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WORLDVIEW

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2007 - 2009



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Panama
2006 - 2008



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Peru
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Andrea Danielson
The Gambia
2006 - 2008



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St. Vincent and
the Grenadines
1997 - 1999



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South Africa
2005 - 2007

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Possibilities



Katie Hartman
Costa Rica
2005 - 2007



Nora Jens
Lesotho
2007 - 2009



Jamison Litten
Thailand
2005 - 2007



Emily Mackin
Jamaica
2007 - 2009



Joni Pederson
Mauritania
2006 - 2008



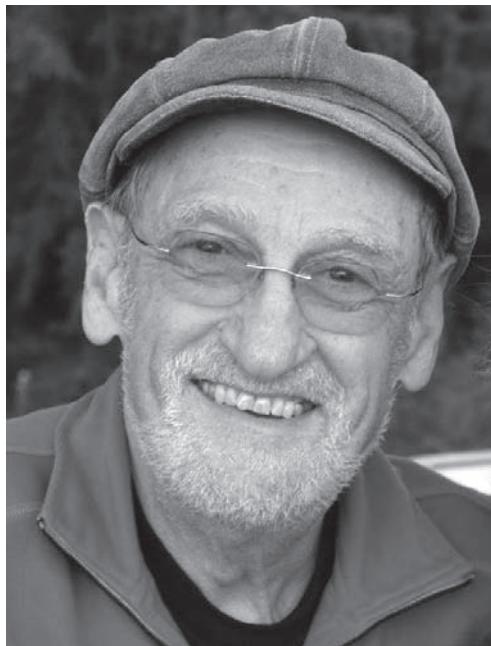
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he organized the student group that is often credited with inspiring President John Kennedy
to establish the Peace Corps.*

*Guskin interrupted his graduate education in 1961 to serve as a
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WORLDVIEW

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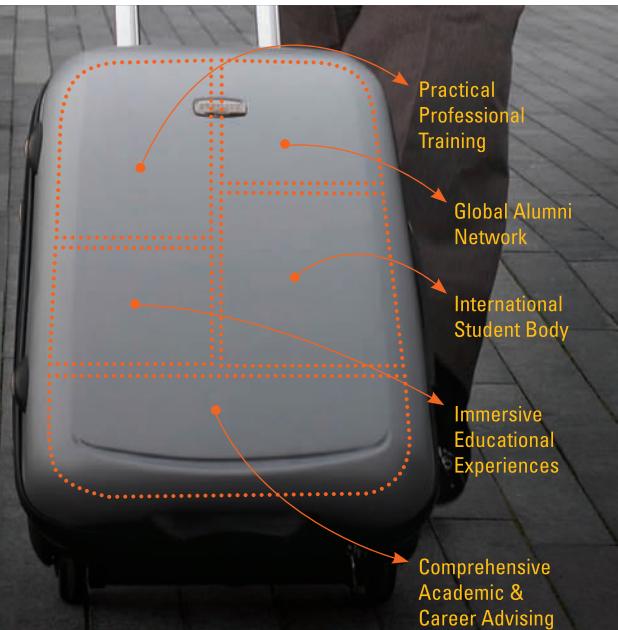
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PEACE CORPS SERVICE + ADVOCACY

The inextricable link

by Kevin F. F. Quigley

Standing on the steps of the University of Michigan Student Union at 2 a.m. in the cold and drizzle, 50 years to the moment after presidential candidate John F. Kennedy's impromptu remarks sparked a student response that led to the Peace Corps' establishment, I was thinking about the connections between service and advocacy, advocacy and service.

If not for the advocacy of Michigan graduate students like Alan and Judy Guskin and thousands of others, it is unlikely that 200,000 of us would have served in the Peace Corps. Young Americans' enthusiastic response to the call to service by advocating for its establishment and then serving in the Peace Corps resulted in perhaps the most distinctive part of John F. Kennedy's legacy.

From the beginning, the Peace Corps was not simply about an international service experience. Rather, the Peace Corps was essentially about having Americans work alongside the peoples of other countries knowing that experience would change those we worked with and those who participated. And then, those changed volunteers would return home and become relentless advocates for an entirely different way for our country to engage with the world.

During the recent Michigan reenactment events, Kay Clifford, who works at the University's International Center and is a Returned Peace Corps Volunteer, suggested to Harris Wofford, one of the architects of the Peace Corps, that "this was a historic moment." Based on his wise perspective, Harris answered, "Only if we make it one."

How do we make this 50th anniversary year a historic moment?

Simply put, those of us who value Peace Corps service have to be much better advocates for it and other positive

ways that the U.S. engages in the world.

A day-long symposium on the future of international service convened by the Brookings Institution, the University of Michigan and NPCA presented a bold new agenda on how to do this.

This symposium discussed fundamental changes from when the Peace Corps was established until today and what the implications are for the future. A key change from the 1960s: there are now many programs providing international service opportunities. Schools, churches, multinational corporations and non-governmental organizations present a myriad of programs options ranging from a week to a month to a semester to a year. There are also volunteer programs organized by the diaspora returning to their country of origin or sending volunteers from overseas to the United States.

Recognizing the tremendous potential of international service to address global problems and the growing demand from Americans who want to serve, NPCA helped organize the Service World Coalition. This coalition envisions "... a world in which volunteer service by people of all nations is a common strategy in meeting pressing challenges in education, health, the environment, agriculture, and more."

This Service World agenda expands opportunities for Americans of all ages to serve internationally, complimenting the work done through the Service Nation coalition that resulted in the May 2009 passage of the Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act. That legislation was the largest expansion of domestic service opportunities since the 1960s when programs like VISTA were created. This legislation was only enacted through the effective advocacy of a coalition of more than 300 organizations, of which NPCA was part of the steering committee.

To be enacted, Service World is going to require comparable advocacy on the part of the international service and Peace Corps community. We know that this is achievable since we have done this before. In recent years, we have kept Peace Corps and military recruitment separate, helped secure the largest appropriation in the Peace Corps' history, and advocated for effective human development policies including universal global education.

Given this, we have the experience to succeed, as many of the articles in this issue attest. If we can enact the Service World agenda, tentatively entitled the Sargent Shriver Serve the World Act, we will significantly expand opportunities for Americans to serve internationally through the Peace Corps and other service programs administered by corporations, non-governmental organizations and universities. This will only happen if we who have served internationally advocate for Americans of all ages and future generations to have comparable international service opportunities.

If we can continue to link our Peace Corps service and advocacy, 50 years from now history will answer Harris Wofford's question by saying that the 50th anniversary of the establishment of the Peace Corps was historic—that it launched a quantum leap in international service resulting in a more peaceful and prosperous world.

Kevin F. F. Quigley

Kevin F. F. Quigley is President of the National Peace Corps Association. He served in Thailand, 1976 to 1979. Please send your comments to president@peacecorpsconnect.org.



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Raka Banerjee, MPIA 2009

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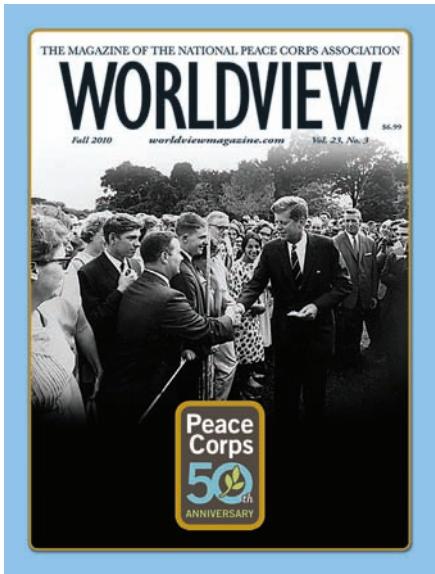
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READERS WRITE US

Letters to the Editor



Harris Wofford's essay identifies the challenge implicit in JFK's original vision—"this Peace Corps will really be serious when in each decade there are a million former Volunteers with first-hand experience in Asia, Africa and Latin America... (who provide) a large constituency for a good foreign policy."

This fall, I spent a few days with the 47th reunion of India 4, a group I had filmed in 1965 for the first Peace Corps movie, "A Choice I Made." Couldn't ask for a more decent, caring and productive crew. Yet as I talked with them, and thought upon how change happens, I came up short. Where is a national voice of reason about foreign policy and cross-cultural domestic issues, ranging from the U.S. engagement in foreign wars, to humanitarian interventions, to domestic discord about immigration, to broad areas of contention about global economics and their local impact?

Individual epiphanies and good works are not nearly enough in a world that requires collective passion and sustainable infrastructure. Perhaps never a million,

yet there are a few hundred thousand Returned Peace Corps Volunteers (RPCVs) with an aggregated base of experience and sophistication about other cultures and societies who should be one of the levers that moves the body politic.

It is possible. By the end of the Eighties, deregulation had spawned a major financial crisis (the S&L debacle) and the abandonment of proactive alternative energy initiatives was part of exacerbating long-term environmental problems and dependency on foreign oil. Sound familiar? In the two decades since, despite governmental ineptitude, the CERES Coalition, the Global Reporting Initiative, and the Investor Network on Climate Risk have defined principles for responsible business, made reporting on social and environmental impact part of virtually every multi-national corporate portfolio, and built a sustainability consensus among pension funds and financial entities with the greatest stake in preserving existing assets.

Building an infrastructure capable of guiding a global economy doesn't make it so, any more than collecting the aggregated voice of RPCVs towards a sophisticated American foreign policy would guarantee positive outcomes. But it would be a start. The 50th anniversary seems a fitting time to take another step in the Peace Corps' pursuit of its original goals.

Paul Freundlich
President, The Fair Trade Foundation
Founder and President Emeritus,
Green (Co-op) America
Board member, The CERES Coalition
Peace Corps filmmaker, 1965-68

I was shocked and appalled to read "Under the Almond Tree" in the Fall 2010 issue of *Worldview* about Margaret Stack's work treating malaria with homeopathy. It is horrifying to think that Stack is treating

one of the deadliest diseases in the world with a totally useless therapy.

Homeopathy is based on two thoroughly discredited principles. First, that disease symptoms can be cured by a compound that produces similar symptoms in healthy people, and second, that the more dilute a compound is the more effective it is. The first principle is simply false. As for the second, many homeopathic "medicines" are diluted to the point that not a single molecule of the original compound remains. It is difficult to understand how a "medicine" that contains no active compound could cure anything at all.

Homeopathy has been studied, and it does not work. Just this past April, an article was published in the Medical Journal of Australia which reviewed the research and concluded that homeopathy is no better than placebo. Even the National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine, which is by definition very supportive of alternative medicine, could not endorse it. Its website reads: "Most analyses have concluded that there is little evidence to support homeopathy as an effective treatment for any specific condition... A number of its key concepts are not consistent with the current understanding of science, particularly chemistry and physics."

I have no doubt that Stack is trying to help, but in fact she is causing great harm by encouraging dangerously ill people to delay their treatment with proven therapies in favor of quackery.

Tamara Schneider Bhandari, MPH
Nepal 2002-04

The writer has a strong opinion about homeopathy. With regard to her assertion that homeopathy has been studied and does not work, on the contrary, there is a growing body of evidence from hundreds of scientific

studies on homeopathy's effectiveness. A comprehensive list is available on the National Center for homeopathy's website. Here are links for two:

1. A diarrhea study, Pediatrics Journal—20% faster rate of recovery compared to placebo. <http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/cgi/content/abstract/93/5/719?ijkey=91a747ece5e19e35f1e75cd7c8>

2. The largest homeopathic study ever undertaken, conducted by the Cuba Government in 2007 using homeopathy as a prophylactic for Leptospirosis – has been replicated and expanded. <http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/197128.php>

Homeopathy is actually based on nine principles. The two the author highlights are controversial but haven't been "thoroughly discredited." Regarding remedy preparation, the work of Luc Montagnier (2008 Nobel Laureate in Medicine), with ultra high dilutions of bacteria and viruses has revealed that water can retain properties of a substance even after dilutions beyond Avogadro's number, when no discernable molecules of the substance remain. Here are links to his published paper and an article about his work.

