

# Friends Of Jamaica

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WINTER 2008 NEWSLETTER

## Jamaican School Children Are Surrounded by a Sea of Pirate Books!

Congratulations and thanks to everyone involved! Our book delivery was very successful. Over 6,000 books were delivered to schools all over Jamaica. The books were **donated** by First Book and **shipped** by Food for the Poor. The USAID project: Expanding Education Horizons (EEH) distributed the books throughout the island. A few of the schools who received books: Inverness Primary in St. Ann, Allman Town Primary in Kingston, Children's First in St. Catherine. PeaceCorpConnect recently recognized us on their new blog site: [http://peacecorpsconnect.multiply.com/journal/item/536/Friends\\_of\\_Jamaica\\_Gets\\_Books\\_on\\_the\\_Ground](http://peacecorpsconnect.multiply.com/journal/item/536/Friends_of_Jamaica_Gets_Books_on_the_Ground)



Allman Town School children enjoying the books.

*Sheryl Brown of EEH said, "...we delivered some of the 'Pirates of the Caribbean' books to Inverness Primary School. They were ecstatic! All normal school activities came to a halt. Children were overtaken with glee and the joy that comes with new toys. The books were distributed immediately and the entire school (except the youngest babies) became a reading class. Numerous pictures were taken..."*

We have received an outpouring of thank you letters from the children and will post them on the website.

Here is an example of the many thank you letters we have received:



Without your support, this project could not have worked so thanks again. We want to make book donations a regular project of FOJ so please let us know of any worthy groups in Jamaica.

Spanish Town P.O.  
St. Catherine.  
October 27, 2008.

Dear Friends of Jamaica,  
Thank you for the books you gave my school, I appreciate them. The books help me to read better. The books I read are from the series pirates of the Caribbenn, they are "Dead man's chest, From ship to shore and The pirate's chase. The thing I like most in From ship to shore" is that I get the chance to pick who I would like to win the fight. I wish you all the best and hope you will send us more books.

your friend,

## Welcome New FOJ Board Members

### CUM EEN

Andrea and Sara!

FOJ Board members can only serve for four years. You can join the Board, just drop us a line. Andrea Tehan and Sara Ferree responded to our plea. Thank You!

Andrea Tehan (G74) teaches high school biology in Montgomery County, MD and is working towards her Masters in Transition Special Education at GWU through the Peace Corps Fellows program. Andrea worked at First Book and has been instrumental in helping get the books to Jamaica. Thank you Andrea!

Sara (Dowd) Ferree (G74) is living in Monterey, California with husband Mark, fellow volunteer, and daughter Davia. She is attending the Monterey Institute for International Studies in pursuit of a Master's in International Development Policy. They recently moved from Rhode Island where she worked as a Grant Writer for The College Crusade of Rhode Island. Sara is assisting Patti with Membership.

## A Message from the FOJ President

As I sit quietly in the Washington DC at Christmas time, I feel very far from the Jamaican Christmas season with its cool breeze, sorrel punch, rum cake, Junkanoo, and Christmas markets. I miss my December weekends at the beach. I am sure we all have fond memories of Jamaica during the holidays; even if it was surreal to hear "White Christmas" on the radio in 80 degree weather where the only white you saw was the whitewash. This will be one of the cruelest holiday seasons in our lifetimes. As the world economic tsunami sent wave upon wave of havoc to the worlds' economy destroying wealth, causing global food shortages, collapsing economies, and shattering lives everywhere in the world, including Jamaica, we need to continue our commitment to help Jamaica.

Friends of Jamaica. Your donations are 100% tax deductible. Your \$15.00 renewal is necessary to develop new projects and continue in our success. Please encourage OTHERS to join. You don't have to be an RPCV to join the FOJ.

We also need your help in suggesting projects or communities we can assist. Referrals create revenue. Please help us so we can meet the needs in Jamaican lives. Projects we have funded or been asked to fund:

- \* enhance school feeding programs,
- \* provide internet access in rural Jamaica,
- \* beach improvement programs, and
- \* Book distribution.

Walk Good — Ian Gottesman, President

It is for this reason that I ask you to give to

## Update from the Treasurer

Friends of Jamaica has \$3,438 currently in the bank.

An audited report will be available in January and posted on the National Peace Corps Association website.

We have been blessed recently by generous members submitting additional gifts above their \$15 membership fee.

We continue to pass on 99% of Friends of Jamaica funds to projects in Jamaica. The remaining 1% covers administrative costs in maintaining our website and supporting the National Peace Corps Association. Thanks to our fiscal agent Youth Service America, all gifts are tax deductible.

Sincerest Thanks. --Adam Donaldson, Treasurer



## Juli Goodlaw wedding

Juli Goodlaw (Group 72, PCVL and Trainer) married Clement (aka Skip) Morris on February 16, 2008. Juli and Skip met while she was working as an environmental volunteer in Morant Bay, St. Thomas. After many years (almost 7) they finally tied the knot at Frenchman's Cove Resort in beautiful Port Antonio, Portland. Juli and Skip have built a house outside of Morant Bay overlooking the beautiful Caribbean Sea. If anyone needs a place to stay in St. Thomas, or wants to work on an organic, sustainable farm, contact Juli at [juligoodlaw@hotmail.com](mailto:juligoodlaw@hotmail.com)



## Deirdre Magnan Wedding

Deirdre Magnan and Michael were married in Kingston, Jamaica June 30, 2008. Deirdre is currently working in Massachusetts and Michael still resides in Jamaica.



