Gala Raises $8,500 for Projects in Fiji

The Friends of Fiji Gala on Saturday, September 6, 2008 netted more than $8,500 to be used to support Peace Corps Partnership and other development projects in Fiji. Total income of $23,890 included $7,200 in raffle ticket sales, $5,700 in registrations, and in-kind donations of goods and services worth $7,400, including raffle prizes (airfare from Los Angeles to Nadi from Air Pacific, resort accommodations for two from the Tropic Splendor Resort), Fiji Water, donations to the silent auction, and expenses related to the NRECA Conference Center venue and entertainment by the Fijian Breeze Band. Other major sources of income came from the cash bar ($1300), the silent auction ($1,000), and donations ($800). Expenses of $7,900 consisted primarily of the costs of invitations and supplies, band transportation to and from the West Coast, food and beverages. This was the second most successful Friends of Fiji fundraiser ever, topped only by the 2004 event at the New Zealand Embassy that netted $9,301.

More about the Gala on pages 3, 4 and 5

FoF Annual General Meeting & Pot Luck
Set for Saturday, January 31

The Annual General Meeting and Pot Luck Dinner of the Friends of Fiji has been set by the Board of Directors for Saturday, January 31, 2009, beginning at 5:00 p.m. at the home of David and Willa Downes (Fiji I RPCVs), 3327 Mantua Dr, Fairfax, VA 22031. The business meeting will begin at 7:30 p.m. and will include the election of the Board of Directors for the upcoming year and any other appropriate business. Weather-related changes will be announced on the
Friends of Fiji website (www.fofiji.org). The “snow date, if needed, will be one week later, Saturday, February 7, same time, same place, unless changes are announced on the website.

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From the President of the Friends of Fiji

The 2008 calendar year is coming to a close and I would like to thank you all for your support of the friends of Fiji for another memorable year.

We’ve seen reunions, festivals, fundraisers, and much more that have made 2008 a year to remember in annals of the Friends of Fiji. And that’s all thanks to all of you, who take the time out of your busy lives to make these events happen. Thanks to your membership fees and donations the Friends of Fiji board was able to approve more than $4000 dollars this year for projects in the Fiji Islands.

Some of those projects include a nation-wide fluoride varnishing program, an eco-drama project, a village footpath project, two income generation projects, a drum oven project, and a sewing skills training program (see article in this issue or log onto our website for more details). I want to thank everyone who has donated in some way to making these contributions possible and especially thank all the people and groups in Fiji that drive these rewarding development projects.

That being said, we had a stunning fundraiser this year which raised over $8500 in net proceeds which means we need more rewarding sustainable projects to fund. So help us get the word out to anyone who has a community in Fiji to help and the vision to make it happen, but needs a little financial assistance. The Friends of Fiji is here to help.

With the end of the year in sight we are already looking forward to the changes that next year will bring. First and foremost will be the Friends of Fiji annual general meeting and pot luck dinner, on Saturday, January 31 (all are invited)
where we will be electing new board members to lead our beloved little organization for another year (see article in this issue for details). We are looking for new people to get involved and welcoming back those who have served in the past and would like to stay involved. The Friends of Fiji needs people like you to keep our organization growing and projects in Fiji funded.

Some of you may have noticed over the last couple of years our push to become more 21st century. You’ve seen the website (http://fofiji.org/) but what about the new blog role, or our new facebook site “Friends of Fiji”. We also have a yahoo group at (http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Friends_of_Fiji/). We are working hard to innovate new ways to help you stay connected and informed. Log on and check it out. In addition to these new tools for communication we have also jumped on the Paypal wagon to help expedite membership dues, and other forms of fundraising.

Again, thanks to all of you, Fijian, Indo-Fijian, Kai Vavalagi or other (whether here in the States, out in Fiji, or anywhere else) who make this organization what it is today.

Sincerely,
Daniel Schmitt
President – Friends of Fiji

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**Gala Evening**

by Daniel Schmitt ‘04-‘06

Great food, friends, music, and atmosphere, what more can I say about the latest Friends of Fiji biannual fundraiser. This was my 1st Friends of Fiji fund raiser and what a first it was. We had 150 enthusiastic attendees from all over the US; people from Fiji and America alike, Fiji Embassy staff, the Fiji 76 RPCV reunion, recently returned Peace Corps Volunteers from the Fiji Re-entry (FRE) groups 3 and 4, and even a PCV who was only in town for a couple of weeks before heading back to Fiji for her PCV service extension!

