



SOJO Mail

Dear Editors,

Peace Corps service is “the toughest job you’ll ever love.” What the posters don’t tell you is that the challenges faced are widely different for each post, site, and even each individual volunteer. It is because of the prevalence of challenges that we applaud those that finish out their two-years at site. However, circumstances do sometimes lead people to decide to head home early.

The individual decision to ET is exactly that – individual. No one except the individual volunteer is in a position to say what the right decision is given the circumstances. People go home for a wide variety of reasons including medical, family, new opportunities, safety concerns, and simply because this is not a right fit. It is arrogant of someone outside to say what course of action is “right,” much less what course of action we ourselves would take given the same set of circumstances.

Yes, Group 9 has had a high rate of volunteers who decided to ET. However, this should not be seen as a reflection on the people who left and especially not a reflection on those of us who are still here. The 24 of us have stuck it out through difficult times. Even through multiple transitions of personnel at the office, the simultaneous introduction and disintegration of the non-formal education project, and numerous other challenges, we continue to work hard to make a difference here in Swaziland.

The ET rate of a particular group is less a reflection on the members of that group than it is on the circumstance they were placed in. The Office should be incredibly proud of their accomplishment in correcting many of the problems that lead some of our members to leave.

I like laughing as much as anyone, but jokes at the expense of the “mighty fine” Group 9 are getting old. Our ET rate is not a sign of weakness, but of the perseverance and commitment of those of us still here. We have worked hard to achieve great things at site and many of us worked just as hard to help make things just a little easier for future volunteers coming to Swaziland to overcome these obstacles.

The attitude of superiority and stigma towards those individuals who have prematurely ended their service is offensive. It is also counter-productive because a miserable or distracted volunteer is neither effective nor a good ambassador of the best of America.

Each volunteer still serving in Swaziland should be proud of what they have accomplished and overcome.

However, it is important to remember that in some circumstances the best decision for the individual volunteer is to take the option of Early Termination.

-Oliver Zornow

Dear Editors,

Thank you so much for all of your dedication and time Libby and Ryan! We all appreciate the commitment that you have had in making *Sojo* such a success as well as the contribution of all the Peace Corps Volunteers. Thanks so much and good luck future g10 *Sojo* editors!

-Dhuha Tawil

Send your letters to swazisojournal@gmail.com



From the Top

Elections, Thanksgiving, and Softball

By Steve Driehaus, CD

I'm reminded at this time of year that we are family. Despite the fact that we come from different parts of the United States and have very disparate pasts, we share a bond as Americans working/volunteering for Peace Corps in Swaziland at this time. That bond ties us together, causing us to share experiences, triumphs, frustrations, and relationships.

I was reminded of this on Election night as many of you came to the house, as both Republicans and Democrats to watch the orderly, democratic election of our next President. Going from room to room, I was taking in the conversations, the music/movie swapping, the board games, and the ongoing political punditry. I come from a very large family, where this type of organized chaos is more common than not. So, for me, this felt like family.

On Thursday, we will come together again to share a Thanksgiving feast. Lucienne has been cooking since Sunday, and Martha, Patrick, Aiesha, and several Volunteers are now in full cooking mode as the effort is joined. It will culminate in a traditional Thanksgiving meal with turkey, dressing, and all the trimmings. We come together collectively to give thanks for each other and for our many blessings. Finally, on Friday we will prevail in the annual Softball game against Embassy staff. Again, joining together to show off our awesome (but sometimes limited) athletic prowess as a team.

The point here is that we are a team, a family. As screwed up as we can sometimes be, we're in this together – a group of amazingly talented, thoughtful, caring people representing the best of what our country has to offer. We are not perfect, as no families are, but collectively we are a force for good in a country where there is much work to be done.

I think of Peace Corps Swaziland as America's true *Modern Family*, and I'm certainly happy to be your Phil Dunphy.

PCMO Notes

By Dayneese Santos, PCMO

HOLIDAY BLUES

This condition may be prevented provided you make a plan. Decide now how you'd like to spend the holidays and with whom. Don't leave out your host family as they probably have never experienced a real "American style" Thanksgiving or Christmas. Be open to sharing some of your favorite traditions or recipes with them. By all means, put up your decorations and play your favorite tunes of the season. If you decide to travel, avoid last minute reservations and expect crowds. You'll probably receive those emotional phone calls from family and friends at home. Surprise them with your spirit of adventure and discovery and share with them the new customs that you'll be experiencing. Then again, sometimes it just boils down to having a good cry and that's ok too! Tears can be therapeutic, stimulate endorphins in the brain, and provide comfort. So have a cry if it suits you, and get ready to welcome in a New Year in Swaziland.

GOING SOMEWHERE?

