



Just like the "Bold and the Beautiful" but *Way* Better

by Vincent D'Agostino, SOJO

Over a period of five nights and six days, 15 PCVs from Group 2 and their counterparts attended a UNICEF-sponsored workshop at Hawane Nature Reserve from October 10th-14th. It was five sleepless nights for PCV's in echo-filled horse stables and five fun-filled nights for our SWAZI counterparts. Horse-back riding satisfied the adventurous and CNN, MTV, and E! fed the couch potatoes. Free T-shirts and bags plus Lion King, and latenight jam parties entertained the moochers and thrill-seekers. And let's not forget the three pot-belly filling buffet meals.

This workshop wasn't all about the entertainment and freebies, but rather one "hail" of a long three-hour soap opera that at times has more shockers, surprises, and drama than your average episode of "Bold and the Beautiful" with Brooke and Ridge.

No, I'm not talking about Peace Corps Volunteers or anyone in particular (hmm, hmm...Brigid and Cliff), but the Alan Brody, director of Swaziland UNICEF, produced "The String Game Story."

The story takes place in "Nobody's Village" (in reality, it's everyone's village) where family members, peers, respected elders, and key leaders' lives intertwine and become connected and disconnected through sex, pregnancies, rape, abuse, STI's and AIDS. A character-driven story with numerous plotlines and subplots illustrates how stigma, ignorance, and poor decisions can affect all parts of a community.

For instance, there's Make Shongwe who seduces a 15-year old boy and Peter Dlamini, a kombie driver, who sleeps with young female passengers. In the presentation of the story, a piece of a red string is attached to each character once he or she is infected with HIV, reminding the audience who is infected and by whom. By the end of this three hour soap opera, the audience had become witnesses to the demise of about half the village. Through repeated story-tellings by creative PCV's, animated counterparts, and Vumile Dlamini, the managing director of this "String Game" workshop, we learned many diverse ways to tell the story while keeping the key messages intact and injecting a bit of humor.. UNICEF is providing two story-boards, one for the PCV and



This is our new fire escape door

With the entire office being renovated into Fort Knox (I'm not sure if to keep us in or out), our very own Volunteer Lounge has gotten a makeover amidst the chaotic drilling, Group 1's COS process and sloppy PCVs. **We have ourselves a new fire exit.** A plaster of wood nailed to the wall. And that's me boys and girls trying to get out of the firestorm our office has become...when the gang and I inquired about our new exit door to the foreman, his response was: "Anyways"

one for the counterpart, to bring the story back to the community to share the wealth of HIV education we learned over that week.

Thanks to UNICEF and Alan Brody, we--along with our counterparts--now feel equipped to deliver information in a riveting way whereby 1)we reach many people at one time, 2)keep their attention long enough to get what we really want them to know and learn, and 3) not bore ourselves with endless HIV and AIDS information. It is recommended that you divide the three-hour story into shorter hourlong episodes or half-hour episodes. Also, it is strongly recommended that you partner with a respected member of your community tell part or all of the story in SiSwati, as well as to keep it as animated and lively as possible. I think it's high time Brooke and Ridge move over and give Make Shongwe and Peter Dlamini a run for their money.

Inside this Sojo

String Game Story
page 2

JICA & USPC
page 3

Tibose Tikwenge
page 4

Long-Winded Daynese
page 5

All Ears with Mahlubi
page 6

An Attack on P.C.
page 7

"Confessions"
page 8

Litsanga Sinkhwa
page 9



Counterpart practicing telling part of the String Game

If you did not attend the workshop and want more information o this "String Game" and how you can access the story board, story, and tools to reach your community contact Vumile Dlamini at 605-0213 or Alan Brody at abrody@unicef.co.sz or UNICEF directly at 407-1000.

A Friendly Reminder from Nwando

Your Living Allowance And Its Purpose!

Just a reminder to all that your monthly allowance is for your day-to-day expenses including your housing and all that it entails (water, electricity, locks, etc.). The Peace Corps office will not reimburse unless it is an extraordinary event such as your roof falling off, your latrine collapsing, etc. In such extraordinary cases, please make sure you have received approval to submit for reimbursement. Your allowance is broken down (approximately) as follows:

| Category | Percent | Approximate |
|---------------------------------------|-------------|-------------------|
| Amount | | |
| Food | 45% | 1,012.50 |
| Utilities | 5% | 112.50 |
| Household supplies | 6% | 135.00 |
| Clothing | 4% | 90.00 |
| Recreation & Entertainment | 10% | 225.00 |
| Transportation | 12% | 270.00 |
| Reading materials | 5% | 112.50 |
| Incidentals | 5% | 112.50 |
| Emergency communication | 8% | 180.00 |
| Total | 100% | E 2,250.00 |

Safety & Security *by Mfanafuthi Vilakati, SSO*

Sanibonani nonkhe emaPCVs!

