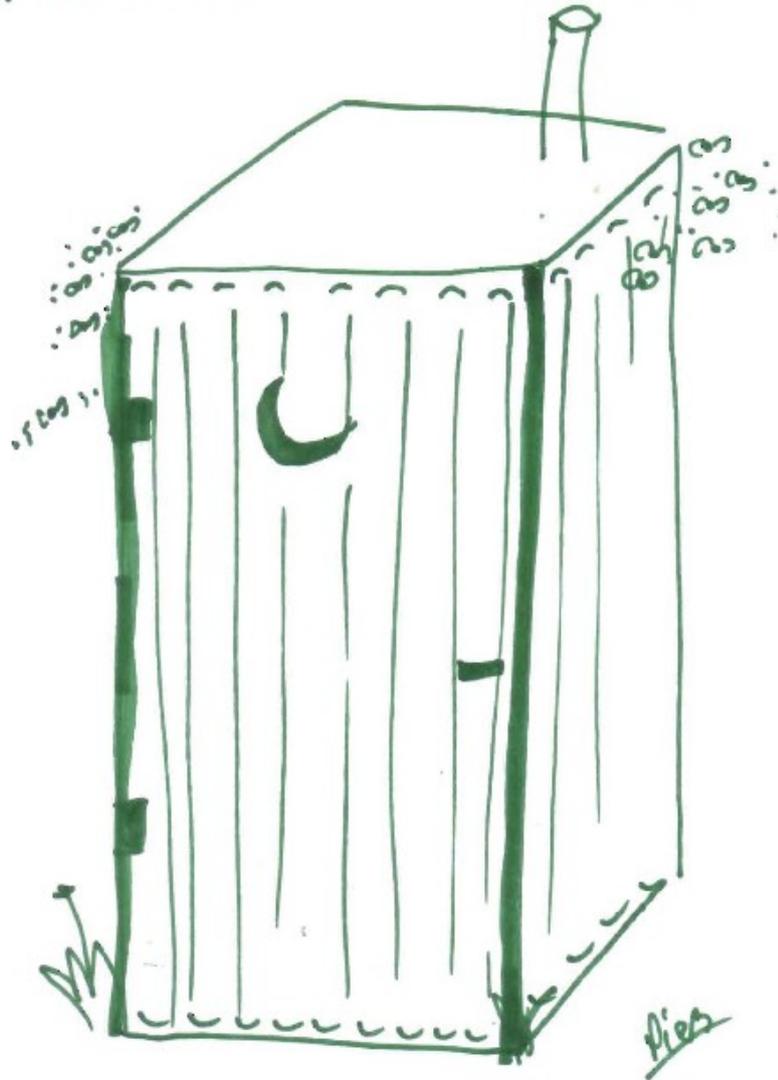




SOJO Mail

YOUR PIT LATRINE:



ONE DAY YOU WILL
REMINISCE ABOUT THIS

Send your letters to swazisojournal@gmail.com



From the Top

Upcoming PDM info for Group 10 volunteers

By Themba Makhubu, Training Unit

Hi G10 – I hope the holiday season is treating you well – not too many fines for inappropriate clothing.

I wanted to give you the latest update on PDM for both HE and YD. Musa gave you dates in the last Sojo, but after our recent P&T meeting,

Community Health: your PDM with one counterpart will be the first week of February (4th – 8th)

Youth Development: your PDM with one counterpart will be the last week of February (25th – 1st March).

Both PDMs will most likely be at IDM, but you will get an email with more details as we get closer to the training. Please begin your search for your counterpart in earnest. YD folks, if your CP is a teacher, please try and have a discussion with them on their schedule as soon as possi-

ble since they will need to discuss their leave with Head Teacher or their supervisor. HE, your CPs may need to arrange leave with their jobs as well.

Who should your counterpart be? Please think back on our IST sessions, especially How We Share Our Progress. Please also think about who will be around your community (people waiting on university admission or a job they interviewed for may not be ideal), and who you think has the ambition and the personality to work with you on a number of projects. It can be anyone, but these factors are important to consider. It is also wise to think about a back-up in case your CP gets sick, moves, or has another conflict, and they cannot attend.

Babe Musa has requested that you send to him the names of your counterparts and a one way transport fare to IDM. (However he did send a message to you about this.) Thanks.

Safety and security reminders in the New Year

By Mfanafuthi Vilakati

Safety & Security Coordinator

Compliments of the season to everyone!

For the most part most volunteers made it safely back to Swaziland for those that had traveled!

It has been good to observe that incidents over the festive season were few, so its thumbs up to you guys for maintaining vigilance for the most part over the festive season.

Rains are still pouring in most parts of Swaziland, and as a result some roads and bridges to PCV sites are damaged. I am happy though to share that despite the status quo on the roads, PC can still reach all volunteer houses in case of an emergency. Some PCVs have also reported extensive damages on their roads as a result of the rains.

If a river is in floods, do not attempt

to cross it, no matter how easy it may seem. Please do not take a risk; it is not worth it. Postponing your trip to a safer time is strongly advised.

I once again wish to remind PCVs about trying to minimize their travel on public transport. Newspaper reports reflect that traffic accident statistics are still quite high in the country. The more you stay at site, the safer you are! It may be a matter of time before one of us is involved in a traffic accident, so we need to control our movements.

Last year's post crime statistics revealed concerns of serious under-reporting of incidents against PCVs, on the part of the PCO. The annual AVS for 2012 revealed a totally different picture from post's security incidents records. I wish to appeal to all PCVs to work with us to ensure that the PCO is able to ensure a good pulse of what is going on with regard to PCV safety and security on the

ground by reporting all incidents to me, CD, PCMO or APCDs.

I wish to once again remind PCVs to call the Duty Phone after hours to report incidents and for other types of support needed. During working hours please call the intended PC Officer's number directly.

The post's Consolidation Point **wardens' training** will be on **Feb. 12** in the PCO, and wardens and their assistant are advised to overnight on the 11th in Mbabane so we may start on time at 8 a.m. PC will make the accommodation arrangements and will inform the affected volunteers in due course.

Alcohol continues to compromise PCV safety and property in the region as a whole, so I once again appeal to everyone for responsible drinking and do so with reliable friends.

Until next month, ASIPHEPHE / LET'S BE SAFE!

What volunteers love about Swaziland



By Blythe Terrell, G10

As we tumble through the day-to-day challenges of Peace Corps life, it's easy to overlook the grand things about the Kingdom of Swaziland. But it's about time for Valentine's Day, so we're wearing our hearts on our sleeves. Presented here is a list of just some of the things volunteers enjoy about the tiny nation that so graciously serves as our host.

- 1) Christmas in the SUMMERTIME!!
- 2) The blossoming of the JACARANDA TREES (especially around Nhlanguano) in October
- 3) Biltong. Biltong. Biltong.
- 4) Bomakes ... in the markets, on the streets, selling, selling.
- 5) Greetings. Meeting people in town, or along the way, and greeting, talking, and actually spending some time with someone who asks how you are doing, how your family is doing, and really cares and wants to hear ... and is not too busy to chat for a while.
- 6) Punctuality is not a virtue ... things start when they start and end when they end.
- 7) Amazing voices of Swazis. When only two or three sing together, it sounds like a whole choir.
- 8) How generally happy the Swazi people are ... especially the children ... the kids can make an entire game with a Spar bag ball, or a stick, or a wire car, and play joyfully with it for hours.

