



February 25, 2022

Greetings, FOL Members --

We hope that even as the Ukraine crisis has exploded and COVID remains concerning, you are doing well. It seems almost wrong to write at such a time, but this bulletin will cover some date-sensitive topics important to FOL, so we hope you will read it all and reply or ask questions about anything of interest. In summary, topics included are:

1. Friends of Liberia is coordinating a **trip to Liberia in October 2022** to celebrate the 60th Anniversary of the Peace Corps in Liberia, and in order to do further planning we need to know if you are seriously interested in going with the group. See details below!
2. FOL is transitioning to a new generation of leadership that will direct FOL's mission in the future, and we would like to introduce key new officers.
3. FOL needs to identify members who are willing to share their expertise and skills on either a very short-term basis as needed, such as pro-bono legal advice, or longer-term to help update our Strategic Plan or participate on the Communications (social media), Finance, or Development (fund-raising) Committees. No experience required – old-timers will help you!!

Also, Friends of Liberia members join in with friends across the globe to mourn the loss of Dr. Amos C. Sawyer, former President of the Interim Government of National Unity of Liberia, academic, writer, and progressive civil society leader, among other accomplishments, on February 16, 2022. We extended deepest sympathy and condolences to his family and the people of Liberia, who have lost a great champion for liberty who lived with generosity, courage, creativity, and leadership. May he rest in peace, and his family be enfolded by comforting love.

<https://www.liberianobserver.com/liberia-dr-amos-sawyer...>

DETAILS!

1. The trip to Liberia plan is to leave the U.S. on or about October 20, 2022, and stay a couple of weeks. There will be a few days of gathering and celebrations at the beginning of the journey while in Monrovia, potentially some with the U.S. Embassy and Peace Corps Liberia staff, followed by a few days of **optional** projects collaborating with Liberian health and education partners. After the projects, travelers are welcome to travel to their "home" villages and towns or elsewhere in Liberia. You certainly do not need to be a RPCV to participate, experience, and enjoy!

We are looking for interest (questions needing to be addressed) and more -- serious intention -- to travel with the group in order to plan well. We are working on coordinating flights; composing travel waivers; sharing information about visas and meds, travel insurance, COVID requirement updates, feasibility and costs for upcountry travel, etc.; and collaborating on the optional projects, so we need to know if plans will include 10 or 50! We would love your company and ideas.



Please respond by March 15, 2022 to Stephanie Vickers (email address below) if you are interested in joining the trip. Next, we will contact those committed to travel, request information about your interest in partner projects (your specialties and talents), and will share specific information to help you make flight and hotel reservations in Monrovia. We will stay in touch frequently before traveling to update information from Liberia, answer questions, and provide helpful hints.

Sincerely,

The 60th Liberian Trip Committee

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|-------------------|------------------------------|
| Elizabeth Frost | lizwfrost@msn.com |
| Maxwell Sines | maxwellsines10@gmail.com |
| Preston Tulay | preston_tulay@yahoo.com |
| Stephanie Vickers | stephanievickers@comcast.net |

2. In January 2022, the FOL Vice President Rebecca Martinez, stepped up to the President's role as planned. We will soon have her bio up on our website with others, but a bit about her can be seen on Facebook or (if you are on LinkedIn) at <https://www.linkedin.com/in/rebeccagmartinez/>. Congratulations to Rebecca, who will juggle this with grad school! Her email is president@fol.org.

FOL is also very proud to announce that John Morlu, CPA, has offered to serve as treasurer! John brings a wealth (LOL) of experience, credentials, and resources, including staff, to assist us. His email will be treasurer@fol.org. For info on John, please see www.jsmorlu.com.

FOL has begun the transition to more of its leadership being from the post-Liberian war RPCVs, with several Board members now representing that generation. Other Board members are looking for replacements to mentor into leadership roles. Former presidents and committee chairs will continue to serve on committees, mentor, and take leadership roles on special tasks as needed. We believe this is the blueprint for a vital FOL that can change with the times as needed, yet retain wisdom born of experience.

3. In regard to new leadership opportunities and needs, FOL would like to develop a talent pool to call on for advice and answers, as well as recruit people who would like to serve on the Board and/or be active on committees. If you are an attorney, for instance, and would be willing for us to very occasionally call you, please let us know.

A path to being FOL Vice President, which is currently vacant, is to work on a committee or special task force, such as an update to the FOL Strategic Plan. To lift a suspension of our Small Grants and Economic Development/Entrepreneurship programs, we must have volunteers who can make enough time to participate in and lead or co-lead those committees. We also need to revitalize our Communications committee and are seeking those who love social media and have some editing talent. Our Development and Membership chairs would love to have more "post-Liberian war generation" RPCVs, Liberians, and others work with them. **Are you interested?** If so, please write membership@fol.org and your message will be forwarded to the correct person.



I didn't intend to write a farewell letter, but when the Trip Committee drafted this letter, I knew I should use it to also introduce my successor and update you on a few other matters. It has been an honor to serve the FOL membership in the role of President for the past five years and to work with a range of wonderful people who served on the Board, on FOL committees, and who have been our Liberian partners – some long-term and some for just a short project. We have accomplished much, and it all has been due to your participation. The messages that some of you have written with donation checks or in emails about your memories of Liberia have often brought me to happy tears. They demonstrate how special Liberia is to you -- the ongoing commitment from Group 1 is just incredible and an inspiration for our 60th Anniversary activities.

The auctions were a great success, and another may occur! Watch for announcements as plans develop, including summer publication of an anthology of stories and poems written by FOL members, and a probable book launch in DC. Exciting!

I am very grateful for your support and I wish were able to write personal notes to all.

Remember, Stephanie needs to hear from you by **MARCH 15th** if you are seriously interested in being part of our FOL "reunion" in Sweet Liberia! I hope to travel with you!

Warm regards,

Sarah Morrison

FOL President, Jan 2017- Dec 2021