1. DNA between Physics and Biology – DNA waves and water
<http://montagnier.net/montagnier/index.php/publications/>

2. News article, the Australian, Montagnier's July 2010 presentation
<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/health-science/nobel-laureate-gives-homeopathy-a-boost/story-e6frg8y6-1225887772305>

Annually, millions of people around the world use and benefit from homeopathy. It is one of the National Systems of Medicine in India since 1975, where there are 200,000 registered practitioners, 228 homeopathic hospitals and over 5,000 dispensaries. It is clear that comprehensive health care must include more than just Western medicine. Good nutrition, proper exercise, massage, chiropractic, acupuncture, and yes, even homeopathy all have proven valuable and valid in overall health care.

Adjoa Margaret Stack, CCHH
Burkina Faso 1983-86



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Educating Minds and Hearts to Change The World

MY PIECE OF THE PEACE CORPS VIDEO CONTEST WINNERS

Contest lets Peace Corps community creativity shine

by Brittany Clark

They only had two minutes to creatively express the impact of their diverse and life-changing Peace Corps experiences. As daunting as that may sound, entrants into the National Peace Corps Association's "My Piece of the Peace Corps" YouTube video contest did it fabulously. A wide variety of original submissions were entered, representing 50 years of Peace Corps service. Of these, three deserving winners were chosen.

Returned Peace Corps Volunteer (RPCV) Carrie Pavlik of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, won first place and a \$2,500 cash prize for her video "My Piece of the Peace Corps (Zambia)." The video depicts how rural Zambian life tested her romantic relationship, and subsequently transformed her and her boyfriend into urban farmers in their Pittsburgh home. Film effects such as vibrant, sliding video panels and a "whirled peas" intro made this video all



the more interesting and unique.

Second place and a \$1,000 cash prize went to John Garvey, a Peace Corps Volunteer (PCV) currently serving in Burkina Faso, for his light-hearted and humorous video, "A Peace Corps Song." Using his guitar and cleverly written lyrics, Garvey outlines the three goals of Peace Corps. He also provides a brief peek into the daily living routine in his village—to include bucket showers and doing his business "in a hole." This is one catchy song that will have listeners

clamoring to share it with friends.

Another currently serving PCV, Matthew Hardwick, took third place and won a \$500 cash prize for his entertaining video, "Leaving Home (Vanuatu)." The video features Hardwick performing an original rap, with instrumental accompaniment from a local musician. Hardwick's heartfelt lyrics about "leaving home" but finding a whole new sense of home in Vanuatu, is a theme all PCVs can relate to. The video's honesty and simplicity make it impossible not to love. Also, the breathtaking Pacific Ocean backdrops don't hurt.

Participants entered their video submissions on YouTube between July 1 and Sept 30, and NPCA staff and board members selected the three winners. All three of these videos, as well as the runners up and other entrees can be viewed on the NPCA's YouTube channel at youtube.com/user/peacecorpsconnect.

ORGANIZE A HOUSE PARTY FOR THE "BIRTHDAY" OF PEACE CORPS

One of most accessible ways that you can join with others is by organizing a Global House Party on Peace Corps' "Birthday," March 1, 2011. The

National Peace Corps Association wants to have 500 House Parties around the world, so we need you to help out and plan one! Once you do, let us know by entering information about your house party at <http://bit.ly/GlobalSignup> and on the Calendar at www.peacecorps50.org/.



**National
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The special House Parties program that NPCA is planning will focus on the issue of Food Security and how food and meals impact our lives as Peace Corps volunteers and host country nationals. What better way to have a party than to focus on what Peace Corps Volunteers love to

do—eat? However, food insecurity is a critical issue around the world and as a community we are serious about working to abolish it. As we gather together on

March 1, you'll learn ways that we all can have an impact on our local or Peace Corps communities.

The National Peace Corps Association has created a handy toolkit for you to plan your party from start to finish, which you can download here: <http://bit.ly/MarchPartyToolkit>.



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GROUP NEWS HIGHLIGHTS

A look at what NPCA member groups are up to

by Erica Burman

RETURNED PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEERS OF COLORADO

The Returned Peace Corps Volunteers of Colorado are launching a Clean Cookstove Project in El Salvador in partnership with Peace Corps and Trees, Water and People. The project will connect a local nonprofit organization (Trees, Water and People) to currently serving volunteers in El Salvador. RPCVCO will be the funding partner, raising money to fully fund this project for one year.

<http://www.rpcvcolorado.org/>

SHRIVER PEACEWORKER PROGRAM

The Shriver Peacemaker Program at the University of Maryland Baltimore County hosted its annual Practical Idealist Evening on Tuesday, November 16. To celebrate the Peace Corps' 50th they hosted a lively and interactive conversation about social change leadership in Baltimore, led by a diverse panel of RPCVs who are leading change in Baltimore.

<http://shrivercenter.org/peacemaker>

FRIENDS OF COLOMBIA

Patricia Wand (63-65), NPCA Board member and past President of Friends of Colombia, was on hand at Rutgers University recently to honor Colombia I, the first group to enter Peace Corps training. The trainees arrived at Rutgers on June 24, 1961, resided in Hegeman Hall during their training and became the first of 200,000 Volunteers to serve in Peace Corps to date. More than 250 Peace Corps community members, including 37 members of Colombia I, attended a symposium on the future of the Peace Corps on November 4. The following morning Colombia I and guests gathered



to hear remarks about the impact their service made and to unveil a plaque commemorating their place in Peace Corps history.

<http://community.peacecorpsconnect.org/group/friendsofcolombia>



Above: Colombia RPCVs Steve Murray and Pat Wand sneak a peak.

Left: Members of Colombia I pose with the newly unveiled plaque at Rutgers.

SERVING VOLUNTEER ADVISORY GROUP FORMED

This summer NPCA put out the word that we were looking for a few good Volunteers to serve on a new Serving Volunteer Advisory Group. The purpose of the Group is to establish a regular two-way channel of communication between serving Peace Corps Volunteers and the Returned Peace Corps Volunteer community. We received many excellent applicants and the following Volunteers were selected. You can learn more about them at <http://www.peacecorpsconnect.org/about/servingvolunteer-advisory-group/>

- Sarah Anderson – Albania
- Lóki Gale Tobin – Azerbaijan
- Win Williams – Peru
- Nicole Fiol – Uganda
- Austin Land – Dominica
- Alice Pettaway – Mozambique
- Zachary Pullin – Belize
- Kirsten Kensinger – Guatemala
- Debra Pritchard – Philippines
- Jon Schmidt – Bulgaria
- Travis Hellstrom – Mongolia

WESTERN MONTANA RETURNED PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEERS

The University of Montana Missoula homecoming parade is the second biggest parade in the state. "More than 100 other groups participated and along the hour-long parade route it seemed as if the whole of western Montana showed up," said **Western Montana Returned Peace Corps Volunteers** president Dennis Bangs.

<http://www.wmrpcv.com>



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www.pcv.com

GROUP ADVOCACY

In a November 4th letter, **Ninety-one member groups of the National Peace Corps Association** asked President Obama to support \$500 million for the Peace Corps in its 50th anniversary year. While Congress continues to consider final action on the Fiscal Year 2011 budget, the Obama administration is hard at work preparing its budget for Fiscal Year 2012. The President will submit this budget to Congress next year on or before the first Monday in February, soon after delivering his State of the Union address. In its letter, member groups also asked the President to highlight Peace Corps' 50th anniversary during his State of the Union address and recognize the service and contributions of current and returned volunteers.

"Behind the names of each of these groups is a story of ongoing service to our nation," said NPCA President Kevin Quigley. "Each year our member groups contribute tens of thousands of hours and hundreds of thousands of dollars to help uplift those less fortunate both here at home and around the world. This is the forgotten dividend of Peace Corps service and is a primary reason why we should continue to increase opportunities for fellow Americans to serve in the Peace Corps."

Find a listing of all the official NPCA Member Groups on our website at <http://www.peacecorpsconnect.org/resources/member-groups/>. Find over 380 Peace Corps-related interest groups in our online community at <http://community.peacecorpsconnect.org/groups>.

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PEACE CORPS 50TH ANNIVERSARY YEAR BEGINS AT UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

by Erica Burman

The Peace Corps' anniversary year got off to a fabulous start during the second week of October, when the University of Michigan hosted several days of events

to mark the moment 50 years ago when then-presidential candidate John F. Kennedy first gave public voice to the idea that would become the Peace Corps. Highlights included:

- A Tuesday evening reception at the Hatcher Graduate Library, followed by curator Kay Clifford (Uganda 69-71) giving a personal tour of the exhibit "U-M and the Peace Corps: It All

Right: Students reenact the moment: 2 a.m. October 14, 2010.

Below Right: Fifty years ago.

Below Left: NPCA co-hosted a daylong symposium on service.





Far Left: President Toledo with the brother of the Peace Corps Volunteer who helped him further his studies in the U.S.

Left: Alan Guskin, Harris Wofford and Judy Guskin reunite at Michigan.

NPCA

Started Here.” The exhibit explored for the first time the unique role of University of Michigan students and faculty in the creation and popularizing of the Peace Corps.

- The daylong National Symposium on the Future of International Service, co-organized by NPCA, the Brookings Institution and the University of Michigan. Former Peruvian President Alejandro Toledo, the luncheon keynote speaker, spoke eloquently about the impact of Peace Corps on his life. Video recordings of the Symposium are now available on our YouTube channel at <http://bit.ly/NPCASymposium2010>

- A 2 a.m. celebration that included the screening of the forthcoming documentary “A Passing of the Torch,” and remarks by Alan Guskin—student leader in 1960 who, with others, advocated for the creation of the Peace Corps—and Peace Corps Director Aaron Williams. Read about it here: <http://bit.ly/hShLAV>

- Dedication of a historical marker and a second ceremony at the Michigan Union, including remarks by the second Peace Corps Director Jack Vaughn, and Kennedy aide and early architect of the Peace Corps, Harris Wofford.

NPCA staff provided extensive blog coverage from Michigan on our website. And be sure to check out our gallery of Michigan photos on our Facebook page, www.facebook.com/peacecorpsconnect.

A Cornell PhD, Generous Funding, and a Half Year in Africa.



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EXTENDING SERVICE THROUGH ADVOCACY

We have an obligation to exercise our citizenship.

by David P. Magnani

After my third year of teaching science to Sierra Leonean kids, I was trying to decide what my next step would be. Should I go to Mozambique and join the armed struggle against apartheid? I mentioned this to some of my Sierra Leonean friends. They chuckled at the thought of my picking up a gun—figuring I would become my own first victim—shooting my own foot by accident. “No, man,” they said. “Africans will fight that fight. But you, you can do something for the children of Sierra Leone when you leave here that we cannot do.”

Intrigued, I asked them to continue. They explained how they were paid 8 cents an hour to dig bauxite out of the mines here, yet their country received very little for their minerals. In South Africa, American companies were benefiting economically from apartheid. U.S. trade policies, and Sierra Leone’s debt burdens to the World Bank and the IMF, forced them to convert food production to cash crops so that they could pay their foreign debt in U.S. currency. In addition to agricultural mechanization in the U.S., American farm subsidies made it harder for them to get a decent price for those cash crops. Much of our development assistance, while appreciated, was either ill-conceived or ill-executed, because there was too much control by non-Africans. Today, they might mention the effects of droughts and floods due to climate change as well.

