

ANNUAL GIRLS' CONFERENCE 2006

by Mahlubi Hadebe, PEPFAR Coordinator

A great and exciting day it was on a Friday, the first day of September 2006. Seventy girls and counterparts as well as 18 Peace Corps Volunteers graced this occasion. Though the weather was sunny and warm it was made even brighter by the splendid conference room at the Tums George Hotel in Manzini.

Not like many Swazi organized events, this one was different because it started exactly on the scheduled time. When the Country Director was making her welcoming remarks, the conference room was almost full with the alert girls, with great anticipation. She did a marvelous job especially when she reminded the girls that they should not just pretend that they are going to be safe from HIV/AIDS not unless they become clever, behave themselves, love themselves and value their future.

Our motivational speakers were superb. They actually outdid the organizers' expectations. Khabo Kunene, Khosi Dlamini and Lindelwa Mafa were fantastic. Their speeches gave the girls a lot of hope that, yes, it is still possible to have a Swazi woman professional even in this dark era of HIV/AIDS. Not one of them forgot to emphasize the importance education and the ability and freedom of making informed decisions about their future.

It was so exciting to hear some of the girls reading their winning essays from the competition. They gave a clear picture that Swazi girls are aware of what is happening around them and they do want to see a change. You should have seen the smiles on their faces when the Country Director and the APCD presented them with school bags and books.

As if there had not been enough entertainment already, the girls from Manzini Central High just put the cherry on top when they presented a very befitting short skit/play and an educational poem.

To complete the day's speeches was the APCD, Stella Nkosi, who was followed by the guest of the day, Nonhlanhla Dlamini

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(Director – SWAGAA). They were able to also give their motherly and professional advice to the girls. What was worth noting from both their speeches were the facts that the HIV status nowadays determines one's future and that one should not be a statistic of HIV just by succumbing to peer pressure.

The success of the conference should also be attributed to the support from the admin office and the organizing team, comprised of PCVs Bliia, Jana, Derek, Caitlin, Michelle and Mahlubi.

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Left: CD Pattie Austin and APCD Stella Nkosi handing awards to the winning essayists; Top and top left: Manzini Central High School girls rendering a skit/play to the audience at the PC annual conference.

Director's Chat w/Pattie Austin, CD



Greetings to all Volunteers! It saddens me to share the news with those of you who were unaware of the sudden death this week of the Deputy Prime Minister of Swaziland, Albert Shabangu. The DPM was a real friend and supporter of Peace Corps; every year he would make the 90 minute trip to Nhlanguano to welcome new Trainees to Swaziland and share lunch with them. He loved reading the DOS statements and Programming reports detailing Volunteer activities that I would share with him. The Peace Corps program is linked with the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister so I will await news of a new appointment with interest.

The PCO remains busy with the Close of Service of Group 2, preparation of IST and an All-Volunteer reconnect in November, PEPFAR programming and site visits to group 4 during Integration. The first Group 2 Volunteer has already left and the remainder will be staggered from Nov 8 onward.

This will be the final year of 3 Volunteer groups in country overlapping so COS activities will take place prior and during PST next year. The Peace Corps model is for a new Volunteer to replace a COSing Volunteer at site, thus continuing projects and capacity building in a seamless fashion. The dates for PST were advanced 4 months prior to my arrival so it put us off track temporarily.

Congratulations and thanks to Mahlubi and his Volunteer assistants for a highly successful Girls Conference at the Tums George in Manzini. It was inspiring to see the Volunteers and their groups of girls engaged by the motivational speakers, essay reading and entertainment. At one point during an "open mic" session, a male journalist sent to cover the event, ran to the mic and shouted at the Swazi girls to "listen to what these women are telling you, we men will tell you anything. We are dogs!" Needless to say, the audience

applauded wildly.

Another PEPFAR activity that is just beginning is the Anglican church training program. The idea is that PCVs will work with Anglican clergy and conduct a training session on HIV prevention. Then PCVs and clergy will return to the rural parishes and help with training congregations. PCVs on the planning committee include Jenny Jones, Jana Barnes, Alex Edwards and Kristen Wexler. Planning has just begun and there is lots of work to do so if you are interested in the early stages of the Program please contact your colleagues or Stella Nkosi and Mahlubi Hadebe.

Lastly, Peace Corps Swaziland will be saying a fond farewell to Training Manager Simanga Ntando this month. Simanga takes with him our gratitude for all his efforts on behalf of the Volunteers and our best wishes for a happy, healthy, and successful future.

Training Teams' Site Visits to Group 4

25 October
 Adam Kohlrus 10:30
 Kate Anderson 12:00
 Mark Weng 14:00
 Virginia Gervin 16:00

26 October
 Hannah Lee 9:00
 Karen Lee 10:30
 Karen Peebles 12:30
 Rosalane Miller 14:30

27 October
 Caroline McPartland 9:00
 Michael Marrone 12:00
 Joe DelGiorno 14:00

07 November
 Amy Huber 10:30
 Marian Gamboa 12:30
 Polly Chen 15:00
 Chris Young 16:00

08 November
 Amy Mayer 9:00
 Joe Mayer 10:00
 Rebecca Pedrotty 11:30
 Tommy Rimbach 15:00

09 November
 Kendra Oliver 10:00
 Caroline Wheatly 13:00

APCD's Site Visits to Group 4

3 October
 Adam Kohlrus 9:30
 Kate Anderson 11:00
 Mark Weng 12:30
 Virginia Gervin 15:00

4 October
 Rosalane Miller 9:00
 Karen Peebles 10:30
 Karen Lee 13:00
 Hanna Lee 14:30

5 October
 Caroline Wheatley 10:30
 Kendra Oliver 12:00
 Tommy Rimbach 14:00

10 October
 Amy Huber 9:30
 Marian Gamboa 12:00

11 October
 Joseph DelGirono 10:00
 Michael Marrone 12:00
 Caroline McPartland 14:00

12 October
 Rebecca Pedrotty 10:00
 Amy & Joe Mayer 12:00
 Polly & Chris Chen 14:30

Med Exam Schedule for Group 2

27-29 September:
PCMO PCV Dental (27/9)
 10:00 Gavin D. 12:00
 11:00 Francie P. 14:00
 12:00 Vincent D. 15:00

