

KHOTSO

February 2012

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Message from the Country Director



Celebrating back to school at PC Lesotho

Dear Volunteers,

In January, I had great site visits with CHED 10s Chanté Liggins and Kate Glanville. It's obvious to anyone that both of these Volunteers are enthusiastic about what they're doing in Lesotho, are doing great work and are appreciated by those with whom they work. I was particularly impressed with the variety of activities in which each is engaged.

In other news, I was remiss in the last issue of the *Khotso* in not mentioning a few recent staff changes. Please allow me to introduce the newest member of the Peace Corps staff, 'me Jeanett Mosae (see staff spotlight). 'me Jeanett is the new Executive Assistant, replacing 'me Makhauta. 'me Jeanett, who sits in the office next to mine, has already shown that she is a hard worker with great ideas. We are very lucky to have her!

In December, 'me Selloane and 'me Malitaba's positions were upgraded from Program Assistant to Programming and Training Specialist (PTS). This is in line with what many other Peace Corps posts have and better meets the needs of our program. The main difference in the two positions is that the PTS has a more strategic role in the continuum of Volunteer training. Congratulations to 'me Selloane and 'me Malitaba!

Finally, Peace Corps Washington recently informed

us that Peace Corps Lesotho was approved for a new position - Director of Programming and Training (DPT). Again, this is a position that most other Peace Corps posts have, and we lobbied for it for two years. We're also very happy that Peace Corps has selected Charles to fill this position. Charles was the DPT in Kiribati and Guyana before becoming APCD in Lesotho. The DPT oversees the P&T unit to ensure consistency and quality in programming and training. Since this is a new position, we're lucky that

Charles has held it before and can help us make the best use of it. We will begin recruiting a local hire replacement for Charles very soon. In the meantime, Charles will serve as both APCD and DPT.

On January 30, 'me Jeanett and I attended a brief ceremony at the National Health Training Center (NHTC) where Ambassador Bond handed over a check from Friends of Lesotho (FOL) for the equivalent of \$6000 for scholarships for needy NHTC students. In addition to \$14,000 worth of scholarships that they funded through Peace Corps Partnership Project, FOL also contributed \$3000 in scholarships to NHTC students last year. FOL, which was founded by RPCVs in 1986 and has about 400 members, is one of the most active and generous "Friends of" groups. They genuinely care about Lesotho and have made a commitment to remain engaged in its development through the programs they support. As an RPCV myself, it's truly inspiring.

At the request of an envious Volunteer, I will refrain from regaling you with tales of my recent trip to Madrid and abseiling in Semonkong last weekend.

Keep up your great work!

Kathy

Editorial Staff

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Editor – Deepak Pullanikkatil, IT Specialist

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Program and Training:

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Community Health & Economic Development - Charles Miller— Associate Peace Corps Director & Selloane Pitikoe—Program Assistant

Training – Masechaba Mapena—Training Manager, Mamokola Matlanyane—Language, Cross Culture and Homestay Coordinator
Letsatsi Mohale—Programming and Training Secretary

Safety & Security – Nthoalo Masiphole

Medical—Dr. Victor Inegbedion

Distribution – Lebohang Ranooe

All other staff and PCVs who contribute

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 1st 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.

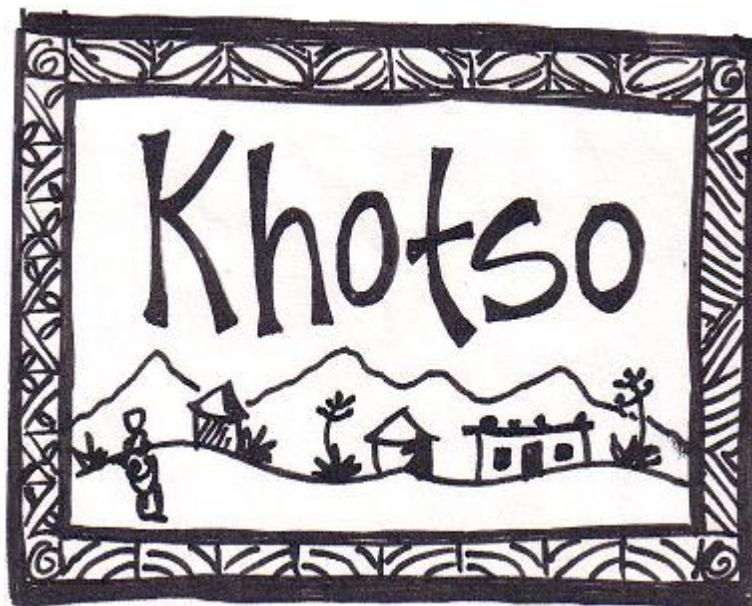
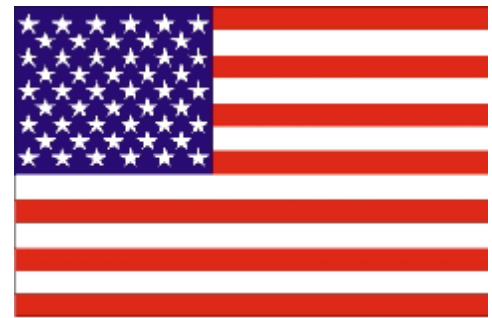
The editorial staff would like feedback from PCVs regarding the content. It is our desire to provide you with information that is useful, helpful, and encouraging. We would appreciate receiving constructive feedback from you.

