



THE SWAZI SOJOURNAL

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Photo by Ryan Fouss

Bomake, donors, Siphocosini unite for World AIDS Day

By Kate Reilly, G10

On Saturday, December 1, 2012, approximately 800 Swazis, along with a few American friends, attended the first Siphocosini World AIDS Day Event in the northern Hhohho region of Swaziland. As a result of an extensive letter-writing and pavement-pounding effort by my wonderful counterpart, Busi, and Me - to our Umphakatsi, community stakeholders, government agencies and every conceivable NGO in Mbabane - the event was a collaboration among the Siphocosini Clinic, the Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation (EGPAF), and the Siphocosini KaGogo Center, and Lusweti. Specifically, the early and extensive buy in of EGPAF was a huge coup, as it gave us access to Swazi professionals experienced with navigating the extensive protocol involved in pulling off a Swazi event.



Marchers participating in World AIDS Day

The event began early with an AIDS Walk, led by the drum majorettes from Siphocosini High School and Bhekephi Primary School. The 2.5-kilometer walk began at one end of the community and ended at the grounds of the clinic, where the main event took place. As the walkers arrived, they were greeted by NERCHA banners displaying the World AIDS Day 2012

theme: "Getting to Zero: Zero New HIV Infections. Zero Discrimination. Zero AIDS-Related Deaths." The celebration began with a performance by the drum majorettes followed by a welcome by the MC, Sipho, a senior nurse from the clinic. The event focused on addressing the importance of male involvement in the fight against HIV, and more specifically the male role in the prevention of mother-to-child transmission. To that end, EGPAF hosted the Swaziland army's drama group, Simomondiya, who performed a play addressing the necessity of male participation in a way that was both substantive and humorous and that had the audience, which contained people of all ages and genders, engaged and entertained. The performance was followed by breakout sessions, facilitated by professionals from EGPAF, to discuss the performance and issues, information and myths surrounding HIV and AIDS.

In addition to the residents of Siphocosini, we were joined by members of neighboring communities. We also were honored to welcome the American Ambassador to Swaziland, Makila James, who gave an inspiring speech. Throughout the day, PSI administered HIV tests at mobile testing units, while the crowd was entertained and inspired by musical, dance and poetry performances by local artists, community members and high school students; and speeches by the Hhohho Regional Health Administrator and members of the Umphakatsi, the community's traditional leadership. After being fed a delicious meal at the end of the day courtesy of food donations by WFP, Spar, Pick n' Pay, and EGPAF - and, of course, the efforts of Bomake - we wrapped up by distributing T-shirts, caps and Tom's shoes



US Ambassador Makila James

that had been donated by World Vision.

According to the World Health Organization, World AIDS Day exists to provide an opportunity for public and private partners to spread awareness about the status of the pandemic and encourage progress in HIV and AIDS prevention, treatment and care in high prevalence countries and around the globe. With the highest HIV prevalence in the world, Swaziland benefits greatly from World AIDS Day as a tool in the battle against this epidemic, which is threatening the very existence of the Swazi people.

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SOJO Mail

SOJO Letter from the Editors

Welcome to the 10th volume of The Swazi Sojournal, or SoJo! We, your new editors, are ecstatic to be taking over from Group 9, and we want to thank Ryan and Libby for all their hard work. The SoJo is what it is because of their dedication and hours spent in the office, and we look forward to taking the reins from them and letting them get back to site.

Our goal for SoJo is to make it your SoJo. It's for PCVs, by PCVs. We want to include your ideas, stories, photos, features, and jokes. It's your newspaper (and may be the only source of news you get for a month!) and we want you to be proud of it.

We're looking at adding several new features over the coming months. This month we are introducing *This Old Hut*, written by Walker VanWagoner, filled to the brim with nifty ideas for fixing up your hut. We are also revamping the review column. Rather than focusing on one form of entertainment, we are bringing you *Lounge Finds*, a selection of reviews of things found in the office. And don't forget to check out our new section, *Bluff The Reader Challenge*. We'll bring you five headlines from Swazi newspapers, but only four are real. If you can guess the fake, you get our congratulations.

If you are interested in writing a monthly column for us, or contributing to current ones, please let us know! If you just want to write an article about what's been happening at site, please do! If you want to talk about an interesting experience, or have a fun story, submit it! We can't reiterate enough how much we want this to be your SoJo. Therefore, we ask you to submit anything and everything to us, either at our email (swazisojournal@gmail.com) or at any of our personal emails. You can leave articles or photos in our box in the office or on the volunteer share folder on the office computers. Really, the possibilities for getting in touch with us are endless!

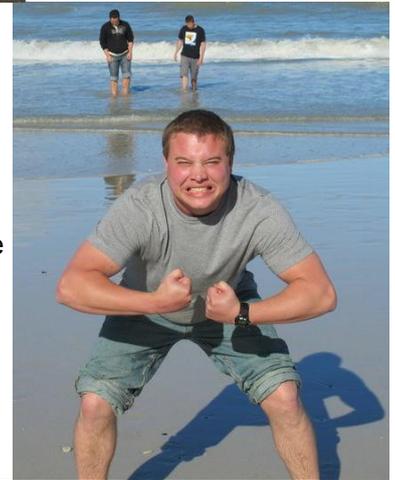
PCVs are pretty awesome people, and we think they need some awesome reading material in their huts during rainy days. What more could you ask for than the SoJo?

Thanks!

Blythe, Tim, and Hilary



Blythe Terrell



Tim Schulte



Hilary Wartinger

Send your letters to swazisojournal@gmail.com

From the Top

New Faces at Peace Corps

By **Steve Driehaus**
Country Director

As the year ends, and we reflect upon the friends who have joined us and those who have left, I want to welcome two new staffers to the Peace Corps family – Anne Borrel and Pamela Mhlanga.

Anne Borrel comes to us from the Mbabane Clinic and has been hired as the back-up PCMO, Peace Corps Medical Officer. Anne will be working part time in the medical unit and will be on call when Daynese is off. I expect that Anne will become a familiar face to the volunteers very quickly as you see her in the office, at trainings and assisting with site visits. She provides much needed relief for Daynese, and we are lucky to get someone of her caliber.

Pamela Mhlanga will be joining us the first week in January. Pam will replace Aiesha but will carry slightly different responsibilities. Pam will join Amelita as a Programming and Training Assistant (PTA) where she will provide support in the programming unit and will also provide training to volunteers. Pam will share responsibilities in assisting volunteers with grant requests and will also be assisting with the monitoring and evaluation of Peace Corps programs. Pam's knowledge of PEPFAR was demonstrated in her previous work for ICAP. She will be a great asset to Peace Corps Swaziland.