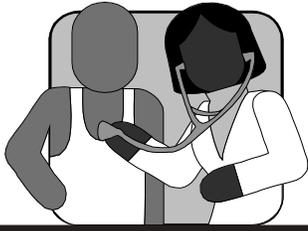
4-6 October:
PCMO PCV Dental (5/10)
 9:00 Meredith A. 11:00
 10:00 Kate M. 12:00
 11:00 Caitlin C. 14:00
 12:00 Bridget O. 15:00
 14:00 Cliff O. 16:00

9-11 October:
PCMO PCV Dental (9/10)
 10:00 Julie G. 12:00
 11:00 Alyson P. 14:00
 12:00 Tegan C. 15:00
 14:00 Michelle D. 16:00

11-13 October:
PCMO PCV Dental (12/10)
 9:00 Andy P. 11:00
 10:00 Marisa H. 12:00

16-18 October:
PCMO PCV Dental (16/10)
 14:00 Arlene S. 16:00

1-3 November:
PCMO PCV Dental (1/11)
 9:00 Steph S. 11:00



Keeping you Updated and Healthy w/Daynese Santos, PCMO

PAIN IN THE NECK

If you're determined to master the art of transporting water on your head here are a few tips:

- Ø Start with an empty bucket
- Ø Place a protective pad or 'donut' on your head
- Ø Balance the empty bucket on the 'donut'
- Ø Keep both hands free
- Ø First practice walking on a flat surface
- Ø Then uphill, downhill, rocky and muddy paths
- Ø Now you're ready to add a small amount of water to your bucket
- Ø Gradually increase quantity of water
- Ø If you're really good you may become skillful at it within five to ten years!!

Even though water toting probably predates Paleolithic man (or more likely woman), our neck muscles and cervical spine have not been conditioned for that task. Conditioning takes time and practice which must come first. There are several good reasons why you may consider forgoing this activity altogether, such as, severe neck strain, whiplash injury, ruptured cervical disc, or worse compression fracture of the spinal bones in the neck. Think it over!

COS'ers

Your COS physical will flow very smoothly if you observe the following guidelines;

- Ø Be on time for your appointment.

- Ø Avoid scheduling appointments that conflict with menstruation.
 - Ø Consider increasing your water intake and/or adding prunes, apple juice, Fibergel to your diet a few days before you begin your physical. Be prepared to produce a stool sample each day, (that's 3 stool samples).
 - Ø Write down health concerns that you would like to discuss with the PCMO and bring your list with you on the first day of your exam.
 - Ø Stool samples must be fresh, (less than one hour old).
 - Ø Don't expect all of your lab results to be back by the third day of your exam. You'll have plenty of time to review results during your 72 hour checkout.
 - Ø Anticipate that your dental appointment may require two sessions if you require extensive work.
- See you then!

PROTEIN PICKS

Most volunteers are doing a fantastic job of meeting their daily protein requirements, (about 20-25 grams). Remember that vegetable proteins are incomplete therefore must be combined with grains in order to provide all of the essential amino acids. Eggs are a great pick providing the highest quality protein however eggs are not a substitute for dairy products. If you're not including milk, yogurt or cheese in your diet you're probably still getting the protein you need but you're lacking calcium. Calcium supplements are still available in the medical unit, just ask.



FINAL news from the training desk w/Simanga Ntando



Colleagues and friends!

Time has come for me to part with Peace Corps. I am leaving this organization with a very clear conscience, knowing that in all the years I have spent with the organization, I have performed my tasks/duties with utmost dedication, diligence, honesty, focused vision and integrity.

It will take me time to think of myself outside the Peace Corps context. As a person; I have grown professionally during my employ with Peace Corps. I have also shared my professional skills with all those who interacted with me and cared to learn from me.

Volunteers: I want to thank you most profoundly for allowing me to know and work with all of you. Our PST days/times will always

be memorable times to me. I wish all of you the best as you continue the challenging task of helping the poor Swazis out there in their efforts to fight HIV/AIDS. For those of you who are winding up/down your activities in Swaziland, I wish you the best of luck as you venture into the future.

I want to assure you that I will continue supporting the Peace Corps program in any way I can. My contacts beyond Friday 29th are: ssmntando@hotmail.com or P. O. Box 5801 Mbabane, Swaziland, H100 or cell # 6089055

**SALANI KAHLE. BEKUMNANDZI KUNATI
NEKUSEBENTISANA NANI.**

Programming w/Susan Olson, APCD

What's New in the Programming Section of the PC Office?

