

Rubbing Elbows With the Man

by Justine Spisak, SOJO staff, Nsangwini

It's not everyday that you get to tell your boss exactly what you think... But there I was on Wednesday, February 21st, sitting next to Ronald Tschetter, the new director of Peace Corps. And I don't just mean the boss of Peace Corps Swaziland, but *United States* Peace Corps, as in "appointed by George W. Bush." In an even more surreal twist, this boss actually *listened* to my impressions and revealed a bit more about himself and his own experiences in the Peace Corps.

Mr. Tschetter was on a tour of the Africa region with an entire entourage of Peace Corps admin. higher-ups: Henry McCoy, director of the Africa Region was there along

with Ron Campbell, the man in charge of Peace Corps HIV efforts. The group visited only 3 African countries (Malawi, Namibia, and Swaziland). According to Tschetter, he wanted to visit Swaziland specifically because he'd heard of (and since confirmed) its "phenomenal beauty," but also because he wanted to see a fully "PEPFAR-ized" program.

Once the entourage arrived at Serendipity, we made our formal 'hellos' and sat down for lunch and a chat (poor Kim taking one for the team and getting the only seat in the abnormally-hot-for-February sun). I, on the other side, got to ask a few questions on the ever-so-convenient pretext of Sojo.

As most of you already know, Tschetter is an RPCV who served in India with his wife Nancy in the 1960's. Perhaps you did not know that Tschetter served as a family planning volunteer, assisting doctors with vasectomy operations and training nurse midwives. Personally, I found this detail to be incredibly relevant: that being that Tschetter's Peace Corps mission was possibly as seemingly an insurmountable task as ours: controlling population growth in India versus turning around HIV in the country with the highest prevalence in the world. Both very timely tasks (The world's population growth rate was peaking in the 1960's. I think we're all hoping HIV in Africa is peaking in the 2000's).

When asked if he felt he had accomplished his mission after finishing the Peace Corps, Tschetter firmly said "No." With four months left of service, hearing this from the lips of the person now responsible for keeping Kennedy's vision alive was tremendously relieving. Especially since hearing reports of the Schindler-esque guilt that seems to succeed the not-so-triumphant return of PCV's to American soil: unchanged HIV prevalence left behind still unchanged, instead at a transAtlantic distance.



Peace Corps Director Ronald Tschetter paints part of a World Map in Empini.

I'll admit though, the relief was accompanied by small pangs of disappointment that we may be helplessly, only now knowingly, watching history repeat intself: foreign aid failures. But Tschetter offered a more realistic perspective and timeline.

"Peace Corps, you guys, are very unique because you're working at the grassroots level. You're creating awareness, especially with the children. Without even knowing it you're influencing their lives. To see any change you'll need to be here [for] at least 10 years. You've only been here [for] four [years]," he said.

On Peace Corps he offered, "It gives you a unique perspective. There's no other way to get it. Only 187,000 people out of what? 300 million have that. And that's not very many."

As for any interview, my last inquiry was into Tschetter's future plans. What's in store for Peace Corps, especially HIV programs under his leadership? But Tschetter decided to keep these thoughts to himself, deferring to his lunch.

Perhaps only time can answer those questions. Hopefully we'll all still have the same sparks of hope and idealism to impart after our own long careers in public service have brought us full circle to the lunch tables of green PCV's who are then facing the seemingly insurmountable crises of the next era.

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The Swazi Sojournal news

Director's Chat w/Pattie Austin, CD



Hi to all PCVs ! Peace Corps Director Tschetter and his delegation of HQ officials left Swaziland recently so I want to thank all the Volunteers who helped make his visit so successful. The Director was able to meet with the entire PCV group and I know he appreciated that opportunity. It was great to have you attend the various meals, receptions and meetings. He especially enjoyed the two days of site visits and seeing the great work you are doing in the field. He really got a comprehensive overview of our program and the successes and challenges of working in Swaziland. Thank you so much for your contributions to his visit and for representing yourselves so positively. I was so proud of you and the work you do here.

It is not too early to be thinking about group 3's Close of Service! The Close of Service Conference is scheduled for April 25, 26 and 27 at the Forrester Arms. Group Three Volunteers will be receiving a COS manual in March which details some of the logistics concerning the final months of service. Of course we will review all the details at the COS Conference. One question I am frequently asked

about is early COS. The official COS date is August 3 but as Country Director I have the authority to grant a one month (30 days) early COS. If your work is complete and you wish to leave within that 30 day window, please send me a written request. Naturally we cannot accommodate all of you leaving on July 3 so please stagger your days. I am accepting request letters for early COS effective immediately and responses will be given at COS conference. You are not required to decide on a date by the COS Conference but if you have firm plans and want to request an early COS date, please do so. Nwando will also be checking with you to confirm your home of record, your desire regarding your re-adjustment allowance and travel plans. There are lots of choices you must make about your departure and for some decisions you can't change your mind! The office has learned that the smoothest departures occur when Volunteers are organized and plan their departure logistics carefully. We want to assist you in closing your service as easily as possible!