All Volunteers travelling to the U.S. must stop by the med unit to sign out their WHO yellow immunization card and a Health Benefits Program Identification Card. If you become ill in the U.S. and need to see a health care provider, contact the Office of Medical Services (OMS) for authorization from an International Health Coordinator, (202-692-1500). You must present your Health Benefits Program Identification Card at each medical appointment. Once you notify OMS of illness, you may not return to Swaziland until you have been medically cleared by OMS. Your status will be "Medical Hold" until you are medically cleared by OMS. Therefore, your medical care provider must fax or scan a summary of your diagnosis and treatment to OMS for review. Should your "Medical Hold" become extensive, OMS may authorize per diem. Bear in mind however, that if "Medical Hold" exceeds 45 days, it may result in medical separation.

All other Volunteers travelling outside of Swaziland must stop by the med unit to sign out their WHO yellow immunization card which contains documentation of Yellow Fever Immunization.

WHO yellow immunization cards must be returned to the med unit upon return to Swaziland.

News from the Training Unit: Group 10 PCV In-Service Training

By Musa Malaza, Training Manager

Sanibonan' nine bekunene!

I hope that this communication will find you in good spirits. The Training unit would like to congratulate Group 10 Volunteers again for all the hard work they are putting in as they study their communities, and we are all looking forward to the reconnect.

Right now, the Programming and Training units are in the process of planning for your 3rd Phase of PST – the In-Service Training (IST). So, let me brief you on the logistics of this Training.

Lodging for IST

IST (In Service Training) will be held at the Institute of Development Management College in Kwaluseni, Matsapha. The set up is the same as during your PST, same Training room facility and the same lodging facility. You will be staying at this centre for the duration of IST. You will pair up with a colleague in each room assigned to you by the Centre's housekeeper. All three meals will be provided by FEDICS Food Services. You will arrive at the training centre in the afternoon of Sunday, December 2, 2012. Your first meal will be dinner at 6:00pm. The last meal paid by Peace Corps will be breakfast on Sunday the 9th. Departure back to your sites will be on the 9th of December 2012 after breakfast.

Sessions

All the IST and sessions will be held in the same Training / conference room used during PST. Your days will be packed with Technical sessions and information sharing opportunities. Each day will begin at 08:00 in the morning and end at 5:00 in the afternoon, with some possible scheduled optional evening sessions. We also expect you to bring along all your completed technical and language assignments. You will receive your schedule on arrival at IDM.

If you have other questions related to the IST, please feel free to talk to Musa (76028528) or Patrick (7602). We are looking forward to seeing all of you there. Keep well and continue the good work you are doing for Swaziland.

Draft daily schedule

- 02 Dec 4:00pm – 5:30pm Arrive at IDM
- 5:30pm – 6:00pm Schedule overview at the Dining hall room
- 6:00pm – 7:00pm Dinner
- 03 – 08 Dec 8:00am – 5:30pm Training
- 09 Dec 8:00am – 9:00am Breakfast and departure afterwards

We hope your integration is still going well. We miss you all and can't wait to see you at your In-Service Training in December! Your IST will be an intensive week-long training covering exciting programming and other topics. As part of the training we will be doing a life skills practical in nearby schools. There will be some prep work that you

will need to do before you arrive. The programming team will send you instructions to help you prepare in November. Please do also complete your Phase II assignment and submit to your APCD on the agreed deadline. Please also make sure to read *The Heaven Shop* before IST begins so we may have a fruitful discussion during training.

Before I go let me just say...

By Aiesha Volow, PEPFAR Coordinator

Goodbyes are always hard and I don't love saying goodbye to all of you and to Swaziland and to Peace Corps. This country, this organization, and this community have been my home and family for the past 4.5 years and leaving is bittersweet. As I'm sure you all know I am leaving at the end of November to move to Taiwan where I will enter an intensive Chinese language program. I am very excited for the new things that will come, but really when it comes to leaving ... *emoyeni kubuhlungu!* I know I will miss Swaziland very much and it is hard to leave. It has been so great to see you all through to this point and I know you will all do wonderful things with what is left of your time here. I want to thank all of you for your hard work and dedication to Peace Corps. Your efforts help make *Peace Corps* what it is and as a direct result I am so proud to have spent the last few years here. Keep with it! *Kancane kancane*, you will make it!

Ngitohlala ngicabanga ngani. I'm on LinkedIn and Facebook; look me up!

Nibosalani kahle!



See Aiesha's staff profile on page 15.

NOTES FROM THE FIELD

Photo by Bunker

Hey It's Ok... in Swaziland (spoof off of Glamour mag's "Hey It's OK" list)

By Bethany Leech, G9

... to use a dirty pan because you are just going to make it dirtier

... to eat only popcorn for dinner because the day was just too hard already

... to wear whatever is clean or at least doesn't smell, even if it is a striped shirt with a floral skirt

... to only wash your hair once a week to save money on shampoo, only to spend it on a weekly E20 cup of coffee

... to not leave your homestead for 5 days because you are perfectly happy there

... to dream about America and curse Swaziland some days

... to become an airtime dealer at the end of the month because you spent all your money in the first week

... to skip the parts of your workout DVD that you don't like (cough, cough... the dreya roll)

... to watch more TV series here than you ever did in America

... to plan what you want to do after COS even if you still have 8 months or 20 months left

... to sleep for 10 hours in a row, night after night

... to spend an extra 26 rand on a taxi just so you don't have to walk an extra 40 feet