PC/Swaziland's Programming Unit has undergone some changes since we last updated PCVs in August. Most notably, we have a new APCD on board. Stella Nkosi received the typical PC orientation by being tossed into the deep end of the pool, so to speak. Her first day of work on August 20th saw her heading off for a week-long Peace Corps Sub-Regional Programming and Training Workshop in Pretoria for 50+ PC staff from seven PC posts in southern Africa. We're pleased to report that despite being the newest APCD at the conference, she held her own and is now quite versed in all of our PC acronyms and programming initiatives. Upon returning to Mbabane she and Mahlubi helped organize the successful Girl's Conference in Manzini on Sept. 1st (see Mahlubi's article in this issue of Sojo), attended Group 2's COS conference and then began work with Khabo to prepare a DVD of Volunteer activities in Swaziland that will be sent to all prospective Group 5 trainees.

While in Pretoria, the programming staff learned about several new HIV/AIDS programming efforts underway at other PC posts that we look forward to sharing with you at the upcoming All-Vol meeting scheduled for Nov 22-24 at Emafini. If you have any suggested topics that you would like to see included as part of the All Volunteer Conference, please contact the programming staff as soon as possible.

Now that PCMO Daynese has nearly completed her Group 4 site visits, Stella and Susan will hit the road from Oct 3- Oct 12th to see how the newest Volunteers are faring with integration into their respective communities following PST. After we return to Mbabane, Musa will head out the second half of October to see how things are going from the language and cross-culture perspective. A detailed schedule of Group 4 visits is listed in this issue of Sojo.

Reminder:

Group Four's Reconnect IST is scheduled at Emafini from Nov 13-21. Plan to arrive mid-late afternoon of Sunday, Nov 12th.

An All-Volunteer Conference is scheduled to follow Group 4's IST at Emafini from Nov 22-24. Group 3 PCVs should arrive by 1pm on Tues, November 21st.

Finally, we are pleased to announce that Mahlubi is the proud father of a new baby daughter named Magcino (meaning the very last one) who was born on Sept 20th. Mom and baby are reportedly doing well. Mahlubi will be taking some well-deserved leave October 1 - 14.

PEPFAR Update:

At long last, our Volunteer Activity Support and Training (VAST) program is up and running. Peace Corps/Swaziland was recently awarded \$20,000 to provide funding for HIV/AIDS activities in support of grassroots initiatives in the communities where Peace Corps Volunteers serve. We have received additional guidance from PC/HQ stipulating that our VAST funds must be used for "AB Prevention" activities. What this means for PCVs and their communities is that all proposals must have an education or prevention component that is clearly articulated. For example, if you plan to apply for funding to organize a kids' camp or an AIDS Awareness activity, you'll need to specify how an HIV/AIDS prevention or education component has been incorporated into the planned event or activity. This shouldn't be an issue for camps or RHM trainings but a little more creativity will be required for a trench gardening project.

The Country Director has established a VAST proposal review committee comprised of PEPFAR Coordinator Mahlubi Hadebe, AO Nwando Diallo, Lang/XC Coord Musa Malaza and APCDs Nkosi and Olson (who will alternate depending upon workload and availability). The forms necessary to submit proposals to the VAST Review Committee have been prepared and are available directly from Susan or Mahlubi. Once you have had a preliminary discussion with one of the programming staff about your ideas for a proposal, you will need to complete the application and submit it to one of the program staff who will arrange for the VAST committee to review it. The committee will make its recommendation to the Country Director, who will then give the formal approval. If the proposal is approved, the PCV will be notified and the Admin Unit will order a check in emalengeni (in the PCV's name) from PC/HQ. If there are questions or concerns, one of the program staff will contact the PCV for clarification. We anticipate that the timeframe from proposal submission to receipt of the check will be approximately 6 weeks. PCVs who are within 6 months of their COS date should take the application, project comple-

tion and final reporting timelines into consideration when applying for VAST funding.

Please note that the VAST application forms are more detailed than what PCVs may have seen with PC Partnership project proposals because the reporting requirements are much more stringent. Each proposal is required to have monitoring and evaluation indicators. We expect that most proposal submissions will be in the \$500 - \$1500 range so that more than a handful of PCV communities can benefit from the VAST funds. VAST funding criteria were provided to PCVs in the July Sojo however copies are available from APCD Olson and are posted in the PCV lounge should you need to review them again prior to submitting a proposal.

Interested in Starting a Library?

Several PCVs have been working with school libraries so we thought we'd take this opportunity to provide guidance for other PCVs who might be interested in such a project in the future. A copy of some pertinent information from PC/HQ has been placed in all PCV mailboxes. Please remember that Volunteers are not authorized to solicit private donations directly but should discuss their plans with the CD and/or APCD who will advise PC/HQ's Office of Private Sector Initiatives (OPSI) and provide the PCV with potential resources on starting a library or obtaining book donations.

Attn Group 3 PCVs – Info for your Bucopho and Host Family

Way back during the April 2006 Bucopho Training Workshop, PC staff promised the 33 participants that they would receive a copy of the soon-to-be published Swaziland PCV Worksite Handbook. This booklet provides a general overview of PC, the HIV/AIDS Education project, and highlights expectations on the part of PC/Swaziland, the PCV and host community. There are also staff contact numbers as well as what to do in the event of an emergency. The booklet is written in both English and SiSwati. All Group 4 PCVs received copies to share with their community leaders and host families before OJT and a number of Group 3 PCVs have also obtained copies. If you have not yet received copies of this booklet, please let Susan know and we will make arrangements to get them to you. Thanks!



Safety and Security w/Mfanafuthi Vilakati, S&S

A big Sawubona /Hello to all Volunteers at their respective sites. The Swaziland PC post had the privilege to host the Chief of Volunteer Safety and Overseas Security from PC/HQ, Daryl Sink, together with the region's Peace Corps Safety and Security Officer, John Allen, from September 17th to September 20th. A few PCVs were visited by these security chiefs who had come primarily to see how the post is doing and of course to meet Volunteers and offer support.

