



FRIENDS OF LESOTHO

# METSOALLE ea LESOTHO

Fourth Quarter 2014  
Newsletter

## RPCV helped to name Ebola: We didn't realize deadliness

Newsletter Features Clickable Links!!

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By **Mike Tighe**, [mtighe@lacrossetribune.com](mailto:mtighe@lacrossetribune.com)

Excerpted from the Oct 25 2014 issue of The La Crosse Tribune, La Crosse Wisconsin



Gary Cook

The deadly Ebola outbreak in West Africa hits close to home for one Lesotho RPCV. Gary Cook helped name the disease when he helped quash its first outbreak in Africa nearly 40 years ago.

Although some of Cook's acquaintances tend to give him full credit for labeling the disease, he spreads the acclaim among the scientists and health officials he worked with to suppress the outbreak in its infancy.

"I'm not sure who came up with the name, but the whole team discussed it," Cook said during a phone interview from his home in McLean, Va. "It could have been the Belgian guy," he said, referring to Belgian scientist Peter Piot, who is credited with isolating the virus.

The virus broke out in the village of Yambuku, in what then was Zaire, where Cook was a foreign service officer with the U.S. Agency for International Development.

"It was new (in 1976), and we had to name it, but we didn't want to stigmatize Yambuku forever," he said. "There was a river nearby called Ebola, and that's what we picked."

When Cook first went to Zaire, now the Republic of the Congo, he said, "Health conditions were atrocious. We started a measles vaccination program and a nutrition program for kids. We lived with them and worked with them and learned their language."

His familiarity with the area made him a de facto team leader when experts came in from the United States and other countries to fight the disease.

Read more about Gary Cook's adventures during and after his Peace Corps Service in Lesotho.

"We were working 16-hour days at some personal risk," he said. "I personally was not treating patients, but I worked with people who did. At that time, we didn't realize how contagious or deadly it was."

(Continued on page 2)



Cars made of wire.

Photo Credit: Zoe Schroeder PCV 2013-14

## Motorcycling from Lesotho to La Crosse, WI RPCV Health Expert Tells of Life-Changing Days in Lesotho

By **Madeline Ura-neck**, RPCV Quithing, 2006-2009, [globalmaddy@gmail.com](mailto:globalmaddy@gmail.com)

Gary Cook's Lesotho adventures are as interesting as his public health career that led him all across Asia and the Middle East. Cook landed in Lesotho 1969 in just its second group of Volunteers, and was delivered by land rover to one of the most remote sites that year, the village of Mashai in Thaba Tseka.

There the 22 year-old, with a BA in Business Administration, was assigned a project to develop credit unions, introducing a moneyed economy to Basotho still used to bartering. For two months he lived with the village chief and his large family while his combination office / rondavel home, the credit union, was being built. In the hours the credit union wasn't busy, Cook, now 'Ntate Motlalepula', built soil conservation dams, planted gardens for nutrition projects, and spent long hours learning Sesotho. Even 45 years later, he still remembered enough Sesotho to surprise Lesotho's Minister of Health, when he greeted her at an international HIV/ AIDS meeting in Rwanda, even throwing in a few clicks like Quithing and Qaches Nek into the brief encounter.

After 15 months, feeling like he'd made respectable accomplishments, and by admission a bit lonely, he traveled to Maseru and asked the Peace Corps Director if he might tackle another project.

"I got a life changing opportunity," he remembers. "I was assigned as Managing Director of the Lesotho Flying

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## RPCV helped to name Ebola (continued)

Some of the differences between then and now don't include science, said Cook, who retired in April as senior health adviser and health team leader for USAID's Asia and Middle East bureaus and now is a career coach.

"It was trust and human behavior. Those infected were at a Catholic mission, and when they were told they had to stay quarantined, they obeyed. Now, they don't trust, and they escaped," he said.

The international team eventually controlled the virus, although it killed scores of Zairians and Belgian missionaries, Cook said.

"I was not an expert in Ebola then, and I'm not now," he said, noting that his duties focused on logistics and communication.

But the U.S. government is acting responsibly in addressing the outbreak, involving USAID, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the Defense Department, he said.

"People disagree on shutting down borders, but I think that is an overreaction," he said. "Shutting down borders will have an economic impact — and it would let Ebola win."

The current outbreak in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone confirms that much work needs to be done to improve health care systems in West Africa and other developing nations to control illnesses, he said.

Cook was drawn to the Peace Corps as an eighth-grader in La Crosse, Wisconsin, when his class listened to President John F. Kennedy announce that he was forming the international service organization.

"I thought, after four years of high school and four years of college, that's what I wanted to do," he said. "The idea of making the world smaller and helping people help themselves sounded exotic."

After graduating from Loras College in Dubuque, Iowa, and his two years in the Peace Corps in Lesotho, he returned to La Crosse and worked with the Western Wisconsin Health Planning Organization for two years before joining USAID in 1974. Cook, who has a master's in international health and administration from Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, took on leadership roles in several USAID missions throughout the world.

Meanwhile, now, "When people ask me how to protect themselves from Ebola, my first response is tell them to forget about Ebola and get their flu shots, because that is what they should worry about," he said.



