



Columbia River Peace Corps Association Newsletter

Volume 24, Issue 10 "Bringing the World back Home" October, 2005

In This Issue:

President's Corner	CRPCA Potlucks
The Military and Peace Corps	Letters
Campout Wrap-up	Events Calendar
New Program Director	Order Form
NPCA Representation	Story-A Place in the
2006 Calendars Sale	Family (conclusion)
Story-Pieces from Niger	
CRPCA Calendar of Events 2005-2006	

Events Calendar (*For a full year of events, see the Annual Calendar in this issue!*)

October 9th Sun., Potluck / Meeting
(See page 4 for details.)

October 31st Mon., Soiree, 6:30, Lucky Labrador Brew Pub, 915 SE Hawthorne, kids and their pets welcome. Host: *Dane Pikkola*

President's Corner

Thank you all for participating at our recent *Calendar Planning Meeting*. I know it is not the most exciting of meetings, but it is an essential one. I feel very blessed with the quality of people I am working with. It makes my job a pleasure.

We needed another hour to complete, but here is what we have agreed upon. I will follow that with decisions to be made.

Soirees: Last Monday of each month, *except* December. Sponsors will buy a beer for a new membership, if they get a check *that* night.

Pot Lucks: We will start creating programs.

Bill will contact *Laura Montez* about coordinating the programs.

Another *Teacher Meeting* will be scheduled in about 6 months.

Our *Calendar Partners* this year will be *Friends of Niger* via *Mercy Corps* and *Pangaea*. CRPCA will take 20% of profits, *Friends of Niger* and *Pangaea* will split 50/50 the remaining 80%.

Bylaw discussion was tabled until Oct. 9 meeting.

White Elephant Post-Christmas party, Jan 7th. Karen will reserve SW Lucky Lab. I will MC the event. (*See Events Calendar, this issue.*)

Decisions yet to be made:

Annual Dinner Fund Raiser: E-mail me with your thoughts. I essentially am unwilling to take it on unless there is someone excited and willing enough to make the effort. I would like to see it happen.... but, who has the energy?

Service days: We did not schedule anything on the calendar. Karen suggested we organize it through e-mail... I think that is a good idea.

OPB: We have done that as one of our volunteer days. I would vote to do it again. Who is willing to organize it this year? Contact *Dane* for the schedule.

Severing the Nexus between Military Recruitment and Peace Corps

Legislation was introduced by Congressman *John Kline* (R-MN), a member of the House Armed Services Committee, to remove the Peace Corps as an option for completing an individual's military enlistment requirement that now exists under the National Call to Service Program.

In 2002, a law was passed that allowed servicemen and women to shorten their armed forces service *by spending two years in the Peace*

Corps. Only now are the U. S. Armed Forces using this statute in recruiting efforts. This connection between the Peace Corps and the Military has raised the alarm among RPCV's nationwide. The concern has been voiced by Kevin Quigley, president of the National Peace Corps Association who said: "We think a real or perceived linkage between the Peace Corps and military service could damage the Peace Corps and potentially put the safety of Peace Corps volunteers at risk."

Other prominent RPCV's have raised similar objections. Mark L. Schneider, who was a volunteer in El Salvador in the late 1960s and headed the Peace Corps during the last two years of the Clinton administration said:

"Democratic and Republican administrations alike have kept a bright line separating the Peace Corps from short-term foreign and security policies," Schneider said. "Blurring that sharp line is a bad idea, particularly now, given the unfortunate rise in anti-American sentiment following the Iraq war."

Congressman Kline's bill (H. R. 3709) will correct this problem by removing the Peace Corps option from the military's recruiting arsenal. To help get this legislation passed please call or write your congressperson and request that they sign on as co-sponsors.

