

Çava?

The Newsletter of Friends of Guinea
Advocacy, Information, and Networking for Guinea and Peace Corps Guinea



Steve Peterson Takes Over in Conakry as New CD

We bid a fond farewell in our last newsletter to Country Director Lisa Ellis, who was tapped to become CD of the Peace Corps program in South Africa. We only hope she will be able to find a good bowl of *maafé haako* in Pretoria.

Meanwhile, Steve Peterson has been named by Gaddi Vasquez to head up Peace Corps Guinea. According to the memorandum announcing his appointment, "Mr. Peterson possesses a strong and diverse background as a leader and has as a sound knowledge of Peace Corps work in West Africa. Having served as Assistant Peace Corps Director for Administration in Niger for over three years he became familiar with all aspects of managing a Peace Corps Post in his role as Administrative Officer."

In fact, some Guinea RPCVs will recall Steve fondly from '95 and '96 when he lived in Labé, where his wife Jen was employed as a consultant by Chemonix on a USAID-funded project that also involved several PCVs. Fouta volunteers will recall that Steve and Jen's home was always open to them, and that they had an awesome stereo.

Peterson is a graduate of the University of Northern Colorado, where he completed a Bachelor's of Science Degree in Biology. He was a Peace Corps Volunteer from 1989-1991 in Zaire, and Logistics Manager and PST Coordinator at Peace Corps Gabon 1994. From 1996-98 he was General Services Manager for Peace Corps Zambia, and in 1999 he worked under contract for Peace Corps in Malawi where he developed a farmer cooperative funded by USAID. Africa Regional Director Henry McKoy says that Peterson is "familiar with the various aspects and levels of management at a post and has served as Acting Director at the Niger post during the absence of the Country Director. Steve is uniquely familiar with the development challenges facing West Africa and possesses the knowledge and skills to lead a Peace Corps Program."

At this writing, Steve has completed his Country

Director training and is expected in-country shortly. Friends of Guinea welcomes Steve Peterson *back* to Guinea and looks forward to a fruitful collaboration with Peace Corps Guinea during his tenure. *Ko tooli*, Steve! Bienvenue.

United States Under the Eyes of the World

Daouda Touré, Guinean Journalist
TOURED@unhcr.ch

Ed. Note: Çava is pleased to present our readers a Guinean perspective on recent momentous political events in our own country, with consequences for the whole world. The following article by one of our Guinean correspondents was written exclusively for this newsletter.

The recent American presidential election was certainly one of the most notable in decades. If the election of 2000 provoked great press scrutiny, given its slowness and controversial outcome, that of 2004 remains the most closely-watched election in history around the world. And not by chance, because the United States is the world's superpower and the global defender of democracy.

In addition, this particular election turned on the conduct of the war against terrorism, an issue of vital interest to the entire world since September 11. After the attacks that day on the symbols of global U.S. power, the response was quickly felt in Afghanistan. In 2003 the war spread to Iraq, after George Bush made his priority the restoration of peace and the elimination of terrorist cells around the world.

Although dominant on the battlefield, Bush and his allies have not yet managed to restore peace and tranquility in the world, where the consequences of conflict are largely borne by the poor. These are the issues

What is...

ÇaVa?

ÇaVa is the quarterly newsletter of Friends of Guinea and seeks to maintain contact and community among members as well as inform them of the official activities of the organization.

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that colored the world's perspective on the American presidential election of 2004.

The Republican George W. Bush is a true warrior against terrorism and a true believer in American power, while his Democratic challenger John Kerry advocated an America with greater economic strength and fuller employment, restriction of military expenditure, and a more peaceful strategy for gaining influence in the world.

It is possible that a foreign observer will analyze the trends which led to Bush's re-election differently from an American; particularly if that observer is from the Third World, where peace is particularly essential in order to confront the problems of poverty, stability and development. The attacks of September 11 have deeply affected American attitudes, and the war against terrorism enjoys wide domestic support. Since then, the Americans like the Israelis have taken up the challenge of the fight against terrorism. Bush's policies, however, have caused a sharp increase in negative opinions about the United States. They have become the focus of global controversy since 2003. Thus the war in Iraq has made Bush the most unpopular president in the world, while in America many consider him their best hope for the establishment of peace.

