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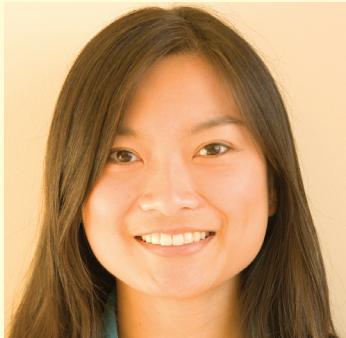


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WORLDVIEW

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Peter Grothe JoAnna Haugen Paula Hirschhoff
Chuck Ludlam Annie Maschoro Mike Meyer
Barack Obama Lex Rieffel Jeremy Wade Shockley
Robert L. Strauss Robert Terry
Ronald Tschetter*

In the last issue of WorldView ("Planet Interrupted") we misspelled name of RPCV and contributing writer/photographer Patrick Gonzalez. We apologize for this error.

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Peace Corps volunteers working side by side with counterparts. Photo left: Ethiopia, 1973. Photo right: El Salvador, 2006. Photos provided by Peace Corps.

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WORLDVIEW

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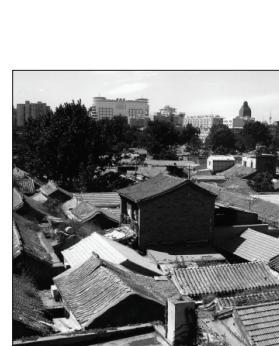
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THE PUBLISHER

The publisher of *WorldView* magazine is the National Peace Corps Association, a national network of returned Peace Corps volunteers, former staff and friends. The NPCA is a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) educational and service organization which is independent of the federal agency, the Peace Corps.

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From the President

THE PEACE CORPS AND THE NEXT PRESIDENT

An opportunity to be bold again?

by Kevin F. F. Quigley

At its start, Peace Corps was one of the most innovative government programs in history. It sprang to life with a series of questions from a Presidential candidate in the middle of a long campaign night. In its early days, the Peace Corps lacked any formal identity or blueprint and had many more skeptics than supporters. It did, however, have a compelling vision that captured the imagination of a generation of Americans and people all around the world. In less than a year from a causal campaign discussion, the idea was realized when the first group of volunteers arrived in Accra, Ghana.

Over the past half-century, the Peace Corps' goals and approach have remained essentially unchanged, although the world is vastly different. While much of the world has seen significant economic development, more people are living in poverty. Pandemic disease is a burgeoning global threat, and there is increasing evidence that climate change will have profoundly adverse consequences on the world's poor. We are more globalized through travel and technology, and a majority of people now live in cities. Beyond the Peace Corps, there are myriad options for Americans who want to volunteer overseas whether through their university, place of worship, NGO, or their employer. Most of these other programs did not exist when the Peace Corps was created in 1961.

Today's geo-political environment is also utterly changed. The Peace Corps was created in the midst of the Cold War, at a time when the world was divided into two ideologically opposed camps. Now, the United States, as the lone superpower, is viewed more skeptically. Increasingly negative perceptions of the United States and sharp skepticism about our intentions

affect our ability to be a trusted partner and global leader.

Despite these declining perceptions of the United States overseas, there is significant unmet demand for Peace Corps volunteers. Peace Corps is presently active in 74 countries, and there are more than 20 countries requesting Peace Corps programs for which there are insufficient resources. There is also growing demand on the part of Americans, young and not so young, who want to serve their country by serving in Peace Corps or in other some other form of national service.

Both major party presidential candidates (and their views about the Peace Corps are included later in this issue) have highlighted the importance of increasing the size of the Peace Corps as part of a renewed commitment to national service and a more cooperative U.S. foreign policy. Senator John McCain said he would have expanded Peace Corps in the post-9/11 world. Senator Barack Obama has pledged to double the Peace Corps by 2011.

Today, there is a lively discussion about "smart power": extending U.S. influence through non-traditional ways rather than through the military or diplomacy. Along with various exchanges like the Fulbright Program, the Peace Corps may be one of the smartest forms of "smart power". It could play a role in shaping a new foreign policy designed to improve U.S. standing abroad and better address the pressing challenges facing our world today.

A bold, innovative, new approach is required to finally realize the promise of the Peace Corps, reach the scale initially envisioned by President Kennedy, and have the impact we all want. Re-invigorating PC is not expensive and has significant promise of multiple pay-offs: on individuals, communities at home and

abroad, and on the country itself.

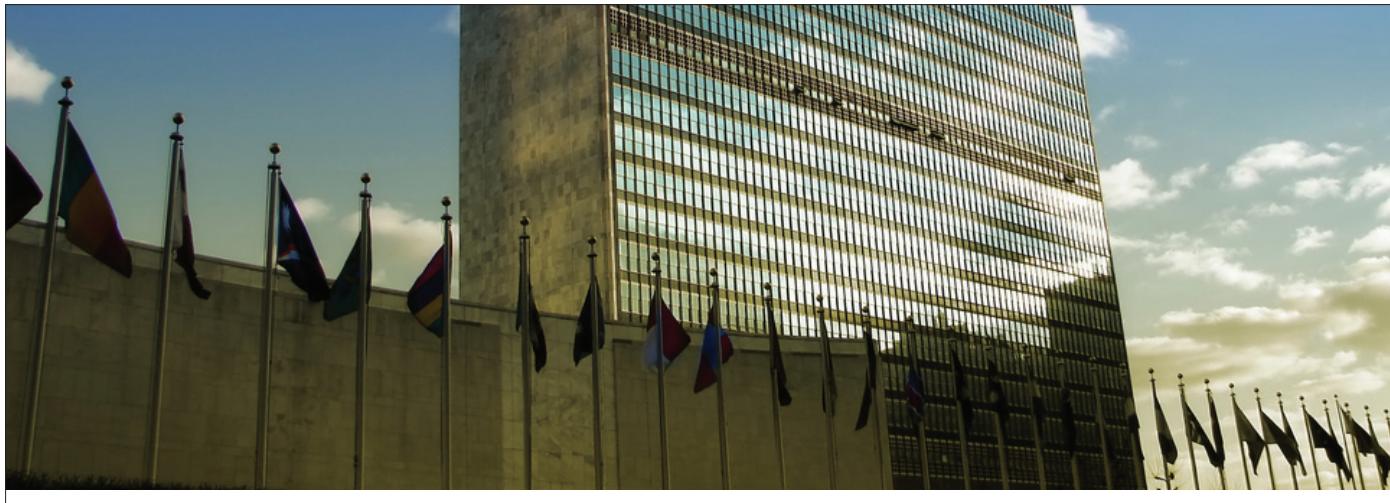
Recognizing that it is timely to consider how to have a more robust and effective Peace Corps, NPCA launched the More Peace Corps campaign (www.morepeacecorps.org) in January 2008. This is a national outreach and legislative campaign designed to build public support for a reinvigorated Peace Corps, doubled in size and budget by 2011—the milestone 50th anniversary of the Peace Corps. This campaign is not simply about a bigger Peace Corps... it is also about a better and bolder one.

To stimulate discussion about a re-invigorated Peace Corps, in June NPCA convened a high-level meeting to examine how the Peace Corps goals and programs might be adapted. You can find more information about this Pocantico Meeting on our website at www.peacecorpsconnect.org.

To include more of our community in this discussion, we sent out a call for submissions to *Worldview* on this topic. What follows are some of those ideas. While all support the Peace Corps, not all agree with how the Peace Corps might be enhanced and NPCA's role here is to promote the discussion, not endorse any single set of ideas. Other ideas will be on our website. In October, we will commission a survey to further explore these ideas and we will share the results with the next President's transition team.

We sincerely hope this discussion helps the Peace Corps recapture its initial innovativeness and strengthen its prospects for addressing pressing global problems while advancing U.S. national interests.

*Kevin F. F. Quigley
Thailand, 1976-79
president@rpcv.org*



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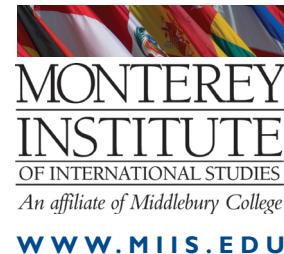


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PEACE CORPS

Looking Back, Looking Ahead



A PEACE CORPS FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

Peace Corps has never been satisfied with the status quo

by Ronald A. Tschetter

Since 1961, over 190,000 Peace Corps Volunteers have served in more than 139 countries around the world. Most Volunteers, like my wife, Nancy, and I, had life-changing experiences and know they truly made a difference in the lives of the people they were serving.

We all have stories about our impact as Volunteers, and one that always comes to my mind is former President Alejandro Toledo's of Peru. Toledo credits two Volunteers for guiding him from poverty to the presidency. Volunteer experiences and stories like this will be a rich part of the Peace Corps' 50th anniversary (www.peacecorps.gov/50) in 2011.

This anniversary is a chance for us to celebrate the accomplishments of

the Peace Corps, but also to look at how this organization we all admire so much can do even more. I believe the Peace Corps is thriving today in part because we have kept true to the mission as set forth by President Kennedy back in 1961. After 47 years, the Peace Corps' three goals still make it unique among organizations globally.

We can reach further to accomplish our mission and goals in the 21st century in three significant ways. *First, work to build our capacity in order to increase the number of Peace Corps Volunteers and the countries in which they serve.* Foreign leaders I've met throughout the world consistently ask for more Volunteers and applications are up 14 percent this year. These

factors indicate we have both the supply and the demand to grow the Peace Corps.

As the Peace Corps grows, we need to support Volunteers with high-quality training and programming, provide them with jobs that meet the needs of the communities where we serve, and do all of this with the partnership and will of the host-country governments. And while the majority of Peace Corps Volunteers will continue to bring "generalist" skills, many government leaders today are asking to augment current and new programs with Volunteers bringing specific technical skills for targeted project needs. We are working to meet this need by recruiting for specific skills, in particular with our mid-career and 50+ initiatives.

Second, expand information technology. While the Peace Corps experience has in many ways not changed since I was a Volunteer, the most significant difference is in information technology. Our challenge is to manage and expand technology while supporting Volunteer integration. Today, Volunteers can provide country information through websites and connect with others using blogs, e-mails, community chat rooms, websites, video streams, and phone calls.

Today, more families visit Volunteers, support their projects, and continue to be part of the experience electronically. This means Volunteers can start working on the third goal right after they arrive in country. Families, and even communities, can now share in a Volunteer's service more than ever.



Peace Corps

Third, expand partnerships. I am amazed to see the type of work Volunteers are doing around the world today. Whether it's combating the current food crisis with permaculture and urban gardening in Africa; providing clean, reusable sources of energy for homes in Latin America; or providing opportunities to people with disabilities in eastern Europe and Asia. The level of work Volunteers are doing is incredible and is dependent on strong partnerships with local NGOs, counterpart organizations, and host governments.

Last year, our posts reported 376 international partner organization projects. With the United Nations (UN) alone, we have an agreement with the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and eight different local partnerships. Globally, we work with Habitat for Humanity, CDC, CARE, the UN Volunteer Program (UNV), UNICEF, and others. We also partner with other organizations that provide volunteers, such as the Japanese development organization (JICA), our German counterpart DED, and British Volunteers (VSO).