## FOL, Rosenberg Honored in Washington, DC Letter from President Scott Rosenberg

Lumelang Metsoalle:

Lesotho is a place that has touched all of our hearts, and for many of us is a second home. Recent events in Lesotho reminded all of us how much we care about the Mountain Kingdom and its people. It is this love and connection to Lesotho that drives many to volunteer our time to Friends of Lesotho (FOL). Friends of Lesotho (FOL), represented by me, was one of 16 organizations recognized by Peace Corps Partnership Program (PCPP) on October 1, 2014, in Washington D.C ~ testament to our accomplishments. Other recipients included one more Friends group (Friends of Ghana), two area RPCV groups (Atlanta and Madison), and a handful of small and large corporate donors to PCPP projects. FOL was in good company!



Lesotho Ambassador Eliachim Molapi Sebatane names Rosenberg as Honorary Consul for Lesotho. Since 2003, Rosenberg has taken more than 350 Wittenberg students on month-long service trips to Lesotho.

As an individual honoree, I was also able to participate in a roundtable discussion hosted by Peace Corps/Washington, examining how we can work better with PCPP and each other. I was able to pick the brains of individuals from other organizations, getting ideas and inspiration for helping FOL in the future. To my surprise, Lesotho Ambassador Sebatane and his wife Lois, as well as former US Ambassador Michele Bond and newly-returned Peace Corps Lesotho Director of Programming and Training (DPT) Eric Goldman were in attendance. It was a great night for FOL and Lesotho! Ambassador Sebatane emphasized his country's appreciation for all that we do.

How do these things develop? In March 2015, Friends of Lesotho will hold elections for new Board Members, and I hope you will consider joining. Please e-mail me, [srosenberg@wittenberg.edu](mailto:srosenberg@wittenberg.edu), if you have questions about responsibilities and time commitment. New board members bring fresh ideas and new perspectives, all of which are essential to keeping the FOL vibrant, active, and innovative.

On October 3, 2014, Ambassador Sebatane traveled to Wittenberg University to open the award-winning, made-in-Lesotho film, *Forgotten Kingdom* (which I highly recommend) and to present me with official credentials as Honorary Consul for the Kingdom of Lesotho. My work with FOL, and FOL's significant achievements, are among the reasons that I received this honor. I only hope that it allows me to further help FOL in achieving its important goals.



Khotso, Pula, Nala  
Hon. Dr. Scott Rosenberg  
President Friends of Lesotho



## Motorcycling from Lesotho to La Crosse, WI (continued)

Doctors Service. We had a British volunteer doctor and two Cessna 180s and we flew around to nine clinics in remote areas.” While the doctor was seeing patients, Cook busied himself building maternity homes and more soil conservation dams and managed the logistics of medications and supplies.

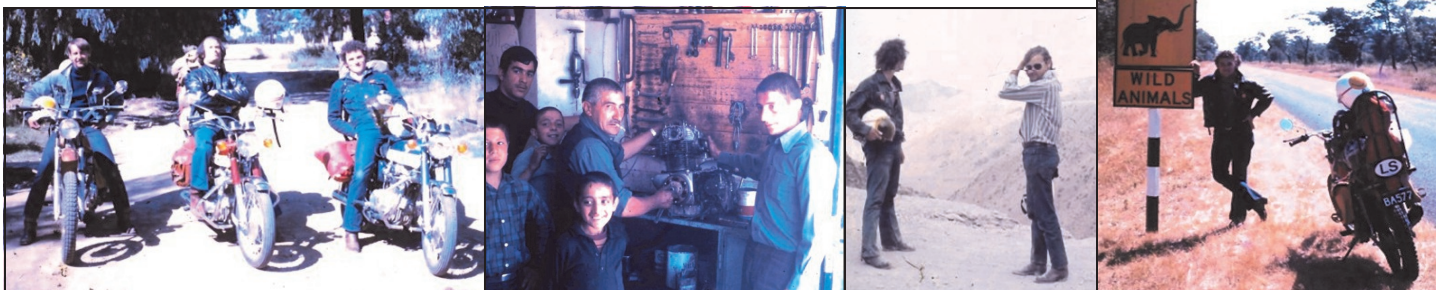
“It was a terrific job,” he chuckles, “and it pointed me right into public health – a career I followed for the rest of my professional life.” Primarily on the basis of his brief Peace Corps health work, Cook was hired into Western Wisconsin Health Planning Organization, managing federally funded grant programs, and from there launched a 40-year career with USAID.

But there was one giant adventure remaining in Lesotho. After his first two Peace Corps years of service clocked out, Cook was one of three Volunteers who extended a third year. “But we only stayed six months,” he remembers. “When we decided to return to the US, we had the inspiration to see if we could motor cycle all way home!”

And they did.

Together with fellow Volunteers David Biviano and Tom Cassel, the three set off on their Honda 350s in April of 1972, bumping from Maseru, often over dirt roads, through mud, wind storms, rain, hail, but mostly brilliant sunshine, heading across the Republic of South Africa, north through Rhodesia (Zimbabwe today), Zambia, Tanzania, and finally to rest on the beaches of Mombasa, Kenya.

There the three cycles were loaded in the hold of a freight ship and they crossed the Indian Ocean to the teeming, chaotic city of Bombay (Mumbai). A week later they boarded a ship bound for the bustling port of Karachi, Pakistan. Including the ocean voyage and short stay in Bombay, they’d been on the road for 57 days.



