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News from around the Peace Corps World

Message from the Country Director



PCV Wes Helm shows 'M'e Makhauta around the SMARTD Resource Center in Ha Sekake. The posters behind Wes were hand-drawn by PCV Brandi Helm. Great work, Wes and Brandi!

Thanks to everyone (staff and Volunteers) who participated in the recent portfolio review. We got a lot of great information and have a good idea of where we want the program to go over the next 5-7 years. In the coming months, we will be taking the input received and using it to revise the current CHED and ED project frameworks. This will entail additional meetings with Government of Lesotho and other partners as well as Volunteers. Even though we do not anticipate finalizing the new project plans before the end of the year, we will likely incorporate many of the suggestions we received in the upcoming PSTs.

Recently, a Volunteer told me that they had been advised by a former PCMO not to use locally available condoms. This shocked me as I know that most condoms available in Lesotho are provided or funded by international organizations. I decided to verify, and this is what I found out from colleagues at PEPFAR and PSI:

- The "double butterfly" (silver foil) generics that are distributed at MoHSW clinics and workplaces are donated by UNFPA. The "blue and gold" (this refers to the look of the packaging and is not a brand name) and unpackaged Trust that are distributed through ALAFA factories and some other large workplaces are donated by USAID. PSI sells Trust and Lovers Plus. Most or all of these condoms – and most condoms worldwide – are produced in places

like Malaysia.

- There is no difference in quality between generics and branded, socially marketed condoms; they are subject to the same quality tests and in many cases produced by the same companies. Although occasionally there may be superficial differences between them (e.g., cloudy appearance), these do not impact their effectiveness in preventing pregnancy or STIs. What differs between generics and branded, socially marketed condoms is

– surprise – the way they are marketed.

PSI currently distributes and sells nearly all of the condoms in Lesotho, including MoHSW generics, US government-funded generics, and socially marketed brands.

So please banish the thought that you can not use anything except the condoms provided by PC. As with any condom, however, the onus is on the user to verify that the condom is not somehow damaged. If your local *shopong* keeps the condoms in a window where they bake in the sun all day, you probably don't want to buy them.

In addition to practicing safe sex themselves, Volunteers are also expected to promote HIV prevention, including correct and consistent condom use, in their communities. Please ensure that you provide accurate information about the quality of locally available condoms. If you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact 'me Jimi.

Khotso,
 Kathy

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From the Editor

Articles must be received by the 4th Monday of the month to be included in the following month's edition of the Khotso. **When submitting articles, please provide the name of the person making the submission and a contact person for follow-up questions.** The Newsletter will be emailed and a hardcopy made available in the office on or about the 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.

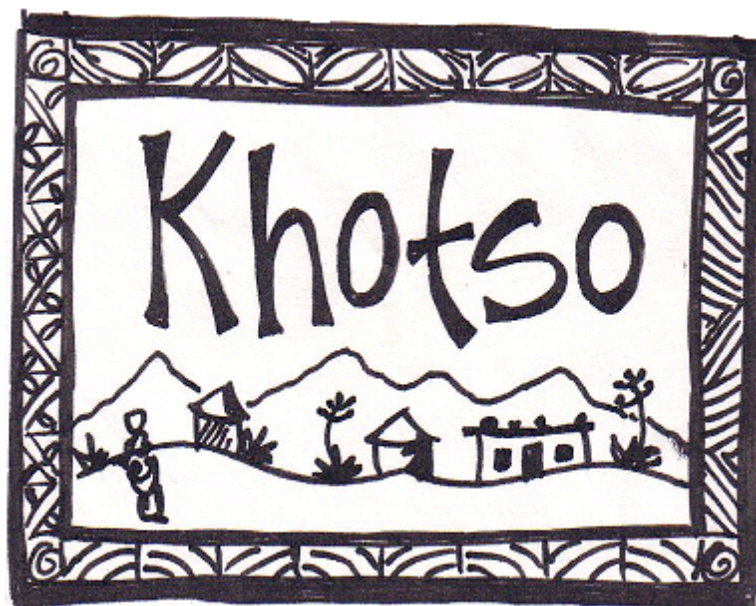
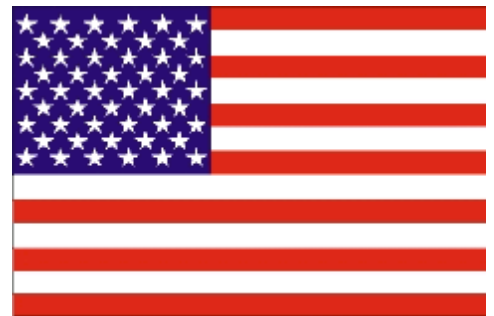
The editorial staff would like feedback from PCVs regarding the content. It is our desire to provide you with information that is useful, helpful, and encouraging. We would appreciate receiving constructive feedback from you.

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 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.

**May**

Morin, Tim	May 14
Santos, Adam	May 15
Waggoner, Haley	May 17
Lobrow, Karolina	May 18
Viola, Greg	May 20
Delise, Brandon	May 28

June

Anderman-Hahn, Evan	June 21
Carson, Amy Jo	June 17
Enriquez, Rocio	June 17
Erdeg, Irena	June 10
Ryan, Brenda	June 20

Staff Birthdays**May**

Ralintoane, Majara	May 2
Mokone, Makhauta	May 26

June

Malitaba Hlabana	June 6
Lereko Mofokeng	June 15
Matlanyane Mamokola	June 13

Peace Corps Lesotho Holidays**May**

May 1— Worker's Day (LS Holiday)*
 May 25— Africa Heroes' Day (LS Holiday)*
 May 30— Memorial Day (US Holiday)*

June

June 2— Ascension Day (LS Holiday)*

*PC Lesotho remains closed on this day.

STAFF SPOTLIGHT

Full name: Charles Miller

Job title: CHED APCD

Background: Southern born and bred, I'm originally from Alabama but have lived outside of the USA for more than ten years.