I hope everyone is safe out there. Talking about safety, this is one element of life in every community that requires a collective effort in upgrading and maintaining. On the same note, a collective effort between the Volunteers and the PCO is required to ensure that the safety and security structures PC has function, and function well. I would like to take this time to appeal to all PCVs to forward information in a timely manner that could assist PC to take necessary precautionary measures in issues of PCV safety.

The office of safety and security has come up with an abbreviated EAP pamphlet. This pamphlet can be easily kept in a backpack or even a small handbag. This pamphlet has all the information PCVs need to know and steps to take in case of an emergency.

As promised the PCO has embarked on an exercise to install lightening rods in sites where there aren't any. Almost half the sites for Group 3 volunteers have been fitted with the lightening rods. In case of a storm, please stay indoors and avoid standing under trees and DON'T GO JOGGING if you hear thunder.

PC posts around the world have been instructed to revise their Volunteer and Trainee Transportation policy to be compliant with the revised Manual Section 450 of PC policies. PC Swaziland is therefore in the process of formulating a new Volunteer and Trainee Transportation policy inline with the directive from HQ. PC Swaziland will be working through VAC to get Volunteers' input on the proposed policy.

My greatest appreciation goes to the PCVs who have made it a point to report security incidents they experience out there in their communities, and also to the Volunteers who look out for each other in neighboring communities. Thank you for practicing good personal safety strategies and remember that you are safest at your sites.

Ngiyabonga, Asiphephe! Thank you and lets stay safe.

In Brief

Mentoring Program for Girls

Peace Corps Swaziland is launching a new mentoring program for young girls. The program will provide mentoring for one to five girls in volunteer communities. Volunteers will help to identify female counterparts, who will in turn help implement the program. The program aims to assist girls with schoolwork, provide occasional in-country outings, offer a forum for sharing health information, and create opportunities for arts and crafts and sports and games. The program is being developed in conjunction with SWAGGA and FAWESWA and will be launched January 2006. Volunteers can start identifying potential girls and coun-

DOS/COS File

DOS/COS file for ETing and COSing is on the computers in the Volunteer Lounge under the Volunteer Files. Ask Make Thandi if you have any questions as to where to locate the file if unable to do so.

Skirts by Zodwa

If you would like a beautiful panel skirt made from Julie Z's friend Zodwa Nhlabatsi, contact Julie at 611-8114 with the following: size, ankle length or knee length, color (red, blue, brown). She will make arrangements to either deliver skirt to you or drop it off in your mailbox.

Cost: 5 panels (ankle 26-28/Knee 30-32)-E70, 6 panels (ankle 30-34/Knee 32-34)-E80, 7 panels (ankle 36-38/Knee 34-36)-E90, 8 panels (ankle 40-40/Knee 38-40)-E100.

Staff Announcements and Travel

Staff Annual leave:
PCMO Daynese Santos Home Leave
Nov 20 to Dec 17

Staff departure:
Medical Assistant Thembi Mkhalihi has accepted another position and will be departing Nov. 4

PCO closed:
Thursday Nov. 24 Thanksgiving Day

Director's Chat

a monthly update from PC Swaziland CD, Pattie Austin

Thanksgiving is coming up this month, so I want to clarify the holiday options for PCVs.

In early October, we learned that Ambassador Lucke had been invited to State Department Chief of Mission meeting in Washington D.C. the week before Thanksgiving. He will remain in the U.S. with his family for the holiday.

Although some of you may be disappointed that there are no "official" Thanksgiving festivities this year, please understand that Thanksgiving celebrations are not common at other posts.

If you are up in Mbabane on Leave Thanksgiving, you are invited to my house for cookies, brownies, and other sweets in the afternoon. Please let me know in advance that you'll be there so I have enough sweet treats prepared. I would enjoy sharing the holiday with you so if you are in the neighborhood, please consider coming by.

Another option is that PCVs can take an Annual Leave day on Thanksgiving and combine it with a 3-day free weekend for a nice 4-day break either an international getaway or a time to holiday in Swaziland.

If there are any questions about Thanksgiving and time off please direct them to Lindiwe or to me.

-Pattie



NEWS & NOTES

From the Peace Corps website

WASHINGTON, D.C., October 19, 2005 -- As the Peace Corps nears its 45th anniversary, Director Gaddi H. Vasquez announced today that the agency has reached a 30-year high in the number of volunteers in the field. The official count for fiscal year 2005 includes 7,810 volunteers serving in 71 posts across the globe. This is an increase from the total in fiscal year 2004 of 7,733 volunteers and is the highest number of Americans serving in the Peace Corps in three decades.