The election was fought on economic issues, where the first Bush administration saw the conversion of a budget surplus into massive budget deficits; and also on foreign policy issues such as military policy and Bush's lukewarm attitude toward cooperation with the UN over Iraq. Bush looked to the business community for support and sought allies there wherever he could find them, although with incomplete success. Kerry showed himself the greater master of the issues throughout the campaign, but failed to master the two which would count for the

most: fear and the social issue.

By fear, I mean the loss of tranquility since September 11 and the unleashing of war in Iraq where Americans thought only Bush, the mastermind of the ongoing war against America's enemies, capable of prevailing. Even though his policies have made Americans more anxious for their safety in the short run, especially outside the U.S.

By the social issue, I mean the phenomenon of social conservatism which caused Bush to dive into the fight against abortion and gay marriage, to both of which John Kerry was more sympathetic.

The new global war against terrorism has already had consequences, with the sharp rise in fuel prices felt everywhere. It is the Third World especially which bears the heaviest brunt of these consequences, with its weak economies and incompetent governments promoting policies already ill-suited to economic development. That is why the recent election caused so much debate in every stratum of society, including even the illiterate and uneducated. Africa in general, and Guinea in particular, were no exception. Remember that Guinea was in the position of chairing the UN Security Council when the issue of military action in Iraq was debated there. (It was a questionable choice to entrust this role to a country friendly to the U.S., and particularly one as dependent as Guinea.) However like other African countries, Guinea hoped this American election would bring some kind of resolution to the present crisis and the monetary inflation aggravated by the war in Iraq. This inflation has caused the local currency to lose 60% of its value and the price of fuel and transport to climb between 80% and 100%.

In a tour of the capital the day before the elections, the people I interviewed were in close agreement:

AD (chauffeur): "Me, I hope Kerry will win the election because I hope that he will end the war and bring down the price of fuel."

Mr. Camara (teacher): "My wish is that Americans will reflect on how best to improve our conditions, because we ask only for world peace. Since we cannot confront war and development at the same time, I don't believe in the present policy. Kerry does not seem as big a man as Bush, but I think he would do better."

Bernadette (homemaker): "All types of food are getting more and more expensive in the market because of the skyrocketing price of fuel, which they say is caused by the war in Iraq. He who makes war has no self-control. Diplomacy is the best solution. This war makes us poorer and Bush must change his policy in order to make us happy, along with all the people in the world."

N. Davis (American lawyer working in an international NGO): "You have to be stupid to like Bush's policies. Living outside of the United States teaches you the reality of American policy. Here people say they are proud to be Americans but don't like injustice. I believe if Bush changed his policy the world would be safer."

Jean K. (student): "I hate terrorists and I strongly

condemned the attack of September 11 but I am not able to understand how America, champion of democracy, is able to invade innocent and sovereign people, involving the whole world in a crisis! War is nothing but failure. Americans would do well to choose Kerry."

Mr. A. (A sixty-year-old man who requested anonymity): "I know that the war is at the bottom of this crisis, and winning will help the people!"

When Al-Jazeera released its cassette on Al-Qauida's threats against the U.S., any informed person could see that this would only serve the interests of Bush. Even if most wished for Kerry to prevail, they would not be astonished at a Bush victory because he was already identified with the fight against terrorism. He had to be given a reason to continue his battle. But after the television debates many respected John Kerry and considered him the "coolest" if the less experienced of the two.

Therefore much turned on the passions aroused by the American presidential election, as well as on the votes cast. Americans, concerned above all with their own security, voted for Bush; placing in him their great hope for a restoration of tranquility. A minority could not stomach the continuation of the war with a team haunted by failure and disappointment, and voted for Kerry, respecting him for having given a clear direction to follow.