Photos from L-R: Tom Cassel, Dave Biviano, and Gary Cook in Maseru. Lesotho: Tehran mechanic and sons do motorcycle overhaul; Cassel and Cook in Pakistan; Wild Animals in Zambia

The countries that unfolded after that were breathtaking, where three motorcycles today would probably not pass with the friendly reception the guys seemed to get everywhere – such as Afghanistan and the Tora bora Caves of the Kyber Pass. In Tehran, Iran, Cook needed major bike repairs. He found an elderly mechanic who, together with his two grown sons, took the motorcycle completely apart, machined new pistons and put it back together again. Cook breathed a sigh of relief when he turned the key and it worked again perfectly. Wives brought lunches at noon, and for the three days it took to complete the rebuilding, they’d climb to the loft and sit together on the Persian carpets to eat. The men spoke no English and Gary knew no Farci, but their mechanical language quickly bonded them.

Going across Turkey and then Europe was equally fascinating, but not as unique as the journey across the African and Middle Eastern expanses. When the three made it as far as London, they boarded an Icelandic Air flight and departed for JFK Airport in New York. They hadn’t abandoned the cycles, however; those arrived on a commercial freight flight a week later. Not home yet, Cook kept on riding, through the busy streets of Manhattan, across the Great Lake states, and into his family’s drive way in La Crosse, Wisconsin, arriving on August 18, after a journey of 115 days.

Cook stays in contact with his two fellow travelers. In 2012 he and his wife hosted a dinner in their home near Washington, DC. Biviano and Cassel arrived with their wives, accompanied by several other Lesotho II cohorts who were in town for Peace Corps’ 50th Anniversary celebration.

“Google Earth is as close as I’ve gotten to Lesotho since 1971,” he admits regretfully. But for a man big on commitment, opportunity, and adventure, here’s betting the older *bo-ntate* in Mashai wouldn’t be completely surprised to see that American, ‘Ntate Motlalepula,’ riding horseback over a hill toward them, someday soon.



### SESOTHO GREETINGS

Happy New Year  
*Mahlohonolo a selemo se secha*

Happy Holidays  
*Phomolo e monate*

Peace on earth in 2015  
*Khotso e aparele le fatse lahle ka 2015*



#### Maliba Lodge, Destination in the Sky

Lerbie’s Maliba Lodge bills itself as “Lesotho’s one and only five star lodge” and attracts an increasing number of high-end eco tourists and has a newsletter, the Blanket Wrap (<http://maliba-lodge.com/blanketwrap/>). Maliba Community Trust, associated with the lodge, has hosted three Peace Corps Volunteers in recent years to work on community projects.



## Litaba tsa Lesotho (News from Lesotho)

By Ella Kwisnek, RPCV 1992-94, Lesotho Agricultural College, ekwisnek@msn.com

### Army and Police Leaders on Leave of Absence

Under the Maseru Security Accord (full text at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201410231898.html>) endorsed by Southern African Development Community (SADC) facilitator, Mr Cyril Ramaphosa, the heads of the country's army and police Lieutenant General (Lt Gen) Tlali Kamoli, Lt Gen Maaparankoe Mahao and the Commissioner of Police Khothatso Tsooana agreed to take a leave of absence. During their absence, their deputies, Major General Khoantle Motšomotšo and Deputy Commissioner of Police Masupha will head the Lesotho Defense Forces and the Lesotho Mounted Police Service respectively.

Under the accord, they pledged to do everything in their power to prevent further hostilities between the military and police. They also agreed that any future differences between them should be referred to the SADC Politics, Defense and Security Observer Mission. The three also committed to support reforms aimed at depoliticizing security forces.

Head of SADC Facilitation Mission, Ramaphosa said, "We are confident that the signing of the Maseru Security Accord adds yet another important chapter and milestone in the irreversible march towards the return of Lesotho to constitutional normalcy and the stabilization of the security situation as mandated by the SADC Heads of State and Government.

Read more online at [www.publiceyenews.com/site/2014/10/24/army-police-bosses-sent-on-leave/](http://www.publiceyenews.com/site/2014/10/24/army-police-bosses-sent-on-leave/), [www.publiceyenews.com/site/2014/10/23/19047/](http://www.publiceyenews.com/site/2014/10/23/19047/), [allafrica.com/stories/201410241445.html](http://allafrica.com/stories/201410241445.html), [allafrica.com/stories/201410231896.html](http://allafrica.com/stories/201410231896.html), and [www.publiceyenews.com/site/2014/10/24/ramaphosa-meets-kamoli-tsooana/](http://www.publiceyenews.com/site/2014/10/24/ramaphosa-meets-kamoli-tsooana/).

### Lesotho Parliament Reconvenes

On Friday, October 17, 2014, King Letsie III reconvened Parliament to discuss a number of matters including the holding of General Elections at the end of February 2015. In heated debate the following week, some opposition legislators called on Prime Minister Motsoahae Thabane to step down.

Read more online at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201410161546.html>, <http://www.publiceyenews.com/site/2014/10/17/parly-opens-after-four-month-suspension-photo-gallery/>, <http://www.publiceyenews.com/site/2014/10/24/kings-speech-sparks-debate/>

### Manufacturing Sector Loses nearly 1,000 Jobs

A recent Bureau of Statistics report indicates that 956 people lost their jobs in the manufacturing sector in the second quarter of the year as compared to the previous quarter. The decrease was due in part to closure of some companies that make leather and footwear products. The textile and clothing industry also saw a decline. Only Food & Beverages saw a slight increase.

Read more online at <http://www.publiceyenews.com/site/2014/10/17/956-lose-jobs-in-manufacturing-sector/>.

### Trout farming in Lesotho

A recent BBC report indicates that Lesotho's Highlands Trout operation now produces some of the world's finest "Made in Africa" trout, and is exporting hundreds of tons of fish to Japan and South Africa.