... to start a Russian novel on the

plane ride to Swaziland and finish it on the way home

... to replace your social life with a pet cat

... to feel no remorse when a rooster gets its head cut off

... to make yourself a certificate every time you successfully complete a "project"

... to be a self proclaimed sommelier on PnP No Name box wine

... to say you are camping at Jason's, but never actually sleep outside

... to use your pee bucket in the middle of the day just because it's 3 feet away and not across the yard

... to start accepting marriage proposals if the *labola* prices get high enough

... to think you are dying every day; *Where There is No Doctor* does not lie

... to walk around with your *lahiya* or blanket tied around you and call it an outfit

... to leave the door open when you actually use your pit latrine for all to see; it's culturally appropriate to pee anywhere

... to eat at Malandelas every Sunday for brunch

Hey it's not ok...

... to rip on the retention rate of G9

Top 10 Afro-English

By Patrick McElroy

10) *Is it?* Variation: "Is it right?" Used for: making sure we are all together, notification that I'm listening so you may proceed, or mild shock

9) *That side*. Geographic term

8) *Somehow*. But only when it is used in place of somewhat. As in, "I feel somehow tired" or "the store is close somehow."

7) *Too much*. As in, "I can like it too much" or "You're too much clever."

6) *For My Side*. As in, "for my side, I can say that I'm too much tired." May also be used with second person singular, "I can see that you are more than happy for your side."

5) *I Love You*. As in, "you keep using that word. I do not think it means what you think it means."

4) *Even Me*. As in, "even me, I feel somehow happy" or "even me, I can like ice cream too much."

3) *Be Free*. Probably the best advice you'll ever get in Africa. It's a philosophy really, a mantra. It's best when preceded by "Don't worry."

2) *So? What can I do?* Best delivered in a flat, emotionless statement, rather than a question. As in, "I have exhausted all possible solutions to this quandary, and have found myself without recourse or redress of any kind. I have no further steps or options available to me. I have therefore resigned myself to give up."

1) *You can't me. I am another*. As in, the ultimate comeback... to anything.

Silent Bloopers

By Libby Bloxom, G9

I'm not sure I can ever work with hearing people again. Communicating with my hands is far more natural to me than speaking has ever been. I love being able to have a conversation with an entire soccer pitch between me and a person. I love being able to mutter a few expletives under my breath when I'm frustrated without fear of anyone being able to hear me (well sometimes). With that being said and no matter how accustomed I have come to working with the deaf, I still occasionally falter and forget about the no hearing thing. So keeping with the theme of this month's special edition:

My Top 5 Work Blunders of 2012

5) I've always said I'm too OCD to work in a library—especially libraries that don't ban small children. The library at school is the very bane of my existence. Keeping it organized and keeping the students from re-shelving the books is my daily and constant struggle. One day, after telling a class repeatedly and a particular student to leave the books after he was finished with them on the table and watching him take a reference book on the national parks of Swaziland and throw it next to Eric Carle's *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*, I screamed out in frustration—what I thought fell on deaf ears. I saw someone straighten up out of the corner of my eye and snicker. It was Bongani. Bongani wears hearing aids. Thankfully, this blunder became our little secret and he joined my cause, becoming the spokesman for leaving books on the table.

4) I still haven't gotten the sign for "Mbabane" down. Every time the students ask me where I'm heading, I inevitably tell them "I'm going to... a certain female product (sanitary napkin)."

3) 3rd Term was rolling around, and I was determined to make myself more productive and find more activities to do at the school. I decided a Study Hall would be a good idea for

Wednesday nights. I made flyers and hung them up all over the school. The flyers boasted: "Come study in a *quiet* place." I spent a good part of a day cutting off the bottom of all the flyers.

2) I stubbed my toe in the library during a class one day. I started hobbling around, laughing a bit to ease the pain. The students wanted to know why I was laughing if I was in pain. I attempted to tell them, "Sometimes, pain is funny," but what I actually signed: "Sometimes, pain is sex." A subtle swipe of the nose with a thumb is the difference between those two words. Chaos ensued.

1) When 1 pm rolls around at school, I'm tired and hungry and ready to be out of the library as quickly as possible. One day last week, I shuffled everyone out, locked the door, and went to my house for a quick lunch. After eating, I started the walk to town to check the post office box. At the school's gate, I heard a really loud, distinctive cry—each deaf student has their own unique sound to get someone's attention—from behind me and turned around to find Zanele running after me. She quickly and sporadically made the signs: "small boy," "alone," "library." I stood there for a minute and then unfortunately realized her meaning...I ran back to my house and grabbed the library key and hustled to the library to find a Grade 1 student crying at the door. Locking a boy in the library over the entire lunch break will hopefully be my biggest (and last) blunder.

Takalani Sesame Update

By Gail Messick, G8

As some of you know/ remember, Krista Clark, Jordan Dye, and I attended a Takalani Sesame (Southern Africa Sesame Street) Workshop in May 2011. The workshop was designed to help make the South African version of the television program *Sesame Street* adaptable to the Swazi culture.

