

# KHOTSO

January 2011



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## Message from the Country Director



Ariel Simons (ED '09) and Jessica Langridge (CHED '09) hip-hopping in Quthing.

Dear Volunteers,

I hope you all had an enjoyable “festive season” and that 2011 is filled with good health and success! I had a great Christmas in Swaziland and relaxing New Year’s in Maseru, where apparently you don’t need a license to shoot off fireworks!

I know that many of you hosted visitors from the US or went home to visit family over the holidays. If you have any 3<sup>rd</sup> Goal stories from these visits that we can share with PC/Washington, please let me know. They’re always asking for vignettes to illustrate how Peace Corps’ 3<sup>rd</sup> Goal is being achieved.

Peace Corps Lesotho staff are looking forward to 2011 with a mix of enthusiasm and trepidation. As you likely have heard, we will be looking for a new office, which will take a lot of work. We will also be conducting reviews of both the Education and CHED projects and will involve many of you in that exercise, which should take place in March. Staff are beginning to plan site visits and site identification trips for the year and will include tentative calendars in the *Khotso*. We’re also planning regional meetings (more info to come). And of course, we’ll be back on track with two PSTs this year. We are excited that we have a full staff contingent to take on all of these activities!

As you know, 2011 is also Peace Corps’ 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Fifty years ago President Kennedy signed an executive order creating the Peace Corps, and the first group of Volunteers was sent to Ghana in September of 1961. Each Peace Corps post is encouraged (if not required) to organize events to commemorate this anniversary. Although we’ve been talking about it for quite a while, we have not yet made any concrete plans here in Lesotho, but now we need to get moving!

I’ve solicited ideas and spoken to some of you about helping organize our celebration. Ideally everyone (staff and Volunteers) will be involved in one way or another. We’ll also be reaching out to the RPCV community in Lesotho as well as other “friends of Peace Corps Lesotho” to assist with preparations and celebrating with us. Please stay tuned for more information.

In other news, we posted on Share Point and will send in an email to Volunteers the Executive Summary of the report from the Post Operations Support Team that was here in October. We have begun to implement many of their recommendations including: looking for a new office, closing the transit house part of the Training Center, revising leave and out of site policies (sent in an email and on Sharepoint), and holding committee meetings and workshops outside of Maseru, among others. We will try to keep you posted as changes that affect Volunteers are made. Thanks for your patience and understanding with these changes. They’re all designed with your safety and security in mind.

Finally, in December, I had a chance to see all the ED 10 and CHED 10 Volunteers at their ISTs. It was great to hear about (or see) the great work they’ve been doing. I also visited Ariel Simons in Quthing with Jim and Michael. She invited us to the kick-off event for the “Sports and Service Club” that she helped form with young people from her community. Apparently, the kids arranged the whole event, complete with an elaborate program that included singing, poetry recitation, speeches (of course), refreshments and lots of hip-hop dancing. They scheduled the event to coincide with a visit from a friend of Ariel’s from the US who is one of several donors who sent basketball jerseys to the club for their newly formed basketball team. The afternoon was a lot of fun and very inspiring to see the kids so engaged. Way to go, Ariel!

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

Safety & Security – Masiphole Nthoalo

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

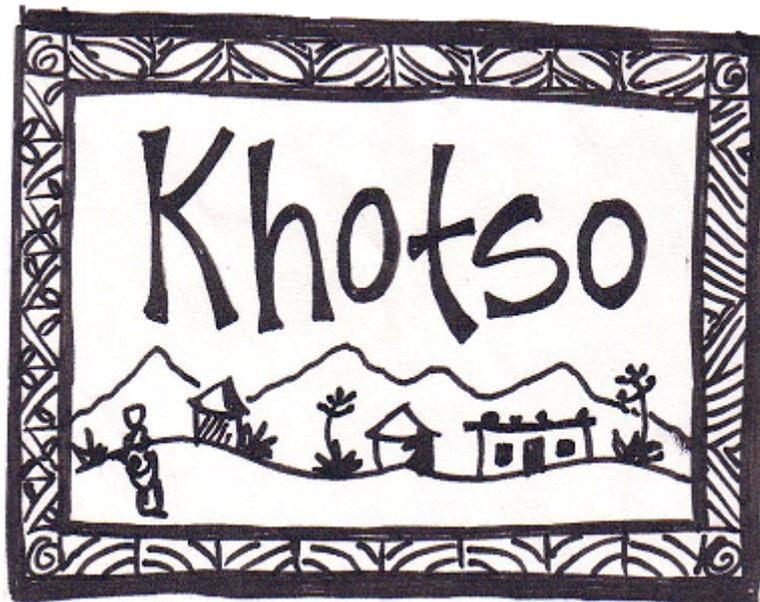
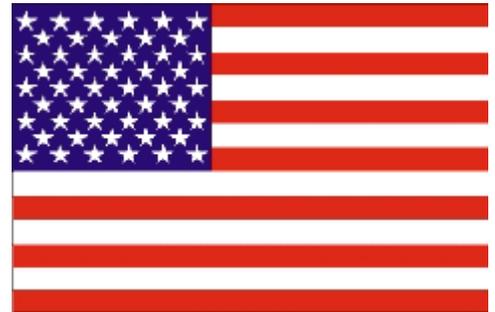
The editorial staff would like feedback from PCVs regarding the content. It is our desire to provide you with information that is useful, helpful, and encouraging. We would appreciate receiving constructive feedback from you as to whether the information contained in this newsletter met your needs.