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!

February

Holmen, Andrea – 1
 Bruno, Maria – 2
 Birhanu, Nathan – 9
 Niang, Lee – 9
 Taylor, Tahira – 10
 Kerr, Mike – 12
 Nthoalo, Masiphole (SSC) – 12
 Helm, Wes – 13
 Parks, Lauren – 14
 McFarland, Shane – 19

March

Letsella, Bernard (Gardener) – 15
 Chaille, Lyndsey – 21
 Anderson, Kelly – 24
 Brewer, Anne – 30

Peace Corps Lesotho Holidays (Office closed these days)

February

President's Day (US Holiday) – 20

March

Moshoeshoe Day (LS Holiday) – 11

Calendar of Events and Staff Travel

Jan 30 – Feb 3	Nt. Clement, M'e Mamokola and PCVL Nathan on site visits in the north
Feb 1 – 2	Kathy and nt. Nthoalo on site visits in Mohale's Hoek
Feb 6-10	'Me Malitaba and 'me 'Mamokola on site visits in Quthing & Qacha's Nek
Feb 6-10	CHED11 PDM & Capacity Building workshop (South)
Feb 13-17	CHED11 PDM & Capacity Building workshop (North)
Feb 27-28	Nt. Clement and 'me 'Mamokola on site visits in Mafeteng and M'Hoek
Mar 5 – 7	'Me Malitaba on site visits in Berea, Leribe & Butha Buthe
Mar 16 – Apr 14	Charles on leave
Mar 29 – Apr 4	ED12 Phase III Training in Berea

Duty Officer Schedule

Feb 6 – 12	HIV Coordinator
Feb 13 – 19	PA ED
Feb 20 – 26	PA CHED
Feb 27 - Mar 4	SSC
Mar 5 – 11	ITS
Mar 12 – 18	FA
Mar 19 – 25	GSO
Mar 25 – April 1	CD

STAFF SPOTLIGHT

Jeanett Mosae joined the Peace Corps as Executive Secretary on December 05, 2011. Before then she worked for several non-profit making NGOs such as LHDA, World Vision – Lesotho Office



and National AIDS Commission as an executive Assistant/Administrator. She has a diploma in secretarial studies, a graduate diploma in management studies, and a diploma in HR and labour laws.

'M'e Jeanett is married with a daughter and two sons. Her hobbies include cuisine, gym and swimming. Welcome, 'm'e Jeanett!

STAFF OF THE MONTH



Ntate Tsatsi is always willing to take on a new challenge and took on several in the last month. He worked hard at mastering the new BarTracks system to ensure that post has an up-to-date asset inventory. This involved visiting all Peace Corps-leased spaces several times to verify that items were properly counted and inputted into the BarTracks software. He worked with the Financial Assistant on improving the VAT collection procedure, and assumed the responsibility of Medical Supply Inventory Control Clerk to ensure that we are complying with Peace Corps policies concerning the medical inventory process.

ADMIN CORNER by Jim

Those of you from the New England and New York areas are no doubt happy that the Pats and Giants will face off in the Super Bowl. For those of us from Chicago it is just another year of watching someone else's favorite team in the Big Game. Ugh...!