- Mike and Gail Messick, G8

That hour right before sunset when everyone is finishing their daily chores and the sun is setting right between the banana trees on my homestead.

My Swazi Cycling crew.

The phrase "yebo kakhulu!"

- Ryan Hall, G9

Bandzile & Dyroach

- Heather Arvidson, G10

BoGogo breaking it down and dancing down the aisles in church showing off their flawlessly white tennies.

- Kelsey Freeman, G10

I love gogos, cute little babies, sunsets, monkeys and hanging out with my Swazi wolfpack.

- Kevin Garcia, G10

Being treated like a regular at pretty much every place I eat, having internet on my phone for the first time ever, saying ncesi shame excessively, when a proposal is refreshingly witty, kids petting my dog for the first time, the phrase "you are dodging me," being the random white girl in some poor couple's wedding video for all eternity, the breeze afforded by traditional clothes, and the mist rising off the mountains in the morning.

- Lauren Karplus, G10

I heart cloud formations and the quality of light (especially at dawn and dusk), men strolling with interlocking pinkies, and the wanton mix of modern and traditional dress.

- Kim Koettel, G10

Reasons to have a scarf:

Look and feel pretty

Use as a belt because you lost weight

On your head because wind of khumbi, or style

To cover your private area when in pants

As a napkin

To wipe the sweat from your face

To sit on

To use as a sheet at night

- Sybil Lee, G10

I love being able to hold another man's hand while chatting.

- Brian Orr, G10

Universal passion for talking about the weather. Universal hatred of snakes.

Confession: I actually really like pap. And ligusha. And beetroot and butter-nut "salads." I have not warmed up to chicken feet, though.

I love wearing a lihiya as a skirt. Wrapping a square of fabric around my body and tying it in a knot would not pass as chic in the U.S., but here earns me mad props.

I love the night sky and getting to ogle a bazillion stars at the end of each day.

I love watching the whole homestead come together to chase down and brutally mutilate a snake.

- Shari Orr, G10

When you looked out on the horizon and you could find those awesome trees that they paint that look like "Stereotypical African Tree on the Horizon," like the tree of life sort of. I always loved looking out and seeing those trees with my own eyes.

- Jessica Randall, G10

I love the laughter we get from Swazis who realize we know how to speak (kancane) siSwati. I also love the smiling boMake who always want to know how my friends and loved ones are doing. I love the "Hello, how are you?" chorus that comes from small children whenever we walk by. I love how you can get a banana for E1 almost anywhere you go, and I love that sitting and talking is more important than time with Internet or TV.

- Blythe Terrell, G10

Favorite Swazi thing by far: double hand wave with a curtsy and a big smile from older Swazis.

- Walker Van Wagoner, G10

I love the sunsets, the wildflowers on the green hills, and watching the amazing birds come into their mating plumage.

- Katie Walters, G10

NOTES FROM THE FIELD

Photo by Bunker

The Treadmill

Perception of time changes dramatically with Peace Corps service

By Ryan Fouss, G9

I get to the restaurant around 7:30 a.m. I'm always the first one to arrive; it sets the standard for the other employees. My hands shiver as I fumble for the keys to the back door. I'm standing ankle deep in snow, hidden in a dark alley, the catacombs of the food service industry. Frost billows from my mouth. I open the door and turn the lights on. The fluorescent bulbs flicker, exposing the pale green walls, crusted with grime.

First, I unlock the door to the storage room and office. Next, I focus on everything that is temperature sensitive. I grab the doors to the sushi fridges from the drying rack and bring them up front. It takes about 35 minutes for each fridge to get below 40°F, which is required by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Then I turn on the hot sake machine. There is always some dude who wants to take the edge off with a shot of sake before his 10 a.m. midterm. Next, I turn on the deep fryer. This is the kitchen chef's job, but he hasn't arrived yet. He better get here before 8 a.m. In my restaurant if you're on time, you're late. I notice that the oil in the fryer is getting dark; I'll tell Ernesto to change it out at the end of his shift. Next, I fill the ice trays. As I bring buckets of ice to the soda machine, I carry bus tubs with my free hand to save trips to the back.

Then, I grab the floor mats. They are piled up in some forgotten corner

of the restaurant. The mats are so old that they're ripped into small shreds, and they stink of old fish and bleach. My hands are stained black as I carry the grease-drenched mats. When I get to the front of the restaurant, I see Kelsey knocking at the door. She looks hung over. She better not give any customers shit today. I let her in.

Next, I prep my sushi station. I need cutting boards, wash buckets, bar towels and trash cans. Ernesto strolls in at 7:52 a.m. - cutting it close, buddy. I am particular about how I set up my station. Even if my eyes are closed, I want to know exactly where everything is. My hands operate by reflex, not by thought. My knife is always on my left; in front of my knife is a small pan of water to clean my knife after plating each dish. My bar towel is folded and placed on the right side of the cutting board. The trash can is to my right, behind my foot. In the sushi fridge, the fish is on the right; the veggies are on the left. From right to left the fish are organized: salmon, yellowtail, tuna and shrimp. The veggies are organized: cucumber, carrots, green onions and bean sprouts. The items on the left are used more often. The doors open from the left-hand side so the items on the left are easier to reach.

Being a chef is all about seconds. If something is not in the right place, I will have to turn my focus away from the food to find what I need. God forbid, I would have to run to the back of the house for something. Seconds could easily turn into minutes; when I'm drowning in tickets, every second is precious. I need to send out each order in less than 15 minutes no matter how big the ticket is or how far behind I am. I turn the outside lights on,

the Sushi Spot sign flickers, and the restaurant is officially open.

Living as a volunteer in Swaziland, my daily routine has changed considerably. The roosters wake me up around 6 a.m. The sound of the roosters crying one after another echoes through the valley, deep and droning like meditative ohms. It is soothing. There is no alarm that I nervously wake up to minutes before it rings. The fog slowly rolls up the side of the mountain as the heat of the day falls. I go back to sleep. I wake up around 8 a.m.

What do I have to do today?

I have class at 3 p.m. I am discussing condom usage. Condoms are latex coverings that males wear over their penis during sex to avoid ejaculating inside of a woman's vagina. I hope the students will use condoms to keep themselves safe from HIV, STIs and pregnancy. Swaziland has the highest HIV rate in the world. Most likely, few of the students will actually change their sexual behavior. I still have to prepare my presentation for class.

I reach for my laptop, which is conveniently located next to my bed. I was watching the Showtime series "Homeland" the night before. The show is frustratingly addictive. I watch an episode. Then I watch another episode. Then another. I wish I could be a spy. The dangerous and secretive lifestyle excites me. It's 11 a.m. I should eat something.

I make myself some scrambled eggs and coffee. I drink way too much

Continued on page 6

coffee, about four or five cups a day. I need to prepare for my lecture. I write a simple outline of the items I want to discuss on a pad of paper made from a recycled Cheez-Its box. I miss Cheez-Its.

Next I prepare a bath. It's too hot, so I just bathe in cold water. I've been told that I bucket bathe incorrectly. I haven't taken a bath in a couple of days. I put on my clothes. Everything that I put on is dirty. My shirt has dirt around the collar and white deodorant stains at the pits. It's a dark shirt, so it's barely noticeable. My pants are wrinkled, and there are red dirt marks around the pockets and up the pant legs. They get like this after one wear; I've given up trying to wash them every time.

