

The Magic Kingdom

Newsletter of the Friends of Swaziland
February 2004

Sanibonani!

Friends of Swaziland Group Leader's Letter, February 2004

Another year has flown by and it's been quite a financial success, thanks to some generous support from benefactors, contributions from you, and hard work by Treasurer Scott Lewis. As a result we have increased our treasury to over \$9000.

We need to make 2004 the year we use these funds to help out our friends in Swaziland. We've made several attempts to contact non-profits in Swaziland who can use the funds, but have been unable to find a definite donation possibility. With Peace Corps' re-entry into Swaziland, we now hope to use them as a resource to identify groups that need assistance. If you have some suggestions for worthy causes, please let us know.

This is also my semi-annual appeal for volunteers who can help Friends of Swaziland continue to grow. Right now we need some people who can take on the following tasks:

- Fundraising Coordinator
- Newsletter Editor

So, if you do have a little time on your hands and would like to use it to good effect, please let me know. Also, as you have had the same board for more than two years, it would be great to get some new members with fresh ideas on the Board. If you would be willing to serve, please let me know as well.

Salani kahle,

John von Reyn
RPCV Swaziland 1977-79

New Peace Corps Volunteers Sworn-In

(from official Peace Corps News Release)

WASHINGTON, D.C., December 1, 2003 - With a focus on fighting one of the world's deadliest diseases, 36 Peace Corps volunteers completed their training and were sworn-in on November 26, 2003, to begin working in HIV/AIDS awareness and education projects in Swaziland.

All 36 volunteers, who arrived in the Kingdom of Swaziland on September 17th, were sworn-in by the U.S. Ambassador James McGee. The ceremony marks the return of Peace

Corps programs to Swaziland. His Royal Highness Prince David (representing the King), the Director of the National Emergency Response Committee on HIV/AIDS (NERCHA), and representatives from other HIV/AIDS organizations also attended the ceremony at Esibayeni Lodge.

Currently, the greatest problem confronting the people of Swaziland is the HIV/AIDS pandemic. In 2002, the HIV/AIDS infection rate of adults (ages 15 to 49) was 33.4 percent, and approximately 35,000 children have been orphaned as a result of AIDS.

The Peace Corps volunteers are all HIV/AIDS educators and will assist the Swaziland government in implementing its HIV/AIDS national strategy. In collaboration with NERCHA, the Deputy Prime Minister's Office, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, and other partners, Peace Corps volunteer activities will focus on training teachers and community members in life skills aimed at HIV/AIDS prevention; initiating and promoting programs in HIV/AIDS awareness; identifying partnerships and resources alliances to fight the epidemic; strengthening existing HIV/AIDS intervention strategies and activities; mobilizing communities to respond to the effects of HIV/AIDS; and working with in-school and out-of-school youth and with orphans.

This first group of volunteers will serve in the Southern and Eastern regions of Swaziland. Swaziland is an African nation the size of New Jersey located between Mozambique and South Africa.

The Peace Corps first arrived in Swaziland within a year of its independence from Great Britain. From 1968 to December 1996, more than 1,185 Peace Corps volunteers served in Swaziland, most in the fields of agriculture or education. With an average population of one million in Swaziland and an average of 200 people taught per Peace Corps volunteer, it is estimated that one-quarter of all Swazi people have been affected by a Peace Corps volunteer.

Since 1961, more than 170,000 volunteers have served in the Peace Corps, working in such diverse fields as education, health, HIV/AIDS education and awareness, information technology, business development, the environment, and agriculture. Peace Corps volunteers must be U.S. citizens and at least 18 years of age. Peace Corps service is a two-year commitment.

FOS Sends Letter to Clinton Foundation

After reading a *Times of Swaziland* article posted on the Swaziland e-list about the inability of the Clinton Foundation to find a legitimate sponsoring group in Swaziland that the Foundation could use as a conduit for the Foundation's HIV/AIDS initiative, FOS member Steve Berman drafted a letter to the Foundation, pointing out the problem of HIV/AIDS in Swaziland and offering our help. The letter was posted in draft on the e-list and 19 former Peace Corps volunteers asked to have their names added in support of the letter. It was sent in mid-February. We will let you know what we hear from the Foundation.

Treasurer's Report

by Scott Lewis

The balance in the group checking account at the end of the year is \$9,575. The only liabilities are money owed to Scott Lewis (approximately \$230) for purchasing the *Songs of Life* CDs as an incentive for donations by group members under the challenge grant project (see below). Approximately \$500 in challenge donations has been pledged but not yet received.

