Arlington Cemetery to the Lincoln Memorial. Wendy Seaward, RPCV Lesotho shared the day with her parents. "I invited my parents to march in the Parade of Flags it was a very joyous occasion. My dad served two tours of duty in Vietnam and sees the value of the Peace Corps as a useful tool for the establishment of peace and understanding in this world", said Wendy.

**RPCVs from Lesotho advocate for the Peace Corps on Capitol Hill:** RPCVs from Lesotho spent a day on Capitol Hill during the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration of the Peace Corps in Washington, DC. Meg Castle (Maryland), Julie Galbraith (California), Deena Rowe-Krumdick (Colorado), and Wendy Seaward (Tennessee) spent Thursday, September 22, 2011 on Capitol Hill urging their Congresspersons to support legislation that will honor and strengthen the Peace Corps' mission of promoting peace and friendship around the world. September 22<sup>nd</sup> marked fifty years to the day of final congressional passage and signing of the Peace Corps Act in 1961.

The RPCVs from Lesotho, along with over 500 other RPCVs from various countries, urged continued strong support for funding of the Peace Corps, noting the positive role Peace Corps volunteers play in U.S. outreach to the world and emphasizing the significant dividends and many domestic benefits RPCVs provide to communities here at home. Earlier this year Peace Corps received a \$26 million cut to its \$400 million budget. Advocates are seeking to forestall further cuts. Some 8,655 Peace Corps volunteers are currently in the field – an increase of nearly 1,000 from a year ago and the highest number in 40 years. Since 1961, more than 200,000 citizens have served as

Peace Corps volunteers in nearly 140 different countries.

Advocates also urged bi-partisan support and cooperation to ensure passage of the Kate Puzey Peace Corps Volunteer Protection Act, designed to strengthen the agency's training and response to volunteers serving overseas who are subjected to physical or sexual assault. Since this issue received much attention earlier this year, Congress, the Peace Corps and victims advocacy groups have taken significant steps forward to address the concern.

Congress is also considering legislation to authorize the creation of a commemorative work near the National Mall to mark the historic significance of the founding of the Peace Corps in 1961. This project would use no taxpayer funds for either the creation or maintenance of the commemorative work. The RPCVs explained each of these issues to their Senators, Representatives, and/or their staff, as well as providing them with follow up literature for further review.

### **Lesotho to harness wind and water in huge green energy project**

By David Smith, [www.guardian.co.uk](http://www.guardian.co.uk), Monday, 31 October 2011

The tiny mountain kingdom of Lesotho is to harness the power of wind and water in a \$15bn (£9bn) green energy project, the biggest of its kind in Africa. The Lesotho highlands power project (LHPP) will generate 6,000 megawatts (MW) of wind power and 4,000MW of hydropower, equivalent to about 5% of neighbouring South Africa's electricity needs.

Lesotho says the scheme will help end its plight as one of the world's poorest countries, "making it a case study in how investing in renewable energy can transform a nation's fortunes". Lesotho offers the opportunity to build one of the highest wind farms in the world, with more than 80% of its territory lying at least 1,800m above sea level. But the high altitude of its Maluti mountains also carries risks: one of the highest lightning strike rates in the world and temperatures plunging to -20C in the winter months.

The electricity generated by wind and water will be used by Lesotho and the country that landlocks it, South Africa, which faces a constant battle to keep up with growing demands. It is also hoped that the scheme, up to 80% financed by Chinese loans, will be a silver bullet in Lesotho's impoverished economy. Nearly half of the 2 million population struggle to live on less than \$1.25 a day. Lesotho has the third-highest rate of HIV in the world and the third-lowest life expectancy at 45.9 years.

Investors say the power project will create 25,000 jobs over 15 years. Some 1,500 technicians and engineers will be employed on a permanent basis. The difficult construction of roads and transmission lines will open up isolated communities, giving them access to markets and government services.

Monyane Moleleki, Lesotho's natural resources minister, said: "The Lesotho highlands power project promises hitherto unheard of positives for the socioeconomic wellbeing of our nation. The project comes at a time in our history when our traditional income streams have dried up due largely to the global economic meltdown.