PC Swaziland had its mandatory annual EAP test on September 19th. It is worth mentioning that the exercise generally went very well. A consolidation test and a communication's test was staged at the same time. Only PCVs in Nhlangano Sun consolidation point were consolidated. On the whole PCV response during these tests were quite satisfactory. However it is very much worrying to discover that some PCVs did not have an idea of what was going on despite the training and numerous reminders on the EAP in the SOJO.

I wish to urge PCVs to take these tests seriously because they are serious business designed to ensure PCV's safety and security preparedness. The community we live in cannot be guaranteed to be "entirely safe and free of surprises". Another drill will be staged sooner than expected and so I really would like to urge PCVs to familiarize themselves with the EAP booklet and stay prepared.

The post is just about to embark on a lightning rod installation exercise for Group 4 PCVs since Summer is here and so are the storms. During a thunder and lightning storm, do not:

1. Run but keep walking to avoid a body temperature rise.
2. Stand underneath tall trees
3. Be in a non-ventilated room with other people.
4. Bathe or wash dishes, stay away from water.
5. Touch or stand underneath or next to a lightning rod.

This may be last article for some COSing PCVs, so I wish to take this time to congratulate them and further urge them to continue to not be hard crime targets and also leave with good memories of Swaziland. Please make good use of the site evaluation forms to paint a good and accurate picture about your sites.

Greetings from the Admin Unit!

Beginning October 1, 2006, Headquarters is requiring us to change the way we disburse the PEPFAR Girls Mentoring funds. There is good and bad news, but overall the good outweighs the bad. Here's the deal:

Good news! – You are no longer limited to 250 emalangeni per month. At any given disbursement, you can take up to 1,400 emalangeni (basically, the equivalent of USD \$200). Yippee! This will help in terms of how often you must trek into Mbabane just to get your Girls Mentoring funds, as well as provide you with more flexibility in terms of activities you wish to carry out with your girls.

Bad news! – You must now fill out a slightly longer and more detailed form that must get approved by both the Programming Unit (Susan, Stella and Mahlubi) and the Country Director AND you will be required to submit a report (inclusive of an activity narrative and financial reconciliation). The reporting back on your activities is so important that you will not be eligible for subsequent cash disbursements if you do not turn in your report.

Note to the guys: if you are interested, you can start up a PEPFAR Boys Mentoring Program in your community. See the Programming Unit for details.

NEWS & Notes

Ronald Tschetter to become the 17th Director of the Peace Corps

WASHINGTON, D.C., September 14, 2006 Ronald A. Tschetter was unanimously confirmed by the United States Senate as the 17th Director of the Peace Corps last night. Mr. Tschetter was nominated by President George W. Bush on July 25, 2006.

"I am honored by the trust President Bush has placed in me and grateful to the United States Senate for their confidence," said Mr. Tschetter. "My wife and I served together as Peace Corps volunteers, and our experience continues to inspire and affect every aspect of our lives today. I look forward to encouraging more Americans to become Peace Corps volunteers and continuing the fine tradition of this great agency around the world."

Mr. Tschetter will replace Gaddi H. Vasquez, who became the United States Representative to the United Nations Agencies for Food and Agriculture in Rome on September 7, 2006. Mr. Tschetter will be officially sworn in as Director in the coming weeks. Until that time, Deputy Director Olsen will continue to serve as Acting Director.

Two PCVs killed in Mali

On Sunday, Brady and three of his Peace Corps colleagues set out for a day of fun, traveling in their homemade catamaran down the Niger River. When they sighted rough water ahead, the young men decided to pull into a tributary and get some local expertise, according to Peace Corps press director Barbara Daly. The mast of their boat hit a low-hanging electrical power line. A witness on the riverbank saw a blue arc of electricity that seemed to blow Brady and his friend Matt Costa into the water. The other two men jumped out. Their injuries were not life-threatening. But Brady and Costa, 24, were killed instantly.

Senator Dodd Introduces PC Legislation

Senator Chris Dodd (RPCV Dominican Republic) spoke at the ceremony for this year's Shriver Award and elaborated on issues he raised at Ron Tschetter's hearings. Dodd plans to introduce legislation that may include: setting aside a portion of Peace Corps' budget as seed money for demonstration projects and third goal activities (after adjusting the annual budget upward to accommodate the added expense), more volunteer input into Peace Corps operations, removing medical, healthcare and tax impediments that discourage older volunteers, providing more transparency in the medical screening and appeals process, a more comprehensive health safety net for recently-returned volunteers, and authorizing volunteers to accept, under certain circumstances, private donations to support their development projects. He plans to circulate draft legislation for review to members of the Peace Corps community and welcomes RPCV comments.

Volunteers to Return to Ethiopia

WASHINGTON, D.C., September 13, 2006 – Peace Corps Acting Director Jody Olsen announced today that volunteers will be returning to the African nation of Ethiopia, the second most populated country in sub-Saharan Africa, for the first time since 1999. The Peace Corps/Ethiopia program is scheduled to open in fiscal year 2007, with approximately 40 volunteers arriving next summer. The volunteers will be working in the field of health and HIV/AIDS education and prevention, with possible expansion into other sectors in the coming years.

Stella's New Groove

By Justine Spisak, Sojo Staff, Nsangwini

"I don't know how to describe myself," says Stella Nkosi thoughtfully as we sit and chat in the Volunteer lounge. "I have a tendency to close in. If there is a big challenge I am thinking about, I can go overboard and I tend to close in. But I'm really nice."