Lesotho produces twice the amount of trout as South Africa, and the operation has been heralded as an example of how Africa can benefit commercially from creative investment and aquaculture opportunities.

Trout eggs are imported from Denmark. Hatchlings are then transferred into reservoirs situated in a climate-controlled room. When the fish reach 20g, they are transported to grow-out cages on the Katse Dam itself. Once there, they are fed on a high-protein pellet diet imported primarily from France. When they reach about 2.8kg (6.1lb) in weight, the fish are taken from their cages on the dam, and are processed for export.

After many biological and environmental studies and a multi-million dollar investment from the South African gold producer, Gold Fields, in 2009, Highlands Trout received its fish farming license three years ago. Operations officially started in 2012, a year that saw the fledgling company export 500 tons of fish. By the end of this year the company forecasts it will have exported over 1,500 tons of trout, and expects to be selling 4,000 tons by 2018. The fish farm has given local people jobs and opportunities to study.

Read more (and see some great photos!) online at <http://www.bbc.com/news/business-29793303>.



**Shopping?? Please use [Smile.Amazon.com](http://Smile.Amazon.com). Be sure to select Friends of Lesotho as the organization. Amazon donates part of your purchase to Friends of Lesotho year round, with no extra charge to the customer, if you use [Smile.Amazon.com](http://Smile.Amazon.com). So, SMILE while you shop!**



## The Classroom for Future Leaders Building Project

*Mary Ladabouche is a Primary School English teacher who has lived and worked as a Peace Corps Volunteer for the past two years in Ketane near Mphahle's Hoek. On October 31, 2014, with student tributes, songs, stories, tears and laughter, her school colleagues and community gathered to celebrate her contributions. In addition to teaching, Mary worked closely with The Classroom for Future Leaders Committee to identify and to fulfill a great need: a classroom to enable learning to flourish. The Committee consisted of the village chief, school board chair, seven teachers, four builders and one Peace Corps Volunteer – Mary Ladabouche.*

*Here is Mary's story of how the classroom came to be, fueled by community buy-in, community contributions, and community teamwork.*

“My counterpart, ‘M’e Malimabe Bobojane, and I attended a Peace Corps workshop on community development. Upon returning to our village, the Ketane Primary School principal asked us to do a presentation for the teachers. There were many questions about the amount of money available, types of projects, who should be involved, and what their responsibilities would be. When I returned to school the following week, ‘M’e ‘Mamonaheng smiled her quiet smile and said, “We need a classroom.” After many discussions, The Workers for the Future Committee – a group of teachers, school board members and community leaders – was formed and work began. Meetings were held after school, where planning and grant writing took place. Committee members were assigned tasks of getting estimates, finding workers, comparing prices, etc. Finally, in December 2013, the PCPP Grant was sent to Peace Corps for suggestions. Several revisions later, the grant was sent to Washington and posted in June 2014. Thanks to the support of so many wonderful friends and relatives, the needed funds were quickly raised.



Photos from L-R: Mary and Teachers; Mary's students help build their new classroom; Mary giving her farewell speech

Teachers returned to school at the end of July 2014 and things began to happen. Parents arrived in the rain with picks and hammers to remove a pre-existing concrete slab located where the new classroom was to be built. Materials were ordered. The road to the school needed to be widened so that the building supplies could be delivered. So one afternoon, classes were cancelled and students and teachers went to work - only to have the supply delivery delayed – one, two, three times. When the supplies finally arrived, we all celebrated. Unfortunately, some of the supplies were missing. The committee, however, had a plan and the needed supplies arrived in time. Everything was falling into place. The builder, Ntate Mohlakoana and his helper, Abuti Motlatsi, arrived and construction began.

Then due to political unrest in Lesotho, Peace Corps Volunteers were temporarily relocated to South Africa. A month later, I returned to find the committee had continued with ownership of the project and the work had not stopped. It was wonderful!

The classroom project is close to being completed. As is characteristic with construction projects anywhere, unexpected challenges arose. Yet, with typical Basotho creativity and perseverance, these challenges were overcome. There are a few last details, like the placement of a chalkboard not covered by the grant, but purchased through sales of hats knitted and donated to teachers to sell, then the new classroom will be ready for students at the beginning of the new school year, which starts in January, 2015.

I am honored to have worked with The Classroom for Future Leaders Committee. The teachers and community set out to build a classroom to address the issue of severe overcrowding. It does, indeed, take a village!”





## Little Known Facts of a Country Director's Life

By Kathy Jacquart, RPCV 1988-1991, Central African Republic, jacquartke@gmail.com

From 2010 to 2013, I was the Peace Corps Country Director in Lesotho. For the four years prior to going to Lesotho, I worked as the HIV Programming and Training Advisor at Peace Corps HQ in Washington, DC. In this capacity, I worked with almost every post and got to visit several countries, including Cape Verde, El Salvador, Guinea, Indonesia, Mali, São Tomé and Sierra Leone. On these trips, I observed firsthand country directors and other staff carry out their day-to-day duties. It was always impressive and a bit astonishing to witness the array of issues they addressed in a single day's work. So when I took the CD job, I thought I had a pretty good sense of what my life would be like, but it turned out there were a few things I hadn't anticipated. Here are six of them.

