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www.friendsofmongolia.org

FRIENDS OF MONGOLIA NEWSLETTER

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SUMMER 2004

Friends of Mongolia (FOM) is an incorporated nonprofit organization conducting operations in both Mongolia and the United States. It is an affiliate of the National Peace Corps Association and its membership includes both Americans and Mongolians. It is organized and operated exclusively for charitable, educational and developmental purposes. Friends of Mongolia exists to develop partnerships with the people of Mongolia in furtherance of cultural exchange and human development.

FROM DEADLOCK TO GRAND COALITION

Ts. Elbegdorj, fresh from the Kennedy School, is once again Prime Minister of the Ikh Hural. N. Enkhbayar will take over as Speaker of Parliament. Leader of the Democratic Coalition, M. Enkhsaikhan, will chair the Standing Committee on Security and Foreign Policy. Earlier this summer, the election saw the Dems come from behind to win 34 of 76 seats, which did not leave the MPRP with an opposition. J. Gurragchaa, Mongolia's Cosmonaut and Minister of Defense, initially lost his seat, but regained it in a controversial recall election. Rather than face gridlock, the MPRP and the Dems went to Israel this summer to see first hand a parliament with a grand coalition. Another notable winner in the election is founder of Buyan Cashmere and the Republican Party, B. Jargalsaikhan.



Throat Singer at Georgetown Naadam at MongolianArtist.com.
Sign up for free weekly news alerts! Photo by Bob Wolf.

ONLINE STORE!

Thanks to FOM board member John Napoleoni, we now have an online store! Members may renew membership by indicating the type of membership in the text field. You may also purchase FOM T-Shirts with our new logo. Indicate XL, L, M or S. Also, we plan to place items from our craft collection on line.

BOOK PROJECT—SPECIAL THANKS TO KEN!

We request your support for the new Friends of Mongolia project: Wisconsin Books to Mongolia (WBTM). Launched late last year in Madison, this project will collect and ship a container of books to Mongolia in Fall 2004. We have successfully collected

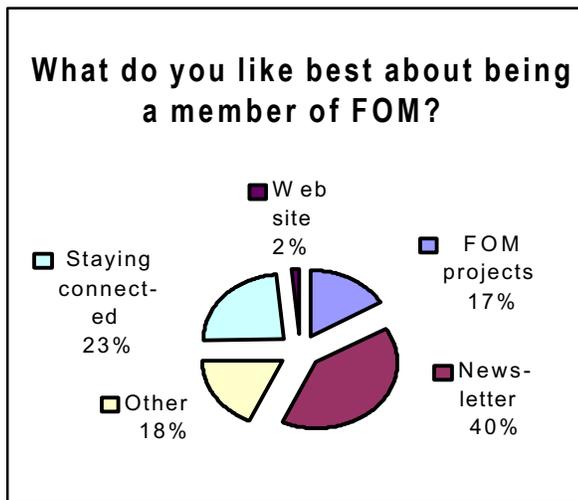
10,000 books, completing the first phase of this exciting project. The books will be sent to schools in remote rural areas, arriving in time for the start of the school year in September. Khovd and other western aimags are under consideration for distribution. Special thanks to Ken Helenfelds who made a generous contribution to the book project through FOM's eStore. For more information contact Adam Zenko at adamzenko@hotmail.com.

MONGOLIAN TAKES BRONZE IN JUDO

Kh. Tsagaanbaatar takes home a bronze from Athens in extra lightweight men's judo. At 20 years, he is the youngest Mongolin to win a medal in the Olympics.

FOM SURVEY RESULTS ENTHUSIASTIC

In order to better get a sense of members expectations for FOM, the Board decided to commission a survey. FOM thanks board member Rachel Fix who designed and distributed the survey and Bob Wolfe who built an online database to allow data entry over the web. Two thirds of our members filled out the survey. All indicated that they would renew their membership next year. 67% want to be more involved. Only one person disagreed that FOM membership was important.