I have an hour till class. I sit on the cold concrete step in the front of my house. Make is sleeping on a woven mat, under the shade of a tree. She holds my young sister in her arms. Babe is standing by the kraal gazing at the mountains; he looks like a lion watching his pride. I wonder what he is thinking about. I am envious of his serenity. He doesn't speak any English. I don't speak enough SiSwati.

I walk to class. It doesn't take me more than 10 minutes to get there. I have about 60 students, and I always get a little nervous before I begin. As I speak, I look around the room at the faces looking back at me. Each face is different. Some are bored. Some are confused. But others look back at me with intensity. As if they understand what I'm trying to say. My whole day is dedicated to seeing that face, that intensity. My job is not to change the world but to maybe influence one choice.

The two stories above describe my perception of time and how it has changed since I have become a volunteer. The first story took place over one hour, the hour before my restaurant opened. My mind and actions were mechanical and exact. I didn't move an inch without a purpose; I performed tasks in sequence to increase efficiency and to reduce mistakes. I was productive. The preparation I did during this first hour directly correlated to my performance as a chef when the restaurant was in full



We are born into cultures that perceive the pace of life differently. Back home life is fast. And life in many other parts of the world is slower. One is not better than the other. It is difficult, however, to switch from one pace to another.

swing. I measured this success in minutes and seconds.

Here in Swaziland, my days have no such organization. On the particular day of the story, I had something to do. Many days, I don't have anything. Sometimes, I just watch movies all day. I never read as much as I say I do. Sometimes I spend the whole day, waiting for khumbis to and from town, just to buy groceries. Progress with my *mission* here as a volunteer is slow, and the impact is small. Meetings never accomplish what I hope for, and things never happen when they are supposed to. One day, when I was stressed about a project, a friend calmly told me not to worry, "There is always time."

Coming from my previous life, this was a hard transition. I felt like I was wasting my time while not accomplishing enough. Wasting time. What does

that even mean? We have however long on this Earth as the events in our life allow. We are born into cultures that perceive the pace of life differently. Back home life is fast. And life in many other parts of the world is slower. One is not better than the other. It is difficult, however, to switch from one pace to another. I call this the "Treadmill Effect."

When you're running on a treadmill, you're burning calories; the endorphins in your brain make your body feel good. You're tightening up that ass. You're accomplishing something. When you step off, for the first couple of seconds, there is a phantom feeling in your legs. You feel like you're still running. It's uncomfortable for a while, but eventually you gain your footing and you adjust to the slower pace of walking. This is what happens to many of us *experiencers* of different cultures. We become accustomed to that pace of life. In both our bodies and minds. We let the pressure of the sexy-fast-paced American lifestyle fade away. It's quieting.

Stepping back on the treadmill is also a challenge. The treadmill continues to run despite how long we've been off it. Imagine having to jump on a quickly moving treadmill. You have to prepare yourself and wait for just the right time to jump. Most likely, it will catch you off guard, you will stumble. You might have to grab on the railings until you've adjusted to the speed. This is what it feels like when we go back home. The world hasn't stopped because you decided to find yourself in Africa. Most likely, it's gotten faster. We adjust to the speed because we have to, it's home. But for many of us, there is this empty feeling, the memory of that slowed pace of life. It's hard to adequately share this feeling with people who have never experienced it. This is isolating because we are often in the minority of people who have. So we bury it away in order to re-assimilate. But it will always be a part of who we are.

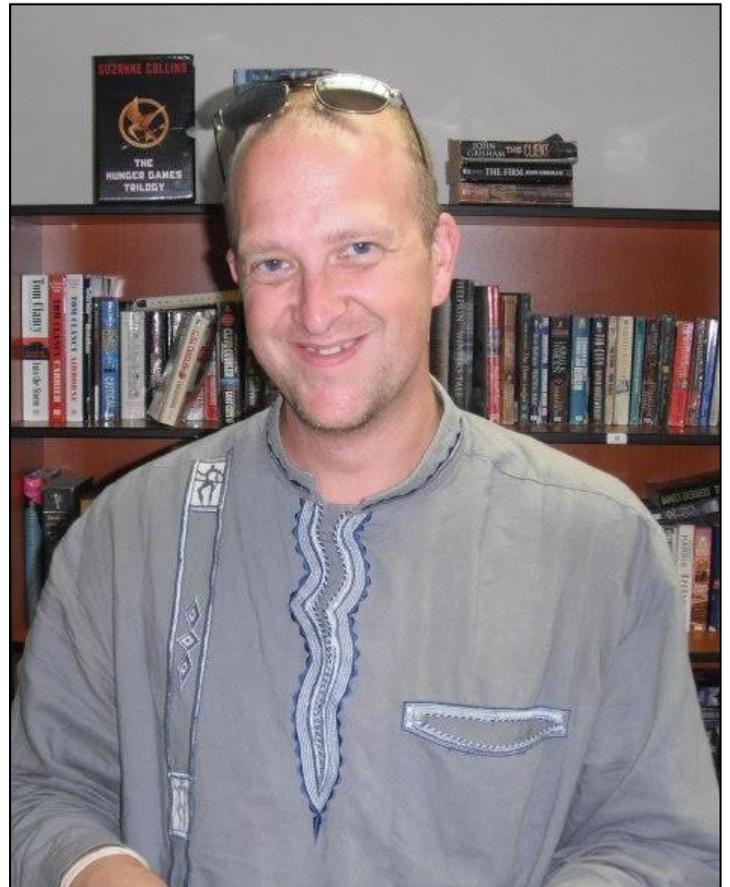
I believe that, other than being consumed by a foreign culture and the well-intentioned work we do as volunteers, it is this feeling that bonds us. It is our secret. It is our burden. We cannot blame those who do not understand, for it was our privilege. I only hope that more people can experience this for themselves.