In the most recent annual Volunteer survey, over half of the Volunteers said they received funding for at least one project, and each project traditionally requires a 25 percent community contribution. The primary sources are the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), the Small Project Assistance (SPA) program of USAID, the Ambassador's Self Help Funds, and the Peace Corps Partnership Program (PCPP).

PCPP is on track this year to raise nearly \$2 million in contributions, funding 620 projects in 60 countries that benefit 560,000 individuals. The majority of donors are individuals, but nearly 300 foundations, businesses, schools, religious organizations, nonprofits and other groups have contributed over one-third of all donations received.

We just launched a new "Country Funds" section of PCPP, which makes it easier for "Friends of" groups to contribute to their countries of service.

There is currently \$40,000 available for projects in 13 different countries. Visit www.peacecorps.gov/contribute to see how you can help.

In the future, I would like to see the creation of a Peace Corps Foundation to support Third Goal activities through raising private funds. The foundation would be comprised of prominent individuals from a diverse background in the corporate, nonprofit, and government sectors. With more corporations recognizing the value of global responsibility, this could be a powerful tool for raising the agency's visibility and strengthening our third-goal initiatives.

I believe in continual improvement, and every time I visit the countries where we serve, I bring back ideas of how we can do things better. The Peace Corps has never been an organization satisfied with the status quo, and what I find is that it's an organization constantly striving to improve.

President Bush said a few months ago that the Peace Corps "is the best foreign policy America could possibly have." And both presidential candidates have called for an expansion of the Peace Corps. I couldn't agree more. I believe the Peace Corps represents America at its best and is needed now more than ever.

The Peace Corps' impact can certainly reach further into communities internationally and at home, and the 50th anniversary offers a three-year window for all of us to work toward expanding that impact. Let's work together to ensure that our fine tradition of making better tomorrows for the people we serve continues as we further accomplish our mission of promoting world peace and friendship.

Ronald A. Tschetter is the Peace Corps Director. He served as a Peace Corps Volunteer in India from 1966-1968 and as the Chairman of the National Peace Corps Association from 1995-1998.



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"BOLD, PERSISTENT EXPERIMENTATION"

Peace Corps roots run broad and deep

by Robert C. Terry Jr.

Yes, President Kennedy created the Peace Corps on March 1, 1961. No, the idea was not his alone and did not spring from his mind full-blown. While today we seek to expand it in our 21st century context, we should glance backward to understand how it evolved over 70 years via many clashes among disasters, ideas and experiments.

Our Peace Corps story begins in 1895 as philosopher William James began years of disputes with politician Theodore Roosevelt over issues raised by pampered Gilded Age youths, the Spanish-American War, quashing Filipino insurgents, and America's first peace movement.

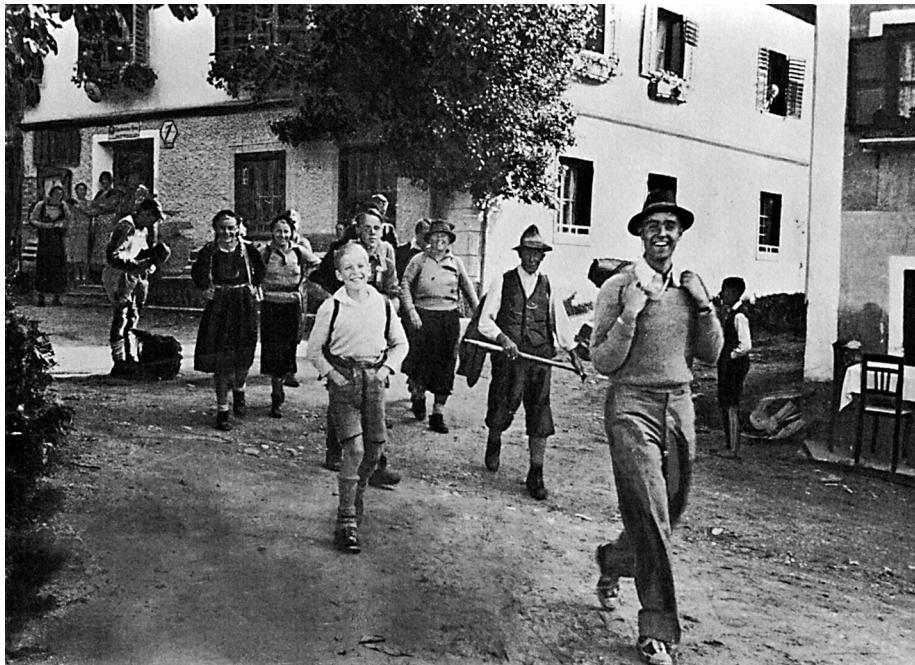
James understood how appealing are our age-old rites of passage: athletics, adventure, military exploits.

Seeking an alternative, "something heroic that will speak to men as universally as war does," he first suggested the ancient religious idea of individuals choosing to serve. "May not," he asked, "voluntarily accepted poverty be 'the strenuous life,' without the need of crushing weaker peoples?" By 1910, in his famous essay, *The Moral Equivalent of War*, he changed his argument to a modern idea of social policy, urging that "our gilded youth" be "drafted" into "the immemorial warfare against nature."

Meanwhile, the U.S. Army, mustering out young soldiers after fighting Filipino guerrillas, offered them the chance to remain in the Philippines and teach. Many did. Of 12,000 more who volunteered at home, 540 shipped west aboard the *U.S.S. Thomas*. By 1933, when the program ended, hundreds of "Thomasites" had trained thousands of Filipino teachers in English and other subjects.

After World War I, James' idea inspired other innovations. A Swiss conscientious objector, Pierre Ceresole, led volunteers reconstructing a war-torn village in France. His work camp concept spread and created Service Civil Internationale (SCI), which expanded later to Africa and Asia. A Bengali SCI leader, whom I met in India in 1958, later became my Peace Corps deputy and life-long friend.

Franklin Roosevelt led America out of its 1930s Depression by "bold, persistent experimentation." The Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) put Army officers in charge of poor city youths to clear forests and build roads. In Vermont, a camp failed through lack of local knowledge and support. A German professor and work camp pioneer, exiled by Hitler, led Dartmouth and Harvard students to join farmers in petitioning Roosevelt to try again, but this time with youths of all social strata working with local neighbors. FDR agreed. The CCC reopened its site, chartered formally as Camp William James.



Sargent Shriver (Foreground) in Austria, with the Experiment in International Living, 1934.

In 1932, a determined visionary, Donald Watt, launched experiments to learn how teen-agers from various countries might overcome language and cultural barriers to live and work together amicably. Trials and errors created an effective format – immersing one student in one country, in one family, with good training and bi-national leaders – and an organization, The Experiment in International Living. A 1934 “Experimenter,” Sargent Shriver went on to twice serve as an Experiment group leader.

Shriver recalled: “The Experiment taught me how to form the Peace Corps 30 years later – speak the language, wear the clothes, eat the food, accept the customs, waste no money, study ... play ... learn.” In early 1961, Shriver asked The Experiment’s President, Gordon Boyce, to join him for six months to design Peace Corps partnerships with private agencies such as CARE, 4-H Clubs, Operation Crossroads Africa and International Farm Youth Exchange. Others designed partnerships with universities and labor unions.

The Experiment’s School for International Training trained 23 Peace Corps Volunteer groups and managed several abroad; I led its first. Family homestays during in-country training are now standard worldwide. Today, The Experiment, now part of World Learning, is headed by Carol Bellamy (Guatemala 1963-65) and the first returned Peace Corps Volunteer to serve as Peace Corps Director (1993-95).

After World War II, both religious and secular agencies expanded. In 1953, several service groups, including Mennonite, Quaker, and Unitarian, formed International Voluntary Service (IVS). Brethren Service volunteers taught Chinese to drive American tractors. The Experiment, American Field Service and university programs grew, aided by cheap voyages to Europe by student ships.

While visiting Southeast Asia in 1957, Rep. Henry Reuss (D-

Wisc), an Experiment parent, met IVS volunteers, who inspired him to propose a “Point Four Youth Corps” and in Congress to gain \$10,000 to study its “advisability and practicality.” Sen. Hubert Humphrey (D-Minn) encouraged a young staffer, Peter Grothe, to draft a bill proposing a “Peace Corps” which he gave to Democratic presidential candidate Kennedy. Lt. General James Gavin endorsed the idea, although President Eisenhower and Republican candidate Richard Nixon ridiculed it as “juvenile.” These proposals and the study, *New Frontiers for American Youth*, cited the rich history of private efforts over decades.

Political opportunity beckoned at 2 a.m. one October night when University of Michigan students wildly cheered Kennedy’s off-the-cuff challenge: “How many of you are willing to give two years of your lives . . . ?” It ripened two weeks later when over a thousand

students organized into Americans Committed to World Responsibility, and petitioned Kennedy (and also Nixon!) to launch an overseas service program. This encouraged Kennedy’s formal proposal of a Peace Corps in San Francisco just before election day, 1960.

Kennedy, Shriver and their staffs had ample private sector experience to help scale the idea up into a new public program. Looking forward, Congress and the Peace Corps should expand its traditions of innovations and partnerships, captured by the title of Gerard Rice’s fine 1985 history, *The Bold Experiment*.

Robert Terry led the first Peace Corps Volunteers sent to East Pakistan, now Bangladesh (61-63), and served later as a Trustee of The Experiment in International Living and Director of the National Peace Corps Association.

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Looking Back – Models and Goals

HOW PEACE CORPS GOT ITS NAME

A Humphrey staffer remembers

By Peter Grothe

While the Peace Corps is indelibly linked to the presidency of John F. Kennedy, there would not have been a Peace Corps without the efforts of Minnesota Sen. Hubert H. Humphrey (later Vice President of the United States). I had the privilege of serving as the foreign relations adviser to Senator Humphrey and working for the newly created Peace Corps, and so I had an extraordinary front row seat to observe "how it all began."

Unknown to most, Humphrey first put forward the idea of American volunteers serving abroad way back in 1948, in the Minneapolis living room of George and Dorothy Jacobsen. Also present was Humphrey's close friend, Orville Freeman (later Governor of Minnesota and Secretary of Agriculture) and Freeman's wife, Jane. George Jacobsen was active in the cooperative movement and he was discussing the great benefits of community development. According to Jane—who recently told me about the now-historic living room conversation—Humphrey leapt to the idea of a volunteer corps serving overseas and became very enthusiastic as he spoke about its potential.

However the idea lay dormant for many years while Humphrey worked on legislation for his wide range of interests. (It was said that he "had more solutions than there were problems.") The volunteer corps idea jumped back into his consciousness after a talk in 1956 with Ed Snyder, then the congressional lobbyist for

the Quakers. They spoke about the admirable work that Quaker volunteers were doing abroad and Humphrey reaffirmed his keen interest in legislation whereby the U.S. government would fund a corps of young volunteers. He spoke about his idea on a number of speeches in the late 1950s.

