

THE SWAZISO JOURNAL

April 2017

Peace Corps Swaziland

Volume 14 Issue 4



PCV Spencer Pretecum G14 gets fancy for his birthday on April 13th

What's inside:



Taylor gives advice on chickens, relationships, and making friends



PCIT explains the optimal battery charge for your electronics



The Mystical Make Clarin reads the stars



Meet the new staff!



Updates from BRO and GLOW



Peace Corps

Your Post. Your Paper.

Meet the new staff

VSS Thandi Mkhabela



Thandi Mkhabela has been selected as the new volunteer support specialist (VSS). Since Peace Corps Swaziland's inception in 2003, she has worked as receptionist, receptionist/program assistant, and receptionist/executive assistant. Before joining Peace Corps she worked for Swaziland College of Technology as secretary to the principal, at FAO as secretary to the team leader, at Swazibank as secretary to the finance manager, and at Foreign Broadcasting Information Service as communications operator. Mkhabela holds a certificate in secretarial, office administration, and executive assistant. Currently she's pursuing a diploma in business administration at IDM as a part-time student.

CH PTA Carol

Mshabayiwa



Carol Mshabayiwa is the new program and training assistant for community health. She holds a bachelor's degree in social sciences from the University of Swaziland. Mshabayiwa has practiced in varied vocational positions including project management; monitoring, evaluation, and reporting; research; and human resources. Prior to joining Peace Corps Swaziland, she managed an empowerment project for girls at Swaziland Action Group Against Abuse.

Get Lit with Deb

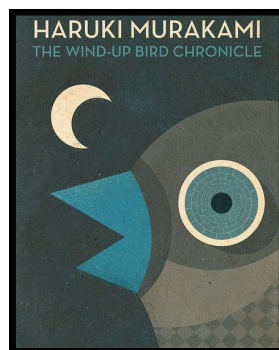


Book reviews by
Deborah Iyiade, G14

The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle
by Haruki Murakami

The Japanese mystery begins with an introduction of the protagonist Toru Okada, a married man who has decided to quit his dead-end desk job at a law firm. Throughout his time in his new position as a stay-at-home husband, strange things happen to Toru like strangers calling him at odd hours requesting phone sex, having to find his lost wife, and sitting at the bottom of dry wells.

The novel is difficult to summarize because it is constantly transitioning from past, present, future, dreams, and hallucinations. But because of these mind-spinning transitions, the novel truly captures your attention and begs you to continue on the path of solving the mystery. I definitely give this book a stamp of litness.



Say it in siSwati

Q: Howzit?

A: Kuyale kuyale. Kuhlafuna kwentjwebe kepha kutawucondza.

Q: How are you?

A: It's neither here nor there but it's going to go straight.

What's happening here:

A caption contest



Just what's happening here? Use those CHAT skills and share a caption that best captures the spirit of this photo. Remember to keep your captions VRF-appropriate. Patrick and Sara will choose their favorite caption(s) and share them in the next issue with this photo, along with a new photo. So, keep those two happy or else you may feature in the next *What's happening here*.

Submit your caption or photo through WhatsApp to Patrick at 76567386 or to Sara at 76567376. Do so by May 5 if you want a chance to see it published in the May SOJO.

SOJO Shout Outs

Nolan and Zach are comic book champs.
-Corbin

Shout to Anadelia for being Peace Corps Swaziland's Latin dance wrangler.
-Kirby

Shout out to Kirby for saving me from technology. Again. And again.
-Tori

Shout out to the Durban vacay crew! Had the best trip ever with you ladies. Thanks for the laughter and love!
-Lakia

Shout out to MV for being MV.

-Timmya

Shout out to Meaghan for not losing her keys today!

-Tori

Shout out to Babe Ndzabandzaba for coming all the way to Mpomptha to help with fixing my roof. I've been sleeping like a baby every since.

-Akirah

Shout out to Glenda for being a wonderful host.

-Abby



By Robert Amy,
G14

HEY PCIT!

How do I charge my electronic devices so that their batteries last as long as possible?

The one or two user manuals I've actually spent any time reading (or claim to have read) said something about not overcharging the battery to maintain the device's lifespan, but what does that mean? If you've ever had questions about how to charge electronics, or simply might be interested in learning more about rechargeable batteries, look no further (actually, don't just take my word for it, and feel free to research on your own).

