



United States Peace Corps
PO Box 554
5 Bowker Road
Maseru 100, Lesotho
Southern Africa
Phone: +266 22313871
Fax: +266 22310287

In this issue

- PCV News Corner on Page 3
- Staff, Admin & Education Corners on Page 4
- CHED Corner on Page 6
- Language & Cross-cultural and Medical Corners on page 7
- PCV Life on Page 10
- News from around the Peace Corps World on Page 14

Message from the Country Director



Elissa Kaufman and Mohales Hoek prison guard librarians

Dear Volunteers,

We finally started to see the sun last week after more than a week of constant rain. Ironically due to the heavy rain, water pumps in Maseru broke leaving many neighborhoods without running water. Several staff members had to resort to bucket baths and found themselves a bit more understanding than usual of the Peace Corps Volunteer reality!

The rain and resulting bad roads cut short site visits I had planned in Mohales Hoek, but I did get to visit Elissa Kaufman (CHED 09), Ariana Berdini (CHED 10) and Kelly Anderson (CHED 10). All three seem to be doing great! The visit with Elissa focused on her life skills classes and library activities. Thanks to Elissa, I got to see the inside of a prison for the first time as we visited the "maximum security" prison in MH where she's helping develop the library that former Volunteer Ann Scheuneman started. No sooner had the guard unlocked the door to show us where the books are shelved than 3 or 4 prisoners showed up books in hand wanting to check out more! I also watched Elissa teach a great life skills lesson at a primary school on "identity." The lesson incorporated writing, drawing, and listening comprehension. The students were engaged and Elissa in total command!

Ariana had not yet begun teaching her classes at the Ntlatso Skills Training Center so we met with her supervisor and took a tour of the school. They are thrilled to have Ariana and based on the classes she taught last term really see the value of business education for their trainees.

Kelly "loves" her job and her site and is quite excited about spreading the good word about solar energy to the students at the Taung Skills Training Center and beyond!

It was also nice to see the CHED 09 group at their Reconnect in Pitseng. Although only 3 months from their COS conference, they seemed ready to make the most of their remaining time in Lesotho.

The 50th Anniversary Steering Committee (made up of staff, Volunteers, RPCVs and Embassy staff) finally met on January 28th. Following is the tentative plan for PC/Lesotho's 50th Anniversary celebration: 1) Kick-off press conference event at NUL in March; 2) Traveling photo gallery (March – December); 3) District events on July 4th; 4) Major event in September with King/PM, government officials taught by Volunteers, etc.; 5) Service event on International Volunteer Day in December; 6) Limited edition PC/Lesotho Basotho blanket and stamp. These are all in the embryonic stages of development so things very well may change. VAC members will get an update at their next meeting, and we'll send more details to Volunteers as they emerge. We hope that all Volunteers will be involved in our 50th celebration. Peace Corps also encourages you to spread the word to friends and family back home. Feel free to include the following with your email signature: **Peace Corps 50th Anniversary 2011: Be part of the legacy and join us as we honor our past and look to the future.** www.peacecorps.gov/50

Finally, I'd like to thank all the Volunteers for your cooperation and understanding with the new rules and policies. I know some may be disappointing, they are based on recommendations of the Post Operations Support Team that we align better with agency-wide policy. As always if you have any questions, please don't hesitate to ask. We may not be able to give you the answer you hope for, but at least we can try to provide an explanation.

Keep up your great work!

Khotso,
Kathy

Editorial Staff

Managing Editor – Kathy Jacquart

Editor – Deepak Pullanikkatil

Staff Contributors:

Administration – James McCormick

Program and Training:

Education – Clement Lephoto & Malitaba Hlabana

Community Health And Economic Development – Charles Miller & Selloane Pitikoe

Training – Masechaba Mapena

LCCH – Mamokola Matlanyane

Safety & Security – Masiphole Nthoalo

Health – Dr. Victor Inegbedion

Distribution – Lebohang Ranooe

All other staff and PCVs who contribute

From the Editor's Desk

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 1st of each month. Please make sure that your email address is on file with Peace Corps.

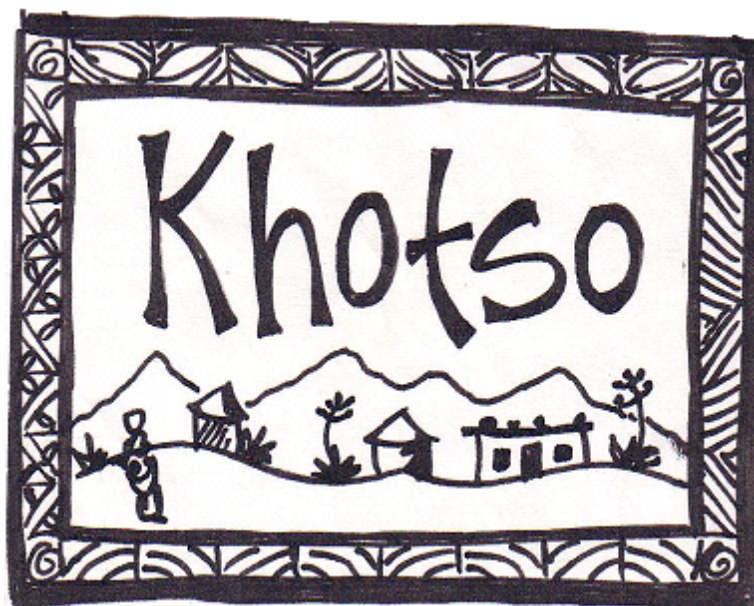
The editorial staff would like feedback from PCVs regarding the content. It is our desire to provide you with information that is useful, helpful, and encouraging. We would appreciate receiving constructive feedback from you as to whether the information contained in this newsletter met your needs.