News & Notes

1st Group of PCV's Arrive in Cambodia

Thirty English teachers, the first group of Peace Corps volunteers, will serve in Cambodia teaching English at the upper secondary level and supporting teachers in Cambodian provinces and districts to improve their English language and teaching skills.

Volunteers in Guinea Consolidate

All volunteers serving in Guinea are safe and are consolidated in Mali. Volunteers were moved to Mali as a precautionary measure due to the on-going strikes and demonstrations in Guinea. The duration of the Guinea Volunteers' stay in Mali will be contingent upon the situation/events in Guinea. Families may contact the Peace Corps' Office of Special Services with any questions or concerns they may have. Special Services maintains a 24-hour a day, 7 days a week duty system. The telephone number during standard office hours is 1-800-424-8580, Extension 1470; the after hours number is 202-638-2574. The Office of Special Services can also be contacted via e-mail at osssdutyofficer@peacecorps.gov.

Peace Corps Swaziland Volunteers Noted on PeaceCorps.gov website

After Director Ron Tschetter's visit to Swaziland in February, Volunteers Lindsay Hayek, Kristen Wetzler, Alix Edwards, and Megan Guetzko were mentioned specifically for their volunteer efforts in Swaziland in an article appearing on the official Peace Corps website under the Press Release section. Props, ladies!

Peace Corps Fellows USA Now at Yale

Peace Corps Fellows has now opened a new program in International Relations at Yale University in Connecticut. In addition to the IR program, Peace Corps Fellows at Yale may also pursue any of the joint degree programs available through IR and the MacMillan Center, including forestry and environmental studies, management, law, and public health.

New Documentary Discusses Potential Tomb of Jesus, Wife, and Son???

Titanic director, James Cameron, and award winning documentary director Simcha Jacobvici have apparently made a documentary on a tomb discovered in Jerusalem with inscriptions that could reignite controversy about Jesus' earthly life and alleged resurrection.



Safety and Security w/Mfanafuthi Vilakati, S&S

Hello again to all Volunteers in different parts of Swaziland. Autumn has surely landed and so it is important to note the change in nightfall and daybreak times and plan accordingly so that we all return to the safety of our homesteads before dark.

Thumbs up to all the posts' Consolidation Point Wardens and their assistants for attending their training on February 1st at Emafini. Their enthusiasm to learn and discuss issues concerning their functions during the EAP process was just amazing and the feedback I got from them will surely be considered and possibly put to use.

I wish to also remind Volunteers that the PCO expects all Volunteers to have enough airtime in their phones at least to make one call. This is very important so that Volunteers always have means of calling for help and responding to messages during any possible EAP activity. I wish to make an appeal for full cooperation in this regard.....as PCVs always do.

Always remember to close your house windows and curtains when leaving your homesteads because what a potential thief cannot see, surely cannot tempt him/ her. Use the burglar gate at all times as well to secure your

doors. Also make an effort to minimize the number of hands your keys go through for any reason so that you may control the chances of having your keys duplicated by your "friends".

Reports of crocodiles attacking people on Swazi rivers are on the increase so please stay away from rivers. Language continues to be one of the most important "self defense tools" in our society. I would like to encourage all Volunteers to work harder on their language as means of improving their safety in our society.

PC Swaziland recorded a 52% decrease in crime against Volunteers in 2006. Bravo to all PCVs for taking advice, practicing safe lifestyles and making an effort to err on the side on caution. But this **does not** suggest in any way that this is the time to get comfortable, not yet.

Senegal will be having elections on February 25th. PCVs are advised to shelve plans to visit this country until after March 3rd in order to avoid being caught up in possible riots resulting from these elections.

Until next time do watch those wallets and cell phones. Its always best to be safe than sorry!