The website Battery University (not a school) provides a lot of useful information about batteries, and I got all of the information for this article from that site. For starters, there are a lot of different batteries out there, and they will each have unique attributes, designed to be either small, energy dense, or be inexpensive (none really prioritize lifespan). They each have a particular product in mind when it comes to their applications: small (cell phones), energy dense (laptops), and inexpensive (cars). There are primarily five different types of rechargeable batteries, and you can learn all about them on your own by visiting the Battery University website yourself.

Overcharging is when one continues to charge the battery even after it has reached 100 percent capacity, and this generally decreases the battery's life.

The degree to which this happens depends on the kind of battery. Similarly, discharging the battery to 0 percent has similar negative effects. Some batteries are very good at tolerating overcharge (or overdischarge), while others are much more negatively affected by it. For lithium-ion batteries (the ones in most phones and laptops), it's best to keep them charged between 40 percent and 80 percent. However, about once a month, it's actually helpful to drain the battery to 0 percent because that helps the device accurately estimate how much time (2 hrs, 5 mins remaining) the battery has left.

At the end of the day, though, don't lose sleep over worrying how the battery life on your device is faring. Modern batteries in portable electronics are simply not designed to have a lifespan of more than a couple of years, so props to those of you who continue to be able to use their phone or laptop from pre-2014.

For those of you who have follow-up questions about batteries, don't understand something they found on the Battery University page, or simply want to talk batteries or electronics in general, look no further than me, your friendly local PCIT representative. For all of the boring questions, though, go ask Deacon or Kirby first.



Sebenta National Institute

What do they do?

Mission

Sebenta National Institute is committed to providing adult education and training to all communities throughout the Kingdom of Swaziland to achieve a better quality of life. Its mission is to help the people of Swaziland to read, write and speak with greater competency so that they can:

- share the wealth of wisdom contained in the world's literature
- communicate effectively
- cope with modern world
- master the skills of independent study and improve their chances of meaningful employment or self-help projects

Sebenta National Institute is a non-profit organization housed in the Ministry of Education & Training that provides a variety of services to enable people to achieve personal goals through adult basic literacy and non-formal education.

Sebenta believes that a majority of the rural and peri-urban population in Swaziland is underdeveloped, and disempowered in part because of illiteracy, yet there is no way rapid development may be attained with an illiterate population. Sebenta believes that the ability to communicate, read, write, and speak with confidence is the key to the up-liftment of Swazis.

Sebenta strives to deliver a professional basic literacy program through professionally-trained personnel who are dedicated to the course and armed with necessary resources, including a broad curriculum.

Contact info:

Phone: 2404 2644, 2551 6168, 2404 5997

Email:
seben-

In honor of host families well loved, Aaron W. and Kaelani traditionally marry



By Kaelani and Aaron W., G13

Kaelani:

Aaron and I were both blessed to be hosted by two amazing families. They took us in as their own and shaped much of how our service has gone until this point. Since Aaron and I have been together since the beginning, we both got to know each other's families very well. Aaron's family made me feel completely at home and mine did the same for him. They ask about us frequently when we are not there. They would frequently joke about us being married in Swaziland, and we would just play along, mostly to be polite. As time went on, the joking turned into actual discussions. It was only a few months back that, "We would never..." turned into, "Why not?"

Obviously Aaron and I were not actually ready to tie the knot, but wouldn't it be nice for our Swazi families to see us make that bond with each other since they would not be able to see us get married in America? As we know, a big part of the marriage process is not just about binding two people together, but binding two families together. It became clear to us that we were not doing this for ourselves, but for the families that provided us a home for two years and relationships that would last for a lifetime.

We feared it would look like we were mocking the culture instead of integrating into it. We were afraid that there would be a barrier to helping

make our families understand that we would not be living together after the ceremony, and that our Peace Corps service still came as priority until the end. Finally, marriage in Swaziland means something different than it does in America. However, the smiles on our families' faces and the joy they expressed when they learned we wanted to actually do this melted our fears away. We understood that there would be miscommunications ahead, but if we stayed true to why we were doing this, it would be worth it.