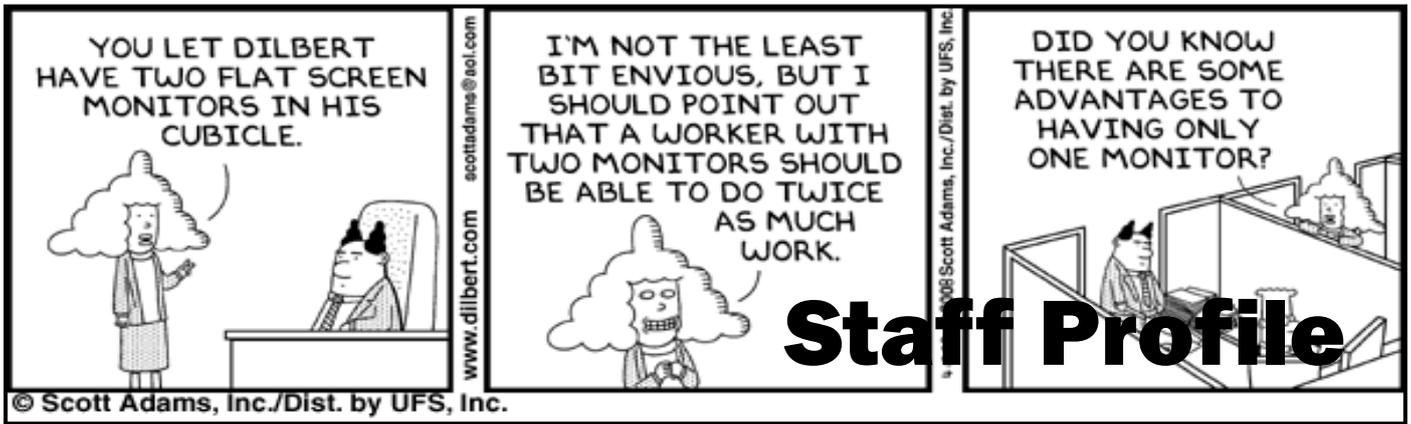
VOLUNTEER PROFILE



Photo by Ryan Hall

- Name:** Majaha Mkhabela / Brian Deyo
- Site:** bengihlala kaLomahasha, nyalo Mbabane neSiteki
- Region:** Depends on the week
- Hometown:** Tucson, AZ
- Tin roof or thatch:** Proper ceilings
- Pit latrine or bucket:** I like the little house
- Size of *umndeni wakho*:** 7-10, or 36 for the family reunion
- Craziest thing you've seen on your homestead:** A dog chased the shadow of lusoti so it could attack it when it landed
- Hut activities:** Making stuff out of junk
- Activities outside your hut:** Gardening
- Favorite Swazi food:** emahewu
- Favorite non-Swazi food:** I can has cheezeburger!
- Favorite Food to cook or can to open:** BBQ pizza
- Favorite Swazi pick-up line:** A man cannot stand on one leg
- Favorite Book:** I am reading "Plan B 4.0" right now.
- Favorite carrying case:** Cargo pants
- Hardest thing to adjust to:** ligusha
- Easiest thing to adjust to:** Everything but ligusha
- Favorite place in Swaziland:** ekaya wetfu kaLomahasha





Staff Profile

Name: Elliot Luhlanga

Site/Hometown: Ndwabangeni

Education: MCSE, MCTS, MCITPDD, A+, N+

Size of umndeni wakho: 7

Favorite Swazi Food: Ligusha and sinkhwa semumbila

Favorite Non-Swazi Food: Pizza

Hobbies: Soccer, reading and traveling

Favorite Thing About Peace Corps: Meeting new people and creating relationships.

Least Favorite Peace Corps Responsibility: Receiving and counting purchased items for the office

Favorite Place in Swaziland: Any of the game reserves

Favorite Thing About Volunteers: Their commitment, perseverance, humility, endurance and willingness to help.

The Most Pathetic Thing About Volunteers: Calling me Babe Elliot instead of Mkhulu Elliot.

Favorite Book: My Windows 2000 Server Manual.

Something About Me That Would Surprise

Volunteers and Staff: In my community I own a soccer team, and it's nicknamed IJUZI Football Club.



Who we are: PCV Stories

Before we can understand other people's diversity, we must first seek to understand our own. The Peer Support Inclusion/Identity Network is collecting short, personal stories regarding your perceptions of diversity and your own unique background. The Sojo plans to highlight a story each month. The point of this section is to really think and discuss the things that have had an impact on how you see the world and perhaps how the world sees you.

An Mlungu Chindian

By Anonymous

Every PCV, at one point or another, struggles with diversity and identity issues. Whether you're a man or woman, gay or straight, white, black, yellow or brown you experience what it means to be a minority in a foreign country simply because you are a visitor in a foreign land. Every experience is different, and every struggle is valid. No one's is harder than another's, and no one's experience is a walk in a park - for who are we to judge and determine the severity of what each person is going through?

My story revolves around my struggle with ethnic identity and my severe lack of patience - the two seemingly going hand in hand. When I joined Peace Corps Swaziland, I was 21 years old and fresh out of university. Originally from Hawaii, I got my first

dose of what being a minority felt like in college. Mexicans would come up to me and speak Spanish, happily embracing me as one of their own until my broken and heavily accented Spanish would give away that no, I was not indeed a Mexican. But coming to Swaziland brought on a whole

Depending on my mood, how much I slept, how much food and water I had, and, most important, how much I was harassed that day, my answers and actions varied. I have given in-depth and thorough geography and history lessons on Hawaii and America while in khumbis and while grocery shopping in Buhleni and Pigg's Peak. I have spent countless hours explaining how America is not just composed of "white Americans" and "black Americans" as they had suggested, but rather is a melting pot of different people from various countries, ethnicities, religions, and cultures.

On the opposite end of the spectrum, I have also ignored the Mlungu Chindian calls, sticking in my headphones and pretending I didn't hear them until they left me alone or until they'd poke me, tap me, or pull my headphones out to talk. On one occasion I had a man run up to me and say, "Mlungu! China! Where is your shop? Give me some sweeties. Give me a job in your shop now!" As annoying as it was, I couldn't help but smile and laugh at this man's boldness and willingness to work - even if it was only for emasweeties.

Sometimes you have the patience to answer them about who you are, where you're from and what you are doing, and other times you

have to say a mantra and get into your happy place. But always you need to let it roll off your shoulders and find comfort in the fact that you're not alone. We may not all be experiencing the same issues, but we all have hardships to face.

other set of identity issues. Almost every time I went into my shopping town, Buhleni, I was called out in this order, "Eh Mlungu. Eh China. Eh India!" None of which are correct. This sparked what my PCV friends referred to me as the Mlungu Chindian.



News

U.S.

President Barack Obama has chosen his new national security team. He has nominated Sen. John Kerry for secretary of state, Chuck Hagel as defense secretary and John O. Brennan as CIA director .

Source: *The New York Times*

The New York Senate has passed what supporters say is the toughest gun legislation in the United States. The plan went to the state assembly Jan. 14 and is expected to pass. The proposal includes a tougher assault weapons ban and restrictions on ammunition and the sale of guns, as well as mandatory police registry of assault weapons. New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo said he wanted to act quickly to avoid a rush of assault-weapon purchases. Opponents of the legislation criticized Cuomo, calling the action political opportunism for a governor with eyes on the presidency.

Source: *Fox News*

Cycling superstar Lance Armstrong has admitted to talk-show host Oprah Winfrey that he used performance-enhancing drugs, according to media reports. Armstrong had stridently rejected the allegations for years while winning a record seven Tours de France. The interview was his first since he was stripped of the Tour titles in October.

Source: *CNN*

World

Anglo American Platinum, a mining company that operates in South Africa, plans to shut down production at four mine shafts. The shafts are in the Rustenburg region, and their shutdown could result in the loss of nearly 14,000 jobs. The platinum producer cited lower demand and higher costs. The action follows the firing of 12,000 workers in October after a wage-related strike.

Source: *BBC*

France will deploy more troops to Mali to counter an Islamist insurgency, French President Francois Hollande said, referring to the insurgents as "terrorists." The nation already had sent 750 soldiers. Nigeria, Benin, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Niger, Senegal and Togo also have said they will send troops. The Islamists, who took advantage of chaos after a military coup to seize northern Mali in April, are said to have left Timbuktu and Gao.

Source: *BBC*

Pakistan's Supreme Court ordered the arrest of Prime

Minister Raja Pervez Ashraf over corruption allegations. Ashraf is accused of accepting bribes as minister for water and power in 2010. He denies the allegations.