The evening started out with the remnants of an unpleasant weather front dumping rain on the greater Washington, DC area, but just as our guests began to arrive the weather broke and the late afternoon sun shone through promising a wonderful evening. The “Fijian Breeze” band, flown in all the way from Sacramento, CA, got things rocking with familiar Fijian tunes and soon the dance floor was hopping with friends and families in a good ol’ taralala.

The silent auction was a smashing success again, reuniting tapa with longing tapa owners, bilos with missing tanoa and many more estranged pairings. Sadly (because it wasn’t me), Selai Nacagilevu was the excited winner of the grand prize raffle drawing for 2 to the beautiful Fiji Islands with 4 nights of luxury accommodation at the Tropic Splendor resort. Congratulations, Selai Nacagilevu and to all you winners out there.

For the bold, the bilo’s were flying in the back corner as yaqona imbibers reminisced about previous talanoa sessions and recuperated from the last taralala on the dance floor.

Soon dinner was served. A long banquet table of food so succulent and aromatic that chefs from nearby Zagot-rated hotspots were salivating at our door. Curries, dalo, kumala, palusami, lovo’ed pork, beef, and chicken were piled high for the taking, and taken they were. In what seemed like a flash, our table of plenty was cleared and the sounds of clattering flatware on plates and happy dinners were all there was left.

Sadly all good things come to and end, the clock stuck 10 and our Shangri-La began to fade away into the shuffle of volunteers cleaning up, band equipment being put away, and the conversations of those stubborn revilers who just won’t go home. Fortunately, we just moved them to the bar next door.
Vinaka Vaka Levu and Bahut Dhanyavaad to everyone who helped make this year’s event one to remember.

And the winner is... Selai Nacagilevu!

Selai Nacagilevu from New York was the winner of this year’s Friends of Fiji raffle grand prize – a Fiji vacation! Some of you may recognize Selai, but we thought you might want to get to know her a little better and learn what she'll do with her free trip!

Selai is from Nairai in the Lomaiviti group. She first came to the U.S. many years ago to visit her first cousin Apimeleki Qaranivalu. After Api's sudden and tragic death, his son Alfred went to live with Selai in Fiji. She later returned to the U.S. and worked for three years as a caregiver in Washington, DC. Following the death of their grandmother, the family she was working with referred her to the Laskin family in upstate New York. That was six years ago and Selai has been there ever since, caring for David Laskin after his injury in a plane crash.

Selai is very grateful to be working with such a supportive family. Jean and David Laskin always make sure Selai is able to come to DC for the Friends of Fiji fundraisers and have even bought a number of raffle tickets themselves. Selai says this about the Friends of Fiji: "You don't have to, but you love Fiji. You give of your time, money and effort to support the Fijian community." When asked about the fundraiser itself, she replied, "It's always fun! The whole family can enjoy the event." And as for her experience at this year’s event: "Great food, great music, dance like crazy and at the end of the night rewarded with a free trip to Fiji!"

So, what will Selai do with her trip? She plans to take her good friend Teresia Owens (also from Nairai) to celebrate Teresia's birthday! As it is difficult to travel to/from Nairai, they plan to spend some time in Savusavu (no doubt at the Tropic Splendor Resort!), then visit relatives in Suva. We await your report and photos, Selai and Teresia. Have a great trip!
Oi Lei Na Cagi Laba!

(How to Make a Lovo in a Tropical Storm)

By Rob Bartel

What self-respecting Fijian gala could happen without a lovo? That was the question that the FOF Board had to ask itself as the forecast changed for the worse just days before the fundraiser on Saturday, September 6th. With three to five inches of rain and tropical storm force winds predicted for the morning of the event, it was clearly time for plan B.

Plan A had been to cook the lovo the morning of the event. Linda Ayers had guided the organizing committee to Potomac Overlook Park in Arlington, VA. There, park naturalist Martin Ogle was intrigued by the idea of an earth oven in action and willing to allow FOF complete access to the park for this purpose. And luckily, Saula and Sala Sucu were willing to guide us in preparing the site, sourcing food items and the actual cooking.

With Hanna approaching, the fundraiser organizing committee evaluated the forecast and decided that the event would go on. However, lovo plans needed to be reconsidered. Through a flurry of emails and phone calls it was decided that the lovo would get cooked a day early. All free hands were to report at the park at 3PM to assist in food preparation.