A Word From APCD: Stella Nkosi

I recall clearly all my experiences working with girls. Girls are the most awesome lot. They are versatile, adaptable and can play hard to get if they want to. Sanibonani mantombazana. I seriously miss the girls' only congregations I used to have back in the times at FAWE. FAWE, by the way stands for "Forum for African Women Education-alists." This is a regional organization targeting the needs of women and girls in education. The education of women and girls is one of the many social "gray" areas that need special attention. I can also clearly recall back in the days still at FAWE when PEACE CORPS Swaziland invited me to come and make a representation to a group of newly arrived Peace Corps Volunteers about the work we do in Swaziland in addressing the plight of girls' education. In this particular group there happened to be amongst the group Tiftobile aka Lauren Winterholer.

The presentation I made comprised of the many activities we had established in a number of Swazi rural communities. One of the strong communities in our activities back then was none other than Siphofaneni. The girls from this humble community were equally humble then. The humility they had was good but FAWE wanted to use this humility to the advantage of each girl's survival. We aimed at turning these girls into humble but ambitious young heroes. I tell you this is not an overnight exercise or a one formula equation. Little did I realize that just around the corner (amongst the PCVs) lies the spot on solution in the name of Lauren aka Tiftobile. Upon Tiftobile's placement at her working site which happened to be Siphofaneni, she lended herself to a group of girls eager to work with her. I suspect Lauren has a thing or two which some of us do not have to pull the best out of a personality. I was pleasantly surprised to get a call from Lauren one day to say that she had met enthusiastic young girls ready to do small research on domestic waste. This was a project FAWE had challenged girls in camps to undertake at the respective communities/schools. It was not the project idea that fascinated Lauren about the girls, but the assertion and confidence they showed about themselves. Leading the girls was Samukelisiwe Simelane. Samu, as we would call her at FAWE girls' camps was still doing her primary school education then. At the camps she was one of the quietest girls one would from time to time probe to have her talk. However, she was a different personality with Lauren. This is why I am saying Lauren must be having a thing or two for

activating the "hidden" character from the girls.

Nonetheless, since the arrival of Tiftobile at Sophofaneni Samu and the girls in her team have reached a milestone. The girls are clear as to what they want in life and want to do. The summary of what one had to do with girls to address their needs back then can be simply put as "Mentoring the Girls." There is no one formula to mentor a person because people have different personalities and needs. Some are outward extroverts that really need a serious tone down whilst others are next to being chronic introverts that have a lot within them that is great to bring out. One of the biggest lessons one has learned over the years is that the quiet ones are most likely (not always the case) to be full of good ideas that need to be tapped on. On the other hand, some of the outgoing characters are most likely to be very intelligent and one of the reasons for the outgoing personality could be the need to use their capacity to the fullest. The long and short of it is not to judge by the obvious character the real person you are dealing with. Boys or girls this is the same case.

To come back to working with girls, like I noted in the opening of this article, girls are pretty good at playing hard to get. Whilst this approach can be a good strategy to keep guys out of a girl's boundary, it can equally be misinterpreted as a sign of encouraging the advances. This is one area I worked on for the FAWE girls. Actually in my own opinion, the play hard to get stance is now outdated. For me, I would urge every girl child to be as direct and frank as can be without signs of apologies, either by body language or verbally. That not only sends a clear cut and dry message it also sets the boundary lines for all your male friends. By the way Girls did you know that guys actually admire such behavior from a girl? They can go to the extent of protecting you even when you have not asked them. The reasons being that you have earned the respect for yourself with little effort. That is my powerful phrase to you girls out there.

Next article I want to invite myself to write more about the work I am now doing at Peace Corps Swaziland. All I can say for now is that the job is exciting, involving and good for the mind. It has kept me in touch with Swaziland's communities where 70% of the nation is and that makes me feel good to be in touch with my brothers, sisters, baby girls and boys out there. Thanks for inviting me in your newsletter.

In Brief

Ixnay on the Omputercaay

The volunteer lounge will be getting two new computers upgraded to Windows XP. Therefore, the computers will be out of use from March 9 through 14. There will be new guidelines for computer use and a copy will be inserted into your mailboxes shortly.

Snag the Mag

The Newsweeks will no longer will individually placed into the volunteers' mailboxes. If you are interested in taking an issue, you will find a stack on the floor next to the mailboxes. Please take only one.

Hey Mom!

Nows there's an inexpensive way to call home! Go to www.call2.com and credit an account. After sms-ing a number, they will call you back and direct you to the number at home. Calls are less than E3 a minute!

Tracking the Trail for Tincwadzi

Justine is looking for her "Pathologies of Power" by Paul Farmer, soft cover. If you have it, please let her know. She will not be angry or violent, she just wants her book back.