“No, man, you need to go back to the U.S. and try to help Americans better understand Africa and build policies which are more supportive of Africans. If you are serious about helping, that is your role.”

“Sure,” I thought to myself, “I think it would be easier to go and get myself shot.” But I understood the accuracy and the gravity of their observations. “To teach, to learn, and come home and teach.” Without careful thought, structure or funding, that Third Goal of Peace Corps has, for nearly a half century, been the orphan child of Peace Corps, not by intent, but by effect. The National Peace Corps Association—along with its member groups—has over the years worked valiantly hard on the Third Goal, with official Peace Corps displaying apathy or even resistance to its efforts. That has thankfully changed recently, but resources for the Third Goal are still a real problem.

One essential aspect of the Third Goal is global education: helping our fellow Americans understand, respect and appreciate the peoples of economically “developing” countries. (Many are already “developed” beyond us in various ways.) However, this is not enough. Unless we take the time to study and learn the effects of our collective action on those we may never meet, we risk bringing great harm to those for whom we have good and generous feelings. Intelligent action requires real study

of trade policy, environmental law, development assistance, military policy, human rights and more. It cannot be a “hobby,” engaged in simply because one has a “taste” for it.

So often I hear “Oh, I don’t get involved in politics,” said with pride rather than embarrassment. One cannot choose to be involved in politics, or not involved. Every action we take has consequences for others we may never meet. Neutrality is not available. What is optional is consciousness. What is optional is active engagement. That is a choice.

Those of us who have worked with and seen the effects of centuries of Western policies, both good and bad, on the people we worked with during Peace Corps service have a special opportunity, and a special obligation. The Third Goal requires us to come home and teach. Yes. That includes teaching policy makers. The decisions of our President and our Congress are often life and death decisions for our host country brethren.

When the viscous civil war in Sierra Leone was being sustained by blood diamonds, some of us from the Friends of Sierra Leone asked Sierra Leonean child victims of amputation to come to Congress to tell their story. It was arranged and they did. Soon after, the Blood Diamonds bill was signed into law. It banned purchase of diamonds in the U.S. that had been sold to pay for arms in that conflict and others. Within months the diamond flow began to dry up and soon the flow of arms to the rebels. Nigerian troops and other factors were key, but the Blood Diamond Act played its part in ending that war and Returned Peace Corps Volunteers had played a critical role in its passage.



Today, there are many opportunities to make a difference in the lives of those vulnerable populations around the world with whom we have had a special and personal relationship. It is true that, while in service, it was right to remain rigorously apolitical. But our obligation shifts when we come home. We aren't just Americans—we are American *citizens with unique experience afforded us by our government*. We have an obligation to exercise our citizenship actively and to put to use the understanding we had gained through Peace Corps service. Like all human assets, political voice atrophies from underuse.

Fortunately, the National Peace Corps Association is making involvement relatively easy. If you go to www.peacecorpsconnect.com and click on the *Advocacy* tab, you will find opportunities to work with other RPCVs across the country to promote a stronger Peace Corps or universal basic education or climate change or many other issues that directly affect our countries of service and their people. There is no substitute for action. There is no delegating our citizenship to others. Over the long term there is no more powerful way to positively affect the lives of those we love and have loved in our countries of service, than to get involved in constructive advocacy. It makes a difference. You can too.

David P. Magnani (Sierra Leone 68-71, Kenya staff 82-83), a former Massachusetts State Senator, is now Executive Director of the Massachusetts Nonprofit Network and Northeast Board Representative to the National Peace Corps Association.



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EDUCATION FOR ALL

The time for action is now

by Rep. Nita Lowey

Right now, hundreds of Peace Corps Volunteers (PCVs) are in classrooms around the world educating thousands of young individuals hoping to build better lives for themselves and their communities. Perhaps more than any other segment of the population, Returned Peace Corps Volunteers (RPCVs) and serving PCVs understand the benefits of quality education in every corner of the world.

Basic education is not just a building block or a luxury; it is the cornerstone of free societies and an essential part of the solution to the global recession. No country has reached sustained economic growth without achieving near universal primary education, a fact that underscores the importance of education as a core underpinning of long-term sustainable growth and increased stability.

As the Chairwoman of the Appropriations Subcommittee that funds foreign aid, I have worked tirelessly to bolster worldwide education, increasing funding for basic education from \$100 million in fiscal year 2001 to a high of \$925 million in fiscal year 2010. But money alone will not ensure that the millions of children currently out of school have access to a quality basic education.

That's why I greatly appreciate the support of the National Peace Corps Association, Returned Peace Corps Volunteers, and individual Volunteers in promoting the Education for All goals, as well as my bill, the Education for All Act (HR 5117). This bill lays out an aggressive strategy for the U.S. to work with other countries, multilateral institutions and civil society to assist developing countries to provide



At a press conference earlier this year, Rep. Lowey introduced the Education for All Act.

children with a quality basic education, strengthen educational systems, and promote education as the foundation for community development.

The bill supports programs to train teachers, build schools, develop effective curricula, and increase access to school lunch and health programs. The bill also introduces a concept I care deeply about called Communities of Learning. As PCVs know well, schools can bring together parents, students, teachers and government officials to lift up whole communities through education, health, nutrition, adult literacy, business training, and democracy education.

Because over half of children out of school live in countries in conflict, the EFA bill supports efforts to ensure a continuity of educational activities and provide safe places to learn by promoting out-of-school programs and flexible-hour schooling during conflict

and humanitarian crises.

Additionally, in order to better streamline U.S. government assistance, the bill would create an Education for All Coordinator position to improve inter-agency coordination—including with the Peace Corps—and increase effectiveness of U.S. government education assistance. The bill also mandates that the President develop a comprehensive and integrated strategy to promote universal basic education.

While U.S. bilateral assistance for education has accomplished a great deal, the needs remain great. More international cooperation and collaboration is required to get 72 million out-of-school children into classrooms. To that end, the bill calls on the U.S. to support a multilateral education initiative like the Fast Track Initiative or a Global Fund for Education.

The time for action is now. Empowering young people with the knowledge and skills they need to drive their own futures, break the cycle of poverty and create politically and economically stable societies is only possible through improved educational systems. Passage of the EFA bill would provide the framework to ensure that this transformation takes place.

Again, I thank you for your efforts on the ground to educate children and your advocacy and support at home to move the EFA bill forward and reach our goal of getting every child a quality education and a foundation for creating a better, safer world.

Nita Lowey represents New York's 18th Congressional district, serving since 1993. She previously represented the 20th district from 1989 to 1993.

TELL YOUR STORIES

Peace Corps Volunteers are our finest ambassadors

by Sen. Johnny Isakson

It is an honor for me to have the opportunity to pen an article for *WorldView* magazine, a periodical dedicated to reaching out to the Peace Corps community at home and abroad. The Peace Corps' mission has three admirable goals, and the first two focus on assisting the people in other countries and promoting a better understanding of America to these people. I would like to take this opportunity to focus on the third goal of the Peace Corps: Helping promote a better understanding of other peoples on the part of Americans.

The men and women who serve in the Peace Corps work to build a better life for the individuals and communities around the world that they serve. The Volunteers' hard work and service help foster a better understanding and a more positive, long-lasting impression of Americans. The Peace Corps continues to excel in its work abroad, but I believe there is more work to be done right here in the United States. The work a Volunteer does here in America to advance the acceptance and understanding of other peoples is equally as important as the work they do abroad.

On many of my official travels overseas, I make it a point to meet with Peace Corps Volunteers serving in the countries that I am visiting. Most recently, in May 2009, I met with Peace Corps Volunteers in Kenya, Tanzania and Rwanda. It was an amazing experience for me to hear about the projects these volunteers were working on, the people they were helping in the villages where they served, and their thoughts on life after the Peace Corps. In particular, in Tanzania I met a married couple



Sen. Isakson (second from left) meets with Peace Corps Volunteers in Kenya. Joining Isakson on the trip was Sen. Bob Corker (second from right).

Sen. Isakson's Office

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Sen. Isakson's Office

Sen. Isakson visits a Tanzanian classroom.

who had retired from teaching and decided to join the Peace Corps. They had dedicated their careers to service by teaching America's students, and then committed their early years of retirement to serving the less fortunate in Tanzania. Although this couple set out to serve other people, they made it clear that they felt enormous personal gains as they began to understand this village and understand the beauty of its people. Stories such as this one need to be told back home.

The Peace Corps and its network of Volunteers—nearly 200,000 have served since 1961—have such a wonderful story that often is not told or heard back in the United States. I believe better outreach and communication by Returned Peace

Corps Volunteers and the Peace Corps could make a difference in the hearts and minds of the American public.

It is very important that our returning Peace Corps Volunteers and all the members of the greater Peace Corps community tell your stories and promote your experiences upon your return to the United States. The job of a Peace Corps Volunteer should not end the moment you return home following your service, but rather it should be a lifelong commitment to improve the world and its people. Not only will this promote the work of the Peace Corps to future generations, but it will also educate the American public on how important an investment the Peace Corps is to the United States. Peace Corps Volunteers are some

of our finest ambassadors for the United States to some of the most remote places across the globe. Just as important as educating the people in these remote villages, it is crucial that you educate your American peers about your experiences and the culture of the country in which you served, so that all Americans can be better citizens of the world.

It is my hope that as the Peace Corps celebrates its 50th anniversary in 2011, that more Americans have the opportunity to learn more about the Peace Corps and the work its volunteers do to better the lives of individuals throughout the world.

Johnny Isakson represents Georgia in the U.S. Senate and serves on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

THE SECOND TOUGHEST JOB YOU'LL EVER LOVE

Two years in Ethiopia set the stage for a life of public service

by Rep. John Garamendi

As I look back to prepare to write this article I realize that my journey to the halls of Congress began on my family ranch near Mokelumne Hill, a small community in California's Mother Lode country. I quickly learned about community service from my parents, who were constantly involved in the PTA, Boy Scouts, and local community club. Having only five kids in my eighth grade class and three rooms in the school that my great-grandfather helped build in the 1890s made it clear that if something was to get done, we all had to help. On my way to becoming an Eagle Scout, we had the annual duty of cleaning two historic gold rush cemeteries. Service often meant hard work.

But the real lesson in service was taught to me in 1965 by my girlfriend at the University of California Berkeley, where I had some success as a football player. In our senior year, I asked her to marry me. She replied, "I would love to marry you, but you're heading for the NFL, and I am going into the Peace Corps."

She committed to the cause following President Kennedy's 1962 commencement speech at Memorial Stadium. She heard his call to service and decided then and there to join the Peace Corps. I joined her.

September of 1966, nine months into our marriage, we arrived in Metu, a village in southwestern Ethiopia. Thirty kilometers from the grass airstrip and an endless muddy road, we found our new home: tin roof, dirt floor, wattle walls, outhouse out back, and unlimited opportunity to serve. Teaching seventh and eighth grade students and women's family health education, digging wells, offering small



Peace Corps Volunteers Patti and John Garamendi in Ethiopia.

Rep. Garamendi's office



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Peace Corps will be featured at the Smithsonian Folklife Festival in Washington, D.C., this summer.

This free event is open to the public. Check out details on our website and find other events occurring across the nation throughout the year.



Peace Corps 50th Anniversary
1961-2011

50

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1

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pox vaccinations, building remote schools, setting up coffee co-ops—every day filled with helping the community, building friendships, and setting the pace for a life of service. As the Peace Corps motto goes, “It’s the toughest job you’ll ever love.”