**1) You're never alone.** A few people (including a CD or two I met on my work travels) had given me the impression that being a CD was a lonely gig because the CD is ultimately responsible for everything that happens at post. While it's true that the buck more or less stops with the CD (learned that the hard way during an investigation by the Inspector General; it all worked out and no one went to jail!), I never felt like I was flying solo. Quite the contrary. In addition to the incredibly dedicated staff in country, I had the support of myriad personnel at HQ, the US Embassy and local officials, all of whom were eager to assist in any way they could. When things really got crazy, I could call someone in my informal "CD support group" to say, "You are NOT going to believe this..."

**2) You give lots of speeches.** I expected to have to give speeches at swearing-in ceremonies, openings and closings of trainings, workshops, and conferences, and special events like our 50th anniversary celebration. I did not expect to give them at a staff member's grandmother's funeral (I hadn't met her) or a staff member's 20th wedding anniversary party (attended by King Letsie, no less), etc. In the big-fish-in-a-little-pond category, a CD is kind of big deal, so protocol dictates that you get the mic.

**3) You get asked about RPCVs a lot.** I think it's every Volunteer's hope that their legacy will live on. Well, guess what? It does! Frequently on site visits, someone would ask me, "Do you know so and so?" Nine times out of ten, I had no idea whom they were talking about, but they would usually proceed to tell me all about Mary or Bob or whomever and what fond memories they had of the Volunteer. One high level government official once visited me at the PC office and asked how he could get in touch with his old high school history teacher from 1968! We managed to connect the two of them, and the official later donated five cows to our aforementioned 50th anniversary feast in honor of his former teacher.

**4) You get Top Secret US Government security clearance.** When I got it, after a mysterious G-man interviewed me at length, I thought, "Awesome! Now I'm going to get the inside scoop." Not the case. Clearance is based on a "need to know" policy, and apparently, I never needed to know top secret info during the 3.5 years I was in Lesotho. Nonetheless, I somehow felt cool having the label.

**5) Volunteers say the darndest things.** I'm not a particularly warm and fuzzy gal, but many Volunteers opened up to me, often about things I personally wouldn't even discuss with my own husband! I'd want to put my fingers in my ears and say, "La la la la." Don't get me wrong, I was honored that they felt they could share intimate details, but I hadn't expected (nor can I repeat) some of the things I heard!

**6) One final thing:** I hadn't planned on being mistaken for the Volunteers' mother - all the time! I can't tell you how many times on site visits, someone would ask the Volunteer, while pointing to me, "Me oa hau?" (Is that your mother?) My ego didn't love it, but I probably shouldn't have been surprised, since people in the community where I served as a Volunteer 25 years ago were fond of pointing out the wrinkles that were already beginning to appear back then on my 22 year-old face!



Former Lesotho CD Kathy Jacquart, accepting a gift of Thaba Tseka peaches



## RPCV Calendars Raise \$1 Million

Since 1988, RPCVs of Wisconsin-Madison have donated \$1 million to PCPP and Volunteer projects from sales of their handsome calendars, each day designated with celebrations of past and current Peace Corps counties. Cover to the left: Ethiopia. Order 2015 calendars now.

Order: <http://www.rpcvcalendar.org/>



## Be the Best 3rd Goaler You Can Be

**Graham Hall** (@grahamcorridor) is a Lesotho RPCV and now a Washington, D.C.-based comedian.

After Peace Corps, one must remember the 3<sup>rd</sup> goal: “To promote a better understanding of other peoples on the part of Americans.” Ordinary people need to know what it was like for you over there. The way I see it, I was in the Mountain Kingdom taking bucket baths and speaking Sesotho while they were all here being stereotypical Americans, not appreciating how good they had it. Non-Peace Corps people always make sweeping generalizations. So as an RPCV, I feel it’s my duty to educate those who aren’t as well-traveled.

When I wake up, I immediately start “third-goaling.” At Starbucks I told a barista she had no right to look sad while being surrounded by espresso-based beverages. “Did you live in a hut for two years while only consuming instant coffee? Because I did.”

Just like that, you can open someone’s mind.



One hot August afternoon I was at a street fair (wearing my Basotho hat, thank God). I overheard some guy expressing his frustration with the restroom line. “At least it’s free,” I said. “Where I lived in Africa for two years, you had to PAY to use the public restroom. Try experiencing that, and then get back to me.”

Even a chance encounter like that can be an opportunity to enlighten someone.

Sometimes you’ll meet an American who’s lived in another country but maybe hasn’t experienced the types of difficulties a PCV deals with. At the airport I was sitting next to a soldier who had recently gotten back from his second tour of duty in Afghanistan. You should have seen his face when I told him about 45-minute taxi delays and not being able to buy cheese in my camptown on Sundays. He was speechless when he heard about the extreme conditions I endured and the heroism it took to last two years there.

Recently I was at Bed Bath and Beyond, explaining to one of the cashiers how there’s no Bed Bath and Beyond in Lesotho, and how I lived in a rondavel without basic amenities. Had there not been a line of customers, I would have gone into more depth about latrines.

As I was leaving the store, I met eyes with the security guard. Since I had lived in Africa for two years, my intuition told me he was African. Turns out, he was. He was from Burkina Faso. We chatted for a minute, and surprisingly, he knew nothing about Lesotho. And he was African! That’s like being an American and not knowing about Kalispell, Montana. It’s part of your continent, for Pete’s sake.



## Literary Festival in Lesotho Soars High

Amidst the negativity and cynicism coughed up by the political coup attempt in early fall 2014, a remarkable literary festival, *Ba re e ne re*, attracted southern Africa’s literary greats, its own aspiring writers, and students from elementary to college-age. Three days of live music, poetry readings, storytelling performances and discussions with authors went on despite some political uncertainty at the time. *Ba re e ne re* (“They say it was said”) is a phrase used to start traditional stories in Sesotho, similar to “Once upon a time” in English.