Living Allowance Survey

It is that time of the year again to complete the Living Allowance Survey. For the newer PCVs it is (as my predecessor was fond of saying) an opportunity to "give yourself a raise!" It does require a little effort, but it might be worth it. (In 2010, the LA was increased 14% due to the results of the survey). Here is the catch, however. We need to have a response rate of at least 75% for PC HQ to even consider making an adjustment. No matter how much we preached this last year, we still only got 57% of the PCVs in country to submit it. As a result it went nowhere. We will email to each PCV a spread sheet of the survey, which you can complete on-line and email it back to us (vmofolo@peacecorps.gov and/or mmakhele@peacecorps.gov). For those of you who have unreliable internet service, we have attached a 'hard copy' of the survey at the back of this issue. Please try and find the time to complete and return it.

Settling-in Allowance Survey

ED12s who haven't completed and turned in their Settling-In Allowance survey, please do so while the prices or costs are still fresh in mind. Previous groups have done a wonderful job in completing this survey on time so let's please keep the trend going.

W-2s

The 2011 Peace Corps W-2 forms will be mailed to your homes of record by the end of January. (I also have duplicate copies in my office so stop in when you are in Maseru if you want yours). It will come with instructions on how to file your 2011 Federal Income Tax returns. If Peace Corps was your only source of in-

come during 2011, you are not required to file a federal tax return. Depending on your individual situation, however, it might make sense for you to file so do yourselves a favor and consult with someone back home (e.g., parent, accountant, tax person) who will know if it is worthwhile. Additional assistance can be obtained from taxhelp@peacecorps.gov. Please remember that this only applies to your federal income tax returns. Check with your individual state (via their website) to see if your State Income Tax filing is required.

Voting

In the January issue of Khotso we sent information on absentee voting. The link to access this information is in the Federal Voting Assistance Program's (FVAP) website www.FVAP.gov. If you are planning to vote in the U.S. Presidential election in November (or any of your local State elections) you need to apply for your absentee ballot soon. Please access the link and follow the instructions. We are available to assist if you get "stuck" anywhere in the process. Stay safe everyone...!

EDUCATION CORNER by Nt. Clement & 'M'e Malitaba ED10s

In January, we sadly bid farewell to ED10s Erica Rossi and Nate Landrum. We wish them well as they also venture into the next chapter of their lives. PCVL Nathan Birhanu is here with us until March but will unfortunately just miss our Phase III training. Please note that ED10s Andrea Holmen and Rusty Delucia are here for another year and PCRV Lisa Dold are here until June. As more "seasoned" Volunteers, we encourage the ED12s to tap into their knowledge and experiences during your time of adjustment.

Phase II and III

At the time of going to print we have received majority of the Phase II assignments (part one). Please make sure this part is handed in. We would like to remind you that by February 24, we should have received your suggestions for areas to be covered at Phase III training. You can call, text email, send by letter or directly communicate your ideas during the site visits (those who will be visited before the 24th).

CHED CORNER by Charles & 'M'e Selloane

Hi CHEDers. We wish you all a Happy Valentine's Day in advance. We have high hopes and aspirations for 2012 as we get into full swing.

Site Visits

'M'e Selloane and I have already been in touch with a number of you to schedule site visits for the next several months. During site visits we want to see you in action (at work if possible), meet with your supervisor and counterpart/s, visit your house (this is a requirement as we have to check on the security of your house), and discuss your work and community life. We generally try to schedule the site visit to last for 3 or more hours. Site visits can and are done by any number of staff members, but we commit to one visit each by the APCD, PTS (formerly PA) and CD within a Volunteer's two years of service.

Project Advisory Committee (PAC)

We are awaiting feedback from Peace Corps/W on our draft framework but initial response has been supportive of our focus on youth activities while maintaining our strong foundation in HIV prevention.

Project Design Management / HIV/AIDS Capacity Building Workshops

The Project Design Management / HIV/AIDS Capacity Building Workshops are scheduled as follows:

- February 6 – 10 in Mohale's Hoek (Southern Volunteers, including Tab, Cassie and Tara)
- February 13 – 17 in Leribe (Northern Volunteers)

CHED 12 Site Identification

We are in the early stages of site identification for CHED 12s who arrive on Friday, June 1, 2012, but WE NEED YOUR HELP! If you have any ideas for good sites for the new Volunteers, please send them to 'M'e Selloane or Charles. Remember that a good site must have a well-defined job, a supervisor and counterpart/s interested in working alongside a Volunteer, plenty of work that involves mitigating the impact of HIV and AIDS on individuals and communities and a house that meets PC/L's safety and security standards. We'll have copies of Volunteer Request Forms at the CHED 11 PDM workshops. CHED 10s, please give us your input immediately about replacing you at your site so we can discuss. Thanks, and again, PLEASE HELP!

