

Çava?

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



First Girls' Conference in Doucki

Doucki, a tiny scenic village near Pita, is a hotspot for foreign tourists. There, they can walk down waterfalls, up ladders and through stretches of lost canyons, under the expert eye of Hassan Bah, the local guide. But Guineans, and especially Guinean girls, rarely have the chance or the time to explore and appreciate their country's beauty. In light of this situation, PCVs Sarah Reid, Liz Chadwick, and Juliette Keeley decided to combine hiking, environmental issues, and girls' empowerment. On February 1st, they brought a total of 10 girls from their schools to hold a girls' conference in Doucki for 3 days.

What is... **ÇaVa?**

Ca Va 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. We welcome submissions!



Edited by: Mackenzie Dabo
Email: newsletter@friendsofguinea.org

Who are we?

FOG is run by a small group of volunteers.
Consider joining our ranks!

 Email us @friendsofguinea.org
(eg., "projects@friendsofguinea.org")

Pat Barron	secretary
Mackenzie Dabo. . . .	newsletter
Teresa Pope	membership
JanRose Ottaway Martin	finances
Anne Sites.	projects
Amy Daffe.	communications
Amy Daffe	webmaster
Urska Manners	listserv
Betty Walker	gps (parents)

Friends of Guinea

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>



It's a new website for a new FOG

The girls immediately adopted Hassan as their grandfather (or "soro" in Pular) and impressed the PCVs with their endurance and climbing skills. Armed with tight jeans, pagnes, and of course plastic flip-flops, they swung from vines, balanced on tree branches, and daringly looked over steep cliffs.

Of course, the hikes were complemented by sessions related to girls' empowerment, which included:

- Gender roles in Guinea
- Environment: how to protect it
- Communication skills
- Health: malaria, nutrition, and sexual health
- Goals: how to plan and achieve them

The last session culminated in a candle ceremony, in which each girl held a candle, announced her goal, and lit her neighbor's candle. The goal most cited was "to finish my studies." Sessions were also split apart by widely popular games and songs. The conference ended with the distribution of diplomas, and gifts of a calculator and a copy of Aicha Magazine. Upon returning to their schools, the girls planned and carried out a presentation of the conference to their peers.

The girls especially loved the hiking and scenery, and that Hassan was an excellent, positive role model who thoroughly enjoyed guiding the girls. The conference allowed girls to speak freely, express their concerns and hopes, and learn how to support themselves and each other in their life goals. A fellow volunteer, Catie Hone, acted as an observer to the conference and hopes to replicate it next year.

Friends of Guinea has been on hiatus for a while, but due to popular demand, we're back! And we've got great plans! We have invested in a new website with a members-only area, and are excited to announce the launch of the website... and with it, the re-launch of FOG.

Check us out at <http://friendsofguinea.org>. We can now offer our members:

- Members-only area of web
- Register as a member online
- Add yourself to our online registry (and find your friends!)
- Upload your photos
- Offer or ask for packages to be carried to Guinea
- This spiffy new newsletter!

All current members will soon be receiving an email with your username and password. Only members who are registered on the website will keep getting our newsletter and stay on our email list. Membership is still FREE.

Many thanks to all those who helped with this rollout – Stephanie Chasteen (who spearheaded and coordinated the effort), volunteers Chuck Greb (who helped with many technical details) and Meghan Greeley (who painstakingly checked all links and text on the site), all the FOG officers, and the developers at Sun Powered Productions (sunpoweredproductions.com) who gave us a great rate and much assistance in this project.



Girls enjoy a hike at the Douki Girls Conference held earlier this year.



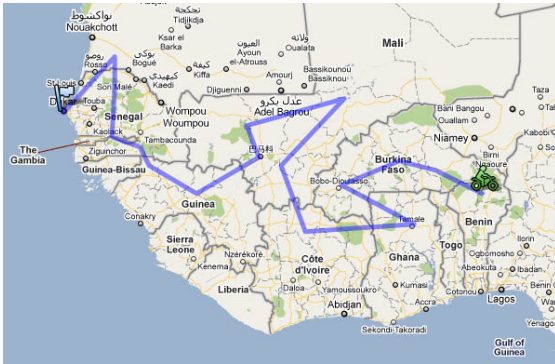
At the Douki Girls Conference, the participants had a chance to build confidence by conquering challenging hikes.



