



The Columbia River Peace Corps Association Newsletter

Volume 16 Issue 1

"Bringing the world back home"

January 1997

Oregon Director of Americorps to speak at next CRPCA Meeting Sunday, January 19th

MARLIS MITHCI, Executive Director of the Oregon Commission for National and Community Service is scheduled to speak at the next CRPCA gathering on January 19th. The Commission is in charge of coordinating the services of Americorps, VISTA, Learn and Serve America (for children and youth grades K-12), and the National Senior Service Corps for the state. Marlis will provide us with an overview of the Commission's activities in Oregon, and we will discuss ways in which the Commission and the CRPCA might collaborate on projects.

Everyone is welcome to attend and to bring friends and family members who are interested in Americorps or other Commission activities.

Where: Charlene Holzworth's Home, 2524 NE 34th, Portland.

When: Sunday, January 19th, 5 pm Business Meeting, 6 pm Potluck, 7 pm Guest Speaker

<p>Americorps Trivia: Did you know that, unlike Peace Corps volunteers, Americorps participants are known as "members"?</p>
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National Geography Awareness Week at Madison High School

National Geography Awareness Week held November 17-23, 1996 was celebrated in a big way in Madison High School. The gigantic map that some of you helped paint at the national RPCV conference in Eugene was displayed in the cafeteria along with flags from over 50 countries. Gabriella Maertens (Niger) coordinated the speakers who gave presentations in the library. Over 600 students participated. Many thanks to the presenters: Josephine and David Cameron (Solomon Islands); Mike Waite (Liberia); Carol McCormac Wild (Senegal); Anne Feldstein (Sierra Leone); Dick Swee and Par Greendale (Liberia); and Lester Lamm (Honduras). Steve Riddle (Nigeria) presented to his wife's Spanish classes, and Gabriella Maertens (Niger) presented to her ESL classes.

Kurdish Refugee Project Update

by Karen Cellarius

Do you remember the first few months in your Peace Corps country? Learning local customs. Trying to understand the people speaking the local language. Attempting to make strange machines and appliances work. Wondering what kind of work you'd be doing and who you'd be working with. Meeting new neighbors. Eating strange food. Trying to understand the strange currency and how much things cost. Discovering that your clothes weren't adequate for the climate.

Well, Eskander, Botan and Shakhawan have been encountering the same emotional ups and downs

since they arrived in Portland from Iraq in November. They've been taking ESL and job training classes, getting settled in their apartment and looking for jobs. Thanks to the donations and assistance of RPCVs, they're adjustment has been easier than it would have been.

They will soon be joined by other Kurds from Iraq, scheduled to arrive sometime this month. We have almost everything we need to furnish an apartment for one of those families. However, additional items and assistance are always welcome. Many thanks to everyone who has helped so far. Next month, we hope to be able to give you a full update on all donations and what we actually did with them...

Donation Drop Off Points

- West Portland: Barbara Pugh - 297-0636
- NE Portland: JoAnn von Rohr - 282-1721
- SE Portland: John Risley - 235-9391;
Linda Centerian - 788-7366
- Forest Grove: Angela Colva - 359-2225
- Vancouver: Mike Waite - 360-574-7455
- Call Thrina Parent if you need help with a truck (236-1948)

A Gourmet's Delight

by Mariana D. Bornholdt

It is said, "For the Chinese, eating is the first joy." After dining at Hua Ai Hi's (Flora's) family home, I fully understand. The menu of dishes served on a small apartment's coffee table was indeed a banquet fit for an Emperor, or Empress, as the case may be. Flora had promised me *real* Chinese food, and so it was. Seven of us, her father, mother, brother, sister-in-law, campus roommate, Flora and I sat around the table, chopsticks flashing until we could eat no more.

Seasoning is an art in any cuisine, and though our food at the college is quite good, there was something about Mr. Hue's and Flora's touch with herbs that lifted their viands out of the ordinary. It is hard to say what I liked best, but I shall certainly ask for the recipes for the spiced peanuts, the sweet and sour eggplant with tomatoes, the steamed whole fish, and the rice soup with green beans. Outstanding!

You may be surprised to find potatoes on the menu, since they are a New World vegetable originating in Peru. However, sliced and sautéed, they are great favorites in China, and a very tasty noodle is

made from potatoes as well. Sweet potatoes are also grown here, and I enjoyed a roasted one last Sunday, bought on the street for one yuan (8.3 cents).

The moon cakes on the menu deserve special attention. In China, or at least in Northern China, the traditional harvest festival is celebrated on the day of the full moon in the seventh lunar month. This is the day when families gather, to "close the circle of the relationship" and view together the round full moon of the evening. A round sweet cake 3 1/2" or so in diameter, is baked commercially, and gifts of moon cakes are offered to customers, employees and dear friends. Most Chinese people find moon cakes too sweet. I don't, and was delighted them both at the Hua's and also from the college. This year's (1996) harvest Moon festival was Friday, September 27th, preceding National Day, October 2nd, which celebrated the founding of the People's Republic of China. And I answered many questions on national Day about how *we* celebrate July 4th in the United States, *our* National Day. Both have parades, speeches, family outings, and fireworks; China also has magnificent floral displays in all public places such as Tiananmen Square.

The remarkable thing to me about Chinese meals is that soup constitutes the final course. This was true of the banquet at the Hua's and also of our meals on campus. Somehow it makes good sense, actually. It ensures a warm ending to the meal, as soup keeps its heat better than the sautéed dishes.

Remember, this is North China.

Before the meal was served, an assortment of fresh fruit and nuts was offered us (Amy [Flora's roommate] and I) along with hot tea. During dinner, we were offered soft drinks and mai-tai. I chose Coca Cola and refused the mai-tai, which according to those who know can run as high as 120 proof. It is drunk in tiny glasses about the size of a thimble and evidently very fiery. No thanks!

I shall remember this banquet for a long time. Not only because it was so sumptuous, but because it was an opportunity to join the circle of a kind, warm-hearted family - the first since my arrival here. A most memorable occasion.

Mariana Bornholdt is a CRPCA member currently living and teaching in China
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➔Calendar of Events➔

Jan 19

CRPCA Potluck Meeting and Americorps Presentation

Charlene Holzworth's Home, 2524 NE 34th, Portland. 5 pm Business Meeting, 6 pm Potluck, 7 pm Guest Speaker: Marlis Miller, Executive Director, Oregon Commission for National and Community Service (includes Americorps and VISTA)

April 19

Oregon Day of Service

July 10-13

NPCA National Conference in San Diego

Web Sites of Interest

CRPCA

<http://www.ak.org/uway/staff/orrpev.html>

Peace Corps

<http://www.peacecorps.gov>

NPCA

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



From the President

Mike Waite's column will return next month



Boldog Uj Èvet Kivanok! B.U.È.K.!

(Happy New Year - Hungarian)



The **Columbia River Peace Corps Association (CRPCA) Newsletter** is published monthly by the CRPCA for the benefit of its members. The CRPCA serves returned Peace Corps volunteers in Oregon and SW Washington. Annual membership rates: \$15 for individuals and \$22.50 for families. Address all correspondence to: CRPCA, PO Box 802, Portland, OR 97207.

Newsletter submissions are encouraged. Please send them via e-mail or regular mail to the above address by the 25th of the preceding month. Submissions on 3.5" disk or through e-mail (mwaite@pacifier.com) are appreciated.



Want to become involved? Have questions or comments about specific issues? You may contact the following people directly:

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