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.*



**January**

Bryant, Parker	January 7
Burk, Brett	January 9
Weiss, Tam	January 10
Glanville, Kate	January 11
Kaufman, Elissa	January 11
Rosen, Zach	January 13
Kalaw, Michelle	January 29
Marsh, Kelsey	January 30

**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



**Itumeleng Notsi**  
Medical Secretary



**Masiphole Nthoalo**  
Safety & Security Coordinator

**Meet the new Staff**

Last month we introduced you to the new AO, James McCormick and the new Language and Cors Cultural Coordinator, M'e' Mamokola. This month, we would like to introduce you to four new staff members who joined us last month. Their brief bios are on pages 5 & 6.



**Dr. Victor Inegbedion**  
PCMO



**Letsatsi Mohale**  
Programming & Training Secretary

PCV News Corner



**Staff Birthdays**



**January**

Deepak Pullanikkatil January 22  
Margaret Putosa January 23

**February**

No staff birthdays.

**March**

Bernard Letsella March 15

**Peace Corps Lesotho Holidays**

**January**

January 1— New Year’s Day (US/LS Holiday)\*  
January 17— Martin Luther King Day (US Holiday)\*

**February**

February 21— President’s Day (US Holiday)\*

**March**

March 11— Moshoeshoe Day (LS Holiday)\*

\*PC Lesotho remains closed on this day.

**Admin Corner** By Jim and Victoria



**Meet the New AO**

Hello Everyone! My name is Jim McCormick and I am the new Administrative Officer for Lesotho. I arrived in country on December 2<sup>nd</sup> and I’ve already had the good fortune to meet over 50 of the current PCVs by virtue of stopping by a couple of the ISTs that were going on when I first arrived.

It is really a great feeling to be part of Peace Corps again. I am a former PCV from Cameroon (1980-1982) who has spent most of the last 25 plus years in corporate America.

That is not to say that I have been completely detached from Africa. After pursuing my former Cameroonian girlfriend for almost 20 years I finally convinced her to marry me ten years ago. (I think she finally just felt sorry for me). As a result I have two beautiful girls (three including my wife) who I hope will all be joining me here next June.

I know that I have very big shoes to fill following Richard Carlson, but I promise you that I will do whatever I can to support you and help make your PCV lives easier and less stressful. It is also my hope to get out in the field as much as possible and see firsthand the great (and critical) work you are all doing. In the meantime, “salang hantle” and “kea leboha...!”

**Message from the Financial Assistant**

Compliments of the New Year! Please be informed that starting with your December 2010 Living Allowances and/or Reimbursements, payment de-

tails/advises/slips have been emailed to you. From this payment slip you are able to see how much and for what have been paid and what deductions (if any...very rare) have been done. It is important that you inform PC office of any changes in your email addresses as we forward this information to the addresses we have.

Kindly note that the payment slip will always be emailed to you before funds are actually deposited into your bank account, so receipt of this slip should only be heads-up for you that money should be on its way but has NOT actually reached your bank account.

We are trying hard though to ensure you get your allowances the last week of every month to cover you for the following month. Nevertheless, we do encounter unforeseen and unexpected delays at times, mainly due to Bank negligence and poor communication between the two banks (Mother-Bank (Ned Bank) and your Standard Lesotho Bank.