School-to-School



The Candle Ceremony at the end of the Douki Girls Conference, where participants announced goals they had for the future.



Motorcycling photojournalists traverse, record Fulani West Africa

Pulaku translates as “Fulaniness.” It is the pride, stoicism, and cultural identity of the Fula people, and in the spring of 2010, Christoph Herby and Guida Belco set out on an expedition to record it online. Their journey, stretching across eight countries including Guinea, is captured in text, video, and photo journalism on www.pulaku.com.

Such a project was no small feat, logistically and culturally, and the pair was particularly suited for the challenge. Herby (RPCV Benin '08-'10) brought his knowledge of web design, photography and motorcycle repair. Belco brought his

International's High Five campaign

School-to-School International (STS) is an educational non-governmental organization providing aid to Guinean schools in a variety of manners.

In 2011, STS continued working in 30 rural elementary schools in Guinea, West Africa. Here's a sample of our accomplishments in 2011:

- Trained 100 teachers in the use of active methods to teach health and nutrition.
- Held meetings with 103 school and community leaders about the importance of helping girls stay in school.
- Built 4 wells in schools that previously had no access to fresh water.
- Organized pen pal exchanges between 1,310 students in Guinea, the U.S., the U.K., and Canada.

Join our HIGH FIVE CAMPAIGN

We are launching the HIGH FIVE CAMPAIGN that is focused on five schools in Guinea. Our goal is to ensure that every child in these schools has access to the essential educational and health resources they need to succeed. Your contribution will make a difference for one thousand students in our High Five schools over the next year. How?

- \$25: Sponsors 5 students in the Pen Pal Program.
- \$50: Provides materials for after-school girls' clubs.
- \$100: Sends a girl to school in STS' girls' education program.
- \$250: Sponsors a classroom's participation in the Pen Pal Program for a year.

fluency in four languages and his diplomatic skills as a Fulani community leader. Both of them had a good dose of patience for government bureaucracy. As they put it, they wanted to “give a voice to a culture facing a diminishing frontier for survival,” providing an “intimate report of the Fulani people.”

Several themes make it into their journey’s narrative. Most prominently, visitors will find the diversity and resilience of a Fula population as it embraces age-old traditions, encounters modernism and adapts to a changing environmental landscape.

Online visitors to www.pulaku.com will find a wealth of on-site reporting with beautiful photography and gripping storytelling. Some moments are celebratory, such as the Goja ceremony’s beauty contest at the end of the rainy season, some are daunting, such as the hunt for communal water in Mali’s Bokolo community, and others are comical, such as team’s television interview on a Benin national children’s program. Throughout it all, Herby and Belco provide an up-close portrait of a wide range of people and villages never before seen in web 2.0 format.

Guinean Peace Corps volunteers may recognize one particular star of the Pulaku website: Hassan Bah, the ecotourism entrepreneur of Douki in the Fouta region of Guinea. In a brief video interview, Hassan describes his non-traditional career path and distinguishes it from the herding customs of the Puehl population. In his raspy voice played over familiar sights and songs, Hassan explains, “I’m a Fulani from Guinea, but I don’t have any cows. I’m doing a different job, which is

- \$500: Provides a first-aid kit for a school.
- \$2,500: Builds a well in a school.
- \$3,000: Constructs a 3-cabin latrine in a school - one for boys, one for girls and one for teachers.

To donate, follow this [link](#)

Here are other ways you can help support STS throughout the year:

1. Join the STS mailing list and connect with us. Follow this [link](#) to join us.
2. Forward this message to 10 of your friends and family - help spread the word.
3. Like us on Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn - be our friend.
4. Join our community on GoodSearch.com and help us raise money for our mission. On GoodSearch.com, select School-to-School International as your favorite cause and through everyday actions including online shopping, searches, and dining you can raise funds for STS.

