

December 2007



Friends of Sierra Leone

2007 Review and Plans for 2008

Once again it's time to review the past year and sum it all up. There are some goals that we have accomplished and a few that we are still striving to achieve. There are also the losses we have encountered and had to cope with in sadness and inspiration.

A major goal of our Advocacy Committee has been the return of the Peace Corps to Sierra Leone. I had hoped that the Federal Budget issues would have been resolved by now because this is apparently the only remaining stumbling block to PCVs returning. Peace Corps staff continues to assure us that Peace Corps Response (formerly known as the Crisis Corps) will be sent there in the New Year and plans are still on-going to have staff people in place in preparation for the return of Peace Corps sometime in 2008. We will continue to keep our efforts at the forefront.

There was a change made in August at the U.S. Embassy in Sierra Leone. Ambassador Thomas Hull, who has been a great friend of FoSL, retired from the State Department. His successor is Ambassador June Carter Perry. FoSL hosted a reception in Washington for Ambassador Perry in July and we were very impressed with her professional accomplishments and her extensive involvement with the Peace Corps. I'm pleased to say Ambassador Perry is as approachable as Ambassador Hull was which is so important to FoSL in performing its job. Additionally, while Ambassador Hull has in fact retired, we welcome him and his wife as FoSL members! We look forward to having him join us in our many endeavors. How lucky we are to have someone with his knowledge and experience as an active member of our group.

During 2007 we were very successful in re-establishing our Small Grants activity. To that end we funded 6 different projects for almost \$15,000. Our Projects Committee has new co-chairs, Richard Frazier and Jim Hanson. The selection committee has been able to meet together to pick the most deserving of all the applicants. We appreciate their time and efforts toward this end. Related to projects is the addition of the Bunce Island Committee which received a \$25,000 contribution to support Joe Opala's project to digitally recreate the slave castle on Bunce Island. We hope to see the fruits of that project in 2008.

The overwhelming event of 2007 was without doubt the passing of our beloved Daphne Sawyerr-Dunn on August 7th. May her Soul Rest in Eternal Peace. The loss of Daphne is still fresh on our minds and in our hearts. The Board of Directors has decided that our main project for the foreseeable future will concern setting up a memorial to commemorate this remarkable woman. It is our hope that her work for the people of Sierra Leone will continue through our help. Along with her co-workers and friends at the World Bank, we are in the process of planning a lasting tribute. We are also establishing a scholarship and would like to build a school or library if we can raise sufficient money. Those who knew Daphne were struck by her concern for all Sierra Leoneans throughout the whole country.

If you would like to contribute toward Daphne's memorial, please indicate that your donation to FoSL is for that specifically. Otherwise, it will be used to support the general projects fund.

FoSL President Peggy Murrah

Friends of Sierra Leone

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2008 Annual Meeting

Pack your bags and make your plans to join the group traveling to Sierra Leone for the 2008 Annual Meeting to be held in Freetown from June 24th till June 25th. The group will depart from JFK on the evening of June 21st and arrive in Casablanca early on the 22nd. There is long layover in Casablanca and a hotel plus food vouchers will be provided by the airline, Royal Air Maroc. We depart late on the 22nd and arrive at Lungi at 5 a.m. You may stay as long as you like – up to 3 months. The price for the roundtrip to/from JFK to Freetown and back is \$1750 although we have been advised that taxes and fuel surcharges may be up

to an additional \$100. We will be met at the airport by pre-arranged ground transport to a central point in Freetown. Lodging is booked on your own, but we will be sending out comprehensive information on available rooms. If you pay your deposit by January 15th the meeting registration fee will be reduced by ¼.

For more information, e-mail Peggy at info@fosalone.org

From U. S. Ambassador to Sierra Leone, June Carter Perry:

It is a pleasure to be in the beautiful country of Sierra Leone and I am grateful to all the helpful background and meetings organized by FOSL before my arrival here. Visiting Bunce Island and traveling to Bo and Kenema have been my initial trips out of Freetown. We have had the opportunity to meet many new government officials, businesspeople and young citizens interested in the political process.

We were very pleased to invite the Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, Dr. Jendayi Frazer, as the official head of the United States Delegation to the Inauguration of President Koroma on November 15, 2007. Assistant Secretary Frazer's high-level visit was extremely well received both by the President, the Government, the people and the press of Sierra Leone. It was an honor to host her in this recognized West African democracy. Other attendees included Liberian President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, President Wade of Senegal and President Yardua of Nigeria among many other dignitaries.