Jobs prior to PC Lesotho: I served as a Peace Corps Volunteer in Papua New Guinea from 1994 – 1996, and

later worked at Peace Corps Headquarters in Washington, DC for more than four years, placing Volunteers and helping to recruit and train staff. For the last five years, I've worked with Peace Corps in the field as Programming and Training Officer, first in the Pacific Island of Kiribati, and later in Guyana. In addition to my career with Peace Corps, I've managed a humanitarian relief program in southern Sudan, and strengthened local capacity in implementing a peer education project in Nigeria.

Family status (married? kids?): I have a partner who's currently in east Africa, and hope to adopt a child someday.

Most favorite part of your job: Visiting volunteers, receiving new Volunteers, helping Volunteers to help their communities, and working with local staff.

Least favorite part of your job: Paperwork.

What do you do in your free time?: Watch television, cook, enjoy a glass of South African wine, and travel.

If you hosted a dinner party, who would you want to come?: Bill Clinton, The Dalai Lama, Kristine Baranski, Usher, and Graham Norton.

Advice for PCVs in Lesotho: Be kind to yourself and others; never let go of your idealism; remember that you are here to serve your community; and finally, enjoy this special time in your life because it goes way too quickly.

ADMIN CORNER – By Jim McCormick, AO

No doubt the best news I can pass along to all of you right now is the announcement of the arrival of 'M'e Victoria's baby. On April 14th she gave birth to a beautiful baby girl named Makori. I understand she is named after her grandmother, which is quite an honor. Mother and daughter (and husband) are all doing well and we are all eager to meet Baby Makori as soon as 'M'e Victoria feels up to an office visit. On a side note, Ntate Nthoalo won the baby pool by picking the correct date of birth. In good Chicago fashion I thought about offering 'M'e Victoria's physician half the winnings if he could arrange for the baby to be born on the date I selected, but by the time I was to get my plan in motion the baby was already here.

As of April 26th we are at a 59% response level for the Living Allowance Survey. To those of you who took the time to submit it we really appreciate it, but unfortunately with less than 75% (or more) of you responding we can't appeal to PC HQ for a possible Living Allowance increase. You are still welcome to complete it and send it in, but at the moment it is "dead in the water."

We are in the process of conducting a per diem review to determine if an increase is warranted. As you might imagine (if you have been following the on-going budget battles in Washington) this is not the best year to be appealing for increases in spending, but if required we will take the battle forth and do the best we can to make it happen.

On a final note, please be reminded that if you're staying at the Anglican Training Center you'll need to bring your own towel and plan for food. There are no facilities for cooking. Also, try to be in for the night by 9:00pm. If you have any comments or feedback you'd like us to pass on to the ATC management, please let us know.

Volunteer Amenities

Recently, a post in the Africa Region queried other posts about amenities that their Volunteers received because several of his Volunteers were complaining that they were not provided with certain amenities that they felt they deserved.

Below are the overall Africa region-wide averages (estimations) based on responses from 19 CDs:

Refrigerator: 22%
Running water: 21%
Hot tap water: 8% (i.e., a tap in home or compound)
Shower: 10%

Here's a highlight from the "Southern Africa Five" (South Africa, Botswana, Namibia, Lesotho, Swaziland):

Refrigerator: 66%
Running water: 43%
Hot tap water: 24%
Shower: 20%

Compared to the "Post-Conflict Three" (Guinea, Liberia, Sierra Leone):

Refrigerator: 0%
Running water: 0%
Hot tap water: 0%
Shower: 0%

Below is what we estimated (roughly) for Volunteers in Lesotho:

Refrigerator: 15%
Running water: 40%
Hot tap water: 20%
Shower: 20%

Stay safe everybody. Your safety and well being are the most important things to us. Please keep that in mind.

EDUCATION CORNER – By Ntate Clement Lephoto, ED APCD and 'Me Malitaba Hlabana, ED PA

First, we would like to say thank you once again to those who participated in the recent portfolio review process. The review team expressed their satisfaction with the input received from the field visits and the stakeholders meeting. We are positive



PCV Tam Weiss recently conducted a workshop in Mashai where teachers created their own storybooks.

that as we move forward, we are taking with us lots of ideas from all of you and of course our development partners. We are not done yet, so stay put as the work has just begun!

We plan to resume the site visits programme in May and in case you misplaced our program here is our schedule:

May 3	[09:00am]	-	Leeza
May 4	[10:00am]	-	Rusty
May 9	[09:00am]	-	Rory
May 9	[02:00pm]	-	Sonny
May 10	[09:00am]	-	Haley
May 10	[02:00pm]	-	Shanthe
May 11	[09:00am]	-	Eric
May 11	[02:00pm]	-	Katie
May 12	[09:00am]	-	Joey
May 12	[02:00pm]	-	Nathan
May 16	[11:00am]	-	Ryan
May 17	[09:00am]	-	Andrea
May 17	[02:00pm]	-	Adam
May 18	[10:00am]	-	Nate
May 23	[09:00am]	-	Dustin
May 23	[02:00pm]	-	Kali



Art work done by PCV Ariel Simons and her students in one of the classrooms at her school.



More art work at PCV Ariel Simons' site.

Please inform and remind your supervisors and counterparts about these visits. For third generation volunteer sites this will be our last visit and it would be great if we could use this time to also reflect back on the work that we have done at these sites and how the schools plan to move forward without the volunteers in the future.



M'e' Makhauta in discussion with the youth club members at Maseribane HS during the portfolio review.

Please note that 'm'e' Malitaba will take two weeks vacation at end of May and beginning of June and Ntate Clement will take his in the first three weeks of July.

VRF#2

This is a gentle reminder that the next VRF submission is coming up in June!!! Our plan is to review and provide feedback to all of you by the end of June.

CHED Corner By: Charles Miller CHED APCD, 'M'e Selloane Pitkoe CHED PA, and Ntate Letsatsi Mohale P&T Secretary

Hi CHEDers. A huge *Thank You* for all of your respective participation in the district meetings, and for some of you, the field interviews and the Portfolio Review.

Remember to copy both 'M'e Selloane and Charles on any CHED work-related emails. This helps to insure we can provide a timely response in case one of us is out of the office. Also, remember to text the Whereabouts Phone at 6288-5598 anytime you will be away from your site. If you do not get a response you must text again, or call the number. Traveling without receiving an acknowledgement that your message has been received is not acceptable.