I went to work for the senator in 1960 and came across the Peace Corps idea in his files (although it still didn't have a name) and asked him whether I could work on it. Humphrey was busy running in the Democratic presidential primaries and so he didn't have much time to spend developing the legislation. He responded with an enthusiastic "Absolutely!" I spent part of the next six weeks interviewing anyone I could find who worked for organizations whose focus was assisting peoples in the developing countries (which mainly meant Christian missionary groups), and then wrote a draft of the legislation. The Senator said, "It looks good, but take it over to the people at the foreign aid administration (then called the International Cooperation Administration, or ICA) and see what they think."

I talked with six top ICA administrators—an hour each—and five of the six had the same reaction, which can be summarized as: "It is a lovely-sounding idea, but it will never work! We would be sending over all these young people to countries where age and experience are so respected. Also, the young volunteers would have to adapt to very different cultures, and they

might mess up. Sorry to say it, but it just won't work!"

I returned to the office discouraged. I was a young man in my 20s and, I thought, those older, experienced people at ICA surely knew a lot more than I did. I reported their reaction to the senator and his response was vintage Humphrey.

"That's the trouble with those people in the Eisenhower administration!" he exploded. "Their attitude is 'let's not try anything new, no new starts!' All they see are the problems! They place the problems so high (and he raised both arms over his head) that they don't see the challenges. They don't see the opportunities. I want to grasp the opportunities! Peter, draft me a bill!"

I returned to my office and drafted a bill, based on Humphrey's vision and on what I had learned from many, many interviews with persons who had done volunteer work abroad. Now, the question arose, what do we call this thing? Humphrey had some pieces of legislation and proposals with the word "peace" in them; the "Food for Peace" legislation was the best-known example at the time. To be consistent with the Humphrey "peace" theme, I toyed with the name "Works for Peace Corps." However, that seemed a bit cumbersome and so I just wrote down the name "Peace Corps." I floated it to a number of friends who worked in government. Some said, "Peace Corps sounds really communistic!" Others said, "Don't call it 'Corps.' That sounds too militaristic!"

But Humphrey liked the name and somehow "Peace Corps" stuck and is still with us today.

Peter Grothe, Ph.D. is Director of International Student Programs at the Monterey Institute of International Studies.



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Educating Minds and Hearts to Change The World

PEACE CORPS POINT-4 YOUTH CORPS

From the office of Senator John Kennedy

by Winifred Armstrong

Winifred Armstrong worked in the office of Senator John F. Kennedy on Peace Corps, Africa and other matters from 1959 to 1960. Ideas about whether there should be a "Peace Corps"—and whose interests it would serve—swirled around Washington at that time. We recently saw the memo she drafted on November 10, 1960 for the incoming Kennedy administration, laying out "questions which should affect consideration and planning" of the Peace Corps program, and asked if we could publish it. Many of the same concerns are still relevant today.



Kennedy Library

Members of the Senate office staff of Senator John F. Kennedy, 1960. Winifred Armstrong is seated on the floor, first row, extreme left.

Peace Corps – Point-4 Youth Corps

First Draft

Some of the major questions which should affect consideration and planning of this program.

I. AIMS

1. To provide additional manpower for foreign aid programs, at little cost.
2. To educate others with regard to American ideals, by action and pressure.
3. To offer young people an opportunity to learn to understand other countries while serving their own.
4. To fill in existing urgent personnel needs of under-developed countries with qualified young Americans, thus
 - a. Advancing the economic and

social development prerequisite to strengthening democratic institutions.

- b. Providing Americans with inter-cultural experience and opportunity for service at an age when neither status nor career plans interfere with their learning.
- c. Providing opportunity for the establishment of the kind of personal relationships in countries where such relationships are often the measure of national purpose.

II. PLANS WHICH HAVE BEEN SUGGESTED

1. Humphrey Peace Corps.
2. Congressman Reuss – Point-4 Youth Corps.
3. Melady Plan.

Note: The last two of these plans do not tie the program necessarily to the military, and allow for the possibility of extensive cooperation with, and even administration by, private organizations.

III. PRESENT ORGANIZATIONS DOING RELATED WORK

IV. ORGANIZATION OF THE WORK

Any of the following, singly or in combination, might be possible:

- a. American-sponsored and American-administered projects selected in cooperation with foreign national government. Such programs might, or might not, include foreign nations.
- b. Work on foreign national government projects: i.e., teaching in schools, cooperation in community development and health programs, etc. In such cases, Americans might be used individually or in small numbers, to work with foreign nations.
- c. Voluntary organizations, both American, indigenous and other: These would, of course, be decided on in cooperation with the foreign national government, but might include mission and other non-governmental Agents of each.

V. AMOUNT OF TRAINING

- a. Skills: necessary to ascertain how many people having what particular skills, will be necessary in each country.
Should the program include the teaching of skills, or take only those who already have them?
Should, for example, people going

- to teach English be given special training in English teaching to people with foreign languages?
- b. Orientation: How much should be in the U.S.; how much in the foreign country or area? What should orientation include?

VI. MILITARY

To include the Peace Corps as part of a military program will almost certainly:

1. Increase the amount of bureaucratic delay and red-tape.
2. Be likely to take away from the technical assistance – service emphasis – of the program, both in the U.S. and probably in the interpretation give to the program by other countries.

General Hershey indicated in a letter to the I.C.A., when funds were appropriated for the study of this project, that he approved the project, but hoped they would not take a hard and fast stand on the military aspects. He indicated that it would almost certainly be possible to arrange that Draft Boards exempt acceptable applicants to the Peace Corps without making the program an alternative to military service.

VII. SELECTION

1. Qualifications
2. Process

VIII. ADMINISTRATION BY WHOM

Possible cooperative agreements: voluntary organizations, U.S. government.

(One suggestion has been made that a separate non-government organization administer the program, with money for at least transportation, and possibly salary, provided by the U.S. Government.)

Would foreign governments be able to contribute to salary if participants were working in foreign government schools, health projects, etc.?

What would foreign governments be asked to provide in the way of housing, facilities, transportation within the country, etc.?

IX. POSSIBLE TYPES OF PROJECTS

1. Community and Village Planning and Development (Schools, Bath-Houses, Houses, Community Centers)
2. Sanitation (Wells, Malaria Control, Latrines)
3. Agriculture (Animal Husbandry, Crops, Irrigation, Soils, Poultry)
4. Home Economics (Foods and Nutrition, Clothing, Mother and Child Care, Gardening)
5. Nursing (Practical Nursing, Midwifery, Nursing)
6. Engineering (Irrigation, Flood Control, Surveying, Highways, Water Supply)
7. Literacy and Adult Education.
8. Youth Organizations (4-H, Scouts, Recreation, Physical Development)
9. Recreation, Handicrafts, and Leisure Time Activities
10. Vocational Education
11. Trades and Industry
12. Social Welfare (Orphanages, Homes for the Aged, Welfare Agencies, Homes for the Blind)
13. Secretarial
14. Medical Services (Medical Technicians, Laboratory Assistants, Doctors' Assistants)
15. Cultural Education (Literature, Arts, Music, Historical)

X. PRELIMINARY INFORMATION

NECESSARY BEFORE

PROGRAM CAN BEGIN

It will probably be necessary to ascertain by direct contact, rather than by mail, the total need and types of positions in each under-developed country which might be filled by young American personnel. It is almost impossible to develop such information by mail. I.C.A. has indicated that it would be unwise to use their personnel to obtain such information. (Field personnel would be unlikely to be enthusiastic about such a project, particularly since their role is generally advisory or technical, and not operative. They also feel that such a project, even if it should become part of I.C.A., should be handled as a separate project, and not as a part of their already-existing program.)

XI. ADDITIONAL FACTORS FOR CONSIDERATION

1. Is a Point-4 Youth Corps practical and advisable?
2. In what types of projects might they be used?
3. In what manner could private groups, religious groups, and government agencies cooperate with such a project?
4. Should service in such a Youth Corps be accepted in lieu of military service?
5. What would be the optimum size of the Corps?
6. How would participants be selected and then supervised?
7. What orientation and training, both in the U.S. and abroad, would be recommended for corpsmen?
8. What should be the educational level for corps members?
9. Should there be an age range and limitation, and if so, what?
10. Should corps be administered by the U.S. Government or by private agencies, or both?
11. How could such a Youth Corps best support existing programs (government and private) of technical cooperation?
12. How could such a program be coordinated with all interested individuals, groups, organizations, and agencies?
13. What are the existing training and orientation programs in the U.S. and abroad, and how can these best be coordinated and integrated in to this program?
14. What degree of specialization and technical training is desirable for members of such a Youth Corps?
15. In what types of work might corpsmen be used? (Common labor, skilled labor, advisor, etc.)
16. What previous work of a similar nature has been carried out?
17. What should constitute the minimum essential living conditions for corpsmen living in villages, with respect to food, shelter, and sanitation as may be necessary to maintain health?

A BETTER PLACE FOR THE PEACE CORPS

The case for a corporation for international study and service

By Lex Reiffel

The Peace Corps is stuck in a rut. It remains the gold standard for international volunteering but budget constraints have kept the number of volunteers in the field below 8,000. Today the Peace Corps is barely half the size it reached at its peak in the mid-1960s, despite President Bush's request to Congress after 9/11 to rebuild to the 14,000 level.

A critical challenge for the next president of the United States will be to convince the rest of the world that we are more interested in being a reliable partner than a military superpower. The future security and prosperity of Americans will depend on the success of this effort, which can only be achieved through a mix of hard power and soft power instruments. The Peace Corps has been one of the most effective forms of American soft power since John F. Kennedy created it in 1961. Scaling up the Peace Corps to ten times its present size could be one of the smartest initiatives advanced by the next president. Based on policy analysis and deliberations carried out over the past five years, a bold move of this kind will require a new mission, a new funding model, and a new organizational form.

The new mission simply needs to reflect the immense changes in the world over the past fifty years, especially the rise of new economic powers such as Brazil, China and India. A bigger Peace Corps will only be attractive to these countries if it is more of a partnership, an exchange, a two-way street. The new funding model can be borrowed from our domestic volunteer programs. Instead of putting the full cost on American taxpayers, federal

budget dollars can be combined with private sector funds: from NGOs, for-profit programs, corporations, universities, etc.

The most radical step required to have ten times as many Americans engaged in volunteer service overseas is probably the creation of a new organizational form. The task calls for an organization that will allow traditional Peace Corps service to remain the gold standard, but will accommodate a "family" of related international volunteer programs.

Four organizational forms have been considered. The one that offers the greatest advantages is a Corporation for International Study and Service that includes the Peace Corps, essentially as it is today, among half a dozen or more volunteering options.

The alternatives that appear less attractive are: keeping the Peace Corps as a federal agency but mandating it to establish several new programs with a range of service requirements; spinning off the Peace Corps into the private sector (with a basic commitment of federal funding) where it would be free to innovate both on the funding side and the program side; and enlarging the mandate of the Corporation for National and Community Service – CNCS (which administers AmeriCorps, Vista and other domestic programs) to include the Peace Corps and various new international programs.

