

Friends of Jordan Association

2013

ANNUAL REPORT



Mission Statement

“To facilitate networking and knowledge exchange among persons with a common interest in the country of Jordan, promote a better understanding of Jordanian people and culture, and support projects and activities of the U.S. Peace Corps and charitable private organizations in Jordan.”

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March 2014

Letter to Our Members

Welcome to our 2013 Annual Report! We've tried to pack it full of the history of our association as well as the past year's activities and finances. 2013 was a busy year for Friends of Jordan, and one that we all can be proud of. We funded a number of projects in Jordanian communities through the Small Grants program, and also introduced the "I Love Reading" Literacy Initiative. With your continued support and participation in events such as our second annual "Ramadan Iftar Potluck" we raised an impressive amount of money to fund those projects! We continued to improve our social media presence, and introduced our online merchandise store. There were also many additional activities which we describe in more detail in the report.

We are proud of what Friends of Jordan accomplished this past year and know that 2014 will be a great one! It has been our honor to serve you and Friends of Jordan as the Present and Vice President, and we look forward to look on as the new board continues to work towards and expand these common goals.

Sincerely,

Rachel Cleary
President,
Friends of Jordan Association

Gina Cabrera-Farraj
Vice President,
Friends of Jordan Association

Association Background

History

The Friends of Jordan Association was founded in 2004 with a group of Returned Peace Corps Volunteers (RPCVs) from Jordan along with former in-country staff. This group of RPCVs and former staff adopted the concept for Friends of Jordan from existing Peace Corps country “Friends of” groups. Peace Corps Jordan began in 1997, and six groups of returned volunteers existed by 2004. These returned volunteers were interested in having an organization that would bring them all together, help them stay connected to Jordan, connect them to others outside of the Peace Corps with an interest in Jordan, and provide a base for Jordan-oriented educational and charitable activities.

Friends of Jordan became incorporated as a state non-profit in Maryland in October 2004. In late 2004, the Friends of Jordan Association formed an affiliation with the National Peace Corps Association (NPCA), a non-profit organization that serves as an umbrella organization for all of the RPCV groups.

In February of 2005, Friends of Jordan held its first election and welcomed its first group of officers. The Officers discussed and finalized the draft bylaws by vote in September 2005 and an application to gain federal 501(c)3 non-profit status was in process at the end of 2005. After its first full year Friends of Jordan became a functioning non-profit with 39 members. Members now include not only Returned Peace Corps Volunteers and staff but also Jordanians and others interested in Jordan and the goals of the association.

2007 saw the creation of two more officer positions, acceptance as a 501(c)3 organization by the IRS and the success of numerous objectives and activities, which are outlined in the sections of this report that follow.

Mission & Goals

Mission Statement:

To facilitate networking and knowledge exchange among persons with a common interest in the country of Jordan, promote a better understanding of Jordanian people and culture, and support projects and activities of the U.S. Peace Corps and charitable private organizations in Jordan.

Our Association’s Main Goals:

- Encourage charitable and educational activities relating to the third goal of Peace Corps – to promote a better understanding of Jordanians on the part of Americans;
- Provide a forum within the U.S. and abroad for charitable activities, professional development, networking, and exchange of knowledge among persons and organizations with a common interest in Jordan;
- Support projects of the U.S. Peace Corps and charitable private organizations in Jordan;
- Assist Peace Corps volunteers returning from Jordan to re-connect with their

- communities and cultures in the U.S.; and
- Help Peace Corps volunteers returned from Jordan to continue with public service and related activities similar to those they performed during their Peace Corps service.

Organization

Officers

In 2013, there were eight officer positions.

President – Rachel Cleary
Vice President – Gina Cabrera-Farraj
Secretary – Susan Miller-Coulter
Treasurer – Natasha Marwah
Fundraising Coordinator – Erin Parr
Program Coordinator – Alex Bruce
Membership Coordinator – Jessica Cho
Communications Coordinator – Linsey Meldrim

Position Descriptions

Currently, the officers also act as the Board of Directors for this association.

(a) President.