A majority of Guineans were bitterly disappointed to see the white house continuing in the same direction after the election, and by no means because of a personal dislike of Bush, but rather because of concern over U.S. policy, and its effect on the strapped city-dweller who no longer manages to make ends meet since the beginning of the war in Iraq. The Guinean economy has fallen far and the standard of living has been badly affected. Guineans naturally hope and wait for Bush to adopt policies more favorable to African prosperity. Thus Americans have chosen their sides for the next four years. Africa awaits its share of "globalization." Bush cannot win his war without finding peace in the Middle East. Let us hope that the aspirations there will be fulfilled.

Gender Conferences Receive NPCA Grant

Thanks to hard work by outgoing Friends of Guinea Projects Officer Donald Parker, FOG was recently awarded a \$1,000 "Continuation of Service" Grant by the National Peace Corps Association, to complete the full funding of the 2005 Gender and Development conferences and to help meet the goal of expanding the Boys' Conference to three days. According to the award notification from NPCA, "The committee was impressed with the presentation and the details of the grant proposal you submitted, but more importantly, we commend you for your commitment to service and education."

Since 1997, Guinea Peace Corps volunteers have

Friends of Guinea

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Friends of Guinea is a non-profit organization made up of former and currently serving Guinea Peace Corps Volunteers, Guineans inside and outside of Guinea, and others interested in promoting the cause of Guinean development in the world at large. We are a country-of-service affiliate of the National Peace Corps Association. Dues are \$15 annually for individuals, and \$23 for families.

email: info@friendsofguinea.org

website: <http://friendsofguinea.org>

held three Regional Girls' Conferences every year for one hundred young women between 12-22 years of age. Many volunteers feel that the Gender Conferences have been the single most rewarding part of their Peace Corps service. Thank you, NPCA, for your support!

From Down Under to Siguiri

Ben Schwartz, Siguiri 1996-97

natalieandben@soon.com

Ed note: Ben Schwartz, a member of Friends of Guinea, is a Registered Surveyor from New Zealand who worked at a gold-mining site near Siguiri in late 1996 and early 1997. He is active in the New Zealand Institute of Surveyors, and his memoir of his work in Guinea was published last year in the March 2004 issue of Survey Quarterly (Wellington, New Zealand). The following excerpts are reprinted by permission of the author.

Ben is also interested in contacting anyone who has been around the Siguiri area. Look for his ad in the "classified" section of this newsletter.

In 1996, while setting out on building sites in London, I got a three month contract surveying at a gold mine in Guinea, West Africa. It was a great escape from the dreary northern winter and a wonderful experience culturally.

I flew into Bamako, the capital of neighbouring Mali, back to the developing world. All those things that

are so different from the West – relaxed noisy crowds, chaotic bureaucracy, beggars, roads full of potholes and rocks, mopeds and ancient Peugeot tooting, roadsides littered with junk, straw huts and stalls selling everything from hubcaps to melons, sacks of rice to mattresses. The smells of sewage and stale sweat wafted on the heavy humid air.

A day's drive up the Niger river valley brought me across the border into Guinea to Camp Koron, near the town of Siguiri. Along the way were little villages of round mud-brick huts with conical thatched roofs and triangular windows. Woven grass panels made compounds in a largely unsuccessful attempt to keep goats away from crops and the road. Children in open-air classrooms, playing in the cornfields or washing in the creek always waved and were thrilled by a response.

The mine was not yet in production. It is based at the site of a failed Belgian alluvial mine. Locals work over the tailings and dig pits in the bush by hand, washing their ore at the washplant, making a labour-intensive living. Extensive geological surveys are underway, mapped with handheld GPS.

My main job was to survey the site for a heap leach pad. The D9 bulldozer cut lines through the bush in preparation for building the large slightly graded, plastic-lined pad where cyanide solution will leach the gold from heaps of ore. There is also some planning for a new road to bypass the town. This involves setting-out a rough alignment through the bush with compass, tying flagging tape high enough in the trees to avoid the periodic fires, and choosing a suitable spot to place an open ended shipping container in a stream as a culvert.