PCV Chante' Liggins and her Counterpart, Ntate Ntai planned and implemented "UniTY", a day of activities which highlighted the many talents of the youth of Ty and outlying Berea communities..

Project Plan Review:

Thanks to CHED 09 PCVs Melissa Hill and Karolina Lobrow, and CHED 10 PCVs Benjamin Davies, Chante Liggins, Brandi Helm



Special thanks to the CHED and Education Volunteers who actively participated in the Stakeholder's Workshop on April 20, 2011.

and Juliana Fulton for their active participation in the Stakeholders Workshop on April 20th. Thanks also to all of you who completed and submitted surveys. Your input is very helpful as



Youth stepping to the beat at "UniTY", under the mentorship of PCV Chante' Liggins.

we work to improve upon our current project frameworks.

CHED 11 Site Identification:

The Peace Corps Placement Office in Washington continues to invite Trainees for CHED 11, who will arrive in early June. We still 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 preference in Mokhotlong, Thaba Tseka, Qacha's Nek, Quthing, Mohales Hoek, and Mafeteng Districts, while maintaining Volunteer numbers in Leribe, Butha Buthe, Berea and Maseru Districts. We will not be placing new Volunteers in Maseru City. Please do help!

CHED 11 PST:

Thanks to all of you who expressed interest in assisting with the CHED 11 PST. We are reviewing the letters of interest to assist with the CHED 11 PST and will be informing Volunteers soon. If you sent in a letter expressing interest in helping with PST you can expect to hear from us in the first week in May.

We are also planning the Host Volunteer Visit, and as we did last year, priority will be given to CHED Volunteers in all Districts for hosting, however if you are an education Volunteer and you are interested in hosting a CHED Volunteer for HVV, please let us know. We will also be sending a solicitation of interest letter regarding HVV. HVV is currently scheduled for June 23 through June 28, 2011. We will be sending out the solicitation for HVV Hosts soonest.

CHED 09 COS Conference:

It's hard to believe but the CHED 09 COS Conference is just around the corner – a very immediate corner! CHED 09ers will convene May 3 – 5, 2011 at the Maluti Mountain Lodge in Clarens to look back and look ahead.

UniTY:

On April 2 PCV Chante' Liggins and her host organization, Leseli hosted UniTY, an event to celebrate youth. The day helped to display the many talents of the youth of TY and outlying Berea District. Congrats to Chante' and her host agency for a very successful event.

Trimester Reports:

Thanks again to all of you for submitting your reports. We've enjoyed reading your reports and providing feedback. We wanted to share with you some of the "GOLD STAR" activities that many of you have included in your reports.

Gold Star Activities:

- Matt Deakin teamed up with PCV Juliana Fulton and her project which needed more permanent help with agriculture clubs at local schools. This joint effort led to internships of several youth from one of Matt's projects. As a result, two students from the LASTC were selected and are now applying the skills they learned to address local needs.

Thanks again for your hard work. Stay tuned for more "Gold Star" activities in the next edition of The Khotso!

From Ntate Mohale, Programming and Training Secretary

I hope all is good for everyone. Winter is here and I bet most of you will be planning to take some days off from their sites. If so, you're reminded to submit your leave request forms on time to make it easier for the APCDs and CD to sign and be notified of their approvals on time. Also leave forms that say 'See so and so's form' will not be approved as each individual volunteer is required to provide all the necessary information. Many of the forms come with no contact numbers. Such forms will not be approved until the information is provided.

Also, thank you for contacting the whereabouts phone whenever you leave your site over night! Remember that if you don't receive a confirmation within a business day, please contact the phone again.

Ha e phaphathoe!!!

LANGUAGE & CROSS CULTURAL CORNER – By M'e Mamokola, Language, Cross Culture and Homestay Coordinator

Lumelang, baithaopi ba Lesotho. Le ntse le phela joang kaofela? Ke soabile hobane ke tsepisitse ho le chakela empa mosebetsi oa ka o mongata haholo. Kahona ha ke fumane nako ea ho le chakela. Ke khonne ho kopana le baithaopi ba Quthing, Qacha's Nek le Mohale's hoek "District Meeting." Ke tsepa hore ke tla khona ho le bona kaofela pele selemo sa 2011 se fela. However I'm hopeful that you are continuing to learn Sesotho and Culture and trying your best to integrate into your communities. Some of you have told me that you have found tutors. That's a great step. I am still trying to find time to meet them and see how we can work together. In the main time please continue working with them in any possible way you can. Remember to fill in Peace Corps Reimbursement form to be reimbursed.

Those who have not yet identified a tutor, this may help you.

"Who is a tutor?"

- ◇ *Someone you like and trust*
- ◇ *Someone who speaks some English and can help you understand what you are learning.*
- ◇ *Someone who can help you prepare your learning adventures.*
- ◇ *Someone who will be available for your tutoring.*

Now here is something you can do to help you get started and assess your learning progress.

STARTING A LANGUAGE AND CULTURAL LEARNING PORTFOLIO

Document your efforts, progress and questions in a **field language & cultural learning portfolio**.

Tip: Use a binder and separate your portfolio sections with dividers. Some suggested sections:

Grammar Notes and Questions: Keep track of formal or informal grammar study; include workbook pages, drills, sentences you hear, see or want to practice. Jot down questions you have and write down answers when you find them out.

Vocabulary Learning: Write down new words and phrases. Indicate the original context or create your own context; include other words typically used with your target word. Be visual: paste in magazine or newspaper pages or pictures; draw your own pictures and label them; take pictures and organize them on your computer; group words according to function: office items in one place, economic terms in another. Use your new words in sentences or paragraphs.

Writing / Reading: Copy or imitate news articles you read; include writing that you prepare for work, news articles that you want to read later, letters you write to friends, and any script practice you're working on. Research shows that doing some of your learning in writing supports your other skills.