Here are some of the benefits to expect from creating a Corporation for International Study and Service – CISS:

- Like the CNCS, the CISS would have a policy-making Board of Directors dominated by private

citizens. This will make Peace Corps governance more bipartisan and more visible.

- With a fresh and broader mandate, the CISS Board would appoint as CEO a charismatic personality who could more effectively "sell" international volunteering to the Congress, to Americans seeking service opportunities overseas, and to the leading emerging market countries that will be the major drivers of global economics and politics for the next fifty years. The CEO could be the Director of the Peace Corps at the same time.
- The Peace Corps would have a better "home," less beholden to the White House and the State Department. It will be at the heart of the CISS: recruiting, training, and supporting volunteers for two-year assignments, as it has been doing successfully for almost 50 years. It will contribute country knowledge and operational experience for the new programs to be established by the CISS. The goal of doubling the number of Peace Corps volunteers by 2011 can be more easily reached as part of a strategic approach to building bridges with the rest of the world.
- Two existing "sister" programs would also find better homes in the CISS. One is Peace Corps Response, which sends returned Corps Volunteers to "hot spots" for short-term (six month) periods of service. With co-financing, it could easily grow from 100 volunteers per year today to more than a thousand per year. The other is Volunteers for Prosperity, a "match-making"

program now administered by USAID. The CISS would also be the logical home for the Global Service Fellowship Program that is now under consideration in the Congress.

- The CISS would be free to add and drop programs as the supply of volunteers and the demand from foreign countries evolves. An absolutely critical step will be to create a program to place foreign volunteers at useful sites in the United States, as science and language teachers in our public schools, for example. An obvious winner will be a new program for "Baby Boomers" that might involve shorter but repeated commitments at sites tailored to their skills and experience.
- The Peace Corps was born on a university campus. Sargent Shriver's vision included an intense partnership with American colleges and universities. It did not materialize, but today the prospects may be better. In-service learning is booming here and in other countries. Academic leaders have been working to scale up international study. The synergies between international study and international service are clear and immense. Bringing the two together in the CISS will help both movements achieve what neither can achieve independently: more funding, greater volunteer interest, better service opportunities, and better post-study and post-service employment opportunities.

Will the next President of the United States be prepared to take a bold step of this kind? The answer depends in large part on what the candidates hear on campuses and in communities across the country this fall. That's how the Peace Corps began. The time is ripe. Use your voice and vote.

Lex Rieffel (India 65-67) is a Nonresident Senior Fellow at the Brookings Institution in Washington, D.C. The views expressed here are the author's and do not necessarily reflect those of the NPCA.

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A CALL FOR PEACE CORPS REFORM

Improving management and support of volunteers

by Chuck Ludlam and Paula Hirschoff

As its highest priority in the 21st century – as it doubles the number of Volunteers – the Peace Corps should substantially improve the quality of the management and support of Volunteers. Enactment of the Peace Corps Volunteer Empowerment Act (S. 732) that Senators Dodd and Kennedy have co-sponsored is essential to these improvements.

In 2005, nearly 40 years after first serving as Volunteers, we rejoined the Peace Corps. This second-time service confirmed and strengthened our commitment to the founding ideals of Peace Corps. During our separate terms of service in the 1960s (Chuck in Nepal and Paula in Kenya), we had come to believe in the power of those ideals as applied in local settings. Our recent service as a married couple in Senegal was rich in experiences similar to those we enjoyed the first time. We loved serving again and recommend it to other RPCVs. Moreover, we found most of the Volunteers with whom we served as idealistic, resourceful, and hard working as those we admired in the 1960s. They struggle valiantly to apply the Peace Corps concepts at the grassroots.

Unfortunately, during this second-time service we encountered pervasive mismanagement of Volunteers, both through direct experience in Senegal and Washington, DC and through reports from Volunteers in other countries. We came to realize that the Peace Corps has become a middle-aged bureaucracy that often condescends or seems hostile to Volunteers. Too often, we found that substandard program design and training, minimal



Wilma Scheuren

administrative support, and violation of Volunteer rights were undermining the development work and morale of Volunteers.

In July 2007, at the invitation of Sen. Christopher Dodd (D-Conn), we flew to Washington, DC at our own expense to testify in favor of the Dodd/Kennedy legislation on behalf of the 8,000 current Volunteers. We attested that hierarchy and rigid controls prevail in much of the Peace Corps, with Volunteers at the bottom of the managerial pyramid where their needs are often ignored. As a result, too many Volunteers become demoralized or cynical. Their potential as agents of development is often not realized. Many of them terminate their service early, a proportion estimated at 35 percent.

Reports on the hearing led Volunteers around the world to send us e-mails that substantiated our concerns. At the hearing Senators requested “a full vetting” of Volunteer-staff relations

from the Volunteers’ perspective. (Volunteers, recent and current, wishing to express their views on this vital issue should email them to PCVAffidavits@gmail.com, stating their country and years of service. These statements (minus names) will be forwarded to the Congress.)

Strong evidence that RPCVs support the changes that the legislation proposes comes from an online poll that NPCA took in 2007. Members overwhelming supported each provision of the legislation.

In general, the Dodd/Kennedy bill seeks to improve Volunteer morale and effectiveness. Its measures would increase Volunteer satisfaction and productivity, thus decreasing the high ET rates, by establishing systems that require staff to listen to, respect and empower Volunteers.

The legislation is premised on the belief that Volunteers in the field are a key source of the expertise needed to strengthen and renew the Peace Corps. Key provisions would give Volunteers a substantial voice in personnel and program reviews, training curricula, and site choice and preparation. With enactment of the legislation, the Peace Corps would rely more on their expertise in these crucial areas.

A key provision would mandate that Peace Corps institute “360 degree” or “upward feedback” personnel and program reviews, like those now common in the private sector where employees assess the performance of their supervisors and employers. In collaborative organizations, these reviews are becoming standard operating procedure. No one knows better than the Volunteers what staff

members are supporting them and what programs are working at the village level. Peace Corps staff should be judged primarily by how well they manage Volunteers and help facilitate their work. Staff need to know that their tenure depends on how effectively they manage and support Volunteers. And sector programs should be judged on how well they enable Volunteers to achieve sustainable results. Programs that are ineffective should be revamped or terminated.

The legislation would also strengthen the development role of the Volunteers by offering reimbursement for expenses, up to \$1,000, incurred when they mount demonstrations, which are the best way to teach in the developing world. Such reimbursement would come only after appropriate authorities approved an application. In addition, the bill would overhaul the widely ignored restrictions that tell Volunteers they cannot accept money directly from friends and family. These reforms do not mean that the Peace Corps would become a grant-making agency; they would simply give the Volunteers the financial resources they need to achieve sustainable results.

The legislation also confirms and clarifies certain Volunteer rights so that managers cannot arbitrarily terminate their service. Moreover, it gives Volunteers the same whistleblower rights as government employees.

That the Peace Corps staff in Washington largely opposes the Dodd/Kennedy legislation and denies there are serious management problems reinforces the need for these reforms.

Based on our experience in our recent service, the high ET rates, and the statements from Volunteers around the world, we believe that the Peace Corps is facing serious management problems. We will know the proportions of the problem when more Volunteers speak up about their experiences. We must reform the Peace Corps now, working on our own terms and at our initiative, not waiting until this long simmering management crisis boils over into public scandal.

Some RPCVs may not be happy to hear what we've found. Some

may be dismayed at the reports of mismanagement. Indeed, we found it difficult to speak out. But after 40 years we still love the Peace Corps and believe in its ideals, so we felt we had no choice. We urge other RPCVs and PCVs to join us in stepping forward to document the problems and to support the Dodd/Kennedy legislation to empower Volunteers as they honor America with their service.

Chuck Ludlam (Nepal 68-79, Senegal 05-07) founded the Friends of Nepal and is an NPCA board member. Paula Hirschoff (Kenya 68-70, Senegal 05-07) is a writer, editor and teacher. They can be reached at Chuck.Ludlam@gmail.com and PHirschoff@gmail.com. The views expressed here are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the NPCA.

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NEW YORK

WHAT PEACE CORPS COULD DO

A critic weighs in

by Robert L. Strauss

As a former volunteer, recruiter, consultant and country director, I am a firm believer that Peace Corps could be one of our country's greatest initiatives. Unfortunately, and to the detriment of volunteers, staff and host countries, the agency's organizational culture and administrative policies have prevented it from ever approaching that potential.

I believe the following steps would reinvigorate the agency and solve many long-standing problems.

TABLE ANY DISCUSSION OF GROWTH FOR FIVE YEARS

Calculated in real dollars, support for volunteers has been dropping for years. Expanding the number of volunteers without a major budget increase is irresponsible and a formula for ineffectiveness and dissatisfaction. Peace Corps is not the only virtuous organization strapped for funds. In today's environment of enormous federal deficits, pleading and hand wringing will not to cause manna to fall.

What Peace Corps needs to do is use its current budget more effectively. The first step would be to work only in countries that are stable, needy and serious about improving their citizens' quality of life. This will require a system to select high-potential partners. Operating in 50 or fewer such nations would free up millions of dollars, which would allow Peace Corps to...

FIX THE BASICS

Peace Corps started off sprinting in 1961 and has never caught its breath. Astonishingly, 47 years later, some things as basic as standard forms and consistent policies don't exist. Peace Corps must get

out of its perpetual crisis management mode and focus on developing systems designed to achieve meaningful results in the field. That done, Peace Corps will be able to ask Congress for increased funding because it will be able to show that it is using public money responsibly. This will require...

GETTING SERIOUS ABOUT IMPACT

Whether one believes that Peace Corps is first and foremost a goodwill and cross-cultural exchange organization or first and foremost a development agency, it's more than time for it to be measuring impact. Without credible evidence of real results, Peace Corps will remain on life support, getting nowhere near enough to make big, lasting differences in the lives of millions. This will require implementing...

A MUCH HIGHER STANDARD OF VOLUNTEER PERFORMANCE

Too many Volunteers do not take their roles seriously, and use their unpaid status as an excuse for being AWOL or not doing their work in a professional manner. To make its expectations clear, Peace Corps must set much higher recruitment standards and then make sure candidates, both staff and volunteers, are sent to countries where their experience can be put to work effectively. This will require that Peace Corps...

FOCUS ON A LIMITED NUMBER OF TECHNICAL FIELDS

Currently Peace Corps often offers watered-down debutanism in lieu of the expertise that developing countries want. Concentrating on a limited number of technical fields would allow the agency

to improve its training and its ability to give people information they can use. Computer literacy, NGO management, assistance with applied research projects, management of water resources and improvement of agricultural productivity are among the areas in which volunteers could provide expertise that other countries may lack.

Whether it does this or not, Peace Corps must...

EXPONENTIALLY INCREASE SUPPORT TO VOLUNTEERS

Regular, disciplined supervision is part of any well-run organization. With most volunteers working in unfamiliar circumstances, Peace Corps should provide much greater supervision than "normal" organizations. Yet it provides far less.