## Andrea Wolf – Defending Her Masters

Andrea Wolf will be defending her master's thesis December 2008. She studies the effects of high elephant densities on vegetation change in the semi-arid savannahs of southern Africa and her thesis is entitled "The ecological footprint of elephants on vegetation in the Koba National Park, Northern Botswana.



## Adam and Jess Donaldson — New Addition

In September, Adam and Jess (G73) adopted Isaiah Habtamu Donaldson from Ethiopia. Isaiah, who is extremely social and never refuses any kind of food, has adapted quickly to the hustle and bustle of Baltimore.

# Tribute to Jody Brooks - Group 70

It remains difficult for me to write about the passing of Jody Brooks. Most remembrances I've read take a relatively detached tone, trying to do justice to the person who has passed away by refraining from overly personal expressions of grief. In this case, however, I do not believe such restraint would do justice to the memory of my friend, a truly dynamic human being who touched so many people in such a profound way. My experience of Jody was a deeply personal one, my grief at his passing remains intense, and I will always remember him as a member of my family.

I served with Jody in Kingston, Jamaica for three years, and shared two houses with him. Living in such close quarters over such a long period of time will either create insurmountable levels of conflict between people, or it will create deep bonds of friendship. In our case, it did both. We laughed, talked, argued, played basketball, and wrestled liked brothers. To say that Jody helped define my Jamaican experience would be a gross understatement. While Peace Corps Volunteers often attest to the strength of the friendships we develop with fellow volunteers in country, Jody was family to me.



However, my relationship with Jody was in no way unique. His funeral brought a huge number of people together, people who flew in from three continents, and from countries as diverse as Botswana and Japan, to pay respect to Jody's memory. I felt a strangely personal connection to these perfect strangers through our shared experience of, and love for, Jody.  
—Kristofer Sellman-Johnson

## FOJ Hurricane Relief Grant Summary-PCVS: Mer Mayhew & Adam Rhoads

Date: September 9-12, 2008  
Location: Burwood Beach, Trelawny, Jamaica

A team of 9 Mystic Rhoads Production (MRP) volunteers, along with local community members & Peace Corps Volunteers, repainted the main building, benches and garbage receptacles and erected signs notifying beach patrons of proper garbage disposal procedures at Burwood Beach.

For 4 days prior to the Burwood Beach Volleyball Tournament Fundraiser, 7 volunteers from across the USA joined MRP in Jamaica to relieve Burwood Beach from its most recent hurricane scars. The volunteers switched duties often as there was always something to be done to beautify the beach or prepare it for the tournament.



This was the first volunteer tour MRP has organized and has plans for more in the near future. A valuable experience for all involved and a great learning experience for MRP as an organization.

Jody served as a PCV and PCVC (later known as PCVL) from 1999 to 2003. To anyone who knew him he was an integral part of their Peace Corps experience. Jody is someone that has made an impact in this world so positive and extensive.

As a PCV at Hope for Children he turned an unofficial garbage dump (I heard there was something like 400 truckloads of garbage taken away) into a park/green space. For anyone that would like to go and pay tribute, the park is on the corner of Spanish Town Road and Maxfield Avenue, a place where a park is a rare sight/site. He also was able to get young men from warring communities to come together and play basketball, which effected their lives far beyond sports, and if you know Jody, you know what I mean.

Jody also was well liked by the Peace Corps staff and when he left Jamaica he took the time to leave a picture/plaque thanking them for all they do for Jamaica and for us volunteers. Jody was charming, hard working, kind, fun, dedicated, intelligent, real, and it was always a joyful experience to be in his presence. His death is a deeply painful loss, but I believe he continues to teach the living how to live, by how he lived his life. Jody knew how to move in any circle. From the ghetto to the hills, he was an inspiration to all he met. — Deb Broxton and Juli Goodlaw



## A Jamaican Christmas Greeting

By Anonymous

(To the tune of Chestnuts roasting on an open fire...)

Breadfruits roastin on an open fire  
Mongrels nipping at your toes  
Dancehall songs being sung by a choir  
An we dress up in we bashment clothes  
Everybody knows  
When gungo cook an sorrel flow  
Yu dun know seh de season brite  
Gal an bwoy wid dem starlight a glow  
Dem naw go waan fe sleep tonite  
Dem know seh joyride deh pon di way  
Wit music rockin, rockin tru de day  
An all de chicken dem a try fi spy  
Fi see is which one a dem is gwine fry  
An so, we want to big up everywan  
All kidz from one to ninety-two  
Aldoah money dun  
Have a hole heap a fun  
Irie Chrismus, Irie Chrismus ... to yuuuu!!

## Allman Town Primary School Library Dedicated to PCV

Kandi-Lee Crooks-Smith – Principal Dedication: October 13, 2008

Five years ago, Anne Varnell became a special member of our school family. She came in the capacity of Peace Corps Volunteer.

Anne worked assiduously to realize the beloved, recently-retired principal, Ms. Beril

Esson-Jacob's dream of a library for the school and community.

I am happy that students were here to witness this occasion, and it is because of them that the dedication is happening.

The children are our inspiration, and it is our desire that they excel in all areas of development, as they discover the enjoyment in reading. It is therefore fitting that the room is dedicated in Anne Varnell's honour.



For Membership Information go to [www.servejamaica.org/join.html](http://www.servejamaica.org/join.html)  
Download application and send \$15.00 US to:

Friends of Jamaica  
c/o Adam Donaldson  
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