

The Magic Kingdom

Newsletter of the Friends of Swaziland
February 2005

Sanibonani!

FOS Funds PCV Media Project in Swaziland

In October, FOS received a proposal from Peace Corps Volunteers serving in Swaziland (our first!), requesting our help in funding the purchase of video equipment for the "Media Project." The project is a collaborative effort between Peace Corps and Swazi TV. Its primary focus is preparing public service announcements to air on TV in Swaziland. Another aspect will be preparing educational videos about the dangers of HIV/AIDS. I am happy to report that through your contributions, we were able to fully fund this project, purchasing all the needed video and editing equipment for a little less than \$3,000.

In late December PC Swaziland received the equipment. We hope soon to begin seeing the Volunteers work. Please check the Elist from time to time to see if sample videos have been posted.

Help Needed!

Your current board has been serving for over four years. We're definitely in need of some new members with fresh ideas and talent who can help us continue our good work.

Board member and FOS E-Group moderator Jack Conrad recently underscored this need with a the following "want-ad" he posted:

The FOS Board is seeking skilled and motivated individuals to help further our mission and goals—helping Swaziland help itself, distributing a series of news & information about the Kingdom, and organizing periodic events and activities for our members.

This call for volunteers is precipitated by two main circumstances. First, the Board is in need of qualified individuals to help with our semi-annual newsletter, a group Web site (e.g., like that of Friends of Cameroon's at www.friendsofcameroon.org) and a membership coordinator. Secondly, formerly active Board members have been beset by increased responsibilities at work and home.

Plagued by AIDS, famine, and poor governance, Swaziland needs our help now more than ever. We have established ambitious plans for our FOS fund (which,

thanks to Scott, collected nearly \$10,000 to support projects in the Kingdom in 2003-04), for more regular news and newsletters, and for us to connect and socialize, particularly those around the greater D.C. area.

What is missing from the equation? You....

So, if you do have a little time on your hands and would like to use it to good effect, please let me know by either contacting me via e-mail, jvonreyn@hotmail.com, or give me a call at 703-335-0848.

Ngiyabonga and salani kahle,

John von Reyn

News Flash!! I'm happy to report that Jack's posting has already paid off. Tom Gutnick and Lowell Boileau have volunteered to take on the Friends of Swaziland Website. Tom will be developing the site and serving as Webmaster. Lowell has graciously offered to host the site on his server. Things are moving along fast, so start clicking on our new web address, www.FriendsofSwaziland.org, to see what's been posted.

However, we're still in need of a newsletter editor, membership coordinator, and some new Board members to replace those who will be stepping aside.

Peace Corps Week, February 28 – March 6

Peace Corps Week is an opportunity to shine a spotlight on the important work of Volunteers around the world and the continuing service that returned Volunteers bring to their communities in the United States. If you'd like to participate in promoting the Peace Corps during this week by giving a presentation on your experience to your community, you can find more information at the Peace Corps website under www.peacecorps.gov/pcweek.

DC Area RPCVs – Spring Get-Together

Plans aren't finalized, for that matter, they aren't even developed, but there will be event in the D.C. area in the Spring. If you have some ideas or would like to host an event, please let John von Reyn know (703-335-0848). Current possibilities are a pre-concert picnic at Wolf Trap or perhaps an informal meeting at that fine, funky bar with the third-world ambiance in Arlington, VA, known as Dr. Dremo's.

FOS Receives Affirmative Response Letter from Clinton Foundation

As announced in the last newsletter, 19 RPCVs from Swaziland signed a letter that was mailed to the Clinton Foundation. It offered FOS's assistance in identifying a legitimate sponsoring group in Swaziland that the Foundation could use as a conduit for the Foundation's HIV/AIDS initiative.

The Foundation replied to our offer with the following:

"Dear Friends:

On behalf of President Clinton, thank you for your letter regarding the AIDS epidemic in the Kingdom of Swaziland. I am pleased to let you know that the Clinton Foundation HIV/AIDS Initiative currently is working to extend its programs to include that country.

As you are aware, the Clinton Foundation HIV/AIDS Initiative assists the governments of hard-hit, resource-poor countries in Africa and the Caribbean to improve their health infrastructure so that more of their citizens can receive the treatment they need. I have passed along to Initiative staff your generous offer to be of help in achieving this goal in Swaziland.