The newsletter wins hands down as the number one perk enjoyed by members followed by staying connected and contributing to projects. Members rank FOM project priorities as follows:

1. Education scholarships
2. School development
3. Community health
4. Environment
5. Family farming
6. English language book distribution
7. Winter disaster relief
8. Other

FYI, the FOM board does not foresee supporting winter disaster relief, in part because of mild winters and the negative impact of disaster relief on the animal fodder supply chain.

58% of FOM members are male to 42% female. Our average age is 40 and median age 35 with a standard deviation of 11.86. That means that two thirds of our members are between 23 and 52. We are mostly mid-career professionals: education is the largest sector followed by NGO then government.

Please note that this is preliminary data. FOM still needs to test the beta cold fusion database and validate the data against hard copies. Final results will be posted on the website.

THE NOMAD'S HOME

This year, FOM board member, Chris McKee finished a documentary called *The Nomad's Home*, about building a ger in Bulgan Aimag. "Well, it's going to be something like Bakara or Pawaaquatsi with just music and images—at least that's the idea," says McKee. The National Peace Corps Association screened the film at the national conference in Chicago from August 5th – 8th. For more info see www.ragcha.com.

EAST 17 STEAMS NAADAM STADIUM

Naadam Stadium is no stranger to bands who have lost their following back home, but not to loyal fans in Ulaanbaatar. Smokie rocked the house back in 1999. This year East 17 put back on their tight pants, left the kids at home and harmonized with Lumino as a warm up. The UB Post reported that Britain's boy band was surprised that they would draw a sold out crowd of 20,000 because at home they are lucky to get 500.

NEW INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

According to the UB Post, officials broke ground on the new \$900 million airport Khushigtiin Khundii, Tuv Aimag. Costs include a 43 mile highway to Ulaanbaatar. Developers plan to finish the airport by 2009. Some flights will continue at the existing airport.

FOM 2004 NEW OFFICERS

Lara Ho, Rick Smith and Patrick Sommerville are continuing as FOM officers. Our new treasurer is Jane Sommerville of Washington, DC and our Communications Officer is John Tsai of Adelphi, MD. Jane is a grants manager with Antheon, an institutional contractor at the Office of Refugee Resettlement of the Administration for Children and Families of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. She is a graduate of Harvard and the University of Minnesota. She worked as an educational development consultant in the Ukraine. Her dream job is to run a refugee services organization. John is a Presidential Management Fellow at the Broadcasting Board of Governors, parent corporation of the Voice of America. He taught

ESL in Mongolia and traveled extensively in east Asia. His attended the University of Houston and New York University. John's dream job is to work as a physician with Doctors Without Borders. Jane and John are looking forward to bringing fresh ideas and energy to FOM. They both accepted nomination after the general election. Previous nominees on the ballot decided not to serve.

AMB. LA POTRA JOINS USINDO

FOM Board member Ambassador Al La Porta assumed the presidency of the United States-Indonesia Society (USINDO) on April 1. USINDO is a bi-national organization formed for the purpose of promoting awareness of Indonesia in the United States and improving mutual understanding. Al's office e-mail address is aflaporta@usindo.org. He will maintain his interest in Mongolian affairs and, among other things, contributed to the development of FOM's strategic plan.

LAKVA DIAZ

Lakva Sim, aka D. Lkhagva, captured the world lightweight boxing championship last April from Miguel Callist in Las Vegas with a knockout in the 5th round. His reign as champ lasted about four months as he lost to 20 year old Antonio Diaz in Houston this July. It was no easy match; both had good chin and lasted the full 12 rounds without a knock out. In the end, Antonio's fierce energy out punched Lkhagva's experience. Lakva previously held the featherweight world championship.