CHED 10 Extension Applications and PCVL Vacancy

We've attached an extension application for any CHED 10 Volunteers who wish to extend in Lesotho for a partial or full year, or as PCVL. Please let us know if you are interested in extending or if you have any questions. If you are interested in applying for PCVL, please also remember to submit your letter of interest to Charles by March 1, 2012. Please refer to your January Khotso for more information on the PCVL position.

Gold Star Activities

Thanks to all Volunteers for your hard work. Below are a few "Gold Star" activities we've pulled from the VRFs over the last few weeks which helps to illustrate the importance of persistence, patience, and creativity. Stay tuned for more "Gold Star" activities in the next edition of The Khotso!

Grief and Support Discussions – Lyndsey Chaille, CHED 11

Lyndsey led a discussion with her support group on grief and loss (particularly on the loss of children), using the book "It's Okay to Be Sad," written by Lesotho RPCV Kaye Thompson. Lyndsey reports that the group really enjoyed the discussion and the book because it's also in Sesotho and because it is new information that they haven't really focused on before. "This was a great learning opportunity for me. I was able to hear their personal stories, many of them taking care of OVC's and facing many challenges with them," reported Lyndsey. (Please contact your APCD or PTS if you'd like to get copies of this useful resource, "It's Okay to Be Sad".)

Water and Boat Safety – Mike Kerr, CHED 10

A South African trout farm, Highlands Trout, set up shop in Katse Reservoir not far from the Katse Dam and asked Mike to provide much-needed water safety training to their staff. Mike is teaching eight Basotho about basic swimming skills, life jacket safety, water safety rescue and boat safety. Nice work, Mike!

Potato Production Workshop – Courtney Lane, CHED 11

Courtney organized a workshop facilitated by the Ministry of Agriculture with the intent of furthering the knowledge of the participants on potato planting, growing, and harvesting. One of the indicators of the project's success is a demonstrated increase in communication and networking between Courtney's host organization and the Ministry of Agriculture. Great job, Courtney, on tapping into those local resources which help to ensure project sustainability!

HIV/AIDS CORNER by 'M'e Jimi

HIV/AIDS and Life Skills Resources

In 2010, several Education Volunteers created an HIV/AIDS and life skills training for teachers and community members using books written by African writers and published in Africa to complement the Ministry of Education and PC life skills curricula. The books are of different levels, user friendly and simple and can be used in school or community libraries. Some of them are translated into Sesotho.

After piloting the training curriculum, the Volunteers trained a number of primary teachers in the Butha- Buthe district on how to use the books. Using PEPFAR funds, Peace Corps Lesotho has since procured several sets of these HIV/AIDS and life skills-related books and makes them and the training curriculum available to interested Volunteers and their counterparts. Acquisition of the books requires a plan for training people in how to use them effectively. Training sessions can be done at once (e.g., in a one or two day workshop) or over time (e.g., one session a week for a few weeks).

Volunteers who have used these books and shared them with teachers and other counterparts have been quite pleased with how they've been received by students and teachers.

How to access the books:

- ◆ Volunteer and community partners assess the need for books in school and/or community libraries and mobilize teachers and members of the community who may be interested in using the books.
- ◆ Volunteer and community counterparts develop application including the following information:
 - ◆ 1-2 paragraphs describing the community/school(s) that will use the books and the history of their library.
 - ◆ Level of books requested (e.g., lower primary, upper primary, secondary).
 - ◆ List of names and positions of people to be trained in the use of the books.
 - ◆ Proposed training plan – How? When? Where?
 - ◆ Intended follow up – After the training how will the use of the books be monitored?
- ◆ If you wish to receive a sample of the curriculum developed by the ED Volunteers, and a list of book titles and levels, please contact 'M'e Jimi and indicate if you would like a hard copy or soft copy.
- ◆ Send application to 'M'e Jimi (mmachai@peacecorps.gov). Cc your APCD and PA.
- ◆ Staff will review your application.
- ◆ If there is any information that needs clarification, 'M'e Jimi will contact you. If not, you will be notified that books and the training manual will be sent to you.

Note: PC does not provide any financial support for conducting such training. You'll need to be creative in organizing workshops.