A number of writers from outside Lesotho took part in this second annual festival. These included South African novelist Niq Mhlongo, Nigerian/Barbadian writer Yewande Omotoso, and Namibian poet Keamogetsi Molapong. Cape Town-based *Chimurenga* (“Struggle for Freedom”) Magazine, a pan African publication of culture, art and politics, was the event’s official partner. Basotho writers, among them Mpho Makara, Teboho Rantsoabe, Motebang Sekhohola and Patrick Bereng, were featured alongside the international guests. Author Zakes Mda joined via Skype. Festival goers and those far away were able to follow proceedings on Pan African Space Station (PASS), streamed live via Internet.



Left: Reatile Mohapeloa tells a folktale.  
Right: Writer Yewande Omotoso describes her creative process.  
Photo Credit: Meri Hyöky Photography

The festival was dedicated to the memory of Liepollo Rantekoa (1983-2012), founder of the first literary festival, who was energized by the challenge of cultivating a new generation of readers and writers. That challenge continues, and *Ba re e ne re* soared high to meet it.

*Thanks for background to Leila Hall, freelance writer living and writing in Lesotho; Lineo Segoete, festival organizer; and Zach Rosen, Friends of Lesotho Board Member and RPCV 2010-2011.*

Mail & Guardian newspaper’s Voices of Africa blog (<http://voicesofafrica.co.za/ba-re-e-ne-re-reigniting-lesothos-literary-culture/>) and Africa Is a Country’s (<http://africasacountry.com/ba-re-e-ne-re-the-rebirth-of-a-literary-dream-in-lesotho/>)





# METSOALLE ea LESOTHO

## Five Ways to Help Friends of Lesotho

*Reminders from Pete Neumann, Board of Directors Fundraising Committee Chair, RPCV 2004-06, Mohale's Hoek*

Friends of Lesotho supports numerous projects. All of them need your support. Right now, the Tuition Assistance Program, TAP, is in particular need of dollars to fund student scholarships.

**Annual Fundraising Letter coming your way – please donate.** We are hoping you are able to share some of your good fortune with people and projects in Lesotho. Every donation matters--no matter the amount. Write a check to "Friends of Lesotho," and mail to: Friends of Lesotho, 4110 Denfeld Ave., Kensington, MD 20895, or:

Use your credit card or PayPal at Razoo on our website or on our Facebook site  
<http://www.friendsoflesotho.org/donate/>  
<https://www.facebook.com/FriendsOfLesotho>



**Holiday Shopping** ~ help Lesotho - make your holiday dollars count for a better world.

Holiday greeting cards, toddler clothes, tote bags:

<http://www.cafepress.com/lesotho>

**Shop Amazon.** Did you know you can help Friends of Lesotho by shopping at Amazon? If you use this link and choose Friends of Lesotho, the price you pay is NOT affected. Amazon will send a percentage of your purchase price to Friends of Lesotho.

<https://smile.amazon.com/>

### Run/Walk for Lesotho


Winter is the time for planning spring and summer Run / Walks. Check out FOL's Walk-a-thon Kit with how-to suggestions, forms, photos. Twin with the students from Taipei American School in Taiwan who do an Annual Walk-a-thon to raise money for Lesotho's Tuition Assistance Program (TAP).

<http://www.friendsoflesotho.org/shop/fundraising-ideas/>

### Join the Board—Nominate yourself or nominate a friend

**Directors** are members in good standing who are elected on their ability and willingness to support the purpose of FOL.

**Nominations:** Complete a Nomination Form found at <http://www.friendsoflesotho.org/how-to-support-fol/board-and-committee-service/> and email it as an attachment before **Saturday, January 17, 2015** to FOL President Scott Rosenberg, Nominations Committee. If you have any questions about time commitment or responsibilities, please contact Scott at [rosenberg@wittenberg.edu](mailto:rosenberg@wittenberg.edu)

**Board Committees:** Want to help, but have only a little time? Join an FOL committee – fundraising, donations, social media, membership, newsletter. You have skills and knowledge of Lesotho that FOL can use in 2015. Thanks for considering. 

## YOU'RE INVITED!!

Sunday, March 15, 2015

Friends of Lesotho's Annual Meeting

Special Guest Speaker (to be confirmed)

4 pm Central Standard Time

by Telephone Conference Call

Contact John Hollister ([johnh@zapdoodat.net](mailto:johnh@zapdoodat.net))

for call-in information.

## Mark Your Calendars

Dec 1 World AIDS Day

March 11 Moshoeshoe Day

March 15, 2015 FOL's Annual Meeting (Call in & join us)

June 1, 2015 Deadline, next Friends of Lesotho newsletter

June 5-6, 2015 NPCA's Peace Corps Connect, Berkeley, CA







## MOVEMBER = MUSTACHES IN NOVEMBER BROVEMBER = MUSTACHES + MEN'S HEALTH FOR BO-NTATE

By Joseph Downes, Current Volunteer, HY 13

Reprinted from November 2014 *Khotso*, official newsletter of Peace Corps Lesotho