I encourage all of you to stop by and greet the Peace Corps staff when you come to the office. You might learn a bit more about the people working every day to support you and to make your experience here in Swaziland a great one. The lounge will still be there when you make it down the steps.



Safety and security tips for the holidays

By **Mfanafuthi Vilakati**
Safety & Security Coordinator

Compliments of the season to everyone!

I have prepared and circulated via email a safety and security advisory specific to the festive season and when you go on vacation. Please make time to read it.

Vacations: When you go on vacation, please make all the necessary preparations regarding the safety of your house whilst you are away, arranging for someone to take care of your pet and providing a full itinerary to PC. Traveling with a friend is advisable. When you go to a PC country, you are to follow that country's transportation policies, which are available either in the PCV lounge or on request from SSC. If you need security or medical support whilst on vacation in a PC country, call that country's PC Staff for support. Their numbers are

available on the travel advisory I'm about to send out to PCVs. Avoid doing anything that you would not do locally, like being out at night.

Rains are still pouring in most parts of Swaziland, and as a result some rivers are almost flooding. 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.

Property crime has risen very high this year, so please take every necessary precaution to secure your property. Theft, as in pickpocketing and house breaking, has risen drastically over the year in most parts of the country, including rural areas.

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.

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

Important Points to Remember:

- Always close your windows and lock your burglar door when leaving your house.
- Make time to go through your EAP.
- Keep your phones charged.
- Do not put all your eggs in one basket.
- Don't leave your bags unattended when traveling.
- Avoid drinking with strangers or unreliable "friends."

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

Training notes and holiday absences for staff members

By Patrick McElroy

Associate Peace Corps Director

PC Kingdom – Thanks, Group 9 (and Brian)! From Sharing Best Practices at IST to Diversity to our Youth Development task analysis this week, you have made yourselves available, and shared your experiences. They are extremely valuable, and they give us here in the office a great deal of pride knowing what you are achieving. Thank you so much! I hope our Task Analysis will guide us toward better training, better M&E for you, easier and clearer reporting and a better project overall. G10 – we'll talk it through at PDM in February. In the meantime, remember to create and deliver your presentations from "How We Share Our Progress." We will need the feedback you get to design successful interventions and projects! I will be out of the office from 19 December through 18 January. I'm off to the snowless Rockies to get married! Many other staff will be out as well from next week through the end of January. There will always be one Programming and Training Staff member in the office on days when it is open throughout the holidays.

- December 17 – 21st – Amelita, Musa and Stella will be in all week (Samu in Monday –

Wednesday, Patrick out Wednesday)

- December 24 – 28th – Stella will be in all week (except days when the office is closed) – Musa will be in on Monday
- December 31 – January 4th – Stella and Musa will be in every non-holiday
- January 7 – 11th – All P&T staff but Patrick will be in
- January 14 – 18th – All P&T staff but Patrick will be in
- January 14 – 25th all P&T staff but Musa and Stella will be in the office (except holidays)

And finally, a note on identity and inclusion – there is a reason that you are all very open with each other about challenges, frustrations, food, poop stories and the like. It is not because you are all Americans, not really. Yes, spending the majority of your time surrounded by non-Americans can make you appreciate the way you can just speak, without explaining. But we are all from different places and stories. What makes us a PC family is that we go through something hard together. Swaziland can take it out of you some days –

coming through it, or this journey through it, bonds you all together more than simply all being American does. That's an important thing to keep in mind when we default to the easy "us" and "them" discourse. "We" are not all from the same America – Langston Hughes said that America never was America to him. Your story has conspired to make you who you are, and no two stories are co-conspirators – they only masquerade as such while you are here, distracted by the easy to see differences: conspicuous consumption of Aromat, interesting English language construction, men who wear their homones on their sleeves, etc. Behind those billboards that say "I'm different than you" are travelers guided by their own wayfaring conspirators.

Just as stereotypes are not untrue, just incomplete, the notion of "we" is not untrue, but merely incomplete. There are a great many factors that suggest that your experiences will be similar, but no two paths cross The Kingdom in the same way. Instead of the assumption that "we" all experience Swaziland and Swazis the same, feel the same about them today, let's get curious. Be safe. Relax. Soak it up ... especially you, Group 9ers. You are on top of the roller coaster, it's a blur from here on out.

News from the training unit and useful holiday phrases

By Musa Malaza
and Themba Makhubu

Training Manager / Language and
Cross Culture Coordinator

A big thank to all staff and volunteers for making IST 2012 the success it was. The Programming and Training units worked tirelessly together the Peace Corps Admin staff to organize the Group 10 IST. Credit is indeed due to the TEAM!

The feedback we got from staff, our partners and the Volunteers has been positive. Every one of the Group 10 Volunteers who took time to fill their evaluations stated that they benefited from the IST. Baylor still tops the sessions that were enjoyed by the Group 10 volunteers, closely followed by the Best Practices session, the Corporal Punishment and Gender Violence session, and the NGO Resource Fair. We are appreciative of the feedback. It will help us improve our presentations for the future.

A big thank you to all the Group 8 and Group 9 PCVs who made the IST

and LPI workshops successful as well. *Siyabonga bahlobo betfu lesibat-sandza kakhuuuuuuulu!*

The Training Team under the Programming and Training Team is intensely planning the Group 10 Project Design and Management workshop for Group 10 Volunteers in February 2013. The plan is to have the Youth Development volunteers and their counterparts be the first ones to be part of the workshop in the first week of February and the Community Health teams during the last week of February 2013. The actual number of days and tentative schedules will be communicated in January. We are excited about this training! We encourage the Group 10 PCVs to make use of the next few weeks to assess and select the best counterpart for this workshop.

Here are a few phrases that may come in handy during this festive season:

Ngikufisela khisimusi lomuhle.

I wish you a merry Christmas.

Ngicela khisimusi.

May I have a Christmas present.

(**Khisimusi** in this context means Christmas present/gift. Though sounding a bit demanding, this phrase is widely used within communities to promote exchange of gifts and spread the spirit of Christmas. Remember that **Khisimusi** in this context can be anything you can afford to give that individual. I usually buy a set of handkerchiefs and just give one to my special friends and my **bobabe lomncane noma bobabe lomkhulu** as well. Just a candy to your home stay kids would be sufficient **Khisimusi**.)

Ngukufisela umnyaka lomusha lomuhle.

I wish you a good new year.

Nibe nakhisimusi lumuhle kakulu nonkhe bekunene.