Kitione Sukanaveita’s assistance proved critical at the lovo. Kitione is the cousin of the new Second Secretary at the Embassy of Fiji, Sili Lomalagi. I was fascinated by how Kiti built a labyrinth-like base of lumber for the overall pile of firewood to rest upon. It ensured good air circulation throughout as was evidenced by how quickly the fire got to roaring. Soon we piled on the stones and turned our attention to the food items.

Many hands made for light work. Saula and Kiti peeled taro. Linda Ayres, Beth Shearer, Anne Baker and Jim Reierson all joined in to wash, season and wrap chickens and pork roasts in aluminum foil. Next, Sala directed the entire group in palusami production.

Once all of the parcels were ready, the glowing hot stones were spread to ensure even distribution of heat. Food items were packed onto the hot stones in a precise manner: large meats near the center for greatest heat, taro and kumala next, with palusami packets on top of the other items. At 6 PM the food was covered with burlap and a layer of vegetation before being carefully buried with soil. At 8 PM as the rain began to fall, we unearthed the lovo items by flashlight, loaded everything into cars and headed to the conference center kitchen.

On Saturday morning, Tropical Storm Hanna dumped five inches of rain on the area. We were all glad that the lovo had been completed on Friday evening. And to the surprise of the fundraiser organizing committee, our Fijian friends took advantage of the rainy morning to make vakalavalava (grated cassava and coconut) and malimali (diced bananas & plantains). These sweets were a great way to top off our very respectable lovo.
Fiji RPCVs Attend NPCA Annual Meeting

A distinguished group of Fiji RPCVs, including Anne Baker, Vice President of the National Peace Corps Association, attended NPCA’s Annual General Meeting in San Francisco on the weekend of October 2-4. The Northern California Peace Corps Association (NorCal), whose president is Fiji RPCV Scott Watenpaugh, capped off the weekend by hosting a picnic in Golden Gate Park on Sunday, October 5.

Photo: (left to right): Will Lutwick (68-70), Jane-Ann Fontenot (69-71), Jon Anderson (74-46), Christine (Laws) Anderson (74-76), Scott Watenpaugh (88-90), Anne Baker (85-87)

Fiji 16 Reunion on the Fourth of July

A reunion of Fiji 16 and Friends took place in Issaquah, Washington, on the 4th of July weekend 2008. Organized by Elliot Rosenberg, the event included lots of memorable food and stories retold at Elliot’s home just outside of Seattle. Beginning with a dinner on Friday the 4th, the get together continued through the weekend, ending with a Sunday brunch.

The 40th Anniversary Reunion of Fiji I (the first group of Peace Corps Volunteers to serve in Fiji who began service in January of 1968) was a great party! Returned Volunteers, staff and their families gathered in Healdsburg, CA beginning on July 10, 2008 for a weekend of reminiscing, “talanoa” and catching up with old friends.

The celebrations actually got started with a wine and cheese reception at the beautiful hilltop home of Mike and Kathy Tierney on Friday night (where we enjoyed the fruits of Mike’s Taft Street Winery), followed by dinner at a downtown restaurant. On Saturday afternoon, we gathered again at the spacious, tree-shaded picnic grounds of the Alexander Valley Vineyards where Tom Gore had arranged for a fabulous barbeque meal, plenty of yaqona, beer and local wine, and his son, Tom, Jr.’s band. Everyone got a commemorative tee-shirt that said “Fiji I Reunion, Alexander Valley, July 2008” on the back and “Nice Bola” on the front, a fitting description of all the 60-somethings in the group.
Although the organizers (Tom Gore and David Downes) were able to contact just about all Fiji I volunteers and staff who had completed service, not all were able to attend. But the group did include Bob and Joanna Dawdy, Barbara Bukar Delphey, David and Willa Downes, Tom and Susan Gore, Rick and Tina Goulette (and several of Tina’s family from New Zealand), Bob and Marie Graninger, Dan and Sue Hatch (and their son Ted, born during their service in Fiji), Phil and Linda Johnson, Kent and Ingrid Kluth, Paul Korenberg, Ray and Bonnie Penniman, and, Mike and Kathy Tierney.

We were all especially glad that Sue Hatch was able to be with us. She had been battling cancer for a long time and passed away shortly after the reunion. Many of those not able to attend (and most of those who did) expressed an interest in getting together again before too long, perhaps on the East Coast or in the Midwest. Anyone interested in organizing this?