I supervised the local survey team in French. Africans are much easier to understand than in France – it is their second or third language, and the tone is crisp and clipped, almost like the musical sound of the local language Malinké. I only picked up parts of the important but convoluted salutations in Malinké – “Tenate? Ayneke! Mbaa!” The same structure is transferred to French, with multiple repetitions of “ça va?” – enquiring into the well-being of the extended family. “How are you? How's your brother? How's your family? All well in your compound?”



A scene along the Niger River.

Degree-trained geodiste Maxime is a Christian from the south of the country. The rest are Muslim. Two cheerful technicians, Alpha Kabine Traore and Malick Sidibe, set-out lines by following the D9 bull-dozer with ranging poles and tape and compass. The middle-aged driver and part-time medicine-man Haji Youssouf collects medicinal herbs and twigs to use as toothbrushes. He is a tall with a wiry grey beard and is a funny figure wearing his dark glasses, woolly hat and jacket over a work suit. Labourer Bakary is jet black and stocky.

Lunch in the field is a communal bowl of rice with pimento hot palm oil sauce. One day the dozer blade hits a big fat bush rat, which is promptly skinned, salted and barbecued. The more devout Muslims will not eat it as it had not had its throat slit and so cannot be halal.

Lunch provides an opportunity to improve my French as we chat about New Zealand and Guinea, families and work, sitting in the shade with music from Zaire on the radio. Youssouf always does his prayers, and sometimes Kabine if there is time. Malick and Bakary are not so religious, although they do not drink alcohol.

The landscape included a beautiful range of reds and greens – very different from grey London, autumnal Europe or lush New Zealand. There are little plantations of rice, papaya or cassava scattered in the scrubby lowlands near the river. Villagers' tracks criss-cross the area, they watch progress en route to gardens or the river, and suss out where to plant mango trees to be in for compensation later.

One evening I bike around the nearby villages of Boukaria, Kofi Lani and Fatoya. Cooking is done outside on open fires. Children play around the wells, which are mostly simple holes with a rope to draw water although a few have hand pumps. Little shops sell tomatoes, sweet potatoes, sugar cane, bread and milk. Lots of portable shortwave radios play musical static and long range interference glissandos. Everyone looks at the whitey, waves and calls “bonjour, ça va?” even though there have been foreigners working in the vicinity for years. Every village has a little mud-brick mosque.

A few local geologists from the slightly separate, more crowded African part of the camp join the staff and expatriates for an eagerly anticipated Saturday night trip to the big smoke – Siguiri. We pile into a Nissan Patrol and set off along the dirt road into town, with its obstacles of straying stock, broken-down trucks, police checkpoints and black people who disappear into the black night. In the outskirts, lit only by the occasional storm lantern, crowds gather to chat – there is nowhere else to go. We eventually find an open-air disco, with fine music and dancing.

I have a week off over Christmas, and take a local riverboat down the Niger towards Bamako. The pirogue is a 10-metre long wooden dugout with an outboard, carrying traders and college students back to their villages – it is the end of the school term. The riverbank is crowded with women washing clothes and men washing cars. I am befriended by Ansaman, a 19-year-old student wearing a

snazzy pink air force-type beret, who offers to put me up for the night in his village of Dialakoro. He lives with his seven brothers, some sisters and all their families in a large compound with a dozen round huts. We sit outside in the dusk, receiving a string of visitors.

We share a meal of *toh* – gluey maize and cassava porridge, eaten in the hand with a dash of hot pimento or slimy okra leaves. Green tea is brewed strong in a battered enamel pot on a charcoal brazier, and poured back and forth many times to make it aerated and frothy. A glassful of sugar is added, more pouring, then back on the heat. Finally we drink small glasses, slurping loudly in appreciation. In a village with no reliable power supply, entertainment is self-made. An energetic game of soccer on a rather rocky pitch, and later dancing and tamtam drumming – an electric atmosphere of noise, rhythm and gymnastic energy!

The mud-brick walls are good thermal insulation from the cool night, but do not keep out the noise of sheep and children yelling. I wake to the rhythmic pounding of pestles and dozens of cocks crowing. Breakfast is sweet maize porridge eaten with carved gourd spoons.