Peace Corps Lesotho HIV/AIDS Committee or District AIDS Representatives (DAR)

The mission of the HIV/AIDS Committee is to develop and support Peace Corps volunteers' role in the holistic management of the HIV/AIDS epidemic in Lesotho. The committee serves as a forum for and between the district and national levels. Volunteer representatives (DAR) and Peace Corps staff exchange information on best practices, technical updates, current trends, policies, industry and volunteer feedback, project development and resources for funding.

'M'e Jimi is the staff liaison for DAR. Her role is to link the committee with staff and provide resources and advice to the committee.

Membership:

In general, the committee is composed of 10 members (1 from each district). Two members are selected to serve as co-chairs of the committee. Preferably one co-chair should be from the Education group and one from the CHED group. There is no established division between the number of EDs and CHEDs on the committee; however, the committee tries to maintain diversity between placements and terms/years of service. The process of selection is as follows:

- ◆ Each DAR Rep is nominated by a majority vote of the volunteers serving in their district. They are then vetted by staff
- ◆ The co-chairs are elected by a majority of DAR members.
- ◆ DAR members and co-chairs can be removed from their positions by a majority vote of the district or HIV Committee or by staff decision.
- ◆ If a selected DAR member wishes to remove him/herself for any reason, they must inform their district so an election for a replacement can be held.
- ◆ If a co-chair wishes to remove him/her from her/his position for any reason, they must inform the DAR members so they can hold an election to select a new co-chair.

Please note that ED12s must wait at least 3 months before participating on any committees (normally it's 6 months but since we skipped a training class last year so we're making exceptions).

Committee Member Responsibilities:

In general, DAR members:

- ◆ Organize a district level HIV meeting at least once before each HIV/AIDS Committee meeting.
- ◆ Raise district-level HIV/AIDS concerns/information/resource needs at HIV and AIDS meeting.
- ◆ Help support Volunteers' work in HIV and AIDS in their district.

Meeting Schedule

DAR meets 3 times a year. Members and 'me Jimi decide on a suitable date for the following meeting at each meeting. The committee meets outside Maseru where all members can easily reach.

Transportation Reimbursements for members attending meeting:

PC reimburses for only 3 meetings per year for all committee meetings regardless of the number of committees a Volunteer is on. PC does not reimburse for the local district meetings.

HEALTH CORNER by Dr. Victor

Schistosomiasis

Recently, the PC Office of Medical Services has documented an increase in the number of cases of Schistosomiasis (also known as bilharzias or "schisto") and a few among PC Lesotho PCVs. This parasitic infection occurs after exposure in fresh wa-

ter (e.g., rivers and lakes) in endemic areas. People become infected when larval forms of the parasite – released by fresh-water snails – penetrate their skin during contact with infested water.

In the body, the larvae develop into adult parasites. Adult worms live in the blood vessels where the females release eggs. Some of the eggs are passed out of the body in the feces or urine to continue the parasite life-cycle. Others become trapped in body tissues, causing an immune reaction and progressive damage to organs. The infection can result in very serious complications including severe damage to the urinary bladder, liver problems and very significant neurologic problems from involvement of the spinal cord. All of these complications have been seen in PC Volunteers.

Lesotho is the only African country considered non-endemic for Schistosomiasis. However, Volunteers serving in Lesotho can acquire the infection when they travel to other African countries, Asia or South America.

Schistosomiasis is a preventable condition, but it requires you to take the risks seriously:

You should not swim in fresh water (except in a chlorinated pool) especially when you travel outside Lesotho.

Bath water obtained from a river or lake should be boiled for at least one (1) minute then be allowed to cool to prevent scalding. Water that has been in a storage tank for 1-2 days should be safe.

If you do have exposure to fresh water, immediately dry yourself off with vigorous toweling. If possible apply alcohol (hand sanitizer) to the exposed areas of your skin particularly between your toes.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the PCMO.

SAFETY AND SECURITY CORNER by nate Nthoalo

(Following is an article that underscores the PC policy prohibiting Volunteers from spending time in Joburg and the need for constant vigilance anywhere they travel.)

Joburg is top of the lethal violence pops

By Candice Bailey and Foreign Correspondents, *The Mercury*, January 30, 2012

Cape Town may be the country's murder capital, but you're still more likely to fall victim to armed robbery in Joburg than be murdered in the Cape.

The South Africa Survey, released by the SA Institute of Race Relations, showed that the City of Gold was still SA's most dangerous city, with more aggravated robberies occurring in the city than anywhere else in the country.

According to the statistics, there were 17 092 aggravated robberies in 2010-11.