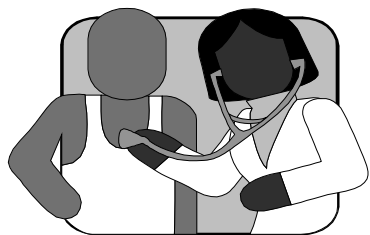
Alix misses her "Franny and Zooey", by J.D. Salinger, soft cover. Despite the fact that the book is missing the last two pages, she'd like the book back for sentimental value. Each day you do not return the book to her, you will lose a toe!

Wentani Lapho?

A reminder that all quarterly reports will be due yet again by March 31st.

**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 etceteras your minds can produce. Love, k,k,j&t.



Keeping you Updated and Healthy w/ Daynese Santos, PCMO

ALLERGY SEASON

Some of you may have been caught off guard this year and are being slam-dunked by environmental allergens. If you were granted a reprieve last year it was probably because your immune system had not been previously exposed. This year however things are different! Once the immune system has been sensitized it is primed for attack. DEFENSE!!! So all of that sneezing, congestion, runny nose, itching, tearing, scratchiness in the throat and puffiness around the eyes is your body's way of fighting back. If you haven't out grown your allergies by now there are few options:

- Ø Avoid exposure, (highly compatible with life in a bubble).
- Ø Suffer, (martyrdom has its' place).
- Ø Control of symptoms by medication.

Depending upon the severity of symptoms you may require an antihistamine, nasal spray, decongestant and eye drops. The good news is that treatment is usually short term or seasonal. If symptoms persist or in the case of nosebleeds, wheezing or shortness of breath further medical investigation may be required. It's also important to keep your

living space clean, free of dust mites and cockroaches which can be highly allergenic. Keep cats off of your bed and out of your bedroom to minimize exposure to cat dander which contains a protein that may trigger an allergic response.

FLU SHOTS

We're still awaiting delivery of our shipment of Influenza vaccine. Increased demand this year has generated regional supply issues. As things stand we're now looking at giving flu shots during mid- to late-March.

LIFE PRESERVER

If 'yo luv light's shinin' we ain't mad at you! You still need to practice safe sex. Talking about condoms is only part of it. Use condoms the first time and every time for any form of intercourse, oral, anal or vaginal. If you're not ready to discuss condoms with your partner, you're not ready to have intercourse. If you're out of condoms, intercourse is not an option. The time to make decisions about birth control is before you and your partner become sexually active. Turn on the radio, what's really at stake here, maybe your life! Abstinence or safe sex, there are no other options.

WARNING!

Check Those Care Packages!



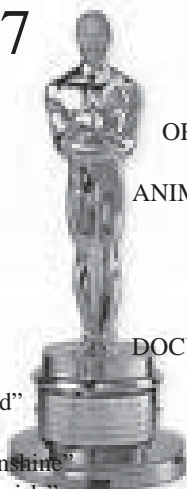
Peter Pan Peanut Butter and possibly Great Value Brand Peanut Butter contaminated with Salmonella tennessee. CDC announced on 15-FEB-2007 that many states in the U.S. have been affected.

Salmonella may cause diarrhea, fever, abdominal cramps and volume depletion lasting 4-7 days.

Check your care packages for Peter Pan or Great Value Brand Peanut Butter, (Product Code 2111) and discard contents in the pit latrine.

If you think that you may have already been affected, contact the PCMO.

Oscars Awards 2007



PICTURE - "The Departed," Graham King, producer
 DIRECTOR - Martin Scorsese, "The Departed"
 ACTOR - Forest Whitaker, "The Last King of Scotland"
 ACTRESS - Helen Mirren, "The Queen"
 SUPPORTING ACTOR - Alan Arkin, "Little Miss Sunshine"
 SUPPORTING ACTRESS - Jennifer Hudson, "Dreamgirls"
 ORIGINAL SCREENPLAY - "Little Miss Sunshine," Michael Arndt
 ADAPTED SCREENPLAY - "The Departed", William Monahan
 DOCUMENTARY FEATURE FILM - "An Inconvenient Truth", Davis Guggenheim, director; Laurie David, Lawrence Bender, producers