NOTES FROM THE FIELD

Photo by Bunker

Five months, two trainings, and a 180 shift in attitude

By Tim Schulte, G10

It's been five months, G10. Five months since all of us stepped off the plane in Johannesburg. Five months since we started one of the most challenging yet rewarding journeys of our lives here in Swaziland. Five months since we arrived, three months since we took the oath, and two days since it all started to feel very, very real.

Now, if you're a G9, you're probably reading this with a knowing smile as you sip on your Rooibos and peruse the adverts in this latest edition of the SOJO. And that, honestly, is a justifiable reaction. G10 has probably been a mite overenthusiastic about ourselves, Swaziland, and our pretty awesome bucket bathing skills since we got here.

However, for many of us in G10, these past five months in Swaziland have been some of the most challenging and exciting times in our lives as we are constantly finding all of our preconceived notions, ideals, and values being challenged by the reality of Swaziland and development work on the ground. Almost daily we are forced to reassess and process these new experiences and emotions into something resembling a consistent and healthy emotional mindset. As such, I genuinely believe that there is some real value to be gained in looking back on these past five months to see where we've been, where we are, and where we might go.

From the start, G10 was pretty upbeat about this whole Peace Corps thing. Sure, we listened attentively during PST as Babe Musa, Aiesha, PSN, and really everyone kept warning us just how hard and frustrating this experience was going to be. But that didn't really matter. This was G10. We didn't lose a man to OJT, and by golly, we were going to develop the heck out of this country if they would just let us get started already.

Excitement, positivity, a can-do attitude: I feel that these were all pretty accurate descriptions of G10 and its outlook on development here in Swaziland. We got a little taste of reality here and there as power outages happened, meetings took forever to start, and more people touched me in a more intimate manner on the bus rides to training each morning than any of my exes ever have. But these were just minor hiccups. We'd heard this stuff was going to happen. We could deal with this.

Then they sent us away.

I can think of no better way to describe the emotions of leaving for site that day than that of a forced exodus. Here it was: the moment of truth. We were officially Peace Corps volunteers, and it was time for us to take all that training, all that knowledge, and all that excitement that had been bubbling inside of us for two months and put it to work - doing nothing. Or at least that's what it felt like. I'm getting paid to make friends and go for long walks is how I tried to explain it to friends back home, and I know that as a group many of us began to feel frustrated and impotent. They told us we might have trouble with a counterpart, but nobody ever said she wouldn't return my phone calls. They told us people might not be as excited to work with us as we might like, but they never said the school would say, "Come back next year and then we'll see." They said homesteads might be a bit rough to live on, but nobody actually told me I'd be contemplating goat-mageddon after just a few weeks.

It seemed that soon after we left the relative safety and security of IDM and PST, all that excitement and positivity just got punched right out of us by the gnarled fist of reality. Very soon all the problems we'd been warned about and many that we hadn't been alerted to started to become very, very real. Frustration with bureaucracy, irritation with a dependency attitude, sexism, racism, death threats, loneliness, boredom, poverty, apathy, selfishness, religious bigotry, and rain began to take their toll on our psyche. Sure, there were flashes of brilliance and inspiring compassion, but much like the problems we faced in PST, those were the exceptions and not the rule.

That brings us to today. During IST I got a sense that G10's optimistic and exuberant attitude toward work in Swaziland had taken a decidedly negative and despairing turn. More often than not, conversations and lectures turned to problems and challenges we faced in our communities, and breakout sessions designed to help us practice problem solving often turned to dark humor or bitter resignation. The mood just wasn't the same as at PST, and the optimism wasn't there like it was.

Now, I don't want anyone to think that I write these words to pass judgment or to condemn. If anything, I was the worst perpetrator of despondence and naysaying. In fact, if I'm being honest, I think a proper understanding of the challenges we face and the

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issues we have to deal with is probably a really good thing. You can't fight a hydra if you keep losing count of the heads you haven't cut off. But as IST continued, I began to think about this new attitude that seems to have permeated G10 and me, and I began to worry. Because I saw a very real danger of this negativity turning into apathy and this apathy turning into ET's.

As I sit here listening to 3-year-olds throw rocks at chickens and struggle to put these thoughts down on paper, I think I have come to a conclusion about how where we have come from and where we are now can help direct our steps in the future. And that conclusion is: This is where we start.

We start when the illusions have been torn away. We start when we understand just what challenges face us in the next 21 months, and we start when we realize that what we are really here to do is rise above them. I try to look at it this way: If we, as Americans, with our wealth, influence, education, privileges, and power - perceived or not - come to Swaziland and after having looked around for a few months throw up our hands and say, "Well, there's nothing I can do about this" then where does that leave the Swazis? Imagine what that must feel like, seeing those you perceive as having some answers to problems and the resources to back up those answers telling you, who by comparison has little, that there is nothing they can do for you.

Sure, Swaziland has problems. They told us about them during PST, we experienced them during integration, and we groused about them during IST. But that's exactly why we're here. Let's acknowledge the problems that exist and confront us every day in a deviously ingenious new way each time and then let's remember some of that blind optimism and exuberance we brought with us from America and push on anyway. Understand that we probably won't fix what we think is wrong, but we should then remind our-



Tim's homestead in Shiselweni. On any given day you can see him running around the homestead chasing 3-year-olds or conversely being chased by 3-year-olds.

selves that that doesn't stop us from trying. Something Steve said during training has stuck with me these past few days and that is that our biggest job here is to help Swazis see things from a different point of view. And though he was probably referring to helping build chicken coops out of goat poop or some sustainable project like that, I'm taking it to mean that it is my responsibility while I'm here to help Swazis honestly assess the problems they face and then to honestly tell those problems to suck it and try anyway.

Problems and issues never get solved when people wait for someone else to come and fix them. They don't get dealt with by constantly raising "awareness" in the hopes that others will get their hands dirty. They don't get fixed by talking about them ad nauseam, whether it's in the form of focus groups or just heartfelt griping. Problems start to get solved when each of us takes what we've learned over the past five months in Swaziland, couples that with a healthy dose of the optimism we once had, and takes the first step toward change.

The Christmas Miracle

By Molly Seuryneck, G10

Sending home Christmas presents is tricky. What's worth sending home? It's got to be small, right? I'm notorious for buying elaborate gifts. This year I was particularly indecisive while shopping. I couldn't persuade myself to buy jewelry for everyone. The package I was sending home was a bit big, and heavy. Call me sentimental, but I was determined to send home gifts I actually wanted to give my family: a drinking horn, emahiya sewn into couch pillow cases, elephant book ends, wooden salad spoons, carved wooden creatures, some jewelry, and a zebra mask.