We witnessed good people needlessly suffer and die in Ethiopia. Returning to America, we experienced culture shock at Harvard Business School. Upon graduation, Patti and I returned to California with a sense of purpose. We decided that a career in public service, working to develop policies that create social and economic justice and lift people out of poverty would be our life’s path.

Patti returned to Ethiopia in 1994 as the Associate Director of the Peace Corps, restarting the long dormant program in that country to give a new generation the chance to serve. She then went on to become Deputy Administrator of the USDA’s Foreign Agriculture Service. I served in the California Senate, as the statewide elected Insurance Commissioner, Deputy Secretary of the U.S. Department of Interior, California Lieutenant Governor and now a member of Congress.

I am often asked, “Isn’t it terribly hard to get things done?” Of course it is but like ending poverty, creating social justice, educating children and providing health care in Ethiopia in the 1960s, achieving those same goals in the halls of Congress is a tough task. But I love it because each bill, each committee hearing can advance the goal, and we have made progress.

For forty years America tried to advance universal health care. This session, on my third day in office following my special election in November 2009, I was proud to join a slim majority in the House to pass historic health care reform that extends coverage to almost every American.

War or the Peace Corps way, what will be America’s choice? I am in Congress now adding my voice and vote to a small but growing group who refuse to fund a continuation of the Afghan war. I believe it is better



In Ethiopia, 1968.

Rep. Garamendi's office

to pull our troops out and focus like a laser on the true terrorists and the causes of terrorism. We will spend over \$120 billion this year on the Afghan war. What if we used that money for social, educational, health care and economic development in the developing world? Those who read the *WorldView* magazine know from their own experience the answer.

Expanding the Peace Corps, reducing our reliance on the military option, and expanding our humanitarian, social justice and economic development role in the world will advance our cause of peace far faster than 130,000 troops in Afghanistan.

Many Returned Peace Corps Volunteers know the fragile edge of life as the fickle weather patterns of the world bring drought, floods and uncertainty to the lives of billions of people in this world. It is now certain that climate change caused by the world’s consumption of carbon-based fuels will create even greater uncertainty in weather patterns and create new conflicts and even greater human suffering. America’s energy policy remains stuck in the 1960s with a continued reliance on coal and oil. As the energy and climate debate continues in Congress

I continue to be reminded of the 1984 famine in Ethiopia. Patti and I worked in the famine camps, and raised relief money. We saw the suffering, the deaths and the civil war that engulfed Ethiopia. By all accounts vast regions of the world will face similar famines as the weather patterns change.

Can America finally put in place an energy policy that moves us away from coal and oil? I must answer yes and vote for such changes, because our Peace Corps experience gave me the opportunity to experience the reality of famine and war.

Patti and I decided to go join the Peace Corps and go to Africa 45 years ago. Those two years in Metu set the foundation for our public lives and today, as I ponder the upcoming vote in committee or on the floor of Congress, the toughest job I have ever loved directly influences the second toughest job I now love.

John Garamendi (Ethiopia 66-68) represents California’s 10th Congressional district. He was the California State Insurance Commissioner from 1991 to 1995 and 2003 to 2007, and the Lieutenant Governor of California from 2007 until his election to Congress.

TAKING IT TO THE HILL

RPCV staffers bring their unique perspective to Capitol Hill

by Jonathan Pearson

A few years back, a young woman I knew was preparing to enter graduate school for public policy at a prestigious school in the upper Midwest. When the admissions officer outlined the rigorous schedule and requirements she would face, the applicant seemed unfazed—perhaps even relieved—at the anticipated workload.

The admissions officer correctly identified the applicant's current occupation: "Oh...you must be a Capitol Hill staffer."

The operation of our Congress is fueled by the dedicated work of public servants who staff the offices of Capitol Hill and work in an atmosphere that is long on hours and short on compensation. More than two dozen—likely more—Returned Peace Corps Volunteers (RPCVs) contribute to the legislative process serving as Capitol Hill staff. For some, it was Peace Corps that influenced their decision to continue in the field of public service.

"Peace Corps service opened my eyes to the difference I could make in this world," says Dan Zell (Philippines 99-00), a Fellow with the American Association for the Advancement of Science who is working in the office of Rep. Betsy Markey.

Service in Mali between 2006 and 2007 was also an eye-opener for Michele Scarbrough, Legislative Correspondent for Rep. Pete Stark. "Seeing villagers work day and night just to provide food for their families, children dying of preventable illness, a general lack of education, sanitation and access to health care...gave me the passion, determination and ambition to pursue a career in public service. Originally I thought I wanted

to do international development work, but once I realized the influence of our policy decisions made at home, I knew I needed to come back."

Perspective. That's a word a number of staffers use when asked how Peace Corps informs their work on Capitol Hill. Scarbrough says living in one of the world's poorest nations gave her a perspective not shared by many in the U.S. From his role as staff for the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming, Jonathan Phillips (Mongolia 03-05) concurs. "I think you need a global perspective to be really interested in and understand the energy and climate challenges our nation and the world are facing." Phillips says Peace Corps provided an introduction to that perspective.

Foreign affairs is part of the issue portfolio of Will White (Dominican Republic 67-69), Senior Advisor to Sen. Jeff Merkley. "Peace Corps service gave me first-hand experience in a developing country. My Peace Corps service is directly relevant in helping me to understand the impact of various U.S. policies."

While public opinion of congress is near historic lows, many of the RPCV staffers maintain a positive outlook on the work they do and challenges they confront. Some of their Hill experiences are not unlike those they had in the Peace Corps.

Phillips remembers first going to Mongolia and "thinking these people have nothing in common with me. I wondered how I would be able to connect with them. Of course, all volunteers know how those barriers are broken down and how we usually end up finding far more similarities than differences." He says on the

very best days on Capitol Hill, that's what it's like with Democrats and Republicans.

It's also about the Peace Corps ideals of listening, understanding and action, according to Benjamin Nathanson (Nicaragua 05-07), Health Legislative Assistant for RPCV Sen. Chris Dodd. "Every single day, I learn about critical health issues from constituents and advocates. Their voices are inspiring. We work to translate their ideas into innovative policy solutions."

Along with U.S. policies that impact the world, RPCVs on Capitol Hill are enthusiastic ambassadors for the Peace Corps. But a national constituency is key. "Nothing worth anything gets done here without a very strong, engaged base of support led by tireless advocates communicating the message," says Phillips.

"Do your homework," advises Nathanson. "The most effective advocates know the member's record on a specific issue and can project the impact of the proposed policy on the member's state or district. The more legwork you do on your end, the easier it will be for staff and the members to digest and readily consider."

And, says Will White, "Know your facts, be able to concisely present your story in a compelling way to Hill staffers, and close by summarizing one or two specific actions you want their boss to take."

Jonathan Pearson is the Advocacy Coordinator for the National Peace Corps Association.

WE MUST DO MORE

RPCVs who have served in Muslim countries need to speak about Islam

by Caroline Brown

Recently, at our favorite Malaysian restaurant in Southern California, I read a travel poster, which stated: "Islam is the official religion of Malaysia but many other religions are freely practiced here." Islam is an overlay on the already existing culture and what we see and fail to understand of Islam is many times cultural and not religious.

My husband and I served in the Peace Corps in Malaysia, from 1968 to 1970. We wanted to serve in South America, an area we knew something about. Instead, when our training program was transferred from Ecuador we headed to the library to find Malaysia on the map—and found a German atlas. We located Java. We were close.

Serving in Kedah, Malaysia was a great gift of learning and understanding this part of the world. Our town was predominately Chinese but everyone moved easily between its many cultures and regions: Malay Muslims, Tamil Hindus, Sikhs and Chinese from many cultures and religions of China. The Malay teachers, students and their parents were a major part of our lives for those two years. We were learning everything about each other's cultures but we did not participate in their religious observances in the local mosque. Looking back, I can say I don't know why, but now I can see that as a missed opportunity.

Living in such a multicultural society, there inevitably were many things that were done by some and absolutely not by others. We quickly adopted the local response: "*Tidak adak saya.*" "It is not my custom." Everyone was happy to let it go if you did not wish to eat something



The Putra mosque in Putrajaya, Malaysia.

unusual and they would kindly make excuses for you. We moved smoothly between the many customs we internalized during Peace Corps training.

After the attacks on the World Trade Center, I put on a Malay dress and gave a slide presentation to the local Kiwanis Club. It was my intention to give a picture of Malays and Islam in the most non-sensational way I could. The talk was well received. I need to do this again. We all need to tell of our Peace Corps experience as part of our continuing obligation to world peace, and to share our experience in the Islamic world.

The rest of the world knows so much about us—and it is not always the best. One of our first experiences over 40 years ago still brings tears to my eyes as I look back on how Americans was seen then.

We were the guests for dinner in a Malay teacher's home. We sat on the floor in the living room, visiting while final preparations were made. His young daughter sat to his side and she seemed to be hiding. People are shy

no matter where you are in the world but when I said hello and she did not answer, her father said she was afraid. She had heard that Americans do not like people with dark skin.

Today, this shy girl would be saying she had heard Americans do not like Muslims. We cannot let this continue. Returned Peace Corps Volunteers from Islamic countries have to speak up. Many of us lead very busy lives but we made a personal commitment years ago to the advancement of world peace. We think globally as we work locally to influence those around us every day. Can we again move out farther and be more effective? I know we can. I know we must.

If you would like to contact the author and work on forming a group of RPCVs for Understanding Islam, e-mail: madresierra@earthlink.net.

Caroline Brown (Malaysia 68-70) is a retired high school language and dance teacher, currently involved with open space and oak woodland conservation.

ADVOCACY TALES

You never know when you'll sit next to a Senator

by Jonathan Pearson

Over the years, from places far and near, members of the Peace Corps community have been engaged in a wide range of advocacy initiatives. We asked some of them to share their favorite stories...

On a DC flight in March 2009, I was assigned seat A1. On boarding, I clumsily stepped around the gentleman in A2. Sitting down, a double take—Sen. Harry Reid. I was flying to an NPCA board meeting and we fell into talking about Peace Corps and his children's mission work in Ecuador where I had been a PCV. He emphasized his active support for the agency and I mentioned the MorePeaceCorps campaign. It was a thrill to learn later that following NPCA's concerted outreach campaign—he signed a 'dear colleague' letter for Peace Corps support and later that year helped to pass a landmark Peace Corps spending bill.

Ben Bellows (Ecuador 97-00)

.....

I was on a Congressional fact finding mission to Nicaragua in 1984 with Congressman Leon Panetta and four other members of Congress. We were to meet with President Daniel Ortega, the Marxist fighting our Contras, and I was the translator. After the third or fourth day, Ortega asked me where I had learned my Spanish...when I said I had been a Volunteer in Colombia he stopped the meeting and asked me into his office! He put on his New York Mets cap, took out his glove and ball and started talking. "Tell President Reagan that I want to request Peace Corps Volunteers to

be returned to Nicaragua." A Marxist president is asking this! I reported this conversation to Peace Corps Director Rupee, who shared it with the President. Peace Corps is still serving and Ortega is President again.

Bob Arias (Colombia 64-66; staff Colombia (68-73), Argentina and Uruguay (93-95)

.....

As President of RPCV/W (formerly Action Alumni Assn. of the Greater Washington Area) and 20th Anniversary Chair of NPCA (formerly National Council of Returned Peace Corps Volunteers), I testified before the Senate Appropriations Committee in May 1981. Since I had never testified before, I began by thanking Senator Kasten's staff "for telling me what to do." Senator Kasten laughingly responded, "That is the same job they do for me." Maybe this humor influenced the Senate to approve all three of my Peace Corps budget requests.

Karen Keefer (Nigeria 66-68; staff Liberia (68) and (US 77-79)

.....