Categories	Amount in Maloti
Food	684.00
Housing supplies	338.80
Communication	290.20
Clothing	102.30
Local Transportation	133.40
Personal sundries	98.40
Discretionary	344.70
Base Allowance (non-taxable)	1647.10
Base allowance (taxable)	344.70
Base Total	1991.80
Leave Allowance	159.72
<b>Total Allowances</b>	<b>2151.52</b>

On the left is a breakdown of your monthly living and leave allowances.

**Mr. Penny Pincher’s Corner – Lodging in Maseru**

Looking for an inexpensive way to spend a night in Maseru? If you find yourself “in transit” through Maseru and need a place to spend the night you might want to consider the **Anglican Training Center in West Maseru**. They have just undergone a major



*Staff Corner & Admin Corner*

Admin Corner,  
Education Corner &  
CHED Corner



turnover of personnel and now have a new administration and a new security company (the PC AO and SSC have thoroughly vetted it and can confirm its safety). This is a “no frills” place but affordable. The cost of a night’s stay is M130 per person paid upfront, which by comparison to most B&Bs in town, is a steal. The rooms are comfortable and secure

but do not have bathrooms; there are common shower and toilet facilities (men’s and women’s are separate). The management expects guests to be in for the night at 9:00pm and respectful (noise wise) of the other guests during the evening. (It is a church after all!) Breakfast (if you want it) is extra at M35. Reservations can be made by calling

2232 2046 or the Assistant Manager, Mr. Mathula at 5916 5823. If you are not arriving in town until after 9:00pm, Mr. Mathula will arrange for security to let you in and remember, you must take a taxi if travelling around town after dark. This is Mr. Penny Pincher signing off!

### **Programming and Training Corner** By Letsatsi Mohale

#### **Meet the New Staff**

Hey everyone, my name is Letsatsi Mohale, and I’m the new P&T Secretary. For the past three years, I worked for Lesotho Planned Parenthood Association (LPPA). I joined PC on December 06, 2010. I consider joining PC Lesotho as the biggest, most challenging, wise and above all PERFECT moves for me as new challenges are coming my way to help me grow both socially and career wise. I believe in new challenges in order to develop

and strengthen my skills, knowledge, and experience for my career. To emphasis on this point, I am not only focused on secretarial duties but also on counseling and accounting skills as it was part of my previous employment.

The Programming & Training Unit has lacked an assistant (secretary) for more than a year, and I believe that the Training Manager, Language Cross Culture and Homestay Coordinator, APCDs and PAs in

this unit have been working very hard to keep the unit functioning. One of my objectives is to keep up the good work the staff have been doing and this will only happen with the help of the staff and PCVs. I also have intension of bring up new skills to keep the flag of PC flying.

“Pele ea Pele Peace Corps Lesotho, le etsa mosebetsi o motle sechabang sa Basotho”

### **Education Corner** By Clement & Malitaba

Mahlohonolo a mangata haholo a selemo se secha! Welcome back from a deserved holidays. We hope you all come back with renewed ener-

gy and are ready to face this, the last leg of your journey in Lesotho! Our calendar for January – March is not finalized yet, mainly because most

of the events will be done jointly with our sister project (CHED) and we want to ensure that there are minimal areas of conflict here.

### **CHED Corner** By Charles & Selloane

Khotsong! A very prosperous 2011 to the Peace Corps family! It is that time of the year where we look at the achievements we made in the past year, identify the gaps and define the way forward to fill up those gaps in order to make us a better partner for the host Country. It is also worth-noting that in the past year, many people lost their way, others fell by the wayside but surprise...we are still standing; we didn’t give up; we made it to the end of 2010. Is this not encouraging?

Our APCD is back from vacation...and no doubt...he deserved it with all the refreshment that comes with it...with such energy, he is definitely ready to go an extra mile...welcome back, Ntate Charles, we missed you.

We are also aware that most

PCVs went out on vacation in and outside of Lesotho. Needless to say we hope they came back very much refreshed and looking forward to the New Year ahead of us...let us give it our best shot! Looking forward to a fruitful year ahead together!

#### **CHED 09 Reconnect**

In January, CHED will facilitate a RECONNECT for its most senior PCVs...the CHED 09 group. This activity will be held in Leribe in the small camp town of Pitseng London...what a lovely name! The dates are January 9-11 2010.

As with other RECONNECTS, we are looking forward to share with the CHED 09 their achievements in the past 18 months and the plans that they have for the remaining +- 6 months of service in Lesotho. We are very much looking

forward to spending the fun time together before they COS...

#### **CHED 11 Site Identification**

The time has come to make preparations for the new group and this will not be a success without your input. Surely, PCVs have already started to help identify potential host organizations within your districts/areas to host the new group so that we could kick-start the process.