I continue downstream to Nafadji, and complete the journey to Bamako by bus – 22 adults plus a few children in a regular Hiace van. Being wedged in tightly means less rattling on the bumpy road. A pane-less window ensures good ventilation, and being stuck with my head against the ceiling, above window level, means slightly less dust. The roof rack is piled high with sacks, tin trunks and a miserable looking sheep. The 130 km trip takes six hours – I am the dirtiest and most uncomfortable I had been for weeks, yet strangely happy, buoyed by the bond of shared suffering.

Eventually the three-month contract period is over and I return to London. The isolation had become almost as tiring as the tropical heat, but I still retain today many souvenirs, photos and valuable memories of my exotic West African work experience. The mine now produces around 270,000 ounces of gold a year and is the largest in the country.

Inside Peace Corps Guinea

Our sincere thanks to Peace Corps Guinea for allowing us a peek inside the Peace Corps Guinea Newsletter, which is distributed to all staff and volunteers. Some highlights from the December and January issues:

December: Congratulations! Acting CD Catherine Kling just got married. Ah, Guinea ... land of romance ...

G5 has just COSed, and G9 is due in Conakry in January to begin PST. PC Guinea is presently evaluating applications from PCVs to participate in PST as trainers. Three PCVs from G5 have extended for a third year: Wayne Kleck with World Food Program; Jordan Kimball with Food and Agriculture Organization; and Sonya Starr with Population Services International. Congratulations to

all three of you, and don't let anybody tell you that you are crazy ... your copies of *Where There Is No Psychiatrist* will be arriving in the mail shortly.

ElHadj Thiam is back in Guinea as acting APCD while Catherine fills in as CD.

Communication with the field has been improved with the acquisition of new radios in the vehicles and the medical unit. Catherine says they are great. The telephones are the same as ever.

Peace Corps Guinea is using considerable ingenuity to find financing for volunteer projects. PSI is soliciting volunteer project proposals in the areas of HIV/AIDS awareness, family planning, malaria and child survival for funding consideration. PCV Carrie Mitchell had a project funded last year by something called ESWA, or English Speaking Women's Association of Conakry. Two more volunteer projects will be funded by the same group this year. *Du courage!*

In response to Volunteer feedback, the Health Unit has included a short discussion on treatment of snakebite, but notes that there is no documented case of a Volunteer ever being bitten by a snake in Guinea. PCMO Ann won first prize last Halloween for dressing as a Guinean taxi.

Peace Corps staff sent turkeys upcountry in November to help PCVs celebrate Thanksgiving.

A new living allowance survey is underway; not surprising given the inflation Guinea has recently suffered.

The Conakry office is scheduled for an upgrade to their internet connection in December.

Peace Corps and FAO have signed a memorandum of understanding that will lead to greater cooperation in the field of agroforestry and food production. It sounds like the new partnership will mainly reinforce existing areas of collaboration.

January: January's newsletter contains another strong warning to PCVs against drug use, including the strict Peace Corps policy that pertains thereto. Also a letter from Steve Peterson, the new CD, introducing himself ahead of his arrival in country.

G8 IST will be at the Hotel Tangama in Dalaba. I remember the place – one of the nicest views in the Fouta.

SPA funding this year is \$7,000. PC Guinea has requested additional funds to support projects related to HIV/AIDS.

The Teachers for Africa (TFA) program is looking for individuals who would like to spend one or two years promoting public health and implementing educational reform in African countries. The desired qualifications make it sound like a good fit for a COSing volunteer. Information is available at www.ifesh.org.

240 soccer balls are available for donation to Guinean Schools from the Ministry of Education.

G8 math teachers are translating "Math for Dummies" into French. Awesome!

GAAD (Gender and Aids in Development) has small sums available for volunteer projects, up to one

hundred fg per year per volunteer.

JET (*Je t'entends*, or the volunteer support network) is looking for two new members from the G8 group.

A very interesting essay by PCV Stacy Warren describes her experience as an African-American volunteer in Africa. It seems that Guineans tend to see her as more American than African. She describes the various ways she is described by Guineans and admits that her favorite is "*Americaine Chocolate*."