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 Birthdays

Birthday greetings go out to the following PCVs. The Peace Corps Lesotho staff sends you greeting and hope that you have a very prosperous year.

**February**

Holmen, Andrea	February 1
Birhanu, Nathan	February 9
Niang, Lee	February 9
Pulvino, Rory	February 11
Tipsword, Jackie	February 11
Casimer, Kevin	February 12
Kerr, Mike	February 12
Helm, James	February 13
Movalli, Kristine	February 13
Landrum, Nathan	February 21

March

Mahylis, Jocelyn	March 15
Anderson, Kelly	March 24
Green, Sara	March 25

PCV News Corner

**Staff Schedule****February**

Jimi attending PC Staff Training (Jan 24 – Feb 4)

Lebohang on leave (Jan 31 – Feb 4)

Maseru District Meeting (Feb 3)

All day staff meeting (Feb 7)

Jimi on leave (Feb 14th – 18th)

Kathy on leave (Feb 8th-15th and Feb25th-28th)

March

CHED 10 PDM/HIV Workshop at Mochales Hoek (Mar 1st – 4th)

CHED 10 PDM/HIV Workshop at Butha Buthe (Mar 8th – 11th)

Ed and CHED Project Reviews (TBD)

Duty Officer Schedule

31-Jan to 6-Feb	— Kathy
7 – 13-Feb	— Jim
14 – 20-Feb	— Clement
21 – 27-Feb	— Charles
28-Feb to 6-Mar	— Masechaba
7 – 13-Mar	— Jimi
14 – 20-Mar	— Malitaba
21 – 27-Mar	— Selloane

U.S. Embassy Recruitment

The US Embassy is recruiting a Secretary for the Regional Security Office. It's a full-time; 40 hours/week position. Incumbent must be a US citizen. **SALARY:** M96, 514, per year (R8, 042.83/month) starting salary, including allowances (position grade FSN-06). **CLOSING DATE:** February 18, 2011. Contact 'm'e Ts'epang Mohale at the US Embassy for more information. (2231-2666)

Back to School

PC Lesotho staff celebrating back to school

Staff Birthdays



February

No staff birthdays.

March

Bernard Letsella March 15

April

No staff birthdays.

Peace Corps Lesotho Holidays

February

February 21— President's Day (US Holiday)*

March

March 11— Moshoeshoe Day (LS Holiday)*

April

April 22— Good Friday (LS Holiday)*

April 22— Easter Monday (LS Holiday)*

*PC Lesotho remains closed on this day.

Admin Corner By Jim and Victoria

Greetings from rainy Maseru! Looking out the window at the rain falling helps me contemplate things about the journey of life, like my hairline getting smaller and 'M'e Victoria getting bigger. In other words, all is as it should be...

W-2s: We received copies of 2010 W-2s for all Volunteers. (Copies should also have gone to your homes of record). If you are in Maseru stop by Jim's office and pick yours up or, if it is not likely you will be coming through anytime soon, send

him an e-mail requesting it and I will scan it and e-mail it back to you as an attachment.

Living Allowance Survey: Once again, it is time for the annual Living Allowance Survey. As Richard use to say, "It is an opportunity to give yourself a raise...!" It does however require a 75% or better participation rate to be considered so please take the time to complete it. Even if you are COSing this year you could do your part to help the Volunteers that will follow you. For

those of you that do not have reliable internet service a "hard copy" of the survey is attached to this *Khotso*. Please complete it and get it back to 'M'e Malisema (mmakhele@ls.peacecorps.gov) by any means possible. We will also e-mail to each Volunteer a spreadsheet of the same document which you can complete on-line and e-mail it back. That's all for now. Continued good luck at your sites and please stay safe.



Staff, Admin &
Education Corners

Education Corner By M'e' Malitaba

Lumelang Baithaopi Selemong se secha sa 2011. Re thabile haholo ho ba le lona selemong sena.

We hope you all come back with renewed energy and are ready to face 2011, the last

leg of your journey in Lesotho! J.C. and C.O.S.C. results are out and most of schools that have a Volunteer have performed well. We would like to congratulate all your hard work that you are doing out there. Below is the reported perform-

ance from schools where Volunteers worked last year. We are waiting for the analysis from Exam Council. MOHOMA TEMENG BANA BESO!

Below are the JC results.