WASHINGTON, D.C., October 25, 2005 – Peace Corps Director Gaddi H. Vasquez traveled to Japan this week to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), marking the first alliance between Peace Corps and the Japanese volunteer agency. Director Vasquez and JICA Vice President Kazuhisa Matsuoka met at a ceremony in Tokyo today to sign the historic agreement. "This agreement will allow us to expand collaboration on larger-scale development projects, which are greatly needed throughout the developing world," said Director Vasquez.

WASHINGTON, D.C., October 3, 2005 – From Houston to Baton Rouge, 132 Crisis Corps volunteers continue to provide assistance to those in the Gulf Coast region who have been uprooted by Hurricane Katrina. Today, Peace Corps Director Gaddi H. Vasquez visited areas of Louisiana devastated by Hurricane Katrina. "As Americans, we have an obligation to share our resources and assist when help is needed. The Peace Corps Crisis Corps program was founded on the premise of mobilizing when a crisis occurs, and this time the crisis was here at home," said Director Vasquez.



News from the training desk

Simanga Ntando, Training Coordinator



Reminder about Group's 3 IST

I hope this note finds all of you in good health. I am looking forward to meeting all of you at your IST. The dates for Phase 1 of the IST are October 31 through November 3.

Accommodations at Emafini

We will not be using the dormitories this time but will instead have you all accommodated in blocks closer to the kitchen area. You will be expected to share rooms in the following manner:

- 1) Block A 1 - 6: to be shared by the female volunteers in 5 groups of 3 and 1 group of 4
- 2) Block B 1 - 2: to be shared by the male volunteers in 2 groups of 3
- 3) Block B 4 - 6: to be shared by the three couples we have in the group

Volunteers will be expected to select their own room-mates. If you have other questions related to the IST, please feel free to talk to Simanga (6028527) or Musa (6028528).

Directions to Emafini

a) Coming from the Manzini direction: board an "all station" kombie or bus and ask to be dropped at Emafini. The center is within walking distance from the road. A staff member from the training unit will be there to meet you and show you your accommodations.

b) Coming from the Mbabane direction: board an "all station" kombie or bus and ask to be dropped at Bahai. You would then have to walk back to the center. This would possibly be a 10 -minute walk. Or, take a private taxi for 20-25E.

Language and Culture Musa Malaza, Language Coordinator**LPI FOR GROUP 2**

*Nine Bekunene! Mavalontiya lamahle!
Ninjani bo? Mine ngisaphila.*

A note about the LPI:

The Language Proficiency Interview is a face-to-face interview with a qualified Language Proficiency Tester. The intention of the interview is to measure and rate your ability to function (speak) in the local language. It is a standardized interview and follows a specific protocol. The ratings are guided by the ACTFL (American Counsel on Testing of Foreign Languages) Proficiency Guidelines. I have made a copy of the ACTFL guidelines if you need to remind yourself, and placed it in the volunteer lounge amongst the Language reimbursement forms.

So, it is with pleasure that I invite you to register for your mid-term language interviews. It is a requisite to have the interview, but if you feel that you are not ready please forward the reason to the training office and address it to Simanga or myself. Please sign in your name in the space allotted in the LPI schedule found on the notice board at the volunteer lounge. Sign against your preferred time. I can only interview three people a day. If by any chance we need to cancel the appointment, let us give each other sufficient time to change it without inconveniencing each other.

Looking forward to talking with you.

*Sitawubonana, sicoco, kube
mmandzi. Nibe nelusuku loluhle.*

**LANGUAGE CORNER**

*Sanibonani bonkhosi. Ninjani vele? Ey,
tsine ngalapha ehhovisi siyaphila.*

Here is a story I picked from one of my friends a few days ago. I had a good laugh. I've obviously spiced it up a bit. Enjoy and learn. Be the judge if the topic I picked up is befitting.

Tibose Tikwengce!

Uyati, at times I wish I could have learned just one word or phrase or even an expression earlier in my life that could JUST do the trick. Send one particular person who was turning out to be a pest politely away from my gang and me. I eventually learned the phrase. I was excited, really excited. I must confess though that it took quite a while for me to understand it. I had to ask the older folks, who even though they spoke my language, I felt they were speaking in tongues I tell you. These guys are so wise and rich in language usage. *Phela* this particular person was an old bloke. His name is Zindaba. A pest in its true sense. I just wanted a phrase that was so pregnant with information that would simple make him disappear from our midst.

I clearly recall this particular day. I was excitedly chatting away with my friends about issues that concerned us, *uyabona*, only us. Guy issues nothing sinister. Lo and behold, in that moment, there came this bane of my existence. *Ye wena, phela* the guy is my father's age. He just could not envisage why we, obviously him excluded, were having such a stimulating and spirited conversation. And *uyati*, this chap then suddenly leaned as close as he could towards us and wanted to jump in and join in the conversation. He should have just continued with his journey. *Eish! Nkosi yami!* I almost lost it.