Another essay, this one by PC Guinea Cross-Culture Coordinator Alpha Barry, describes attitudes toward, and ceremonies related to, the issue of death in the three main ethnic groups in Guinea: the Peuhl, Malinké and Soussou.

Advocacy Report

Jenn Denno (Sandenia, '02-'04), Advocacy Director
advocacy@friendsofguinea.org

Salut! My name is Jenn Denno and I'm FOG's new advocacy director. I was a volunteer (math teacher) in Sandenia, Faranah (Haute Guinée) from 2002 to 2004. As a PCV, I appreciated what FOG was doing for PC Guinea and the Guinean community. I hope to be able to contribute to this effort as the advocacy director. So keep in touch and tell me what's important to you! Please email me at advocacy@friendsofguinea.org.

Election Report

Brian Farenell (Beindou, '95-'97), Elections Coordinator
fogelections2005@yahoo.com

Hello all. Friends of Guinea recently conducted elections for its board for 2005. Those elected were Claire Lea ('02-'04), Projects Officer; Stephanie Chasteen ('97-'99), Membership Officer; Betty Walker (PCV Parent), Secretary; Jody Sites ('94-'96), Financial Officer; and Brian Farenell ('95-'97), Communications Officer. Jennifer Denno just missed the deadline for nominations when she volunteered to fill the vacant advocacy officer position, so after due consideration, the board appointed her to that post. Contact information for board members can be found at our website:
www.friendsofguinea.org/contactus.shtml.

We'd also like to welcome the following volunteers who will be serving as members-at-large: Nathan Shepherd ('01-'03), Web Administration; and Meghan Dunn ('01-'03), Aicha/GAAD Fundraising Coordinator, assisted by Marilyn Pearson.

Thanks very much to our new volunteers: Claire, Jenn, Nathan and Meghan. Thanks to our departing volunteers. And a big thanks to all of our continuing volunteers, including Marilyn Pearson (RPCV Parent), Listserv Administrator and Guinea Parent Support Coordinator; Stephanie Mullen ('88-'92), Health Projects;

Helen Thouless ('95-'97), Education Projects; Scott Sackett ('96-'98), FOG Registry; and particularly Membership Officer Stephanie Chasteen ('97-'99) and Newsletter Editor and Peace Corps Guinea Liaison Woody Colahan ('93-'96) who have been with FOG from the very beginning.

Ed. Note: And let's not forget Brian Farenell ('95-'97), who has also been with Friends of Guinea from the very beginning; serving in a variety of roles including, presently, Communications Officer and Elections Coordinator. Wow, look at all the individuals who lend their time and energy to making Friends of Guinea a success! There is room for you, too. Just email Betty at info@friendsofguinea.org if you are interested in helping out. If you do not have convenient access to the Internet, write to the return address on this newsletter.

Projects Report

Claire Lea (Banian, '02-'04), Projects Officer
projects@friendsofguinea.org

Hello! My name is Claire Lea and I'm pleased to be Friends of Guinea's Projects Officer for 2005. I served in the Haute (Banian, Faranah) in 2002-04 (G4) as a math teacher and worked extensively with APROFIG and HIV/AIDS education. Now I am pursuing a master's degree at the University of Missouri-Columbia in foreign language teaching (Spanish). I'll be helping volunteers secure money for secondary projects and I'm looking forward to working with members, volunteers and the rest of the FOG officers in helping the Peace Corps Guinea program continue its fantastic work. FOG is available for funding small individual projects and has in past years collaborated with *Partage Québec-Guinée* in Canada to facilitate donations of books to Guinean communities. FOG has also significantly contributed to the Girls' Conferences over the years.

Although politics and economics in Guinea may be grim, humanity always shines brightly. No one knows better than a PCV who has lived *en brousse* how happy someone can be because you gave them a *Newsweek*, walked by to *saluer la famille*, or humiliated yourself by trying to *piler*. Peace Corps volunteers are making a difference every day and hopefully empowering someone to be optimistic about their future as a Guinean. And if you need a little cash (in dollars!) to give your project that extra punch, let us know. *Du courage*.