Culture Notes: Make notes about how people really use your new language. What kind of small talk do they make before business meetings begin? How close do they stand when they talk to one another? How loudly do they speak? When and why

they laugh? What makes them angry? Do men and women speak differently from one another? How do you signal a waiter or ask someone to help you? Consider non-verbal communication as well. Some other ideas to look for: gender roles, religious beliefs and practices, verbal/gestural expressions, perceptions of time (do they arrive on time to a meeting?), concept of beauty, dress code, nature of friendship, attitudes toward age, work, change, tradition, and conflict. You can make this section of your binder more interesting and dynamic by adding pictures.

Personal Reflections: Language and culture learning isn't just about the "what", it's also about the "how": Keep a personal record of your strategies, your motivation, your experiences, your changing emotions, your sense of progress, your goals and plans. Periodically assess whether you're balancing social, individual and formal learning.

Khotso!

SAFETY AND SECURITY CORNER – by Masiphole Nthoalo, SSC

WINTER MESSAGE

This is the time of the year that most people are not that happy as winter has arrived. Winters in Lesotho normally start in May until the end of July but this year the season came earlier than expected. It is anticipated winter 2011 is the year to experience one of the coldest winters in recent years and it is reported to be due to the effects of heavy rainfalls since the beginning of the year. We have heard that snow fall has begun in some of the mountainous areas. Volunteers should remain vigilant about the conditions of the roads, and if in doubt contact SSC Nthoalo on 6285-6636 for information before planning any travels. If you hear of road closures in your area, please let us know.

EAP

The EAP was updated recently to include Volunteers' current phone numbers, update the police numbers above and change a few of the consolidation points. Changes were provided to the DSRs and alternates. Note that the Crocodile Inn is the consolidation point for Butha-Buthe. The Anglican Training Center is our new Consolidation Point for Maseru-based Volunteers and anyone in Maseru temporarily. St. Barnabas High School is the consolidation point for all Maseru district Volunteers based outside of Maseru city.

AIR HORNS

We just received an order of air horns for use by Volunteers in emergency situations. These are primarily for CHED 10s and will be sent to you with the next possible opportunity. You can also request one if you happen to be in the office. If you're not from the CHED 10 group but do not have an air horn, you may request one from Ntate Nthoalo or Ntate Tsatsi (General Services Assistant).

POLICE EMERGENCY NUMBERS

I had individual meetings with all districts police commanders about strategies that could be implemented from the police side to maximize the safety and security of Volunteers. All of them made important recommendations and amongst them they suggested that Volunteers be provided their contact numbers so that they can call them directly during emergencies. As commanders they can ensure that Volunteers' matters are attended to with a high level of urgency.

The list below is the current contact information for the main police stations in all country districts. It is also accessible on the PC/Lesotho website. Due to police staff transfers, Commanders' information is subject to change. If we hear of a change, we will inform Volunteers. Office contacts should remain unchanged.

District	Name of Police Commander	Com-mander's Cell number	Com-mander's office number	Charge office Number
Berea	Mr. Fobo	58842661	22501356	22920203
Butha – Buthe	Mrs. Mokhele	58440910	22460285 22460741	22460900
Leribe	Mr. Hlaahla	58794140	22400340	22400300
Mafeteng	Mr. Nthako	58742127	22700321	22700200
Maseru Urban	Mr. Ts'ita	62062828 59969919	22322708	58881024 22317263 22317262
Maseru Rural	Mr. Seturumane	63019128	22350505	28351183
Mohale's Hoek	Mr. Rampai	58910644	27855202	22785215
Mokhotlong	Mr. Letsoepa	58720944	27050781	22920203 22920310
Thaba-Tseka	Mr. Letoanane	63254585	22900214	22900215
Qacha's Nek	Mr. Raleting	58070905	22950204	22950950 22950211
Quthing	Mr. Kolo	58795030	22750202	22750215

Remember to introduce yourself to the Police Commander in your district.

DEALING WITH SEXUAL ASSAULT

April was designated as Sexual Assault Awareness Month. The goal is to raise public awareness about sexual violence and identify strategies to prevent sexual violence. For more information, please see the Sexual Assault Awareness Month website at: <http://www.nsvrc.org/saam>

What should Peace Corps Volunteers know about sexual assault?

Sexual assaults and rapes may occur anywhere Volunteers live, work, or travel, just as they do in the United States. The victims are usually women, and the perpetrators of these crimes are often acquaintances, neighbors, or coworkers. Last year 65% of sexual assaults reported by Volunteers stopped at unwanted touching and did not involve force or injury. 18% of these attacks involved a weapon, substantial use of force, or resulted in an injury to the Volunteer. Of the 7,800 Volunteers serving in 77 countries last year, a total of 21 reported they were victims of rape or attempted rape.

What can you, as a Volunteer, do to minimize your risk of sexual assault?

You have the primary role in maintaining your personal safety on a daily basis. You receive a wide range of safety and security training, which includes information that is specific to your country of service. You can use this information to:

- ◇ Integrate into your communities and gain acceptance
- ◇ Adhere to the behavioral norms in that culture
- ◇ Remain aware of your surroundings
- ◇ Avoid locations and situations which may put you in danger of sexual assault
- ◇ Travel with trusted companions whenever possible
- ◇ Take an active role in watching out for fellow Volunteers

during social activities

- ◇ Tell Peace Corps Lesotho staff your safety concerns and ask for their guidance in addressing those
- ◇ Remember, recognizing risk is the first step in avoiding any threat to your personal safety.

What does the Peace Corps do to support victims of sexual assault?

Each incident is unique and must be handled in accordance with the circumstances of the event and in adherence to local law. As part of the agency's victim-centered approach, there are systems in place to make sure victims can report rapes or other crimes and seek assistance. The Peace Corps is committed to taking care of Volunteer victims with compassion and dignity.

What does the Peace Corps do to reduce the risk of sexual assaults against Volunteers?

The Peace Corps takes the issue of sexual assault very seriously and is committed to the prevention of sexual violence and supporting Volunteer victims. The Peace Corps will never be able to eliminate crimes committed against Volunteers overseas, but it employs extensive measures to train all Volunteers in the skills they can use to reduce the likelihood of becoming victims of crime.