FOREIGN LANGUAGE FILM - "The Lives of Others", Florian Henckel von Donnersmarck
 ANIMATED FEATURE - "Happy Feet", George Miller, director
 ORIGINAL SCORE - "Babel," Gustavo Santaolalla
 ORIGINAL SONG - "I Need to Wake Up" Melissa Etheridge (from "An Inconvenient Truth")
 ANIMATED SHORT FILM - "The Danish Poet", Torill Kove, director
 ART DIRECTION - "Pan's Labyrinth" Eugenio Caballero, art direction; Pilar Revuelta, set decoration
 CINEMATOGRAPHY - "Pan's Labyrinth", Guillermo Navarro
 COSTUME DESIGN - "Marie Antoinette," Milena Canonero
 DOCUMENTARY SHORT FILM - "The Blood of Yingzhou District", Ruby Yang, Thomas Lennon
 FILM EDITING - "The Departed", Thelma Schoonmaker
 LIVE ACTION SHORT FILM - "West Bank Story," Ari Sandel, director
 MAKEUP - "Pan's Labyrinth", David Marti, Montse Ribe
 SOUND EDITING - "Letters From Iwo Jima", Alan Robert Murray, Bub Asman
 SOUND MIXING - "Dreamgirls," Michael Minkler, Bob Beemer, Willie Burton
 VISUAL EFFECTS - "Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest," John Knoll, Hal Hickel, Charles Gibson, Allen Hall - Reuters

Another Look At Id From the Swaz

By Kate Anderson, Sojo staff, Khalangilile

So perhaps you've heard about Paul Farmer, that saint of a doctor who works in Haiti. And yes, he does seem to have all the qualities that would grant him an early induction to that immortal echelon. After reading about his daily life - hiking to peasant shacks a day's hike away, eating offerings from the 'fifth food group,' giving presentations to international medical conferences on the necessity of starting a TB/MDR treatment program in Russian prisons, and personally replying to over 200 emails daily - well, it's inspiring. And also daunting.

His philosophy is simple and its style has certain verve to it. Farmer advocates for the shafted of the shafted- which is code for the lowest level of suffering. Farmer states there is a widespread definition of poverty which posits that being poor is just uncomfortable, rather than the reality that people live in conditions that are intolerable. For the PCV, to read this distinction is both a relief and a frustration. From the general outset, Swaziland and Haiti share the same difficulties of dealing with disease, poverty, and trouble getting food and water. However, from our position in the Swaz, we see many different economic situations- and often the desperate situations live right next to the comfortably surviving ones. It's a relief to hear him affirm there are different levels of suffering, but it's hard to know when 'comfortable survival' has been reached. Farmer has no problem giving Haitians the watch off his wrist, picking up a radio in America for someone back in Haiti, or giving money/food to those who need it. All the while, it seems like he doesn't assess whether the people he's doing these things for need them. Here in the Swaz, such demonstrations are harmful, emasweeti anyone? But Farmer shows the same approach at an international policy level, like ridiculing the idea of appropriate technology.

He also blends western medicine and anthropology with glorious synergy. Haiti's cultural stereotype is practically synonymous with Voodoo- complete with bloody rites of passage involving pigs. Farmer defends it by highlighting the profound need to have something, *anything*, done for pain and suffering- so Voodoo is cheap and ful-

filling. He makes sure to point out that if given a choice, Haitians would prefer medicine, but because there's no money, they must usually rely on Voodoo. Similarly, here in the Swaz, we also see a mixture of beliefs in western med and witch doctors. Recently on my home-



stead, my sisi took her baby to the witch doctor and he came back with cuts around his bellybutton and in the center of his chest. Figuring out how to work with shenanigans like that is a high-wire act- how to validate her concern, lack of money, utilize her belief in something, and ultimately do no harm to that baby.

There are some great slogans which Farmer uses which are meant as "philosophical rebukes to the misplaced preoccupations of those who believed in *identity politics*." This was based in the idea that all members of the oppressed minority were equally oppressed, which all too conveniently obscures the fact that there were real differences in their shaftedness, also called the *degrees of hose- edness*, that people of the same race or gender suffered. *All suffering isn't equal* was generated in reaction to the many times when they had tried to raise money and instead had been offered lectures about the universality of suffering, or simply lines like "the rich have problems, too." Another was TBMI (transnational bureaucrats managing inequality), who produced clever arguments (also known as "well-formed stool") against the treatment of MDR or AIDS. A favorite of mine is "H of G," which a hermeneutic of generosity, which aspires to interpret an action in a favorable light. DQ which stood for *Drama Queen* and a DQ proposal meant an emotional appeal. Geek flowers were the completed research that interns presented to Farmer.

Looking back at his first year of living in Haiti, Farmer remembers working with an-

other young American doctor. The American doctor loved the Haitians, had been there about a year, and was quite ready to go home. Speaking for myself, I can identify with that sentiment of nostalgia and relief that I won't have to remain in such a desperate situation. Always upping the ante, Farmer wonders how people identify themselves, and says we all belong to the Nation of Humanity. Thus, concepts like patriotism, nationality, or race are altered into an awareness of the responsibility we have towards our 'shafted' fellow man. I like that, but it's an idea that won't let you rest. While Farmer glibly utilizes the motivation of guilt, it also has the balancing consequence of validating our presence in Swaziland.