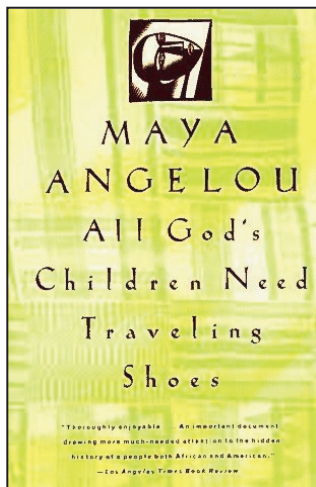


*Khotsong bro-'me le bro-ntate!* We at the Camp BRO sub-committee invite you to join us in spreading awareness about prostate cancer and men's health issues by partaking in the global MOvember movement. While many men around the world grow a mustache during this month in order to raise money for related charities, we figured you could use your new look to generate dialogues in your local communities about such important issues as prostate examinations, voluntary male medical circumcision and other men's health issues such as testicular cancer. As connoisseurs of both facial hair and fun projects to spread knowledge about healthy lifestyles, we at the committee urge you to spread the word in your community and back home in America (social media and mustaches are like two peas in a pod). Ladies, feel free to join up too! (I know some *bo-nkhono* in Hlotse who are very prepared to spread awareness!) Even if you draw one on, it might create a great opportunity to educate Basotho men about making healthy decisions. Thanks and have a great day!

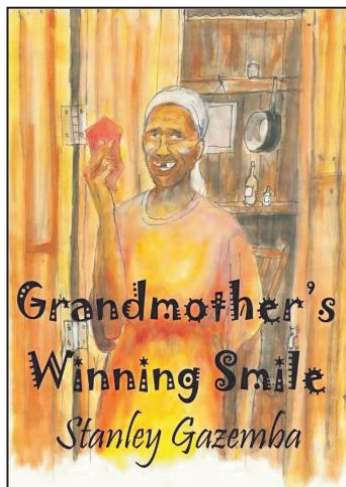
## Website for Africa-Friendly Children's Books

AFRICA ACCESS "Expanding Perspectives of Africa Book by Book"  
Excellent reviews of books about Africa. delineated into age groups K-12  
<http://africaaccessreview.org/>

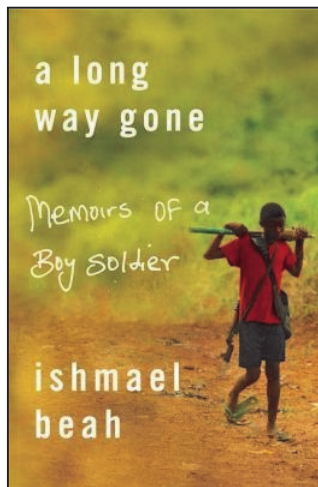
For example: These books are for middle and high school:



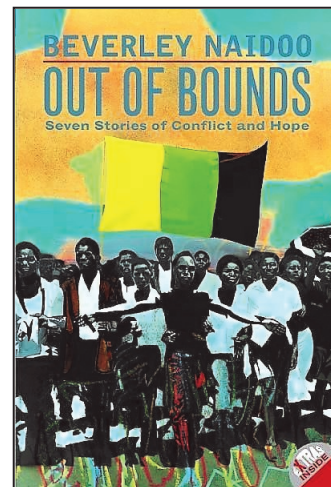
Ghana



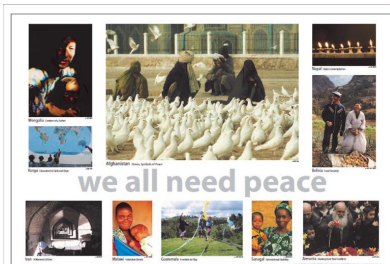
Kenya



Sierra Leone



South Africa



We All Need Peace Poster. "Peace"

Order **WE ALL** International Posters for schools, libraries, ESL classrooms, dreary office walls.  
Posters focus on 15 commonalities we all share globally.  
Each set contains five posters, 36" X 24" each.

Order: <https://www.rpcvcalendar.org/sc/products/products.php>  
Proceeds donated to Peace Corps Volunteers and projects in Peace Corps countries.



# METSOALLE ea LESOTHO

## Looking for Peace Corps Gear?

Finally, the handsome Peace Corps cycling jersey is out from NPCA.

Or maybe you'd like a bumper sticker?

ipad sleeve?

T-shirt for a little bitty baby?

Just sayin'....

Order from: <http://peacecorpsconnect.shop.musictoday.com/Product.aspx?pc=QPCM014>



## THANKS!!

Thanks to contributors to this newsletter:

Gary Cook, Joseph Downes, Graham Hall, John Hollister, Kathy Jacquart, Patty Kuntz, Ella Kwisnek, La Crosse Tribune, Mary Ladabouche, Stephanie Motz, Pete Neumann, Debra Pinckney, Lebohang Ranooe, Zach Rosen, Scott Rosenberg, Zoe Schroeder, Mike Tighe, Wendy Van Damme

## TREASURER'S REPORT

By John Hollister, Treasurer, Friends of Lesotho.  
RPCV Thaba Tseka 1986-88, [John.Hollister@friendsoflesotho.org](mailto:John.Hollister@friendsoflesotho.org)

|                                 | <u>7/15/2014</u>   | <u>9/16/2014</u>   |
|---------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Current Bank Balance (checking) | \$4,956.48         | \$5,813.89         |
| Current Bank Balance (savings)  | \$48,324.30        | \$47,856.85        |
| <b>Total (both accounts)</b>    | <b>\$53,280.78</b> | <b>\$53,670.74</b> |

**Newsletters Past and Present**—The FOL Newsletter, *Metsoalle ea Lesotho* is posted on our website homepage (<http://friendsoflesotho.org>) each quarter of the year. The complete set of newsletters is available on our website from Issue Number One, Summer, 1987 to the present. Go to Membership > Newsletters for the archives.