After speaking with the new Assistant Peace Corps Director about her life, experiences, and hopes, I can think of a few descriptive words. Thoughtful, supportive, strong, experienced and wise come to mind. The mother of two and Manzini native has watched the HIV pandemic in Swaziland become what it has become; she has watched it grow and change from the inside of several organizations whose aim it was to address the problem. And it is these experiences that make her deeply qualified to guide and support us in our work in Swaziland.

Like our former APCD, Lindiwe, Stella began her career in the field of education. The two actually worked together at the Curriculum Center (where textbooks for Swaziland schools are written). In fact if you check out the name of the author on your younger sisi or bhuti's Science book, you will no doubt find her there as she wrote the chapters on HIV/AIDS, health, and abuse for grades 1,2,3&4. She also taught science and math at the secondary level and holds a teacher's certificate for secondary education in Science and Math from UNISWA.

In the mid-nineties, after ten years in education, she looked to leave teaching and decided to study Immunology in the UK.

"I felt this would support health issues in the community," she reflects. After finishing her degree in the UK she returned to Swaziland and began working with SHAPE (Schools, Health, AIDS, and Population Edu-

cation) as a programs officer because she "wanted to become involved in community work."

SHAPE targeted teachers and curriculum planning. But she also began giving motiva-

because the chief had just buried his daughter who died of HIV."

After several years she left SHAPE to lead FAWE (Forum for African Women Educationalists), which was designed to support and encourage women at the professional level to advance themselves through the education system and to become role models for young girls. The organization also offered support for young girls faced with violence and inaccessibility to education. The organization also did research on problems girls face in education.

"Girls in Swaziland are not performing well in Science and Math," she says. "It's the gender issue in the classroom, but it also comes from the home."

After leaving FAWE Stella partnered with UNESCO (United Nations Education, Scientific, and Cultural Organization) on an education and entertainment project that dealt with HIV and AIDS education for young people.

"I had been working with Peace Corps for a long time," she said, "especially with the camps." She is referring to the educational boys' and girls' camps organized by PCV's in their communities, which she liked because they involved boys as well as girls.

When I knocked on her door, I caught Stella reading reports in her office. At the end of our interview, I breached the subject of her job description or more accurately, what she sees her job to be. She refers to the reports she's been reading and offers her thoughts.

"I could best help the volunteers by knowing all of them; knowing the circumstances of the sites for each of them; knowing the person, their strengths; knowing the people in their community and developing a good rapport with the community for the sake of the PCV's; understanding what structures are available to them; and acting as a buffer between the volunteer and the community."



Stella Nkosi speaks at the Annual Girls Conference.

tional talks to children and giving one-on-one counseling to troubled and abused youth.

One very relevant story that speaks to the slow acceptance of the reality of HIV in Swaziland was when she had driven with a van full of colleagues from Mbabane to another chiefdom to give a talk on HIV/AIDS. The chief of the community sent a messenger to tell the group to go back to Mbabane because he believed all the talk of HIV was just a myth. The group had no choice but to turn around.

"Three or four weeks later we received an invitation to come back to that same chiefdom

And the winner is....

...actually, the quantity of accumulated votes were piddly, pathetic and, well, not too surprising. Due to Group 3's lack of interest in voting, we're going to assume you also lack interest in what our precious T-shirt will look like so we're taking the handful of votes and going with it.



Derek's design will be on a navy shirt, with white print, and a red ribbon. The overwhelming quotation choice was, "We are the knights who say 'ngi'". This is what happens when you don't vote! Stay turned for information about sizes, prices, and orders.

Sala Kahle Nganwane

by Tegan Callahan, Mahlalini

Group 2's Close of Service (COS) has officially begun. The departure of Julie Zollman on the 27th September began the official exit of our class. She'll be followed over the next four months by all of the other sixteen remaining Group 2 PCVs.

Three weeks ago our small pod of "ones left" met for our COS conference at the Forrester's Arms Hotel. The two-night conference proved relatively helpful. However paradoxically, it both fuelled and quelled the fire of anxieties felt by all as we prepare to say goodbye and return to that far off "home of record."

We sat through sessions on departure logistics and post-Peace Corps benefits, as well as helpful panels of RPCVs and Swazi staff. All ran smoothly, aided by Daynese who helped lighten the mood by circulating a never-ending bowl of chocolates.

In the evenings we reminisced about our dreadful "training fashions" and all the multitudes of time we've experienced over the last two years: time that seems to stand still or move backwards or simply jump from moment to moment. As we processed our thoughts, we were aided by Dr. Debbie and a group discussion by the fire using the book *Einstein's Dreams* as a guide.

Over all it was a relaxing three days spent together. And yet it was oddly anticlimactic. Yes, we've reached the end of our service,



Group 2 vol's are all smiles at last month's COS conference.

but it's not quite the party that's expected.

Personally, it's probably the hardest juncture of my experience – standing at the end and struggling to find the right words of goodbye. Also, as I look down the threshold of my COS, I find myself overwhelmed at the new feelings of responsibility I hold: we, who are privileged enough to be walking away from the hardships we've witnessed and experienced over the last two years; what is our role now? How do we translate all that into "the next"? In time I am sure we will all find our own answers to these questions.

But for now, we are simply focused on the procedures of leaving (who would have thought there were so many?). Soon enough, Group 2 will be a memory encased in old Sojo's and nostalgic PCVs. Therefore, what more is there really to say, except: Bosalani kahle! Sitawubonana.