### Development Projects Funded by Friends of Fiji

**Friends of Fiji** continues to support projects in Fiji with contributed funds and our biennial fundraiser. Projects recently funded are described below. Many of the projects were submitted by Peace Corps Volunteers in Fiji via the Peace Corps Partnership Program (PCPP).

#### Footpath in Korotubu, Vanua Levu

Korotubu is a coastal village on the rural island of Vanua Levu in Fiji. Korotubu’s location on the coast, at the base of a ridge means that it is prone to flooding during the rainy season. The community depends on subsistence farming and fishing for income.

In response to an expressed community need, the Korotubu village council set a goal to complete a footpath throughout the village. The footpath will provide increased accessibility and address health concerns during the rainy season. Friends of Fiji contributed $1,000 to partially fund this Peace Corps Partnership Project.

#### Cadranasiga Eco-Drama Project

Cadranasiga District School is situated next to the coastal village of Naividamu on the island of Vanua Levu in Fiji. Due to its rural location, access to resources is relatively limited.

This unique program addressed environmental issues in an entertaining and creative manner and integrates the needs of the school with those of local communities, creating hundreds of indirect beneficiaries. For the school community, it aimed to build capacity to (1) manage waste properly (2) broaden community networks, (3) utilize non-formal education techniques, and (4) provide valuable life skills for the students. For local communities, this program worked towards (1) raising environmental awareness, and (2) improving waste management knowledge.

The school staff provided their time and labor as program managers and worked as counterparts to the Peace Corps Volunteer in implementing non-formal education practices. Students of classes 7 and 8 completed projects that raised environmental awareness. The Cadranasiga Drama Troupe performed environmentally themed plays at local schools. Friends of Fiji contributed $1,000 to this Peace Corps Partnership Project.
Flouride Varnish Program

Tooth decay is the most common chronic disease of childhood in Fiji. According to the National Oral Health Survey Report completed in 2004 showed that 88% of 6-year-olds, and 52% of 12-year-olds have dental caries. Fluoride varnish, used in Europe and Canada for more than 30 years, has been proven to be effective in preventing tooth decay in both primary and permanent teeth. It is applied 2 times per year (or more if the child is at higher risk of developing cavities).

The fluoride varnish program has 3 components: (1) Fiji School of Medicine personnel train a small group of Peace Corps Volunteers on fluoride varnish application protocol (2) Eighteen training of trainers workshops will be held for local health personnel in different districts nationwide (3) Fluoride varnish will be applied to the target group of children in selected schools nationwide. Friends of Fiji contributed $1,000 to this Peace Corps Partnership Project.

Narere Squatter Community Sewing Skills Training Project

The Sewing Skills Training Project is aimed at providing sewing skills and training that empowers women and builds their self-sufficiency and self-reliance. Trainers Betty May and Elisabeth Banda teach sewing skills. Women in the area are taught to sew pot holders, patchwork quilts and other wares that they can then sell to supplement household income or to provide for the basic needs of their families. They have had 4 machines that are used for between 11-13 women, with a growing need for more.

This project was suggested by Larry and Cheryl Irava, who have returned to Fiji after years of service at the Embassy of Fiji in Washington, DC. At their farewell party, Friends of Fiji presented them with a check for $1000 to purchase five additional sewing machines. The Narere squatter settlement is located on Viti Levu, a few miles from Suva. Cheryl and Larry Irava proposed and will monitor the sewing project for the Friends of Fiji.
Cheryl Brown-Irava and Larry Lui Irava
Bid USA “Sa Moce”

Cheryl Brown-Irava served for four and a half years as Second Secretary at the Embassy of Fiji to the United States. In addition to service to their country, Cheryl and her husband Larry supported the Fijian community as a whole and Friends of Fiji in particular. They hosted many events to bring the Fijian community together. Whenever the Embassy was celebrating Fiji Day or Friends of Fiji was holding a fundraiser, Cheryl and Larry would be cooking, greeting, shuttling guests to and fro and generally doing more than anyone else to see that the event went well. For this constant support we will be forever grateful.

While living here, Cheryl and Larry had two sons, Jonathan and Bryan. The family has returned to Fiji where Cheryl is serving as Acting Principal Economic Planning Officer in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Cooperation and Civil Aviation. Larry has returned to his work at Air Pacific where he trains air stewards. They reside in Lami, Suva.