Photos Needed for Book

RPCV Jason Gordon (Moldova, '02-'04) is looking for photo contributions for a large-format coffee-table style book he plans to publish featuring photographs taken by PCVs around the world. When published, a significant portion of the revenue from sales of the book will go to support Peace Corps projects overseas. He is

especially interested in photos that include host country nationals, but will also consider scenic photographs.

If you would like to contribute, please email a selection of your best photographs to jason.gordon64@sbcglobal.net, or send them by postal mail to Jason Gordon, 7815 McCallum Blvd., Apt. 17206, Dallas, TX 75252. If sending digitally, please be sure the images are 300 dpi or higher. Please include your name, country of service, years of service, and a brief caption with each photograph.

New Friends of Guinea Website

Well, some of us thought the old website was perfectly good the way it was. Heck, we won an award for it in 2003, didn't we? Now that the new, redesigned and reorganized site is up and running, however, we have to admit that it is even better. We send out a great big "Thank you!" to Cyn Follich (mother of RPCV Trayle Kulshan) and Rus Miller (friend of PCV Magdalena Valderrama) for giving generously of their time and expertise to design a slick new menu and look for the FOG webpage, which you can still find at the same address: www.friendsofguinea.org.

Le Griot Nous Dit...

Jody Sites (Beyla, '94-'96) reports : "Anne, Aidan, Oliver and I have moved to Maine, and would welcome one and all to beautiful Augusta. It's right on the Kennebec River (great whitewater rafting), with lots of lakes around, and we're about forty-five minutes from the ocean.

"We haven't heard from many folks lately, but we did hear from **Scott Turner** (Beyla '94-'96), and he and his family are really enjoying their time in Naples, Italy. He spent Christmas Eve with the **Pope**, and Scott swears that he didn't slip anything into his drink that would have put the Pope in the hospital."

Paper Newsletter Available

Get the PDF version of the newsletter at <http://www.friendsofguinea.org/cava/0502newsletter.pdf> (Adobe Reader required) to see all the pictures, formatting and fancy graphics we are so proud of. If you find the paper version tempting, feel it would be more convenient to receive the newsletter by mail, or just need something for the bottom of your birdcage, contact us at membership@friendsofguinea.org and let us know of your preference (email, paper, or both). We will make a note of it. Oh, and let us know your current address while you are at it, so we can make sure it gets to you.

Free Personal Classified in CaVa?!

All members in good standing of Friends of Guinea are entitled to one free personal advertisement per year in *CaVa?*, the quarterly newsletter of Friends of Guinea. These advertisements are limited to 21 words are intended primarily as a way for families and friends to send messages of support and encouragement to volunteers serving in Guinea, although they might equally be used to broadcast other messages. We encourage you to take advantage of this free service by emailing your message of 21 words or less to the Newsletter Editor at newsletter@friendsofguinea.org. Please note that this service is available only to current members of Friends of Guinea, so please submit your advertisement under the name in which your membership is listed so that we may verify your status.

Classified:

Any RPCVs from the Siguiri area know folks (or news) from the SAG mine? Ben Zwartz (New Zealand land surveyor 96/97) natalieandben@soon.com

Dear Lizzie Lazar, Happy Valentine's Day Doodle, We miss and love you so! Love, Mom, Dad, George and Tim.

Happy Valentine's Day, Christy. Love from Mom, Dad, Bob and Duke.

Happy Birthday Evan! Better a fox in your mouth than a cobra in your kitchen. Love, Dad, Mom, Leif, Casey, Layne

Erin, Happy Valentine's Day and Happy Golden Birthday! We love you and are very proud of you. Love, Mom, Dad, Alex

Musings of a (Fairly) Young Contrarian – sociopolitical blog: popeyechicken.blogspot.com. Black Star Journal – Africa-themed blog: popeyeafrica.blogspot.com.

FOR SALE: Mosquito nets: 1 used Queen & 1 new Single, \$10 each. 1 Morocco roadmap \$5. Shipping \$2. Stephanie@physics.ucsc.edu



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