The Takalani Sesame Southern Africa Outreach Project has now come to Swaziland. Takalani Sesame conducted a Master Trainers Training Course in Swaziland from 17 – 19 October 2012. The purpose of this course was to train the Master Trainers to use outreach materials designed for use in preschool programming. These colorful, hands-on printed materials include a large Alphabet Book, a Mathematics game, and Life Skills posters. The trainers also learned how to integrate these materials into their classroom activities. They also received CDs with a total of 24 Takalani Sesame programs on them for classroom viewing. These Master Trainers will then train other preschool teachers in their region. Takalani Sesame will provide a box of the teaching materials for each preschool which participates in the training. One of the Pasture Valley staff, Aunty Thandi—who teaches in our preschool--attended this Masters Training.

On October 16, the Swaziland Association of Childcare Providers held their quarterly meeting at Pasture Valley, and it was decided that Pasture Valley will host the national training for all preschool teachers at private Childrens Homes in mid-January 2013. The Pasture Valley preschool teacher, Aunty Thandi, and I are now preparing to host this training, with Swazis leading all elements of the training course. I will be assisting in the background. If you desire any more information about background, agenda, etc., please contact me at 76834319. Thanks.

The Swazi Sojourn

Restaurants... Khumbi Names... Nightclubs... Albums... Books... Gadgets... Bus Rank Stor

ies... Swazi'isms... Marriage Proposals... Care Package Items... Chocolate... Processed

Top 5 of 2012

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Cheese... News Headlines... Halloween Costumes... Vacations... Stay-cations...

Restaurants... Khumbi Names... Nightclubs... Albums... Books... Gadgets... Bus Rank Stor

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zi'sims... Marriage Proposals... Care Package Items... Chocolate... Processed Cheese... News

Headlines... Halloween Costumes... Vacations... Staycations... Restaurants... Khumbi Names

The List Issue!

Top 5 of 2012

Top 5 Best Restaurants in Swaziland (classy edition):

- 5) Malandelas
- 4) Edlalani
- 3) Thornybush Café
- 2) Swazi Candles
- 1) Forrester Arms' Sunday Brunch

Top 5 Best Vacations Near Swaziland:

- 5) Chobe, Botswana
- 4) St Lucia
- 3) Cape Town
- 2) Victoria Falls
- 1) Mozambique (Maputo, Tofo, Inhaca, you can't go wrong)

Top 5 Best Stay-cations in Swaziland:

- 5) Country Director's house
- 4) Kerry Sullivan's Place
- 3) Mahamba Gorge
- 2) Malalotja
- 1) Mkhaya Game Reserve

Top 5 Worst Things to find in your hut:

- 5) The giant puddle under your minifridge following an all-night power outage.
- 4) An errant chicken. Specifically, an errant chicken on your bed.
- 3) Your *bosisi* having discovered your make up collection. Or your *bobhuti* finding your stash of *emaswidi*.
- 2) Scorpions/spiders/cockroaches of biblical proportions
- 1) An empty bottle of wine/Castle lager/Hunter's because you totally thought you had rationed it out so it would last you until the next pay day.

The List Issue!

Top 5 of 2012

Top 5 Most Useful Gadgets Bought in Swaziland:

- 5) Hand-mixer.
- 4) Blender
- 3) Electric oven
- 2) Fan
- 1) Electric kettle

Top 5 Most Useful Items Received in a Care Package:

- 5) Hanging shoe rack
- 4) New hard drive.
- 3) American toiletries
- 2) Magazine subscriptions
- 1) Non-perishable food items

Top 5 Best Chocolate Flavors:

- 5) Do Magnum bars count?
- 4) Mint Cadbury
- 3) Top Deck Cadbury
- 2) Coconut-Cashew Cadbury
- 1) Any/all dark chocolate (Beacon Midnight Velvet, Bourneville, Lindt)

Top 5 Best Processed Cheese Flavors:

- 5) Bacon
- 4) Biltong Flavor
- 3) Parmalat Tube Cheese
- 2) Cheddar
- 1) Gouda

The List Issue!

Top 5 of 2012

Top 5 Bike Races in Swaziland:

- 5) Mafutseni 50KM Classic (Mafutseni, May)
- 4) Nhlungano Swazi Mills Classic (Nhlungano, February)
- 3) Three Reserves Race (Simunye, September)
- 2) City to City (Mbabane/Manzini, July)
- 1) Milwane Imvelo (Milwane, June)

Top 5 Cheap Eats:

- 5) PnP Submarine Sandwich - E14
- 4) Any/all Chicken Dust stands - E12-15
- 3) Fish Cake - (E2.00 Siteki Bus Rank)
- 2) Tinker's Russian - (E10.25 (with a PnP hot dog roll))
- 1) Manzini Bus Rank Breakfast - (E3.00 Egg sandwich)

Top 5 Bars/Nightclubs:

- 5) The Pub - Classy. But, you pay for it.
- 4) House on Fire - A rare find in Swaziland
- 3) Tinker's - Car wash by day, club by night. What could be better?
- 2) Jazz Friends - No jazz, but a great view overlooking the Mbabane Bus Rank
- 1) "The Swazi Bar" - across from the Gables (cheap and braai meat!)