Our identity, while American with all its complex overtones of fine education and western ideas (perhaps neocolonial), is also one of a world citizen trying to fight a battle against HIV/AIDS with devastating causalities. Perhaps this is 'well formed stool,' but at least it's not a product of TBMI rhetoric.

2 New Drugs Offer Options in HIV Fight

Edited version of an article that appeared in the New York Times, 28, Feb, 2007, by Lawrence K. Altman and Andrew Pollack

Two new AIDS drugs, each of which works in a novel way, have proved safe and highly successful in large studies, a development that doctors said here on Tuesday would significantly expand treatment options for patients.

The two drugs, which could be approved for marketing later this year, would add two new classes of drugs to the four that are available to battle H.I.V., the AIDS virus. That would be especially important to tens of thousands of patients in the United States whose treatment is failing because their virus has become resistant to drugs already in use.

Experts said the new drugs would be used in combination with older drugs. Both drugs stem from scientific findings made a decade or more ago that have peeled back the intricate molecular process used by H.I.V. to infect human immune system cells and to replicate themselves.

Cont on page 7

Mdu: Making It Count in Mahhashini

By Lindsay Hayek, Mgazini

Passion is a constant in PCV Derek Vohs' (AKA Mdu) life that is apparent in everything he does. Just look into his eyes while he talks about his current projects and plans, the sadness of situations he experiences here in Swaziland, his determination to do something to help, not just during his 2 years of service, but for the rest of his life. You can see the fire behind his drive simply by watching him passionately talk about anything he witnesses or does everyday. He gets frustrated, angry, and worked up, but it all comes from his heart and deep desire to do everything he is capable of doing to help. However, he knows how important it is to enjoy the ride and live life to the fullest.

Some of the first things we all learned about him during Staging were his devotion to cycling, AIDS rides, and Wisconsin. Watching Derek on a bicycle is watching someone in their comfort zone. He has participated in 7 AIDS rides across America, and has even participated in races here in Swaziland. I've been lucky enough to witness him race, and the intensity with which he rides is overwhelming. A huge fan of Lance Armstrong, Derek attended the Tour de France in 2004, taking time to ride one of the most infamous and difficult courses.

Growing up in Wisconsin is something Derek is very proud of, and he won't hesitate to point out any sightings or references to his home state. Despite his fondness for the Dairy State, before arriving in Swaziland he lived in Washington, D.C. running a successful dog-walking business and making jewelry.

Derek's time in Swaziland has been spent in the village of Mahhashini, near the Sandlane border gate. He has really taken to village life, especially trying to decipher his Gogo's SiSwati ramblings. It's also extremely apparent how much he loves living among animals, namely cows, chickens, and pigs. Awakening at 4 a.m. to roosters and mooing cows is a pleasure he looks forward to every day. "Why does Gogo find it necessary to have like 8 roosters? 8 roosters that crow all f*%!ing day long, everyday. Is that necessary? Supposedly they're doing a job of some sort? Keeping time or something?" he reflects, "And cows, the sound is enough to make me feel as though I may claw the flesh from my face."

One project Derek looks forward to each week is the time he spends at Musi Clinic. Working with his infamous counterpart Sihle, Derek has regular HIV/AIDS counseling hours at the clinic, helping the nurses emphasize the importance of HIV prevention, testing, and education. He noticed the financial barrier testing held for many people, as the closest testing center was E9.00 away. Not surprisingly, Derek reached out to all avenues and Musi Clinic has since then started doing HIV testing, and mobile VCTs now visit Mahhashini. In addition to this, Derek has helped Musi become more welcoming to patients, officiating and redoing one of the rooms as a counseling room, complete with newly painted walls and pictures.

A regular at umphakatsi meetings each week, Derek has also done HIV/AIDS presentations for community members, helped with Career Guidance classes in his local schools, and helped



The girls nominated to the Girls' Mentoring Conference pose with their favorite umlungu, Mdu



Derek gets down

educate teachers and students on corporal punishment in schools.

Although still planning a World Map, his biggest project for his final 5 months of service is the Sports Field he is currently planning with the help of community members and the VAST fund (his proposal was just approved). Mahhashini has no such space for the youth to use, thus resulting in boredom and risky behavior. With this space, he hopes to have a meeting space for the youth for sports activities, HIV/AIDS education, and local events promoting healthy living.

