



The Columbia River Peace Corps Association Newsletter

Volume 24, Issue 8

“Bringing the World back Home”

August, 2005

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August 2005

Saturday, 8/13, 6:00 pm. *BBQ Pacific Style*, 2840 SW 24th Street in Gresham. 503-674-3584 (See July issue for more information.)

Thu-Sun, 8/25- 8/28. *Northwest Regional Peace Corps Campout*, Honeyman State Park on the Oregon coast, near Florence. 503-235-9637 (See page 3 this issue)

Monday, 8/29, 6:30 pm. *Soirée* at Lucky Labrador Brew Pub, 915 SE Hawthorne Blvd in Portland.

President's message:

The last two events, Picnic and Potluck, have been very well attended. There seems to be a resurgence of activity. Old mixing with new always brings more aliveness to our community.

The picnic was a great success with a wide mixture of new nominees, nominee wannabes, recently returned and old guard returned...And great food! Thank you *Linda Parko* for organizing this event. Stay tuned, we may have other events coordinated with the Recruiting Office.

I find it a delight to talk to new and prospective volunteers. My bias is that we go with the energy and our service to you is helping that energy connect to our community. So if you have events, ideas, notions send them to me at r Ireland88@yahoo.com. Or, better yet, come to the Sept.18th planning meeting and throw out your idea so we can schedule it for the next year.

We can also support spontaneous events like the Cookout on August 13th. Last year we opted to not have our Annual Banquet. I would like your input about whether we should do it this year. We usually have good food, entertainment. Two years ago we combined it with a silent auction to raise funds. Please email me if you want that for next year and if interested in helping out with organizing it.

Bill Stein is doing a great job updating the Website and I encourage you to check periodically to see upcoming events. We also have our application there and so if you run across potential members tell them to go to crpca.net.

Look for our booth at Global Fest, Sept.11th at Holiday Park. We will be sharing a table with the *Recruiting Office* and the *Museum of the Peace Corps Experience*. It is a great mix of culture and community. Thank you all for what you do in our community and

the global community. You are what is right about our world. *Celebrate.*

Richard Ireland, President

Calendar Partner for 2006

Sept 18th we will be deciding who will be our calendar partner for this year. We are looking for applications. For those who are unfamiliar with this process, each year we partner with an organization we think is doing good work either in our community or overseas. They help us sell the calendars and we share the profits. Usually 80% goes to them. This year we have expanded from 500 to 600 calendars, and so it is important that they be willing to put in effort toward selling the calendars. If you know of any worthwhile organization, have them send a description of their work to Cate Wilcox cwilcox@teleport.com, who is coordinating the sales this year. And consider helping by buying or selling. I buy 10 each year and that takes care of most of my Christmas shopping!

Show your stuff!

Join us for the *CRPCA Volunteer Day*. CRPCA's all volunteer day this year consists of staffing a table at the *Global Portland Festival* on Sunday, **September 11** from Noon to 6pm. The event will take place at *Holladay Park* across from Lloyd Center.

Please help by signing up for a shift at the table! It should be a lot of fun. We will be sharing the table with the *Committee for a Museum of the Peace Corps Experience* and representing Peace Corps itself, since a recruiter cannot be there that day. A response to the events of September 11th, the event theme is: "*Hope Begins When Fear Ends.*" For more information, visit www.clcbank.org

Last year's festival was very entertaining, with many international tables, entertainment and food. Even if you can not volunteer at the table, please come enjoy the day!

To sign up to help at the table, contact *Rich Ireland* at rireland88@yahoo.com or 503-246-0479.