Sili Lomalagi Joins Fiji Embassy Staff in Washington, DC

In August Mr. Veretariki (“Sili”) Lomalagi arrived in Washington as the Second Secretary of the Embassy of Fiji. Mr. Lomalagi is on his first foreign service assignment. Prior to his appointment Mr. Lomalagi was the Senior Administrative Assistant at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Cooperation and Civil Aviation and was Acting Principal Administrative Secretary. Mr. Lomalagi holds a Masters Degree in Business Administration and a Bachelor of Arts degree majoring in Management, Public Administration and Economics from the University of the South Pacific in Fiji.

Thank You Note For Previously Funded Vatulele Project

August 18th, 2008

On behalf of everyone on Vatulele Island, I would like to thank you for your generous donation to the Vatulele School compost latrine project. With your help, we were able to build 4 latrines and hold a grand opening ceremony as a thank you to all who participated in this accomplishment. We are the first school in Fiji with a block system of composting latrines. The school is very proud to hold this honor and to take part in improving the environmental health of Vatulele. Last week we held a workshop to train all the teachers and nurses, who then held a training for all 200 children at the school. They learned about the process of composting, the maintenance and the benefits of their new latrines. Now we can only hope that this next generation will continue to have a desire to improve their health and environment. Thank you again.

Melissa Styles
Although Mr. Lomalagi had a busy start at the Embassy, we are grateful that he found time to assist with the lovo for the Friends of Fiji fundraiser in September and brought a home cooked dessert for the event.

From PC/Fiji’s Country Director

Dear Friends of Fiji,

A big “Bula Vinaka” and “Namaste” to all of you!

I have now been in Fiji for about 8 months, and I can’t believe how fast the time has flown by. I have gone through the whole winter (and really enjoyed the breezes and cooler weather) and am coming back to summer again. The office continues to be a great place to work, with wonderful staff and Volunteer Leaders.

We have seen the FRE 4 off to their new careers, done our MST (mid-service training) with the FRE 5 (Fiji Re-Entry Group 5), and first IST (in-service training) with the FRE 6. All 32 of the FRE 6 are still here; not one single ET (early termination) so far! They are very proud of this record and are putting a lot of pressure on each other to stay and be successful. I have been fortunate to travel around Viti Levu, Vanua Levu and to Ovalau and Taveuni. I still haven’t seen the Volunteers in Kadavu, due to changes in volunteers at a crucial time, then the ongoing troubles of Air Fiji, which is on and off due to the rising fuel costs.

Despite uncertainty about the government, the economy seems to keep chugging along, and we are getting increased requests to help with “alternate livelihoods”, i.e., what villagers can do to earn money. Sat Narayan, our SSC (Safety and Security Coordinator) has several money-making ventures going at the school he helps manage, and he has informally trained some volunteers and their counterparts to start up beekeeping businesses. Others are working on crafts, marketing tourism, and prawn ponds and even baking. As you may know, one of our RPCVs is working at the Fiji Water Foundation, which funds projects around the country---putting her development and business experience to work here!

One of the environment volunteers is working on coral farming at his site on the Coral Coast. He did a great presentation at our IST about it. I hope this will be successful as a way of refreshing the coral, especially on the Coral Coast, where, as you know, it is nearly all dead or bleached. There seems to be a lot of interest in Marine Protected Areas around the country, though it remains to be seen if the villagers can be patient enough and can restrict poaching enough to get dramatic results.

Health workers have done many good projects on HIV/AIDS prevention, nutrition and recently in helping their sites clean up during the dengue epidemic. It looks like that is dying down, after a couple of months of a lot of cases, even among family of our staff. Fortunately no volunteers or staff themselves fell sick.

We have continued to develop assignments at sites where Hindi is the predominant language and hope to have a selection that represents the numbers of Hindi speakers in the community by 2010. (That’s about 38% now.)

I know PCVL (Peace Corps Volunteer Leader) Maya (Breitburg-Smith) enjoyed seeing some of you in Washington, and I certainly enjoyed having dinner with a few of you when I was there for training. Keep up the good work and keep in touch with us! Best Wishes!

Ruth Larimer
Country Director
Peace Corps
Fiji
Oct 20, 2008
From the Peace Corps/Washington Desk Officer for Fiji

Friends of Fiji Members:

I hope this note finds all of you well and enjoying the autumn season in the Washington, D.C. area. I was asked to make a contribution to your quarterly newsletter and update you on all things Peace Corps Fiji.