Every volunteer should be visited by a Peace Corps supervisor at least every six weeks. These visits need to offer in-depth technical information, administrative assistance, and psychological support when needed. The result will be greater effectiveness and a dramatic reduction in avoidable dramas and disasters.

Performance is important across the board and that is why...

THE NUMBER OF POLITICAL APPOINTEES MUST BE CUT 90%

The Government Accountability Office has 3,300 employees. It has two political appointees. Peace Corps has a slightly higher number of employees and around 30 political appointees.

Most political appointees get their jobs because they are "owed" one and not because of their expertise or passion. At Peace Corps the finish line is much further away than the next cycle of congressional or presidential elections. There simply is no

role for extensive staffing by unqualified political appointees.

Dramatically reducing the number of appointees won't mean much unless...

THE FIVE-YEAR RULE IS ELIMINATED

According to the 2001 Workforce Analysis, staff tenure at Peace Corps averages 18 months. Having a constantly churning staff overseen by a constantly churning cadre of political appointees is why Peace Corps has reinvented the wheel more times than Fred Flintstone. In the 1960s it was a nice idea to think that forcing people out would result in a creative, dynamic organization. The result has been exactly the opposite; an inefficient, stagnant organization with no institutional memory.

Peace Corps ought to be the world's most effective development organization. The churn caused by the five-year rule works directly against that objective. No one is around long enough to master how things work or to see substantive changes through to completion. By causing it to throw out the dead wood AND the good wood, Peace Corps has enshrined a rule that is much worse than no rule at all.

Getting Peace Corps on the right track after so many years of squandering its potential will not be easy. Many other issues need to be addressed. These include reducing the economic barriers that prevent many from ever considering Peace Corps, implementing creative solutions to the obstacles of a uniform length of service, creating a GI-type bill for RPCVs, establishing a truly independent Inspector General's office focused on malfeasance while creating a truly empowered, credible and competent evaluation division to assess impact objectively.

Some of these actions might take years to implement. The ones detailed in this article could be put in place quickly and to great impact. All that's needed now is the managerial will to leave the past behind and guide Peace Corps to a future that will shine as brightly as its initial promise.

Robert Strauss lives in Antananarivo, Madagascar where he works as a management consultant. He can be reached at RobertLStrauss@hotmail.com. The views expressed here are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect those of the NPCA.

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It is with this goal in mind, many volunteer hours, and a childlike resourcefulness, that we, the RPCVs of Madison, Wisconsin produce the International Calendar as a way of sharing our deep love of the world and her many cultures. We hope this calendar will contribute to promoting a greater understanding and appreciation of others which will, in turn, create a more peaceful world.

The International Calendar is a project of the Returned Peace Corps Volunteers of Madison, Wisconsin. WEBSITE: www.rpcvcalendar.org



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as long as they were taken in a country where Peace Corps Volunteers have served. The International Calendar owes much of its success to resourceful people who have captured memorable scenes and are willing to take time to submit their photos.

These photo contributions mean a lot to us, to those who learn about other cultures and, ultimately, to many others, whose communities receive the proceeds from the calendar. See the photo submission guidelines on our website at www.rpcvcalendar.org.

Be sure to accompany your entry with a *photo submittal form* and put it in the mail by December 31. We'd love to see your photo in a future calendar.

PEACE CORPS MEXICO'S TECHNICAL COOPERATION PROGRAM

Model for a “more professional” Peace Corps?

By Byron Battle

Pace Corps undertook a major new initiative when it signed the first-ever agreement with Mexico in 2003, introducing a ‘technical cooperation’ program between the two countries. Both countries were eager to promote citizen-to-citizen cooperation by inviting experienced American and Mexican professionals to work together to address many of Mexico’s pressing economic and environmental problems.

Since 2004, Peace Corps has been working with two Mexican institutions, its Environmental and Natural Resources Ministry (SEMARNAT), focusing on environmental conservation and education, and its National Council for

Science and Technology (CONACYT), focusing on transferring technologies to promote job growth for Mexicans in Mexico. Both institutions are focusing on critical needs for the country, affecting the poorest elements of Mexican society, rural and urban. Peace Corps’ agreements with these two entities permit committed American volunteers to contribute their professional experience and skills to these challenges as well as permitting them to understand the issues facing our closest and most important neighbor.

The Mexico program constitutes a focused effort by Peace Corps to attract older and very experienced volunteers in specific fields. For the CONACYT applied technology

centers, Peace Corps has been able, for example, to attract experienced water and civil engineers, as well as business and organizational experts, to help these centers assess how best to transfer technologies to promote job creation for Mexicans in Mexico and improve environmental conditions for urban and rural areas alike. With SEMARNAT, Peace Corps has recruited highly experienced experts in forestry, coastal, bio-diversity conservation, and natural resource management to address the alarming deterioration of Mexico’s physical environment.

Currently, Peace Corps has approximately 60 volunteers, half of whom are over the age of 50, including seven married couples. Volunteers have largely been concentrated in the central region of Mexico, although several are located in Chiapas, the southernmost state, and in Coahuila state in the north. Typically Peace Corps responds to requests by our Mexican counterparts for specific skills and experience. Peace Corps staff then works with the counterparts to define specific jobs for these individuals. Once this has been defined, Peace Corps recruitment offices tap into relatively new recruitment sources, such as professional associations as well as companies and government agencies where skilled professionals are retiring. Candidates are required to have a basic minimum of a master’s degree and at least five years professional experience in the field. Many of the Mexico Volunteers have 30 to 35 years experience. As a result, Peace Corps’ current “50+ initiative” meshes perfectly with the needs of this type of



Peace Corps/Mexico

Peace Corps volunteer Cristina Vélez uses her scientific education and eight years of field experience to work with Mexican co-workers on technical projects such as the monitoring of water levels and endangered species in delicate wetlands of the Cuatro Ciénegas biosphere in the state of Coahuila.



Peace Corps/Mexico

Volunteer Walt Meyer, an environmental engineer from Oregon, developing testing techniques to treat wastewater discharged by lakeside communities in Guanajuato, Mexico.

technical cooperation program being undertaken in Mexico and may well serve as a model for similar types of Peace Corps interventions in other countries.

The acceptance and satisfaction of host country agencies to Peace Corps' technical cooperation initiative has been extremely positive. In fact, Peace Corps Mexico is receiving far more requests than they can fill, and decisions are being made to concentrate and focus efforts on specific projects and geographical regions.

Peace Corps Mexico's headquarters are located in the city of Queretaro, three hours north of Mexico City. Since the Mexico volunteers are already highly experienced, the principal focus of training is intensive Spanish and cultural and organizational integration. Peace Corps Mexico has contracted its language-training program to a highly respected Spanish language school that provides host families to the trainees.

The longer-term strategy of Peace Corps is to obtain eventually a regular bilateral agreement with the Mexican government as exists with other Peace Corps countries through which we will have greater latitude in assigning volunteers to areas where we would like to work. As our reputation builds, we expect that ultimately the Mexican Congress will be disposed to approve a bilateral agreement. Currently, however, Peace Corps scope of operations is limited to these two agencies and, as a result, we respond to

requests from these entities for skilled volunteers. Despite these limitations to where Peace Corps can assign volunteers, Peace Corps Mexico has vast opportunities to expand and diversify its technical activities in both the environmental and economic development areas.

Byron Battle, Peace Corps Country Director for Mexico, was the Country Director in Mali when he was asked to set up the first ever Peace Corps program in Mexico in 2003.



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Looking Ahead - Ideas for Reform

A PEACE CORPS FOR THE FUTURE

RPCVs share their views



Peace Corps

NPCA asked members of the Peace Corps community to share their thoughts on what a Peace Corps for the 21st Century should be. Here are some excerpted responses.

If Peace Corps will have value beyond its 50th year, it will be derived from applying its core values to the world we live in today.

We must begin thinking of developing countries as key and equal partners working to solve problems held in common. To deal with threats from rapid environmental change and emergent diseases, we need their help as much as they need ours. This might involve providing them with trained volunteers as we do under the current first goal. But we should consider going one step further and include an exchange of volunteers. For every US Peace Corps Volunteer who is sent to the partner country, a volunteer from that country is sent to the United States.

The key words for Peace Corps in the 21st century must be "equal partners" and "common goals." This may be a

difficult model to sell politically. It requires a change in perspective from "the wealthy, educated nation helping the poor, undeveloped country" to "brothers and sisters in different countries whose collective future is irrevocably intertwined." Our long-term health and well being may well depend on our success in making this transition on a global scale. Peace Corps can be a small, but important partner in helping such change take place – if there is political will and financial support.

***John Knapp, DDS, MPH
Botswana 66-69***

I am a Returned Peace Corps Volunteer with slightly over thirteen years of Peace Corps service, starting in October 1986. I served as a Volunteer and trainee in six countries. I served under twelve Country Directors (or Acting Country Directors). When I left Peace Corps in January 2005 at age 82, I was the oldest serving Peace Corps Volunteer. I am also a Professional

Engineer with training in engineering and economic planning. My spouse, Marcia, was a Peace Corps Volunteer with me on all assignments.

The National Peace Corps Association has set a goal for "a rejuvenated Peace Corps doubled in size and budget" by 2011, in time for Peace Corps's golden anniversary. To someone who has been in the planning profession, that aspect of doubling is challenging, but I believe the NPCA is correct that now is the time to act, to propose a bigger and more effective Peace Corps. Listen to Sargent Shriver: "We may have only one more opportunity to get it right."

MorePeaceCorps is on the right track, but there are many things to be resolved. Acknowledge the size and scope of the effort. Carefully define rejuvenation and reform. Make sure that present and former Peace Corps staff, Peace Corps Volunteers and the key Congressional leaders are central in the effort.

Chuck McBeath
Lesotho, Jamaica, Namibia, St Lucia, Côte d'Ivoire, Kenya 86-05

As we approach 50 years of Volunteers living and working abroad, there is no better time to reflect on how partnerships with other organizations can create a more effective, efficient Peace Corps organization.

There is a fear that creating networks with other internal and international organizations will create a more political Peace Corps organization that relies less on grassroots ideals and more on global communication and change. As Thomas Friedman suggests in his book, *The World is Flat*, historical, regional and geographical divisions are becoming increasingly irrelevant. Given today's work and social environment, regardless of where or what you do for work, partnering with other organizations may be an actual requirement if Peace Corps is to maintain and grow an effective, efficient and successful program.

Jeanie Rojas
Paraguay 99-00

For years Peace Corps has suffered from self-inflicted institutional amnesia, which is most evident in the dearth of Internet resources that would be useful to in-country volunteers.

Why this situation has been allowed is befuddling. The 21st century presents a far different world of challenges and opportunities than existed in the early 1960s when Peace Corps began.

The Peace Corps must grow up! Yes, priority number one should remain community integration and making personal connections. However volunteers should have real jobs. Assignments should have requisite training or expertise to fulfill these functions. Moreover, volunteers should know about the history of the Peace Corps in their sites and they should have opportunity to work with development professionals on sustainable technologies appropriate to the particular part of the world they are working in. There are many things a wiki-type database could include, such as information about every volunteer, every site and government-related documents....