"Remember Sipho" I reprimanded myself, "that this culture dictates that you be nice to elderly people and pick your words carefully lest you offend this *babe*." *Olwayt*, I told myself amidst the whinge and clash inside my brain cells. The bad guy inside me wanted to tell this pest to just lay off and let us continue with our conversation. *Uyati*, we were having such fun here.



Well, since he had already invaded our space and had asked me in an animated voice, *'what you talkin about..?'* I felt duty-bound to address him. Oh! How I would have loved to ignore him, but you know Zindaba, he just wants to know everything. I mean everything from our girlfriends to our dreams. I used to have problems dealing with him, but not any more, thank goodness. I was armed and ready. I had done my research. I knew just the phrase to use. Mkhulu had tipped me.

I looked at him straight into his bulging eyes. *Nkosi yami*, the poor thing expected me to feel him up with our latest gossip! *Phela* Zindaba loves gossip. Never! *Ayikhona!* This time I wanted to face the bloke. I brought up all the courage and stared. I took a few seconds and just starred at him at him. Boy, did I feel good, and in the softest voice I could master at this point I said, "*Tibose tikwengce*". Wow, it worked. He just stood there stunned not knowing how to respond to that. I struggled in suppressing the burst of laughter building up inside my belly. I could only imagine him thinking about how in the world I could have learnt that phrase, and wondering if I really meant what I had just said. The mask I was wearing at that time must have confirmed his fears. He knew that I really meant what I had just said. I was tired of him poking into our conversations. Just one phrase, he sulked and with his head hanging to the side of his neck, he majestically moved away to join his cronies in searching for *amanz' amponjwana*. *Eish!* Some people. Just one phrase. That is all I had to learn and it worked. One simple phrase.

Tibose tikwengce.

This literally means, for once you should let news pass you. This is said to a person who overhears other people talking and jumps into the flow of the conversation, which is not his or her business. He or she must stay away from it.

Keeping you updated and healthy

Daynese Santos, PCMO



VACCINE AGAINST CERVICAL CANCER

Human Papilloma Viruses, (HPV) are extremely common sexually transmitted infections. In more than 90% of cases, the infections are harmless and go away without treatment. However certain types of HPV are linked to cervical cancer, particularly HPV 16. This strain is found in 50% of cervical cancers. About a dozen other types of HPV are also associated with cervical cancer. A recent vaccine study conducted by the National Cancer Institute reportedly blocked 100% transmission of HPV 16. This is very promising news however there are limitations.

First, the vaccine is protective against HPV 16 but not other types of HPV. Second, protection against HPV 16 may not be long lasting. Third, the vaccine is not helpful for individuals already infected with HPV 16. Cervical cancer affects about 15,000 women in the U.S. each year and about 500,000 deaths worldwide. For now the best protection against HPV infection is barrier protection. You've got it! Condoms!!!

DR. RICHARD PYLE'S VISIT

Peace Corps Swaziland was very fortunate to have had a week long visit from Dr. Richard Pyle of the Office of Special Services last month. Dr. Pyle's focus is support for volunteers assigned to 'loss saturated' areas.

On that note, he facilitated a skill building workshop for PSN which provided tools to enable PSN to become more effective. A workshop was also staged for staff in which Dr. Pyle addressed volunteers' reactions to stress. It's definitely helpful to know that if tempers flare, or melt down is apparent that these may be signs that an individual's stress quotient is in the hazard zone. Dr. Pyle also conducted several site visits and was stunned by your tenacity, creativity and let's face it sheer brilliance out there in your communities. You gave him lots of information to digest and hopefully utilize in formulating a strategy to reduce stress and tension in your lives. Thanks for your participation.

MIDSERVICE PHYSICALS

First up on the docket in January, 2006 are midservice physical exams for Group 2. This is an opportunity for you to discuss new or ongoing health problems, update immunizations if applicable, get screened for tuberculosis exposure and check stool samples (3 to be exact). All females will have breast and pelvic exams and all males will have hernia checks. The midservice process requires three consecutive weekdays and may not be started after Wednesday.

Exams must be scheduled in advance and appointment times must be adhered to. Ladies check your calendars so that you avoid scheduling your exam during menstruation.

GOODBYE THEMBIE

'Now's the time to say goodbye . . . humm hummm humm humm'! Thembie Mkhaliphi, our Medical Assistant has resigned and November 4th will be her last day. Thanks Thembie for being a pioneer and helping Peace Corps to get this post up and running. Continue to grow and learn and may success await you in your next endeavor.