- Arranges and conducts officer meetings
- Recruits officers if a position is vacated between elections
- Ensures that the Bylaws are upheld
- Presents a report of the Association's activities at the annual meeting
- Calls special officer meetings if/when necessary
- Receives and approves, along with at least 6 members, amendments to the FOJ bylaws

(b) Vice-President.

- Assumes the position of President should the President resign, be removed from office, or require a temporary absence
- Acts as a resource to the President
- Coordinates nomination and election of candidates for vacant Board seats
- Acts as liaison between the organization, the community, the National Peace Corps Association, Peace Corps Washington and other National Peace Corps Association groups

(c) Treasurer.

- Has charge of all funds belonging to the organization
- Receives, deposits and disburses funds as appropriate
- Maintains financial records as appropriate
- Writes quarterly and year end financial reports and submits them to the Secretary for distribution to Board members

- Receives and enters new membership information (by mail and through NPCA), assigns expiration date and forwards information to the Membership Coordinator
- Maintains Internal Revenue Service 501(c)3 status

(d) Secretary.

- Develops, maintains, and distributes the Association's written records including bylaws, annual reports, and any other documentation of the Association's structure and processes; acts as the liaison for the most current versions of these documents; and works with other officers to keep these documents up-to-date (example documents include the annual calendar, position descriptions, membership and renewal forms, and others)
- Records meeting minutes from officer meetings and general meetings or ensures a substitute if planning to be absent
- Archives records required by Maryland law; maintains tax-exempt status with the Maryland Secretary of State
- Maintains Association membership with the National Peace Corps Association, including writing and submitting the annual organizational report to their offices in Washington, DC
- Manage and maintain Association email account

(e) Membership Coordinator.

- Maintains Database: Enters information forwarded by Secretary/Treasurer into membership database
- Provides new member contact/orientation
- Liaises with existing members about any membership concerns
- Answers non-member questions
- Contacts non-members and encourages them to join
- Writes articles in newsletter about the benefits of joining

(f) Program Coordinator.

- Plans or oversees Association programs, such as online membership discussion forums, educational or awareness campaigns, small-grants funding, or social gatherings; arranges time and place of program events
- Encourages Association members to participate in programs and events
- Notifies Newsletter Editor of upcoming program events
- Coordinates program event publicity with the President
- Submits a report on each program event to Newsletter Editor for publication in next newsletter
- Develops new programs, events, or activities
- Oversees program committees, comprised of association members, established for the purpose of promoting one or more Association programs

(g) Fundraising Coordinator.

- Consults with Board Members and establishes the target fundraising amount for the year
- Develops and coordinates fundraising activities to meet the annual goal; example activities could include a banquet dinner, silent or on-line auction of Jordan related items,

pitches to other organizations with an interest in Jordan (such as the Jordan Embassy in D.C.), and the like

- Works on funding for new programs that are not contained in the annual fundraising goal and other events that may arise
- Maintains a network of member contacts from each volunteer service group (J-1, J-2, J-3, etc.) to serve as the person to approach association members if/when asking members to contribute individually

(h) Communications Coordinator.

- Publishes the Association's newsletter on a regular basis and distributes the newsletter to the association's membership, preferably by email
- Solicits information for the newsletter from Officers, other members, National Peace Corps Association, Peace Corps Washington, Peace Corps Jordan, other Peace Corps Association groups, or other members of the community
- Maintains the Association website so that the information is current and relevant
- Responds to information requests submitted to the site
- Makes sure all dues related to maintaining the site have been paid by the Treasurer
- Maintains communication with website host via e-mail

2013 Accomplishments

- Coordinated the 2013 Ramadan "Night-In" Fundraiser and Ramadan Iftar Potluck.
- Designed and launched a new Friends of Jordan merchandise store on Cafepress.com
- 12 Small Grants were awarded to Jordanian groups working with Peace Corps volunteers, including a behavior awareness workshop, a world cultures camp, a journalism camp, and Camp GLOW.
- \$1,200 was raised for the "I Love Reading" Literacy Initiative. A \$600 grant was awarded for the construction of a library in a Jordanian community. \$600 remains for an additional grant to be distributed in 2014.
- Reviewed applications for FOJ Small Grants Program
- Published one issue of *Marhabtien*, the FOJ newsletter, in February 2014.
- Met with the Director of Jordan Information Bureau at the Embassy of Jordan in Washington D.C.
- Combined the Newsletter Editor and Webmaster officer positions into one Communications Coordinator position to streamline our member communication.
- Held monthly conference calls.
- Organized and filed documents and minutes for Friends of Jordan.