Language & Cross-cultural Corner, Safety & Security Corner and Medical Corner

## Language & Cross-cultural Corner By Mamokola

Lumelang baithaopi kaofela. Ke tsepa hore le bile le kerese-mese e monate. Mahlohonolo a selemo se secha. Lebitso la ka ke 'm'e Mamokola Matlan-yane ('m'e Coke) – Language Culture & Homestay Coordinator. Selemo se fetileng ke kopane le baithaopi ba ED 10 "Reconnect" Black Mountain. Kamorao ka kopana le baithaopi ba CHED 10 "Phase 111" motseng oa Bokone Ha Jubilee. Re ile ra bua ka "Tutoring Program, Identification and Training of tutors. I'm done

working on Tutoring Program and I'm ready to train tutors once you've identified them.

### **"Who is a tutor?"**

- Someone you like and trust.
- Someone who speaks some English and can help you understand what you are learning/have learned from your experiences.
- Someone who will help you prepare for your learning

adventures.

Someone who will be available for your tutoring.

As soon as you have identified someone who bears the above features, please give me a call through Peace Corps Office 22313871. I'm planning to do tutor training by districts to avoid too much travelling and unnecessary expenses. Looking forward to meeting the CHED 09 during the up-coming Reconnect. Ke le lakaletsa katleho bohle. Kea leboha!

## Safety & Security Corner By Masiphole Nthoalo

### **Meet the New SSC**

Ntate Nthoalo was born in the district of Mofale'shoek. In 2000, he obtained a certificate in Agriculture Mechanization from the National University of Lesotho. He then joined the Lesotho Mounted Police Service (LMPS) where he mostly worked as an investigator. From 2006 and 2010, he was granted an opportunity by LMPS to further his academic education. He successfully procured a Bachelor of Science degree in Agriculture from Northwest University in South Africa. During that pe-

riod he served as chairperson of the University sports committee and member of the International Students' committee. He got married in May 2010, and he is yet to be blessed with a baby. Last but not least, his hobbies include sports particularly soccer as well as travelling.

### **EAP Test**

On December 29, 2010, Peace Corps staff performed an EAP communication test using cell phones. The exercise started at 0930 HRS and took 8 hours to complete; the

vast majority of the Volunteers were contacted within about 3 hours; however 1 or 2 took a while longer. A total of 49 Volunteers were approved to be out of the country and hence were not contacted but cleared in VIDA as part of the test. Twenty Volunteers, who were presumed to be at their respective sites in the country, plus 5 visiting Volunteers from other countries were contacted and cleared. We will likely perform another type of EAP test in the coming months.

## Medical Corner By Dr. Victor & Itumeleng

### **New Staff Introductions**

**PCMO:** I am Dr. Victor Inegbedion (just call me Dr. Victor) and started working for Peace Corps on 8 December 2010. I am from Nigeria. I was trained in Medicine & Surgery at the University of Benin in Nigeria. I am certified by the U.S. Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates. This certification verifies that my level of training is equivalent to the standards of medical training of U.S. physicians.

I worked as a senior Medical Officer (Registrar) with the Lesotho Ministry of Health & Social Welfare and was stationed at the Queen Elizabeth II Hospital, Maseru from November 2008 – November 2010. I enjoy spending time with friends and family, volunteering and Church activities. I am very excited about working for Peace Corps and meeting

all of you.

**Medical Secretary:** Itumeleng Nots'i started with Peace Corps on the 6 December 2010. She obtained her Secretarial Diploma from Leretholi Polytechnic. She has worked as an Executive Secretary for different companies since 1989. Her hobbies are playing tennis, watching football, travelling and reading. She has two children, a boy and a girl. She is also very excited about working for Peace Corps.

### **Update on Health Unit Procedures**

Cell phone numbers for the Health Unit are:

Medical Duty Phone:  
6285-1003

Appointments and Ordering  
Meds and Supplies:  
6286-6050

- The Health Unit is open from 7:30 -5:00pm M-Th and 7:30 -1:30 on Friday. Please call during these hours except for emergencies.

- **For emergencies after hours and on the weekends, call the Medical Duty Phone.** Any non emergencies will be handled during office hours.

- Non emergency calls or sms placed during business hours will be returned within the close of the business day or no later than the next morning. Volunteers should follow up if not contacted by the Health Unit after 10:00am the next morning.

- Medication and supply orders should be sent to the cell phone number above 4-6 wks in advance. Medications will be placed in the regional boxes in the VRC for pick up. No medication requests will be

### Medical Corner and Staff Schedule



filled on the weekends or after hours.