Child-to-Child: Working with Primary Students

Looking for a new resource or new ideas to work with primary students? Well look no more! A new resource guide, *Child-to-Child Approaches to HIV and Aids: A manual for teachers, health workers, and facilitators of children and young people*, can help you tackle the more difficult issues with teaching young students in Primary School. Franci has made copies of the book for the volunteer resource library and the volunteer lounge.

This resource from The Child-to-Child Trust is separated into two sections. Section 1 is further divided into 4 parts, consisting of: Why to Teach Children, Basic Information on STI's and HIV, Approaches for Teaching, and Ideas for Activities. The first two parts are pretty self-explanatory. Part 3, Approaches for Teaching, explains the Child-to-Child approach, going through an approach much like PACA in order to find and gather information on the community and then *doing* something about the problems. Next the book goes through an in-depth way to implement this approach with exercises designed for children. Part 4, Ideas for Activities, gives plans for teaching what is in the book and other relevant topics. The 'program' is flexible but the book outlines a 3-year plan for working with the same children.

Section 2 is perhaps a more workable 'program' for the average Peace Corps volunteer. Six lessons are outlined from how HIV and AIDS affect children's lives to building good memories and to planning the future. These lessons are much more in-depth than what is in the first section and are planned by the creators of the book. These lessons could easily be adapted for a youth group or even activities in a youth camp.

Please check out this resource the next time you are in the office for new ideas.

Attention Shiselweni Volunteers:

On December 12 – 15, 2006, there will be a trench gardening workshop sponsored by the MOYA center. The workshop will be held at a Nhlanguano Feeding Kitchen, and accommodation will be provided at the Farmer's Training Center for the three nights in between working days. If your site is near enough to town that you would prefer to return home after each day that is fine. The purpose of the workshop is to teach people how to create an organic garden using readily available materials. With two days of classroom work and two days of practical work, by the end of the workshop participants will have actually constructed a garden and will be able to go home and repeat the process. They also will hopefully pass on the knowledge to others in their communities. Each volunteer who participates will bring a Swazi counterpart to also attend the workshop. Right now there is a maximum of two counterparts, but if we have fewer volunteers sign up you will be able to bring three counterparts. If you are interested in participating, please SMS me (Angela – 631-6030) to let me know how many people will be joining you and how much transport from your site to the Town will cost (costs will vary depending on if you staying in Town for the three nights or returning home each day). Please only sign up (and only allow your counterparts to sign up) if you (and they) can be present for each day of the workshop. Hope to see you there!



Angela's Opinion Box

by Angela Galletta, Nhlango

A few weeks ago, I had the opportunity to go to a friend's house to watch a movie. A movie! Without a second thought, I consigned myself to two hours of cinematic stupor. After all, even if the film is Paris Hilton's *House of Wax*, at least it is two hours of time filled. (Although I'm fairly certain the only Hilton movie *anybody* is going to be interested in watching is her much publicized debut). I had not thought to hope to offer an opinion about the movie selection: beggars cannot be choosers. I was pleasantly surprised when the movie in question turned out to be *Beyond Borders*, starring Angelina Jolie and Clive Owen. The basic premise: Angelina is Sarah, an American socialite following her dashing and politically active husband to London. Sarah and her husband go to some lavish benefit dinner one night. The kind of dinner in which each plate costs more than my readjustment allowance and the worthy cause is given some vague title like, "Save the Poor!" Ironic in the extreme considering the sheer amount of waste that must have gone into just funding the fundraiser.

Into the decadent ignorance blasts Nick, played by Clive Owen. Nick is a medical doctor who jumps from one third-world country to the next, always in countries steeped in turmoil and fraught with peril. Always under paid, under appreciated, and most importantly, under funded. The hurricane of indignant fury that is Nick comes with a little Ethiopian boy, Jo Jo. Nick takes over the party and blatantly exploits Jo Jo's poverty in an effort to shame the party-goers into giving something besides some drop-in-the-pan extravaganza for themselves. After the police inevitably haul Nick away, most of the philanthropists laugh off the display. Sarah, however, is deeply touched. She goes home, cashes in her life savings, and follows Nick to Ethiopia. When she arrives, Nick's disdain for Sarah is palpable: "Why don't we just get this over with. Give me your camera and I'll take a picture of the white girl with the black baby so you can go home." He believes she is like so many others, a wealthy girl in a privileged world looking to briefly make a contribution and assuage her guilt. However, Sarah's commitment to doing things herself instead of passing the buck (or a fat check) eventually show Nick that, if nothing else, her efforts are sincere. Like all good love stories, what starts off as hate and animosity slowly blossoms into understanding. Sarah goes home to her husband, but her life is changed. She finds work with the United Nations and continues to meet Nick in various countries over the next ten years. Although there is much more to the plot, and the romance, I will leave the rest of it to just comment on what I think is relevant to me.

Of all the exotic locations the movie visits, the two which receive the most face time are Ethiopia and Cambodia. And the scenes were actually filmed on site. In scenes with Angelina rescuing starving babies from vultures, there are actually starving babies on death's door. No stunt doubles for this kind of film. Also, because the film covers many years, the situations in Ethiopia and Cambodia are shown at their absolute worst. In Ethiopia people are, quite plainly, starving to death. The skeletal barely human children that we are used to seeing on covers of National Geographic clearly came from here. To answer the problem of starving people, the obvious answer seems to be give food. Unfortunately, the rebel armies trying to take out the oppressive government are always stealing the

supplies to feed their impoverished armies. Same thing in Cambodia: the film shows clips of a very bloody civil war. Although Nick and his compatriots just want to bring medical care to those who have none, they have no choice but to involve themselves in the political games afoot, trading information with spies and rebels in order to be allowed access to the rural areas.