Martin Kaplan

Advocacy Coordinator, CRPCA

2005 NW Regional PC Campout Wrap-up

It's all history now, but if you weren't able to attend you missed a really fine gathering of kindred spirits. Honeyman Campground is located on a beautiful lake (dunes across the way) with plenty of good campsites, clean restrooms and lots and lots of trees. What made it even better was the easy camaraderie, many willing hands and loads of kids and pets. Talk about family friendly!

No doubt many new friendships were made and enthusiasm is high for the next campout. Looks like it will be in Idaho, August, 2006 on the Clearwater River, with Sam Greer (Ethiopia '66-'68) and crew hosting.

Many thanks go to *Bill Stein* (Niger '90-'93) for all his efforts leading to a flawless event, and to *Jenny Tsai* (Fiji, 90-92), our food coordinator, for figuring out correctly that it takes 10 lbs. of couscous and 30 lbs. of chicken to treat 85 people to a very fine Eastern dinner on the beach.

New Program Coordinator!

Those who attended the very successful *South Pacific Bash* (first annual?) at Laura (Kiribati '97-'99) and Steve Montez' will be delighted to know that Laura has stepped forward and become our new *Program Coordinator*, a position long unfilled. Laura has the kind of energy and enthusiasm that promises a great program and we'll all be the richer for it. Welcome to the fold Laura and Steve! The program coordinator schedules presentations at potlucks and other events as needed.

CRPCA now has representation to NPCA

Webmaster, *Bill Stein* (Niger, 90-93) has been invited to represent our organization on the *Membership Relations Workgroup* for NPCA. Now that we finally have someone to air our concerns about the national organization, Bill invites us to share them with him. Power to the people!

2006 International Calendars

Once again it is time to order your *2006 International Calendars* developed by the RPCV's of Madison, Wisconsin. We are carrying on a 15-year tradition of selling the calendars. Calendars are still only \$10 each, plus \$4 postage if mailed to you. This postage rate applies to 1-5 calendars, with an additional \$4 postage for each 5-calendar increment. We would like to encourage people to pick up their calendars at our various pick-up points or to purchase them at CRPCA events. You may also complete the order form (*page 7, this issue*) and have them mailed to you.

This year the committee selected two partners. *The Pangaea Project* is at a launching point in their development. With a little additional support, they anticipate attracting larger grant funding to support their expanded programs. By engaging teenagers from underserved neighborhoods in local and international service-learning projects, The Pangaea Project promotes the development of leadership skills, increases global awareness, and fosters a commitment to work towards social change, profoundly transforming both the participants and their communities. By engaging in activities that have a positive impact on communities, low-income teenagers will feel awakened, valued, and hopeful, resulting in compassionate, empowered, and globally competent leaders.

The *Niger Famine Relief Effort* is being supported by *Friends of Niger* and implemented by *Mercy Corps International*. Mercy Corps has an emergency team on the ground in one of Niger's most famine-stricken areas, helping serve malnourished children and families by improving the quality and reach of critical health care. Their efforts are currently focused in Niger's northern Filingue region, situated about 175 kilometers northeast of the capital, Niamey. Mercy Corps has partnered with a local non-governmental organization called *Appui et Renforcement des Organisations Paysannes* (AROP), translated as *Support and Strengthening of Community Organizations*. These two organizations will

deliver improved health care for Nigerians that are suffering debilitating illnesses due to malnutrition and widespread food shortages. Comprehensive health care and nutrition are critical at this time, especially the therapeutic treatment of severely malnourished children under five years old. Young children account for well over a quarter of the 3.5 million people suffering from extreme hunger throughout Niger. They are suffering from famine as a result of destructive locust swarms and devastating droughts.

You may get calendars from the following people:

- *Richard Ireland* (503-246-0479, SW Portland),
- *Thrina Parent* (503-288-7231 NE Portland), *Lesly Sanocki* (503-690-3391, Beaverton/Hillsboro),
- *Bill Stein* (503-235-9637, SE Portland),
- *Stephanie Tolk* (stephanietolk@gmail.com, North Portland) and
- *Cate Wilcox* (503-777-3578, SE Portland).