Source: *BBC*

Swaziland

Several nongovernmental organizations are planning trial runs of programs that would give antiretroviral drugs to HIV-positive patients regardless of viral loads. This month, Medecins Sans Frontieres plans to offer ARVs to all HIV-positive pregnant women at its site in Nhlanguano. The International Center for AIDS Programs (ICAP) plans to compare two options of care for pregnant women in the Manzini Region. The Clinton Health Access Initiative hopes to begin a study in mid-2013 in which all HIV-positive adults, regardless of CD4 counts, receive ARVs.

Source: *The Lancet*

The Umbutfo Swaziland Defence Force has apologized to the family of Private Samukelo Mukelo Fakudze for the soldier's death. Fakudze is said to have been killed by other soldiers, though the military has not released details. One person who was reportedly involved is said to have killed himself.

Source: *Times of Swaziland*

Bluff the Reader Headline Challenge

One of these headlines is a fake. Can you guess which one?

- To serve is to conserve our place in creation
- Gaga concert butt flash causes outraged flap
- Dagga cures my asthma — suspect
- Tanzanian held for lover's child's murder
- Mozaik reveals all regarding Crax feud

Answer found on the back page

What to consider when you might extend service

By Brian Deyo, G8

Imagine by now most of you are aware that I'm an extension volunteer and I've been in the country for two and a half years now. This is a fairly significant span of time, and I find that reflecting on how I got here is a bit hazy. It all started in a Galaxy Far, Far Away ...

Actually, it started way back at Ngonini. Both Group 7 and Group 8 had our trainings there, and for me it was the very first time I had ever heard of this intangible thing known as "extension." What little I had read about Peace Corps and the few RPCVs who regaled me with stories of their service had not mentioned this. Immediately the 27-month time limit was postponed. I was intrigued before I had finished PST. But as we all know, PST really does fly by, and I hadn't thought again of extending until the Peace Corps office wanted to know.

The decision to extend service comes at a particularly interesting time. Many previous volunteers demarcate the end of the first year as the beginning of really serious work. Some projects have failed, some have started, and the remaining few months of service are undetermined and unpredictable. And a choice has to be made if you're seriously interested in extending. It's a very tough conversation to have with yourself, are you ready to take it to the next level?

As all of our PC experiences are unique during our service, extension is no different. My jobs are vastly different than any of the other G8 extenders, and we barely resemble what G7 did. I think the closest to G7 we can get is living in the same apartment complex where some of the guards think we're them, but we moved two doors down. Many of the past volunteers have arranged an NGO or organizational extension with the assistance and blessing of the PC office. A few previous volunteers have extended in their communities.

I sometimes wonder how different my extension would have been if I stayed in my community. I remember Jordan Dye, G7, who extended with her community. She was able to stay that extra third year and was able to

Similar to many of you, I had some concrete work skills that, no matter how hard I tried, weren't of much use in my rural community. I felt that I would be valuable wherever I went after my service, but I kept experiencing this nagging curiosity about another year. There was a sensation of my deepest inner voice telling me I hadn't done enough. I needed to keep trying to make a real difference ... I knew I had to stay.

build upon the success of her first two, and really make an impact on the sustainability of everything she had worked so hard on. I was lucky enough, though, that by the end of my service most of my work was left in capable enough hands that I could walk away with only a few rough edges left behind.

Similar to many of you, I had some concrete work skills that, no matter how hard I tried, weren't of much use in my rural community. I felt that I would be valuable wherever I went after my service, but I kept experiencing this nagging curiosity about another year. There was a sensation of my deepest inner voice telling me I hadn't done enough. I needed to keep trying to make a real difference, and I needed to really push myself into fulfilling those original dreams I had when I signed up in the first place. I knew I had to stay.

It was a difficult choice to make between staying with my community or seeking a new work placement with the help of Peace Corps. I recommend that you do the following if you are still

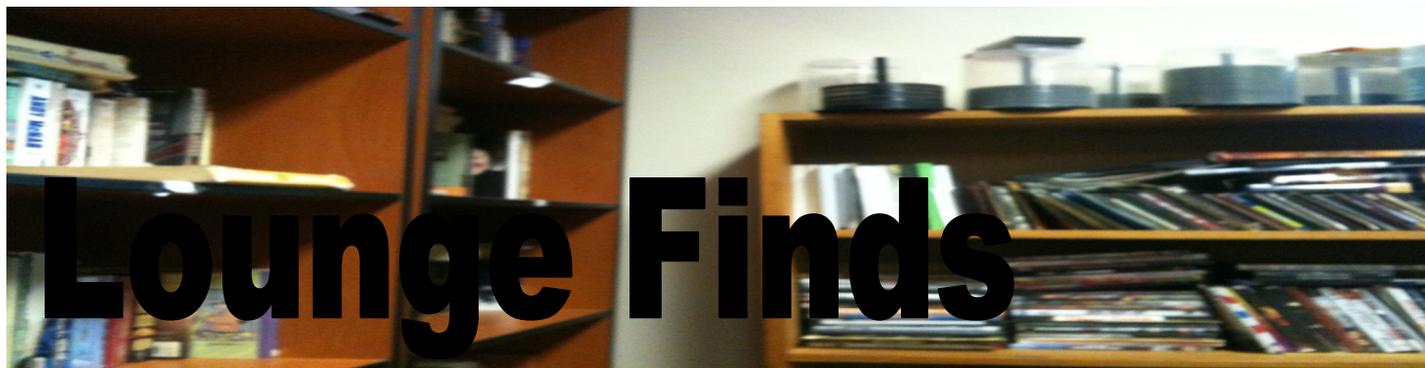
hemming and hawing about extension, or if you are already thinking of it: Sit down and talk with your APCD or another staff member with whom you feel comfortable. I talked with my APCD, Brian Goercke, and that conversation really cleared up the doubts I still had lingering, and it moved the office into a "networking" mode where staff members started keeping their ears and inboxes open for possible placements that I could really help with. It wasn't long before I knew what I wanted to do for the next year.

Extending hasn't been a completely whimsical journey through the land of NGO workers. I wish I could say I read <http://whatshouldpcvscallme.tumblr.com> every day. Truthfully, I wish I had more time! Volunteering with my third-year counterparts is invigorating and challenging, and in many ways far more challenging than my first two years.

I find that my work now is exceptionally more concrete than my first two years, and it is difficult to slow down enough to smell the flowers, let alone watch chickens anymore. I am however continually motivated by how much I can actually see getting done thanks to my efforts. The work is always a balancing act between building other people's capacities and just getting the job done. I don't think I would trade it for anything, and I'm really glad that I've extended. I am building the capacities of the people I am working with in ways that just weren't possible when I was in the community and so new to Swaziland.

As time flies by and your journey picks up speed, I ask you think to yourselves, "What do I want to be doing for my next year?" If your answer includes "I don't know," I ask you to remember your exuberance on first arriving here. At that moment you knew you were doing something truly meaningful, even if you didn't know what you would be doing. We really do make a lasting and incredible impact in our time here. If you extend, you can take that impact and really make good on your original ideals for what you wanted your service to be.

Just how far will you go?



‘Hood of Horror’ will horrify any sane moviegoer

By Tim Schulte, G10

This week in Lounge Finds the SOJO staff is reviewing the film “Snoop Dogg’s Hood of Horror,” a horror-porn/urban/dark-comedy mash-up featuring the star power of Danny Trejo, Aries Spears, Ernie Hudson, and of course the inimitable Snoop Lion.