Schools	PCV	Merit	1st Class	2nd Class	3rd Class	Fail	Absentees	Total
Fobane High	Rory	0	7	21	3	5	0	37
Hlalele High	Stephanie	0	2	34	5	5	0	46
Holy Names H	Shanthi	0	8	84	6	9	3	110
Holy Trinity H	Kimiko	2	10	55	21	42	2	132
Katse High	Tom	0	8	48	1	12	0	69
Lerotholi Sec	John Anhalt	0	0	13	5	33	1	52
Mabuleng Sec	Parker	0	0	5	0	6	1	12
'Maletsema Sec	Cullen	0	3	18	1	4	1	27
Maliba-Matso Sec	Ryan	0	1	29	9	27	1	62
Malithuso High	Sonny	0	7	60	18	43	0	128
Mantoetse Sec	Nathan	0	1	15	4	46	5	71
Matsie Sec	Kaitlin	0	3	32	5	14	4	58
Mekaling Sec	Kali	0	3	35	3	33	19	93
Moyeni High	Ariel	0	3	34	12	95	8	152
Mphaki High	Gwen	0	1	26	10	33	2	72
Qholaqhoe High	Adam	0	0	26	9	23	1	59
Sefako High	Nate	0	1	12	0	5	0	18
Sekameng High	Katie	0	3	29	0	9	0	41
Senkoase High	Violeta	0	2	35	1	28	1	67

St. Agnes	Karen	5	12	78	9	2	3	109
Tebellong Sec	Brett	0	2	12	0	24	0	38
Thaba Tseka High	Sammy	0	3	64	0	8	0	78
Thuto ke Leseli Sec	Eric	0	2	16	2	5	1	26
Ts'akhohlo High	Kelly	15	47	95	0	1	0	159
St DenisH	Melody	1	1	4	82	14	0	131

Below are the COSC results.

Schools	PCV	1st Class	2nd Class	3rd Class	GCE	Absentees	Total
Fobane High	Rory	0	4	6	20	1	31
Hlalele High	Stephanie	2	3	14	24	2	45
Holy Names H	Shanthi	0	15	35	27	0	77
Holy Trinity H	Kimiko	9	9	29	85	2	128
Katse High	Tom	0	11	10	6	0	27
Malithuso High	Sonny	1	11	29	31	0	72
Moyeni High	Ariel	0	4	13	62	0	79
Mphaki High	Gwen	0	4	18	19	1	44
Qholaqhoe High	Adam	1	3	14	16	0	34
Sefako High	Nate	0	1	2	3	0	6
Sekameng High	Katie	1	10	11	3	0	25
Senkoase High	Violeta	1	4	11	41	0	57
St. Agnes H	Karen	4	23	39	39	0	109
Thaba Tseka High	Sammy	2	8	25	29	0	64
Ts'akhohlo High	Kelly K.	26	37	32	9	0	104
St Denis High	Melody	0	2	1	22	0	25

Education Corner



NB: St. Agnes has one student as one of Top Ten students in the country. Ts'akhohlo High has 3 students in Top Ten. These students are going to be sponsored by GOL to study overseas.

Sharing Best Practices

In the next editions of the Khotso we will be including a section on 'Best Practices' across Peace Corps and in particular within our country. These will come from your VRFs, so be sure to include anything you'd like to share. For starters we thought of sharing with you some of the feedback we received from PC/W on our FY10 Project Status Reports that we submitted to HQ last November. The PSR is a compilation of Volunteers' results and other information about the ED and CHED projects for fiscal year 2010.

Project achievements:

- ◇ Great practical response to a felt challenge: Engaging District Senior Education Officers more in determining site placements has yielded some positive results in creating awareness and understanding on the part of Ministry of Education staff at district level. They are now more familiar with PCV presence and various roles they play.
- ◇ Post invites the SEOs to the Supervisors workshops for more in-depth discussion on the role and expectations of Peace Corps and their hosting schools.
- ◇ PCV and counterpart activities under the community development goal has significantly increased, demonstrating that the PCV role in development is not confined to their

primary roles as has been the case in the recent years.

- ◇ One PCV helped create 'Best Practices' DVD with a counterpart. This video presents a variety of classroom scenarios on classroom management and is being distributed by the Lesotho College of Education to individuals and other institutions of learning.
- ◇ Great BCC workshop for ED PCVs
- ◇ Great impact of the typical PCV library project on the overall promotion of reading activities
- ◇ Vignette: Having a PCV train a local girl in life skills and then have her conduct the sessions in a local dialect

Alignment of the project's activities with their stated objectives:

Activities overall align well with objectives

Volunteer activities include regular classroom teaching, as well as mentoring and working

with teacher counterparts.

To note: "Volunteers and their counterparts plan and provide instruction in English, Math and Science disciplines." –

however, output indicators only include learners taught and learners who passed exams – not real outcomes (PSR)

CHED Corner By Charles, 'M'e Selloane, Megan and Ntate Mohale

Greetings CHEDers, We hope you have all settled into 2011, albeit a bit damper than usual. On the positive note, I've never seen a greener Lesotho. J

CHED 10 PDM and HIV/AIDS Capacity Building Workshops:

The dates for the CHED 10 PDM and HIV/AIDS Capacity Building Workshops for Volunteers and counterparts have been set as follows:

- Qacha's Nek, Quthing, Mohale's Hoek, Mafeteng, and Maseru Districts: March 1 – 4, 2011.
- Berea, Leribe, Botha Bothe, and Thaba Tseka Districts: March 8 – 11, 2011.

Venues will be announced in invitation letters, which will go out soon. Each Volunteer will be asked to identify two Counterparts, one of which will be invited to attend both workshops, while the other will only be invited to attend the HIV/AIDS Workshop. Ntate Mohale and 'M'e Selloane will be contacting you soon to confirm your Counterpart attendees.

CHED 09 COS Conference: The CHED 09 COS Conference will take place May 3 – 5, 2011. We hope to announce the venue by mid-February. Please save the dates.

Project Plan Review: In March, we will be conducting a periodic review of our Project Plan, and may be asking some of you to participate in that process. These periodic reviews help to ensure that projects are focused on specific community needs, considering available resources, Volunteer skills and experience, and host country priorities, while setting Volunteers and host communities up for success. We will keep you informed of the process and its outcomes. Any changes in the CHED project as we currently know it will not affect current Volunteer as-

signments.