BEWARE OF BURNOUT

If you're investing the majority of your

time in a highly stressful work setting such as health care facility, on a project only you seem to believe in, take a time out. Eventually high stress takes a toll even though that may not be readily apparent. That is, you may not notice, but others do. Balance is the key here, neutralize tough jobs with fun jobs, or take a break from it, move it to a back burner and focus on something that restores your energy. If you hardly ever smile or find yourself crying everyday or just don't want to have fun, these are WARNING SIGNS!!! Step off, call a friend, contact your PSN rep or your PCMO. Remember, you are in control here.

SHIGELLA ON THE RISE

Get it right people!! Boil and filter your drinking water. Rinse and bleach fresh fruits and vegetables before eating. Shigella is an intestinal pathogen, ie, bad guy, that causes dysentery. Typically we see 0-1 cases per year however we've had four cases during the past month. Keep your guard up and just forget about shortcuts. Protect yourself. If you develop diarrhea inspite of your precautions, make your first drink ORS and continue drinking it until the diarrhea stops. DO NOT DRINK WATER OR GATORADE.

If you run out of ORS, make it from scratch. Mix 2 tablespoons of sugar and ½ teaspoon of salt in 1 liter of boiled, filtered water. Drink 1 cupful after each loose stool. Volunteers who deliberately ignore these instructions place their lives in jeopardy and possibly that of staff when it becomes necessary to travel to the volunteer's site under adverse weather conditions or at night.

PCMO HITS THE ROAD!

I'll be spending Thanksgiving in Philadelphia with my family this year. Sophie Gachuma will cover the med unit during my absence, effective November 20th thru December 17th. Happy Thanksgiving to all of you.

All Ears with Mahlubi

by Vincent D'Agostino, SOJO



Mahlubi at your attention and always willing to give an ear

His name is Mahlubi

At times for me, it's Mashlubi. At times for others, it's Malubi. But I assure you his name is Mahlubi. Mahlubi Hadebe.

This is now

Forty years old. Married in 1993. Four kids. 2 boys. 2 girls. First born at the age of 22. Last born at the age of 5. Hometown: Hluti. Avid TV watcher of wildlife documentaries, news, and soccer. Occasional soccer player. Semi-occasional...okay...less than semi-occasional reader.

That was then

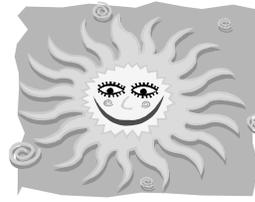
Form 5 graduate of Ngwane Central High School where Cliff Okada's is stationed. A three-year researcher on HIV/AIDS symptomatic management under University of California sponsored by Brixton-Meyers Squibb. Six years of study in a nursing program. Grad of Institute of Swaziland Health Sciences. A nurse. A midwife. Employee of Hlatikulu Government Hospital, Nhlagano Health Center, Mbabane Government Hospital. Program manager of Turner program at UNFPA where he helped train nurses and develop youth friendly clinics. Hired as a program assistant/technical advisor for Peace Corps in April 2005.

This is what I heard when I lent my ear

This might be the man with four ears since he's simultaneously always giving an ear to his family, friends, fellow Peace Corps employees, and us, the volunteers. His greatest passion above all besides listening to us is his family. Being the family man that he is, he treasures above all else his time with his family and being momma's boy that he is, he always finds the time and an ear or two to visit make wakhe on the weekends.

When he's not listening to his family gripe, he's listening to us gripe but he knows all too well that in any job there are destined to be a few complaints despite his willingness to give his best. According to Mahlubi, "When it comes to PCV's, I'm always willing to give an ear, even if I don't have an answer." He credits us as being "very creative diverse people who think things through." He further elaborates on how it is a privilege to be exposed to such Americans for these PCV's are not American kids but professionals who have valuable opinions." His greatest challenge and biggest goal for all of us is to be content, happy, and comfortable in our sites whether we're first year PCVs or second year PCVs. Being the man responsible for site development, he finds gratitude and accomplishment in a volunteer being happy with a site. To him that's a success story.

One of his other greatest challenges he is slowly mastering is putting the faces with the names and the names to the faces. But one thing for certain, he has my name down pat even though sometimes I catch myself calling him Mashlubi. Ncesi! Kakhulu!



Poem from West Africa
by Carrie Young
Mali 2000-01

Every meal of everyday
A memory of the one before
Rising from a mat on the ground
To pull water from a well
To carry home in a metal bucket
On her head
She may be used to it
But that doesn't mean that metal
Is somehow less hard to her
On her body
As she cooks
Over a smoky fire
Bent over now and still
Hours later bent
In a field of intimidating size
Her hands are losing skin
To the wooden handle
Of her only tool
Swung up into the air
And brought back down
Into the soil
This act her livelihood
Her only hope of income
She returns home
As the sun sets over her field
And bends to cook
Before returning again
To her mat on the dirt

Peace Corps Needs Makeover

by Laura Vanderkam

(Reprinted from USA Today, October 25th, 2005)

"How far would you go to help someone?" the Peace Corps commercial asks. Rajeev Goyal, a recent Brown University graduate, traveled to a remote mountain village in Nepal to teach. Upon arriving in Namje, though, he learned his students had no time for schoolwork.