In my opinion Peace Corps runs the risk of developing into an elitist enterprise that has lost touch with its core missions. I want Peace Corps to rediscover its mission by tapping the intensely committed and dedicated community of returned volunteers.

I have found that they believe Peace Corps can again be a powerful force for international understanding as well as a form of national service that is highly respected and sought after.

Will Dickinson
Armenia 04-06
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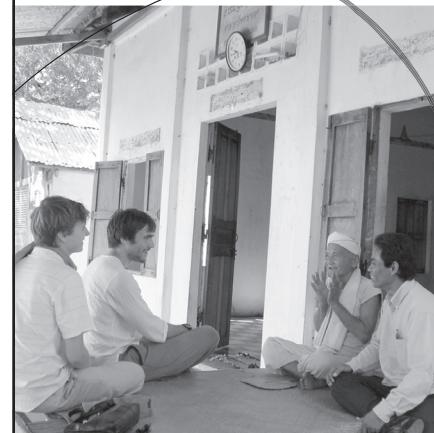
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"I WILL ASK THEM TO SERVE AGAIN"

Comments by Senator John McCain

Editor's Note: The National Peace Corps Association and WorldView Magazine asked Sen. McCain's campaign for a statement by him about Peace Corps to be included in this issue. They declined. However in recognition of the Senator's longstanding commitment to national and volunteer service, we offer these excerpts referencing volunteerism and national service.

...During the last presidential race, I had the privilege of traveling the country and meeting vast numbers of young people. I cannot express how impressed I was.... Though today's

young people, according to polls, have little faith in politics, they are great believers in service. Indeed, they are doing volunteer work in their communities in record numbers – proof that the urge to serve runs especially deep in them. Indeed, most Americans share this impulse, as witnessed after last month's terrorist attacks, when thousands of Americans lined up to give blood and assist in rescue efforts. It is time we tapped that urge for great national ends.

And it is not true, as the cynics suggest, that our era lacks great causes. Such causes are all around us. The

growth of local volunteerism and the outpouring of sentiment for "the greatest generation" suggest a different explanation: that Americans hunger for patriotic service to the nation, but do not see ways to personally make a difference....

What is lacking today is not a need for patriotic service, nor a willingness to serve, but the opportunity. Indeed, one of the curious truths of our era is that while opportunities to serve ourselves have exploded – with ever-expanding choices of what to buy, where to eat, what to read, watch, or listen to – opportunities to spend some time serving our country have narrowed....

If we are to have a resurgence of patriotic service in this country, then programs like AmeriCorps must be expanded and changed in ways that inspire the nation. There should be more focus on meeting national goals and on making short-term service, both civilian and military, a rite of passage for young Americans.

*Washington Monthly
October 2001*

After 9/11, my friends, which none of us predicted obviously, I would have not asked Americans to go shopping or take a trip. I would have asked every single American to find a way to serve their country - to join the military, the Peace Corps, AmeriCorps, neighborhood organizations; every way that we could find a way for people to serve their country. Americans were united after 9/11, my friends, and I would have asked them to serve, and as President of the United States in January of 2009, I will ask them to serve again.

*MTV/MySpace Presidential Dialogue
December 3rd, 2007*

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"A QUANTUM LEAP"

By Senator Barak Obama

Congratulations to Peace Corps Volunteers of the 20th century. Congratulations, too, to the National Peace Corps Association and to current Volunteers and staff in this first decade of our new century. You are setting the pace and pointing the way to a 21st century Peace Corps that will be bigger, better and bolder.

In this presidential campaign, I've set forth a comprehensive plan for a large expansion of voluntary citizen service, at home and abroad. An integral part of that plan is the growth of the Peace Corps in quality and quantity – a quantum leap. We recall that President Kennedy hoped the Peace Corps would grow to 100,000 volunteers, but the program peaked at 16,000 in 1966. Today there are about 8,000. If Kennedy's vision had been fulfilled, there would have been more than two million returned Volunteers with first-hand experience in Asia, Africa, Latin America and Eastern Europe, with a commitment to help America play a more constructive role in the world.

To restore America's standing, I will call on our greatest resource – our people. We will double the size of the Peace Corps by its 50th anniversary in 2011. And, we'll reach out to other nations to engage their young people in similar programs, so that we work side by side to take on the common challenges that confront all humanity. The Peace Corps has been a key part of meeting those challenges such as overcoming poverty, combating diseases like HIV/AIDS and malaria, and reducing the global education deficit. This will not be a call issued in one speech or one program. This will be an important and enduring commitment of my presidency.

To resume the Peace Corps' growth, we will push Congress to fully fund the expansion to 16,000 by 2011. I will work

with former Peace Corps Volunteer Sen. Chris Dodd and the other returned Peace Corps Volunteers in Congress, Republicans and Democrats, and with the National Peace Corps Association to bring this about.

One of the Peace Corps' founders, Harris Wofford told me how the petition to Senator John Kennedy by nearly 1,000 University of Michigan students who pledged their support of his proposed volunteer corps was the trigger that caused him to give his major address proposing a Peace Corps at the Cow Palace in San Francisco. Generations of Peace Corps Volunteers, as active-duty

citizens, have turned Kennedy's call to service into reality.

Almost half a century later, I am not just asking for your vote as a candidate. If I am elected President, I will ask for your continued service and your active citizenship in the years to come. With the Peace Corps' present emphasis on recruiting Volunteers age 50-plus, an expanded Corps will open new opportunities for service to young and old, and help move America closer to the day when voluntary service, at home or abroad, in some form, at some stage of life, becomes the common expectation and experience of all Americans.

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GOING BACK

A former volunteer tries to relive her Peace Corps service

by Annie Mascorro

Recently my partner Matt and I quit our jobs and sold everything we owned in preparation for a return to Guinea, where we met while serving as Peace Corps volunteers from 2000 to 2002. We had promised ourselves and our Guinean host families that we would return someday, and this seemed as good a time as any. We were in the midst of several transitions, and I was struggling to find direction in my life. Much to our family's chagrin we bought one-way tickets and told them we were open to staying in Guinea as long as it felt right. Many thought we were crazy.

Almost five and a half years after having left Guinea, our plane landed in Conakry as the sun was rising. We had waited 24 hours at the Leopold Senghor Airport in Dakar for our 45

minute flight to Guinea in what we had forgotten to be typical Air Senegal fashion (Their motto: You'll love our company.)

Everything was as I remembered. The landscape. The taxis. The street sellers. I was giddy with recognition. This place that had so captured the imagination of my burgeoning adulthood was, in fact, real. I found myself exclaiming "I've been down this street before!" more times than I'd like to admit. Conakry, a place that had never impressed me in the past, was now a wonderland of familiarity. The old man with the pineapple cart was still selling by the slice on the Avenue de la Republique. The shawarmas at Akwaba, the Lebanese hole-in-the-wall, were still to-die-for, and the open-air Niger market was as chaotic as ever.

The peak of exhilaration, however, was the reunion with my host family. I had imagined the worst – being greeted with "What's your name again?" Instead, there were running hugs, tears of joy, and a slaughtered chicken. Time had passed. The newborn had somehow become a kid, the children were taller and my host mother's face revealed the slightest creases of age and fatigue. According to the family, I, too, had changed. What Guinean reunion would be complete without celebratory screams that the newly arrived was now "bigger" – read "fatter" – the ultimate compliment to which I feigned pride and satisfaction.

Much was the same. My old hut was still there, and the mango trees, the homemade toy cars the children make, the potato leaf sauce, the curdled milk in calabashes. Mostly, though, I was relieved and overjoyed to find my host family more or less how I had left them. They seemed to feel the same about me. We slipped easily into the past. I became, once again, a 22-year-old Peace Corps volunteer, my Guinean family's charge, untouched by the loss of innocence that comes with time.

If we had left soon after this reunion, Guinea, my Guinean family and friends, and I would once again be freeze-framed, stored in another album. But we've stayed a bit longer. Six months to be exact. The awe and jump-up-and-down excitement of our first few weeks here have given way to quieter moments. I have come to anticipate the long conversations with my host mom under the mango tree in the family concession. There's much to share. These years apart have filled us with stories and struggles, and it has



photo credit Smatt

Annie Mascorro with Na and Max

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been both reassuring and cathartic to connect our stories into a greater one, a time line that goes both backwards and forwards.

To be fair, this has not been an easy visit. The same frustrations that I remember from my time in the Peace Corps are here: long waits at the taxi park, children screaming at me, and the incessant come-ons. Much more disturbing, though, is witnessing the daily consequences of the current economic crisis. The rising cost of fuel and food is hitting our friends and family here hard. Each day we watch as people struggle in ways they hadn't before just to get by. Sauces are thinner, lines for gas are longer, and individuals as well as whole communities are now hoarding foodstuffs. In recent months familiar problems such as the water crisis, the deteriorating national highway, and the shortage of public school teachers and medical supplies have become more acute.

On a much smaller scale we know that we've played our part in the challenges of this trip. Over these past few months we have pushed the limits of hospitality and frustrated everyone with our lack of plans, not to mention jobs.

It is clear that this visit has been joyous and messy at once. My relationships here have grown deeper, but also more complicated. The juxtaposition of the chaos in the family concession and those peaceful chats with my host mom has taken some getting used to but has also opened up a space for me to begin to find the middle ground in my own life.

I came to Kerouane, Guinea fresh out of college almost eight years ago. Since then I have stumbled through my 20's, given and received second chances, gotten lost, found new paths, given up, started over and laughed and cried until I was sick.

When I walk past my old hut in Kerouane I feel a flash of longing so



Matt and Max wearing their matching bandanas.

intense I can almost smell the hut from the inside, that cozy, musty smell that comes after the rain. I'm in there alone, reading by candlelight, my whole life ahead of me. But I can't go back and my time here has shown me that I wouldn't if I could. I am no longer that young woman. My host family is right: I am truly bigger and I can see now that everyone else is too.

It might have been tempting to remember Guinea as an experience, the last hoorah of my youth, but it never has been and never will be. It's a place, like any other, with people who cannot be captured in a single photo. Time can't be stopped. We are, all of us, constantly moving forward, along roads full of potholes and curves and red dust so thick we can't always see exactly where we're headed.

*-KanKan, Guinea,
May 2008*

Annie Mascorro served as a Peace Corps volunteer in Guinea from 2000 to 2002. A version of this essay appeared in the Friends of Guinea newsletter in May 2008.

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WALKING THE LAST MILE

Social pensions for the elderly

by Jeremy Wade Shockley

The high mountains and rugged terrain that define the landscape of the Kingdom Lesotho stand in sharp contrast to the rolling farmlands of the surrounding South African provinces. Despite the proximity, the Basotho also have a culture and a way of life apart from their larger neighbor. The most perceptible division is economic: Lesotho is one of the poorest countries in the world. Many Basotho live a

subsistence lifestyle, with the older generation often living well below established poverty levels. However a recently introduced pension scheme is helping to alleviate the burdens of old age, while empowering elders within their own communities.