The survey covers the 20 most serious crimes in the country, but also looks at aspects of the criminal justice cluster such as prison populations, private security and police personnel.

According to the study, between 1994 and 2011 the overall rate of serious crime came down by 20 percent.

The statistics show that for every 15 armed robberies that take place in Joburg, one person is murdered.

In Cape Town, there are six armed robberies for every murder, compared to Durban and Nelson Mandela Bay, where the aggravated robbery-murder ratio is eight to one. The national average is six to one.

The survey comes just days after the release of a Mexican survey on the top 50 most dangerous cities in the world, which listed Cape Town as more dangerous than Joburg, Durban and Nelson Mandela Bay.

Several South American cities made the list.

The institute's researcher, Kerwin Lebone, said they did not agree with the Mexican study.

"Just because Cape Town has the most murders does not necessarily make it a more violent city," said Lebone.

He said aggravated robbery had nine categories including car-jacking, residential and business robberies and cash-in-transit heists.

"That is a wide range of violent activity. In Joburg, those crimes are occurring on a much wider and greater scale."

The point of the survey, said Lebone, was to collate all the statistics from sectors of the criminal justice cluster so that they could be compared and analysed.

It would also point out concerns and successes.

It showed that since 1994, there had been a 228 percent spike in drug-related crimes and a 20 percent spike in aggravated robbery.

Overcrowding in prisons was shown to be a problem.

Despite the available prison accommodation being 118 154 beds, the February 2011 prison population sat at 162 162.

Another crime challenge the survey highlighted was rhino poaching.

In 2007, there were 13 incidents of rhino poaching. In 2010, there were 333. But the survey also highlighted the good, he said.

Statistics showed that the country's population-to-police ratio is 318 citizens to every one officer compared to Australia, which has a ratio of 235 citizens to a police officer, and the UK, which

has a ratio of 268 an officer.

"We have adhered very strictly to the UN recommendation of 400:1, which is commendable," Lebone said.

"We may have one of the highest crime problems in the world, but there are improvements."

Lebone said the survey showed that all sections of society were vulnerable to crime and that both victims and perpetrators are found in every corner of the country, although some areas showed a higher propensity.

Which are the most dangerous cities in the world? Where is violence so rife that you would take your life in your hands by merely visiting there?

A recent study by a Mexican NGO listed five Mexican cities as the most violent in the world, based on murder rates, and listed Cape Town at 34 as the most dangerous SA city, followed by Durban in 49th place and Joburg at number 51.

For more information and the rest of the article, go to: [High Crime Cities](#)

*** Back to school celebration at PC Lesotho ***



PCV CORNER
Female Condoms Anyone?

By Amy Jo Carson (CHED10), Berea DAR



In February 2011, Populations Services International (PSI) launched a one year pilot project to promote the increased use of the female condom. Its aim was "to create opportunities for improved health among the next generation of Basotho women – mothers, professionals and leaders of tomorrow." As Peace Corps Volunteers working at the grass roots level, hands-on within our communities, we know what a devastating toll HIV and AIDS has taken on Basotho women. We also know that the infection rates rise significantly with age. Recent statistics are showing an 8% infection rate in those 15-19 years old, to 25% in those 20-24 years old, to nearly 40% in those 25-29 old.

So why the female condom? Current research suggests that although the understanding of HIV/AIDS is high amongst many young Basotho women, they often have a very limited ability to negotiate male condom use within their relationships. The female condom provides women with a safe alternative. If used properly (suggested for women to practice with it at least 3 times before using), the female condom is just as effective at preventing HIV, STIs and pregnancy, as the male condom. Furthermore, it can be fun, too!

The female condom known as "Silk-ee," which is made of nitrile, a synthetic rubber that is latex-free is being reported by users as providing greater sensitivity during intercourse than the male condom. It can also be inserted up to 8 hours before intercourse and not interrupt sexual spontaneity. These two specific factors of the female condom have been key selling points in the women's health outreach work I do with Basotho women in the Ha Senekane, Berea region, to using them. These two factors have also been a great pitch to encouraging Basotho men to accept the female condom as a means of practicing safe sex. Word is slowly spreading about female condoms. In addition, it is opening up more dialogue about sex amongst men and women.

Though the results of the PSI pilot study have not yet been published, please let your District AIDS Representative (DAR) know if and where the female condoms have been promoted in your region or if you have had any experience working with the female condom, both positive and/or negative. All feedback is welcomed. Furthermore, if you need information on how to get



free female condoms and educational materials, please do not hesitate to contact me.