Upon visiting Derek, I find him hard at work in his trench garden, and then taking a break to play with his beloved dog Jabu. "She's so loveable. I feel blessed to have her and am convinced it's no coincidence that I



Derek cuddles with his puppy, Rocky

Rumor Has It...

By Derek Vohs, Mahhashini



Three words as defined by Webster's:

RUMOR:To spread by hearsay

GOSSIP:To talk idly about the affairs of others

LIE:To speak falsely

Having heard a lot of chatter lately about what this person or the other has been doing, true or not, I decided that it was high time to address the ever-popular issue of gossip amongst PCV's. I feel that it is one of the less attractive, yet very important duties, of a PSN rep. to try and discourage and, if possible, head off gossip about other PCV's. Call me "Goody Two Shoes" if you want, but I'd like to *think* that we are all more mature individuals with better ways to spend our time. Recently, I've been hearing about the many women that I've "been with" in Swaziland, which is funny, because I thought that I had only been dreaming these accounts, but apparently, they actually happened! Fortunately, I'm fairly thick skinned and find this humorous if nothing else. As far as I'm concerned, those who don't know me well enough to discuss my personal life with *me*, shouldn't be discussing it at all. My point however, is that other people may not be as thick skinned as I am. In the 19 months that I've been here, I've seen rumors hurt and damage the feelings of several people, which was both inappropriate and unnecessary. Come on folks, aren't we older than that? So from now on, unless you'd like to discuss someone's personal life with them directly, surely we can all think of more constructive and positive things to talk about.

If gossip is what you really *need*, there are plenty of "People" magazines in the Grifters collection. Thank you.



A spotting of the rare species: "Joesium"

perspectives

Workshop Like A Monorail

By Justine Spisak, Sojo staff, Nsangwini

It was the summer dusk of February, and I had been paying a visit to my infamous counterpart of counterparts, Dlalsile; going through the usual rundowns and savoring the relief of another day cooled down.

She gave me her schedule for the week, the bustle of bucopho burdens: meetings, meetings, and a workshop.

Workshops.

According to one pocket-sized Webster that made that fateful transatlantic crossing with me: Work'shop' n. room or building where work is done.

But in this part of the world, workshops have gathered a different meaning altogether. If asked, a PCV would probably define a "workshop" not as a place where anything is *done*, but rather an information (and shall I critically say, money?) dump where it is less expected and more hoped that the participants will *eventually* put all of this information to use.

On this particular day, Dlalsile gave some details on the workshop she was planning to attend: this one on the topic of goat-keeping for commercial purposes. The details have yet to be worked out, but it sounded typical: held in Manzini for a few community members from each area; the idea being that information is expected to get out to the rural areas through a trickle-down system of education. My thoughts? It didn't work for economics, and I don't see it working for goat-keeping either.

This isn't the first time an exciting workshop, promising to be that final answer to the wretched and persistent economic woes of Swaziland has blown into town with the fury of a hurricane ending ultimately with all the gusto and glory of a recently extinguished candle. Awhile back it was beekeeping. Now it's goat-keeping. And who can forget the infamous Job Creation Fund workshops held last year?

Talked up by every MP and member of the royal family, newspapers running article after article, the Job Creation Fund was supposed to make capital available through Swaziland's banks so Swazis could open small businesses. I attended one of the workshops, held in a church near our inkhundla, to see what was going on. Each person received a small folder with a few sheets of notebook paper and a pen. Before the main speakers, a man lectured on HIV basics. They then lectured for awhile on proposal-writing basics and afterward received a free, catered-lunch, driven in by a restaurant lo-

cated in Matsapha, curiously owned by our MP.

That was over a year ago and I haven't heard of one person applying for this money, not one new business up on their feet, nothing changed at all really, yet articles after the workshop talked of millions spent.

This process reminds me of some kind of vaudeville act, a spoof of the Music Man as parodied by the Simpsons where Lyle Lanley shows up at a town hall meeting and gets everyone psyched up with a song and dance number about a "genuine, bona fied, electrified, six-car, monorail!" which turns out to be a scam and blunder because the tracks were never finished, Lanley having run away with the rest of the money.

Perhaps that's the perfect allegory this 'workshop culture,' if we can give it a name: everyone gets excited over the next big thing, lots of money is spent without much planning, and very little tangible result ever emerges other than a few full stomachs that will just become hungry again.

There have been exceptions, however, most notably, the Moya trench gardening workshops where an actual physical trench garden is constructed and on which Sam and Bonkhosi actually *follow-up* on the progress and success of the gardens.