Trainer Director sought

The Portland Chapter of *Amigos de las Americas* is searching for a new Training Director (or Two!) This is a paid part-time position charged with coordinating the training program for the Portland area volunteers. For a list of qualifications and compensation information contact: Max Campos 503-231-1373, 503-267-6409. Also: www.portlandamigos.org and www.amigoslink.org

Why we serve

African Children's Libraries is ready to ship its first cargo container of books to Liberia! They will be able to assist in setting up at least 10 children's libraries mostly in rural Liberia. They are coordinating their effort with the *Monrovia YMCA* and *Liberian Educators for Peace* and

Action sponsored by *Friends of Liberia*. They are also asking for your support in the following ways:

Monetary: \$50 will send 4 boxes of books- roughly 160 books

Volunteering:

- Loading the container August 17th in Oregon City.
- Sorting and boxing books.
- Picking up additional books from Portland schools the end of August.
- Finding warehouse space for coming the school year- about 1000 square feet for more books and work space for the sorting and packing.
- Grant writing or leads for appropriate grant sources.
- Other fund raising.

By shipping approximately 600 boxes of books by container they pay less than the combined shipping costs of the last four years and lower the cost from \$24 per box to \$8 per box or about 20c per book.

Web site : www.africanchildrenslibraries.org

Friends of Liberia web page:

http://www.fol.org/projects/african_childrens_library.shtm

Contact: *Ann Easterly*
African Children's Libraries Director
anotter25@yahoo.com
503 656 7159; 541 757 2467

Northwest Regional Peace Corps Campout

Each summer Returned Peace Corps Volunteers from throughout the Pacific Northwest gather for a weekend of fun times in nature. Here's the info on the 2005 campout, which will be hosted by CRPCA. With this year's expansion of our National Peace Corps Association region, we welcome participation by RPCVs in Alaska, California, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, and Washington.

- **Location:** **Jessie M. Honeyman State Park**, three miles south of Florence on the central Oregon coast. The largest of Oregon's coastal campgrounds features two natural freshwater lakes (the group camping area is next to one). Canoeing, swimming, and a playground are available on-site. The park comprises the north end of the Oregon Dunes National Recreation Area; two miles of sand dunes separate the campground from the ocean. Other attractions in the Florence area include excellent beaches and hiking trails, the **Heceta Head Lighthouse**, and the **Sea Lion Caves**.
- **Dates:** **Thursday-Sunday, August 25-28, 2005.** Four group campsites (A, C, D, E) have been reserved for Friday and Saturday nights. Two of those (A and E) have been reserved Thursday for those arriving early.
- **Directions:** If you have extra time, take the coast highway (US 101) to Florence. Otherwise take I-5 to the Eugene Beltway (exit 195B), then travel west to Florence on Oregon 126. (Florence is approximately 175 miles or 3.5 hours from Portland via I-5 and 126.) Once in Florence, turn south on 101. The turnoff to Honeyman's group campground is three miles down on the left (east side) of the highway. Note that the main campground is on the west side of the highway; many of the park's attractions are there.

Camping

This year the camping costs will be apportioned by vehicle to encourage carpooling. We can accommodate as many as 100 people on Friday and Saturday nights (50 on Thursday night), but the park's vehicle capacity is more limited.

- **Car, Pickup Truck, SUV, Van: \$15.00** Fri-Sat + \$7.50 Thu (*FYI, the per night rate in the main campground is \$17*)
- **RV, any vehicle with trailer: \$18.00** Fri-Sat + \$9.00 Thu (*FYI, the per night rate in the main campground is \$21, though that includes hookups*)
- Please understand that we cannot charge Friday or Saturday by the night, as we need to cover the costs of the camping areas we've reserved. Be prepared to pay the full \$15/\$18 if no one is interested in the night you're not using.
- Check in no earlier than 4:00 pm Friday (4:00 pm Thursday for the early arrivals). Upon arrival, pay your camping and meal fees in cash to the CRPCA host. You'll be supplied with a parking pass valid throughout the park. We'll need to vacate the area by 1:00 pm Sunday.
- Group camp amenities: picnic tables, fire pits, drinking water, and flush toilets. Campers are free to walk or drive 3/4 mile to the main camp for showers. There are no electrical outlets in the group camp.