ALP Corner

By Amy Jo Carson (CHED10), ALP Field Coordinator Lesotho

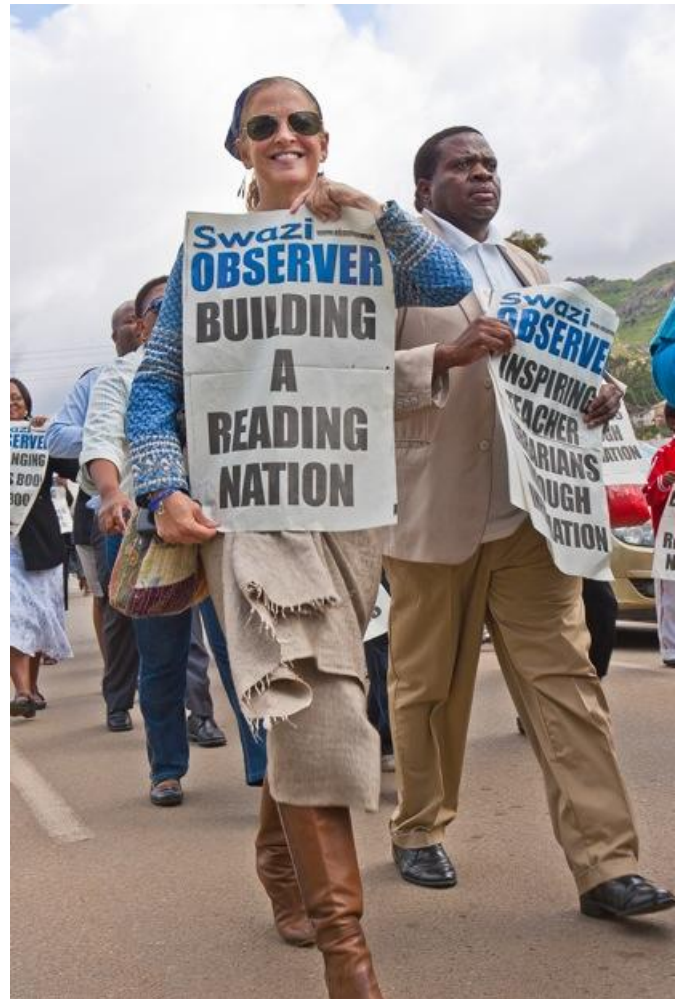
African Library Project's (ALP) mission: The ALP changes lives book by book by starting libraries in rural Africa. Our grassroots approach mobilizes US volunteers, young and old, to organize book drives and ship books to a partner library in Africa. Our method makes a concrete and personal difference for children on both continents.



Libraries, libraries, libraries...it seems to be the word of the day most everywhere I go these days. Inquiring minds want to know how to create or enhance a small library in their communities. Well, I am here to tell you that ALP is just the ticket in my book to such inquiries! To get an overview, as well as the specifics of ALP, please first visit the website at www.africanlibraryproject.org, if you have the opportunity. A couple of quick facts - Lesotho just happens to be the country where it all began for ALP and its first partnership was with Peace Corps, Lesotho. These are but a few, of the many things to be proud of as a Peace Corps Volunteer serving in Lesotho.

If you are exploring the notion to enhance or start a library in your community, make sure it begins right there - at and with the community. If it is not a community-driven effort, the likelihood of success diminishes quickly. ALP will provide the systems, support and follow-up to make sure their libraries succeed. As your field coordinator, I will provide the resources to help you with the process, but just remember that you cannot do this alone. Whether you are a CHED or ED Volunteer makes no difference, get your community involved every way you can!

The ALP 2012 application guideline for 2013 books delivery with an action plan attached is now available in the volunteer share folder on the VRC computers. If you are not able to access this folder, it can be sent as an email attachment and/or a hard copy can be placed in your mailbox. Be sure to complete steps 1-14 as thoroughly as possible on your "community" created application. The deadline for the application is May 31, 2012. Feel free to contact me via mobile phone #59541719 or at amyjcarson@hotmail.com with any questions and/or concerns. Good luck!



For those of you awaiting the arrival of books for the successful 2011 applicants, the shipping container has been packed and is leaving USA port with an expected arrival to Lesotho in March 2012. When the exact date is known, ALP partners will be notified and will be responsible for picking up the books as soon as possible.