The past months have been a period of transition for our post in Fiji. As many of you may know, Oghale Oddo completed his tenure as Country Director in Fiji in January of this year. We are extremely appreciative of the leadership and guidance Oghale provided at a critical time of importance, while we were in the process of solidifying the long term goals and objectives for our program. Our new Country Director, Ruth Larimer, continues to work with staff, Volunteers and counterpart organizations to ensure that we have viable and pertinent health and environment projects that are meeting the expressed needs of the communities in which we work and the host country government.

This past spring marked the arrival of the 6th group of re-entry Volunteers and a renewed focus on the part of our staff in Fiji to identify an increased number of Indo-Fijian placements. Fiji is currently the home of approximately 60 Volunteers and we will welcome our next group of 30 trainees in May, 2009. Volunteers continue to be placed throughout Viti Levu, Vanua Levu and several outer islands.

If you have any questions about Peace Corps Fiji or our operations in the Pacific, please do not hesitate to contact me. I look forward to opportunities for future communication and correspondence.

Leah Tafara-Maddox
Country Desk Officer
Pacific Islands
ltafaramaddox@peacecorps.gov
202-692-2522

Two Fiji RPCVs Sworn In As USAID Directors

If all good things come in twos, what can top two mission directors in one family? Roberta Mahoney is the new mission director to Albania and her husband, David McCloud, is the new mission director to Bosnia and Herzegovina. They received their promotions today after being sworn in together by Henrietta Fore, the U.S. Agency for International Development's (USAID) administrator.

The couple's lives have followed similar paths before and after they married in 1976 after meeting at the University of California, Los Angeles. Both were Peace Corps volunteers in Fiji and both joined USAID as international development interns in the 1980s - Mahoney in 1984, McCloud in 1988. Now, they head missions in nearby, almost neighboring nations.
In Albania, Mahoney will direct a mission in a nation the administrator called a valued peacekeeping partner in the war against terrorism that "plays a vital role in the Balkans promoting peace, security and ethnic reconciliation." In Bosnia and Herzegovina, said Fore, McCloud takes control of a mission where USAID has invested more than $1 billion since 1995, restoring that nation's infrastructure and economy and "strengthening the market chain that resulted in more than 1,500 jobs and investments in agriculture."

During her career, Mahoney served as an economics officer in both USAID/Kenya and in USAID/Malawi, as well as an associate mission director in USAID's Egypt mission. In Washington, she served in several positions within USAID, including those in its Africa and Europe and Eurasia Bureaus. Her most recent position was in USAID's Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean as director of the Office for Resources for Sustainable Development. Mahoney earned master's degrees in regional planning from the University of California, Los Angeles and natural resource economics and international trade from the University of Wisconsin.

McCloud was a program officer in Egypt, Malawi and Kenya and held senior positions in the Africa and Management Bureaus in Washington. He was most recently director of the Middle East Affairs Office before becoming mission director. He earned master's degrees in African studies and public administration from the University of California, Los Angeles.


Thinking About the Peace Corps

“The Peace Corps and More”
“Despite strong political support — and plenty of applicants — the Peace Corps has only a tenth the number of volunteers that John F. Kennedy envisioned when he started the program over 40 years ago. Kevin Quigley and Lex Rieffel explain why this is so — and offer a new vision to help the Peace Corps meet the needs of a changing world.”


“Ten Times the Peace Corps: A Smart Investment in Soft Power”
“A critical challenge for the next president of the United States will be to convince the rest of the world that we are more interested in being a reliable partner than a military superpower. Our future security and prosperity will depend on the success of this effort.

“Reversing the negative attitudes toward the United States that prevail in many parts of the world will require a mix of hard power and soft power instruments. The Peace Corps has been one of the most effective forms of American soft power since it was created by John F. Kennedy almost 50 years ago. With 8,000 volunteers in the field, however, it is half the size it reached at its peak in 1966, and most Americans are unaware that it still exists.

“Scaling up the Peace Corps to ten times its present size could be one of the smartest initiatives advanced by the next president if it is premised on a new vision, a different funding model, and an enhanced organizational form.”
NPCA and Peace Corps Sign Cooperative Agreement

On September 23, NPCA President Kevin Quigley and Peace Corps Deputy Director Jody Olsen signed a Cooperative Agreement between their respective organizations - the sixth successive agreement - to build on the accomplishments of the RPCV Mentorship Program.