- Any medical visits to clinics or hospitals require prior authorization from the PCMO. If you have any questions, issues, or concerns regarding the health unit, please contact us. Our goal is to help you stay physically and mentally healthy during your service.

**Allergic Rhinitis** (Reference: KUMED Health System)

**Description:** Allergic rhinitis is an allergic reaction of the lining of the nose. Seasonal allergic rhinitis is also called hay fever.

**Causes:** Allergic rhinitis occurs when the nose, ears, sinuses and throat come into contact with allergy-causing substances, or allergens. The most common allergens are pollens, molds, dust and animal dander. When the lining tissues of the nose and sinuses come into contact with allergens, chemical called histamine is released. Histamine causes the nose lining to swell, itch and produce excess mucus.

**Symptoms:** Itchy, runny nose, sneezing, nasal and head congestion, other symptoms include fatigue and lethargy, itchy throat and postnasal drainage.

**Diagnosis:** It may take some detective work to figure out exactly what causes your aller-

gic reaction. Your health care provider may swab the lining of your nose to obtain a mucus sample (done in the US). About 50% of people with allergies have cells in their mucus that indicate allergy. Allergy testing is also available in the US but are expensive, most health care providers recommend you try to control your symptoms with medication first.

**Treatment:** The first principle of allergy treatment is to avoid the allergy-causing substance. When these measures are inadequate to control symptoms, medication is usually effective. Your PCMO may suggest you first try nonprescription decongestants for mild symptoms. Nonprescription antihistamines are helpful, especially if used only at bedtime, as they may cause drowsiness. Often the drowsiness will subside after you have taken the antihistamine for 3-5 days. Prescription antihistamines are usually very effective in treating and preventing allergy symptoms. The new "non-sedating" antihistamines don't usually cause drowsiness and are taken once or twice a day.

**Prevention:** There are no known ways to prevent the development of allergic rhinitis. If childhood allergies persist into adulthood, they will likely be present for a lifetime. New allergies can develop any time, even in previously non-allergic persons. Allergy symp-

toms are dependent not only on season and weather but also location. Hence, your allergies may wax and wane, depending on where you are living. Once allergies have developed, you can try to limit exposure to the things that cause them.

#### 10 Proven Stress Reducers that Can Work In Lesotho

1. Relax your standards. The world will not come to an end.
2. Pollyanna-Power! For every one thing that goes wrong, there are probably 10 to 50 blessings. Count them all!
3. Turn "needs" into preferences. Our basic physical needs translate into food, water, and shelter. Everything else is a preference. Don't get attached to preferences.
4. Procrastination is stressful. Whatever you want to do tomorrow, do it today: whatever you want do today, do it now.
5. Be prepared to wait.
6. Learn to live one day at a time.
7. Everyday, do something you really enjoy.
8. Do something for somebody else.
9. Have a forgiving view of people and events. Accept the fact that we live in an imperfect world.
10. Have an optimistic view of the world. Believe that most people are doing the best that they can.

#### STAFF SCHEDULE

##### January

CHED O9 Reconnect in Pitseng (9<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup>)  
PSN meeting in Pitseng (11<sup>th</sup>)  
Clement on vacation (18<sup>th</sup> - 21<sup>st</sup>)  
Mid term PCRV meeting (26<sup>th</sup>)  
Makhauta on leave (17<sup>th</sup> - 28<sup>th</sup>)  
Selloane on leave (12<sup>th</sup> - 14<sup>th</sup>)

##### February

Jimi on leave (14<sup>th</sup> - 18<sup>th</sup>)  
Kathy on leave (8<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup>-28<sup>th</sup>)  
Regional meetings (dates TBD)

##### March

Ed and CHED Project Reviews

#### Duty Officer Schedule

January 3 - 9, 2011	- Clement
January 10 - 16, 2011	- Nthoalo
January 17 - 24, 2011	- Masechaba
January 24 - 30, 2011	- Deepak
January 31 - February 6, 2011	- Charles

## Strange Beginnings of HIV

By Nathan Birhanu, ED 10



As we all start a new year in Lesotho, we reflect on the previous year while looking forward to a hopeful beginning. This is essential for we plan for the future based on the experiences of the past. Often, the origin of HIV is regarded as a topic not to be mulled over as it is thought irrelevant to its current situation. I disagree with this proposition as do anthropologists, epidemiologists, scientists, and other researchers in connection to HIV. In these private communities, the origins of HIV has been heavily researched and debated ever since the identification of the virus in the 1980s. The first identifiable infection of HIV occurred in 1959 although it is possible to have had cases before then that were misidentified. Over time, some theories have been validated while others completely disproven.