If you would like to have them mailed to you, send in the order form (page 5) with a check as indicated on the order form. If you have any questions, call or e-mail *Cate* (cwilcox@teleport.com).

Thanks for your continued support!
Cate Wilcox (Micronesia '87-'89)

"Pieces from Niger"

by Anna Aguilar of Portland (RPCV Niger 1986-89)

One day in November a cry went up in the village. A young boy, Midou came running into my yard, yelling that the locusts were coming back. It was the hottest part of the day and as I walked into the sun I saw them. The locusts fly incredibly high in layer after layer as deep as the eye can see. I watch as they fly over the village. There are so many of them. "This is nothing," Midou says. "When they came the first time they blocked out the sun." Most of the village men and women run to their fields to try to protect the few crops that hadn't been eaten when the locusts came through the first time. One farmer stopped near me to

watch the locusts fly overhead. Mournfully he said to me before leaving for his field: "You should go home, there will be no food here." I was first here in the village of Mondolo as a Peace Corps volunteer in 1986 and now I am back in 2004 for another visit. I notice a man on the plane carrying a map labeled FEWS – the Famine Early Warning System. My first impression of the village is surprise that people have got even thinner. Most of the men and even the older teenage boys have left the village to find work in neighboring countries. The women as usual are overburdened with work. The young children are doing more work than ever before. They are all muscle and too small for their ages.

You would never know that anything was wrong just by looking from the road. From the back of the bush taxi the millet fields look normal. The millet stalks are tall and plentiful. It is only when the villagers take me to their fields that I can see the damage done. They show me that, although all the stalks are standing and the long leaves are untouched, every single bit of the grain has been removed. They show me and they still seem to be bewildered by how such a catastrophe could have happened. How could you not be surprised by watching months of work destroyed by millions of locusts in a matter of minutes? Almost immediately the price of millet sacks start to rise. It goes quickly out of reach of many of the villagers. I remark to the Chief that there is greater interest in starting the vegetable gardening earlier than usual. He replies: "Where there is hunger there is gardening." I join them in the gardening but they do all the hard work: putting up fencing, pulling water from the well, and chopping plots in the rock hard ground. Somehow many of the plants survive. Mondolo is lucky that it is on the road and only a few kilometers from where the government has a grain distribution center in Tondikiwindi. Outside the warehouse wait various groups representing the numerous villages from the surrounding areas. We will wait most of the day for the grain distribution to begin. On the first day Mondolo purchases ten sacks of grain for the entire village. For many days afterwards, the villagers will rise before the morning prayers and head to the warehouse; sometimes they get some grain, sometimes they don't. Always they are using up energy and time trying to secure food. It is unimaginably difficult to see people starving. It is even worse when you know their names and their

stories. The village gets eerily quiet when someone dies. My friends in Niger are amazingly generous to me. They live by the rule that if you have lots of what another person needs then you share with them. I know they will not be surprised if they learn that we are gathered here to help them get the food that they need. It would be more surprising if we didn't give assistance when we could.

[Note: Thanks to all the CRPCA members who attended the Sept 20 fundraiser for famine relief in Niger. Over \$7,000 was raised for Mercy Corps that night, and you can continue to support their efforts by purchasing the Peace Corps calendars. For more information on Niger's food crisis and how you can help, check out <http://www.friendsofniger.org>]

CRPCA Potlucks to resume Sunday, October 9

After a summer hiatus, CRPCA's bimonthly potlucks will resume Oct 9 with a gathering at the home of *Bill & Jenny Stein*, 3322 SE Brooklyn Street in Portland, 503-235-9637. Bring the whole family! (Also, your own chair, if you can.)

Directions: Take SE Division (TriMet, bus 4) or SE Powell (bus 9) to SE 33rd Avenue. Turn south (from Division) or north (from Powell) onto 33rd. From either direction, turn east onto Brooklyn Street at the second stop sign. The house is the third one on the right.

