

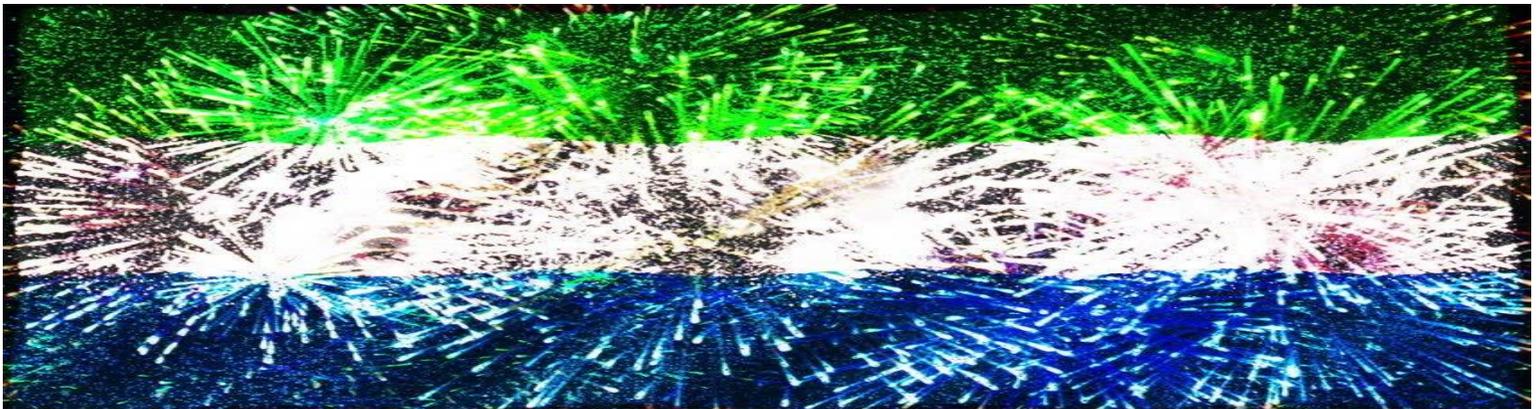


Friends of Sierra Leone
PO Box 15875
Washington DC 20003-0875

Spring 2016 e-Newsletter

Happy Independence Day!

Mama Salone celebrates 55 years of independence today.



If this newsletter was emailed to you, the subject line contains your membership renewal date. Go to our membership page <http://fosalone.org/mbrs.php> to renew, join, or donate.

***Note: The National Peace Corps Association no longer charges an annual membership fee. If you have paid your FoSL membership through the NPCA website in the past you may continue to do so if you choose.

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Update on Annual Meeting

Friends of Sierra Leone will hold its annual meeting in conjunction with the NPCA's meeting in Washington, DC from September 22nd until September 25th.

While our plans aren't finalized, we anticipate a casual drop by event on Friday, September 23rd followed by dinner at Sumah's that evening. Our business meeting will be on Saturday and will last most of the day. We will have a social event Saturday evening. Once venues have been finalized more information will be sent via the membership listserv.

We are still considering having the 2017 annual meeting in Sierra Leone.

Peace Corps' Return to Salone

There are currently 10 Peace Corps Response Volunteers serving in Sierra Leone as literacy specialists, literacy teacher trainers, STEM (science, technology, engineering, mathematics) specialists and STEM teacher trainers. Their training was a little over a week when they arrived in late March and their service will be for 3 months.

Another Response group of 25 is currently being advertised for 12 months of service starting in August 2016 as STEM teacher trainers, literacy teacher trainers, and STEM specialists. Also 15 two year Peace Corps volunteers are expected to arrive in August. They will be involved in secondary education.

Mapping Project

One of our many talented members, Jeff Depree, offered to design a mapping website for Salone RPCVs. He is working with the NPCA on a similar concept and wanted to let our group test pilot the concept. If this is something you'd like to participate in, follow the link to sign up. There have been so many RPCVs over the years and across the country; you might have someone living a few miles away from you and not even know it! <http://salone.rpcvs.com/>

Please email Meghan (meghan@ fosalone.org) or email Jeff through the website with any suggestions.