- Participated in the exchange of ideas for raising membership, fund raising, web site ideas and posting news.
- Continued to promote Jordan and Jordanian interests.

Small Grant Funding Profile

I Love Reading Literacy Initiative – Summer 2013

Award Amount:	\$600
Volunteer(s):	Matt Pezzicara, Damen Davis, and William Evans
Location(s):	Kufr Asad, Irbid area



In early 2013, FOJ created a small endowment in honor of the late Ambassador Stevens, who was killed in Libya in September 2012 and served as a Peace Corps volunteer in Morocco. After receiving numerous generous donations from FOJ members, FOJ created an “I Love Reading” initiative and requested proposals from current Jordan PCVs. By August, we awarded a grant of \$600, much larger than typical FOJ grants, to PCVs Matt Pezzicara, Damen Davis, and William Evans to expand upon a library at a learning center in Kufr Asad, outside Irbid.

By the time of their COS in December, Matt, Damen, and William purchased over 700 books as a result of the grant, more than doubling the number of books at the center. Books in both Arabic and English were purchased, many with an explicit education focus. Sustainability was ensured through full time staff at the center, two of whom received training in library management. Twice a week, the Kindergarten and Pre-School teachers from Kufr Asad bring their classes to the center to read one children's book in English and one in Arabic, followed by comprehension questions and snacks provided by the center staff as well. Further, the volunteers’ counterparts agreed to bring each 5th grade class to the center twice a month for free reading lessons and to familiarize the students with the books and the workings of a library (borrowing and returning). Lastly, the “We Love Reading” organization in Jordan donated their 12 book curriculum to the center. Books are read aloud by a facilitator to a group of students; afterwards, discussion and critical thinking takes place (the questions are gauged so that many answers can be accepted and

there are no wrong answers).

One success story of the project happened soon before the new library opened. Matt, Damen, and William were in the process of training the staff, comparing book prices, and then buying and transporting the books to the center, but were not ready to open the library and had not advertised the library formally. Fortunately, 2 teachers and their classes showed up unannounced at the center one day, wanting to ask questions and use the resources that were available. They had heard about the center from a friend, and the friend had heard from someone else. Without much work, the two teachers were spreading the news of the new library and that it was being funded by Americans. The two teachers began visiting on a weekly basis and became the top supporters of the center, both with extra donations and word of mouth sharing of the center's resources, hours, and capabilities. Once they were really ready to start advertising the center, over a couple hundred people were already using it for personal reading use

Membership Information

Friends of Jordan had 63 total members at the end of December. There were 11 new or renewed memberships in 2013. Members have joined by downloading membership forms and reaching out directly to the Membership Coordinator. We also spent significant time networking with Peace Corps-Jordan to reach volunteers that are completing their service.

FOJ continues to have diverse representation with members living in multiple countries, states, and the District of Columbia. Our members also include current and former Peace Corps staff members, family members of currently serving volunteers, spouses of RPCVs, and others with an interest in Jordan and the goals of Friends of Jordan.

2013 Financial Information

Financial Overview

This report covers the period from January 2013 through December 2013.

Friends of Jordan continues to be financially stable with extremely low expenses for a non-profit organization. 2013 revenues (including donations) totaled \$2630.47, while we had expenses (excluding grants awarded) of \$225.84—about 9 percent of our revenue (Table 1). Revenue includes membership dollars collected and given to the National Peace Corps Association (NPCA). Below is further explanation of the association's finances from January through December 2013 which are also detailed on the balance sheet at the end of the section.