CHED 11 Site Identification:

The Peace Corps Placement Office in Washington is busy inviting for CHED 11, who will arrive in early June. We need your help in identifying sites. Contact 'M'e Selloane or Charles if you have sites in mind. We're especially interested increasing CHED Volunteer presence in Mokhotlong, Thaba Tseka, Qacha's Nek, Quthing, Mahales Hoek, and Mafeteng Districts, while maintaining Volunteer numbers in Leribe, Botha Bothe, Berea and Maseru Districts. We will not be placing new Volunteers in Maseru City. Please do help!

Trimester Report Feedback:

Thanks to all of you for submitting your reports and for wonderful work. We've enjoyed reading your reports and providing feedback. We wanted to share with you some lessons learned and success stories we read in your recent reports.

Lessons Learned:

- When inviting the last of my co-workers over for dinner, I learned that if there is no meat, then it's not a good meal. Always expect the unexpected and be flexible when it comes to facilitating to a new group of people.
- I have learned to communicate clearly exactly what I can do [and cannot] do as a Peace Corps Volunteer.
- I've learned to be patient and do what I can for each person I meet.
- I've learned the Basotho of Lesotho have many more challenges than the people of America.
- I've learned the shortest path for any individual in any nation from poverty to prosperity is a good education and a job.

• I've come to work with this trial and error system in most everything I do. I try something out first and when it fails, I adapt it.

• I have realized that you cannot force anything upon the community, even if you know it will help. Some ideas and practices are too foreign or too different to be accepted right away in a culture that has been doing things the same way for decades.

• Sustainable change cannot be forced. We can teach and push all we want for change but unless the receiving party is willing it will not last.

• I have learned that giving people things creates a dependency that is not in the best interest of the receiver.

• I have learned that keeping a positive attitude makes even the tough situations easier. I have learned that the support of other volunteers is one of the best resources available to us here. I have learned that when a child who has called you "Lakhooah" for months finally calls you by your real name, it's an awesome feeling.

• Life is short and we aren't invincible so make the most of EVERY moment. I have learned that no matter where I end up living, as long as I am surrounded by kids and have the chance to affect a child's life, I will be happy!

Success Stories:

• Working with the teachers, we were able to raise money to expand the gardens at the school and buy hoses to expand the irrigation system. The school earns 300r a year from the gardens; we are hoping to double through the garden expansion and irrigation system. This is the first project that I have completed outside of my organization's work and



CHED Corner

it was incredibly satisfying.

- My counterpart is becoming a better facilitator than me and it is a beautiful thing to watch him interact with the youth.
- I put question boxes in my classrooms so students could ask me any health questions they had in an anonymous fashion. Students took advantage of the boxes which helped me design my lesson plans according to their needs.
- At this point I feel very comfortable in my community and in the surrounding ones.

In the past, people had been calling me by the previous volunteer's name and I am now greeted correctly.

- My language learning is going better than ever. I feel a welcomed and integral part of the community. I rely on the members of the community and they rely on me.
- As a result [of a previous Diversity Camp] we have begun to have our own local Matrix club, which meets monthly. This period I was able to successfully hold training for Peer Educators with my organiza-

tion. The workshop had previously been cancelled, so I was very excited to finally conduct the training. I consider this workshop a major success because the previous peer educator workshops held by my organization were ineffective as they didn't prepare students for their roles as Peer Educators. My organization liked the workshop and we are holding another workshop shortly.

Thanks again for your hard work and we wish you a most productive and happy 2011!

Language & Cross Cultural Corner By M'e' Mamokola

Lumelang hape baithaopi ba batle. Le ntse le phela joang baheso? Selemong sena sa 2011 ke lakatsa ho le chakela le ho bua le lona ka "On-going Language Learning le Community Integration" empa ha ke tsebe hore na ke fihla joang ha lona. Le lula kae? Ke kopa thuso.

(Araba lipotso tsena ho nthusa ho fihla hahao.)

- Ke tla palama taxi/bese efe?
- Taxi/bese e ema kae?/Ke palama bese/taxi hokae?
- Taxi/bese e tloha ka nako mang? Hoseng kapa

motseare?

- Ke bokae ho ea (name of place)?/Ke tla lefa bokae?
- Taxi/bese e tsamaea nako e kae ho fiha (name of place)?
- Ke tla feta kae le kae pele ke fiha (name of place)?
- Ke tla theoaha kae? Ebe ke fihla hahao joang?/K fihla joang lapeng la hau?

• Ntlo ea hau e joang? Ke tla e bona joang? E pela eng, haufi le kae, kamor'a eng, tlas'a eng? Kea leboha. Ha u ka nkaraba ke tla tseba ho u chakela.

(Ha re bapaleng!!!)