Top 5 Musical Acts at 2012 Bushfire:

- 5) Nancy G.
- 4) Jeremy Loops
- 3) Saul Williams
- 2) Mi Casa
- 1) The Brother Moves On

The List Issue!

Top 5 of 2012

Top 5 Best Milkshakes in Swaziland:

- 5) Mandela's
- 4) Portafino's Gelato Shake
- 3) Ngwenya Glass (Best cheap shake I have found)
- 2) Thyme at the Hub (every bit as artificial tasting as a shake from your favorite drive-thru window in the States, and it would have been listed as #1 if they hadn't recently increased their price from E14.95 to E19.95)
- 1) Swazi Candles (Vanilla and chocolate swirled shake)

Top 5 Best Ways to Keep Your Mind Occupied During *Umpkhatsi* Meetings:

- 5) Counting the number of times "*tinkhomo*" are mentioned
- 4) Try to pick out familiar SiSwati words
- 3) Balance budget
- 2) Plan vacations
- 1) Reminisce about America.

Top 5 Best Tony Horton-isms:

- 5) "Like a Terradyctal backing up! Yaaargh!"
- 4) "You make Gumbi look like the tinman"
- 3) "I'm a fan of straight lines. You should see my closet at home."
- 2) "Bounce a little. Get sexy with it."
- 1) "Hit my hands! Hit my hands!"

Top 5 Most Watched TV Series:

- 5) Breaking Bad
- 4) How I Met Your Mother
- 3) Glee
- 2) Dexter
- 1) Game of Thrones

The List Issue!

Top 5 of 2012

Top 5 Best Marriage Proposal Lines:

- 5) All these cows, all these cows (with hands spread open) are for you."
- 4) "We make love all night. I just don't stop."
- 3) "I will love you like I love a baby chicken."
- 2) "You are white. I am black. Let us dilute."
- 1) "Are you a virgin?" She is! She is! She's a virgin! I knew it! SHE'S A VIRGIN! Oh, I WILL marry you!"

Top 5 Best Khumbi Names:

- 5) Jersey Queen
- 4) Chocolate City
- 3) Cheeze boy
- 2) Painful
- 1) The Resurrection

Top 5 Halloween costumes of 2012:

- 5) Exotic dancer in leopard print leggings and fuzzy slippers (Abdul)
- 4) Peter Pan and the Shadow (Libby and Kelly R)
- 3) A Schistosome (Lauren Egbert)
- 2) A Unicorn (Emily Ashby)
- 1) An uncircumcised penis (Katie Walters)

Top 5 Best/Weridest Bus Rank Finds:

- 5) I Love Jesus caps
- 4) Adidos/Mike sandals.
- 3) Obama belt-buckles
- 2) Cowboy Hats
- 1) Red Clay balls (Yini?)

The List Issue!

Top 5 of 2012

Top 5 Best Swazi News Headlines:

- 5) Man arrested for having sex with a donkey. Claims he went to bed with a prostitute, woke up and it was a donkey.
- 4) 6 Men Cross Border with Dead Body
- 3) A Lunatic Can Gain His Senses When Talking About Sex
- 2) Romney's Magic Underpants
- 1) Woman gives birth to a seven headed snake.

Top 5 Best Generations Plot Twists:

- 5) Sibusiso hiring a hitman to kill his son's husband, but ended shooting Muwande in the head.
- 4) Akhona finding out that Muwande is her aunt.
- 3) MJ getting caught taking steroids.
- 2) When Queenie's fiancé absconded with all of her money and left her at the altar.
- 1) Ketiwe joined forces with ex-prisoner Kubohne and blew up her husband in order to inherit all of his money.

Top 5 Best Day Trips:

- 5) Simunye Country Club
- 4) Hlane
- 3) Yebo Art Gallery
- 2) Ngwenya Glass
- 1) The Gables (or just a tour of every Woolworth's)

Top 5 Best Books Read in Swaziland

- 5) *The Imperfectionists* by Tom Rachman
- 4) *White Teeth* by Zadie Smith
- 3) *Middlesex* by Jeffrey Eugenides (and his other two novels as well)
- 2) *Just Kids* by Patti Smith
- 1) *East of Eden* by John Steinbeck

VOLUNTEER PROFILE



Photo by Ryan Hall

Name: Walker VanWagoner; *alias:* Sibusiso Nxumalo

Site: Zandondo

Region: Hhohho

Hometown: Petoskey, Michigan

Tin roof or thatch: Tin

Pit latrine or bucket: I usually pee on my garden...nutrients, you know? Pit latrine for the rest. And yes, any food that comes out of garden is washed, in case you were wondering.

Size of *umndeni wakho*: Ah, that depends, usually just me and *Bhuti*. Sometimes *Make* and *Sisi*.

Craziest thing you've seen on your homestead: Bull fight in the front yard with a dozen dogs nipping at their heels as they nearly crashed into the main house and my hut.

