

Columbia River Peace Corps Association

Bringing the World Back Home

Vol. 28, Issue 6

NEWSLETTER

www.crpca.org

November 2008

* * Editor's Note: The newsletter format is in transition. Watch for a new look in December. * *

PRESIDENT'S CORNER - *Richard Ireland* (rireland88@yahoo.com)

As always, I am greatly energized by the people this organization supports. The life of service you took on in foreign countries inspires me and working with you is a delight.

At our October Potluck we ate well and had wonderful sharing. Thank you to Linda Centurion for her gracious hospitality. We kicked off the program year with a very information talk by Madeleine Mader about how the layers of local government work and ways to get involved locally. We have started a new approach to our Potlucks to focus on looking at the Third Goal through being involved in our domestic community. Check out the topics later in the newsletter.

CRPCA officers voted at our October meeting to provide \$200 to Portland's Cascade Festival of African Films to bring the documentary film "Death of Two Sons" to town in February 2009. The film, produced and directed by two RPCVs, is about the life and death of Amadou Diallo and Peace Corps Volunteer Jesse Thyne and the resulting movements they inspired. We believe the festival, with free admission to all films, is a Portland treasure!

Jessica Mathews represented us at the annual National Peace Corps Association Group Leaders Conference in San Francisco on October 4th.

We are seeking a Web Master to revamp the current web site. We have had a number of ideas batted around about making it more useful. Any web geeks who want to participate, let me know!

Many thanks to Josh for his excellent term as newsletter editor! Madeleine is the new editor. We are in the midst of planning on making some changes and look forward to her contributions.

Stay tuned for our first community service opportunity. Our Co-Coordinators Brandan and Jessica will be sending out a survey to see what we want to do.

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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, please visit www.crpca.org. Newsletter submissions are due by the 20th of each month. Send by mail to P.O. Box 802, Portland, OR 97207, or e-mail to: crpca_nl@yahoo.com.

COMMUNITY SERVICE UPDATE

Jessica Mathews (jrosemathews@gmail.com) and **Brendan Williams** (kenyanwilli@yahoo.com)
Service Co-Coordinator

The officers of the Columbia River Peace Corps Association have decided to focus our group volunteer energy around one chosen organization for the upcoming year. The service coordinators, Brendan Williams and Jessica Mathews, are currently in the process of choosing that organization. We are exploring our options and will soon be asking you to identify your preferences of activities from a handful of opportunities.

Many members completed an online survey in August that demonstrated our member's interests in regards to service activities. Their preferences varied greatly in the types of organizations they'd wish to be involved with, so we are looking into a variety of ideas offered in the survey. The results also indicated that our members prefer Saturday and Sunday mornings or afternoons, with the possibility of occasional weekday evening activities. We will initially hold a service activity every other month, due to member's suggested availability. Member's generally agreed to participate in activities anywhere within the Portland metro area. And the most likely reason for not getting involved reportedly was that member's feel they are too busy or the day and time wouldn't work with their schedule.

Stay tuned for the upcoming survey where YOU will have the ability to help decide where WE will focus our energies for the next year! We look forward to seeing you all out there, getting involved, volunteering to make a difference. Please find the time in your busy schedules, if at all possible, to come join us once we get rolling!! Questions and suggestions? We'd love to hear from you.

POTLUCK DINNER and DISCUSSION

Madeleine Mader, Program Coordinator (mgmader@yahoo.com)
The Third Goal: Continuing to Serve Back Home

Many people join Peace Corps because they want to make a difference, however small, and to have a profound cross-cultural experience. Peace Corps Volunteers serving in diverse communities across the developing world are highly engaged and connected to local leaders and to people who affect change. They often know the chiefs, the mayors, and the formal and informal leaders in their communities as they live a life of service teaching, mentoring, training, planning, and building capacity.

The discussion topics at this year's potlucks will help us bring our world of service back home and help us stay involved in issues that matter to us. The topics will help us engage and connect to our local and regional community.

The Sunday potlucks hosted by RPCVs are one of the Columbia River Peace Corps Association's best-loved traditions. Each potluck is followed by a presentation and discussion on a topical issue. The CRPCA board meeting, open to all, precedes the potluck. Board meeting: 5:00 to 6:00 p.m., potluck dinner: 6:00 to 7:00 p.m. Discussion: 7:00 to 8:00 p.m.