Meals

Plan to bring your lunches and any other meals depending on your length of stay, but we have these special meals to look forward to. If you plan to partake in the group meals, **please add \$5 per adult*** (preteen kids eat free) when you check in. This covers Saturday dinner and Sunday breakfast--what a deal!

- **Saturday dinner (provided by CRPCA):** Chicken curry, African peanut stew, couscous, salad and ice cream.
- **Sunday breakfast (provided by Idaho RPCVs):** Hot cakes (with huckleberry syrup), sausage (chorizo or beef), fruit, juice and coffee.

CRPCA Members

CRPCA members eat free! This offer is valid for one person on an individual membership and the whole family on a family membership. If you reside in our service area (greater Portland-Vancouver), we hope you'll consider joining, renewing, or upgrading your CRPCA membership at check-in.

The catch: As CRPCA is this year's host group, all members in attendance will be expected to *help with Saturday dinner* (preparation, serving, or cleanup). A signup list will be available at check-in. Please contact Jenny Tsai at jenn_tsai@hotmail.com if you would like to help plan the meal.

RSVP!

Please e-mail crpca@crpca.org or call 503-235-9637 (Bill Stein) as soon as your plans are set. We expect to fill to capacity this year. Please provide all of the following information in your e-mail:

- your name, country and years of Peace Corps service and/or RPCV group of which you are a member
- names of all passengers in your vehicle
- type of vehicle:
 - \$15 rate = car, pickup, SUV, or minivan
 - \$18 rate = RV or any vehicle with trailer
- which nights you wish to camp (Thu, Fri, and/or Sat)

Current reservation status

Persons: 74% Booked

Vehicles: 95% Booked

No more capacity for RVs/trailers Thursday night.

Letters

Greetings!

My husband and I have been accepted for the Peace Corps for next summer. We want to live in the Portland area - we love everything about the city! Since we have almost a year before we go, we are hoping to find some way to work in the area until then. We are 22 and 25 years old, with solid work experience and flexible attitudes. I have an undergrad in Anthropology and a Masters in Sociology from Stanford. Nathan has an undergrad in Psychology from Stanford, and a Masters in Education from Berkeley. If you are interested in our resumes, we can send them with references. We will be taking Nathan's sister on a brief college visit to Portland in a few weeks, and would love to meet up with any of you while we are in the area.

All the best,

Anna and Nathan Alldredge

Anna.alldredge@gmail.com

About us

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 (RPCVs) and others in Oregon and southwest Washington who share an interest in global development issues. To join CRPCA (and/or the National Peace Corps Association) and have the newsletter *delivered*, please see the back page or visit: www.crpca.org. Newsletter submissions are due by the 25th of each month. Send by mail to P.O. Box 802, Portland, OR 97207, or e-mail to: crpca_nl@yahoo.com

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MEMBERSHIP ADDRESS CHANGE RENEWAL FORM

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State and Zip: _____

Home Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____

Email: _____

Newsletter form: Electronic (by e-mail)_____ Paper (by USPS mail)_____ Both_____

Peace Corps Country and Years of Service: _____

Peace Corps Job/Sector: _____

Current Occupation: _____

Membership Type (Check one): New _____ Renewal _____

Are you available at times to speak with groups about your Peace Corps experience? _____

Please check one of the following membership options:

Preferred / Encouraged

Low Income / Living Lightly

Membership in the National Peace Corps
Association with CRPCA as your free affiliate.

Membership in CRPCA only.

_____ \$50 CRPCA and NPCA (Individual)

_____ \$15 CRPCA only (Individual)

_____ \$65 CRPCA and NPCA (Family)

_____ \$22.50 CRPCA only (Family)

_____ FREE CRPCA and NPCA (if you closed
your Peace Corps service in the last year)

Please make checks payable to: Columbia River Peace Corps Association, and mail to:
CRPCA, PO Box 802, Portland, OR 97207

Columbia River Peace Corps Association

PO Box 802

Portland, OR 97207

www.crpca.org

A Place in the Family
Vusi Mhlanga
(Swaziland '92-'94)

The letter was brought to my classroom by one of the first-form girls. Holding it in both hands with head bowed she curtsied as she handed it to me. This was not required in my classroom, I always pleaded, but she knew the custom. I was the teacher.