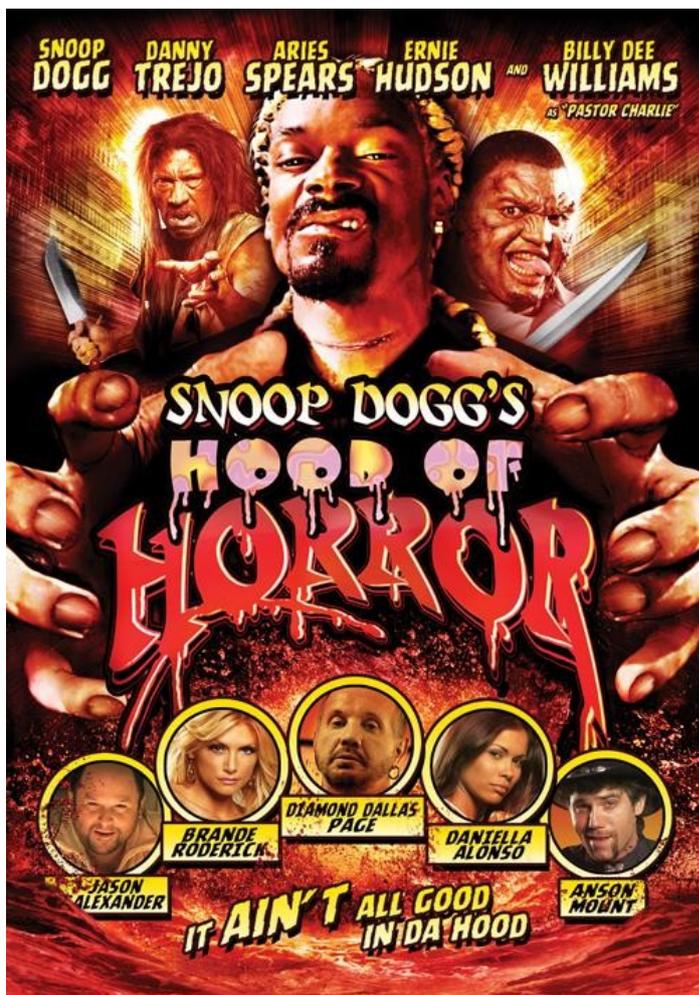
When I popped the movie into my laptop, I was a little confused. Having made the classic mistake of judging a movie by its casing, I had naturally assumed that the actors emblazoned on the cover of the box would actually be featured in the film. Rather, the movie opens with an animated sequence featuring Snoop Dogg racing through the streets of the ghetto, guns blazing, as he pursues an unknown antagonist. Now, I don’t want to ruin the intro to the movie for you guys, but Vigilante Dogg ends up catching this demonic individual, shooting his own younger sister through the body of said demon, being disowned and banished from his home by his distraught mother, making a deal with the aforementioned demon to trade his life for that of his sister’s, and becoming a servant of Hell, tasked with ushering souls into an untimely afterlife.

After this heart-racing ride into the cavernous depths of the Hood of Horror, the film segues to live-action Dead Dogg walking through the streets of the ‘hood, flanked by dangerous-looking women and soon joined by a disturbing little person. Mr. Dogg proceeds to break down how the rest of the film is going to play out. He explains that the movie is broken up into three vignettes. Each one features the cautionary tale of a resident of the Hood of Horrors and the ultimate consequences of his or her wayward behavior.

In the first vignette we find ourselves following the story of a young

Latina woman living life alone in the ‘hood because her father killed her mother and then himself. Now an adult, she encounters a group of street toughs who ridicule her efforts at “tagging,” describing them as “girly” and “girly.” Now, I know many feminists would take offense at this part of the movie, but fear not, this is, after all, the Hood of Horror, and these punks will soon learn the moral cost of belittling a 20-year-old woman for her vandalism. The moral cost, of course, is that the young girl is kidnapped by a frightening Danny Trejo (I couldn’t tell if this was pre- or post-makeup session or was even supposed to be part of the movie) who drags her to his lair, tattoos a skeletal hand upon her arm, and commands her to clean the streets of the filth that befouls it.

Naturally, she assumes he means for her to exact vengeance upon the hooligans who vandalized her graffiti and as such proceeds to place a large red X over each of the gang members’ respective tags. I don’t want to spoil some truly visionary scenes here, so I’ll simply amp up the anticipation by explaining that at least one person takes a 40 of malt liquor to the face. Is it one of the punks? Is it the young girl? Is it me and thus self-inflicted?



You’ll just have to watch and find out.

Sadly, near the end of this young girl’s story when Papa Trejo finds her attempting to beautify the now cleaned streets with her artistic vision, we find that when he said clean, he did not mean the thugs, he meant the graffiti. So with the final reveal of the vignette we discover two things: a new tag on the local church wall, a group of posies painted in the blood of the young woman after she received her punishment, and a pretty condemning message against making a movie for meth, with meth, and on meth.

Continued on page 13

The next episode features a young Texas cowboy, a group of African-American Vietnam War veterans, and a pair of mounted bull horns; I'm serious, they play a big role in the movie. Now, I'll be honest, the only thing I remember from this section of the movie was the soundtrack. Song after acoustical assassination of some of the worst and most stereotypical country music on the planet. I'm pretty sure there's some sort of law against featuring "Cotton-Eyed Joe" in your film about a Hood of Horror, but I know for a fact that Larry the Cable Guy has that song trademarked.

The plot of this piece featured a young Texan "enfant terrible" who has recently come into his father's money. He finds that before he can receive the funds, he must spend a year with his father's old platoon, a group of men living together in the Hood of Horror being cared for by a young nurse. This group is to teach him honor, courage, and decency. Naturally the young man arrives and begins to rule the house with an iron fist, forcing the veterans to attend to his and his girlfriend's beck and call while the two of them seek ways to siphon every last dime out of the old men's pensions. The metaphors in this episode are about as thick as the Southern accent of the young girlfriend but a touch less heartwarming. These are Vietnam vets, not men to be trifled

with. So after one of the men DIES and the NURSE is MURDERED, they decide to take action.

At this point in the review, I'd like to take a moment to give my nomination for best actor and runner up in the Hood of Horror. Best Actor goes to the set of bull horns that end up terminating the life of the young Texan redneck because, quite simply, they bring to end the screen time of one of the worst actors in the history of cinema. The runner-up nomination goes to the little lapdog of the young girlfriend who not only pretended to like the caviar his mommy was shoveling into his mouth but also rolled with it when the veterans, clearly adlibbing this scene, pumped his mommy full of the aforementioned caviar until she popped like a bottle of awful champagne.

I'll be honest with you. I kind of stopped paying attention at this point in the movie because I had some very important Facebook messages to respond to, and I'm nothing if not a man with priorities. However, as far as I can tell, the third vignette featured a rising rap duo, that bald dude from "Seinfeld" pretending to be British, one of the duo coming back from the dead, and Hell Hound Dogg rapping. I mention these because I'm guessing they were important to the plot, but I don't know for sure.

In the end, though, there was a happy ending in the Hood of Horrors.