Hut activities: Reading, making things, cooking, mandolin playing

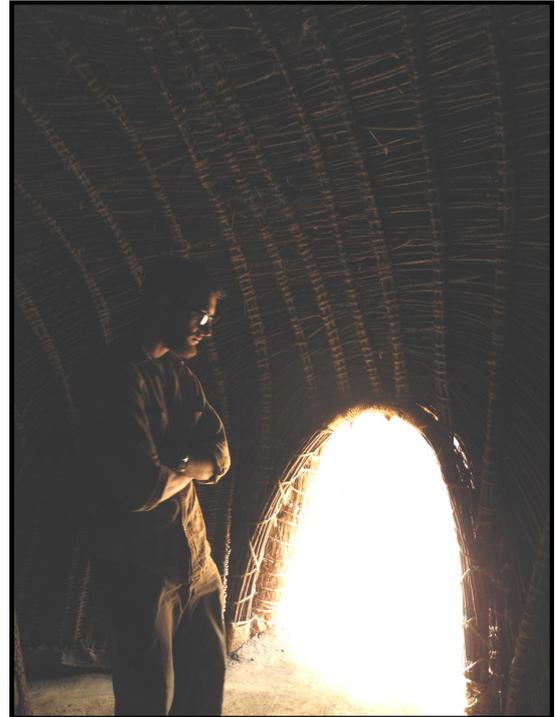
Activities outside your hut: Carpentry, gardening, goat tending, fig picking, fishing, trying to learn Casino

Favorite Swazi food: Chicken dust or emamangos

Favorite non-Swazi food: Venison steak with morel sauce and a side of banana cream pie

Favorite Food to cook or can to open: wood-fired pizzas

Favorite Swazi pick up line: Directed from *bhuti* to



another volunteer "Please come to me, I want to whisper you secret greetings."

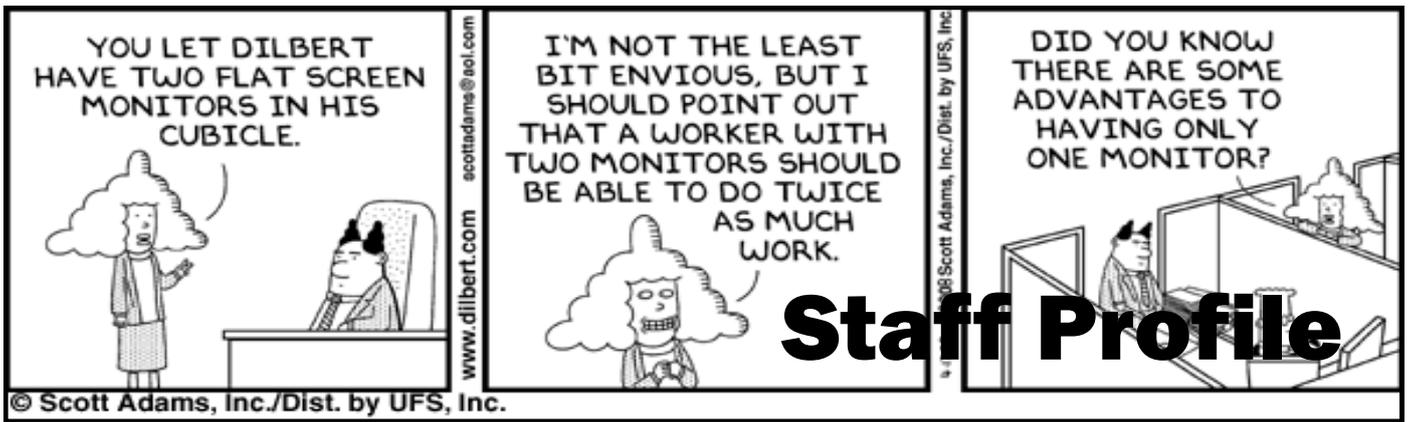
Favorite Book: Depends. Most of the time I'd say *One Man's Wilderness*, *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance*, or *Walden*.

Favorite carrying case: Black Diamond 45 liter rucksack

Hardest thing to adjust to: Screaming evangelists. I don't know if I'll ever adjust to that.

Easiest thing to adjust to: Fresh fruit in copious amounts.

Favorite place in Swaziland: up in the mountains or down by the river



Name: Aiesha Volow; *alias:* Gcinaphi Ndlovu

Site/Hometown/Community:

Now – Ezulwini

Then – KaHhohho, Hhohho Region

Before Then – Northern California

As of Dec. 1, 2012 – Kaohsiung, Taiwan

Education: MPH, Tulane University – School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine

Size of *umndeni wakho*: One sweet Swazi kitty (Nala) and a live-in beau (Dennis)

Favorite Swazi food: Gogo’s chicken stew and rice with spinach (heavy on the ground-nut) and beetroot (hold the mayo)

Favorite non-swazi food: Vegetarian Chinese buffet

Hobbies: Cooking, crafting, hiking

Favorite thing about PC: The fact that it exists – what an amazing opportunity!