New diseases tend to develop when the relationship between human beings and nature is drastically changed. Smallpox, tuberculosis, and anthrax are thought to have jumped from cattle to human beings once the domestication of animals began. Polio emerged in the nineteenth century when sanitation conditions were greatly enhanced. AIDS is thought to have manifested from the introduction of new medical technologies, such as hypodermic needles and blood transfusion, in Africa during the early twentieth-century.

The main overarching theory within the scientific community is that HIV evolved from simian immunodeficiency virus (SIV). It is believed that the virus grew to what we know it as today through "natural-transfer." The natural-transfer theory promotes the idea that viruses similar to HIV have always been present, especially in small forest-dwelling communities that originally hunted and ate monkeys and apes. During this time, thirty-six species of African monkeys and apes carried SIV which is closely related to HIV. SIV somehow entered human beings during this time and only existed within those condensed, isolated communities. The theory continues that in the past century far regions of Africa were drawn together by newly built highways, migrant workers, refugee movements, wars and growth of cities. This lays an explanation for the spread of SIV which only causes mild flu symptoms in human beings and is not sexually transmitted. It is then believed that SIV began to evolve over time and transformed to HIV.

During the early twentieth century, vaccination and blood transfusions were introduced into Africa and are thought of as the facilitators for the evolution of HIV from SIV. Virologists have always know that taking any virus and passing it though a new species will eventually make the virus more pathogenic or infectious. To prove this in relation to HIV, virologists have recreated the evolution of SIV by working with genetically engineered version of HIV known as SHIV – simian human immunodeficiency virus. SHIV does not grow into a disease or become transmitted through sex, but it can be passed on through bone-marrow transplants or blood transfusions.

For an experiment, virologists took SHIV and injected into a lab monkey and then allowed it to multiply while the monkey's immune system takes time to clear it. While this is happening the virus mutates and makes copies of itself unlike the original. The virus is removed from the monkey and then transplanted into another monkey. However, this new virus is much stronger than the original as it has grown stronger from fighting the immune system of the first monkey. The virus was once again allowed to mutate in the second monkey while still causing no disease but growing stronger. After growing a few weeks in second monkey, the virus was taken and transplanted in a third monkey. The virus caused no disease in the first or second monkey but caused mild symptoms in third monkey. Once the virus was passed onto the fourth monkey and every subsequent monkey thereafter, it caused AIDS.

Theory stands that something analogous happened with HIV. A hunter or monkey-meat butcher who became infected with a nonthreatening monkey virus passed it on to another person, who then passed it on to another person, to eventually have it turn to HIV. SIV cannot be transmitted through sex but it could have easily passed on through dirty syringes or blood transfusions during early twentieth-century Africa. It was not unheard of six syringes being used to treat 90,000 people with sleeping sickness during World War I in the Congo. Unsterilized needles were also used during the smallpox campaigns that were conducted in West Africa around the same time. Hypodermic needles came into Africa in the early twentieth century as well as blood banks which were introduced later on. Thus, blood transfusions are also thought of perpetuating the progression of SIV to HIV as well. People who receive blood transfusion often times donate blood themselves once recovering from a sickness thus transferring on the mutating form of SIV. This also helps to account for both strands of HIV: HIV-1 and HIV-2. HIV-1, which is the responsible for the majority of AIDS worldwide, is believed to originate from chimpanzees and HIV-2, which is less aggressive and mostly found in West Africa, is thought to originate from sooty mangabeys.

Although this is still a theory in continues research, it points to an important issue. As we move



PCV Life

forward in treating HIV/AIDS and other diseases, we must be careful to study our past techniques and learn from the success and failures as we implement new ones in the future. HIV is still the major contributor to the challenges of Lesotho and Southern Africa.

### **TAP (Tuition Assistance Project)** By Karen Lindquist (ED 09), TAP 2010 Chair



#### **2010 Wrap-Up**

2010 presented the Tuition Assistance Committee members with varied challenges, but we're pleased at year-end to announce that 90 students and 35 schools benefitted from the support of Friends of Lesotho (FOL) through the TAP program.