(Fumana mantsoe ana: A bolelang ka sekhoaa?) (translate)

Patala, bese, lefa, mosebetsi, taxi, chakela, bokae, hora, ausi, hosing, theoaha, hahau, mose, tseba

t	H	e	o	h	a	t	n	t	h
l	E	f	a	p	r	l	t	s	a
o	P	a	t	a	l	a	l	e	h
h	O	s	e	n	g	s	o	b	a
a	R	e	b	o	k	a	e	a	u
b	N	b	e	s	e	m	o	s	e
u	A	e	g	h	o	r	a	y	x
a	K	t	a	x	i	a	u	s	i
m	O	s	e	b	e	t	s	i	b
c	H	a	k	e	l	a	l	m	t

Medical Corner By Dr. Victor

Dear Volunteers: We have been informed that PC/W will be setting up a mailbox for Volunteers to communicate directly with the Office of Medical Services in Washington if they have medical issues that are not resolved in country. We'll keep you posted as we get more information about this. In the meantime, if a Volunteer has concerns about medical care this is what they should do:

1. If Volunteer feels comfort-

able in doing so, the best solution is usually the most direct one, that the Volunteer discuss with the PCMO his/her specific complaint.

2. If the complaint refers to a PCMO who is no longer at post, the most direct solution would generally be for the Volunteer to discuss it with the current PCMO.
3. If the Volunteer does not want to discuss with the current PCMO (for what-

ever reason), then the Volunteer could communicate with Dr. Cedric, the Regional PCMO in Pretoria. However there are limitations, including Dr. Cedric's lack of access to information from both sides and to the medical chart. If it can wait until he makes a visit to Lesotho (which he does about once a quarter), then he could take it up at that time. If it is a more urgent matter, then he

Language & Cross-cultural and Medical Corners





Medical Corner

should hear about it promptly to sort it out. Please remember that Dr. Cedric supports posts throughout Africa and should only be contacted for very serious concerns about medical care. When possible Volunteers should wait until he visits to seek his assistance.

4. If the complaint is more general rather than clinical, (e.g., late refill of medication, confusing presentation at PST) then the Volunteer could tell the CD or AO, and they could relay the complaint to the PCMO and/or Dr. Cedric.

Other info from the Medical Unit...

CHED 09 TB Testing: The medical unit is aware that some Volunteers (namely the CHED 09 group) did not have a TB test done during their mid-service medical evaluation last September. This is just to let you know that you will receive a TB test during your COS physical exam, which could begin anytime from June 2011. Any necessary treatment will be given then. The fact that you didn't have it done last year is nothing to worry about since it is not an emergency per se. However, if you have symptoms that are suggestive of active TB (e.g., chronic cough, weight loss, night sweats, etc), you should contact the PCMO right away for prompt evaluation. Thanks for your continued cooperation.

ALCOHOL USE

In many Peace Corps countries, consuming alcohol is an acceptable form of socializing. Unfortunately, excessive alcohol consumption by Volunteers can lead to serious safety and security, health and programmatic problems. Following are two articles – one from the PCMO and one from the PSN – about drinking. Take the time to read them and determine if you or a friend might have a problem. If you think you might, please reach out for help.

Alcohol is an intoxicating drug found in beers, wines, and spirits. It affects every organ in the body. It is a central nervous system depressant. There are two main types of disorders associated with alcohol use:

Alcohol abuse

Alcohol dependence (alcohol addiction), which is a more serious disorder.

Alcohol Abuse: Alcohol abuse is a maladaptive pattern of alcohol use leading to clinically significant impairment or distress, as manifested by one or more of the following symptoms, occurring within a 12-month period:

- ◇ Recurrent alcohol use resulting in failure to fulfill major role obligations at work, home, or school (e.g., repeated absences or poor work performance related to alcohol use; alcohol-related absences, suspensions or expulsions from work /school; or neglect of children or household).
- ◇ Recurrent alcohol use in situations in which it is physically hazardous (e.g., driving an automobile or operating a machine).
- ◇ Recurrent alcohol-related legal problems (e.g., arrests for alcohol-related disorderly conduct).
- ◇ Continued alcohol use despite persistent or recurrent social or interpersonal problems caused or exacerbated by the effects of the alcohol (e.g., arguments with spouse about consequences of intoxication or physical fights).

Alcohol Dependence: Alcohol dependence, also known as alcoholism or alcohol addiction, is a disease. It is a maladaptive pattern of alcohol use, leading to clinically significant impairment or distress, as manifested by three or more of the following seven criteria, occurring at any time in the same 12-month period:

- ◇ Drinking more or longer than intended
- ◇ Persistent desire or un-

successful efforts to cut down or stop drinking

- ◇ A great deal of time is spent on drinking or recovering from its effects
- ◇ Important activities are given up or reduced because of drinking
- ◇ Continued drinking despite knowledge of a serious physical or psychological problem that is likely to have been caused or exacerbated by alcohol
- ◇ Tolerance: markedly diminished effect with continued use of the same amount of alcohol, or the need to drink greater amounts of alcohol to get the same effect
- ◇ Withdrawal. Withdrawal is the occurrence of certain symptoms (e.g., tremors, sweating, nausea/vomiting, anxiety, seizures, hallucinations) when trying to quit or cut down on drinking.