Least favorite PC responsibility: Packing toolkits, making packets of handouts, and filing (although... those times are usually when I stop and breathe!)

Favorite place in Swaziland: The stretch of road 10 km after Piggs Peak heading to Mbabane before crossing over the dam. This was my favorite part of the bus ride to the office during my PCV life and always cheered me up (even on the worst days) because it is so beautiful.

Favorite thing about PCVs: Adaptability and kind hearts

The most pathetic thing about PCVs: The most pathet-



ic thing about myself when I was a Volunteer was how self-centered I was. For me, being a PCV was a back and forth between giving (to my community) and taking (hording food, ignoring life outside my community, demanding attention from fellow PCVs and staff). I was so focused on myself that I couldn’t see the big picture. Once I transitioned to an RPCV (and relaxed a bit!), I realized how much I had been missing.

Favorite Book: *The Little Prince* by Antoine de Saint Exupéry

Something that would surprise staff and PCVs: After 4 ½ years, are there still surprises? One of my favorite Swazi memories is spending Christmas 2008 at Maguga Dam – including the dance party in the street with my Counterpart, and best friend, and her huge extended family (and a significant portion of the residents of the surrounding *Inkhundlas*!)

News

US

Hostess is closing down, which will result in the loss of 18,500 jobs and even more Twinkies. Hostess declared bankruptcy once again in January 2012. Hostess blamed the need to liquidate on a nationwide strike by the Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers Union (BCTGM), who decided to strike after workers were asked to accept pay cuts, diminished health benefits, and a reduction (about \$75 mil) in contributions to their pension fund. The bankruptcy court has encouraged the company to hold more talks, and Hostess will go to mediation with lenders and unions.

In Texas, a freight train crashed into a parade float, honoring wounded US veterans, killing four people and injuring 16 others.

President Obama is trying to establish free-trade agreements with Asia, and his Asia trip, his first foreign visits since the election, demonstrates his belief that the Pacific Region is of a much stronger strategic value to the US than other parts of the world. Obama's national security adviser Tom Donilon said: "The United States is a Pacific power whose interests are inextricably linked with Asia's economic, security and political order. America's success in the 21st Century is tied to the success of Asia."

World

Israel has placed the ground attack on Gaza on hold in order to give talks to secure a truce with Hamas militants a chance. Israeli troops are massed around the border, and Israel has stated that a Thursday deadline has been set for the Egypt-brokered talks to succeed. The UN Security Council is calling on both parties to stop attacks and address the needs in Gaza.

Secretary of State Hilary Clinton was sent by President Obama to the Middle East to try to defuse the conflict in Gaza. First, she will meet with the Prime Minister of Israel, then leaders in Palestine, and finally with Egyptian officials. According to the Health Ministry of Gaza, the death toll has increased to 112, roughly half being civilians and children.

Swaziland

The government of Swaziland has released E16.8 million to pay for the allowances and tuitions of tertiary students. This action will avoid the consequences set forth by the students in a 4 day ultimatum.

The manager and supervisor at the Nhlanguano Casino Royale have been suspended for defrauding the company

of over E300,000. They were caught on surveillance cameras adding chips on a table during a roulette game. The casino was losing around E20,000 daily from their fraud.

The first female Anglican bishop has been appointed in Swaziland. Ellinah Wamukoya was consecrated last Saturday and strives to bring integrity to the church: "I am going to try to represent the mother attribute of God," Wamukoya said. "A mother is a caring person but at the same time, a mother can be firm in doing whatever she is doing." Gender activists in Swaziland have stated that the appointment is a proud moment for the country and for women.



Top 10 Reasons to E.T.

1. Wait! We have to think up more lists! Forget it. I am gone.
2. You're out of vacation days already and 2013 is still left.
3. You've finished your duties for *Sojo*.
4. You consulted *Where There is No Doctor* and it turns out you probably have TB, or cancer and headlice.
5. The new season of *Glee*. Grease episode last week. TIVO!
6. You don't get a bowl of Lucienne's trifle. Shame.
7. You're starting to seriously consider marriage proposals.
8. Your African diet finally started working. Time to show it off.
9. You're starting to crave *lipalishi*.
10. Steve considers himself Peace Corp's Phil Dunphy.

FILE UNDER

By Ryan Hall



Sumner Brothers, *I'll Be There Tomorrow* (2012, Self-Released)

RIYL: Townes Van Zandt, Mumford & Sons, Ryan Adams, Murder by Death

Ryan Adams said it right when he said, "To Be Young (is to be sad, is to be high)." There is something about really honest country music that hits a chord of melancholy that is different than anything else. When done right this kind of restrained, slightly-twanged music can strike a raw nerve. It can invoke that kind of world-crushing heaviness while leaving a sliver of light at the end of the tunnel. "I'll Be There Tomorrow" by the Sumner Brothers is one of those albums. Admittedly, I don't listen or write about this kind of earnest, alt-country as much as I once did. At one point, however, this kind of sweet sadness was like breathing for me. There is something about being younger where the lows don't get low enough and a you need to surrender to something that matches that unnamed sorrow without the shrieking nihilism of punk, or pre-packaged angst that bears its own codified histrionics as a flag. There is a kind of pure sadness that come from the fa-

talism of country music. "I'll Be There Tomorrow" by the Sumner Brothers is one of those albums. Sad but with a glinting sweetness that flickers in the dark.