Project Committee

After funding over \$25,000 in Ebola projects last year, the Board of Directors voted to return to the regular projects program for 2016. My thanks to everyone for their donations and to the projects selection committee for their hard work. We can now turn our attention back to funding development projects in local communities.

The Board voted to fund two such projects in January:

- 1.) Conscience International was granted \$2650 to install solar-powered lighting in the Madina Secondary School in Kambia District
- 2.) The Blama Preschool, in the Bo District, was awarded \$3000 to complete construction of new classrooms

The Daphne Sawyer-Dunn Memorial Scholarship in the amount of \$250 was also sent to the Paul school for the Blind in Bo. Due to the Ebola epidemic, the academic year began in January of 2016.

The GofundMe experiment that FoSL tried for the first time last year was wildly successful. We raised well over our \$2000 goal in just a few weeks time, and 20 young girls orphaned by Ebola in Tonkolili District now have new school uniforms, shoes, and book bags. So, we may select a worthy project from our new applications and try this again in June. With an application deadline of April 30, we have already received five applications and will surely receive a few more by month's end.

There is still plenty of time to send us a donation or look for news of a new GoFundMe campaign in June. FoSL's projects grants support leaders in Sierra Leone who are working to improve their lives right now instead of waiting for a large NGO or government program. Funding these smaller projects allows community groups to solve their own problems in their own ways.

Thank you to all who support our small projects program.

Building a Health Clinic

Most of you know that since the early 2000s Friends of Sierra Leone has been involved in helping the community of Kenema Blango get their first qualified teacher and then their first real school built. While many people contributed to this project, there was one main donor who funded the second classroom block. When he visited Sierra Leone for the official opening of the school building, he was struck by the people of Sierra Leone and decided he wanted to do more.



The people of Kenema Blango have been trying to get a health clinic for years. While they are only about 18 miles from Bo, the bush road from Mandu to the village has some very rough places and at times is not accessible to any but the heaviest and sturdiest of trucks. This presents problems for many, but pregnant women and babies in particular. So, this kind and generous man decided to build at least a basic clinic for women and children.

Emmanuel Gborie visited the Ministry of Health office in Bo and secured their permission and approval to build the clinic. The Ministry has agreed to supply the nurse once the clinic is ready. Work on the clinic has already started and should be completed within a year. Emmanuel has already sent pictures of the initial work.

Sadly, since the project was started, Mr. Jalloh, the headmaster of the school, lost one of his twin infant sons. The baby had been ill since birth. While no one knows if having a health clinic in reach would have made a



difference in the outcome, it might have. Hopefully, having a clinic available will improve health conditions for mothers and babies.

If you want to help in this endeavor, please do so. You may donate online or via mail. You need to specify that your donation is for the health clinic. Once the clinic is finished, there will be a celebratory opening and some of our members will likely go. Especially donors are invited to attend.

We will be sending updates over the next year as the work goes on.

Daphne Sawyer-Dunn Scholarship Fund-

Paul School for the Blind

Daphne was a very integral part of Friends of Sierra Leone for many years. While she was from Freetown, her concern was for all of Sierra Leone. Sadly, she died following heart surgery several years ago. In her memory, Friends of Sierra Leone established a scholarship for students at the Paul School for the Blind in Bo.

Secondary students live at the school campus, but they attend different secondary schools around Bo. They have additional expense such as transportation and braille supplies. Even so, the expense is not very great considering the good it does. We send 4 or 5 students each term and the total expense is \$250.

As of the last money sent, this fund was depleted. But, word was sent out to renewing members and donors from the last few months and almost immediately the fund was back. We have enough for at least one year more.



Students come from all over Sierra Leone. This is a great fund to support young people from various districts and also to support handicapped students. If you would like to contribute to this fund, you may do so online or by mail. Just make sure you indicate that your donation is for Daphne's scholarship.