It was from Sipho, my homestead brother. A gentle, quiet man of twenty-two who, remarkably, neither smoked nor drank. In his neat cursive hand he wrote:

"Greetings brother Vusi. We hope you are fine. Our mother requests you come this side. You must decide what profession I am to do for my future. Your bhuti, Sipho"

I'm not sure all volunteers in other Peace Corps countries have adopted families, but in Swaziland it would be unthinkable not to belong to a homestead. In every way that counts, this is the very core of the nation.

The Mhlangas had chosen me from a long list of trainees, sight unseen. Sipho gave me my name and I couldn't have picked a more gracious family if I'd tried. The father had been murdered many years before, leaving a widow and three now grown children. Sipho was the only one still living at home.

Our homestead consisted of a plastered, concrete block house with tin roof, granary for the maize drying in the fields and, of course, a kraal, without which no homestead was complete. Missing was the now increasingly rare beehive hut made of reeds. Having watched one burn, I was not unhappy for its absence. Remarkably, in front of the house was a rusted-out 1936 Chevrolet sedan, wheels long gone, sinking slowly up to its frame in the red earth. Perched near the top of a hill looking down into South Africa a short distance away, this would be my refuge for the next two years. With its wood burning stove, lack of power and indoor plumbing it couldn't have been a more traditional homestead, or pleased me more.

In Swaziland it wasn't considered odd that "our mother" was younger than me, or that my "brother" was my son's age. As the oldest male, however, I had been told in training I would be expected to be a real part of the family. For instance, I might be asked to make decisions that could affect everyone. This made me a bit apprehensive. I wasn't sure it would be in their best interest; me making important decisions for them. But, as I later learned, it was the older women who had a way of making most of the important decisions anyway!

The following Saturday as I waited on my dusty road for the bus to Nhlanguano, I was nervous. What if I made a wrong decision and it screwed up Sipho's whole future? What if....? Well, one thing was certain, I was not going to delegate this one to "our mother." It was time for me to suck it up and at least *try* to assume a responsible place in the family.

From where I waited I could see thunderheads gathering far to the southwest, closing in on my homestead twenty miles away. Good Lord, I thought, not another one.

After my quiet, rural high school, arriving in the noisy Nhlanguano bus rank was always a bit of a shock. But, I had shopping to do. One did not arrive at homestead without bringing something to eat. I bought a fresh chicken in the marketplace, then took the old rattletrap bus to Makhosini where my homestead awaited.

Passing the sacred mountain where long dead kings were interred in their caves, we averted our eyes. Only the newly arrived or some uninformed tourist would stare in the direction of the mountain, always guarded by very serious looking soldiers. Soon I got off at my stop and headed up the long path to the Mhlanga kraal. On the way I was greeted by all the neighbors, who knew more about me than I did about them. "Sawubona, numzahn", they called out, a title of respect presumably earned because of my graying hair. Sipho, who had heard the bus coming, was waiting at the gate. "Mkaya Mhlanga!", I called out. (One greeted the homestead properly before entering.) Sipho received me with his usual shy smile and gentle handshake.

"Sawubona, Vusi. Our mother said you would arrive this day."

As a dark sky moved in, we walked up to the house, hand in hand. (another custom I was slowly getting used to) In the yard we stared up. My stomach dropped. Sipho murmured something in SiSwati. Hanging from that darkening sky were long greenish-yellowish---what? The beginnings of tornados? As lightning split the skyline to the south of us, Sipho said quietly, "I think it is best we go to our home." I was right behind him. *-To be continued-*