- a. Expenses included bank, PayPal, postage, web fees, and \$50 to re-affiliate with NPCA and totaled \$225.84.
- b. Additional costs for office supplies, postage, and phone calls made by board members to participate in the monthly meetings are not included in the expense total. We appreciate donations in materials and time made by board and other members.
- c. We raised \$2630.46 in donations in 2013. Per the Bylaws, Friends of Jordan must retain five percent of this amount for administrative expenses. This figure is \$131.52 for 2013. This number is figured on total donations received. Click & Pledge fees are taken from operating funds.
- d. In 2013, we gave 12 grants, totaling approximately (because of the exchange rate) \$2,184, to a wide variety of projects sponsored by Peace Corps Volunteers in Jordan. All grants were dispersed in Jordan dinars.
- e. Our bank account with HSBC was officially closed on November 20, 2013. A new account was opened at Wells Fargo on October 22, 2013.

We are entering 2014 financially stable with growing assets. Assets in FOJ's bank accounts increased from approximately \$5,844.36 on January 1, 2013 to \$6,237.18 on December 31, 2013.

Table 1. Detail on FOJ Financial Overview of 2013

Category	Quarter (2013)			
	Jan – Mar	Apr – Jun	Jul – Sept	Oct - Dec
Memberships	\$60	\$135	\$0	\$0
Donations	\$400	\$150	\$1,689	\$391.46
Non-Grant Expenses	\$51.62	\$57.44	\$107.88	\$8.90
Grants Paid	\$263	\$944	\$841.71	\$135
Total in Accounts	\$5,844.36	\$5,190.16	\$5989.62	\$6,237.18

Some notes on Table 1 above:

1. The revenue figure reflects all membership monies received, including NPCA membership money and \$131.52 of donation money retained per FOJ bylaws (see point c above).
2. The Donations figure does not reflect carry-over money from 2012.
3. The Grants Paid figure reflects 12 grants given in 2013.

Q4 2013 Financial Statement

October 1, 2013—December 31, 2013

Prepared by Natasha Marwah

Wells Fargo Account

Starting cash January 1

\$5,698.98

Deposits:

1 year memberships	\$0
Individual 0	
NPCA memberships	\$0
Donations	\$350
Good Search Commission	\$41.46
Total Deposits Received	\$391.46

Expenses

Grants	\$135
PayPal fees	\$8.90
Total Expenses	\$143.90

Balance in FOJ Accounts (December 31, 2013) \$6,237.18

Thank You to Our Supporters

We would like to thank Briana Adams, Jessica Alexander, Sara Antaya, Larry Bartlett, Kyle Bellows, Evelyn Cleary, Judith Culver, Jackie Dailey, Dan Dersham, Tighe Flanagan, Felicia Genet, Aysha Ghadiali, Carla Grossklaus, Jarrett Guajardo, Don Hesse, Rose Kyprianou, Gloria Lee, Jaxon Love, Natasha Marwah, Lydia McCloskey, Carolyn Miller-Coulter, Susan Miller-Coulter, Nawal Najjar, Darcy Neill, Bryan Payne, Jennifer Peterson, Vijay Ram, David Rosenburg, Ben Wise, plus anonymous donors for their generous contributions to Friends of Jordan in 2010.

Budget Projection for 2014

In 2014, the Association will need income to cover expenditures for the website and other operating costs, Small Grant Funding, start-up costs for new programs, and donations to causes which further our mission. Below outlines our projected costs which will be funded from membership dues, donations, and fundraising.

Summary of 2014 Fundraising Goal	
Item	Amount
Small grant funding	\$1,500
Operating costs	\$600
New programs	\$1,000
Donations to causes furthering our mission	\$500
Total	\$3,100

We anticipate \$400 from membership dues this year, including renewals and new memberships.

The officers project a need of \$3,100 for expenses. The projected expenses include 12 small grants totaling \$1,500 to communities working with Jordan Peace Corps volunteers for projects in Jordan, \$1000 to set up and launch a larger grants program and to fund one or two new projects under this program, and \$600 for operating costs. We have also included a goal to donate \$500 to one or more causes furthering the mission of Friends of Jordan.