**Peace Corps Lesotho in-country *Khotso* Newsletters are also available on our website.** *Khotso* is the official monthly newsletter published by Peace Corps Lesotho and distributed to current Peace Corps Volunteers. Read it and be prepared for some nostalgic memories and a unique reconnection with your own experiences in Lesotho.

**Submit Newsletter Articles**—Pass on RPCV updates. Recommend a Mt. Kingdom movie, music, book or Website. Share new or old photos. Been to Lesotho lately? Share it!

Submit articles, photos, or information of interest to our members to:

Madeline Uraneck, FOL Newsletter Coordinator ([globalmaddy@gmail.com](mailto:globalmaddy@gmail.com)) or send hard copies to her at 2995 Gannon Street, Madison WI 53711, USA



# FRIENDS OF LESOTHO

Making a difference at the grassroots level

4110 Denfeld Avenue  
Kensington, MD 20895  
(301) 942-2751  
[www.friendsoflesotho.org](http://www.friendsoflesotho.org)

\*Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone/Home \_\_\_\_\_ Cell \_\_\_\_\_

\*Email: \_\_\_\_\_

\*Yrs in Lesotho: \_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_: \*District: \_\_\_\_\_

\*Village: \_\_\_\_\_

CHED  ED Project(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation/Employer: \_\_\_\_\_

**Newsletters will be sent by e-mail as part of FOL's "GO GREEN" effort. If you prefer postal service, check here .**

FOL's Website Member Directory is accessible to members only by use of a secure ID and Password. The fields marked above with an \* will be included in the directory. Check here if you do not want to be listed .

**Privacy Policy:** FOL will not release member information to any organization, except the National Peace Corps Association, upon implied consent when a member joins both FOL and NPCA. FOL will share membership information with other FOL members and prospective PCVs seeking information about Lesotho.

Friends of Lesotho (FOL) is a registered 501(c)(3) organization. Contributions are tax deductible to the extent permitted by law. A copy of the current financial statement of Friends of Lesotho is available by writing 4110 Denfeld Avenue, Kensington, MD 20895, or by emailing [treas@friendsoflesotho.org](mailto:treas@friendsoflesotho.org). Documents and information submitted under the Maryland Solicitations Act are also available, for the cost of postage and copies, from the Maryland Secretary of State, State House, Annapolis MD 21401, (410) 974-5534.

*FOL is affiliated with the National Peace Corps Association (NPCA). \* If you choose to send your FOL dues directly to NPCA in response to their membership solicitation, you must specify FOL as your choice of affiliated group to receive the credit for dues.*

## Membership Form

Complimentary--PCVs during service up to 12 months after COS.

### Dues Are Per Person

Annual Membership--\$15 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

### Lifetime Membership Options

- Basic--\$250 \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- Bronze--\$500 \$ \_\_\_\_\_\*\*
- Silver--\$750 \$ \_\_\_\_\_\*\*
- Gold--\$1,000 \$ \_\_\_\_\_\*\*

**\*\*Payable in annual installments of \$250**

Additional Donation to FOL \$ \_\_\_\_\_ for:

- Greatest Need (default option)
- Tuition Assistance Programs
- Memorial Scholarships Fund *In memory of:*

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Yrs \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ Dist/Village/Job \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL to FOL \$ \_\_\_\_\_

NPCA Membership--\$35 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

*\*FOL will forward to NPCA for you.*

TOTAL CONTRIBUTION: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Mail your check and completed form to Friends of Lesotho at the address above or pay by credit card by Clicking on Join/Renew from our website at [www.friendsoflesotho.org](http://www.friendsoflesotho.org) and select JustGive or Razoo.

For FOL use only. Please do not complete the information below.

Check # \_\_\_\_\_ Amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Member Since \_\_\_\_\_ New \_\_\_\_\_ Source \_\_\_\_\_

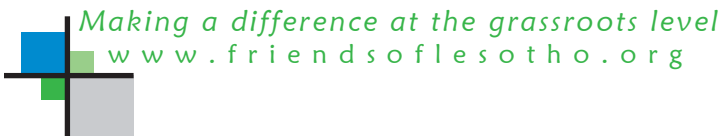
Renew Date \_\_\_\_\_ Expires \_\_\_\_\_ No. of Members \_\_\_\_\_ NPCA \_\_\_\_\_ 11/01/2010



## FRIENDS OF LESOTHO

4110 Denfeld Avenue  
Kensington, MD 20895

301.942.2751  
board2@friendsoflesotho.org



## METSOALLE ea LESOTHO

Fourth Quarter 2014  
Newsletter



FRIENDS OF LESOTHO

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**Vice President:** Bill Moore (Bill.Moore@friendsoflesotho.org)

**Treasurer:** John Hollister (John.Hollister@friendsoflesotho.org)

**Secretary:** Kevin Caughlan (Kevin.Caughlan@friendsoflesotho.org)

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*Additional assistance from the following members:*

**Website/Database/Social Media:** Tammy Benabides, Kieran Conway, Martin Smith

**Membership:** Jan Kalnbach

**Newsletter:** Nicole Potsane, Layout Design  
Mary Howard, Deena Rowe Krumdick, & Kevin Freer, Proofing  
Marisa Ernst, Mailing