The village lacked clean water, so children spent six hours a day lugging it up the hillside. Goyal promised the villagers that if they would build a water system, he would find the money and know-how to do so. He did, raising funds mostly from fellow Indian-Americans. Because Goyal had to hike two hours to the nearest phone every time he needed to contact engineers, though, the project took a year and a half.

On one hand, Namje's watering is a success story. It's the kind the Peace Corps is celebrating as it commemorates the 45th anniversary this month of John F. Kennedy's campaign speech on Oct. 14, 1960, calling for its creation. Since then, thousands of volunteers have spent two years of their lives bettering dozens of countries.

But there's another side to the story. The budget for 7,700 volunteers is more than \$300 million a year. For the roughly \$80,000 it costs to support a volunteer for two years, a team of engineers could have visited Namje to help lay pipes. But the Peace Corps doesn't work that way. Its primary focus is building cross-cultural friendships. To encourage friendships, the bulk of volunteers still serve in situations like Goyal's — remote, alone, living at the locals' level, eking out progress by patience and wit.

That's too bad. Technology and international politics have changed the world since 1960 in ways that make the "roughing it" philosophy counterproductive. The Peace Corps could better the world quicker by changing its focus.

To understand the program's methods, you have to know its three goals:

- "Helping the people of interested countries in meeting their needs for trained men and women."
- "Helping promote a better understanding of Americans on the part of the peoples served."

- "Helping promote a better understanding of other peoples on the part of all Americans."

While the Peace Corps commercials talk about development, only one of these goals is about that version of helping. Says Mike Ward, former Peace Corps associate director, "The value is more in cross-cultural exchange."

Since the focus is exchange, not development, volunteers are encouraged to live as their hosts do. "There is a funny volunteer competitive thing about who has to 'rough it' more, and people without electricity, running water, etc., seem to get the most bragging rights," says Sara Armstrong, who served in the Philippines.

Eschewing toilets is fine, but the roughing-it philosophy also means limiting access to technology, even though it's sprouting all over the developing world. It means having most volunteers, "except in a few cases," according to spokesman Nathan Arnold, serve by themselves. Because friendship is primary, many find their projects vague or feature little accountability.

Josh Berger, a recent volunteer, arrived in Mali to learn that his hosts weren't sure what his mission was. While overcoming these obstacles is a character-building experience, isolation, lack of technology and vagueness make service quite inefficient.

That need not be the case. The world has changed since Kennedy's speech. When John Coyne, who runs the website Peace Corps Writers, flew to Addis Ababa in 1962, it was his second time on a plane. Few volunteers can say that now.

Our needs, likewise, have changed. Under Kennedy, we battled the USSR for the developing world's soul. Now there may be a case for Arab world friendship programs, but elsewhere, people need American friends less than they need to stop carrying water six hours a day.

Possible steps

The Peace Corps, with its well-respected brand name, is uniquely positioned to make that happen. Here's how:

Choose sites where technology is accessible.

Though it's great that Namje has water, sites near cities can develop faster. Volunteers located near cities could use the global cellphones the Peace Corps should issue them and the Internet access they should be guaranteed, to contact other volunteers or experts.

Some volunteers are this wired. Julia de la Torre, while serving in Moldova, emailed me that technology "has allowed me to create teaching materials and work more effectively as a volunteer."

Charge fees.

If groups that request a volunteer must pay something per project, they're more likely to set goals ahead of time.

Staff volunteers in teams.

Teams motivate each other and leverage each other's skills.

Hire volunteers with useful skills.

Says Berger, "The bulk of us are graduates of small liberal arts colleges. We didn't bring a lot that could benefit subsistence farmers in rural Africa." The Peace Corps does well recruiting IT professionals but needs more engineers, agriculture experts and older, experienced volunteers.

Build in accountability.

Peace Corps service is a job, but few volunteers are evaluated on specific metrics, such as how many adults passed a literacy test. Tying the size of a volunteer's post-service transition award (currently about \$6,000) to achieving goals would boost efficiency.

Some Peace Corps country programs already incorporate these elements. Most volunteers in Mexico specialize in business development, so they have access to technology. The South Africa program seeks out older volunteers (people listen to elders when they talk about HIV prevention). That's two countries. There are a whole lot more. After 45 years, the Peace Corps should step up the pace.

New York City-based writer Laura Vanderkam is a member of USA TODAY's board of contributors.