In October we looked at what local government does (City, County and Metro)

The remaining schedule is December 14th Regional Health Equity; February 8th Energy and Peak Oil; April 19th Regional Water and the Bull Run Watershed; June 14th Food Security. For locations, please check out the calendar of events. Everyone is welcome. These are children-friendly events! If you have any ideas for future topics and presenters, please get in touch at mgmader@yahoo.com

TWO NEW BOARD MEMBERS

Brendan Williams, Community Service Co-Coordinator (kenyanwilli@yahoo.com)

Brendan grew up in Connecticut and joined Peace Corps after graduating from the University of Connecticut. As a Small Enterprise Development volunteer in rural Kenya from 2002 to 2005, he worked as a business strategies advisor and supported a community-based organization to improve its development programs. In 2006 Brendan met his girlfriend Jessica at an RPCV meeting in Anchorage, Alaska. Since their move to SE Portland in September 2007, they've been sharing their stories and making great friends at the Columbia River RPCV group events.

Jessica Mathews, Community Service Co-Coordinator (jrosemathews@gmail.com)

Jessica grew up in Anchorage, Alaska with an outdoorsy family, skiing in winters and hiking in summers. She earned a Bachelor's Degree in Sociology and Elementary Education from Colorado College in Colorado Springs, CO. She served as a Peace Corps Volunteer in Thailand from 2004-06 supporting the Teacher Collaboration and Community Outreach Project empowering Thai English teachers to use student-centered in teaching approaches. Jessica enjoyed the thrills and challenges of Peace Corps, along with the "sabai" (relaxed) nature of Thailand. After she completed her commitment, she did tsunami relief work with Burmese refugees in Southern Thailand; the most rewarding experience of her life thus far. After returning from Thailand, Jessica taught in Anchorage for a little over a before relocating to Portland with her boyfriend Brendan Williams. She works for The Pacific Northwest Research Institute researching Type 1 diabetes. Jessica loves Portland and is very happy they decided to move here. As much as she loves Alaska, she's enjoying the culture and the weather here infinitely more, regardless of everyone else's complaints!

NATIONAL PEACE CORPS ANNUAL MEETING – Jessica Mathews

In early October I represented the CRPCA at the National Peace Corps Association's Annual Meeting and Leadership Conference in San Francisco. It was a lively day full of National Peace Corps Association and Peace Corps related topics.

The More Peace Corps Campaign's goal is to strengthen and rejuvenate the Peace Corps before the 50th Anniversary – Bigger, Bolder, Better. Peace Corps' annual budget is \$330 million. This is less than the military spends on marching bands! The campaign is creating a buzz to mobilize thousands of people to advocate for increasing the budget, enhancing innovation, and raising Peace Corps' profile. The campaign coordinator reported that dozens of house parties were held in September. The October edition of Worldview magazine focuses on the campaign. Check it out: www.morepeacecorps.org

There is planning underway to create a virtual community by replacing the current NPCA web site with a social networking. It's sort of like Facebook meets website, meets action center. It would provide resources to help RPCVs to get involved in their community and Third Goal activities. The projected launch date is January 2009. Some people in attendance did not like the idea of NPCA spending money on something they would not use. Why not just use Facebook? The new site would be specifically for RPCVs. What will happen to membership dues if access is free? Online free access doesn't mean people won't still get involved and pay dues.

The 50th Anniversary of Peace Corps (coming up in 2011). Planning is underway for a significant celebration on The Mall in Washington DC including people from around the world. Be on the look out for opportunities to get involved and plan ahead to attend!

Updates from Peace Corps Headquarters - The budget is very tight in part because of several years of a weak US dollar. The regional offices in Minneapolis and Denver have closed. Four hundred fewer 400 volunteers were fielded than planned because of budgetary factors, but also because two Peace Corps countries closed and many of the volunteers were reassigned filling positions that were originally for new volunteers. Peace Corps is considering new recruiting models such as Teach for America's approach, with more recruiters, in more locations working independently, and possibly eliminating regional offices altogether.

Bills in Congress - The \$15 million Volunteer for Prosperity and Global Services Fellowship bill (Senate Bill 2609) is sponsored by Senators Feingold and Coleman. It provides opportunities to serve for shorter periods of time, to cooperate with organizations and create new models for Peace Corps.