WEEPING CAMEL REVIEW

The DC International Film Festival brought a rare gem—*The Tale of the Weeping Camel*. I first learned of this film during Oscar season, when critics complained that it was passed over for a nomination by the academy. Rightly so, *Weeping Camel* takes animal acting to a new level in this portrait of a mother camel that rejects her albino baby. The filmmakers filmed over 43 camel births in the South Gobi until they found a mother willing to act out their script. The film is elegantly shot against the expansive desert landscape. The Dolby digital surround sound gives the audience an eerie feeling of being inside a ger surrounded by the howling wind. The film will take back former residents of Mongolia to the everyday struggles of batteries that don't work, ice cream in stale cones and grandmothers with plenty of milk tea. *Weeping Camel* is produced by THINKFilms with National Geographic Films and is directed by Byambasuren Davaa and Luigi Falorni. (www.weepingcamel.com)

TESTING THE HARDNESS OF STEEL

FOM members Luke and Billie Snell brought hardness testers for steel, several infrared thermometers and floating concrete kits to Mongolia last May. The Mongolian University of Science and Technology in Ulaanbaatar (MUST UB) hosted the

two faculty members from Southern Illinois University. They worked with Mongolian students and practicing engineers to work on some of the problems related to concrete in Mongolia, including cold weather and use of sawdust, rather than vermiculite in the mix.



FOM STRATEGIC PLAN FOR FUTURE

In order for an organization to have a compass for growth, you need a strategic plan. The FOM board drafted a strategic plan which will be available on our website for comment by members for the next 90 days. A small subcommittee of the board drafted the plan. The plan has three goals: 1) education of Mongolian students; 2) use strategic partnerships to promote Mongolia to business, non-profit and educational organizations; and 3) achieve non-profit management excellence. FOM needs support from members in order to realize its strategic plan. As always, please consider serving as an officer or board member in the next election. Furthermore, remember that the next time you do a presentation about Mongolia in your community, you have FOM behind you. We can help you with your presentation and by letting us know, we can motivate other members by sharing ideas. FOM can even put your picture in the newsletter or website.

JOIN THE GREATER MONGOL COMMUNITY

North America Mongolian Business Council
(www.nambc.org)

The Mongolia Society
(<http://www.indiana.edu/~mongsoc/>)

American Center for Mongolian Studies
(www.mongoliacenter.org)

Online Mongolian Communities
HamagMongol@yahoo.com (Washington, DC)
www.assult.net (Los Angeles, CA)
<http://www.monstudnet.mn/> (Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia)
Monstudnet has a great music site!

JOIN FOM (FOM)

As a member you can:

- Subscribe to our e-mail list serve
- Receive our newsletter
- Vote in FOM elections and meetings
- Serve on ad hoc committees for scholarships, fundraising and development projects
- Join the National Peace Corps Association for an additional \$25

_____ \$25 individual FOM

_____ \$40 family FOM (2 people at the same address)

_____ \$50 individual joint FOM/NPCA

_____ \$62.50 family joint FOM/NPCA

_____ I would like to receive future newsletters by e-mail

\$ _____ **Additional donation for FOM's general fund**

\$ _____ **Additional donation for the Scholarship Fund**

(<http://scholarship.friendsofmongolia.org>)

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

FOR MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY: NEW AND CURRENT MEMBERS (OPTIONAL)

Current Occupation: _____

Connection/interest in Mongolia: _____

THANK YOU TO ALL OUR DONORS. ALL DONATIONS ARE TAX DEDUCTIBLE. DONATE OVER \$15 AND RECEIVE AN FOM T-SHIRT. DONATE OVER \$50 AND RECEIVE A FREE GIFT. DONATIONS OVER \$100.00 WILL BE MAILED A RECEIPT.

Make check payable to: FOM

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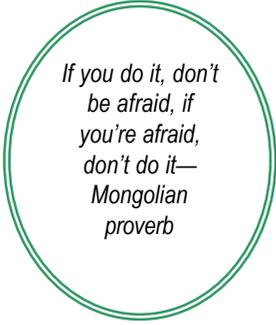
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