Peace Corps is constantly engaged in efforts to enhance training to reduce the risk of sexual violence during service. Each country has procedures in place to respond quickly and provide appropriate support to Volunteers. Teams of dedicated specialists from the medical, mental health, security and legal fields are also available from Peace Corps headquarters to help volunteers, as needed, with the recovery process.

What is the Sexual Assault Working Group?

The purpose of the Sexual Assault Working Group (SAWG) is to provide advice and expertise on the Agency's sexual assault prevention and response. SAWG has representatives from Headquarters offices that have a role in Volunteer sexual assault response and/or prevention. The group is made up of representatives from the Offices of Safety and Security; the Office of Global Operations and the three Regions; Medical Services; Counseling and Outreach Unit; Office of Programming and Training Support; Office of Strategic Information, Research and Planning; and Volunteer Recruitment and Selection.

Where can I find information about the incidence of crime in the Peace Corps?

The Peace Corps publishes an annual *Safety of the Volunteer* report which is available on the website. Please visit Peace Corps' *What about Safety* webpage for additional safety information and reports: <http://www.peacecorps.gov/index.cfm?shell=learn.safety>

Peace Corps' Commitment to Sexual Assault Victims

Peace Corps is committed to providing a compassionate and supportive response to all Volunteers who have been sexually assaulted. To that end, the Peace Corps makes the following commitment to our Volunteers who are victims of sexual assault.

1. **COMPASSION:** We will treat you with dignity and respect. No one deserves to be a victim of a sexual assault.
2. **SAFETY:** We will take appropriate steps to provide for your ongoing safety.
3. **SUPPORT:** We will provide you with the support you need to aid in your recovery.
4. **LEGAL:** We will help you understand the relevant legal processes and your legal options.
5. **OPEN COMMUNICATION:** We will keep you informed of the progress of your case, should you choose to pursue prosecution.

sue prosecution.

6. **CONTINUATION OF SERVICE:** We will work closely with you to make decisions regarding your continued service.
7. **PRIVACY:** We will respect your privacy and will not, without your consent, disclose your identity or share the details of the incident with anyone who does not have a legitimate need to know.

Peace Corps staff worldwide will demonstrate this commitment to you through our words and actions.

If you are the victim of a sexual assault, contact the SSC, PCMO, Country Director, or Duty Officer as soon as possible for support and guidance.

HEALTH CORNER – By Dr. Victor, PCMO

Health Effects of Cigarette Smoking

Smoking harms nearly every organ of the body. Smoking causes many diseases and reduces the health of smokers in general. According to the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, tobacco use is the leading preventable cause of death in the United States, resulting in more than 443,000 deaths, or nearly one of every five deaths, each year in the United States. More deaths are caused each year by tobacco use than by all deaths from human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), illegal drug use, alcohol use, motor vehicle injuries, suicides, and murders combined. Cigarettes contain more than 4000 different chemicals and at least 400 of these chemicals are toxic substances. Some of the health effects of cigarette smoking are as follows:

◇ Cardiovascular diseases (e.g., heart attack, stroke, etc.): Cardiovascular disease is the main cause of death due to smoking. Hardening of the arteries is a process that develops over years, when cholesterol and other fats deposit in the arteries, leaving them narrow, blocked or rigid. When the arteries narrow, blood clots are likely to form. Smoking accelerates the hardening and narrowing process in your arteries: it starts earlier and blood clots are two to four times more likely. Cardiovascular disease can take many forms depending on which blood vessels are involved, and all of them are more common in people who smoke. Blood clots in the heart and brain are the most common causes of sudden death. A blood clot in the arteries supplying the heart can lead to a **heart attack**. The vessels to the brain can become blocked, which can lead to **stroke** and **paralysis**. If the kidney arteries are affected, then **high blood pressure** or **kidney failure** results. Blockage to the vascular supply to the legs may lead to **gangrene** and **amputation**.

◇ Lung diseases: Smoking causes lung diseases (e.g., emphysema, bronchitis, chronic airway obstruction) by damaging the airways and small air sacs of the lungs

◇ Cancers: Smoking causes various types of cancer. These include lung cancer, acute myeloid leukemia, bladder cancer, cancer of the cervix, cancer of the esophagus, kidney cancer, cancer of the larynx (voice box), cancer of the oral cavity (mouth), cancer of the pharynx (throat), stomach cancer, and cancer of the uterus. Cancer-causing agents (**carcinogens**) in tobacco smoke damage important genes that control the growth of cells, causing them to grow abnormally or to reproduce too rapidly, resulting in cancer.

◇ Smokers are more likely to get cancer than non-smokers. This is particularly true of lung cancer, throat cancer and mouth cancer, which hardly ever affect non-smokers. The link between smoking and **lung cancer** is very clear. Ninety percent of lung cancer cases are due to smoking. One in ten moderate smokers and almost one in five heavy smokers (more than 15 cigarettes

a day) will die of lung cancer.

◇ The more cigarettes you smoke in a day, and the longer you've smoked, the higher your risk of lung cancer. Similarly, the risk rises the deeper you inhale and the earlier in life you started smoking. For ex-smokers, it takes approximately 15 years before the risk of lung cancer drops to the same as that of a non-smoker.

◇ If you smoke, the risk of contracting mouth cancer is four times higher than for a non-smoker. Cancer can start in many areas of the mouth, with the most common being on or underneath the tongue, or on the lips.

◇ Other health effects of smoking: Smoking has many adverse reproductive and early childhood effects, including increased risk for—infertility, preterm delivery, stillbirth, low birth weight, and sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS).

