



YALE ALUMNI SERVICE CORPS  CAPE TOWN 2018

Newsletter No. 3  
May 2018

Hello everyone,

What a geographically diverse group we have turned out to be! We hail from 20 different states plus D.C. And from Canada too, with folks coming from both Ontario and Quebec. The age range of our group is an astonishing 10 to 82. And 14 volunteers are under 18 years old. I'm looking forward to seeing all of you in your splendid geographic and demographic glory in Cape Town!

### **Team Effort!**

Some of you have inquired as to when we'll be letting you know about your project team assignments. The answer is....soon. There have been some personnel changes in the Philippi school district, and Scott Clarke and his crew at Amandla have been busy confirming the details of our arrangements for our projects with the new staff. In general, if you indicated a first choice for project, that's what you're going to get. You'll be hearing soon from project team leaders. Please have patience—it will be good practice for when we're on the ground in Philippi when patience will truly be a virtue.

### **Two-minute drill**

I hope you're all practicing your two-minute showers! Day Zero (the day when the taps will be shut off and Capetonians will receive rationed allotments of water) has been pushed off until 2019, mostly due to the incredible job the residents have done to limit their water use. But the drought is not over yet, so conservation measures will still be in effect when we're there. One of our volunteers, Alfred Renaud, has suggested this addition to our 2-minute repertoire: Frank Sinatra singing *Girl from Ipanema* (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NldPFVKYmiw>) Check it out and practice, practice!

## **“Big Ol’ Jet Airliner”**

By now many of you have probably already booked your flights to and from Cape Town. If you’re going to arrive before Thursday July 26 and would like to check into the hotel a night early, we can probably arrange an extra night for you at our discounted rate. (You’ll pay the hotel directly for the extra night.) This also applies at the other end of the trip if you need to stay over on that Sunday night. Let me know right away if you need an extra night.

When you do know your flight, **please send João an email** (joao.aleixo@yale.edu) with the following information:

Date of arrival  
Name of airline  
Flight #  
Scheduled arrival time

And please do the **same for your departure** flight.

***Note that what we want is the last leg of your journey, the segment that arrives in Cape Town.*** So, if you’re flying through, for example, Dubai, we don’t need to know what flight you’re taking to Dubai. Just the Dubai—Cape Town flight. Similarly, if you’re going on the pre-trip to Victoria Falls, all we need is the flight you’re taking back to Cape Town on the 26<sup>th</sup>.

Once we see when most of the flights arrive, we’ll set the time for the shuttle bus from the airport to the hotel. It is likely to be late in the day or early evening. If you are arriving at a different time, you will have to make your own way to the hotel. Luckily, it’s easy to get a taxi or Uber and it’s not very far to the hotel. Uber is around R175 for UberX, R190 for UberXL, and R300 for UberBlack. Most taxi companies will charge roughly R300- R350. (Current exchange rate is approximately R12.25 to the dollar.)

### **We hope you’ll never need this!**

Included in the cost of the trip is an emergency medical insurance policy from United Healthcare. It covers you for emergency medical services if you are injured or become gravely ill while on the trip, including evacuation back to your home if necessary. ***Note that this is not a substitute for your regular health insurance.*** This policy is designed for emergencies only. I will be sending you more detailed information about this insurance in a separate email before the trip.

**Client Name:** YASC Cape Town 2018  
**UHC Global ID#:** 320731

Notice to Physicians/Hospitals: Call immediately for benefits verification and procedures. Call 24 hours a day(multilingual). If you do not have access to a phone, email for assistance: [assistance@uhcglobal.com](mailto:assistance@uhcglobal.com)

### **Plugged-in...**

South Africa's electrical system is 220v. Most laptop and phone chargers will automatically step that down to North America's 110v. But check the charger's specs (usually written right on it) to make sure. In addition, you'll need a plug adapter. The sockets in the hotel look like this (and are sometimes referred to as Type M). I have seen a 3-pack for sale on Amazon for around \$10 as well as some with built-in USB ports for a bit more.



### **...and Plugged in!**

For those who want to remain connected while we're in Philippi, there is good news. In addition to wifi at the hotel, Philippi itself is covered by all the major cell phone service providers in Cape Town. Vodacom and MTN are examples of two major companies with good coverage in the area. SIM cards that you can insert into your phone can easily be obtained in stores in the Central Business District (e.g., Shoprite, Checkers, PEP, Pick and Pay).

## Reading Rainbow

Finally, a couple of reading recommendations:

This recent article in Huffington Post is about the drought but also delves into the history and psyche of Cape Town. Highly recommended reading.

<https://highline.huffingtonpost.com/articles/en/cape-town-drought/>

There are a lot of books about South Africa and apartheid. We are compiling some recommendations for those of you who like to read in advance and will share them in the next newsletter. In the meantime, a personal recommendation—I very much enjoyed reading Trevor Noah’s ***Born a Crime***. Written in a comic, breezy style that you’d expect from the host of the *Daily Show*, it’s a wonderful memoir of growing up as a mixed-race boy in South Africa under apartheid. Trevor’s mother, who is the “star” of this book and of his life, is a Xhosa African, the same as the dominant group that lives in Philippi.

<https://www.amazon.com/Born-Crime-Stories-African-Childhood/dp/0399588175>

That’s it for now. More to come soon.

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**P.S. While we now have photos from everyone (thank you!), we’re still missing a few release forms. If you haven’t sent yours in yet, please email it to João immediately!**