Effects of alcohol: While alcohol is linked with connotations of pleasure and sociability in the minds of many, its use has harmful consequences. Excessive drinking can cause health and social problems, including:

- ◇ Liver disorders. Drinking heavily can cause alcoholic hepatitis, an inflammation of the liver. After years of drinking, hepatitis may lead to the irreversible and progressive destruction and scarring of liver tissue (cirrhosis).
- ◇ Increased risk of cancer. Chronic alcohol abuse has been linked to a higher risk of numerous cancers, including mouth, throat, liver, colon and breast cancer.
- ◇ Digestive problems. Alcohol can result in inflammation of the lining of the stomach (gastritis) and can interfere with absorption of B vitamins and other nutrients. Heavy drinking can also damage your pancreas.
- ◇ Heart problems. Excessive drinking can lead to high blood pressure and increases your risk of

Medical Corner



- heart failure or stroke.
- ◇ Diabetes complications. Alcohol interferes with the release of glucose from your liver and can increase the risk of low blood sugar (hypoglycemia). This is dangerous if you have diabetes and are already taking insulin to lower your blood sugar level.
 - ◇ Sexual function and menstruation. Alcohol abuse can cause erectile dysfunction in men. In women, it can interrupt menstruation.
 - ◇ Birth defects. Alcohol use during pregnancy may cause fetal alcohol syndrome, resulting in giving birth to a child who has physical and developmental problems.
 - ◇ Neurological complications. Alcohol depresses your central nervous system. Alcohol lowers your inhibitions and affects your thoughts, emotions and judgment. Too much alcohol affects your speech and muscle coordination and affects vital centers of your brain. A heavy drinking binge may even cause a life-threatening coma and seizures. Excessive drinking can cause dementia and short-term memory loss.
 - ◇ Reduced judgment and lowered inhibitions, leading to poor choices and dangerous situations or behaviors including indiscriminate/risky sexual behaviors, increased risk of HIV infection, unwanted pregnancy, and sexual assault. Majority of cases of sexual assault among PCVs are associated with alcohol use.
 - ◇ Domestic problems.
 - ◇ Poor performance at work.
 - ◇ A higher likelihood of committing violent crimes or of being a victim of a violent crime.
- Why should I quit?**
Quitting is the only way to stop the problems alcohol is causing in your life. It may not be easy to quit. But your efforts will be rewarded by better health, better relationships and a sense of accomplishment. As you think about quitting, you may want to make a list of your reasons to quit.
- How do I stop?**
The first step is realizing that you control your own behavior. It's the only real control you have in your life. So use it.
- Here are the next steps:
- ◇ Identify your reasons. Make a list of the reasons you want to stop drinking alcohol. You might want to ask a trusted friend or family member to help you make the list complete. Keep this list so that you can renew your commitment from time to time.
 - ◇ Make a plan and commit to quitting. Once you decide to quit, you can make plans to be sure you succeed. Set a date to stop drinking. Complete a plan to stop drinking alcohol. Post it in a place where you can see it often, such as on your refrigerator door or bathroom mirror. You might want to put it in more than one place. You also might want to put it on a card and keep it in your purse or wallet.
 - ◇ Get help from your doctor. He or she can be your biggest ally. Alcoholism is a kind of disease, and it can be treated. Talking with your PCMO about your problems can be helpful
 - ◇ Evaluate your progress. In your plan, identify when you will evaluate your progress. Try a plan for 30 days so that the new behavior becomes a habit. Review your reasons for stopping alcohol use. Write down the benefits that you are seeing. If you drank after successfully stopping (*relapse*), it does not mean that you have failed. Relapse is common. Begin again, using your experience to help you learn how to stick with your plan this time.
- ◇ Avoid stumbling blocks. Many things can interfere with meeting your goal to cut down on or stop drinking. You may need to use some or all of the following strategies to help you cut down or stop drinking:
 - Stay away from people who give you a hard time about drinking less or not drinking. Spend time with people who support your desire to cut down on or stop using alcohol.
 - Stay away from places or events that make you want to drink. Stay away from people who drink a lot or bars where you used to drink. Plan ways to avoid drinking when you're tempted.
 - Learn to say no. You do not have to accept an alcoholic drink each time someone offers you one. Practice the following ways to say no politely:
 - If you drink, drink slowly. Take a break of 1 hour between drinks. Drink soda, water, or juice after a drink with alcohol. Do not drink on an empty stomach. Eat food when you are drinking.
- If you think you might have a problem with alcohol, feel free to call the medical unit for help, and we will maintain confidentiality regarding the information you give to us.



PCV Life

CHED 09 Reconnect By Ed Griffin (CHED 09)



CHED 09 and Peace Corps staff joined together for Reconnect at the Aloes Guest House in Pitsieng, Leribe, January 10-11, 2011. This was a very special event for CHED 09. Reconnect usually occurs at the half way point in a PCV's service, however CHED 09 had to wait 18 months for their Reconnect. It was worth the wait as we all enjoyed the opportunity to Reconnect with each other and our Peace Corp goals as we relaxed in one of the most beautiful locations in Lesotho. Pitsieng translates into bowl in English and it accurately describes the experience. We were in a bowl surrounded by magnificent towering mountains. We reviewed our last 18 months of service and planned our remaining months. We learned about the new java Reporting tool. Many thanks to all the staff and PCVs who helped organize the event.



PCVs Mellisa, Irena & Carol



PCVs Melissa, Jessica, Erin & Elissa



PCVs Carol, Rocio, Chris, Irena
& Karolina

New Version of Peace Corps Volunteer Reporting Tool

At the reconnect, all Lesotho PCVs received a copy of the new PCVR 2.0 in January 2011. This new reporting tool is written in Java programming language. Java by Sun Microsystems (recently bought by Oracle Corp.) is a general purpose programming language designed to produce programs that will run on any computer system. The new program has many features to make reporting more easy for volunteers. The program runs equally well on Windows, Linux or Apple computers.