I took the box to the post office in Mbabane. Let me point out, I had taken the time to fully decorate the entire box. No surface was spared a Christmas tree or Jesus lyric from a Christmas song.

The babe at the counter took one good, long look at the box before he asked if I believe "these things" while pointing to some "Away in a Manger" lyrics. His face and tone made it hard to judge what the correct answer to his question was. I had a feeling I'd be there a while, and I didn't want to make him mad. I went with a nonchalant, "Sure."

I was quite surprised when he responded, "Then you are a fool."

"Oh." Is this guy one of the few in Swaziland to be offended by praising Jesus? Nope.

"I am a fool, too. We believers are all fools for believing. But we are rewarded in heaven by our savior Jesus Christ." This is pretty deep for the post office. I'll spare you the whole conversation. He talked a lot. I said many "oh's," "yep's," and "uh huh's." Here is where the miracle happens. He's punching a lot of numbers into his calculator. I'm getting a bit nervous about the grand total. When he's done abusing his calculator, it says something like E256. Eish! After a little pause, he says, "You pay E100." It's a Christmas miracle!

Forty minutes after walking up to the counter, and 60 E1.65 stamps and one E1, I was leaving. The Jesus Discount had saved my milk carton wallet. It was a Jesus Discount Christmas Miracle! Or at least it will be if the package ever reaches Michigan ...

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

VOLUNTEER PROFILE



Photo by Ryan Hall

Name: Libby Bloxom; I don't really have a Swazi name - most Swazis call me Libs-n-Libs (or my sign name: a graceful swoop of the bangs into the sign for "L")

Site: Primary School for the Deaf, Siteki

Region: Lubombo

Hometown: Hooks, Texas

Tin roof or thatch: Neither. It's a finished ceiling.

Pit latrine or bucket: Neither. Fully functioning bathroom complete with flush toilet.

Size of *umndeni wakho*: *munye* during school holidays, around 200 during school terms.

Craziest thing you've seen on your homestead: Deaf boys hanging out on the roofs of the hostels; one even did a handstand up there ... and then fell off.

Hut activities: Pacing the floor from my bedroom to the living room, cooking and baking, double sessions with Tony Horton (P90X) as a result of all the cooking and baking, reading intelligent books (Tori Spelling is witty, y'all.), and watching "Dirty Dancing" practically every night.

Activities outside your hut: Being the resident librarian and continuously making futile pleas to the students to not re-shelve the books, reading/signing stories to the pre-school kids, running (alone on the weekends and with the deaf students during the week), and movie nights with the entire campus.

Favorite Swazi food: *Ligusha*. Seriously, don't mind the goo part of it; just concentrate on that sweet taste of okra.

Man, it's nice to have some southern comfort here! And all

the great hot sauces!

Favorite non-Swazi food: My mom's seafood gumbo

Favorite Food to cook or can to open: Dahl or Black Bean and Butternut Quinoa

Favorite Swazi pick up line: "You make my spine tingle."

Favorite Book: "A Moveable Feast" by Ernest Hemingway, "White Teeth" by Zadie Smith, and "To Kill a Mockingbird" by Harper Lee

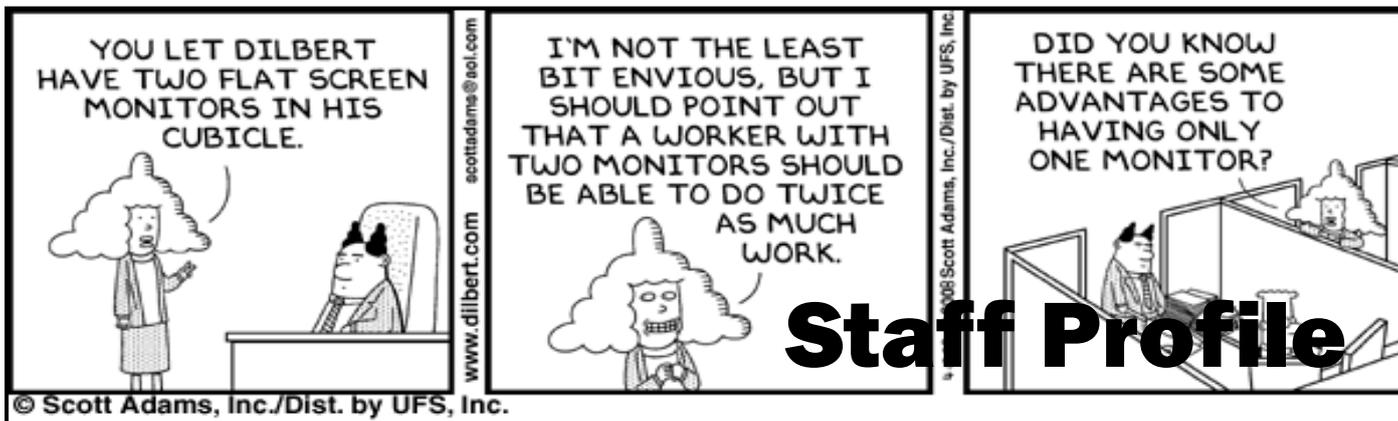
Favorite carrying case: My backpack ... preferably carried by someone else.

Hardest thing to adjust to: The lack of anonymity and being crammed in a *khumbi* on a hot summer day

Easiest thing to adjust to: Walking everywhere

Favorite place in Swaziland: My running route through Mabuda Farm overlooking the lowveld





Name: Thandi Mkhabela

integrating in a completely different culture and language

Site/Hometown/Community: Manzini Region/Manzini/
Makholweni

The most pathetic thing about Volunteers: When
PCVs fail to keep track of their package money

Education: Certificate in Secretarial and Executive As-
sistants

Favorite book: N/A

Size of umndeni wakho: 4 girls, 1 boy, and 4 grand-
Children

Something about you that would surprise staff and

Volunteers: I know how to yoke a span of oxen and
plow.

Favorite Swazi food: Papa with ligusha

Favorite non-Swazi food: Prawns

Hobbies: Indoors – Watching TV; Outdoors – Cleaning
the yard and nursing flowers

Favorite thing about the Peace Corps: The uniqueness
that PCVs stay out there in the communities facing chal-
lenges with rural area people versus other NGOs' people
staying in the air-conditioned offices in town.

Least favorite Peace Corps responsibility: Turn-over
of American US direct hire. While we benefit from their
wide range of expertise, it can be challenging for us local
staff to adjust to the different leadership approaches/
styles.

Favorite place in Swaziland: Mbabane

Favorite thing about Volunteers: Effort PCVs put into



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.