The people of Sierra Leone have been very welcoming and the U.S. Mission has already hosted a major panel on Combating Violence Against Women, welcomed the arrival of "Rhythm Road," our State Department/Jazz at Lincoln Center (New York) young musical ensemble, opened new American Shelf Libraries at Fourah Bay College and elsewhere and we participated in preparations for the official December 9th ceremonies which welcomed the re-constructed Amistad ship into Freetown Harbor for our "sister-city" (Freetown-New Haven) program. Essay Awards will be made to Sierra Leonean students on their contributions to the Amistad and its history during a special reception at our new Embassy in Leicester. We contributed staff and comments on December 1-- World AIDS Day-- during the country's marking of this important landmark.

Many thanks to FoSL for your on-going support; we will continue to keep you updated on progress in Sierra Leone!

Ambassador June Carter Perry
December 2007

The Daphne Sawyerr-Dunn Memorial Scholarship Fund

Daphne Sawyerr-Dunn has been described as a friend, a mentor, a patriot, a role model, and an untiring advocate for the people of Sierra Leone. Her death on August 7 was a shock to her family, friends, and co-workers, as well as to the members of Friends of Sierra Leone. Only now do we realize all that she accomplished, much of it behind the scenes. At our October board meeting, we talked about Daphne, her life, and her work.

This scholarship fund is the product of that discussion. We felt that there was no better way to honor and remember Daphne than to help young Sierra Leonean girls continue their education. Secondary school is still out of reach for many young girls. Providing scholarships can have a great impact not only on their lives, but also on the lives of their families, and on the nation as a whole.

The holiday season is upon us, with much celebration and gift-giving. We hope that you include a donation to Daphne's scholarship fund in this year's gifts. This is truly a gift that will keep on giving--for some young lady the opportunity of a lifetime. And, no trip to the mall is required. You may send a check to FoSL or contribute online using PayPal. Just note that it is for Daphne's scholarship fund.

We thank you for any amount you can send us. There are so many bright young girls in Sierra Leone waiting for an opportunity. And Sierra Leone definitely needs more friends, more patriots and role models, and more advocates for their people; more women like Daphne Sawyerr-Dunn.

Jim Hanson

For FoSL apparel, baby outfits, housewares, hats, stickers, buttons, magnets and note cards, check out:

www.cafepress.com/fosalone

The **2008 International Calendar** produced by the Returned Peace Corps Volunteers of Wisconsin is available through FoSL. In addition to volunteers' photographs from host countries around the world, the calendar includes historic days, holidays and holy days from many cultures. A portion of the proceeds will go toward FoSL activities.

Use this order form or go to the FoSL website and order via Pay Pal.

<u>Quantity</u>	<u>Price/Calendar</u>	<u>Shipping</u>
1-5	\$12.00	included
6-24	\$ 7.00	\$ 8.00
25-49	\$ 6.00	\$10.00
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Goodsearch is a search engine powered by Yahoo that donates a penny to a cause of your choice every time you use it to do an Internet search. Just go to www.goodsearch.com/ and use Friends of Sierra Leone as your designated charity in the box at the bottom of the page. You can even check on the current amount of donation due to FoSL via the searches done in our name. The donations are paid for by the advertisers on the site.

Time to renew your membership? Check the expiration date on the mailing label and use the membership form on page 5.

FRIENDS OF SIERRA LEONE MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

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Relationship to SL (e.g., Sierra Leonean, PC, etc.): _____

Sierra Leone Home: _____ Years _____ to _____

Membership: Individual	\$25	Contributions: FoSL Circle	\$1000 and up
		Supporter	\$500 to \$999
		Sponsor	\$100 to \$499
		Friend	\$50 to \$99

Membership (\$25 per member) \$ _____

Contribution \$ _____

Overseas Mail (add \$10) \$ _____

Membership in *National Peace Corps Association* (\$35) \$ _____

Total Remitted \$ _____

- Both Friends of Sierra Leone and the National Peace Corps Association have discontinued the household membership category.
- Membership dues support operations for Friends of Sierra Leone, including meetings, newsletter, and the website. All other contributions support projects in Sierra Leone.
- Dues and other contributions to Friends of Sierra Leone are fully tax-deductible. The \$35 membership fees for National Peace Corps Association are **not** tax-deductible.

Thank you for your support! Please return this form with a check payable to Friends of Sierra Leone to the address at the right.

FoSL needs your participation. Circle your areas of interest:

Advocacy

Education

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Would you be willing to be part of a network to receive information and contact your members of Congress at important times? (Please include e-mail address, if available.)

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You may also renew your membership online at www.fosalone.org.

**Need a calendar? We still have some left!
Order now! See page 4**

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