#### **New Co-Chairs of TAP**

At a year-end wrap-up meeting, Kali Bechtold (ED 10/Mohale's Hoek) and Kevin Casimer (CHED 10/Leribe) were selected to serve as future co-chairs. Other committee members are: Nate Landrum (ED 10/Butha Buthe), Parker Bryant (ED 10/Mohotlong) and Melissa Hill (CHED 09/Mafeteng).

#### **Moving Forward in 2011**

Friends of Lesotho will continue to financially support the Tuition Assistance Program in 2011. The system for processing applications will be done through the PCPP (Peace Corps Partnership Program) in 2011 and future years. Committee members will meet in January to develop the system, instructions and forms for PCVs use during the application and review process.

We look forward to a new year in which additional PCVs participate in TAP. The program will expand next year to include ECCD, English Medium and Technical Training schools. Look for program details in future issues of *Khotso!*

#### PCV Life

### **FRIENDS OF LESOTHO (FOL)**

By Dyann L. Van Dusen, RPCV 2003-2006, VP and Membership Chair, FOL

PCVs who are only now being made aware of problems with checks issued for their TAP scholarship grantees can no longer present those returned checks to the bank for payment.

FOL closed its Lesotho checking account in late November 2010. All future FOL funding for PCV projects, including TAP, will come through contributions FOL makes to the Peace Corps Partnership Program Country Fund.

However, FOL can send a check to the US account of a PCV who is presented with a TAP scholarship check that was never processed by the bank. We have already processed a request for Adam Santos.

We hope there are not a lot more to come, since the TAP checks were issued nearly 6 months ago and FOL needs to close and reconcile its books for 2010 very soon. THANK YOU ALL FOR YOUR HELP IN RESOLVING THIS UNFORTUNATE SITUATION. AND, THANKS FOR YOUR CONTINUED SERVICE TO PEACE CORPS-LESOTHO

The latest Friends of Lesotho Newsletter can be downloaded here: [http://www.friendsoflesotho.org/wp-content/uploads/2009/07/FOL\\_Newsletter\\_4QTR\\_2010.pdf](http://www.friendsoflesotho.org/wp-content/uploads/2009/07/FOL_Newsletter_4QTR_2010.pdf)

### **AFRICAN LIBRARY PROJECT (ALP)**

By Chris Bradshaw, ALP Founder

It's amazing. We are now celebrating our first five years and 561 libraries! Over 25,000 Americans have joined ALP to provide small libraries to serve half a million Africans in eight countries. Grass-roots volunteers like you are the key to our collective success.

ALP has thrived during 2010 despite the economy. The Winston-Salem Symphony in NC kicked the year off with a book drive that filled a container to Botswana to start 48 primary school libraries! Book drives initiated by Penn State students alone produced 21 libraries. Altogether the dedicated, heroic efforts of our book drive organizers helped us start 223 libraries this year.

A big chunk of our achievement is due to our talented and passionate volunteers, donors and





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board members who contributed to make our first fancy fundraiser, Harambee!, a \$63K success. The event was fun, heartfelt, and fabulous, and everyone glowed by the end of the evening.

I feel like a proud mother hen of our newly launched website. Please check it out, especially the new African Libraries section where you can learn about our fabulous partners. Visit the new Book Drives in Action section to get an up-close look at some of our book drives in progress right now.

We welcome this month our newest partner in Africa – the Michael Lapsley Foundation in Ghana. We will develop primary, secondary and community libraries together with this energetic nonprofit that matches our enthusiasm for the transformative power of books. Our African partners in Swaziland, Lesotho, Botswana and Malawi continue to be the key to our winning model of starting small, sustainable libraries in remote areas. We are so proud of them!

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### WID/GAD

**March 8th 2011 is International Women's Day** – a day often celebrated by Volunteers and their communities with activities that honor women's contributions to their families, communities and countries. This year is the 100th Anniversary. For this centenary, we are encouraged to think in 100's: 100 photos, 100 stories, 100 activities, 100 girls staying in school, etc. Below are some activities that Volunteers have done in the past:

- 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
  - 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.

Let nate Clement, the WID/GAD staff liason, know if you are planning any Women's Day events at your site.

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### **From Africa to Home, Peace Corps Volunteer learns lessons of life**

**By Laura Newell, Folsom Telegraph Staff Writer, Folsom, California**

In 2011, the Peace Corps will commemorate 50 years of promoting peace and friendship around the world. One Folsom woman knows the benefits of the organization.