By Anonymous

Rain is pouring down, dripping through the cracks of the floorboards. Dark clouds form on the horizon, sparkling with hints of lightning. A group of us volunteers are at an ecotourism lodge hanging off the side of a gorge. The view is incredible. The thick bush lay for miles as far as the eye can see. I think to myself, this is Africa. Not expecting rain, we huddle together trying to stay warm and sharing covering. The air is cool and clean on my skin. When daydreaming of my Peace Corps service, I often imagined a scene similar to this: out in the middle of nowhere sharing conversation with interesting people. This is a good moment.

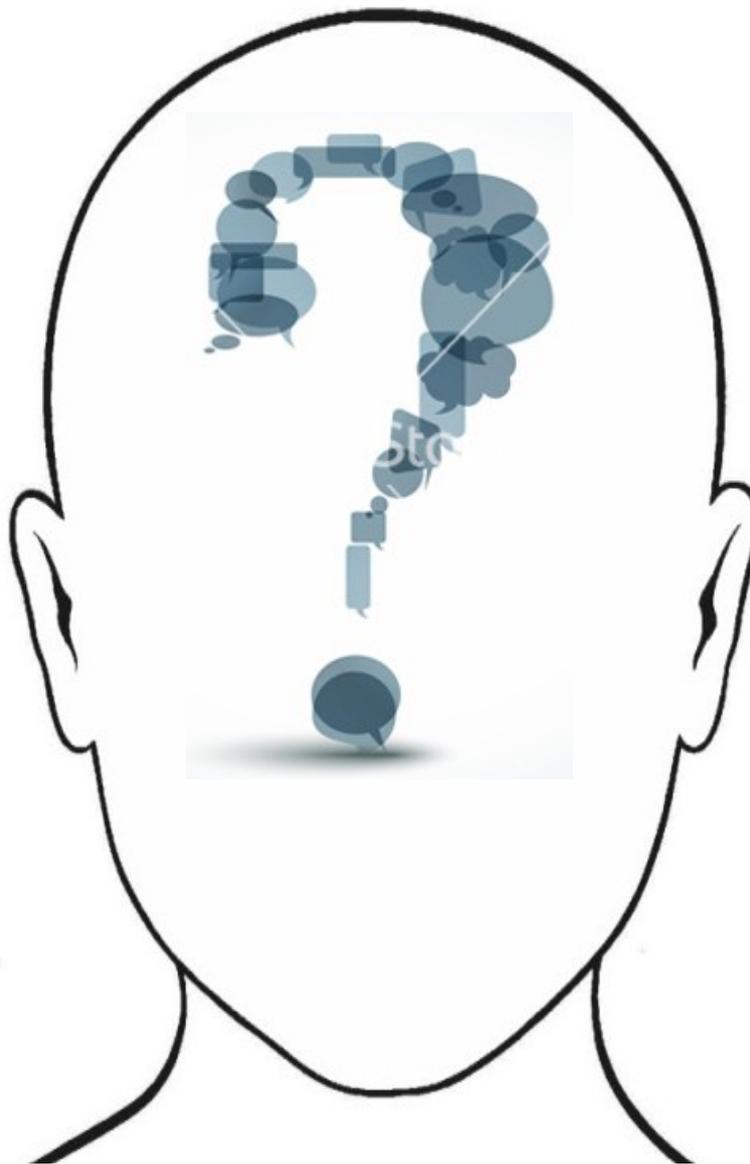
As we sat on the rocks and looked

deep into the gorge the conversation wasn't about anything in particular. Some people were talking about football, others about projects they were working on. Then the person next to

opened than us." I am taken aback, but having little time to react, I laugh it off.

Let's dissect the comment briefly; by "you're" the volunteer is referring to my Asian heritage. By "us" the volunteer is referring to Caucasians, who throughout history claim racial superiority. And by "less developed," the volunteer is saying that my race is less evolved than his because my feet resemble those of a monkey. You can see how a small sentence can express so much.

My whole life I have lived with a small target on my back. A small target that reminds me that I am different, that I am socially, culturally, mentally and even evolutionarily inferior. Even though most of these comments may be unintentional or even in good humor, over time the insults start to ache. This is very frustrating because I thought Peace Corps volunteers would be more sensitive or accepting than that. I was very disappointed. I do realize that everyone says hurtful comments from time to time; I am guilty of this myself. But I ask that we all try to be aware of what we are saying so that we can continue to have a strong volunteer community.



me looked down at my feet and mentioned that I have long and slender toes. Another volunteer, overhearing the comment, chimes in and says, "Yeah, it's because you're less devel-

News

U.S.

Jacob Tyler Roberts, 22, has been identified as the suspect in shootings at an Oregon mall that left three people dead. Investigators reported that Roberts shot Cindy Ann Yuille, 54, and Steven Mathew Forsyth, 45, before shooting himself Dec. 11 at the Clackamas Town Center in Happy Valley.

Source: CNN

Michigan lawmakers on Dec. 11 passed a measure limiting union power. The Republican-controlled legislature banned a requirement that workers pay union fees as a condition of employment. About 10,000 people protested outside the statehouse in Lansing. Supporters of the bill say it will bring jobs and economic benefits to Michigan, and opponents say it will result in lower wages. With the law, Michigan becomes the 24th "right to work" state.

Source: BBC

Democrats and Republicans were feuding Dec. 12 over whether to stay through the Christmas holiday to negotiate a deal to avoid a possible economic crisis. Republicans wanted to stay in Washington, and Democratic leaders said lawmakers should be home for the holidays. The disagreement was a setback after a week of talks between House Speaker John Boehner and President Barack Obama. Lawmakers hope to avoid a "fiscal cliff": \$600 billion in automatic tax increases and spending cuts that could lead to a recession.

Source: Fox News

Facebook, Google and Twitter released their year-end trend reports in December. Singer Whitney Houston's drowning death was Google's leading search trend. Hurricane Sandy generated more than 20 million tweets. "The Hunger Games" series was the top three most-read books and the No. 1 movie among Facebook users.

Source: CNN

World

North Korea successfully launched a rocket Dec. 12, in a move the United Nations condemned as "a clear violation of Security Council resolutions." The United States sees the launch as a test of ballistic missile technology, but North Korea says it intended to launch a satellite. The nation was forbidden from ballistic missile tests after nuclear tests in 2006 and 2009.

Source: BBC

U.S. President Barack Obama officially recognized the

Syrian rebels in December. He said Syria's Opposition Council, fighting against President Bashar Assad's government, was "inclusive enough" to be recognized as its true leadership. Also in Syria, a car bomb killed 16 people Dec. 13, in Damascus, the capital. Seven of those killed were children, and 23 people were injured, state-run Syrian media reported.