The Volunteer for Prosperity Kennedy-Hatch bill was designed as a gesture for the Service Nation Summit that took place in New York City on September 11, 2008. The two presidential candidates supported the bill publicly at the summit and promised to vote for it if elected.

Peace Corps Online www.peacecorpsonline.com is a site independent of Peace Corps for Peace Corps related news. Check it out!

Please let me know if you have any questions or comments. I'd be happy to respond.

MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

Welcome to our new and renewing members! Liz Sampson (Joined Peace Corps in 9/08), Linda Erickson (Liberia 71-74) and spouse Paul Erickson.

UPDATE YOUR PEACE CORPS CONTACT INFORMATION

The Peace Corps will be conducting its fourth decennial RPCV survey and would like to have the most current contact information for all Returned Volunteers. To update your record, go to:

<https://www.peacecorps.gov/index.cfm?shell=resources.former.staycon.updaterec>

Alternatively, you can submit your contact information by mail to:

RPCV Database Manager
Peace Corps Domestic Programs
1111 20th Street NW
Washington, DC 20526

Please provide your name in service as well as country and years of service.

PUBLICATIONS and RESOURCES

The Brookings Institution published *Ten Times the Peace Corps: A Smart Investment in Soft Power*. The paper--part of the Global Policy Briefs series--is available for downloading on the [Brookings website](http://www.brookings.edu/papers/2008/09_peace_corps_rieffel.aspx) [http://www.brookings.edu/papers/2008/09_peace_corps_rieffel.aspx].

EVENTS: CONNECT, BUILD FRIENDSHIPS and CONTINUE TO SERVE

Brenda Michel, Secretary (Brenda.Michel@kpff.com)

- **Soirées at the Lucky Lab Brew Pub:** Join RPCVs the last Monday of every month from 6:30 p.m. on for a “soirée” among friends. It’s a great way to link up with other RPCVs, hear interesting stories from around the world, and grab a beer and a bite to eat among good company. Located at 915 SE Hawthorne Blvd. Kids ok until 9 p.m. Find us in the front room.
- **Potluck and Discussion:** Usually the second Sunday every other month. CRPCA business meeting is from 5 to 6 p.m.; potluck dinner 6 to 7 p.m.; and discussion from 7 to 8 p.m.
- **Restaurant Gatherings:** Dine at one of the many international restaurants. Sometimes make an evening of it by picking a film to share afterwards. Contact Dane at dane9@yahoo.com.
- **Nomination Party.** Meet and encourage prospective Peace Corps Volunteers who have been recently nominated to serve.
- **Annual Summer Picnic** in July takes place in a local park.
- **Campouts** in Oregon and the Northwest with local and regional RPCV groups.
- **Annual Fundraising Events** in support of one or more international projects.
- **Community Service Projects.** Continue to serve. Think globally, act locally.

November 2008

Thu. Nov 6 - Restaurant Gathering. Location to be determined.

Mon. Nov 24 - Lucky Lab Brew Pub Soirée, 6:30 p.m., 915 SE Hawthorne Blvd. Kids ok until 9 p.m.

December 2008

Sun. Dec 14 - Potluck and Discussion. CRPCA business meeting is from 5 to 6 p.m.; potluck dinner 6 to 7 p.m.; and presentation and discussion on Regional Health Equity 7 to 8 p.m. Location to be determined.

Mon. Dec 29 - Lucky Lab Brew Pub Soirée, 6:30 p.m., 915 SE Hawthorne Blvd. Kids ok until 9 p.m.

January 2009

Sat. Jan 10 - Holiday White Elephant Extravaganza. Location TBD. Be thinking of something from home you’d lovingly like to give... or unload!

Mon. Jan 26 - Lucky Lab Brew Pub Soirée, 6:30 p.m., 915 SE Hawthorne Blvd. Kids ok until 9 p.m.

February 2009

Sun. Feb 8 – Potluck and Discussion. Business meeting 5-6 p.m.; Dinner 6-7 p.m.; Program 7-8 p.m. Hosted by Anne Kimberly, 4261 SE Alder St, Portland 97205. Topic: Energy and Peak Oil.

Mon. Feb 23 - Lucky Lab Brew Pub Soirée, 6:30 p.m., 915 SE Hawthorne Blvd. Kids ok until 9 p.m.

March 2009

Mon. Mar 30 - Lucky Lab Brew Pub Soirée, 6:30 p.m., 915 SE Hawthorne Blvd. Kids ok until 9 p.m.