At least, that is how I like my country music. I have always gravitated towards the Townes Van Zandt's and the Hank Williams more than the boot-stompin', shit-kickin' variety. The good news is that Sumner Brothers spend most of their time in the first camp: playing beautifully depressing acoustic country numbers. These are mostly hushed and restrained outings filled with ex-girlfriends, departures and romances that start long after the flame has burned out. The brothers take turns singing, each a variation on gin-soaked, golden-throated twanged vocals. One (I can't tell you which one) is a deeper than deep baritone with ragged edges on the noisier numbers (more on that later); the other Sumner Brother possesses a more delicate voice that breaks and slurs towards the end of phrases like drunk who can no longer support the weight of his own body.

Now, there is that side of the Sumner Brothers. The side of the album that belies the easy categorizations of the alt-country ghetto that "I'll Be There Tomorrow" miraculously flies over. The side of them where an album cover of collage art with a ripped sign of a Berlusconi campaign poster. The side that encompasses the arcing, floating lap-steel in "The Lord is My Protector" or the surprisingly gorgeous instrumental "I Would Love You In The Kitchen." But there is also this other side to the Sumner Brothers. The side that would punch that side in its lilly-assed, book-reading nose. That side is the one behind the kinda-unpleasant, kinda-clever "Toughest Man in the Prison Camp" and the straight-burner psychobilly-bordering "That's Alright."

This is the last *Sojo* of 2012. Subsequently, this is my last music review for the *Sojo*. If we were a sitcom, this would be a great place to put one of those filler retrospective episodes. You know the one, the one that walks you through a 12 episode season treating each character and predictable plot point like James Earl Jones reading the Bible. Well, that is exactly what I am not going to do with this last music review for the *Sojo*.

If you read this article (or the *Sojo* for that matter), then you deserve this album. You have put up with a lot. A lot of music you don't care about, loads of self-congratulatory drivell about genres, memories, and bands that no one cares about. So, here is your pay off. It is waiting for you on the Blackbox. Along with all those other characters I wrote about through the year.

Ryan's Top 12 of 2012:

1. Spoek Mathambo - *Father Creeper*
2. Converge - *All That We Love We Leave Behind*
3. Padang Food Tigers - *Ready Country Nimbus*
4. Ombre - *Believe You Me*
5. Frank Ocean - *Channel Orange*
6. Evian Christ - *Kings and Them*
7. Lake Mary - *Lake Mary*
8. Busdriver - *Beaus\$Eros*
9. Hammock - *Departures*
10. Odd Future - *The O.F Mixtape*
11. Lushlife - *Plateau Vision*
12. Asfandyar Khan - *Elsewhere*



Ruby's Garden

Dhuha Tawil takes up Ruby's spot today with an addicting noodle and cabbage salad. Enjoy.

Cabbage Salad

Cabbage
Onion
1/3 Butter
1 pkg ramen noodles
Almonds or Raw
Peanuts



Dressing

¼ cup vinegar
¾ cup oil
½ cup sugar
2 Tbls soy sauce

Chop vegetables to your liking and place in a salad bowl. Get out your frying pan and melt butter. Toast the ramen noodles. If you have an oven, then you can get the ramen crispy that way (best way). Once the butter is slightly cooled, add the ramen noodles to your chopped vegetables. Add peanuts or almonds to your salad. Take frying pan and add all the dressing ingredients while mixing. In about 5 minutes, the dressing should all become consistent. Cool and add the dressing to your salad. Enjoy! So *kumnadze*.



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!



LUBUMBO REGION

SHISELWENI REGION

HHOHO REGION

JACKETS:

Mountain Hardware Exposure 2 Water-proof 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).

Blankets (x2) Soft, sexy, warm...100E each

Email Walker, wvanwagon-er@gmail.com, if interested.

MANZINI REGION

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Hook a bro (and sisi) up.
Write and submit to the
SOJO about something
happening your side!

Post Office Handling Charges Changes

By Make Thandi Mkhabela

The post office has increased the packages handling charges effective November 1, 2012 as follows:

	OLD+ VAT	NEW + VAT
Big package	30.80	33.06
Small package	9.25	9.95

**Siswati
Phrase of
the Month:**

Kumunyu tibunu

To be tired of sitting in the same place for a long time.

Literal Meaning:
Sore Buttocks

DECEMBER 2012

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2 Molly Seurnyck Mia Zagaja	3	4	5	6 Diane Williams	7	8
9	10 Naeem Abdul-Kareem Ryan Hall Kelly Tooley	11 Lauren Karplus	12	13	14 Kelley Gorsuch	15 Ruby Kiker Taylor Cruz
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25 Merry Christmas!	26	27	28	29
30	31 New Year's Eve					