If the film were only these things, I would say that it is nothing new, nothing to write home (or to you all) about. But it was more than that. Angelina's sheer passion for the work really made me start thinking about myself and my presence in Swaziland. She was so completely committed, to the point where she gives everything she owns and eventually her own life to the causes that matter most to her. It's also interesting to note that the two countries most concentrated on in the film, Ethiopia and Cambodia, are the two countries from which Angelina adopted her children in real life. That explains it right there. The reason Angelina's character seems so horrified and determined all at once is because she isn't acting. When I look at my own presence in Swaziland, it just doesn't match up to Angelina's. The hum of everyday life seems to drain the urgency from my plans little by little till it is just daily life. The overexposure has detached me from the immediacy of the crisis. I worry that I am now jaded, that I've lost my compassion. Or maybe I never really had it but before it was easier to hide: one cannot miss what is not often in demand.

In an effort to assure myself that I am in fact a good person, I started thinking about the other differences between Angelina's role in the film and my role here. Of course she is able to maintain such vigor. She is only in each country for a month, maybe two. She is not required to fully immerse herself in each place that she visits, because ultimately, all she is doing is visiting. While she certainly does her research about a country before arriving in order to know what to bring, that is all she does: bring stuff. I'm not trying to diminish the value of the UN bringing stuff, but it simply is not the same. Also, her job was a lot more straightforward. People are starving, bring them food. That sort of logic does not require months of living in a place, accessing a community, locating local resources, and actually living in a place to ensure the program works. Of course things are a lot more complicated than I am representing here. As I mentioned before, with rebel armies trying to steal the food (and for a cause that Angelina was likely to sympathize with), it is not as simple as just dropping boxes of maize. However, the prospect of starving people is so immediate, these people need help NOW!, that there is no time to think about all the other niggling details that otherwise would have to be dealt with. In some ways, the eminent danger of places like Ethiopia in the '80s and Cambodia in the '90s made the jobs there that much simpler. In Swaziland, HIV is not like starvation. There is no boxed first world item that can make it go away. Even with things like ARVs, a million other things have to happen to make that a viable solution. While from my vantage point now, the situation may not seem as immediate as starvation, the realization is that it IS a crisis. And I should be committed to doing something every day to DO something about it. Even if in the end I came to the realization that my life is nothing like the heroine's, her passion for her work and belief that what she is doing is truly helping gave me a second strength. I may not be Angelina, but her passion makes me sort of wish I could be.



Pork Fajitas!

Here's an easy meal for entertaining:

Pork Fajitas

Marinate thin sliced pork for about an hour in:

- 1 cup pineapple juice
- 1tsp Chinese five spice
- clove garlic
- some red chili pepper
- dash of soy sauce (optional)

After marinating, cook the pork minus marinade then add onion and green pepper slices. Just before serving add sliced banana; heat through and serve.

You know you're **HARD CORPS** when...

- ...you get a filling in your tooth without novacaine.
- ...Halfway into eating a salad, you find a worm in your lettuce, pull it out, and finish the salad.
- ...your water source is a shallow stream in front of your homestead which tadpoles inhabit.
- ...you've been here so long your mom has a better chance of getting a date with the cute, new Mozambican trainees.



You know you're **Soft Corps** when...

- ...you're so desperate for wine, you buy a diluted box-wine in a used whiskey bottle.
- ...you wait outside Spar for it to open so that you can buy the newest issue of *Heat*.
- ...you insist on being pampered so much that after two years you still don't know where the pots and pans are at Grifters.
- ...your only drive to stay awake is to finish watching Mtv's "Top 10 at 10" on Shakira.



Mid-Service Sentimentality



“To see Kim having such a good time, it's almost bringing tears to my eyes”

Classifieds

For Sale

- Memory Foam for a single bed. Amazing! R20
- Hanging baskets (2). R10 each
- Solar shower free to a good home
- DVD player R500
Contact Kate at 624-3622
- Brand new guitar, used only twice, plus case. R350
- Solar phone charger for motorola or nokia phones plus 10 solar rechargeable batteries. R50
- DC/AC inverter. R75
Contact Steph at 624-3753

In Need

- Grundig brand Short wave radio. Battery powered. Price negotiable.
- Speakers for CD player R20
- Hiking boots. Size 7. R250 or best offer
Contact Tegan at 624-3757
- Solar panel. R50
- Inverter. R100
Contact Lindsay 631-6036

•Looking for used cell phones from COS-ing Group 2 volunteers.

Contact Lauren at 631-6011 or Craig at 631-6005

•If you have World Map supplies but do not plan to start the project soon, **Derek (631-6008)** is asking to pass the supplies along to him in the meantime. He will return it when he finishes.

SUBMIT!SUBMIT!SUBMIT!

We'll take anything you got, folks: articles on events and happenings at your site, journal entries, comics, editorials, recipes, craft ideas and projects, hard-corps/soft-corps, diy, gossip, photos, poetry, and any kind of poetically prosaic et ceteras your minds can produce.