Aaron:

After knowing Kaelani wanted to go through the teka ceremony, the next step was to coordinate meetings with the elder members of my family. We took no shortcuts in the process of this teka; it had to be done correctly. Following the meeting of budgeting and logistics, the next step was informing the umphakatsi to let them know a teka was happening on April 1. Then it was time to invite volunteers.

One of the most difficult parts was the element of surprise for Kaelani. Kaelani knew about the teka, but did not know the exact date. I was able to convince her that due to upcoming vacations and little funding, the teka could not happen until June, thus she was convinced she knew the exact date, which she expressed to other volunteers. This created a cryptic situation for other volunteers because they were unsure if she knew the day or if they would be the person to disclose that the surprise was on April 1.

On the night before the teka, the volunteers gathered at a homestead about 5 km away from mine until sunset. As the sun set, and Kaelani and I settled in my home with some *Grey's Anatomy*, our fellow volunteers ar-



rived on my homestead for mac n' cheese and other food with my Swazi family. I wanted to greet everyone, and when I walked up to my main home, the house was packed with Swazi relatives and volunteers. After socializing for five minutes, my make sent me back to bed. It reminded me of when my sisters would kick me out of the living room when they had slumber parties. All I could do was obey my make and go to bed, hoping the secret could be held overnight. The secret was circumscribed within the volunteers until the 4 a.m. awakening.

Kaelani:

Aaron had told me that his family wanted us to go to a church event with them the next morning, and that we would have to get up early. He also explained that his family was having a financial meeting in the main house, so we could not go up there the night before. Little did I know, fellow volunteers were waiting there.

Before 4 a.m., I hear people coming inside the house. I am wondering why his family would be waking us up for church when we have an alarm set. I see volunteers enter with Aaron's extended family, and I come out of my sleepy daze realizing what is about to happen. I am quickly dressed by bomake in a lihiya and a long black skirt.

I am led out to the kraal as they start singing words I do not understand. The presence of my friends around me in the kraal makes me feel comfortable and happy that they are sharing this unique experience with me. They join me in pretending to cry, because at first I am too shy to do it on my own.

The Swazi women proceed to sing for the next couple of hours, and my voice begins to crack after being told I had to be loud enough that Aaron could hear me from his house. However, I did understand that this was all in good fun and I just felt happy.

As the sun rose, they led me out of the homestead into the brush where we sat around a fire and were served breakfast. The Swazi women expressed their excitement that this event was happening and how unique it was that they got to experience it with Americans. After breakfast, women proceeded to put on the fuzzy, round, black hat (*sicholo*) on my head symbolizing becoming a married woman. This was a process, as they had never had to wrestle to get the *sicholo* around a head full of long, blonde hair before.

I carried my spear with my right hand, careful not to switch it to my left hand, and I was led back into the homestead where I saw many more extended family members and finally Aaron, who was dressed in full traditional attire. I received my traditional wedding dress, and it was put over my other traditional attire. Many were surrounding me as they put the red ochre on my face, arms, and legs. Aa-



ron's younger bhuti was given to us as our son, and I had to put the ochre on his face as well.

All of the women and myself went into another house on the homestead to wait for the goat to be slaughtered. Instead of giving our vows vocally, Swazi's wedding vows are dealt by action. This action is obscure in America, but a norm in Swaziland, so we cut out the part of the body of the goat containing the bile, and placed drops on each others' arms, legs, forehead, and *tongue*. This solidified our commitment to one another. After this we were able to enjoy being in the company of everyone who attended the event and eat good food.

Aaron:

The Swazi Times and the Observer were both invited to share this event with the Kingdom of Swaziland. The teka was broadcast to the whole nation as a display of a cultural exchange between Americans and Swazis. The aftermath was positive overall with most volunteers and all Swazis encounters after the articles came out. Conversations with Swazis went beyond what we are used to talking about since our arrival in Swaziland, and the questions were more in depth

about the cultural exchange we experienced in this process.

Our phones were flooded with praise from close Swaziland friends, training host families, and volunteers talking to their community members of the event and being proud that Americans were able to experience their cultural marriage ceremony.