The Mother of Them All Once Again Reinvents Herself

by The DIVA

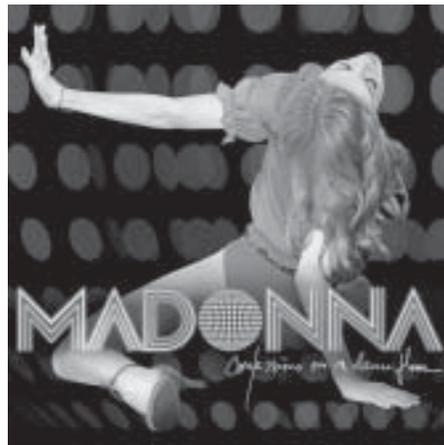
After a successful world tour two summers ago, a string of children's books, and a album bashing 'American Life' and falling off her horse on her birthday injuring herself with broken arms and ribs, the woman, this mother, this superstar, the number one DIVA has yes you guessed it, REINVENTED herself once again. As the Queen of Future Disco that is.

With her new single "Hung Up" released on Oct. 17th featuring the sample "Gimme, Gimme" from Abba, she created a whirlstorm of frenzy over her new look and new sound. Working with a new producer, she has once again redesigned a new face and a new sound of music being labeled as "future disco."

Already sampled in clubs across Europe, her new sound has caught the attention of international club goers for its fusion of electronica, DJ-styled dance music, Madonna penned lyrics, and spirituality according to the Madge. Her new all dance album, cleverly and appropriately titled "Confessions on a Dance

Floor" will be released November 15th in stores across America.

Be a dear and get her biggest fan, that's me, the album. I must bow out now and let the real DIVA take the stage. But I assure you, there's always room in any DIVA for a good comeback. Take it from the Madge herself. And from me.



The cover of Madonna's highly anticipated new album

Bus rank entrepreneurs by Annie Mohr, SOJO



Background

It's been awhile, but now it's back - the Sojo poll. This month's question: If you were a vendor at the bus rank, what would you sell? We've all spent many minutes, hours, even days at the bus rank, be it Manzini, Mbabane, Nhlanguano, Hlatikulu, Lavumisa, Matata, or Siteki. Some of my fondest memories of Swaziland are of gazing out the kombi window watching the antics of the crazy kombi conductors and vendors. There are the bomake and their umbila; the friendly bhuti selling fruit that somehow contains "Vitamin A,B,D,E,F and Z" and is "fresh and delicious." The conductors twirling their colorful umbrellas, the bomake with babies strapped to their backs, sucking on icees. What's not to love? (okay, the harassment, the waiting, the crowding, the smells...)

Methods

PCVs were asked in person or allowed to write their answers to put in the Sojo poll box. Unfortunately those answers were lost, so our results are the few we could remember. To increase our sample size, Vincent asked staff to answer as well.

Results

Ice creamwins, hands down. Of the 24 responses, 6 said they'd sell ice cream. 3 said some sort of cold drink, 2 said sweets (though Holly would use it as a cover to steal cell phones). The rest are as follows. with one vote each:

- | | |
|-------------------|----------------|
| apples | cheesburgers |
| emarussians | cigarettes |
| fishnet stockings | tomatoes |
| myself | umbila |
| my soul | twizzlers/m&ms |
| disco balls | CD's |

Anna's Literary Box

Our Bodies, Ourselves: For the New Century
by The Boston Women's Health Book Collective

Imagine my surprise when I stumbled upon one of the most important books in the feminist canon sitting in the Volunteer Resource Library. Tucked away on the shelves in the conference room is one of the women's movement's classic texts. First published in 1970, *Our Bodies, Ourselves* launched the women's health movement in America. It grew out of a Boston women's conscious-raising group (don't know about conscious-raising groups? ask your mother!) and revolutionized the way society viewed women's health and wellness.

The book:

"... is based on, and has grown out of hundreds of women's experiences. It questions the medicalization of women's bodies and lives, and highlights holistic knowledge along with conventional biomedical information. It places women's experiences within the social, political, and economic forces that determine all of our lives, thus going beyond individualistic, narrow, "self-care" and self-help approaches, and views health in the context of the sexist, racist, and financial pressures that affect far too many girls, women, and families adversely." (Introduction, p21)

In other words, it covers it all! This is not only an incredible resource for your community, but a book that every woman should own and read.

Current Bookshelf Favorites:

1. Laugh-out-Loud GuiltyPleasure
The Nanny Diaries
by Emma McLaughlin and Nicola Kraus
2. Absurdly Ridiculous
The Gringo Brought His Mother
by Geneva Sanders
3. Multiple tissues
Kite Runner
by Khaled Hosseini

Discussion

Random and quirky best describe the assortment of items available at bus ranks, and our results prove that that's the way we like it. Personally, I'd sell ice cream from the back of a bicycle, with litchies, mangoes, and avocado for sale from a basket in the front. So if life back in the US just isn't all it's cracked up to be, maybe you'll see me pedaling around at a bus rank near you.