October (Imbhala)

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|-------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------------|---|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1 | 2 Ndoda's Bday | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 CD on leave... | 7 Freshly Ground @ HOF |
| 8 Make Thandi's Bday | 9 Columbus Day Office Closed | 10 | 11 Nwando on leave | 12 | 13 | 14 |
| 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 Susan on leave (through 25th) | 21 |
| 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 Sojo Production Computers in use | 27 | 28 |
| 29 | 30 | 31 Halloween | | | | |

The Swazi SoJournal

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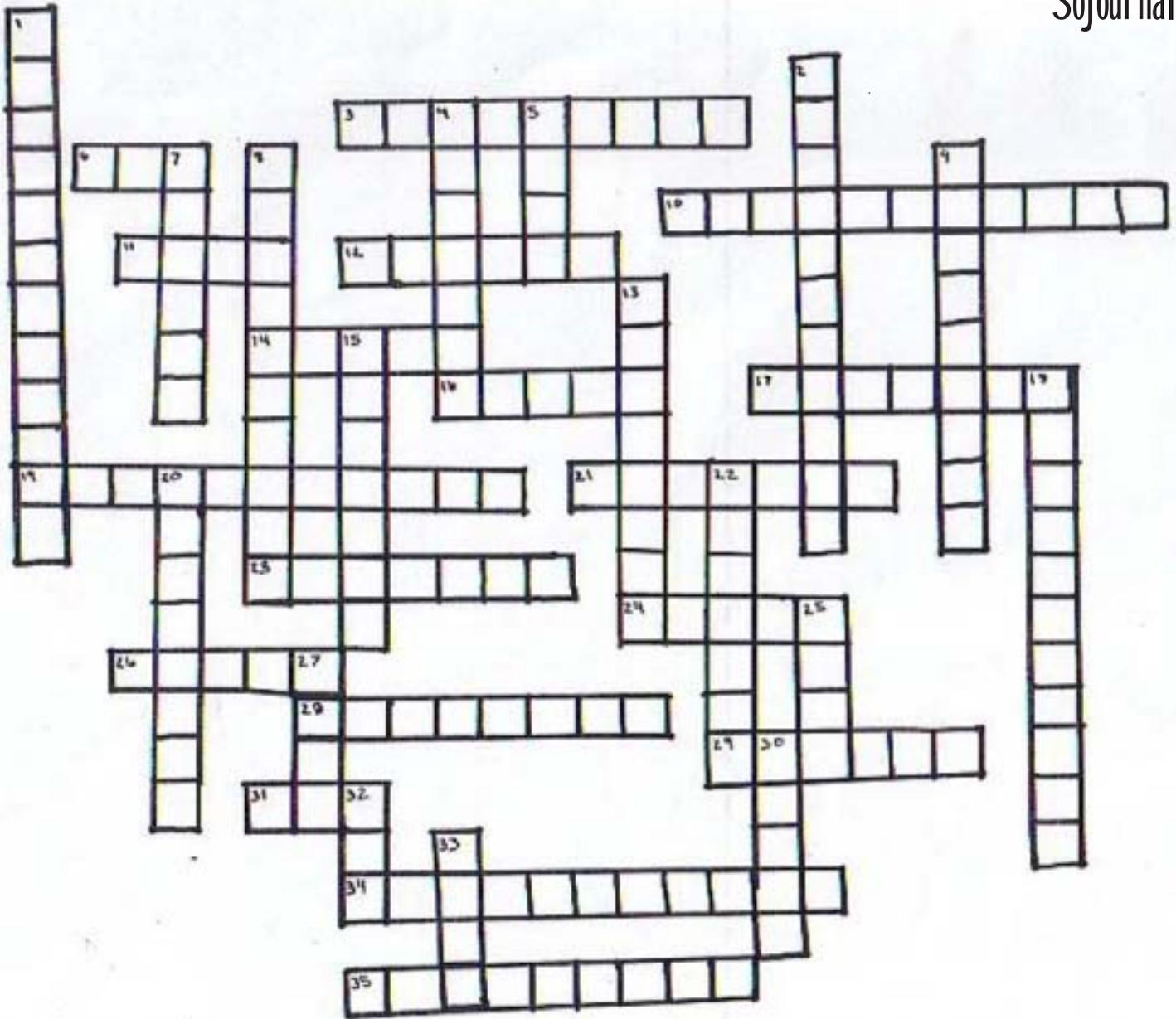
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ACROSS

- 3. Obsolete on Sundays
- 6. Chicken site
- 10. "First 3 months" "Lockdown"
- 11. Sitesh thirty-___
- 12. E3.50 each
- 14. The ___ Room
- 16. Good or bad reply
- 17. Cheeto replicas (2 words)
- 19. Place of live music (3 words)
- 21. Hot place (2 words)
- 23. Site of a pricey meal in Mbabane
- 24. Spar, Shoprite, e.g.

- 26. Chris, ____, and Sarah
- 28. Governmental Publication
- 29. Border Post
- 31. PCV Finish Line (for short)
- 34. Bordering country (2 words)
- 35. Renamed bar (2 words)

DOWN

- 1. Sweetly "treated" water powder (2 words)
- 2. Beloved soap
- 4. CD and Texas city

- 5. Back to _____
- 7. Swazi CVS
- 8. New bread (2 words)
- 9. "...But all you have to do is tuurrn it onnnn..."
- 13. Newspaper (for short, 2 words)
- 15. Site of banned alcohol
- 18. Pampering place
- 20. National Soccer Team
- 22. Chief, Indvuna, & _____

- 25. "Shit", "Oh man", etc.
- 27. Monthly reading pleasure
- 30. Culture _____
- 33. Cheap hello

Thanks to crossword creator, designer, and way too bored at site: **Lindsay Hayek, Mgazini**

Stay tuned for next month's issue in which we'll provide the answers!