The funniest thing to me was how honored the Siphofaneni khumbi section in the Manzini bus rank felt because they knew "Mavela" already and made the front page of both papers. Bomake presented us fruit as gifts and many shook our hands and hugged us. It felt nice to be known as a couple that appreciated Swazi culture and was able to display it in a way that had never been done before.

As a process and event that can be considered controversial depending on how it is done, we felt that it was presented as a union of two families and two people, highlighting the most beautiful parts of the process. Our ultimate goal was to make our families happy, to have a unique cultural exchange, and to show appreciation for an important aspect of Swazi culture, and we believe it was achieved.





What's up, BRO?

So it may be known, the old guard has abdicated, and Akirah, Patrick, Sara, and I have assumed our rightful place as your G14 BROverlords. Think of us not just as totalitarian terrors ruling over young men's programming with our iron fists, but also as fair and just stewards of the BROgram writ large. Many of our subjects have aired grievances, unsure of the direction we will be taking BRO in 2017. As a sign of our prudence and magnanimity, we will release every month a dispatch to the Swaziland Sojournal, elucidating all recent and upcoming BROcurrences within the realm of Swaziland, in addition to any decrees we make pertaining to BRO.

To that end, we would like to share that our BROcus in 2017 is clubs. More specifically, we will focus on the development of their sustainability, their counselors, and BRO culture as a whole. Camp as we know it will not occur this year. Instead, we are working with senior counselors to plan regional events in their geographical zones, which would give more youth exposure to the greater BROmmunity to which they belong. To supplement this, we are also going to hold other events and contests at a national level, of which more information shall be released in later dispatches.

For these ambitions to bear fruit, BRO counselors need to be informed about them. So, from Tuesday, May 16, until Sunday, May 21, BRO will be holding an all-counselor training, so we may share these ideals and get everyone on the same page. As faithful readers of the Swaziland Sojournal, you, esteemed Peace Corps Volunteers, will be able to assist interested counterparts by RSVPing via BROSwaziland@gmail.com. In the email, provide counterpart's name, phone number, and community name. We beseech you to do this before MST. This event will take place during Term 2, so we are drafting a letter for teachers, explaining the purpose of this training and requesting a leave of absence, to present to their head teacher. If your counterpart is a teacher, we will send this letter to you via email, and we will also have hard copies available in the office by the time you read this dispatch. In following Swaziland Sojournal editions, we will share details on BRO's first creativity contest, and how everyone can get involved.

Further queries pertaining to BRO may be directed to the BROverlords via WhatsApp, email, carrier pigeon, or personal audience.

In BROseidon's name,
James Lester Flanagan



In the Know with GLOW

You've probably seen us coming in and out of town, rushing to a bunch of trainings and a half, and I know you are just dying to know exactly what GLOW has been up to. Well, the lovely ladies of G13 have hosted a myriad of useful trainings for all of our wonderful counselors in an effort to gear up for this year's GLOW camp. Back in March we started with a Topical Training where counselors and experts educated each other on topics pertaining to HIV education and Psycho-social Support. They had the opportunity rotate through sessions they felt they needed more knowledge on or would benefit their clubs the most. The following weekend we kicked off New Counselor Orientation, where brand new counselors were taught by our dedicated Senior Counselors about the mission and Purpose of GLOW and how to run/maintain a club. Then, we held our Pre-Camp meeting in April where we banged out the logistics and other fun details as the last step in getting ready for GLOW camp 2017!

Camp is coming up quick with our older girls' camp happening April 24th - 28th and younger girls' going from May 1st-5th. Thank you to all the volunteers who are supporting GLOW and coming to camp, we couldn't do this without you! Get ready for a fun, exhausting, and rewarding week!

Finally, we are going to be transitioning from G13 GLOW to the new regime in June, so make sure to give Madison, Shar, Emily, and the rest of G13 a huge thanks and congratulations on all the amazing work they did with GLOW this year. We'll keep you posted on the direction GLOW is moving in after our handover and all the wonderful opportunities G14 and the Senior Counselors are planning for your clubs in the future.

You know you love us,

What's cooking: Peach cobbler



By Alison Kemp, G14

I have been making peach cobbler since I was a child. I received Addy's Cook Book, from the American Girl Doll series, as a birthday gift, and since then, the only peach cobbler recipe I have used is the one from this book.