President Clinton is glad you took the time to write and sends you his best wishes.

Sincerely,

Renee Sagiv Riebling

Senior Writer

Department of Correspondence"

Treasurer's Report

Scott Lewis reports that the Treasury has approximately \$7,900. The major expenditure in 2004 was the funding of the Media Project mentioned earlier in the newsletter. Scott will be submitting a more complete report to the RPCV Swaziland E-Group list.

FOS Charitable Donations

by Jack Conrad

Are you looking for special tax-deductible charitable giving opportunities? Note that Friends of Swaziland is now a 501(c)3 organization registered with the IRS. As such, your donations to the Friends of Swaziland Fund are now fully tax deductible.

Your contributions help fund aid projects in the Kingdom. Contributions can be sent to Friends of Swaziland Treasurer, Scott Lewis, at:

1276 N. Wayne St., Apt. 425

Arlington, VA 22201-5851

Thank you for your continued support of Friends of Swaziland activities.

NPCA Advocacy for the Peace Corps

by Terry AmRhein, Swaziland 1973-1975

February 28 to March 6 is Peace Corps Week. As part of the celebration, the National Peace Corps Association is planning a nation-wide advocacy effort to voice strong support with members of Congress for additional Peace Corps funding (the exact figures will be available when the new budget is presented in mid-February). This will represent a significant commitment to the Peace Corps in a year when budget negotiations are expected to be more difficult than last year.

That is why everyone's support is so crucial. The plan is that the NPCA will contact all of the 150 affiliate groups, as well as the 500 members of the National Advocacy Network, and ask them to fax a letter and to call their congressman and both of their senators asking for support for PC funding. All of the faxes and calls will be made during Peace Corps Week as close to March 1 as possible. This advocacy effort represents a major effort on the part of the NPCA and I think it is very important that we all lend a hand. Right now, the NPCA is looking for the NENY-RPCV group to get the commitment of at least 20 people to commit to this effort. Think of it, if all 150 groups get the commitment of 20 people, that would be 3000 faxes and phone calls in support the PC budget. That would make a difference! So would you please contact me at vusimusi@aol.com and give me your commitment to participate in this important event. More information about the event, such as the email addresses and phone number of our Representatives and Senators, is available at: www.rpcv.org/pages/sitepage.cfm?id=1080&ref=3

This is important to the Peace Corps – the Peace Corps has no lobbyists, so it depends on RPCVs like us to carry the

torch. Also, it is not just limited to RPCVs, so please pass the word.

Peace Corps Partnership Projects – Funding Possibilities

Peace Corps Partnership Program has posted the following projects submitted by PCVs in Swaziland on their website (PeaceCorps.Gov/Donors) Check out the website for full descriptions:

Nkwene Sports and Recreation Center – Amount needed \$8,272

Nsubane Garden Project and Borehole – Improving Immune Systems Against HIV/AIDS – Amount needed \$19,469

Phaphanmani Women's Association Sewing Cooperative – Amount needed \$1,463

NPCA Conference in Chicago Revisited

At least a half a dozen Swaziland RPCVs attended the National Peace Corps Association conference in Chicago (August 6-8). They included:

Chris Mathews (1968-70)
Terry AmRhein (1973-75)
Richard Enkoji (1977-80)
Jack Conrad (1984-87)
Tom Arsenault (1988-91)
Elizabeth Bara (1988-91)

Presenting some superb speakers and offering some terrific workshops, the conference was a great success.

Former NPCA Board member and new Friends of Swaziland Board member Terry AmRhein prepared a summary of the conference for the Elist, excerpts of which follow:

“Attended by almost 1000 NPCA members and Returned Peace Corps Volunteers, the conference was loaded with opportunities to learn about world events, network with friends, gather new and useful information about America's situation in the world and meet and talk with many influential and famous people.

Opening Ceremony. During the opening ceremony, among the many interesting speakers were Ohio Governor Bob Taft (Tanzania 63-65) and Wisconsin Governor Jim Doyle and First Lady Jessica Doyle (Tunisia 67-69) who talked about their experiences in the Peace Corps and how the Peace Corps has affected their lives. Gaddi Vasquez, Director of the Peace Corps, talked about the role of the Peace Corps in today's tumultuous world and the Peace Corps in the years to come. Gaddi indicated that there are presently 7,533 volunteers in the field, a 23-year high, and the Peace Corps is expanding into more countries every year. He called for more funding for the Peace Corps and more volunteers in the coming years.