That is to say Sir Dogg loaded up all of his recent, I'll call them victims because I'm still not sure what they are, put them on an elevator, and took them to the real Hood of Horrors where the veil that hides the evil inside has been ripped away. Now, I'm not the kind of person who wishes that type of fate on anyone, even psychopathic rap stars, but throw the screenwriter and the producer on there and I'd have felt less bad about it.

In sum, if I were asked to recommend this movie, I would say no. I did not enjoy watching this movie, and it actually took me about five separate attempts, literally, to finish all 84 minutes of it. The movie was gruesome, the plot was weak, the one-liners were cheesy and foolish, the acting was way over the top or non-existent, and the moral of the story was depraved and sickening. I will say that I could see this movie being pretty hilarious in a group setting or if you're babysitting children. Ultimately, though, I would recommend this movie only if you are the kind of person who hates yourself, hates your family, hates the world, and like Nietzsche affirms the idea that "God is dead."

Want to contribute to Lounge Finds? Review any music, movie or book and send your piece to swazisojournal@gmail.com.

'Plan B' offers environmental problems, gives solutions

By Blythe Terrell, G10

This nonfiction book explores a range of issues confronting our changing world. In "Plan B," Lester Brown writes about the widespread implications of peak oil, population growth, and economic and environmental policies. He combines social and environmental issues to paint a comprehensive picture of our civilization's future.

I was assigned this book for a course called the Global Environment and Public Health and found it fascinating. Throughout "Plan B," Brown aims to quantify the issues he discusses. He provides an estimated budget assessing the costs of reforesting the planet, protecting biodiversity and implementing universal primary education, for example.

Brown is president of the nonprofit

The Book

'Plan B 2.0: Rescuing a Planet Under Stress and a Civilization in Trouble'

By Lester R. Brown

Find it in: American Lit on the far left shelf nearest the door to the lounge

Earth Policy Institute. He clearly approaches the subject matter from the perspective of someone who has no doubt that human-caused climate change is occurring and is a serious global concern. This book discusses water shortage issues, food scarcity, rising temperatures and geopolitical elements tied to these problems. It moves beyond traditional environmentalism, however, also addressing pov-

erty, the growing world population and HIV's impact on the African continent.

The purpose of Brown's book is not to preach the gospel of doom and gloom, however. "Plan B" offers an alternative future and aims to provide feasible solutions. As Brown says in Chapter 1, "First, virtually all the destructive environmental trends are of our own making. All the problems we face can be dealt with using existing technologies. And almost everything we need to do to move the world economy onto an environmentally sustainable path has been done in one or more countries."

This book provides an eloquent road map for those who want to learn more about the linkages between the global sociopolitical and environmental issues that we'll continue to confront this century.

THIS OLD HUT WALKER VAN WAGNER

9 "IF YOU CAN'T CALL ME HANDSOME, AT LEAST YOU CAN CALL ME HANDY."

With the summer heat, does your hut feel like a Pittsburgh blast furnace full of flies? To help manage the flies, this month's edition focuses on making homestead life a little more pleasant by catching and controlling this hut-hold nuisance.

Hut Life:

For black flies, collect a plastic bottle and cut the top off about 2/3 of the way up. Pour in an ounce of wine, vinegar or sugar water. Invert the cut top and tightly fit it in place. Flies can enter but are trapped facing certain, as well as very satisfying, death.

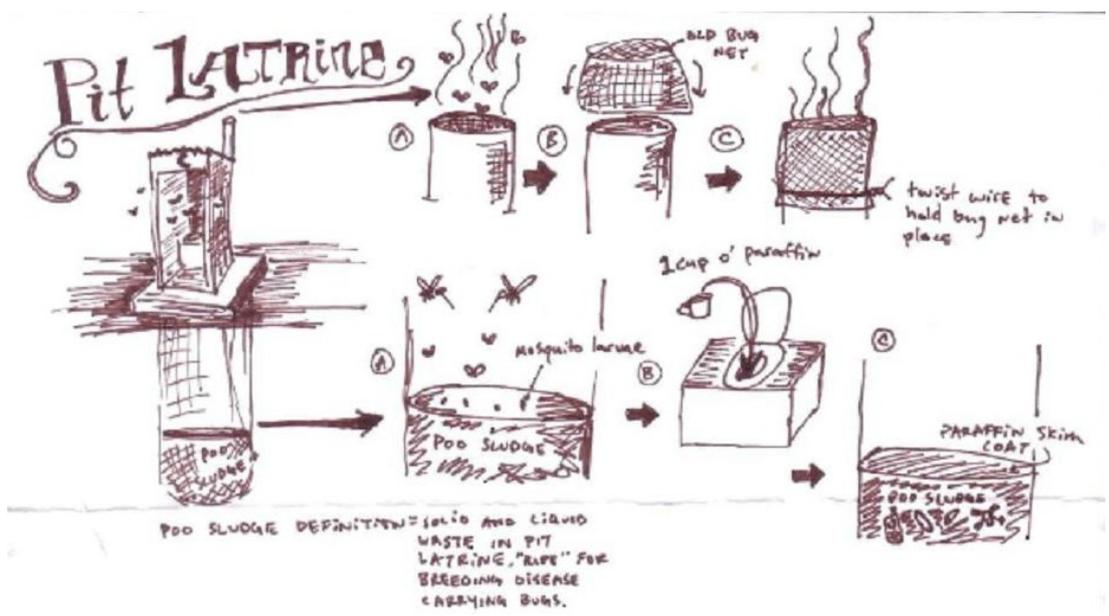
For fruit flies, take a cup, can or cut bottle. Pour in an ounce of wine, vinegar or sugar water. Cover with a piece of plastic bag. Wire bag in place and perforate the top with small holes. Fruit flies, attracted to the tasty nectar, cannot resist.



Pit Latrine:

To allow ventilation but limit the passage of bugs into or out of your pit latrine, cap the vent hole using an old bug net as shown in the diagram.

Paraffin, being hydrophobic, will create a skim coat on top of the poo sludge in your pit latrine, thereby diminishing the breeding habitat for mosquitoes and flies.



This old hut welcomes suggestions for future articles. Please send suggestions to SOJO's email, swazisojournal@gmail.com.



For Sale

Caitlin O'Connor (Shiselweni) is selling a Bialetti Stovetop espresso/coffeemaker. Good condition, pretty. E40 OBO. Contact her at 78316741 or caitlin.annemarie@gmail.com.

JACKETS:

Mountain Hardware Exposure 2 Waterproof shell. Red with black. Very good condition. Well made with sealed seams, many pockets and a substantial hood that can be tucked away when not in use. Asking 700 Rand (or 65 USD). Cost \$250 or so new.

Patagonia 'Retro' model fleece. Furry kind of like a

yak. Very comfortable. One chest pocket, and two pockets at the sides for your hands. Fair condition. 400 Rand (or 35 USD).

Email Walker, wwanwagoner@gmail.com

One teal Game Boy Color for sale. Includes The Legend of Zelda-Oracle of Ages and Pokemon Red. Catch 'em all for E120. Contact Rebecca

Zornow, 76935960

One singing and dancing meerkat for sale. A festive and furry stuffed friend will sing Rock'n Around the Christmas Tree for you next holiday season for only E50. A big hit with Swazi kids. Contact Rebecca Zornow, 76935960

Ode to Swaziland in Month 1

By Jami Hargrove, G10

Oh! Swaziland!