5:00 pm Business Meeting: All are welcome! The agenda will include consideration of redefined officer positions in our *bylaws*, and a discussion of whether CRPCA should support a proposed federal *law to separate Peace Corps from military service*.

6:00 pm Potluck Dinner: Please bring your favorite fall dish to share, along with a drink if you wish. Lively conversation is guaranteed!

7:00 pm Program: *Molly Ola Pinney* of the Global Autism Project will share information about her work with autistic children in Ghana. See <http://www.globalautismproject.org> for advance

exposure to the important work of this organization.

Letters

We are in search of the gal who brought the *Chocolate zucchini bread*, as we'd love to have the recipe! It was so delicious! Please contact me at my email. Thank you!
Laura Montez. (neiroora@hotmail.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

CRPCA OFFICERS

President: Richard Ireland (Haiti '98-'00)
503-246-0479, rireland88@yahoo.com

Secretary: Cate Wilcox (Micronesia '87-'89)
503-777-3578, cwilcox@teleport.com

Membership: Karen Cellarius (Hungary '91-'93)
503-289-3964, karen@cellarius.org

Webmaster: Bill Stein (Niger '90-'93)
503-235-9637, garba@aracnet.com

Restaurant Coordinator: Jenny Tsai (Fiji '90-'92)
503-806-6275, jenn_tsai@hotmail.com.

Advocacy Coordinator: Martin Kaplan (Somalia '62-'64) 503-699- 9833, martinkaplan@comcast.net

Program Coordinator: Laura Montez (Kiribati '97-'99)
neiroora@hotmail.com

Treasurer: Anne Kimberly (Sierra Leone '86-'88)
503-234-4094, anne.kimberly@reed.edu

Newsletter Editor: Dane Pikkola (Swaziland '92-'94)
971-544-1727, crPCA_nl@yahoo.com

Speakers Bureau: Victoria Crumpacker
(Turkmenistan '00-'01) wcrummy@yahoo.com

2006 International Calendar Order form

Sold by Columbia River Peace Corps Association www.crPCA.org

Name

Address

City, State, and Zip

Number of calendars _____ X \$10 = \$

Postage and handling \$ 4 (1-5 calendars)

Total \$

Make checks payable to **CRPCA**. Please send your order and payment to:

Cate Wilcox
4609 SE Mitchell St.
Portland, OR 97206
503-777-3578

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

(Part 2 of 2, from August issue. PCV arrives at homestead, not sure he's up to the task ahead.)

“Our mother” was cooking lipolish, the super stiff porridge made from maize grown on the homestead; the true bread of the Swazi Nation. She greeted me with her big smile and accepted the chicken I brought. It was good to be on homestead again.

In the next room, an old woman I didn't know was busy sprinkling something white along the window sills and across the threshold of the door. When my eyes became accustomed to the dark I discovered it was rice. Siphon informed me she was “our grandmother” and the rice was to keep lightning from entering the house. Considering the door jams and window frames were made of steel, I was not loath to accepting her intervention.

The storm was now fully upon us. Fortunately the lightning favored what was left of the tall gum trees further up the hill, but the deluge of tropical rain showed no such mercy. As we huddled on wooden stools in the middle of the kitchen, it thundered down on the leaky tin roof with such force we had to yell to be heard. (I was thinking we were sitting much too close to the iron stove.) But, grandmother's magic warded off disaster once again and the worst of the storm soon passed. Then I nearly jumped out my skin as the door flew open. Another woman, new to me, burst into the kitchen with the wind. She smiled, greeting me in SiSwati. An “aunt”, as it turned out. We had our quorum.

“Our mother says we must discuss my future,” Siphon said after introductions. The roof-rattling wind was blowing in under the door, so we moved to a more protected room. A candle on the floor provided a little light. I wasn't sure what was expected of me, so I just gazed into the guttering flame and waited. Our mother spoke; Siphon translated.