Sources: The Telegraph, BBC

Swaziland

Prince Sobandla has criticized Swaziland's Cabinet, saying members failed to follow King Mswati III's instructions by cutting teacher salaries. The prince said the Cabinet disobeyed the King by continuing to deduct teachers' pay through the "no work, no pay" rule, though the King called for continued talks between the government and teachers.

Source: Times of Swaziland

The Royal Swaziland Police Service Gender Network donated food hampers to 18 homeless and vulnerable children in Ngonini in December. The network is a new branch in the Royal Swaziland Police Service that aims to empower female officers to address issues extending beyond traditional police work.

Source: Times of Swaziland

Bluff the Reader Headline Challenge

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

- Likening the Swazi PM to Jesus is Blasphemy
- Zombies Have Rights Too
- Ten Goats Slaughtered to Honor New Miss Teen Swazi, Public Says it's Not Enough
- Performers Suck!
- Child Bitten by Rabid Pig

Answer found on the back page



All the reviews in this section will be things found in the PCV Lounge. Books from the library, movies and TV shows from the blackbox, random things from the free box., whatever we found this week! If you found something cool in the lounge, email us at swazisojournal@gmail.com

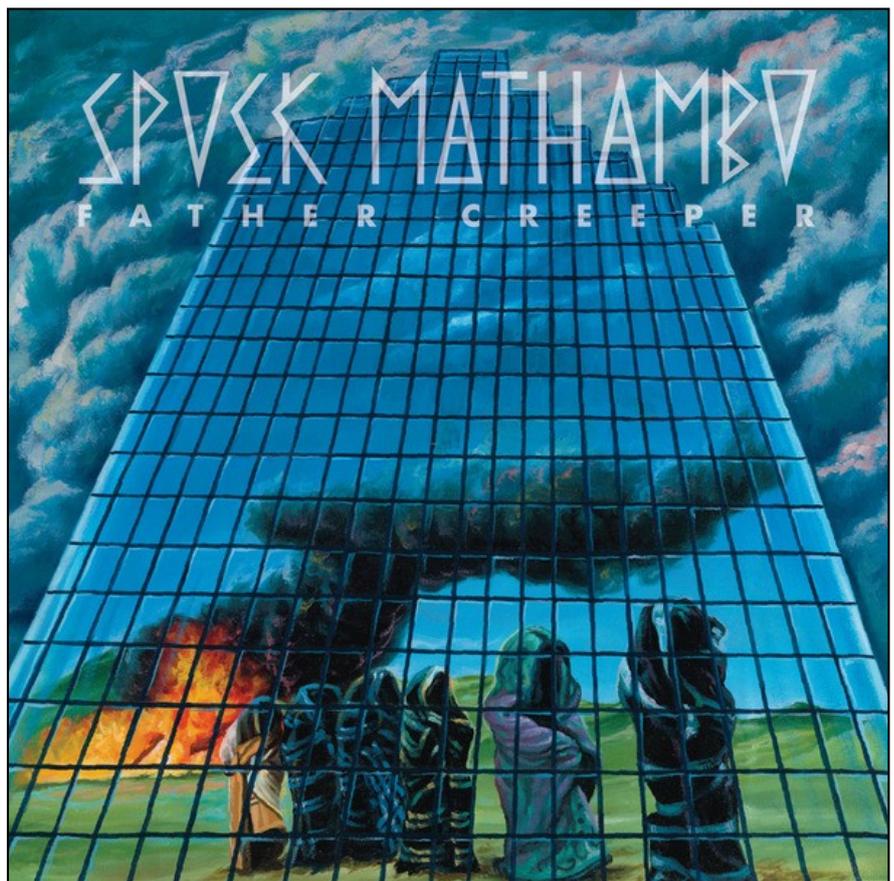
File Under's Top 10 of 2012

By Ryan Hall, G9

It is no surprise that Spoek Mathambo made the top of the list. His filtering of African pop, house and hip-hop through a truly avant-garde approach helped me make sense of all the African music I was digesting on public transport rides, via friends' virus-infected flash drives and playing at some of the most awesome/seediest dance clubs ever. The rest runs the gamut. I haven't heard the new Swans album yet, nor the new Scott Walker album and although I consumed *waaay* less new music this year, this stuff represents the cream of a very, very short crop.

Father Creeper Spoek Mathambo (Sub-Pop)

**Originally published in SLUG Magazine, 03.12 Johannesburg, South Africa* visionary/provocateur Spoek Mathambo's take on dubstep/house/hip-hop on 2010's gate-crashing debut, *Mshini Wam*, and subsequent arrival into American musical consciousness, was revelatory. Mathambo's Sub Pop-released sophomore album relies less on the low-end wobble of *Mshini Wam* and its Music is the Weapon of the Future political focus. Instead, *Father Creeper* embraces a refreshingly eclectic synthesis of African pop, hip-hop and rock. *Father Creeper* is still plenty weird, funny, dirty and political. Spoek's inclusion of Nikolaas Van Reenen's shape-shifting guitar work—ranging from Highlife to anthem—takes Spoek's out-of-the-box rapping, soulful crooning about blood diamonds, apartheid-martyr zombies from the "riot days," and



township-specific economic stagnation into uncharted territory. *Father Creeper's* breadth and eclecticism is a lunar step forward for Spoek Mathambo and the small group of artists in the new African avant garde. You will be hard-pressed to find a better album this year.

All That We Love We Leave Behind Converge (Epitaph)

I like Converge's new record for the exact opposite reasons why I like Padang Food Tigers. After a frustrating day of cancelled meetings after

walking two miles in 100+ degree temps, listening to Converge is as satisfying as putting your fist through a pane of glass. There really aren't too many bands that play this kind of metal influenced hardcore better than Converge. Their albums have only gotten better and more ambitious since *Jane Doe*. The new found clarity in Jacob Bannon's voice is a nice touch, but the sheer brutality of Kurt Ballou's guitar helped me through some rough times.

Continued on page 12

**Ready Country Nimbus
Padang Food Tigers
(Bathetic)**



This album could easily tie with Dylan Golden Aycocock's 2012 cassette *Rise and Shine* for my go-to for aural therapy. The sparseness between the guitar and banjo lines are infinite chasms to throw all the stresses of a day of Africa living. Plus, the field recordings are familiar Northern Hemisphere sounds that were familiar and comforting.