As Americans, we know the power of reading a book and how it can change one's life. Now, Basotho children and adults are getting to know a bit of this extraordinary feeling, too!

Friends of Lesotho

In 2011, FOL made two contributions to the Peace Corps Lesotho Country Fund to support your Peace Corps Partnership Program (PCPP) grant requests. The major contribution (nearly M110,000) was for TAP scholarships—something we are prepared to do again in 2012. For those of you not familiar with the FOL/TAP history, the following may be of interest.

Since 1999, the year FOL established the TAP program, nearly \$78,000 has been donated from a single source—the students at the Taipei American School in Taiwan where 1972-74 RPCV Sandy Puckett taught for years until his passing in 2010. After his death, students established the Sandy Puckett Memorial Walkathon to continue raising funds in his memory, under the guidance of Kathy Keenan, another teacher at the school. Tuition assistance is also the most frequent designation from our membership and other donors.

TAP Committee

FOL's Donations/Distributions Committee is eager to establish

communications with the members of the 2012 TAP Committee. A member of FOL's Committee is available to work with the TAP Chair or Co-Chairs to ensure that we allocate sufficient funds for this year's TAP needs. So, if you are part of the TAP Committee, please drop an e-mail to Dyann Van Dusen, Co-Chair of the Donations/Distributions Committee at dyvandusen@yahoo.com.

FOL Funds Not Just For TAP

Funds are also available to support other projects that may not qualify for PEPFAR or VAST grants. Nearly \$2,000 remains in the Lesotho Country Fund ready to help with such projects and more can be contributed if you have a project requiring a larger amount.

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>

*** PCV stories in pictures ***



Ambassador Bond handing over FOL scholarship check to NHTC Director Dr. Tau.



Chante Liggins, Counterpart and Lesedi Youth Programme footballers.



Chante Liggins and Lesedi Volunteers at TY Meat Supply.



Kate Glanville and Counterpart.

NEWS FROM AROUND THE PEACE CORPS WORLD

Peace Corps Response Expands Program: More Americans Now Eligible

Americans with significant work and language skills are encouraged to apply
 WASHINGTON, D.C. January 30, 2012 — Peace Corps Director Aaron S. Williams announces the expansion of the Peace Corps Response program to allow Americans with at least 10 years of work experience and required language skills to apply for positions overseas. Peace Corps Response, which offers short-term, specialized volunteer assignments, has historically only been available to returned Peace Corps volunteers (RPCVs).

"All Americans with specific work and language skills are now eligible for short-term volunteer assignments with Peace Corps Response," said Director Williams. "This is an exciting opportunity for more Americans to serve with Peace Corps and help us better meet the needs of our host country partners. Peace Corps Response assignments are challenging, but for Americans with significant work experience and an interest in serving overseas, the assignments are extremely rewarding."

Since 1996, Peace Corps Response has sent more than 1,500 returned Peace Corps volunteers to more than 50 countries. Peace Corps Response positions average six months in length and are designed to address needs identified by the host country. Volunteers provide targeted assistance in diverse assignments such as malaria prevention, literacy, emergency response, information technology, food security, teacher training, and more.

Peace Corps Response volunteers receive the same benefits as Peace Corps volunteers including: transportation to and from their country of service, comprehensive medical care, a modest - stipend, vacation days, and a readjustment allowance of \$375 for each month of service. To be considered for a position with Peace Corps Response, applicants must have the necessary language, technical, and cross-cultural skills needed to excel in their assignments. The program recruits flexible, motivated, and culturally sensitive individuals who can adapt to changing situations and effectively engage diverse populations.

To view current openings and to submit an application, please visit: www.PeaceCorps.gov/response/apply.

**Peace Corps Lesotho
CHED 10 Extension Application**

Name of Volunteer: _____ Date of Application: _____

I am interested in applying for: *(rank all of those that are of interest, leaving blank those that are of no interest to you)*

_____ **FULL THIRD YEAR in my current community**

_____ Same assignment/job

_____ Different assignment/job; if so, specify job? _____

_____ **FULL THIRD YEAR in a different region**

_____ **FULL THIRD YEAR as PCV Leader**

_____ **PARTIAL THIRD YEAR in my community: # of months?** _____

Why are you interested in extending your service and what do you hope to achieve that you haven't been able to achieve in two years?

How does a third year extension fit into your short and long term goals?

Describe the most important things you accomplished during your two years of service.

Add any additional information you would like to have considered in your application.

Please submit completed form and updated resume to your APCD by April 10, 2012.