There is one tip I'd like to pass along to Apple MacBook users. The jar file was written in a windows environment by programmers who were probably Windows users and as a result the shortcuts for cut/copy/paste are Control+X, Control+C and Control+V for both Windows and the Mac. This is different from the Mac standard which is Command+X, Command+C and Command+V. So please note that if you are using a Mac, remember to use Control+X, Control+C and Control+V as cut, copy and paste keyboard shortcuts instead of the default Mac commands which are Command+X, Command+C and Command+V. This is a great new program and you can expect further enhancements. Please email Deepak with your comments.



From the Peer Support Network

By Elissa Kauffman (CHED 09), PSN Co-chair



Hello PCVs, I hope you all had a Merry Christmas and the New Year is getting off to a wonderful start! Firstly I would like to introduce you to PSN's three newest members: Karolina Lobrow (CHED 09), Lauren Deakin (CHED 10), and Amy Jo Carson (CHED 10). As always feel free to call, buzz, or sms any PSN member if something is on your mind, or even if nothing is on your mind. We're always here to support you.

This time of year you may be in or just leaving your one year or six month slump. Or maybe you're in your "what am I going to do after Peace Corps" pre-slump. Maybe even the "getting into the groove of Lesotho" high or the "wow, I've accomplished a lot" elation. Either as cause for celebration or remedy for friction, many of us turn to alcohol. I don't have to tell you that drinking (in moderation) can be fun! I would like to offer a few questions to make sure that you, or someone you know, is still having a healthy relationship with alcohol. Things can quickly go downhill and it's important to catch any problems early so that we can all have a full and fulfilling service. So please, ask yourself the following questions:

1. Am I drinking significantly more than I drank before Peace Corps?
2. Is drinking my main coping mechanism?
3. When I drink, am I getting significantly more drunk than I used to?
4. Am I turning to alcohol instead of dealing with problems?
5. Can I have fun without drinking?
6. Do I want to drink more and more frequently?
7. After a night of drinking, do I wake up and regret things I've said or done?
8. Have I tried to quit or cut back but been unable?
9. If someone ten years older than myself drank this much, what would I think of him or her?
10. Do I drunk dial Kathy on the Security Phone?

Take some time to reflect on yourself and those you love. Talk about it with your friends. If you need support for yourself, or intervening on a friend's behalf, feel free to talk to anyone on PSN or Dr. Victor. Everything is confidential and you don't need to name names. What is important is that we all support each other. Here are some ideas to change drinking patterns:

1. Get a drinking buddy – before you have your first drink, make a plan with a friend. Agree how much you will drink, how late you will stay up, what you will or will not do, etc. Then, stick to the plan.
2. Get a designated driver – take turns being the sober friend, look out for each other in strange or dangerous situations. Stay vigilant.
3. Don't go there – you can't drink it if you never buy it.

For more ideas, other warning signs, or coping mechanisms, feel free to contact any PSN member or the PCMO. I wish you all a safe and happy 2011!

World AIDS Day Photo Contest Results

Congratulations to the following Volunteers who won the Peace Corps Lesotho World AIDS Day 2010 Photo Contest. Their photos can be seen in the display case at the front door of the Peace Corps office.



Matt Deakin (1st Place)
Category: Raising Awareness

My host brothers and I have started having some great candid conversations about HIV/AIDS and sexuality. When they asked me how to properly use a condom, I jumped at the opportunity to teach them. We went to the clinic together, requested free condoms, and learned to use them properly.



PCV Life



Aaron Laufman-Walker (2nd Place)

Category: Caring For Those Infected

MAF (Mission Aviation Flyers) helps in the fight for "universal access" by delivering medical supplies to the remote clinics of Lesotho. This photo is from the airstrip in Ketane, Mohale's Hoek.

Nathan Birhanu (Honorable Mention)

Category: Raising Awareness

Girls at a secondary school attend a women's empowerment workshop discussing HIV/AIDS among females in Lesotho.



Elissa Kaufman (Honorable Mention)

Category: Caring For Those Infected

Taken in the mountains of Mohale's Hoek, this photo shows caregivers, orphans, and vulnerable children picking up their monthly ration supplied by World Food Program.

The Future of TAP

By Nathan Landrum (ED 10) and the TAP Committee



It is summer time in the southern hemisphere, and in Lesotho that means many learners (aka students) will be making their way back to school. Except for those attending government sponsored primary schools, many learners will have families scrambling to find a way to pay the school funds. Not all of these families will be able to come up with the money for their children's education. An education, a continuous education, should be something that all children who desire it should have access to. The intention of the Tuition Assistance Program (TAP) is to provide families in need with help in paying the fees that keep learners in school. TAP is unique to Lesotho, a program funded by Friends of Lesotho (FOL), and has been an ongoing program for years here.

As those of you who ran into trouble undoubtedly know, 2010 was an eventful year for TAP. Despite problems, TAP was able to assist 90 learners in paying for their education.

In 2011, FOL will continue to fund TAP but through the Peace Corps Partnership Program. FOL has allocated funds specifically for TAP scholarships so there will be no need for the Volunteer to fund-raise. Individual Volunteers, however, will be required to complete a PCPP application. In an upcoming Khotso we will try to discuss the history of TAP in Lesotho and where this money comes from. For now just know that the application process itself will take care of the funding for these scholarships.

The TAP Committee is also working to broaden its horizon this year with an increase in the number of applicants allowed and the amount individual applicants can apply for, and we are also looking into ways of working with ECCDs.