While posted at the Ministry of Housing and Physical Planning I successfully advocated for Nepali women to have a voice in the formulation of the national housing policy. At the time the ministry was working with a UN-Habitat consultant team. That [inclusion] provided a new dimension to formulating a housing policy for Nepal. This was the first time in the history of Nepal that women were formally invited to a ministry to participate in policy level discussions.

Greg Baer (Nepal 90-92)

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ADVOCACY IN ACTION

Over the years, NPCA and its advocates have held thousands of meetings with congressional offices to advocate on Peace Corps and other issues of global concern.

The photo gallery below highlights some of our more recent meetings.



NPCA President Kevin Quigley (l) thanks Congressman John Kline (R-MN) in 2007 for leadership in removing Peace Corps references from military recruitment legislation.



Philippines RPCV Veneeth Iyengar (r) meets his Senator, David Vitter (R-LA) during the 2010 National Day of Action.



NPCA advocacy intern Molly Carney adds her voice in support of the Peace Corps during a meeting with her Senator, Sherrod Brown (D-OH).



RPCV Senator Chris Dodd (D-CT) with NPCA Director's Circle member Ron Boring at NPCA's 2008 Capitol Hill briefing.



RPCV Congressman Sam Farr (D-CA) is honored in 2009 by the RPCVs of Washington DC for his leadership on Capitol Hill.



RPCV Mona Melanson (l) meets her Congresswoman, Susan Davis (D-CA) during NPCA's Advocacy Day in 2006.



Illinois Congressman Bill Foster (2nd from right) signed a 2010 House letter supporting Peace Corps funding after meeting advocates Rob Marshall, Rachel Shattuck and Mike Wood.



During a visit to Washington, RPCVs Jim and Pat McGeorge scheduled a visit with Congressman Harry Mitchell (D-AZ).



Peace Corps Pioneer and NPCA Advisor Harris Wofford with Congresswoman Betty McCollum (D-MN) in 2009.



RPCV Congressman Mike Honda (D-CA) with Kevin Quigley and NPCA Board President Jan Guifarro during our 2008 Director's Circle Capitol Hill briefing.

NPCA staff and supporters of the establishment of a Peace Corps commemorative thank RPCV Congressman Tom Petri (R-WI) for his leadership on the issue.



Colorado RPCVs Mike and Ann Moore meet then-Senator Ken Salazar during NPCA's 2005 National Day of Action.



Congressman Brad Miller (D-NC) attends the 2009 Africa Night gathering of the North Carolina Peace Corps Association and announces he will co-sponsor Peace Corps funding legislation.



RPCV Dave Hohl (center) meets with Senators John Barasso and Mike Enzi after traveling from Wyoming to participate in the 2010 National Day of Action.



RPCV Marie Zezula meets Congressman Dave Reichert (R-WA) in 2008 – only two weeks after returning from service in Morocco!



Senator Tom Harkin (D-IA) meets RPCV Chesley Prince (r) during NPCA's 2006 Advocacy Day.



(r to l) Senators Kit Bond (R-MO) and Chris Dodd (D-CT) were honored by Harris Wofford and members of NPCA's Director's Circle in 2010.



RPCV Jamie Thornberry meets her Congressman, Vic Snyder (D-AR), during NPCA's 2007 Advocacy Day.

PISCOH DON KAM BACK NA SALONE!

Six years of advocacy by the Friends of Sierra Leone pays off

by Judy Figi and Jim Sheahan

The Peace Corps has a long history in Sierra Leone, first arriving in 1962 with 37 secondary school teachers. Volunteers served the country in consecutive years until 1994, when the program was closed because of a civil war. During those three decades, more than 3,400 Volunteers served there in agriculture, education, and health-related programs.

This past June Sierra Leone welcomed Peace Corps again, the first time in sixteen years. Once again the government identified education as the most pressing need and Volunteers will serve as English, math, and science teachers to help fill a shortage of qualified individuals. Peace Corps Response will also maintain a presence. Having already served as Volunteers, these contributors will arrive at their posts already in possession of the appropriate technical and cross-cultural skills needed to make an important contribution.

Friends of Sierra Leone (FoSL) members worked diligently for six years to make the re-entry happen. In 2004 we held our annual meeting in Freetown. For most of us in attendance

it was the first time back in many years and we were devastated to see the destruction that had resulted from a ten-year war. Returning to the U.S. we felt frustrated by what we had seen and the stories we had heard. We knew the return of Peace Corps could play a major role in the country's efforts to rebuild. Our plan to achieve that goal began that year with a visit to Peace Corps headquarters in Washington, D.C. We were told many countries were requesting Peace Corps assistance and budget constraints posed a major obstacle to Volunteers returning to any of those countries.

We then began a campaign asking our members to contact and visit their Congressional delegation requesting that they support the return of Peace Corps to Sierra Leone. Members of our Advocacy Committee made numerous visits to Capitol Hill. Among our strongest allies was Senator Russ Feingold of Wisconsin, Chairman of the Africa Subcommittee of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. He was particularly active on behalf of our objective. He and Senator Johnny Isakson of Georgia, the Ranking

Minority Member, wrote letters urging Peace Corps to re-establish a volunteer program in Sierra Leone.

Numerous FoSL meetings with Peace Corps staff and visits with key senators and representatives were essential in our campaign. Over a six-year period, dozens of letters were generated by these members of Congress to the Peace Corps Director requesting a return of the Volunteers. Also essential was our effort to include Sierra Leoneans in our visits. Sierra Leonean members of the Board joined us on numerous occasions to give credibility to our statements regarding needs. Even the Vice President of Sierra Leone visited and met with the Peace Corps Director requesting that Volunteers return. This was followed up with a letter from the President of Sierra Leone asking for a new Peace Corps program.

Throughout this time we met on numerous occasions with the Sierra Leone Desk Officer at the State Department. And, importantly, we maintained contact with the Sierra Leone's ambassadors to the U.S. who met directly with Peace Corps officials requesting a return of volunteers to



Peace Corps trainees working with teachers at Friends of Sierra Leone/Schools for Salone sponsored teacher workshop in Bo, Sierra Leone this past July.

Friends of Sierra Leone

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Sierra Leone. Two U.S. ambassadors to Sierra Leone visited Peace Corps headquarters and spoke on behalf of FoSL whenever they were in Washington.

Peace Corps was obviously concerned about security. To assure that this was no longer an impediment to Peace Corps returning, two separate assessment teams were sent to the country. Both reported favorably on conditions there. Several FoSL members who made trips to Sierra Leone for Teacher Training programs brought back dozens of letters from Sierra Leoneans, including government officials, school personnel and health care personnel asking for Peace Corps' return. These were all forwarded to Peace Corps in Washington.

Our advocacy efforts included much frustration, but with persistence they finally paid off. Peace Corps is back in Sierra Leone. Thirty-seven secondary school teachers are presently working in various schools and the government has already requested more volunteers.

Judy Figi (64-67) and Jim Sheahan (61-63) are Friends of Sierra Leone board members.

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NOTHING SAYS HOME LIKE HOMEMADE

The riches and rewards of sharing the world of the kitchen

by Natalie Montanaro

Since beginning my journey into the Peace Corps, in a new environment and a constantly changing future, I've learned more about myself than I ever expected. I've learned that hard work doesn't necessarily entail climbing mountains (although I've done that here, too) and that beautiful memories are being given to me around every corner each and every day. But aside from that, I have also felt compelled to bring to my students some kind of evidence of that person I used to be in order to relate on a more tangible level what it is that drives us all, begs us all, to know about the rest of the world. One of the ways in which I have been able to create a balance for myself between the past and the everyday life of the here and now, is through the art of the kitchen.

Once a month, in the *bucataria* (kitchen) provided by my *gazda* (host family) here in the Romanian countryside, ten or more of my

English language students from grades 4 through 7 experience the diversity of our world's cuisine while learning some hands-on cooking basics: the proper terms and tools to use, food safety, preservation techniques, how to set an entertaining table and maintain the conversation (in English of course) to complement it. My students have learned the difference between "blend" and "fold;" the way to separate eggs and whip them into needed stages; new words like "spatula" and "tablespoon," "colander" and "sieve"—as well as about spices and herbs which can enhance all their food experiences far beyond the addition of too much salt. They can chop, cut, slice, section, julienne, and pare anything and everything in record time using the sharpest of knives, all by themselves. What precision! What promise!

But there is more to these lessons. They also learn about cooperation, timing, organization, planning, how to relax when life is making

you crazy, their own personal tastes, self-forgiveness, and humor. They learn that they are truly budding artisans, scholars, and definitely, most definitely, going places—even if the tips of the meringues occasionally become a bit toastier than expected.

The children in the class ask many questions, work as a team, wear their aprons with pride, and enjoy the "different than Romanian but still quite delectable" food which they have made themselves, along with a bit of dancing and singing after the required clean-up to round out the afternoon. Every aspect of the dish (we usually make three or four each class), from selecting the right ingredients—all of which are available locally—to preparing the dishes economically and with a streamlined approach, are covered, from the start of the class to the finish of the last bite on their plates. And there are always calls for seconds.

The children now have a new way to understand what they read because



Students in Montanaro's International Cooking with English class prepare food for a Derby Day-themed picnic.



they can taste the difference, literally. And they are using their own talents to do it.

I see a future where these same students with their family and friends continue these methods and make something new and unexpectedly wonderful in their own kitchens. We are also in the process of writing a cookbook about our experiences together filled with the recipes we have made. Some of them come from the "theme" classes we have had so far such as "Thanksgiving Fare," "British Teatime," and "Southern Goodness." The International Cooking in English team is now evolving and thriving here in the countryside of Romania. It is one of the most satisfying and gratifying of all of my secondary projects here.

I must give credit also to the folks here in Brusturoasa, Mr. and Mrs. Ion Zamfir, who have been involved with Slow Food Romania for the past several years, and who so kindly welcomed me into their own kitchen to witness their Romanian cooking. Our October cooking class, "The Last of the Summer Vine," was held at the new community/environmental education facility in the village that they, as part of the organization Prietenii Pamantului in Galati, Romania, helped to build. Not only are they wonderful friends now, but they truly, as I do, have a passion for great foods, conversation, organic farm freshness, and the riches and rewards that come from teaching others the skills to last a lifetime.

Riches. Yes, we are filled with them at each meal together. Rewards. Like grains of salt in a shaker bigger than the country of Romania. And counting.

Natalie Montanaro is a currently serving Peace Corps volunteer teaching English as a foreign language in Romania. She is from Charleston, SC, and has taught English in the Peoples Republic of China, is an avid writer, loves photography, and now looks forward to continuing into the next phases of her long-promised Peace Corps journey as a member of the "Kennedy Generation."

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PRESERVING FRIENDSHIP

Sustenance of a different sort

by Bonnie Barron

It told my wife about the time you called your mom crying ‘Mommy, Mommy, I want to come home and eat peanut butter....wahhh!’,” my language tutor, Ashot, laughingly informed me over the phone.

First of all, I don’t call my mom, “Mommy.” And second of all...oh, I’ll get him back.

“Well, I told your wife about the time you ate all of the walnut preserves,” I smugly countered.

Armenian walnut preserves contain whole walnuts, shell and all. The process of preparing them requires soaking and washing them repeatedly, as their outer green layers soften to chewy black. In the jar they rest in spiced syrup that resembles crude oil.

“Which time?” Ashot asked.

Which time? There was more than one time?



Bonnie Barron

The author’s friend, Ashot. There is a pitcher of rose hip juice on the table. The food is for a lunch that his family prepared in Spitak during her visit in May 2010.