**Believe You Me Ombre
(Western Vinyl)**

Another whiplash turnaround. This is a dream collaboration that really, really works. **Roberto Carlos Lange and Juliana Barwick**, two incredible musicians in their own right, cover some impressive ground on this record from pillowy soft drones and Barwick's ethereal vocal loops, to Lange's loose, shuffling sambas. The duo really shine on "Weight Those Words" where Lange switches place with Barwick, singing in a low, far-away tenor bringing to mind a *Low*-era David Bowie. Breath-taking stuff.

Lake Mary Lake Mary (Self-Released)

2012 was a great year for the acoustic guitar. Padang Food Tigers, Dylan Golden Aycocock and SLC's Lake Mary explore the most sonorous nooks and cranny of this holy instrument. *Lake Mary* is a step away from Chaz's earlier virtuoso finger-tapping and cluster note exercises and emerges as the most ambitious record of his career: full woodwind sections, guest vocals, saxophones, free-jazz breakdowns. At the same time the record contains some of the most sim-

ple and beautiful songs of his career.

**Channel Orange Frank
Ocean (Def Jam)**

Yeah, yeah, yeah. Six Grammy nominations. Whatever. This album was playing in our hut non-stop. It is a rare record that can get me, my wife and my Swazi *sisi* (sister) singing along. Ocean's investment in Odd Future made me reexamine them. I hear a lot of Stevie Wonder's keyboard and composition experimentation in *Channel Orange*. That gives me a lot of hope for the future. Probably because this record is probably available at Hot Topic (as is Converge's).

**Kings and Them EP Evian
Christ (Triangle)**



**Originally published in SLUG June, 2012.*

Kings and Them consists of four remastered tracks taken from the enigmatic producer's free mixtape released last year. Evian Christ's incredibly affecting mash up of hip-hop and haunted drones is one of these projects that seemingly makes no sense on paper (e.g Tyga and Grouper sampled in the same song), but comes together as a logic-defying artifact. *Kings and Them* is tied together by the hypnotic way in which Evian Christ, the nom de guerre of Joshua Leary, drops pitch-shifted and endlessly repeated hip-hop hooks with head-banging accuracy over rhythmic, elegiac drones. Simple phrases accumulate new meaning through repetition outside of their context. It is impossible to tell if what you are hearing is idiotic or profound. This is incredibly exciting stuff.

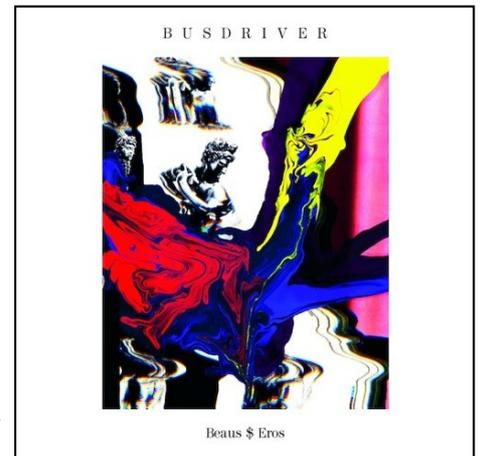
**Departure Songs Hammock
(Hammock)**

Another group I wasn't super impressed with their earlier work. *Departure Songs* is a massive record. I think I like this record because of the reasons I didn't care for the other ones. Their overwrought ambient-drone material has moved into even more overwrought shoegaze territory. Somehow going for broke made it work. There is no restraint on this record at all. The addition of vocals and epic swells of walls of guitar would be eye-rolling if they weren't totally sincere.

**Elsewhere Asfandyar Khan
(Self-Released)**

The only true drone album on the list. The Islamabad, Pakistan's drone musician is a worthy heir to Tim Hecker's weighty, streams of static and Matthew Cooper's somber keyboard explorations. A record that improves on every listen.

**Beaus\$Eros Busdriver (Fake
Four, Inc)**



I have never really been a huge fan of Busdriver's stuff prior to this album. *Beaus\$Eros*, while having a few wince-inducing moments in both lyrical content and Regan Farquhar's delightfully off-key singing, there is a lot of truth on this record couched in between Busdriver's acrobatic delivery and oddball song compositions. The truth comes from confronting some of the ugly facts of being an adult. I turned 28 this year. I think I may qualify as one of those.

Tune in next month when the SOJO staff reviews the film "Snoop Dogg's Hood of Horror".



Ruby's Garden

Editor's Note: Hilary Wartinger is filling in this month for Ruby Kiker, whose delightful tips from the garden and recipes typically appear in this space.

By Hilary Wartinger, G10

I love food. In all its shapes and forms, food is my muse. It's something that has been important to me since I first started realizing that the airplane coming toward me was actually a spoon and on that spoon was delicious goodness in mushy form. So when I tell you that Swaziland has made me appreciate food all the more, I hope you understand what that means. Americans, myself included, are used to a variety of food. So how, I ask myself every day, am I going to add variety to my never-changing pantry of beans, rice, eggs, five different vegetables, and bread? Easy: salad.

Salad is wonderful because you can really put anything you want into it and call it salad. It can be hot or cold, mayonnaise-y or dry, sweet or savory. It doesn't need lettuce (although a leafy green is a good start!) and can be based entirely on carbs. Salad is a wonderful "I have no idea what to make so I'm just gonna make it up" kind of meal. It's become my staple at lunch, dinner, and even breakfast.

This is my favorite easy salad recipe I've created. Everything in here can be bought at either a boMake market, be picked from your garden, or easily supplied by a supermarket. The amounts are vague, but I like to

just put it all in a big bowl and add until it looks like enough.

Hilary's BoMake Salad

Salad:

- 4 or 5 leaves of lettuce
- 3 or 4 leaves of spinach (get the kind with the white stem for better taste)
- 1 tomato
- 1 green pepper
- 1/2 onion
- 1/2 boiled bhatata or 1 boiled potato, cut small
- 1-2 hard-boiled eggs (optional, but good for protein!)
- 1/4 cup leftover rice from your stir-fry last night (optional)
- 1/4 cup leftover beans (also optional, but I've used lentils, black beans, sugar beans, whatever I had)

Dressing:

- mustard (preferably Dijon or whole grain, but whatever floats your boat!)
- olive oil (or sunflower, or whatever you have)
- apple cider vinegar (I found this at Pick n' Pay, less than E20 a bottle)

To make the salad:

Wash and dry (using Walker's awesome salad spinner; it really works!) your greens. Finely, finely chop the spinach and lettuce. The spinach is

easier to eat if it's chopped super fine, and I'm a big texture person, so I like my lettuce to be the same size. Up to you though. Put into a large salad bowl. Chop to whatever size you like the onion, tomato, pepper, egg, and potato. Add to bowl. Add about 1/4 cup of your beans and rice, if you have them.