I was delighted to learn that peaches grew in

Swaziland, just so I could make this dish. Peach season may be at its end in Swaziland, but there are canned peaches for sale at grocery stores, so this can be a year-round dessert.

This is a much easier alternative to making a pie, which is perfect for Swaziland. Any size baking dish can be used—just adjust the quantities as needed. And for those of you without stovens, I give directions for making this on the stove top.

Difficulty: Easy

Cost of supplies: E25

Time: 1 hour

Servings: 6

Tools needed:

Knife
Cutting board
Baking dish
Mixing bowl
Measuring cups
Spoon
Rolling pin
Cookie cutter

Filling ingredients:

10 peaches (3 to 4 cups), depending on baking dish size
2 tbsp flour
½ tsp cinnamon
1 c sugar

Crust ingredients:

1 c flour
1 tbsp sugar
2 tsp baking powder
¼ tsp salt
3 tbsp margarine
2 tbsp powdered milk
6 tbsp water
1 tsp cinnamon
1 tsp sugar

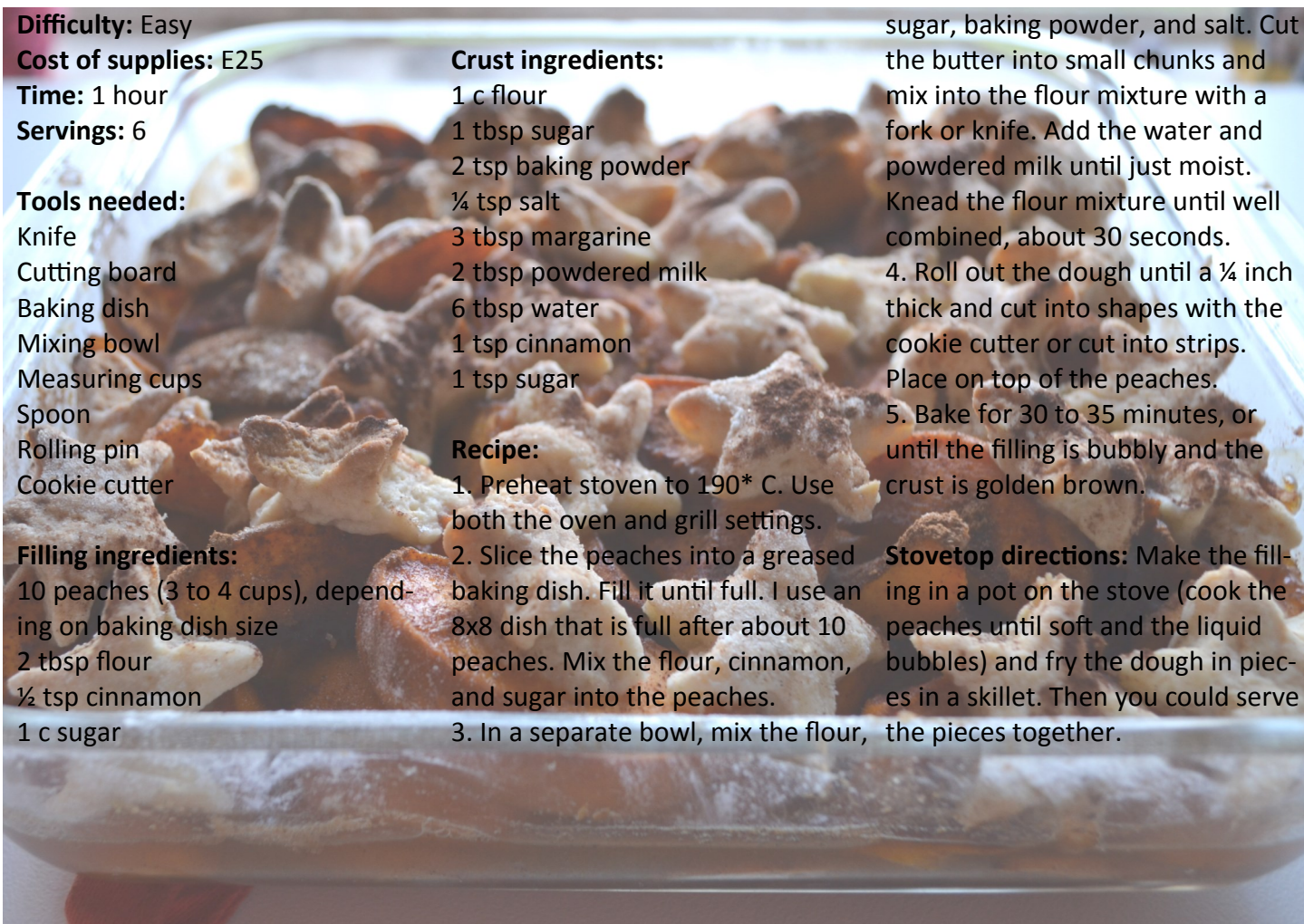
Recipe:

1. Preheat stoven to 190* C. Use both the oven and grill settings.
2. Slice the peaches into a greased baking dish. Fill it until full. I use an 8x8 dish that is full after about 10 peaches. Mix the flour, cinnamon, and sugar into the peaches.
3. In a separate bowl, mix the flour,

sugar, baking powder, and salt. Cut the butter into small chunks and mix into the flour mixture with a fork or knife. Add the water and powdered milk until just moist. Knead the flour mixture until well combined, about 30 seconds.

4. Roll out the dough until a ¼ inch thick and cut into shapes with the cookie cutter or cut into strips. Place on top of the peaches.
5. Bake for 30 to 35 minutes, or until the filling is bubbly and the crust is golden brown.

Stovetop directions: Make the filling in a pot on the stove (cook the peaches until soft and the liquid bubbles) and fry the dough in pieces in a skillet. Then you could serve the pieces together.





By Taylor Powell, G14 Swazi experts.

Dear Taylor,

I have recently purchased some chickens that I keep on my homestead with the intention of having them for dinner one night. The problem is I can never seem to catch them! What should I do?

*Sincerely,
Foul Fumbler*

Dear Chicken Chaser,

To provide you with the best answer to this question, I've consulted the internet and conducted a meticulous search so you can catch your chicken without lookin' a fool. According to www.100waystocatchachicken.com, it shouldn't be too hard. Here are a couple of the highlights:

- #3. Grab it.
- #18. Seize it.
- #39. Clutch it.
- #58. Grasp it.
- #84. Clasp it.

Since it seemed pretty easy to catch a chicken, I decided to put these five methods to test on my own homestead. The results were disheartening. The poultry seemed to sense my inexperience and I could never get close enough to grab, seize, clutch, grasp, or clasp the bird. I was laughed at.

Just when I was about to give up and return to my rondevaal (with an empty heart and an empty stomach), my laughing bobhuti came over. Before I blinked an eye they had it! In just one incredibly swift motion they accomplished what I had been trying to do for the past several hours. For this reason, I urge you to use your keen observation skills and learn from the

Dear Taylor,

Over the last few months I've developed a crush on another volunteer. It seems like this person will never take notice of me in a romantic way. Should I tell this person? If so, how?

*Sincerely,
An Admirer Abroad*

Dear Volunteering Valentine,

I think it's reasonable to assume a large number of volunteers find themselves head-over-heels for another volunteer in country. Many of them decide to take it to the next level and pursue a romantic relationship. I've devised three sure-fire ways to take your relationship up a notch.

1. Say it in a poem! There is nothing quite as romantic as getting a handwritten love letter written in rhymes and limericks. If this doesn't get your sweetheart thinking of you as more than friends, I'm just not sure what will!
2. Cook for them! One thing all volunteers have in common is their dedication to getting free meals. This creates an easy platform to get them alone and show them some of your culinary skills. If you really want to show them what you've got, see the previous question on how to catch a chicken.
3. Announce it in the group chat! If all else fails and your crush just isn't picking up on your hints—it's time to throw all caution to the wind! By announcing your undying love and devotion in a group forum it puts the right amount of pressure on your darling to give the relationship a chance! Doing it this way will also gain you

fans who will encourage your relationship in all the most positive ways.

Dear Taylor,

With the recent news about the G13s who are extending I can't help but be jealous of their future accommodations in country. How can I become better friends with these volunteers so that they'll mentor me and allow me to stay at their place?