“Our homestead is very poor.” This was true. More shyly he added, “And I will have no money for lobola.” Ah, right. No lobola, no wife, and bride price wasn't cheap.

“Yes, I understand,” I replied sagely. Again, Siphon translated.

“Our mother says you must decide my profession.”

“Yes, I understand,” I repeated, my confidence dropping. No one spoke. I wasn't sure what a good next move would be, so I simply asked, “What would you like to do?” He hesitated.

“Perhaps I can be a soldier, or a policeman,” he said. “But, I do not know the proper people.”

Siphon, a soldier? A man who had never fired a weapon in his life, who had a hard time killing a chicken? Everyone waited. I now understood. This was completely my responsibility.

“What would you really like to do, if you could have any profession you wanted?” I prodded, stalling for time. No answer, but I knew the last thing he wanted was to swagger around with a Kalashnikov. Then, a little light came on.

“Siphon, I've watched you working on your uncle's taxi, and you fixed the hand mill when I thought it couldn't be fixed, and you repaired my shoes. I think you would make a very fine mechanic.” It was just a shot, but it must have been the answer to a prayer, because he lit right up!

“Yes, Vusi, I would like that very much. I am good at fixing things.” He thought for a moment. “But, how? I do not know the proper people.”

Now, with renewed confidence, I forged ahead.

“The head administrator at the trades school in Nhlanguano is a friend of mine; he used to be in Peace Corps. You're a good worker and you're honest. I'm sure we can get you in.” Concern crossed his brow. “And,” I added, “I'll pay your application fee. The rest could be paid by bursary.”

That did it. I had made a decision for the family and there were smiles all around. With that settled, our mother left the room and returned with the steaming lipolish and chicken. We ate. It was delicious.

CRPCA Calendar of Events 2005-2006

All events take place in Portland, OR unless otherwise specified
(Current as of 9/26/2005. Check www.crPCA.org for most current version)

Continuing this year:

- Movie Night: On months with no potluck. See newsletter and website for upcoming dates.
- Hosted Soirees: Join CRPCA at the Soiree and get a free beverage.

Returning this year:

- Programs at Potlucks: Starting at 7 pm on Potluck night, presenters will talk about projects, trips, and activities of interest to RPCVs. Coordinator: Laura Montez, neiroora@hotmail.com, 503-674-3584
-

October

Oct 05-Feb 06, Peace Corps Calendar Sales. Contact: Cate Wilcox at 503-777-3578. Proceeds to benefit Niger Famine Relief (thru Mercy Corps) and the Pangaea Project's first group of inner city youth to study abroad.
Sunday, 10/9, 5 pm, CRPCA Potluck Meeting, 5 pm Meeting, 6 pm Dinner, 7pm Program TBA. Location: Bill Stein's house, 3322 SE Brooklyn, 503-235-9637
Mon., 10/31, 6:30 pm, Soiree at Lucky Labrador Brew Pub, SE 9th and Hawthorne. (Soirees are informal gatherings on the last Monday of every month at the Lucky Lab. Look for us in the front room.) Host: Dane Pikkola.

November

Thursday, 11/10, 6:30 pm. Restaurant Gathering and Movie Night. Location TBD. RSVP Jenny Tsai 503-806-6275, or email jenn_tsai@hotmail.com
Mon., 11/28, 6:30 pm, Soiree at Lucky Labrador Brew Pub, SE 9th and Hawthorne. Host: Cate Wilcox.

December

Sunday, 12/11, 5:00 pm. CRPCA Potluck Meeting (5:00 meeting, 6:00 dinner), at the home of Rosemary Furfey, 7022 SW 33rd, 503-245-0819.

No Soiree due to the year end holiday season, but look what's happening on January 7th!

January 2003

Saturday, January 7th, 6:30 pm. CRPCA Post-Holiday Party
We've rented out the upstairs room! Bring a gift for the white elephant exchange. Location: Lucky Lab in SW Portland, 7675 SW Capitol Hwy. Contact: Karen Cellarius 503-289-3964.