Objectives and Work Plan for 2014

FOJ goals for 2014 are specifically to:

- Encourage charitable and educational activities relating to the Third Goal of Peace Corps—to promote a better understanding of Jordanians on the part of Americans;
- Provide a forum within the US and abroad for charitable activities, professional development, networking, and exchange of knowledge among persons and organizations with a common interest in Jordan;
- Support projects of the Peace Corps and charitable private organizations in Jordan;
- Assist Peace Corps Volunteers returning from Jordan to reconnect with their communities and cultures in the US; and
- Help Peace Corps Volunteers returned from Jordan to continue with public service and related activities similar to those they performed during their Peace Corps service

Below is a list of detailed plans by office to achieve these goals. A Gant chart at the end summarizes activity timing by officer position.

Detailed Plans by Office

The priority activities for each officer are listed below. Under each of the officer positions is listed the priority activities for the 2014 term. The “other activities/ideas” are of a lower priority and will be considered on an ad hoc basis.

PRESIDENT

2014 Goal

Represent the organization and support the officers in implementing their respective activities

Priority Activities and Timing

1. Produce 2014 Work Plan – *by end March*
2. Recruit replacements for vacant officer positions -- *ASAP*
3. Lead monthly officers meetings – *monthly*
4. Manage officer elections – *January/February*
5. Liaise with Peace Corps Washington, Peace Corps Jordan, the Embassy of Jordan, and other organizations – *ongoing*

VICE PRESIDENT

2014 Goal

Support the President and the other officers in implementing their respective activities. Serve as lead contact for organization in Jordan.

Priority Activities and Timing

1. Work in the ex-patriot community in Jordan to raise awareness of FOJ – *continuous*

2. Help smooth out financial transactions for small grants funding – *continuous*
3. Help with projects / activities when requested by the President or other officers – *continuous*
4. Maintain and renew FOJ's relationship as an affiliate group with the National Peace Corps Association – *ongoing, with renewal application due by April 2014*

SECRETARY

2014 Goal

Maintain and improve the system for managing association files

Priority Activities and Timing

1. Organize and schedule monthly officer meetings. Take notes during the meetings, post notes online for correction, then post them officially on FOJ web site – *monthly*.
2. Check e-mail address' and respond as needed – *continuous*
3. Organize and post electronic files on Big Tent – *continuous*

Other Activities / Ideas

1. Review grant applications when asked and then evaluate grant applications.

TREASURER

2014 Goal:

Manage finances and support business processes of the Association

Priority Activities

1. Manage day-to-day finances of FOJ
2. Manage incoming/outgoing funds
3. Reconcile finances with Wells Fargo statements
4. Provide funds to Jordan PCVs to support small grants
5. Provide timely grants
6. Maintain IRS and 501(c)3 status
7. File taxes
8. Reporting
9. Submit quarterly financial reports to the Officers
10. Support fundraising officer where needed
11. Support fundraising events where needed
12. Support thank you notes to donors
13. Make FOJ more efficient and effective!

MEMBERSHIP COORDINATOR

2014 Goal

Reach out and target new members via email, particularly families of Peace Corps volunteers currently serving in Jordan.

Priority Activities and Timing

1. Membership drive to target PCVs about to COS and friends and family of current volunteers -- *September*

Other Activities / Ideas

1. Review grant applications when asked and then evaluate grant applications.

COMMUNICATIONS COORDINATOR

2014 Goal

Maintain and improve the quality and reach of the association's online presence.

Priority Activities and Timing

1. Get new officers up and running on email accounts – *March*
2. Develop/integrate an interactive program map for small grant projects
3. Archive old newsletters on website
4. Utilize newsletter for fundraising and announcements – *ongoing*
5. Help archive old newsletters on website in coordination with Webmaster– *Summer*

Other Activities / Ideas

1. Maintain Facebook Page, maybe add Twitter – *continuous*
2. Maintain communication of the NPCA networking website – *continuous*.