Quitting smoking: Stopping smoking is the single biggest thing you can do to improve your health, but it's a difficult task. Smokers who are trying to kick their habit may be disappointed to find there's no single quit method that guarantees success. The weight of evidence suggests that smokers should set a date to stop, and do their best to quit completely from this point. On average it takes four to five attempts to give up, and there are a [number of things](#) that can help willpower:

- [nicotine replacement treatment](#) (NRT) in the form of gum, skin patches or nasal spray
- [Zyban](#) (bupropion) is a medicine that's licensed to help smoking cessation behaviour modification programs

PC Lesotho 50th Anniversary Celebrations

From April 1-15 the 50th Anniversary Photo Gallery was displayed at Pioneer Mall. It was then moved to the National Library where it was on display until April 23rd. We hope to find locations in each of the districts to display them this year. Please send us your ideas for display locations in your district. The next big item is the **district events**. If your district has not already started planning an event, please do. As you plan, keep in mind the following:

- ◇ The event should be on July 4th or thereabouts.
- ◇ We will be inviting embassy staff and RPVCs in Lesotho so they can participate if they're interested. At least one PC staff member will participate in each event.
- ◇ The Volunteers in the district are free to choose the event, but it should be something that involves community members as the point is to celebrate the 50th anniversary with them and raise awareness about PC. Ideas include: a community service activity, fun walk, rock mural painting, screening an interesting/educational movie. We know you're busy so don't plan anything too complicated, but make it fun for you and community members. This is a time to celebrate!
- ◇ The event does not have to be in the camp town; it could be at a Volunteer's site or other central location.
- ◇ PC may be able to provide a small amount of funds to cover certain costs. This needs to be pre-approved by PC. You will not be reimbursed for costs you incur before receiving written approval.
- ◇ Volunteer travel to the event will be reimbursed by PC for approved events. In addition, we will reimburse travel for one district planning meeting prior to the event. If any Volunteers would like to get reimbursed, the VAC member should inform 'me Malitaba of the date and location of the meeting ahead of time.

Send your proposed event idea to 'me Malitaba (mhlabana@ls.peacecorps.gov or 6285-1716) no later than May 31st.



Peace Corps Lesotho Posters exhibited at the Pioneer Mall and National Library in Maseru.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS AND STAFF TRAVEL

April 30 – May 14	Kathy on leave
May 3 – 5	CHED '09 COS Conference
May 5 – 13	Makhauta on leave
May 26 – June 10	Malitaba on leave
June 2 – August 12	CHED '11 PST at Training Villages

DUTY OFFICER SCHEDULE

May 2 – 8	AO
May 9 – 15	APCD ED
May 16 – 22	APCD CHED
May 23 – 29	TD
May 30 – June 5	HIV Coordinator
June 6 - 12, 2011	PA ED

June 13 - 19, 2011 PA CHED
 June 20 - 26, 2011 SSC
 June 27 - July 3, 2011 ITS

PCV Corner

Shameless Plug by Kathy Jacquart Dill

For all you who hope to write the great Peace Corps novel, here's a little inspiration. One of my best friends from Peace Corps, Susi Wyss (www.susiwyss.com), recently had her first book published. It's called *The Civilized World* and is a "novel in stories" about several American and African women in five different countries inspired by her Peace Corps service and nearly 20 years working in international public health. *Publishers Weekly* called it a "smart, urbane debut." And it was selected by Oprah as "a book to watch for" in the April 2011 edition of *O* magazine! As a totally unbiased reader, I loved it! I have an extra copy if anyone would like to borrow it. (Tell your friends and family back home to buy it!)

On my 58th birthday - I got potatoes

By PCV Ed Griffin



Yesterday Ntate Senakane came to visit me in the morning and invited me to come visit him at his house. I went up to his house at 2 PM. On the way I went by the shop where he had his chairs and tables on display. He was doing some low cost marketing. I bought a bag of candy at the red/black store and brought it for Martin and Junior.

But, Martin was not at home he was playing with the Kings children. I visited for a while and then went up behind his house

where he had a rondavel I never saw before that was being restored. He told me it had gotten hit by lightning and the roof and contents burned. It now had a new roof and he stored stuff in it including potatoes. He gave me about 2 kg of potatoes to take home. He also gave me a ride down the hill because it was raining. We stopped to visit the Pastor/Priest of his church (Lutheran). I was pleased to discover when I got home our neighbor children had collected all my laundry off the line so it didn't get wet in the rain.

DAR Update

By PCV Greg Viola



Since November 2009, it has been my pleasure to serve as co-chair of the PCL HIV/AIDS Committee. My time in Peace Corps, however, is rapidly drawing to a close. So, in my last act as co-chair, I'd like to share some thoughts on the current status of the committee: what it is and what I hope it can be.

As you doubtlessly know, the HIV/AIDS Committee, like all committees in PCL, has undergone substantial changes over the past year. New rules and

guidelines have altered the structure and frequency of meetings; new members and attitudes have shifted some of the goals and purposes of the committee.

At our most recent meeting in April, we discussed the fact that this period of change should be seen as an opportunity to reinvent the committee from the ground up. We reexamined everything from the mission statement to the way we hold regional and national meetings. Nothing was taken for granted.

It was agreed that the most important function of the committee is for its members (DARs) to serve as a resource and support network to the volunteers in their district for HIV/AIDS related information and projects. The real question was: how can we best perform this function?

The answer, of course, will vary depending on the district, the DAR, and the volunteer in question. Rather than fighting against this and trying to dictate the same schedules and standards for each district, we've decided to try something a bit looser. It will be up to the members of each district to decide exactly how they wish to organize their meetings and use their DAR. I like to think of it as a more Jeffersonian approach to the HIV/AIDS Committee.

I won't get into too many specifics here. Each district is expected to have a meeting relating to the Peace Corps 50th Anniversary Celebration Extravaganza for which volunteers' travel will be reimbursed. Those meetings will double as district HIV/AIDS meetings, where your DAR will explain options for how future district meetings will work.

I encourage you to also use these meetings as an opportunity to discuss, as a district, what you'd like to see from the HIV/AIDS Committee. Is there information you wish you had about HIV in Lesotho? Would you like to plan an event or a field-trip as a district? Need access to resources? Would you like to write a VAST grant but you're intimidated by the process? Have you already started one but got stuck? Maybe there's something you wish you had learned in training and want to share with future groups. Maybe you feel you do enough HIV/AIDS related work already and, frankly, feel that regular district meetings are a waste of your time. Be creative, but also be honest with each other.

We all know that HIV/AIDS is the biggest problem facing Lesotho. It's on the periphery, if not at the very heart, of everything we do as volunteers. In that sense, it can seem overwhelming. The PCL HIV/AIDS Committee exists to help you with your biggest projects, or with the smallest conversations. It's been a pleasure serving on the committee, and I'd like to thank those who have worked so hard with me over the past two years. The current members are dedicated, intelligent, energetic, and excited about the committee's future. I hope you'll help them help you throughout the rest of your service.