“When you were a kid, and you ate every jar your family put away for the winter, and they found the spoon lying on the shelf!” Every family I knew in Armenia had jars of fruits and vegetables hidden away somewhere dark. I could picture light flooding from the cellar door as Ashot’s grandmother swung it open, rays of sun spotlighting rows of glass containers with shallow sugary rings at the bottom. I imagined the spoon lying in a pool of sticky syrup, maybe sealed to the shelf with time.

“I already told her that,” he boasted.

“Okay, okay. That’s all right. Just wait, I have plenty of secrets I can tell her.”

This is reminiscing at \$.24 a minute, international long distance.

Nearly four years have passed since the end of my Peace Corps service in Armenia. A week before this telephone conversation, I had visited Armenia for the second time as a former Volunteer. Some things had changed, though I wouldn’t say many. One change was that my friend Ashot had married Hermine. Since Hermine and I met for the first time during my trip, I just began to share with her the crazy stories I collected about my friend.



Bonnie Barron

The author (on the left) with Hermine, Ashot’s wife. Visiting the Gosh monastery in Armenia, May 2010.

When Ashot was my language tutor, he once told me that Armenian people are friends for life. Part of being friends is taking on each other’s problems. If I stop to think about the walnut preserve incident, it becomes less a tale of boyhood mischievousness and perhaps something more telling about the difficulty of life in Spitak, Armenia. Was he truly hungry? Maybe this didn’t start as a story about a kid in a candy shop, but became an anecdote that only seems humorous looking back. As for me, I used to think longingly about eating



Walnut preserves (the mysterious looking black things on a plate.) Purchased in Glendale, California, which has a large Armenian community.

peanut butter in Armenia, as if it were a beloved staple back home. Peanut butter only occasionally made an appearance in my American diet. I didn't need it to get by in either country. I suppose my hunger was less about dietary sustenance, and more about cultural sustenance. But it is possible Ashot wasn't getting enough to eat and that's why he raided the walnut preserve stash.

I have to worry about these things. Ashot, his parents, his grandmother, and now Hermine, took me in as family. I know there haven't simply been rough patches here and there for them. It's been a rough road all along.

The Soviet Union fell apart.

An earthquake destroyed Spitak and its neighbors.

War raged with Azerbaijan.

It's heavy just starting the list. No wonder the people I meet in Spitak are weighed down by these events.

Friends may take on each other's problems, but they also help each other become lost in laughter. During that last trip to Armenia, I visited three homes in one day, and every host served homemade rose-hip juice. When I arrived at Ashot's house so that we could ride together to visit his cousin, I told him how many times I had the drink, and how it was really my least favorite.

"What do you wanna bet, your cousin serves us rosehip juice?"

"Oh no, he will not do that." Ashot assured me.

"Oh yes, he will. Every house I've been to has given me rose hip juice. Let's make a deal. \$20 says he will have the juice."

We shook on it, and Hermine was our witness. When we arrived

at Ashot's cousin's home the table was set with dessert and glasses. Then, out came the juice.

Mixed fruit punch in a carton.

Ashot and I started laughing and the hosts were confused. Setting aside the memories of difficulty and whatever stress each day presents, in the company of friends life is sweet. Hermine was appalled when Ashot took my money later, but when he gave her half, she was fine.

Back before bomb threats prompted the change in air travel rules concerning liquids, I brought a jar of walnut preserves home from Armenia. With the precious glass container in my carry-on bag, I approached the security checkpoint during a connection at Heathrow airport. I placed my bag on the conveyor belt, and after it passed through the machine, an agent pulled me and the bag aside. He carefully removed the jar and tilted it in every direction, trying to figure it out. I explained to him that I knew it looked strange, but it contained walnut preserves. Thankfully, the agent didn't question me, and sent me and my belongings on through. Of course the one jar only lasted so long. Now, whenever I visit a store with imported food from Russia or the Caucasus, I look for walnut preserves. I do this, not because I need some food to fill my stomach, but to fill my heart with that sweet reminder of my friends in Armenia.

Bonnie Barron was a Peace Corps Volunteer in Saramej, Armenia from 2004 to 2006. She team-taught English with the village English teacher. Ashot Ghochikyan was her language tutor for those two years, and is a lifelong friend.

Life is calling.



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HORSE, OF COURSE

A desire sated, an insight gained

by Luke Meinzen

As a child, I had little to do with horses outside the coin-operated mustang in the IGA. We were corn-fed van people—horses were for cowboys and adventurers, people I only saw and envied in movies.

At the University of Michigan, however, I had a history professor with a knack for storytelling. He described how a 13th century Mongol horseman would rotate through a string of mounts, survive on the blood and meat of the weakest, and remain constantly moving through conquest and the seasons.

Their brutal simplicity was an attractive counterpoint to my comfortable mundane middle-class Midwestern life. More importantly, the nomadic life of the Mongols was a more romantic version of my own childhood odyssey through a series

of small towns by moving van. The professor's story fused the idea of adventure, horseflesh, and my own life. I was mostly vegetarian, but I became perhaps the only student in Ann Arbor with an active desire to eat a horse.

In a pleasant accident, I went on to Mongolia as a Peace Corps Volunteer and arrived with a rucksack appropriately full of romantic ideas. Typically, the experience of volunteering promptly failed to cooperate with my expectations. I began my service in Khongor, rare among Mongolian towns because its fortunes are more apparently tied to settled agricultural and industrial labor than they are to herding. Surrounded by wheat and canola fields, Khongor drizzled realism on my romantic ideas.

My host family lived at the edge of town. They had jobs in town and

raised root vegetables. They had no horses of their own, only a few cows that required a minimum of wrangling. They did not plunder or conquer, but they did make the best yogurt I have ever tasted. We ate mutton and noodles, fried goat pies, and more dairy than I had seen since I learned to walk. It was hearty food that I was both grateful to share and quietly disappointed to see was not the exotic meat I had imagined. The better part of me appreciated the typically grey, beige and white food of Mongolia. Another part of me daydreamed about hummus and Cheez-It crackers. Another part I tried to ignore still wanted the red flesh and yellow fat of horsemeat.

By the end of the summer I spent with them, the desire to eat horse dulled until I did not even notice the first time I ate horse. While I

A horse skull on the banks of the Kharaa River in northern Mongolia's Darkhan-Uul province. Bleached bones are a common sight in Mongolia as herd animals and working horses are slaughtered, freeze, or, more rarely, die from natural causes.



Rob Shore, Mongolia 06-08



Rob Shore, Mongolia 06-08

Boldoo, a herder from the village of Battsengel in Arkhangai province, pulls alongside a Mitsubishi. Horseback is still a major mode of transport in the countryside, and horses even make their way onto busy streets in the capital or into the parking lot of Chinggis Khaan International Airport.

chewed a bit of dinner, one of the children pointed at my bowl and the rest galloped around the living room: horse. Through that very mundane granting of a private wish, I stopped wanting Mongolia to give me horse and started to take what it gave me.

Part of what it gave me, even living with a family in town, was a reverence for the living animal, a reverence that does not preclude the possibility of stir-fry. Even from the window of our house I could see that Mongolian horses work. Some are raised for racing, some for meat and milk. Horses depend upon their herders for forage, and the herders depend upon them to produce milk, meat, wool, and cashmere that still prop up Mongolia's diet and economy. Over years of co-dependence, the people and their mounts have developed a deep mutual respect that is even stronger for its roots in necessity—we may love dogs, but Mongolians still need their horses, and they love them accordingly.

When I went to my permanent placement in the desert, a woman named Oyunchimeg took over my cultural and culinary education—she cooked, I obediently peeled potatoes. Through her, though, I was able to request my own food from herders in the countryside. I asked for horse, and she called me ridiculous.

Our people, she told me, do eat horse, but we prefer to eat mutton or beef. Horse is for the winter.

But why? I asked.
Because the meat is oily.
It's bad for your stomach
in the summer.

Like the linguistic child I was, I continued asking why until we reached the limits of Oyunchimeg's significant patience. Then she gave me the best and simplest explanation. Because, she said, we do.

Like so much else about volunteering, that bit of common sense did not make immediate sense, and it certainly did not translate back home. I

shared my diet by email and return emails brought indignation and the electronic equivalent of retching. An ex-girlfriend from Kentucky who I hadn't heard from in months scolded me. My sister-in-law, whose family raises horses in Missouri, suggested—perhaps in jest—that she would stop speaking to me if I kept it up. From where I sat, I was being responsible and culturally appropriate, but, looking across the Pacific, I was being provocative at best and cruel at worst.

[For Americans, living horses, like dogs and cats, attract a significance and fondness that elevates them into the sparsely populated pantheon of exceptional, inedible animals. Other animals don't make the cut—we have no cowboy ballads about loyal sheep; we don't feed sugar cubes to turkeys or meaningfully stroke the necks of chickens, we don't develop attachments to oysters or teach shrimp to nuzzle our faces.]

Because is not a good enough a reason for *my people* to eat horse. Even to avid meat-eaters, horses in the United States are usually more than the sum of their potentially delicious parts. For all my frustration with Oyunchimeg, the reasons we don't eat horse—big eyes, sleekness, perceived loyalty, and the national myth of how they helped us "win" the West—can be reduced to *because we don't*.

Ultimately, we eat what we eat because we do, because we learned

to, and because the people around us ate it and still do. When I took my desire to eat a horse to Mongolia, I was playing the same part as my family. Mongolia, thankfully, was amenable to horse-eating, but I had taken one way of seeing the world and, for an embarrassingly long time, applied it to my new home. Before Mongolia, horse was a priority and a symbol. For Mongolians, horse is a somewhat unexciting seasonal food, as exciting as rhubarb and delicious as fruitcake. For the time I was there, horse became exactly what it needed to be—nothing special.

Luke Meinzen (Mongolia 06-09) has written for Gourmet and Salon: Food. He ate mutton, horse, and camel for three years in Mongolia and has since converted to prawns and falafel in Melbourne, Australia, where he works with both international volunteering and public housing programs.



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LESS COMIC STRIP, MORE JANE AUSTEN

An excerpt from The RPCV memoir, From Microsoft to Malawi

by Michael Buckler

What do poor people in Malawi have to offer us? Most people think nothing. I disagree. I love the amalgam of sights, smells, voices, and cultures that make Malawi such a paradoxical place. Simultaneously uplifting and depressing, welcoming and foreboding, liberating and oppressive, cruel yet undeniably vivacious, occasionally commonsensical yet vexingly illogical, Malawi gets in your blood, inhabits your dreams, and dares you to be smitten by its charms. No matter where you go, it never leaves you.

I wasn't always this way. Before joining the frontlines of the war on global poverty, I grew up in small-town America and did everything expected of me—church choir, Little League, Boy Scouts, good grades, prestigious schools, top jobs, and holy matrimony. But something was wrong: I was living everyone else's American dream. So, I walked away, determined to fulfill my destiny, my way. I haven't looked back.

Peace Corps Malawi was my calling. Without running water or electricity, I slept in a dilapidated brick house on the outskirts of a rural village, devoting two years of my life to gritty introspection, personal enlightenment and international development. I spoke local languages, cooked on open fires, drank from a nearby well, bathed out of a bucket, and shit in a hole in the ground. I was white, famous, and celibate—well, mostly celibate.

I tried my best to help. I taught at an underserved school alongside Malawian colleagues. I opened my home and heart to three of my Malawian students, whom I now consider sons. I hobnobbed with crooked politicians and starry-eyed development workers—watching aid money well spent and grossly wasted. Every day brought a blank slate of astonishment and toil, as I labored from the grassroots in nowhere Africa.