Best wishes for the New Year and thank you for all your support,
Mark Lynd and Jeff Davis, co-founders of STS International



HAUTE:
Empowering

ecotourism.” Elsewhere on Pulaku, visitors will find footage and interviews inside a Guinean madrasa, as well as photos of the Dame de Mali and a crowded football video club in Kankan.

Those who are familiar with the staid and Islamic Guinean Puehl population will be surprised by the cultural diversity of the Fula in other regions of West Africa. In Benin, there exists a group of Christian Fulani, and several non-Guinean Fula communities embrace a noticeably flamboyant style of dress. Through several interviews, the site also explores ongoing changes propelled by village-to-city migration. Rather than fracturing the group’s collective identity, many increasingly value their combined culture amidst it all.

Yet, perhaps the most encouraging component of Pulaku comes from the site’s readers themselves. At the foot of each article, you will find comments from returned Peace Corps volunteers, host country nationals, and those who have an interest in the Fula people. Many times, the notes bring up additional details from people who have crossed paths with the subject matter. Mostly though, they simply thank the team for memorializing the Fula and providing a peak at a bright side of Africa. To learn more, visit www.pulaku.com.

entrepreneurs in Guinea

Haute is a non-governmental organization working in Guinea that was founded by an RPCV from Guinea. Haute provided management training and consulting services to small-business owners in Guinea. With current funds, the total number of entrepreneurs Haute has worked with in Africa will be around 190 by the end of 2012. Call me ambitious, but I would like to bring this number to over 200 entrepreneurs.

If you would like to make a donation (remember it’s deductible!), please follow the link below to donate via PayPal* www.hautenet.org/donate

* If you do not have a PayPal account: after clicking on the PayPal button, look for “Don’t have a PayPal account?” near the bottom left-hand side of the screen and then click the “continue” link next to it.

Thanks again for all your support. Here’s to a happy, healthy, and impactful 2012!
Ben Hafele, (RPCV Guinea, ’99-’01)
Founder and Managing Director
www.hautenet.org



Guinea I RPCVs



Aicha Magazine

Aicha Magazine is back in print! Aicha is a girls' magazine, written for and by girls, started by PCVs in 1999 and published periodically till 2009. Education PCV Stephanie Powell and Juliette Keeley have started it up again. Aicha encourages girls to speak out on women's issues, develop writing and reading skills, and promote women's development. The magazine encompasses subjects related to women's lives: fashion, gardening, health, cooking, women's rights, education and love. It also includes a "Dear Binta" page where Binta answers taboo questions on sex, love, STDs, etc.

This issue was written by 14 girls, high school and university students from Labé, who attended a writing/journalism that Juliette organized and ran for three months. Topics ranged from basic creative writing to skills such as observing, listening, interviewing and objective reporting. For the articles, each

create photo story

The Peace Corps 50th anniversary and efforts of the Guinea I and II RPCVs to gather a few photos seeded the idea of a story about Guinea and the people of Guinea in 1963-65. We gathered about 80 photos from our time in Guinea on a variety of subjects but still needed a good theme. The objective was to find something that bridged the times from a population of diverse ethnic groups, to colonial occupation, to emergence of Guinea as a nation.



Guinea I and II RPCVs (shown above at the 50th reunion celebrations) have done a very interesting photo story about Guinea during the early 1960s.

It is available to the public on this link to [Picassa](#)

student picked their own subject of interest, conducted interviews, and wrote their final piece. Each article was then reviewed and critiqued by the other students.

1000 copies of Aicha have been printed and are being sold through the CECOJE, Guinea's national youth group. As of today, 500 issues have been sold in Labé, and the 500 that remain are to be sold by CECOJE peer educators in Pita, Dalaba, Mamou, Kindia, Conakry, Boké, and Kankan. Revenues are going to printing the next issue, which is expected to come out by May.

In the meantime, a special issue of Aicha, focused on water sanitation and funded by a French NGO, Sicoval, will be released in mid-March. To be sent soon!

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