"Doctors Go Far Afield to Battle Epidemics" – New York Times

By [CELIA W. DUGGER](#), Published: April 2, 2011

MASHAI, Lesotho — At a clinic in the mountains, reached only by crossing a churning river in a rowboat, Dr. Paul Young, a pediatrician raised in the housing projects of Savannah, Ga., soothed a fussy baby. She stared at him, fascinated, as he made soft popping sounds with his lips and listened to her heart through a stethoscope.

Battling H.I.V. in Lesotho

Dr. Phiri said the arrival of doctors from the Pediatric AIDS Corps, like Dr. Paul Young, had lightened her load and improved care.

"I used to be afraid to look at the babies' test results," he said after examining a bunch of children, who were born healthy despite having [H.I.V.](#)-positive mothers. "But now, most of them are negative."

Dr. Young, 33, and the nurses he trained here have persuaded many pregnant women to get tested and take the drugs that prevent them from passing the disease to their newborns. It is all part of a charitable effort he joined in 2008 for \$40,000 a year and the chance to work in this AIDS-afflicted country, which has just one pediatrician in its entire government health system. "If this was the last thing I did, if this was the only job I ever had in life, I would have served my purpose," he said.

Dr. Young represents the surging interest of young Americans in combating the deadly epidemics ravaging the world's poorest countries, fueled in part by the billions of dollars that the American government, the [Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation](#) and other organizations have poured into international health in recent years.

Across sub-Saharan Africa, an extreme shortage of health workers remains a critical barrier to fighting illness. The region bears a quarter of the world's burden of disease, but has only 3 percent of its health care workers, according to the [World Health Organization](#).

Public health experts say efforts like the one involving Dr. Young have proved particularly useful on a continent that sorely needs pediatricians, surgeons and other specialists to train African doctors and nurses in the field.

And demand for such opportunities is rising. More than 70 universities in the United States and Canada now offer formal academic programs in global health, most of them developed in just the past five years, according to the Consortium of Universities for Global Health.

"Today's students really want to make a difference in the world," said Michael H. Merson, director of [Duke University's](#) Global Health Institute. "They have a passion for sacrifice and service. It reminds me of the '60s."

The children of powerful politicians are part of this new generation of global health enthusiasts. Vanessa Kerry, 34, a [Harvard](#)-trained doctor and the daughter of Senator [John Kerry](#), Democrat of Massachusetts, is [advocating a Peace Corps-like federal program](#) that would send American doctors and nurses to work and train health workers in developing countries.

And Barbara Bush, 29, a daughter of former President [George W. Bush](#), co-founded the nonprofit Global Health Corps, which this year sent 36 college graduates from eight countries to work with nonprofit groups, mostly in Rwanda, Burundi, Malawi and Uganda. More than 1,000 people applied for the yearlong fellowships.

The [Pediatric AIDS Corps](#) that sent Dr. Young here, largely financed by the Bristol-Myers Squibb Foundation and the [Baylor College of Medicine](#), never advertised for applicants after the first class of doctors was recruited in 2005. Word of mouth produced far more highly qualified physicians from universities all over the United States than the project could ever hire.

In addition to the salary, the program paid down as much as

\$40,000 of the doctors' educational debt for each year of service — making it possible for Dr. Young to join, though he owed \$170,000 after his undergraduate and medical studies. His mother was an assembly-line worker, and in hard times the family relied on [Medicaid](#). Dr. Young himself never had a steady pediatrician as a child.

With a laugh, he said that his friends back home asked him if he had running water or used an outhouse in Africa. "We're not roughing it here by any means," he tells them. He drives a 10-year-old Opel Corsa, but lives in a pleasant town house in the sleepy capital, Maseru, with wireless Internet and a housekeeper who comes twice a week. For the first time in his life, he has gone skiing — in [Lesotho's](#) breathtaking mountains.

But it is the work that gives the job its meaning, the doctors say. Lineo Thahane attended [Princeton University](#) and got her medical degree at [Washington University](#) in St. Louis. It was a 2003 rotation in Lesotho's main public hospital during her residency — when children were still dying of AIDS for lack of antiretroviral treatment — that made her want to return to Africa. Her parents were both from Lesotho, but she was born and raised in the suburbs of Washington, D.C.

Dr. Thahane, 35, joined the first crop of Pediatric AIDS Corps doctors in Lesotho, and now helps her mother, Dr. Edith Mohapi, 64, who for 20 years managed pediatric outpatient services at Arlington Hospital in Virginia, to run Baylor's pediatric H.I.V. programs in Lesotho.

"I felt, 'This is where the need is,'" Dr. Thahane said.

Over the past five years, the corps has had 50 to 60 doctors working in Lesotho, Swaziland, Malawi and Botswana. The [hospitals](#) and clinics they supervise now care for more than 50,000 H.I.V.-positive children, Baylor estimates.

The project's impact should also last beyond its financing, which ends in June. The 128 doctors who served in the corps in the past five years trained about 3,000 African professionals, who will carry on. And in July, Baylor will start another project with 32 pediatricians to work on a broader array of diseases.

Dr. Grace Phiri, an overworked Malawian who has been the only pediatrician in Lesotho's government service for most of the past 17 years, said the arrival of 10 AIDS Corps doctors in 2006 — just as AIDS drugs for children were becoming more widely available — drastically improved the survival chances of H.I.V.-positive children.

Until 2005, not a single child with AIDS was on publicly financed antiretroviral therapy in Lesotho.

"Every morning, I had to check on who is alive and who is not alive," she recalled. "So many passed away. Most of those dying were under the age of 2. It went on for years. You see, in the '90s we didn't even have enough kits for H.I.V. testing."

Battling H.I.V. in Lesotho

Dr. Phiri, who spent every weekend on call for years, said the help from the corps doctors on the ward had lightened her load and improved care. She dreads their departure. "They have shared the weekends and covered me when I'm on holiday," she said. "I've learned a lot from them."