"Through this project, our country has the potential to graduate from a least developed country status to a developing country status. Our beloved Maluti mountain range has once again proven to be the saviour for our country's economy."

Construction is expected to take between 10 and 15 years. The

first phase is a 150-megawatt windfarm, set to start next year. South Africa's Harrison and White Investments and its Chinese technology partner, Ming Yang Wind Power, will build wind turbine components factories in South Africa and Lesotho.

There are hopes it will eventually reduce the power cuts that continue to plague South African residents and industry. Moss Leoka, executive director of Harrison and White, said: "South Africa has huge generation capacity shortages. We've had rolling blackouts since 2008 and it's holding up our new industrial projects and efforts at job creation. We need a lot of extra capacity."

The Maluti mountains are uninhabited but some of the planned sites sustain valuable wetlands and rare fauna and flora. Leoka is braced for a backlash against wind turbines after an environmental impact assessment.

"It's going to come, it's a given when you put these things anywhere in the world," he added. "The government will invite objections and I can guarantee that there will be many. We will have to prepare ourselves thoroughly for answers to those questions."

South Africa, host of the climate change conference in Durban next month, was criticised last week for an "addiction to coal" by Greenpeace, which called on its government to stop building a giant coal-fired power station and invest in renewable energy solutions.



CHED II Jasmine Smith with kids and staff at Help Lesotho

# PCV Life in Photos



Ambassador Bond with CHED IO Sarah Marlow and her supervisor



CHED II Lyndsey Chaille with her host parents



Ambassador Bond, CD Kathy Jacquart Dill and ED IO Haley Waggoner with counterparts



DCM Carl Fox attending a Zenon HS Life Skills Committee meeting with CHED IO Danielle Sanni



ED ID Adam Santos and counterpart see-saw at the PCPP-funded playground at a local primary school



PCRV Lisa Dold practicing yoga poses with students from Thuso e tla tsoa kae Center

### **NEWS FROM AROUND THE PEACE CORPS WORLD**

#### **Law Codifies Many Reforms Agency has Implemented**

WASHINGTON, D.C., November 21, 2011—President Obama signed into law the Kate Puzey Peace Corps Volunteer Protection Act of 2011, codifying a number of the reforms the PC has put into place over the past 2 years to better protect and support Volunteers. The Act is named in honor of Kate Puzey, a PCV who died while serving in Benin in 2009.

"I thank President Obama for signing this important legislation and Senators Johnny Isakson and Barbara Boxer and Representatives Ted Poe, Ileana Ros-Lehtinen and Howard Berman for working diligently to pass the legislation," said Peace Corps Director Aaron S. Williams.

"Kate Puzey was an outstanding Peace Corps volunteer who represented the best America has to offer with her passion for service and commitment to making the world a better place, and this law is a tribute to her legacy. I am grateful to the Puzey family and all returned Peace Corps volunteers who have worked with us to better support volunteers serving overseas. This law marks an important milestone for Peace Corps and ensures that Peace Corps volunteers will continue to receive the best support and protection."

The new law codifies and expands many of the reforms the agency has put in place to enhance safety and security and ensure compassionate and effective response and support to all volunteers. The Peace Corps has:

- Hired a nationally recognized leader in victims' rights to serve as the agency's first victim advocate. Victims of crime can now turn to a skilled and experienced Peace Corps staff member dedicated to making certain volunteers receive the emotional, medical, legal, and other support they need both during and after their service.
- Updated and expanded training for volunteers and staff on sexual assault awareness, risk-reduction strategies, bystander intervention, and reporting and response procedures.
- Created an external body of leading experts in the field of sexual assault and returned PCVs to provide advice on PC's sexual assault risk reduction and response strategies. Established procedures to ensure that allegations by PCVs are handled confidentially and appropriately.



ED ID Dustin Tamsen giving a tour of the Maresca Memorial Library



ED ID Ryan McClaine teaching his Form B science class