To make the dressing:

In a small cup, add about a spoonful of mustard. Then pour 4 times as much olive oil as vinegar into the cup. This works out to about a tablespoon of vinegar to about 4 tablespoons of oil. Whisk with a fork until it's smooth and well mixed. Taste, and adjust the acidity or mustard levels if needed. You want to be able to taste the mustard, have a bit of tang from the vinegar, and still not be overwhelmed. It's a good idea to take a leaf of your greens and dip it into the dressing to make sure it's how you like it. Then add a little salt, some black pepper, and mix again.

To complete:

Pour dressing over salad. Mix with your fancy wooden salad tongs or with a fork. Enjoy!

THIS OLD HUT

WALKER
VAN
WAGNER

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

French Drains

With the recent rains, have you run into problems with water pooling and erosion around your homestead?

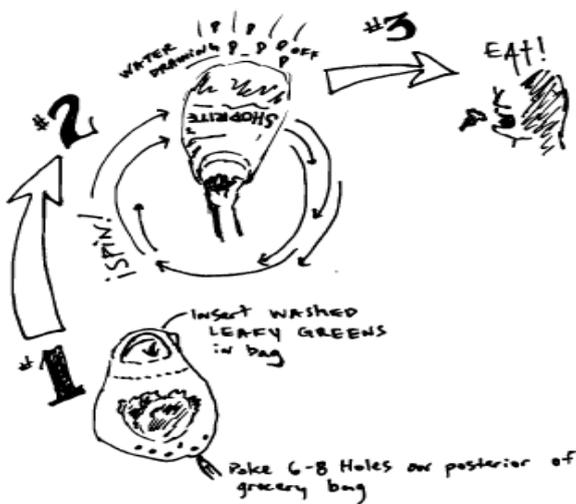
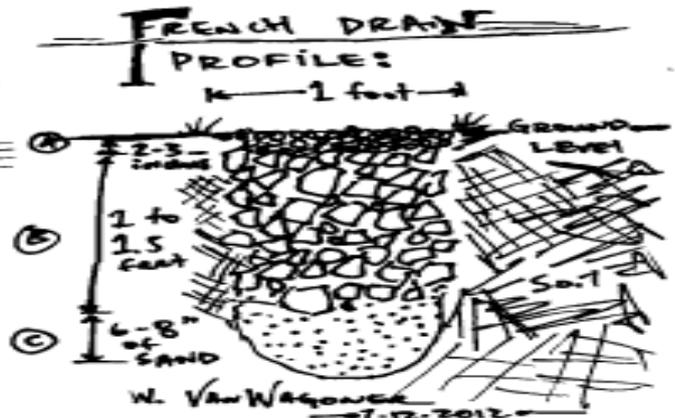
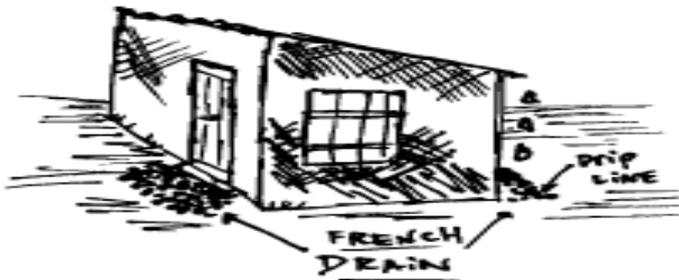
Areas in a roof drip-line and near door and entryways are particularly prone to these problems. One of the best solutions is a French drain.

French drains are trenches in affected areas filled with aggregates (stones, broken bricks, pebbles, sand) that allow for rapid drainage of water to prevent soil degradation and water collection. The diagram shows an ideal composition, but the system is flexible given your available resources.

Level A is made of pebbles and small rocks.

Level B is made of 1 inch or larger rocks, broken bricks/blocks, etc.

Level C is sand.

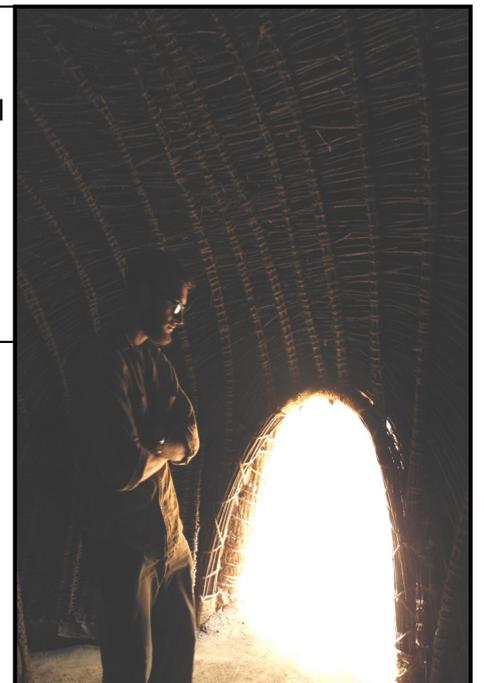


This Old Hut is a monthly feature. Walker is a wonderful handyman and avid DIYer who will share DIY tips, stories from his hut, and new ideas!

No Dollar Salad Spinner

Many leafy greens are ready to harvest this time of year. After washing your chosen greens, a good way to dry them is to:

1. Put them in a plastic grocery bag with six to eight small perforations on the bottom
2. Spin for 15 to 20 seconds
3. Eat!





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.

Wanted

Walker VanWagoner wants guitar parts, to trade or buy. Contact him at 78316752 or exaltingatticus@gmail.com.

Molly Seurnyck wants a Yorkie puppy. Or a Maltese would be OK for second choice.

Emagama lafihliwe

SiSwati Word Search

A	S	M	E	E	I	I	O	U	T	O	M	U	T	N
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BANDLANCANE

EMAKHAYA

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SIBHEDLELA

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TIMPHILO

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EMAKHONO

IMIGWACO

KUKHONSA

SICELO

TFUTFUKISA

UMHLANGANO

EMABHULOHO

EMANTI

INTFUTFUKO

LIVOLONTIYA

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

Packaging Handling Charges

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

Answers to the Bluff the Reader Headline Challenge

C. Ten Goats Slaughtered to Honor New Miss Teen Swazi, Public Says it's Not Enough

Siswati Phrase of the Month:

Muhle sengats akayi ngaphandle

She is so beautiful that you can think that she doesn't visit the toilet.

JANUARY 2013

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 New Year's Day	2	3	4 Dhuha Tawil	5
6	7	8 Janna Baker	9	10	11	12
13	14	15 Emily Ashby	16	17	18 Sherie Viciere	19
20	21	22	23	24	25 Brian Deyo	26
27	28	29	30	31		