Edladleni Corner

HoBu's Yum-Yum Haloween Caramel Sauce



Ingredients

- One small can sweetened condensed milk
- One stick (1 cup) butter
- One cup brown sugar
- One cup caramel-flavored syrup

Directions

Combine all ingredients in a pot. Simmer and stir over low heat until melted. Caramel is ready when it's smooth and sticky. Drizzle on popcorn or pour over chosen fruit. Enjoy!



GREAT PUMPKIN BREAD (makes 3 loaves)



INGREDIENTS

- 3 cups sugar, granulated
- 3 1/2 cups flour, all-purpose
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 2 tsp baking soda
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- 1 tsp nutmeg
- 4 large eggs
- 1 cup vegetable oil
- 2 cups pumpkin (cooked)
- 2/3 cup water
- 1 1/2 cups walnuts, chopped

DIRECTIONS

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F. Butter 3 loaf pans. Sift the dry ingredients together into a large bowl. Make a well in the center of the dry ingredients and add the eggs, oil, pumpkin and water. Beat well with an "electric" mixer. Stir in the walnuts with a wooden spoon. Pour the batter into the loaf pans filling each to two-thirds full. Bake for 60-90 minutes. The bread is done when a toothpick in the middle comes out clean. Cool about ten minutes, then loosen the edges of the bread with a knife and turn out to cool on a rack. **ENJOY!**

"If you got nothing good to say then come sit by me."



Gossip Column

In The Land of SWAZ

- Blia bought Justin G's Apple Laptop
- Brendan looks like teenwolf
- Will had a CD stolen from his house
- Molly had her wallet stolen in a kombie
- UNICEF string game workshop for group 2 was a success
- Katrina has amoebas
- Vincent's amoebas may have returned
- UNICEF march for kids was on October 27th in Manzini
- Cliff went to VIC FALLS
- Marnie's celebrating her birthday in Durban later this month
- Rebecca's worm is finally dying
- Blia made Patrick bleed
- All of Vincent's puppies are dead
- RSS is shutting down and Jacque's getting a roommate
- Michelle made a trip to physical therapy for a stick neck

- Brigid nearly stepped on a spitting cobra in her house
- Rebecca & Marnie had one too many screw drivers in Maputo
- Justin, Chequet, Susan, Natascha, Morgan, Amber, Teresa, Lisa, and Mika have all COS'd officially

Back In The Land of OZ

- Phati's Magagula's lost-in-transit luggage arrived in Chicago
- Chicago White Sox won first World Series in over 80 years
- Hurricane Wilma hit Yucatan, Cuba and West Coast of Florida killing 6 in US and flooding the Keys
- Nigerian plane crash killed 114
- Madonna's single "Hung Up" was released Oct. 14th
- IRAN's president said Israel should be wiped off the map
- Israel now wants IRAN removed from UN
- Tropical Storm Alpha formed in the Atlantic
- Tropical Storm Beta formed
- First Time in history NHC had to use Greek Alphabet to name storms in the Atlantic
- Earthquake death toll rises to 55,000 in Pakistan
- Miers withdrew her nomination

You know you're

Soft Corps when...

(brainchild of the Japanese Stallion)

- ...you still use toilet paper at the latrine
- ...you watch CNN every morning
- ...the roosters still disturb your beauty sleep
- ...you defecate in bags at night out of fear of your latrine



You know you're

HARD CORPS when...

- ...you lose two toe nails in two months
- ...you lose the same toe nail twice
- ...you scramble in line with a mob of primary school kids for a deworming pill
- ... a fly gives birth on your sandwich and you continue to eat it anyway
- ...you wash your hands in a basin with five dead roaches and don't care
- ...you're disappointed at the paltry number of perished flies



November (Lweti) 2005 - Gobble! Gobble!

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|-------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------|------------------------------|---|---------------------|---|
| | | 1 Oliver @ H.O.F. | 2 Group 3's IST @ Emafini | 3 | 4 | 5 Gear Survival w/ Geoff Ramokgadi @ H.O.F E50 at 12:30 |
| 6 Brian's Bday | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 Marnie's Bday Steph's Bday NATICC meeting @ 10 pm | 11 | 12 DAWNAY @ H.O.F 12:30 E50 |
| 13 | 14 Madonna's new album released | 15 | 16 | 17 Brendan's Bday | 18 | 19 Post Test Group@ Matata DJ Fresh @ H.O.F 12:30pm E60 |
| 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 Thanksgiving Day | 25 | 26 |
| | Sojo Production | | Group 3's IST @ Emafini | | Group 2's TOFU trip | |
| 27 | 28 Andi's Bday | 29 Marisa's Bday | 30 Lindsay's Bday | Baylor Workshop @ Orion | | |

The Swazi SoJournal



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