Saturday, 1/14. NW Regional Meeting in Eugene, OR. Meet members of other RPCV groups around the NW.

Monday, 1/30, 6:30 pm, Soiree at Lucky Labrador Brew Pub, SE 9th and Hawthorne. Host: Jenny Tsai

February

Sunday, 2/12, 5 pm, CRPCA Potluck Meeting, 5 pm Meeting, 6 pm Dinner, 7pm Program TBA. Location: Elizabeth Samuels. 3739 SW Hillside Dr. Portland OR 97221, 503-228-7706.

Monday, 2/27, 6:30 pm, Soiree at Lucky Labrador Brew Pub, SE 9th and Hawthorne. Host: Victoria Crumpacker.

March

Feb 27-March 5. Peace Corps Week (45th Anniversary Kick off!). RPCVs speak in local classrooms. RPCVs and teachers contact Victoria Crumpacker (Turkmenistan 00-01) at wcrummy@yahoo.com or 503-288-9200 if interested. Register for a free presentation kit at www.peacecorps.com/rpcv/peacecorpsday

Monday, 3/27, 6:30 pm, Soiree at Lucky Labrador Brew Pub, SE 9th and Hawthorne. Host: Dane Pikkola.

April

Sunday, 4/9, 5 pm, CRPCA Potluck Meeting, 5 pm Meeting/Selection of new officers, 6 pm Dinner, 7pm Program TBA. Location: Jenny Tsai, 2944 NW Raleigh St, 503-806-6275.

Monday, 4/24, 6:30 pm, SW Portland LOCATION! Nom Party and Soiree at West Side Lucky Labrador Brew Pub, 7675 SW Capitol Hwy. Meet newly nominated Peace Corps Volunteers as they prepare for their great adventure. CRPCA Annual Awards will also be presented at this event.

May

Sunday, May 1. New CRPCA Officers take office.

Monday, 5/30, 6:30 pm, Soiree at Lucky Labrador Brew Pub, SE 9th and Hawthorne. Host: Cate Wilcox.

June

Sunday, 6/11, 5 pm, CRPCA Potluck Meeting, 5 pm Meeting, 6 pm Dinner, 7pm Program TBA. Location: TBD

Monday, 6/26, 6:30 pm, Soiree at Lucky Labrador Brew Pub, SE 9th and Hawthorne. Host: Rich Ireland.

July

Sunday, 7/16: CRPCA Picnic, Location TBD. Contact: Linda Oh 503-645-8825

Monday, 7/31, 6:30 pm, Soiree at Lucky Labrador Brew Pub, SE 9th and Hawthorne. Host: Martin Kaplan.

August

Thurs-Sun, 8/??, NW Regional Campout in Idaho. Hosted by Boise RPCVs.

Monday, 8/28, 6:30 pm, Soiree at Lucky Labrador Brew Pub, SE 9th and Hawthorne. Host: Bill Stein

September

Sunday, 9/17, 2:30-4:30 pm, CRPCA Calendar Planning Meeting, Multnomah County Central Library (801 SW 10th Ave).

Monday, 9/25, 6:30 pm, Soiree at Lucky Labrador Brew Pub, SE 9th and Hawthorne. Host: Dane Pikkola.

Other events from the past:

Let us know if you are interested in coordinating and we can add them to the calendar. Email Rich Ireland at rireland88@yahoo.com or 503 246 0479:

- Annual Dinner and Silent Auction (November)
- OPB Fundraising in early December
- Fall and Spring volunteer days
- Starlight Parade (May/June)
- Salem World Beat Festival (June)
- Global Portland Festival (September)

CRPCA 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

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

_____ \$50 CRPCA and NPCA (Individual)

_____ \$65 CRPCA and NPCA (Family)

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

Low Income / Living Lightly

Membership in CRPCA only.

_____ \$15 CRPCA only (Individual)

_____ \$22.50 CRPCA only (Family)

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