Workshops. There were 35 workshops, small seminars, and informational meetings, presented during the

conference. The workshops covered a wide variety of subjects. “How to become an Effective Advocate”, “Stress Reduction”, “Why Kenyan Runners Win”, and “Self-Publishing” are but a few examples. I found the workshop “Afghanistan & Iraq, How Do You Heal a Tortured Place” particularly interesting. I learned that the war in these countries has waged so long that many of the customs and traditions of the societies have been lost. People are without the framework that holds the society together. In the workshop “Understanding Islam”, I had the personal opportunity to discuss with an Islamic imam why such a peaceful religion such as Islam can nurture Islamic terrorism.

Career Fair and International Market Place. Over 100 businesses, government, and non-profit organizations presented at the career fair and International Market Place. If you were looking for a job with the US State Department or overseas assignments with NGOs, this was the place to be. “Peace Corps, Encore”, (peacecorpsencore.org), a new volunteer service that provides RPCVs an opportunity for short term assignments, was there providing useful information about their new service. An NGO called “Deep Roots” (DeepRoots.org) was there taking donations to provide funds for students to attend schools in their local countries. If you were shopping for presents, you could collect a wide variety of unusual and interesting gifts. Peace Corps shirts, crystal glass with images etched inside the glass by lasers and hand-painted silk cloth were several of the interesting items for sale. As I walked among the vendors, I felt like I was on a Christmas shopping spree as I collected several plastic bags full of gifts. It was a great place to pass an hour or so looking at the many interesting displays and spending your money.

Closing Ceremony. The closing ceremony featured Hedayat Amin-Arsala, Vice-President of the Transitional Government of Afghanistan. The Vice President spoke of the great service past Peace Corps Volunteers provided his country, and he personally requested that PCVs be brought back. Mr. Amin-Arsala indicated that an international relief worker costs between \$500 and \$2,000 per day. A PC volunteer can do the same work for \$500 per month. Mr. Amin-Arsala also indicated that Kabul is very safe. What a great service we could provide if the Peace Corps were assigned to Afghanistan today! Following Mr. Amin-Arsala, Chris Mathews, of *MSNBC Hardball* and an RPCV (Swaziland 69-71), spoke. “What a great speech Mr. Amin-Arsala gave,” Chris said, “and just think, English is a second language to Mr. Amin-Arsala. Wouldn't it be wonderful if our Vice President could speak so fluently in English?” The audience loved that comment.

The NPCA conference was a great success, educational, enjoyable, interesting, and a place to get a little NPCA work completed. My hat is off to Trina Janes, Conference Chair; Chuck Sheftel, Conference Vice-Chair; and the entire Chicago Area Returned Peace Corp Volunteers, for a tremendous job well done.”

Uhlalaphi? (Alumni News)

Casey Hanks, 1992-95, writes, "My name is Casey Hanks and I served in Swaziland from 92-95. I am trying to track down and re-connect with the volunteers I served with." Casey's e-mail address is c@moontwist.com

Lowell Boileau writes, "I was with Swaziland 1 and taught at Salesian School in Manzini. I have had the long existing mini site of "Swaziland Mon Amour" (bhere.com/swazi) along with some well-known Detroit-related sites. I have an information age cottage industry specializing in Internet solutions, AtDetroit.com. Our biggest client is Couples Resorts in Jamaica for which we manage Internet operations."

FOS Electronic Connection

E-Group. Friends of Swaziland has an E-group to keep us connected and help share news, information, and ideas through an Internet-based SD-RPCV Network. One of the main goals of the E-group is to make it easy for us to stay in contact with each other by having one central e-mail address for broadcasting to members messages related to our group and Swaziland. Another goal of the E-group is make a difference where we can in projects and activities designed to assist Swaziland and Swazis. The address is: sdrpcvEmailList@yahoo.com.

To subscribe to the FOS E-group, simply visit the website at groups.yahoo.com/group/sdrpcvEmailList/.

SD/RPCV Web Site. As noted in a previous article in this issue, the newly-revived FOS Web site should be up and running shortly. Be sure to check it out at www.FriendsofSwaziland.org to see if anything's been posted. And if you have anything appropriate to post on the site, be sure to e-mail it to the Webmaster.