Welcomed as a Western sage, I was humbled by the wisdom of the plainspoken and powerless. Whether international aid has improved their lives is a matter of heated debate, but no one is asking them. The dominant voices are wealthy donors, government officials and international economists, not the intended recipients living in places you've never seen or heard of. But they, too, have insights and opinions that need to be considered. Indeed, they have as much to teach us as we have to teach them.

This is what I learned.

FROM CHAPTER 1:

Light seeps into the room from the cracked window, gingerly at first, and then more assertively with the rising sun. I cannot escape it, so I groggily rouse my aching body from bed, feeling the effects of yesterday's bicycle ride, lactic rust ringing in shredded, driftwood legs. With a moan and slow roll, I part the cracked drapes of mosquito netting canopied above and fantasize about turning back the clock, falling backwards onto my foam mattress and squeezing out a few extra minutes of sleep. Yet, I know there are rewards for standing and starting the day.

On a table just across the room are the ingredients of a familiar morning treat—hot water (kept overnight in a Thermos) and instant coffee. Together with a sprinkle of powdered milk, they form the ultimate morning elixir, instantly transforming me from grumpy zombie to enthused jitterbug. I mix the concoction, pausing to take a deep sniff of its chicory aroma. A year ago, I would have scoffed at the thought of drinking this crap, but now it's

all I've got—a relationship of convenience, a dependency of desperation.

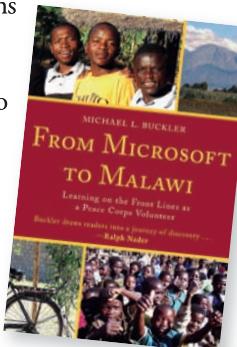
Unfortunately, this morning there is no time to savor the drinking experience. Immediately after the first sip, my stomach growls and churns like a meat grinder, and I scurry from my room, through the backdoor and into the yard. Coolly scrambling past neighbors and their livestock, nodding apologetically for not stopping to chat, I lunge inside the *chimbudzi*, a cramped, brick outhouse with a rectangular bull's-eye hole in the floor. Crisis averted, at least for now.

Thankfully, Alfred, Gift and Myson (the "Boys") miss the bathroom ruckus. My Malawian students and housemates, they rise quietly at 3 or 4 a.m. each morning to study in a nearby classroom under solar lighting. Gift is always the first to stir from the communal bed: a creaky reed mat and blanket unrolled across a cement floor. With a shake and a rebuke, he spurs the other two to rise and seize a harsh but precious opportunity to shine in school and escape the village....

• • •

By Malawian standards, the Boys are not only my housemates, but my sons. Given that two years of celibacy is an insufferable grind, and Malawian women are gorgeous, I could have made a few rug rats of my own. But instead of impregnating a villager, and playing Russian roulette with the HIV virus, I simply invite three students to live with me. It's de facto adoption—village style.

Alfred, Gift and Myson are proven "good kids" between the ages of eighteen and twenty who deserve a helping hand. For each, living in my home means extra study time to prepare for the college entrance examination and the end of long, arduous commutes to and from school. Over several months of cohabitation, maybe I can do for them



what I cannot do during forty-minute teaching blocks in the classroom for the hundreds of other underprivileged and deserving students. In short, it's an experiment.

And, to be clear, it isn't altruism or pity. Well, not entirely. I'm lonely and occupying an entire teacher house by myself seems wasteful. The late Paul Tsongas (U.S. Senator and 1992 Democratic Presidential Candidate) lived with students as a Peace Corps teacher in Ethiopia and later recounted it as one of the best decisions of his life (I'm sure it beat running for President). Based on my experience, I have to agree with Paul.

The Boys, friends since primary school, enthusiastically accepted the cohabitation invitation, dramatically enriching my life. Now, they make me laugh, cook my dinners, tidy the yard and common areas, and generally fill my house (if not life) with a lively, warm humanism. No longer am I living like an island castaway, eating and sleeping in solitary confinement, envious of my colleagues and their familial support structures. In short, I am finally "at home," and the feeling is mutual.

And each of my sons has amazing tales to tell. Gathering for meals, or just lounging around the house, we chronicle our lives. They learn too much about English slang and other peculiarities of America, about the skyscrapers and TV dinners, about the poverty in Appalachia and the opulence of Park Avenue, and about the truths and fictions of homosexuality and masturbation, both Malawian taboos. And I listen intently as they describe village gossip, becoming a trusted insider and learning that Malawian life is not an innocent Peanuts comic strip (as it first appeared to me) but a torrid, Jane Austen novel full of scandal, debauchery and mayhem.

After working as a patent litigator in Portland, Oregon for several years (mostly as outside counsel for Microsoft), Michael Buckler became a Peace Corps Volunteer in rural Malawi from 2006 to 2008. Buckler now lives in Washington, D.C. and works for the National Parks Service. Proceeds from From Microsoft to Malawi: Learning on the Front Lines as a Peace Corps Volunteer are being put towards a scholarship fund for the Boys.

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THE OTHER PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEERS

Peace Corps Response wants to be an engine of innovation for the Peace Corps

by Joshua Berman

Ruthia Yi works in a learning center in Liberia that serves young people whose schooling was disrupted by the country's 14-year-long civil conflict. She is in the middle of a 7-month-long Peace Corps Response (PCR) assignment.

"I'm serving as a librarian," she writes from Monrovia. "I help keep the center's library organized, help develop activities and programs, and help distribute materials to rural communities."

Yi completed her Peace Corps service in Togo in 2009. She moved to New York, got a job at a museum, then "decided that I wanted to go back to West Africa." In Liberia, she discovered as many differences as similarities between her new host country and her recent volunteer life in nearby Togo. But this time, she felt she had the skills to more quickly figure out the cultural differences and how to be effective.

"I had some idea of what was waiting on the other side," she says of her PCR assignment.

Other Response volunteers talk about similar mixes of new and familiar, no matter where or what their assignment. Priscilla Goldfarb, a lifetime non-profit executive and National Peace Corps Association (NPCA) board member, had a longer gap between her Peace Corps service in Uganda in the mid-1960s and her first Response assignment—40 years, to be exact.

Two weeks after Hurricane Katrina wreaked havoc across the U.S. south—and not long after she'd retired—Goldfarb received an email looking for volunteers. She had always wanted to join Peace Corps Response but had never been able to get away from her job and family.

"I responded immediately," she says. "After a flurry of paperwork exchanges and telephone interviews," says Goldfarb, "[I] found myself in about 48 hours

headed to Orlando, Florida for training." (This was an exceptional turn-around because of the circumstances—normally, acceptance, medical clearance, and placement takes around three months.)

A 'BIG DEMAND'

In response to the 1994 genocide in Rwanda, NPCA created the Emergency Response Network of Returned Peace Corps Volunteers willing to respond to crises when needed. Peace Corps Director Mark Gearan subsequently established the Crisis Corps (later renamed Peace Corps Response) in 1996, modeling it on this successful NPCA program. For years, Peace Corps had kept a database of returned PCVs with the will and desire to volunteer again, many of whom had become professionals in health, education, food security, and climate change mitigation. Gearan and others recognized the list as a goldmine of experience and knowledge.

"There is a big demand in our community from individuals who want short-term overseas assignments that relate to their earlier Peace Corps experiences, involve substantive work, and have the potential to make a lasting impact," says Kevin Quigley (Thailand 76-79), president of the National Peace Corps Association.

The Response program was set up and administered under the larger Peace Corps umbrella, but it was given its own mission—to place skilled Returned Peace Corps Volunteers in short-term assignments around the globe.

But despite the large supply of volunteers, it can still be tough to find matches for them, says Peace Corps Response Director Sarah Morgenthau. "I would say that one of the biggest challenges that PCR faces is candidate availability. The RPCV community is a diverse group with a broad spectrum of

skills and experience, but finding the best-qualified candidates who are available within the window of the assignments can sometimes be difficult. However, it is a challenge we can meet. PCR has very few assignments that go unfilled."

Speaking of which, as of late 2010, there were 52 open assignments in 27 countries listed on the Peace Corps website, each one from 4 to 12 months in length. The numbers are much smaller than those for Peace Corps Volunteers—measured in the hundreds rather than the thousands—but that's the point: specialized, targeted, technical assignments.

To date, about 1,400 Peace Corps Response Volunteers (PCRVs) have served in 57 countries around the globe. Morgenthau is eager to see all these numbers going up. "Peace Corps Response grew from 78 PCRVs in 2009 to 206 in 2010," she reports. "In addition, the number of countries hosting PCRVs increased from nine countries requesting volunteers in 2009 to 30 countries requesting PCRVs in 2010."

HITTING THE GROUND RUNNING

After landing in Orlando, Goldfarb received an intensive 72-hour training from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA, her "host organization"), then was handed a FEMA hat and T-shirt and sent into the field. She was assigned with a "buddy" to a small town about an hour north of Mobile, Alabama, close to the Mississippi border. Priscilla was a part of USA-1, the first-ever domestic deployment of Peace Corps Response. Two hundred and sixty-eight fellow PCRVs would join in the Katrina relief effort, also making it the largest deployment of PCRVs.

"Few if any of us had specific expertise in what we would be doing," says

Goldfarb. "Much like Peace Corps in the 1960s, we were trained and then thrown into the pond, where we really learned what to do and how to do it."

Ruthia adds, "Being a PCRV has a lot of difficulties, a lot of them the same as what Volunteers typically face. Public transport is still frustrating, I still can't get a floppy New York slice.... Unlike a PCV, however, I only have seven months to fulfill a really detailed job description and meet all the objectives of a work plan."

'A PERFECT FIT'

Elyse Petersen is an example of how PCRV assignments can be successfully matched with very specific skill sets. In 2010, less than two years after she completed her Peace Corps service in Niger, Elyse, a trained food scientist and quality assurance supervisor in the food industry in the U.S., found herself on a Response assignment in the Caribbean, working as a Food Preservation Specialist with the Antigua and Barbuda Agro-processors Association.

"The qualifications for the assignment were a perfect fit for me," Petersen says. She used her assignment to introduce experimental solar food dryers to the island nation.

Petersen collaborated with a variety of organizations to create a network of people who were trained on how to construct, operate, and market these solar dryers. "We initially introduced the dryers by integrating the design in the secondary school curriculum.... Once the dryers were constructed it wasn't long before others in the network wanted their own dryer and their own dried fruit and vegetables. We utilized social networking, radio, television, e-newsletters, and other media to get the word out and invite others into our network."

Even after returning home, Petersen reports, "This network is still sustaining and we have the kids of the secondary schools to thank for that. In our final report we estimated that the project directly affected about 17 percent of the entire population."

Bob Findlay (Colombia 63–65), a retired architect and university professor, has completed two six-week PCR assignments. In 1998, he helped



Matt Kottemann
Peace Corps Response Volunteers served domestically for the first time in history in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina.

versatility and its responsiveness, as well as its "quick turn-around and field-driven request system" for placing volunteers, were noted in the recent Peace Corps Comprehensive Agency Assessment, a report on Peace Corps' overall strategic vision and recommendations. The report recommended that the agency "make Peace Corps Response an 'engine of innovation' by serving as the Peace Corps' tool for piloting new programs to expand the agency's presence and technical depth and to increase overseas service opportunities for talented Americans."

Morgenthau adds, "We will be looking for opportunities to pilot new [PCR] programs and country re-entries as we have done in Liberia in 2009, and Madagascar, Colombia and Guinea in 2010—as well as finding new and creative ways of placing qualified individuals."

SIMILARITIES AND SMALL SUCCESSES

"Alabama was about as far away as Uganda had been to this northern born-and-bred woman," says Goldfarb. "There were many similarities to my Peace Corps assignment—the rural lifestyle, agrarian economy and hidden poverty...."