What do the changes in TAP mean for you? TAP applications will be different. Nevertheless, the TAP committee is working hard to make this a good year for learners in Lesotho. We, along with FOL, want to help as many learners as we can with scholarship assistance. We are trying to streamline the new application process so that it isn't too onerous for Volunteers. In fact, you should notice a large part of the application will remain the same, and where it doesn't we will work to make instructions very clear. Because this is a year of changes for TAP, expect a few road bumps, but we will try to ensure that these are small.

Don't let these changes discourage you from applying. ED Volunteers, CHED Volunteers – Any PCV who knows of a high school or secondary student in need of tuition assistance, TAP is here for you. Keep an eye out for 2011 TAP applications and start looking now for capable learners in your community. If you have any questions about TAP feel free to contact any of the TAP committee members; Kali, Kevin, Melissa, Nate or Parker. By working with TAP you can help a learner/learners acquire one of the most individually sustainable resources available; an education.

Please stay tuned...requirements and the TAP Application should be available shortly!

WID/GAD

International Women's Day – March 8

March 8, 2011 is International Women's Day, a day to honor women's contributions to their families, communities and countries. This year is the 100th Anniversary. For this centenary, Volunteers are encouraged to think in 100's: 100 photos, 100 stories, 100 activities, 100 girls staying in school, etc. Below are activities that Volunteers have done in the past. **Let ntate Clement, the WID/GAD staff liaison, know if you're planning any Women's Day events.**

- Essay and poster contests about women students admire
- Song and poetry contests about women's contributions which are then performed for the community
- Discussions on the importance of women in decision-making
- Day-long women's fairs with skills-building activities, games and music
- Parades, dances and community dinners with speakers on different topics of interest to women and families
- Girls' sports competitions

PCV Life



- Many types of lessons in the classroom about the history of women in science, government, space, commerce and community life - or highlighting the work of respected female authors
- Promoting or co-facilitating sessions on gender and HIV or women's contributions in day camps and workshops with boys and girls
- WID/GAD Conferences on university campuses, life skills workshops with rural women and leadership forums for businesswomen planned in partnership with NGOs and local organizations
- Targeting women's groups, cooperatives and NGOs for training and mobilization
Bike rides, races and walks to raise awareness of women's rights and/or contributions to their country, communities and families.

NEWS FROM AROUND THE PEACE CORPS WORLD

Peace Corps Mourns the Loss of Founder and Visionary Father, Sargent Shriver

WASHINGTON D.C., January 18, 2011—The Peace Corps issued the following statement from Peace Corps Director Aaron S. Williams on the passing of Sargent Shriver, brother-in-law of President John F. Kennedy, who helped create the agency in 1961 and served as the first Peace Corps Director.

"The entire Peace Corps community is deeply saddened by the passing of Sargent Shriver.

Shriver was a distinguished public servant and a visionary leader who accomplished much in his life of public service, but to those of us in the Peace Corps family, he served as our founder, friend, and guiding light for the past 50 years. Because of his determination and vision, more than 200,000 returned Peace Corps volunteers have served in 139 countries, promoting world peace and friendship. Though he is no longer with us, his legacy of idealism will live on in the work of current and future Peace Corps volunteers. Today, Peace Corps volunteers and people worldwide who have been touched by the Peace Corps grieve with Shriver's family and friends."

Peace Corps Director Aaron S. Williams' Response to ABC World News on Jan. 27, 2011

"Peace Corps takes the issue of sexual assault very seriously. There are procedures in place at each post to respond quickly and compassionately to our volunteers. Teams of specialists from the medical, mental health, security and legal fields are available immediately to assist the volunteer in the recovery process. There is no tolerance for a culture that blames victims. The women interviewed by ABC's 20/20 are courageous and strong, and their stories of sexual assault over the past decade are heartbreaking.

"ABC's 20/20 program does not accurately reflect the support we currently provide to Peace Corps volunteers. The health and safety of our volunteers is the single most important priority for our agency. We have made significant improvements over the past two years in providing support to sexual assault victims, and we look forward to working with Congress to further strengthen the Peace Corps and advance our mission of world peace and friendship.

"ABC News has been accusing the Peace Corps of systematically covering up the extent to which Peace Corps volunteers have been victims of sexual assault. Nothing could be further from the truth. We have been completely open and transparent about the extent of crimes, including rapes and sexual assaults, committed against volunteers. The Peace Corps publishes an annual Report of Volunteer Safety. Reports from the last five years are posted on the Peace Corps website. Each report provides detailed information regarding the incidence and number of rapes, attempted rapes, and sexual assaults among volunteers for the year in question, as well as trends for the past 10 years.

"Reporting data without context does a disservice to honest reporting. Over the last 10 years, there have been on average 22 rapes and 14 major sexual assaults of Peace Corps volunteers a year. In 2009, there were 15 rapes of Peace Corps volunteers and 20 major sexual assaults out of 7,671 volunteers (4,624 female and 3,047 male volunteers). We are proud of the fact that the incidence of rape and sexual assault is on the decline and believe that it is due to enhanced training of staff and volunteers. In fact, between 1997 and 2009, there has been a 27 percent decline in the incidence of rape and attempted rape, and there has been a 34 percent decline in the incidence of major sexual assault.

"We will continue to be vigilant on all issues of safety and security and do our very best to provide a healthy, safe and productive experience for the thousands of Americans who commit to Peace Corps service."



PCV Life
&
News from around the
Peace Corps World