*Sincerely,
Extender Envy*

Dear Fraudulent Friendship,

First of all, I must commend you on the excellent timing of this question. You've skillfully waited long enough to get the names of those extending but not waited so long as to make them suspicious of your friendship advances. That being said...get on it! Take these suggestions and put them to use immediately!

To begin, there's nothing like a little love from home. If you recently got a care package, spread the love and leave some goodies in their box. A heartfelt note will let them know you're thinking of them.

Second, take a moment and list your favorite things about each of them. This way you'll be able to dish out the compliments right and left and each one will be uniquely genuine.

Lastly, let nature run its course. It's likely that if you want to be friends with the extenders for the right reasons (and not just for their sweet cribs), they'll pick up on that and happily return the sentiment.

To ask Taylor a question to be included here, send her a message on WhatsApp at +268 7656 7384.



The Stars Made Me Do It

by the Mystical Make Clarin

April: The Month of
Whatever You Want it to
Be.

Let's look to the stars
to see what your future

Aquarius (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)

The one who makes it until the end

Pisces (Feb. 19-March 20)

The one who screams at everything

Aries (March 21-April 19)

The first to die

Taurus (April 20-May 20)

The one who comes home at the end to find everyone dead

Gemini (May 21-June 20)

The one who figures out who/what the killer is

Cancer (June 21-July 22)

The one who says "Hello? Who's there?" as if the killer will answer

Leo (July 23-Aug. 22)

The one who tries to fight back

Virgo (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)

The one who sacrifices themselves

Libra (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)

The one who says "everybody stay calm!" then freaks out themselves

Scorpio (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)

The one who runs out the front door instead of upstairs

Sagittarius (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)

The one who is secretly helping the killer

Capricorn (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)

The suspected killer

Announcements!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

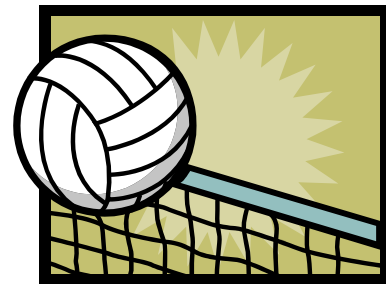


Sondzela Christmas in June

The Christmas in June party for G13 will be held at Sondzela Backpackers in Malkerns/Milwane on Friday, June 23, beginning at 3 p.m. There are 40 dorm beds reserved for Friday night for the event. A shuttle will be coordinated between the stesh and the hostel. G14 is planning decorations, music, and food. Alison is organizing the party, so contact her at 76567380 for reservations, food requests, and any other questions about the event. Any G14s who would like to help run the event, let Alison know. More information will be provided as Sondzela confirms. If you want to stay at Sondzela before or after the event, make your own reservation.

Note from Martha!

If any G13s are selling or giving items to G14s or G15s, do not leave the items at the office.



All PCVs are invited to participate in the Peace Corps versus Embassy annual volleyball tournament on May 20 at Kent Rock. RSVP as a team by May 12 to Glenda at ggreen@peacecorps.gov. The registration fee will likely be covered by

May birthdays and events

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
	1 Cody Office closed for Labor Day	2 MST starts	3	4	5	6
7	8 Heather	9	10	11 Darah, Jojo	12 MST ends	13 Nada
14	15	16	17	18 Hannah H.	19	20 Peace Corps v. Embassy volleyball tournament
21	22 G13 COS conference starts	23	24	25 Office closed for Ascension Day	26 G13 COS conference ends	27
28 Ally	29 Kate Office closed for Memorial Day	30	31			

- MST for G14 is May 2-12. All Volunteers must attend at least one session.
- COS for G13 will be May 22-26. The venue will be announced as soon as it is confirmed.

The Swazi Sojournal
c/o US Peace Corps
PO Box 2797 Mbabane
H100 Swaziland, Africa

Hook a sisi up. Write and submit to the SOJO about something happening in your world! We like articles about travel, cooking, community events, and all the great things you are doing as a PCV. We also love photos. May's deadline is the 5th. Email us at swazisojournal@gmail.com or talk to an editor.

G14 Editors: Alison,
Deb, and Rachael