So how can we avoid getting bogged in this workshop mire? As community educators, we all use the workshop format at some point. I suggest, first, carefully select the people who will attend your workshop. Smaller groups mean each person gets more attention. Also choose people who are interested. They will be more likely to gain something if they really want to learn about your topic. Secondly, employ practicals and problem-solving wherever possible. *Include* the participants. Some lecturing is necessary, but it can really get boring! Why can't we even use life-skills techniques, exercises, and games in workshops with adults if adapted properly? Thirdly, follow-up!!! Meet again at one or several points after the workshop takes place to talk about how you've applied what you learned, what problems you may have encountered, and evaluate whether or not the workshop was successful and achieved some pre-ordained goals. We also have that great advantage of actually living among the people who we teach rather than driving in from Mbabane once or twice a year.

Maybe we can make Peace Corps workshops more like French TGV's rather than just Springfield mono-rails.

Hannah and Lindsay's Marshmallow Dreams

In a moment of desperation for sweet delight and a simple palate to choose from, a concoction of genius was breached. You too can partake. Please purchase:

- Margarine
- 1 bag marshmallows
- 1 bar chocolate

2 cups granola (without the raisins)

Melt marshmallows with margarine until mixture is viscous. Add in chocolate, mixing until melted. Add in granola and mix well. Pour into a greased pan and refrigerate (if available).

An Offal Ode

A ravenous desire
Seated to a side
It'd never seen prior
To this hunger, near-insatiable
To be satisfied
From within.
Like all convenient loves
This one left a funny after
taste.

Took a piece of heart
Tough, yet, at times, tender.
Liver, delicately pasty on the
roof of my mouth
(Or was that a kidney?)
But then the chewy gut
It tasted like poop.

Peculiarly so
That I'd suffocate its memory
Tapping that large pap supply
True Swazi grit.
Not grits – pap for the soul
Innards of my bowl
Starvation controlled
Wrenchingly.
And only once did I gag.

-Wandile, Mabovini

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

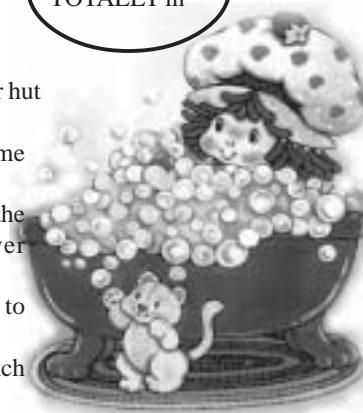
- you're so greasy and sweaty after not bathing for two days, that a sisi asks you what kind of body oil you use.
- your only any response to the dead, bloated goat lying next to the tap is that you want a closer look.
- you can no longer count on one hand the number of vomiting people you have attended to since arriving in Swaziland.
- you pick up the 5 cent pieces found on the ground that even your fellow community mates won't pick up.
- you use cooking oil on your bike chain so that you don't have to buy bike lube.
- you prefer burning in the sun to using parasol because it threatens your manhood.



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

- you still ask your make to scare bugs out of your hut because you can't deal with them.
- you use another PCV's shoe box to carry home the left-overs from the director's luncheon..
- you blush when you talk to other PCVs about the budding romance with someone you met over Myspace.
- the day after watching the Oscars, you run out to buy ripped copies of the award-winning movies.
- you attend the Anglican workshop for the free lunch at Tum's George.

"sequins are
TOTALLY in"



In response to Group 3's arrival of T-shirts (finally!) proclaiming "Umuntfu Munye Angawenta Umehluke", or 'One Person Can Make a Difference', we at Sojo want to know what you think:

Can one person *really* make a difference?

Here are some responses~

- * "I think so, but not in some big honking, sweeping manner."
- * "Yes, maybe not to an entire population, but for a small group of people it can matter."
- * "What do we really think Alix's response is going to be to that? Do I even need to answer that?!"
- * "Joe's mom can make a difference."
- * "I don't think anything has changed in my community, no. But my community has changed me so I will go home a better person. But I do think I have impacted a handful of lives."
- * "It seems too hopefully optimistic to say so, but I suppose all of our actions have some effect in the world and I'd like to think I'm doing more good than bad here."
- * "Depends on the person and depends on the difference."
- * "Yes."

March (2007)

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9 Volunteer computers out of use	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17 Kendra's B-day
	Volunteer computers out of use					
18 Candace B-day	19	20	21	22	23	24
25 Lauren's B-day	26 Amy's B-day	27	28	29	30	31
		Sojo Production Computers in Use				

The Swazi SoJournal

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