Regarding donations:

During 2003, several FOS members pledged a total of \$3000 that they would donate to FOS in a challenge grant if it were to be matched dollar for dollar by the FOS membership at large. FOS member Guy Wroble put up \$2000 of the total challenge grant to get this going. This was very successful and FOS members rapidly pledged the matching \$3000, thus generating \$6000 in donations to the group.

An additional \$175 has been donated under smaller scale challenge grant issued by Mark Pierzchala.

It is also noteworthy that Guy Wroble donated an additional \$2000 to FOS in order to give the group a core checking account balance that could avoid monthly bank fees.

The group thus has a core foundation of about \$8000 that is now available to begin funding projects in Swaziland.

DC Area PCVs: Enjoy African Sounds on Tuesday, April 13th

One of our favorites, Oliver Mtukudzi and Black Spirits, will be visiting the Barns of Wolftrap in Vienna, Virginia, on Tuesday, April 13th, at 8:00 PM. Tickets are \$20 if purchased at the Wolf Trap box office. Weather permitting, bring your favorite beverage and hors d'oeuvre to share for a social hour from 6:30 to 7:30 at the picnic tables near the Wolf Trap amphitheater.

FOS Website Still on Hiatus

by John von Reyn

We hope to have a more interactive FOS Website soon. Scott Lewis has enlisted a friend to help us out and you'll soon have the ability to update address information online. We're still looking for a Webmaster (volunteer) who can make it more user friendly. Plans are to get our own web address, maybe "SwaziFriends.Org" or some such, and also to make the site interactive. If you're web-savvy or ready to be and have some ideas, please send me an e-mail.

NPCA Conference in Chicago, August 5-8

If you're considering visiting Chicago for the 2004 NPCA Conference, please let Jack Conrad know

(jackgconrad@earthlink.net). If there's enough interest, we can plan some FOS conference activities. Here's basic information on the conference.

When: Thursday, August 5 – Sunday, August 8, 2004

Where: Palmer House Hilton, Downtown Chicago

Host: Chicago Area Peace Corps Association

Events planned so far:

- Country of Service Events (FOS pending)
- International Marketplace
- Fun Run/Walk for Peace
- Workshops on global business, writing, environment, advocacy, global affairs, and other topics
- Founders' Day Dinner
- Career Fair And much more!

You can find more info by visiting the NPCA website at www.rpcv.org

Peace Corps Week, March 1-7

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



Uhlalaphi? (Alumni News)

John Allen, 1991-93, writes "You might be interested in this web site. It's a collection of photographs taken at the intersection of every longitude and latitude on earth (except the oceans of course). This point is near Gege, Swaziland."
<http://www.confluence.org/country.php?id=164J>

Matt Grady ('82-'85) and **Anna** (Ingraham '83-'85) Grady live in Burlington, Vermont with their two boys, ages 12 and 9. Matt works at IBM Microelectronics as a Senior Engineer and Anna works as Director of Operations at Northlands Job Corps. Their kids are into basketball, baseball, and skiing/boarding. They are looking forward to taking their boys to Swaziland in the next year or two to show them where they met. Until then, life in Vermont is active and involved. And, while this may not be a time for political announcements, we do want to take this opportune moment to say "Vote Dean!" Best to everybody, Anna and Matt.

FOS Electronic Connection

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

To subscribe to the FOS E-group, simply send a request via e-mail to the group's moderator, Jack G. Conrad (Eku-khayeni, 1984- 87), at JackGConrad@EarthLink.Net.

SD/RPCV Web Site. As noted in a previous article in this issue, the FOS Web site is currently unavailable. As soon as its new location is available, we'll send the URL via e-

mail, or you can look it up by going to www.Google.com and typing in "Peace Corps Swaziland". Once you make it to the site, you'll find FOS announcements, news, a list of volunteers who have served in Swaziland, some useful siSwati phrases, and other entertaining bits. Contributions and comments on the website are always appreciated. Additional information on Swazi RPCVs can be found at <http://peacecorpsonline.org/messages/messages/467/1329.html>.

Your FOS Officers

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

Newsletter Deadline for Next Issue

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



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Friends of Swaziland Membership

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

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

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

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

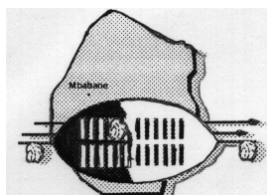
1. Briefly, what have you done since leaving Peace Corps? What are you doing now?
2. What projects or programs would you like to see FOS involved in (either in the U.S. or Swaziland)? Can you help?
3. What news features would or do you like in the FOS newsletter?

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

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

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

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



Friends of Swaziland

c/o J. von Reyn
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Manassas, VA 20112

Address correction requested

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