How I wish your dust was beach sand.

The toughness of your meat from a pig
is forgiven because your avocados are so big.

The mountains provide a lovely view,
to watch the sunrise while walking through the morning dew.

I'd gladly take the pit latrines and bucket baths
over tumbling and falling down hilly, twisty, crooked paths.

Liphalishi reminds me of clumpy grits,
however, I am slowly learning to like it a bit.

(I sure do wish I could get my hands on a chicken biscuit).

Baby goats and baby pups make my life,
thank goodness no one wants me to be their Swazi wife.
(Yet).

Your bus rides remind me of roller coasters.

Man, it'd be nice to have a toaster.

And from that toaster, I'd like to see an Eggo pop up,
and maybe an ice cold Pacifico in a pint-size cup...

But until my next date with a beer (which I hope is near),
you're wedding proposals, windstorms, and cow heads
I'll try not to fear.

We best get to know each other, after all we've got two years!



Ruby's Garden

Carrot-Top Pesto

By Ruby Kiker, G9

Basil is a little harder to find here in Swaziland, and if it's not growing in your garden, it's hard to satisfy your impromptu pizza craving. Lucky for you, carrot tops are, and if you're desperate they will definitely do the trick. I wouldn't recommend them as a substitute for pasta sauce, but on pizza with myriad other flavors, carrot tops do just fine.

Recipe:

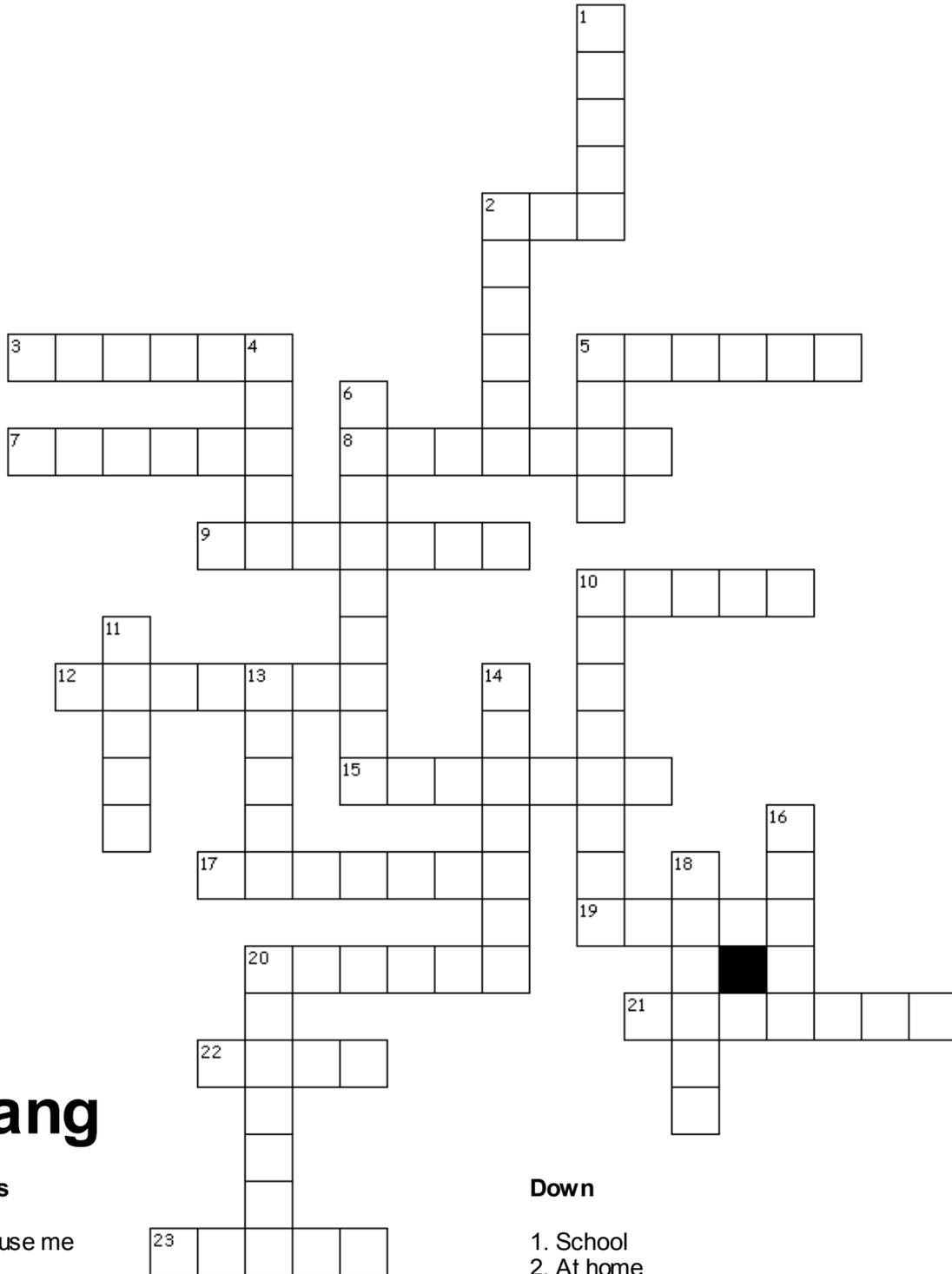
- ◆ 1 bunch of carrot tops
- ◆ 1/4 – 1/2 cup walnuts
- ◆ 2-3 Tbsp. Olive Oil
- ◆ Salt & pepper to taste
- ◆ Finely grated pamesan if you have it, but is not required
- ◆ Maybe a clove of garlic if you'd like

Blend all ingredients with a blender, hand blender (what I use and love), mortar and pestle or mutilate endlessly with your excellent knife skills.

Mix up some pizza dough from your copy of "Where There is No Chef," add all the delicious toppings you have and try your hand at pan pizza with carrot-top pesto.



Ruby's Garden is a monthly feature. Ruby is a wonderful cook and avid gardener who will share gardening tips, stories from her garden, and recipes!



Slang

Across

- 2. Excuse me
- 3. Girl
- 5. Money
- 7. Alcohol
- 8. Sister in slang
- 9. Shoes
- 10. Job or a task
- 12. Teacher
- 15. Pants/trousers
- 17. Dad
- 19. Neighborhood
- 20. Bread
- 21. Food
- 22. Buddy or friend in slang
- 23. Mom/mother

Down

- 1. School
- 2. At home
- 4. Car
- 5. Girlfriend
- 6. What are you doing?
- 10. Grandmother
- 11. Football in township slang
- 13. Boyfriend
- 14. Come
- 16. Hi or hello in slang
- 18. Small boy
- 20. Cigarette

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Swaziland

Hook a bro (and brosis)
up. Write and submit to
the SOJO about some-
thing happening your side!

Guess the source

"Travel is fatal to prejudice, bigotry, and narrow-mindedness. Broad, wholesome, charitable views of men and things cannot be acquired by vegetating in one corner of the Earth all one's lifetime."

John F. Kennedy, Jacques Cousteau, Thor Heyerdahl or Mark Twain?

Answers to the Bluff the Reader Headline Challenge

B. Gaga concert butt flash causes outraged flap

Siswati Phrase of the Month:

Mahlekeh-latsini

A man with a big, untidy beard

FEBRUARY 2013

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