PROGRAM COORDINATOR

2014 Goal:

Make the small grants program continue to run smoothly.

Priority Activities and Timing

1. Recruit persons to review grants – *ongoing*
2. Acknowledge receipt of grants, find reviewers, compile reviews, provide feedback and grant decisions to applicants, notify treasurer of awards – *ongoing*
3. Solicit final reports and pictures from grant awardees – *ongoing*
4. Work with webmaster to update projects pages on website – *ongoing*

Other Activities / Ideas

(None)

FUNDRAISING COORDINATOR

2014 Goal:

Raise \$1500 through solicitations and fundraising events

Priority Activities and Timing

1. Hold Ramadan Night-in and Ramadan Iftar fundraisers - *summer*
2. Foster deeper and stronger relationship with larger/more consistent/regular donors – *continuous*

Other Activities / Ideas

1. Support other, especially new, officers in their efforts – continuous

Additional General Ideas for FOJ

The additional items presented below were identified as ideas during the planning process but are not tied to any existing officer. We will pursue these activities on an ad hoc basis.

- Seek partnerships with other organizations that are working to achieve FOJ's mission.

Friends of Jordan



اصدقاء الاردن



Key Facts about Friends of Jordan

A Group of Returned Peace Corps Volunteers, Staff, and Other “Friends of Jordan”

Our Mission: To facilitate networking and knowledge exchange among persons with a common interest in the country of Jordan, promote a better understanding of Jordanian people and culture, and support projects and activities of the US Peace Corps and charitable private organizations in Jordan.

Our Association’s Main Goals:

- ❖ Encourage charitable and educational activities relating to the Third Goal of Peace Corps—to promote a better understanding of Jordanians on the part of Americans;
- ❖ Provide a forum within the US and abroad for charitable activities, professional development, networking, and exchange of knowledge among persons and organizations with a common interest in Jordan;
- ❖ Support projects of the Peace Corps and charitable private organizations in Jordan;
- ❖ Assist Peace Corps Volunteers returning from Jordan to reconnect with their communities and cultures in the US; and
- ❖ Help Peace Corps Volunteers returned from Jordan to continue with public service and related activities similar to those they performed during their Peace Corps service

KEY FACTS

Founded:	October, 2004
Members:	63 and growing
Member locations:	Multiple countries, states, and Washington, D.C.
Current Programs:	Small grants program, quarterly newsletter, Facebook, Twitter, CafePress, GoodSearch
Programs in Development:	Medium sized grant program
Membership:	\$20/year (waived for 1-year for returning PCVs)
How to join:	www.friendsofjordan.org or email membership@friendsofjordan.org

Founded: Friends of Jordan Association (FOJ) is a non-profit organization founded in 2004 by Returned Peace Corps Volunteers and staff who felt that a group to promote Jordanian culture, heritage, and awareness was of great importance.

Members: Friends of Jordan currently has 63 members, and we are continually growing. Our members include Returned Peace Corps-Jordan Volunteers who are now working and/or studying around the globe, current and former Peace Corps-Jordan staff, and others associated with or interested in Jordan.

Activities: Friends of Jordan’s first charitable activity, the **Small Grants Program** was launched in 2005 and offers up to \$150 for secondary projects to Jordanians working with a Peace Corps Volunteer currently serving in Jordan. The program supports 10-15 projects a year including sports camps, art projects, language workshops, educational field trips, and more.

We publish our quarterly newsletter *Marhabtain* and have pictures, and resources on our interactive website.

Project Funding: Friends of Jordan has received donations totaling over \$2,600 in 2013 for our programs. Donations fund secondary projects proposed by Jordanians working with Peace Corps volunteers through the Small Grants Program. Donations also support other worthwhile projects in the U.S. or Jordan that promote American-Arab cultural exchange or grassroots community development.

How to Join: Membership is open to all persons with an interest in Jordan. To join, please visit <http://friendsofjordan.org/membership/> or email membership@friendsofjordan.org. FOJ offers a complimentary, one-year membership to Jordan-PCVs who have recently returned from Jordan. Otherwise, membership is \$20/year.