"Most familiar of all from my Uganda experience," she says, "was the mix of reserve, even suspicion, and at the same time, hospitality far beyond one's means on the part of the people we were there to serve. The kindness and appreciation shown us was much greater than conventional courtesy. Familiar, too, was the incredible strength, grace and dignity of people on a daily basis facing the most adverse of circumstances."

Yi adds, "Every day is a small success—helping someone open an email account, polishing off a bowl of country rice and cassava leaf soup, making a joke that Liberians laugh at—these are all things that make me happy to be here. I'll know what my biggest success was at the end of my service, but right now, I'm just enjoying every day."

Joshua Berman (Nicaragua 98–00) is a freelance writer and Spanish teacher based in Boulder, Colo. His website is joshuaberman.net.

PARALLEL PATHS

Peace Corps helped twins launch science careers

by Eric F. Frazier

Identical twins Daniel Kim-Shapiro and David Shapiro-Ilan have more in common than matching DNA. Both 49-year olds are high-level research scientists. Both credit Peace Corps volunteer service 25 years ago with helping to launch their professional careers, and both are still making a difference in people's lives through advanced research and education.

Dany, as the older (by five minutes) brother is known to friends and colleagues, taught physics at a teachers college in Zaire, now the Democratic Republic of Congo, from 1984 to 1986. Today, he is a physics professor at Wake Forest University in Winston-Salem, N.C., where his hemoglobin research focuses on curing sickle cell disease and making stored blood safer.

"There is no doubt that Peace Corps helped me develop my career and was a great asset when looking for a professor job," Dany says.



David served as an agricultural volunteer in Niger from 1985 to 1987. Today, he is a research entomologist with the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Southeastern Fruit and Tree Nut Laboratory in Byron, Ga. He focuses on controlling crop pests using natural enemies like nematodes, tiny worm-like parasites, instead of chemical pesticides.

"I was already interested in a scientific career oriented toward improving agriculture by decreasing chemical inputs to the environment," David says. "Peace Corps was kind of a 'testing ground' to see if I really wanted to go in that direction. In the end, Peace Corps definitely reinforced my career aspirations."

From childhood, the twins shared an interest in nature and science. Born and raised in New York City, they spent weekends at their grandparents' country home, where their grandfather encouraged them to collect and study insects and amphibians. The mischievous youngsters performed "household experiments" like starting fires with rubbing alcohol and dissecting things for a peek inside. They enjoyed switching places and fooling schoolteachers.

As they grew older, they followed separate but strikingly similar paths, like the mysterious entangled subatomic particles that quantum physicists have observed behaving in unison, no matter how far apart. Both brothers qualified for honors science programs but at different high schools. Both headed west for top colleges but in different states. After earning undergraduate degrees in physics and biology, both volunteered for Peace Corps and went to Africa but to different countries.

Following Peace Corps, they earned masters and doctorate degrees at four

Peggy Greb/USDA-ARS



Top: David (left) and Dany Shapiro at the age of 10.

Far Left: David Shapiro-Ilan at work in his USDA-Agricultural Research Service lab.

Left: Daniel Kim-Shapiro examines a blood sample in his Wake Forest lab.
Ken Bennett/Wake Forest University



David Shapiro stands outside his home in Bazaga, and Dany Shapiro fishes in the Kwilu River.

different universities and completed post-doctoral fellowships in 1996—David as a Fulbright Scholar in Israel, while Dany was a National Institutes of Health Fellow in California. Each married and attached his spouse's surname to his own, but one added it before and the other after. Each has fathered only boys. One has three; the other has two.

After more than a decade working in separate fields, David asked Dany to apply his physics expertise to a study of how electromagnetism influences the movement of nematodes in soil, and in 2009, they published a paper together in a scientific journal.

They speak about their Peace Corps days as if it were yesterday. Experiencing dramatically different cultures and helping people with acute material needs produced indelible memories.

David was the first Peace Corps volunteer to serve in Bazaga, a village of about 200 families, near the southwestern border with Nigeria. When he arrived, he found the mud house where he was to live full of stored grain. "I think they didn't believe I was coming," he says. David acclimated himself to life without electricity or running water and led projects digging wells and planting trees for firewood and to slow desertification. "The best part was how rewarding the job felt," David says. "The people there were

extremely happy to have me there and grateful for the things we were doing." Subsequent Volunteers told him his village became a model for others.

Dany envisioned himself in similar rural conditions but went instead to Kikwit, a regional capital and commercial center with a population then of about 250,000 people. Still, the city had just one paved road and mostly mud houses. He had expected to teach high school physics but was assigned to one of Zaire's few teachers colleges and taught from the same college textbook that he had just used. "I learned it so much better," he says. "By the time I got to grad school, I really understood it." Lecturing 18 hours each week gave him a level of preparation that he rarely sees in applicants for professorships today.

Their jobs give Dany and David opportunities to recruit for Peace Corps. Dany displays posters in his office and helps the North Carolina Peace Corps Association at campus events. David's USDA lab hosts numerous college interns, and he encourages them to consider volunteering. For budding scientists, the twins' experiences appear to prove a simple hypothesis: Peace Corps service produces lasting value for volunteers and the people they help.

Eric F. Frazier lives and writes in Kernersville, North Carolina.

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RECENT ACHIEVEMENTS OF OUR COMMUNITY

by JoAnna Haugen

BENIN

Charlie Loesel (91-93) recently released his debut album, Westfalia. There are eight tracks on the album informed by a variety of blues and folk styles. Loesel has worked a variety of jobs over the years, but he is now devoting himself to music and touring full time.

CAMEROON

Alon Ferency (97-99) recently became a rabbi at Heska Amuna Synagogue in Sequoyah Hills in Tennessee. Prior to this position, he worked on the 2000 presidential campaign, as a substitute third grade teacher and in the music industry. Ferency has his master's degree in Jewish education from Jewish Theological Seminary in New York City.

COLOMBIA

Dave Stock (69-72) runs Stock Seed Farms, a major national supplier of native grass and wildflower seeds. The company is one of seven entities to be named as a recipient of the Omaha World-Herald's 2010 Master Conservationist awards. Stock is the fifth generation to farmland first homesteaded in the 1860s.

GHANA

John G. Walsh recently became the acting Comptroller of the Currency for the U.S. Treasury. Prior to this position, Walsh was the chief of staff and public affairs for the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, a position he assumed in October 2005. He also worked for the Group of 30, served on the Senate Banking Committee, was an international economist for the U.S. Department of the Treasury, served with the Office of Management and Budget and worked with the Mutual Broadcasting System.

GABON

Bonnie Lee Black (96-98) was a writer/editor and chef/caterer in New York City for many years before she joined the Peace Corps. Since returning home, she has written two memoirs about her time in Africa. *Patchwork: A Memoir of Mali* was her first, and *How to Cook a Crocodile: A Memoir with Recipes* was just published. She currently teaches English and creative nonfiction writing at the University of New Mexico in Taos.

GUINEA BISSAU

Amy Burtaine (95-97) is the newly appointed director of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill's Interactive Theatre Carolina program, which uses acting to highlight social issues on campus. Burtaine trained in Brazil with the Theatre of the Oppressed and has built a career using theatre to spark dialogue on health, wellness and social justice issues. Prior to her appointment at UNC, Burtaine worked as an actor / facilitator for Kaiser Permanente's Educational Theatre Programs in Denver, Colorado, where, among other projects, she led an arts residency with teenagers with disabilities and ran an internship where college actors toured a play about healthy eating and active living to more than 11,000 elementary school students.

HONDURAS

University of California Davis professor Dan Sperling (73-75) is one of ten recipients to receive this year's Heinz Award. This award recognizes innovative and inspiring individuals who have addressed environmental challenges through their work. Sperling joined the faculty at UC Davis in 1982 and is

a professor of civil and environmental engineering and environmental science and policy. He also founded the Institute of Transportation Studies at the university in 1991, was interviewed by Jon Stewart on the Daily Show in 2009 and is the author of *Two Billion Cars*, which received international acclaim. He earned his doctorate degree from UC Berkeley.

KENYA

Guy Consolmagni (84-85) is an astronomer and Jesuit brother for the Vatican Observatory, located in Castel Gandolfo, Italy. Prior to this, he worked at Harvard University and MIT.



Shanti Parikh (90-93) is the first African American professor to complete her tenure track in Washington University's College of Arts & Sciences. She received her bachelor's degree at the University Virginia and her doctorate degree from Yale University. Parikh arrived at Washington University in 2000 for a post-doctoral fellowship and began her tenure-track appointment in 2001 in the Department of Anthropology. In addition to her teaching and research roles, she works with the Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship, a nationwide program that encourages minority students in higher education to foster relationships with mentors.

MADAGASCAR

Meg E. Shad (06) recently finished the North Face Endurance Challenge Midwest Regional, Gore-Tex 50-mile ultra race. This is the



first of two events she is competing in to raise awareness and funds for the National Peace Corps Association. Shad currently runs 45-55 miles per week. She has raised \$1,945 in donations so far.

Brett Beach (99-01) and **Tim McCollum** (99-01) started Madécasse, a Brooklyn-based chocolate company four years ago. Joe Salvatore has since joined the team. The company only works with farmers in Madagascar to harvest cacao, and the whole chocolate production process takes place in the country as well. This provides locals with jobs and fosters growth in local communities.

MICRONESIA

Kathy Elsaesser is the first female lieutenant for the Lakeland Fire Department. Now stationed at the Lakeland Linder Regional Airport, Elsaesser has worked on and off at Lakeland Fire Department since 2001. Her public service earned her the title of Firefighter of the Year for the department in 2005 and this past year. Elsaesser is a graduate of Barry University.

NEPAL

Mel and Dorothee Goldman (66-69) are the owners of Keuka Lake Vineyards, located near the Finger Lakes. The 40 acres of land currently yields slightly fewer than 2,000 cases annually, though

Mel envisions a day when the winery will produce 4,000 cases a year. The concept of the winery is to make dry, elegant wines that fit the local environment. Much of its effort goes into making vinifera wine, including three vineyard-specific dry Rieslings.

PHILIPPINES

In response to the waste many people create, **Leslie Kelly Shockley** (96-98) launched Tea with Iris. The business showcases products including children's clothes, potholders, produce bags and bibs she has created from "upcycling" old items such as pillowcases, fabrics and nonrecyclable materials.

TOGO

Anna Omura (04-06) was presented with the Franklin H. Williams Award, which honors ethnically diverse returned volunteers who exemplify a commitment to community service and the third goal of the Peace Corps. Omura is an operations manager at the Legatum Center for Development and Entrepreneurship at MIT. She has served on the Boston Area RPCV board of directors since 2009, where she chairs the speakers bureau.



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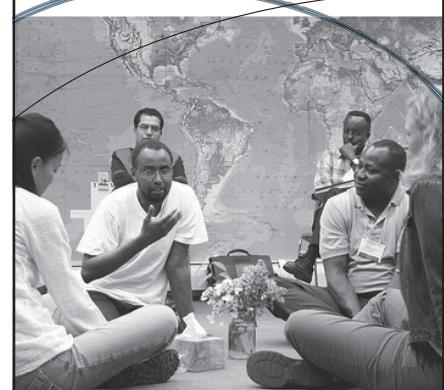
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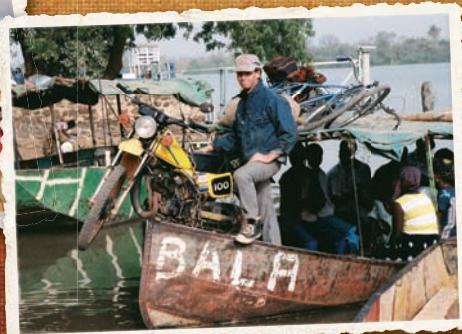


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