Ntate Malefetsane lives on a small dusty road outside of Liphiring, a rural village in the southeastern corner of Lesotho. The small garden plots surrounding the yard are parched,

after what had been an unseasonably dry month of February. His house is fashioned out of native limestone, bound with mud joints and covered in the traditional way using the available dry, coarse grass as thatching. A much older *rondavel* sits adjacent, the roof caved in, mortar walls soon to follow. This is where Malefetsane was born.

Like most Basotho, the day begins at dawn for Malefetsane. He gathers wild spinach and pumpkin leaves



Jeremy Wade Shockley

An elderly woman returns to her home at day's end. Life in Lesotho will continue to have its hardships, but the availability of a pension for the elderly will help to alleviate some of the burden.



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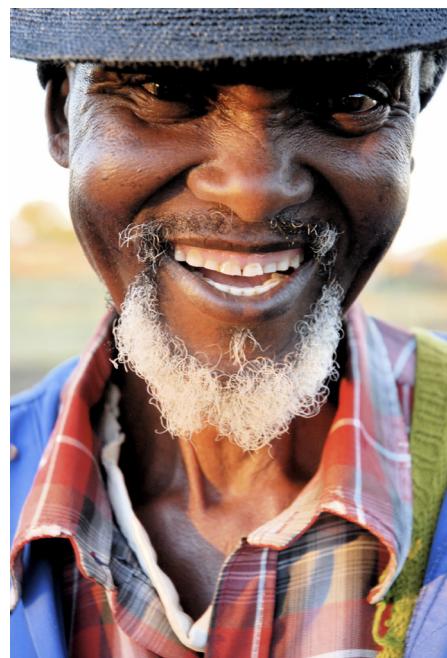
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for cooking. This dish of vegetables, known as *morocho*, will most certainly be eaten alongside papa, the staple food in Lesotho. Papa is a white cornmeal mush, usually accompanied by vegetables and, less often, meat. Malefetsane lives alone, his simple lifestyle providing the very basics. Malefetsane is 67 years old. In three more years he will be eligible for a monthly pension of two hundred Maloti, an amount that will certainly alleviate the conditions of his life and provide added security during hard times.

The Social pension was introduced in November 2004. By 2006, 72,000 Basotho elders were receiving their pensions: 96% of those who are eligible and 3.6% of the total population. The pension is available to those people over the age of 70 and was recently increased to the sum of M200 per month, equivalent to \$29 US Dollars. This amount may seem small by our North American standards, but it can easily equate to survival, education and respect in the increasingly challenging environment of Lesotho where the national motto of 'Peace, Rain and Prosperity' is becoming more symbolic of their hopes than the reality at hand.

The pension program in Lesotho is unique in a number of ways. The



Jeremy Wade Shockley



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Ntate Malefetsane at home in Liphiring. Malefetsane is 67 years he will be eligible for a monthly pension.

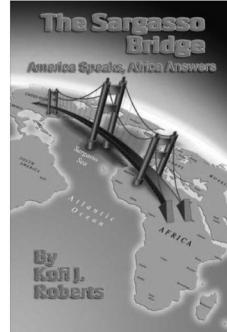
pension is a cash transfer scheme, where the recipients are responsible for spending the money as they see fit, thereby providing more flexibility than a food program alone. A recent study by Help Age International suggests that the money is spent on anything from food and clothing to health care and school fees for younger family members. The bulk of this allowance still goes toward food costs, but the flexibility provides for many other facets of day-to-day survival. In some circumstances this money is used to buy seeds or materials, whereby the pensioner can generate income from agriculture or small business, while still feeding themselves and their families.

David Croome of the National University of Lesotho (NUL) has been leading an interdisciplinary research project on the impact of the old age pension in Lesotho. He explains, "The study has provoked considerable international interest, mainly because Lesotho is by far the least economically developed

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country in the world that is providing non-contributory old age pensions universally to almost all elderly citizens. Our 'way forward' may be to get support for bringing the elderly into a more prominent role in their communities. There is little advocacy for old people in Lesotho, but they could be involved much more."

A primary objective of the research is to assess the impact of the pension on the family, household and

community. The study concluded that elders coming from the poorest situations use the pension to better their family's immediate needs, as well as their own. This money – most often spent wisely, it was found – helps to generate livelihoods, while investing in the community and ultimately the overall economy of Lesotho.

Many Basotho elders have become the primary caregivers for children and grandchildren, directly and

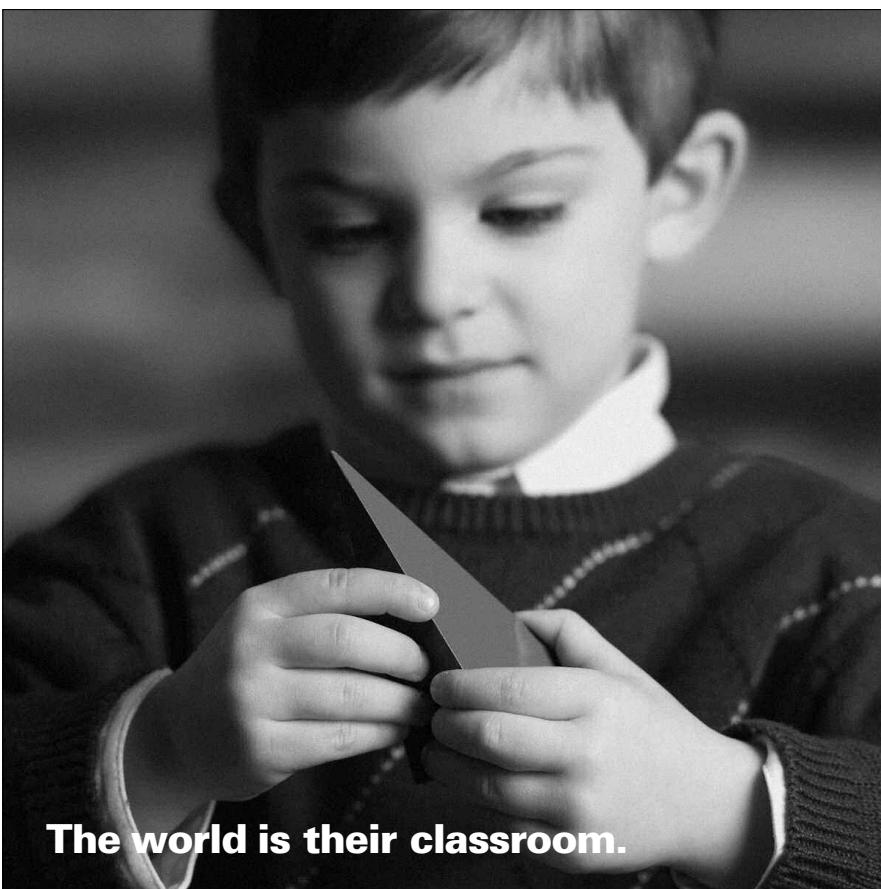
indirectly affected by HIV/AIDS. This responsibility has had a substantial impact on their lives.

A good-natured woman, Rosina Jasong is the grandmother of four, and the recipient of a pension. Her house is clean and spacious, it is a tin-roof cement-block house built adjacent to the original round, mud and brick structure that now serves only as a cooking hut and storeroom. Rosina is surprisingly spry for 73 and highly involved in her community. Despite her age, Rosina tends a large vegetable garden and keeps chickens on the side. The younger children in the household share the workload. Rosina's pension alleviates the financial burden of secondary school fees that might otherwise be unaffordable.

Hopefully the continued success of Lesotho's pension scheme will lead to further increases in the pension budget as the cost of living continues to rise along with the demands put on older individuals in society. If empowering the old, educating the young and increasing the standard of living can begin with a mere \$29USD, then perhaps the pension scheme of Lesotho and many other developing countries is worth more consideration as we piece together a set of solutions to reduce poverty on a larger scale.

As I look back on the faces of Liphiring, my thoughts turn to Malefetsane and Rosina Jasong, and the challenges they and so many other Basotho face, as well as the fortitude of the older generation, and the growing importance of their role within the community. Hardships aside, Basotho are easy to smile and generous in nature. I am sure that high hopes (and a pension check) will continue to play an important role in the future of this small country.

Jeremy Wade Shockley is a freelance photographer based out of Colorado. He served as a Peace Corps Volunteer in the Berea District of Lesotho from 2003 to 2005. This article and the accompanying photographs were produced during a return trip to Lesotho in 2007. Jeremy's images can be viewed online at FedoraPhoto.com.



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BECOMING TEACHER PLUMBLOSSOM

An excerpt from The Last Days of Old Beijing

by Mike Meyer

I started to think about moving into a *hutong* that spring of 2003, when I met Mr. Yang. Reflecting its crowded, linked traditional architecture, Beijing's social network moves sideways. I was talking in a bar about writing an article on the city's disappearing heritage when a woman at a neighboring table overheard and wrote down the number of a friend whose courtyard home was being razed. Later that week, Mr. Yang waited for me at a subway stop on the west side of town.

Beijing's traffic overpasses and subway stations bear the names of the citywall gates they replaced. We met at the one formerly reserved for the passage of coal shipments. "That KFC is where Marquis Wu Ding's palace used to be," Mr. Yang said. He was in his early thirties, with a round face and cropped black hair. He spoke Chinese with a slight stutter that disappeared when he talked about being evicted. "My courtyard stands—stood—alongside the Duke of Guangning's Palace. Now it's called Financial Street."

The area was a corridor of department stores, high-rise banks, and treeless squares whose signs warned keep off the grass. A sculpture of brick walls surrounding a seedling evoked a home it had replaced.

"My parents bought our courtyard in 1945," Mr. Yang said, "but after Liberation in 1949, they were afraid of being labeled capitalists, so they subdivided the rooms and sold them, as well. During the Cultural Revolution, two thirds of the courtyard's rooms were divided again, and cadres and workers moved in. My parents clung to one room."

They lived there until the character that means "raze"—(*chai*)—appeared on their home's gray exterior walls. It

was brushed on condemned homes in ghostly white strokes and circled. Mr. Yang had never seen someone paint the symbol, and neither had I. It just appeared overnight, like a gang tag, or the work of a specter. The Hand.

"We were told we had to move," Mr. Yang continued. "In the beginning of forced relocations, residents were offered new apartments on the outskirts of town as compensation. But then people began resisting, not wanting to trade their homes and neighborhoods for a life in a high-rise far away. So cash began being offered instead. The sums are fair, 8,020 yuan [about \$1,000] per square meter. But that's only if you actually receive it."

Mr. Yang produced a pen and drew on the back of a napkin. "In practice, it's difficult due to corruption. In theory, an evaluator is supposed to assess the property's value and act as mediator between residents and developers."

He traced a triangle. "But the evaluator is in league with the developers, leaving people, really, against the two of them and the coming high-rises."

The napkin was a swirl of lines, figures, and ink-blotted scribbles. Mr. Yang's sketch of his home lay buried beneath them.