This program came online this past May and links returning Peace Corps Volunteers with RPCV mentors to assist in the transition to life after Peace Corps. The goal of this new agreement is to scale up, automate and ultimately decentralize the Mentorship program.

"In a few months, RPCVs around the globe will be sharing career advice, promoting Third Goal opportunities, and administering topical discussion forums directly in a targeted mentoring social network," says NPCA Vice President Anne Baker, who manages the program for NPCA. "PCVs returning from service immediately connect with the Peace Corps community at home, which builds an engaged RPCV network and helps our member groups grow - all vital as we build momentum towards the 50th anniversary of Peace Corps in 2011."

RPCV Mentoring Program

Mentoring: Don't Be a Fish Out of Water

Do you ever feel like a fish out of water or remember what it was like? Whether you are just coming home from Peace Corps or you've been back a while, the RPCV Mentoring Program is for you. Tap into the experience of someone who knows what you are going through. Help someone with the transition back to the U.S. Friends of Fiji is actively recruiting members to participate. Go to www.rpcvmentoring.org for more information. (If you want Friends of Fiji to match you with a mentor or mentee, indicate so in your notes. Vinaka!)

Update Your Info

The Peace Corps will be conducting its fourth decennial RPCV survey and would like to have the most current contact information for all Returned Volunteers. Please go to the Peace Corps website to update your record: https://www.peacecorps.gov/index.cfm?shell=resources.former.staycon.updaterec. Alternatively, you can submit your contact information by mail to:

RPCV Database Manager
Peace Corps Domestic Programs
1111 20th Street NW
Washington, DC 20526

Please provide your name during service as well as country and years of service.
Membership Drive On For Friends of Fiji

Some of you received a letter in the mail inviting you to join the Friends of Fiji or to renew your membership. Although we are generous with our mailings and welcome all to our events, we rely on memberships to fund our routine expenses - particularly these newsletters. All fundraising monies are spent on projects in Fiji. See the application form in this issue for how to subscribe. You can also join FoF when joining NPCA through their web site.

From the Friends of Fiji Webmaster

Join Friends of Fiji with your Credit Card

You can now join or renew your membership online and pay with a credit card. Just go to the Membership page on http://fofiji.org, fill out the Membership Application and click 'Submit Application'. Then click on the 'Pay Now' button to pay with your credit card using PayPal. It's secure – Friends of Fiji gets the data you submit on the membership application and an email from PayPal stating the amount you paid, but none of your credit card information.

Friends of Fiji Social Networking

It’s a new world – technologically speaking. Did you know that Friends of Fiji has a Facebook group? And a LinkedIn group? Join us as we connect to our Fiji friends around the globe through these online social networks. Subscribe to our Yahoo! Group to get the emails on the latest happenings. If you have other suggestions or can offer your time and expertise to help manage these technologies, please let board member Anne Baker know at aebaker@cox.net. See you online!! Our website http://fofiji.org contains a link to our Fan Page on Facebook http://www.facebook.com/pages/Friends-of-Fiji/23752435565 where we have posted fundraiser photo albums and other information. You don't have to join Facebook to see the albums on the Fan Page. However, many Friends of Fiji have joined Facebook in order to network with each other.

Amazing Site

Go to Wikimapia at http://wikimapia.org/ and search on Fiji. You can then pan and zoom and see names of islands and villages. Wikimapia combines Google Maps with a wiki system, allowing users to add information.

Whenever you have a gathering of Fiji folks, be sure to take a photo and send it along to us! We've started a reunions photo album on our Facebook fan page. See anyone you recognize?
**Friends of Fiji Board**

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Dana and Becky Trytten (FRE PCV Liaisons)

**JOIN FRIENDS OF FIJI FOR ONLY $15 A YEAR**

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**Membership Category**

(please check one)

- ___ Individual FoF only $15.00
- ___ Couple FoF only $22.50
- ___ Individual NPCA & FoF $50.00
- ___ Couple NPCA & FoF $92.50

If couple, name of second person: ____________________________

- ___ Enclosed is an additional $20 for overseas mail
- ___ Enclosed is an additional contribution of $____________ to help Friends of Fiji fulfill its mission.
- ___ Do not share my information with NPCA

Mail form to:  
Friends of Fiji  
4327 43rd St., NW  
Washington, DC 20016

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