**Merrill Nosler (CHED 08)**, 46, is a Folsom resident who recently returned from the county of Lesotho in the Sub Saharan African region as a Peace Corps volunteer. She said the county is about the size of Maine. While there, she helped train teachers and teach the communities about health and education development. "The country is dying because of AIDS," Nosler said. "I got placed in an area to teach and train about the prevention of HIV and AIDS." She said she worked with a lot of youth groups there to train youth in the community. She mainly worked with youth between the ages of 13 to 20.

"The most difficult thing for me was watching how children were treated and undervalued," Nosler said. "So the best thing for me was being able to help teach how to value the youth. Just having one kid grow up thinking they are valued from my presence there makes this all worth it."

She said it was difficult at times to see cultural differences from America like beating punishments to instill fear. But rather than leaving, she wanted to take action and help educate other forms of teaching and helping youth. "Because the country invites us, they are usually accepting of our new

ideas,” she said. “That’s why two years living there helps them know us and trust us.”

She said the commitment is well worth it for most volunteers. “It takes a two-year commitment because it takes a year to become comfortable and familiar with the culture,” she said. “Then you work. I can completely understand why they do that.”

She said volunteers are given benefits while working including a stipends, safety protection and medical. “I would encourage people to do it,” Nosler said. “It’s the toughest job I’ve ever loved.” She said the opportunity was amazing. “To have the opportunity to become something bigger than myself has been life changing,” she said. “It has opened my heart to something bigger than I ever experienced in America. To be fully immersed in another culture, I appreciate things so much more.”

Nosler said if she doesn’t go back into the Peace Corps, she hopes to work with a local non-profit organization because it would be had to do something else after what she experienced.

“To go there are see the hope was beautiful and to take an opportunity to go to something like the Peace Corps to see other cultures was wonderful,” Nosler said. “We are all a part of the human race and to share their culture with America is part of the Peace Corps project.”

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

**TO:** Peace Corps Global  
**FROM:** Aaron S. Williams, Director  
**SUBJECT:** Nominations for the 2011 John F. Kennedy Service Awards

The John F. Kennedy Service Awards were established in 2006 to honor the hard work of six Americans who have given outstanding service to the Peace Corps, both at home and abroad. The awards are granted every five years in the following categories: current Peace Corps Volunteers; returned Peace Corps Volunteers; and Peace Corps staff members. Two awards will be given in each category.

I hope you will help by nominating outstanding Americans who should be selected for this award.

While every Volunteer, returned Volunteer, and staff member contributes to the success of the Peace Corps, the John F. Kennedy Service Awards provide an opportunity to recognize six individuals who go beyond the call of duty for the Peace Corps and America every day.

A worthy candidate demonstrates exceptional service and leadership, and helps further Peace Corps’ mission and three goals.

Please find a link to the 2011 Kennedy Service Award nomination form. Nominations must be received via email to the following address: [KennedyServiceAward@peacecorps.gov](mailto:KennedyServiceAward@peacecorps.gov) by midnight on **January 21, 2011**. Awardees will be honored on March 5, 2011, at the Kennedy Library in Boston, Massachusetts, and featured on the Peace Corps website. Thank you for your thoughtful participation.

#### **Spotlight on Eastern Europe and Central Asia**

After the fall of communism and the breakup of the Soviet Union nearly two decades ago, the world turned its attention to the 15 newly independent nations of Eastern Europe and Central Asia. With Russia hosting both the 2014 Winter Olympics and the 2018 World Cup Soccer, this region will once again be in the world’s spotlight. But, what do our students really know about places like Kazakhstan, Macedonia or Ukraine?

There are 1661 Peace Corps Volunteers currently serving in this region while over 15,318 Volunteers have served there since 1961. Coverdell World Wise Schools invites you to take a trip to this fascinating part of the world through stories from Peace Corps Volunteers.

What do you and your students know about this culturally rich and diverse region of the world? Test your knowledge!

1. Bulgaria borders what body of water to the north?  
a) Pacific Ocean, b) Danube River, c) Caspian Sea, d) Pripyat River
2. Kazakhstan is one of the world’s top 10 producers of what natural resource?  
a) oil, b) coffee, c) grain, d) timber
3. A Turkmen can be identified anywhere by wearing this traditional piece of clothing:

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a) Khalat (robe), b) Sherwani (coat), c) Telpek (hat), d) Turban (headdress)

Have your students learn more from an interactive quiz—and get the answers!

Interested in connecting with your very own Peace Corps Volunteer “tour guide” in places like Ukraine, Kazakhstan, or Azerbaijan? Enroll in Correspondence Match today and learn about Volunteers’ work in areas such as teaching English as a foreign language (TEFL), health, environment, business development and youth development.



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