Despite offers of compensation, and the substandard living conditions, Mr. Yang did not want to move. He grew up in the house and knew the area's history. He was part of it, he said. Connected. One day, he wanted his child to know these things, too.

"But to resist is useless. There's no social network anymore," he said. "You have three groups in these old *hutong* neighborhoods: natives, people moved in during the Cultural Revolution, and those resettled since then by their work units. It's too hard to get everyone to agree. The middle class is still being formed and afraid to stand up, lest they lose what they've gained. Then there are the demolition crews. They're from the countryside and have no connection with the city. They're just doing their job. Then there are the city planners and developers, who lack a spiritual connection with Beijing and see the city as something to shape, rather than preserve."

Mr. Yang couldn't bear to watch the workers destroy his house. "They're not delicate, like you would be," he said. "They're just brutal." His jovial face fell. "It wasn't just a building. It was me. It was my family. Our spirit. My grandmother died of cancer, and last year one day after she had gone, I felt an immense sadness, like something was wrong. I walked over to the house, only to find they had knocked down the kitchen. Suddenly I remembered the last



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time she cooked for us.” His eyes began to moisten. “She raised all of us, you see, and her best dish was meatballs. I just kept thinking of the last time she cooked those for us, with all of us home, and her laughing and talking. We were filled with such hope that perhaps somehow she would cheat death and be as healthy as she looked then. But she died. And so did our home.”

Tears ran down his pale cheeks. “I’m sorry. I did this once before, in front of my girlfriend. She told me I was strange.”

We walked to the rubble, past office towers named Investment Plaza and Corporate Square. I closed and opened my eyes, remarking that if I had just arrived, it would be hard to guess what city I was in. Mr. Yang laughed. “No, you would look around and see how ugly it is. That’s how you would know you could only be in Beijing.”

A Ritz-Carlton hotel was planned for his former *hutong*. “There is still one family living there, and one of my old rooms,” he said. “My friend has a GPS, so he came over and recorded the coordinates of the house. Now I can take my kid back one day and stand in the hotel lobby and say, ‘I grew up here.’”

He peeled back a layer of tin sheeting painted blue. We ducked into a landscape of shattered brick and bone-colored characters commanding. The windows of Mr. Yang’s room had been

smashed. He carefully brushed the shards from the wooden sill.

The neighboring family refused to move. Their water had been shut off, though no one could say by whom; the Hand, again. The vegetable market had moved out of the area, making life even more hardscrabble. The father introduced himself as an ethnic Manchu. His ancestors had lived in the house while serving China’s last emperors as imperial guards known as banner men.

“Now they expect me to go to a one-bedroom apartment in the suburbs?” he said. As the father criticized the government, his son made a face. He wanted to accept the money, the new apartment, the new life. “Why are you telling them this?” he finally blurted in a rising voice. “Do you think this brings you glory?”

Their argument carried to the other side of the wall, where the demolition squad bunked, waiting. You could still hear their voices on the lane, as a line of men in dark business suits strolled past. They cradled the neighborhood’s future in rolled-up sheets, gesturing upward at buildings only they could see.

Mike Meyer went to China with the Peace Corps in 1995, where he trained English teachers in Sichuan province’s Neijiang city. The Last Days of Beijing is published by Walker & Company.

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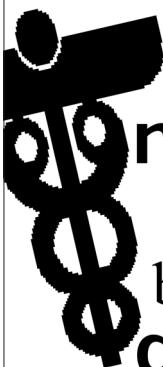
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Community News

Recent achievements of our community

edited by JoAnna Haugen

BOTSWANA

Ninebark Press has been awarded a 2008 Independent Publisher Book Award for *Deep Travel: Contemporary American Poets Abroad*. Edited by **Sandra Meek** (89-91), the anthology contains work by a number of Peace Corps volunteers, including **Derick Burleson** (Rwanda 91-93), **John Isles** (Estonia 92-94), **Susan Rich** (Niger 84-86) and **Margaret Szumowki** (Zaire 73-74, Ethiopia 74-75). Founded in 2006, Ninebark Press is a not-for-profit literary press dedicated to publishing innovative and compelling work by both new and established writers.

BURKINA FASO

David Eckerson was recently named as mission director for Uganda for USAID. In his position, he will oversee a program exceeding \$300 million annually. Eckerson's previous positions include serving as USAID's director of the Office of Human Resources and the Office of Strategic and Program Planning, deputy mission director in Ethiopia and deputy director in the Office of Caribbean Affairs.

COLOMBIA

An active National Organizers Alliance member since 1993, **Walter Davis** (67-69) has been promoted to the position of executive director. His previous positions at NOA have included trainer, training coordinator and director at the Southern Empowerment Project. Davis' career has included advising immigrant rights organizations, organizing against the disenfranchisement of the poor, serving as a local labor leader and supporting grassroots organizations throughout the world.

COSTA RICA

Social Venture Network has selected

John Heymann (95-97), founder and CEO of NewLevel Group, LLC, to join other industry professionals and social entrepreneurs who have made a difference in the environmental and social issues facing society today. Heymann's resume includes time as the managing director of the Land Trust of Napa County and chief executive officer of MKF, an international consulting firm.

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

Dr. Amy Vedder (73-75) was selected by The Wilderness Society as vice president to direct its ecology and economics research department. She has served as a member of the Governing Council since 1993, but Vedder has a history of work with the environment. Vedder has done groundbreaking studies of mountain gorillas in Rwanda and is the co-founder of the Mountain Gorilla Project. She worked for the Wildlife Conservation Society for several years and has been the senior technical advisor for the United Nations Development Program's Protected Areas Biodiversity Project since 2007.

ECUADOR

Jeffrey Rathelf recently became the director of community service and service learning at Gustavus Adolphus College in Minnesota. He has been working at the School for International Training for the past seven years directing and managing the Latin American and Caribbean undergraduate study abroad programs.

GUATEMALA

Many people are familiar with crochet, but the fine art of tapestry crochet is not as well known. **Carol Ventura**

(76-80) is an expert in the art who has published books, led workshops and traveled around the world documenting the many approaches to tapestry crochet. Her artwork has been on display in the Thigpen Library at Volunteer State Community College in Gallatin, Tenn., this month. Ventura is also an art history professor at Tennessee Technological University in Cookeville.



GUATEMALA

Cynthia Goody (93-95) has been named as McDonald's director of nutrition. Goody is a registered and licensed dietitian as well as a member of the American Dietetic Association. In her new position she will oversee all aspects of menu nutrition for the 13,800 McDonald's restaurants in the United States. Prior to joining McDonald's, Goody served as a retail and clinical dietitian for HY-VEE food stores.

GUYANA

Jill Hoxmeier has been the community garden project coordinator at Rail Town Gardens, a green development project in Whitefish, Wisc., since September 2007. The half-acre of gardens are new to the community, which will be rented out for a nominal fee. Hoxmeier recently applied for and received a \$5,000 grant for the gardens, which will help develop the project to its full capability.

NEPAL

Littleton "Lit" Tazewell (84-87) has

been promoted from USAID's legal adviser for Central Asian Republics to the mission director in Panama for the agency. He has worked for USAID since 2000 as an attorney in Guatemala, Nicaragua and Panama, and a legal adviser for the agency's Latin America and Caribbean Bureau and African Bureau. Prior to 2000 Tazewell worked as a corporate lawyer and university instructor.

PHILIPPINES

Fulbright scholar **Noah Jackson** (99-01) has spent the last nine months living with the forest people of Borneo documenting communities in Sabah and Sarawak. He has visited at least two dozen communities during his time in Borneo, but has spent the majority of time with the Penan, Iban and Orang Sungei. Jackson is documenting how local people preserve the forest, trees and seeds.

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NIGERIA, BOTSWANA, KENYA, WASHINGTON, D.C.

The Fish and Wildlife Service recently awarded **George Petrides, Sr.**, (Nigeria 66-67, Botswana 67-68, Kenya 72-74, Washington, D.C. 70-72) with the Citizens Award for Exceptional Service. He is the founder and chairman of Wild Bird Centers of America, Inc., and he was honored for helping to improve the Service's bird watching and conservation programs throughout the National Wildlife Refuge System.

PHILIPPINES

Pamela Browning was recently selected as the 2007-2008 Eanes, Texas school district teacher of the year. She is currently a fourth grade teacher at Cedar Creek Elementary School and has been teaching for 14 years

SENEGAL

Andrew Sherman is a first-year resident in pediatrics at the University of Rochester's Strong Memorial Hospital and co-founder of the program Netlife, which delivers mosquito nets to Senegal. His partnership with two existing organizations that also fight malaria has allowed Sherman to offer the nets throughout the country for only five dollars a net. Netlife delivered 600 nets in 2005 and 1,100 in 2007. This year Sherman hopes to deliver 4,000 nets; 2,600 have already been distributed with the help of local Senegal PCVs.

SWAZILAND

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in the technology community, awarded **Reed Hastings** (83-86), the founder of Netflix, a Visionary Award for his contribution to changing the underlying rules of and improving technology. An active educational philanthropist, Hastings is on Microsoft's Board of Directors and serves on the boards of many nonprofit organizations as well.

THE KINGDOM OF TONGA

Richard Stoll recently became the master planner of The Kingdom of Tonga's capitol, which was destroyed by rioters in 2006. Stoll has a long history in the country having spent the last thirty years working in engineering and environmental science positions; he began his career as the chief engineer of the country's water board.

VENEZUELA

The Colorado Mountain College Summit campus recognized **Richard Hale** (66-68) as one of its faculty of the year. Hale teaches English as a second language and Spanish classes and has been at the college for 20 years. He also taught English for eight years in Peru. Hale earned his degree in Latin American studies from the University of Colorado and a master's degree in Spanish from the University of Denver.

ZIMBABWE

Rev. Kimberly Greway (99-01), a minister at Mt. Lebanon United Methodist Church in Pennsylvania, returned to Zimbabwe in 2006 with 17 church members. The group worked on several projects during their three-week trip, including assisting in the 240-bed hospital at the Nyadire United Methodist Mission. The hospital serves 500,000 people. They also helped with a vacation Bible school for elementary school students, and worked on maintenance and construction projects. Greway returned to the area last year where she noted improvements in the lives of the community members, and she hopes to travel to Zimbabwe this coming October to help secure a clean and secure water supply to the hospital.

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Organizations with an RPCV Connection

by JoAnna Haugen

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<http://rwenable.org/>

PLANTING HOPE IN AFRICA

African women are empowered through sustainable opportunities with Seeds of Hope Africa, an organization founded by Angela Kieffer (Niger 96-98). With the help of Peace Corps volunteers on the ground, Seeds of Hope Africa funds programs that have been developed by community leaders. The organization is currently helping African women through a goat loan project that is funded through donations from the United States. Through the program, a village woman is selected to receive a goat on loan knowing that the first offspring will be given to another woman while any future offspring will

be kept by the woman who originally received that goat loan. Kieffer is currently working with village leaders and local Peace Corps volunteers to implement the program with the initial purchase of 200 goats.

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