More than 6,500 children in Lesotho, a country with a population of two million people and the world's third-highest rate of H.I.V. infection, now receive the lifesaving medications. While that is progress, it is still only about a quarter of those in need of treatment, according to Unaid, the [United Nations](#) AIDS agency.

Dr. Mphu Ramatlapeng, Lesotho's minister of health, said the country could not have reached as many children without the corps. "These were serious professionals willing to dirty their hands," she said.

Dr. Young set off one recent morning for a village clinic he visits one day a month. He drove into the lush green mountains, past men draped in traditional blankets, through hamlets of mud huts crowned with conical thatched roofs, over crystalline streams flowing down from the peaks.

"They know me here in the mountains," he said.

When he arrived at the clinic, families were already waiting on wooden benches to see him. Relebohile Mosehle, 27, an energetic nursing assistant he has trained, sat at his side in a small examination room. She lives at the clinic, which has neither running water nor electricity. She and a Kenyan nurse are the backbone of medical care in this area.

Tsiu Lerotholi, 49, and his grandson Mojalefa, 9, had come that morning, having hiked through the mountains for another month's supply of antiretroviral medicines. Mojalefa's parents had died of AIDS — and he and his grandparents have the disease.

The man and the boy took their almost empty bottles of pills from their backpacks. Dr. Young and Mrs. Mosehle quietly calculated, by how many were left, whether they were taking them properly.

The pair's adherence was nearly perfect.

"Inside you feel stronger?" Dr. Young asked the grandfather.

"Bit by bit," he replied.

Mrs. Mosehle said the soft-spoken American doctor treated her like an equal and had taught her much. "He is a brother," she said.

But she did not yet know that his three-year stint in Lesotho would end in June. When told, she could not speak for some minutes, pressing her fingers to her eyes to hold back the tears. "We knew that he would go back home," she said, "but our hearts are not ready."

[News From Around the Peace Corps World](#)

Increase Peace

Do you know someone who would make a great Peace Corps Volunteer or benefit from learning more about what the agency does around the world? Share your enthusiasm by encouraging at least one person to consider serving overseas. The **Increase Peace** initiative is a formal referral system created by Peace Corps with resources to help you reach out to the next generation of Peace Corps Volunteers. Peace Corps invites you to increase peace by sending out a referral message today and spreading the word! <http://www.peacecorps.gov/index.cfm?shell=resources.returned.increasepeace>

Peace Corps and the President's Malaria Initiative Announce Malaria Partnership

WASHINGTON, D.C., April 26, 2011 – The Peace Corps and the President's Malaria Initiative (PMI), led by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and implemented together with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), announce a new partnership that will expand malaria prevention activities throughout Africa and provide Peace Corps volunteers with the best resources on malaria prevention. Peace Corps

Director Aaron S. Williams, USAID Administrator Rajiv Shah, and U.S. Global Malaria Coordinator Rear Admiral Tim Ziemer announced the partnership during a World Malaria Day discussion at Peace Corps headquarters in Washington, D.C. "This partnership builds on the work of Peace Corps volunteers in Africa who have been leaders in malaria prevention for 50 years," said Peace Corps Director Williams. "From distributing bed nets, eliminating mosquito breeding areas to teaching families about basic health practices, volunteers implement projects and solutions to help fight this preventable disease." The event also featured Professor Awa Marie Coll-Seck, executive director, Roll Back Malaria Partnership; Michael Gerson, opinion writer, Washington Post; Andrea Gough, senior campaign associate, United Nations Foundation, Nothing but Nets campaign; Mark Green, senior director, U.S. Global Leadership Coalition and senior advisor, Malaria Policy Center; and Matt McLaughlin, program manager, Peace Corps Malaria Initiative for Africa.

"Peace Corps volunteers bring with them the spirit of sacrifice, dedication, and knowledge of the local setting that can only come from living with and serving local populations, often in the most difficult areas where we often find the greatest burden of malaria," said Dr. Shah. "Volunteers' access and cultural sensitivity, combined with PMI's 'know how,' which is based on the combined strengths of USAID and CDC, presents unique opportunities to reach people in rural Africa with malaria control and prevention interventions." Through the partnership, Peace Corps health and malaria-specific volunteers will work with accredited public health universities, and with malaria prevention experts from organizations like PMI, Malaria No More, and Population Service International (PSI) to bring targeted resources to volunteers in the field. Volunteers will coordinate with PMI to plan activities like indoor residual spraying, the distribution of mosquito nets and the monitoring, evaluation, and mapping of malaria data.

There are currently more than 3,000 Peace Corps volunteers serving in Africa. Volunteers work in malaria prevention projects in 25 sub-Saharan African countries.

About PMI: PMI is a U.S. government interagency initiative that works to reduce the burden of malaria in Africa. It is a key component of the Global Health Initiative, a six-year, comprehensive effort to reduce the burden of disease and promote healthy communities and families around the world. Visit www.fightingmalaria.gov for more information.

Congressional Delegation Meets with Peace Corps Program in China

Washington, D.C. - On Sunday, April 24, 2011, a delegation of ten United States Senators, led by Majority Leader Harry Reid of Nevada, met with Peace Corps China volunteers and country director Bonnie Thie in Chengdu, China. At Peace Corps China's Headquarters, the delegation met with 22 volunteers and Peace Corps staff to discuss the importance of the work of the 130 Americans serving as "U.S.-China Friendship Volunteers". The bipartisan delegation's ten Senators which also included Sen. Richard Shelby (R-Ala.), Sen. Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), Sen. Richard Durbin (D-Ill.), Sen. Michael Enzi (R-Wyo.), Sen. Charles Schumer (D-N.Y.), Sen. Frank Lautenberg (D-N.J.), Sen. John Isakson (R-Ga.), Sen. Jeff Merkley (D-Ore.), Sen. Michael Bennet (D-Colo.), return to Washington today, concluding their eight-day visit to China.

The Peace Corps program in China focuses on university English teaching. Volunteers are placed in Sichuan, Gansu, and Guizhou provinces, as well as the Chongqing municipality. More than 660 Americans have served as volunteers in China since the program opened in 1993.