RPCV Looking for Photos

Hello fellow RPCVs,

My name is Jason Gordon (Moldova 2002-04) and I am looking for photo contributions for a large coffee-table style photo book featuring photographs taken by PCVs all over the world. If you would like to contribute, please send a selection of your best photographs (preferably with Host

country Nationals in them but will consider scenic) via email to jason.gordon64@sbcglobal.net or via snail-mail to

Jason Gordon
7815 McCallum Blvd.
Apt. 17206
Dallas, TX 75252
(214) 695-4637

Please include your name, country of service, years of service, and a brief caption with each photograph. If sending digital, please be sure the images are 300dpi or higher. If published, a significant amount of the revenue from the book sales will go to support Peace Corps projects worldwide. Thank you.

Your FOS Officers

Group Leader	John von Reyn
Communications/E-Group	Jack Conrad
Webmaster	Tom Gutnick
Treasurer	Scott Lewis
Newsletter Editor	<i>Volunteer needed</i>
Fundraising Coordinator	<i>Volunteer needed</i>
Membership Coordinator	<i>Volunteer needed</i>
Board Member	Lorraine Stehn
Board Member	Susan Soares
Board Member	Mark Pierzchala

Newsletter Deadline for Next Issue

We try to publish twice a year, so the next issue should be published in early summer, which gives you plenty of time to write that article or you've been meaning to submit.

Hambani kahle!

Friends of Swaziland Membership – Join or Renew Today!

Membership in Friends of Swaziland brings you, in addition to all issues of our Newsletter, special mailings announcing the annual meeting, reunions, etc. Membership also brings you the satisfaction of contributing to the goals and aims of Friends of Swaziland. To join, complete this form and return it with your check.

You can also join the National Peace Corps Association and Friends of Swaziland at the same time (joint membership) NPCA members receive the quarterly magazine *World view*, the newsletter 3/1/61, eligibility for the National Convention, credit cards, Congressional representation, and other benefits. NPCA dues and contributions can be tax deductible.

Name		Today's Date
Street		Home Phone
City	State	Zip
Current Occupation		Email
Experience in Swaziland: (PCVs list Peace Corps job; Academics: list field and research topics; Swazis: list profession or field of study)		
Years in Swaziland	Site/Hometown	Job Assignment (math teacher, etc.)

We like to keep an update on our members. Please answer the following questions (use additional paper if needed)..

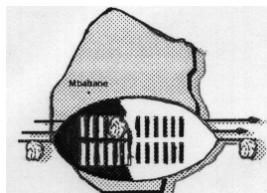
1. Briefly, what have you done since leaving Peace Corps? What are you doing now?
2. What projects or programs would you like to see FOS involved in (either in the U.S. or Swaziland)? Can you help?
3. What news features would or do you like in the FOS newsletter?

Areas of Interest: Check potential FOS Activities in which you would be most interested:

- Newsletter Reunions/Gatherings Trips to Swaziland
 FOS Officer/staff position Fund raising Other: _____

JOINT MEMBERSHIP IN FRIENDS OF SWAZILAND and NPCA		Easy method: Join from NPCA Website www.rpcv.org Otherwise send to address below.
Individual Friends of Swaziland & NPCA membership	\$50.00 ____	
Dual FOS/NPCA Memberships (two persons, one address)	\$65.00 ____	Send to: Friends of Swaziland c/o Scott Lewis 1276 N. Wayne St., Apt.425 Arlington, VA 22201
MEMBERSHIP IN FRIENDS OF SWAZILAND only		
Individual Friends of Swaziland membership	\$15.00 ____	
Dual FOS Membership (two persons, one address)	\$20.00 ____	
Additional donation to Friends of Swaziland. Thank you!! (Donations are tax-deductible as allowed by law.)	\$ _____	
TOTAL ENCLOSED (payable to Friends of Swaziland)	\$ _____	

The information collected on this form will be used by FOS and will be made available only to those organizations whose purposes are consistent with the aims of FOS. It will not be sold or traded for commercial purposes. The information may be used in the FOS Directory unless you request otherwise.



Friends of Swaziland

c/o J. von Reyn
6194 Deer Path Court
Manassas, VA 20112

Address correction requested

To help us with our mailing costs, please consider joining – only \$15.