April 2009

Sun. April 19 - Potluck and Discussion. Business meeting 5-6 p.m.; Dinner 6-7 p.m.; Program 7 to 8 p.m.

Hosted by Cate Wilcox, 4609 SE Mitchell St, Portland. Topic: Water and the Bull Run Watershed

Mon. April 27 - Lucky Lab Brew Pub Soirée, 6:30 p.m., 915 SE Hawthorne Blvd. Kids ok until 9 p.m.

May 2009

Mon. May 4 - Lucky Lab Brew Pub Soirée, 6:30 p.m., 915 SE Hawthorne Blvd. Kids ok until 9 p.m.

Thu. May 7 - Restaurant Gathering. Location: contact Dane at dane9@yahoo.com

June 2009

Sun. June 14 - Potluck and Discussion. Business meeting 5-6 p.m.; Dinner 6-7 p.m.; Hosted by Jessica Mathews and Brendan Williams. Program 7 to 8 p.m.

Topic: Food Security.

June 26 and 27 - Summer Camp-Out at Indian Henry Campground _Mt Hood National Forest. (Group Site #D008). Close enough to home so folks can come for the day, if they don't want to camp.

Mon. June 29 - Lucky Lab Brew Pub Soirée, 6:30 p.m., 915 SE Hawthorne Blvd. Kids ok until 9 p.m.

July 2009

Sun. July 12 - Summer Picnic. Location TBD. Potluck. Fun. KIDS!

Mon. July 27 - Lucky Lab Brew Pub Soirée, 6:30 p.m., 915 SE Hawthorne Blvd. Kids ok until 9 p.m.

August 2009

Early August - Annual Regional Camp-Out. Location TBD. More info about where and when forthcoming.

Mon. Aug 31 - Lucky Lab Brew Pub Soirée, 6:30 p.m., 915 SE Hawthorne Blvd. Kids ok until 9 p.m.

September 2009

Mon. Sept 28 - Lucky Lab Brew Pub Soirée, 6:30 p.m., 915 SE Hawthorne Blvd. Kids ok until 9 p.m.

CONTACT US – CRPCA Board Members

President:

Richard Ireland, Haiti 1998-2000
503-246-0479, rireland88@yahoo.com

Program Coordinator and Newsletter Editor:
Madeleine Mader, Cameroon 1984-1986

Secretary:

Brenda Michel, Sierra Leone 1986-1988
503-408-6933, Brenda.Michel@kpff.com

Service Co-Coordinator:

Jessica Mathews, Thailand 2004-2006
971-678-8510, jrosemathews@gmail.com

Treasurer:

Cate Wilcox, Micronesia 1987-1989
503-777-3578, cwilcox@teleport.com

Service Co-Coordinator:

Brendan Williams, Kenya 2002-2005
971-678-8509, kenyanwilli@yahoo.com

Education Coordinator: Vacant. Please apply!

Membership Coordinator:

Jim Maddry, Sierra Leone 1986-1988
503-288-3046, crpca_memb@earthlink.net

Social Coordinator:

Dane Pikkola, Swaziland 1992-1994
971-544-1727, dane9@yahoo.com

Mentoring Coordinator:

Nicora Gardner, Mongolia 2004-2006
503-548-7674, nicora.gardner@gmail.com

Webmaster:

Brian Hobbs, Ukraine 2003-2005

MEMBERSHIP -- ADDRESS CHANGE -- RENEWAL FORM

CRPCA’s \$20 dues confer full membership on one or two named adults sharing an address. NPCA’s \$35 dues are per individual. CRPCA urges you to support both organizations. Membership is open to all and your contributions are tax-deductible.

| | Member 1 | Member 2 |
|--|--|--|
| Name | | |
| Address | | |
| City, State, Zip | | |
| Home Phone | | |
| Work Phone | | |
| Cell Phone | | |
| Email | | |
| Country and Years of Service | | |
| PC Job Assignment | | |
| Current Occupation | | |
| Willing to talk about your Peace Corps experience. Check. | <input type="radio"/> Speakers’ Bureau | <input type="radio"/> Speakers Bureau |
| I’m interested in participating in the mentor program. Check | <input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No | <input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No |

Columbia River Peace Corps Association

One free year is offered to all Returned Peace Corps Volunteers (RPCVs) residing in our geographic area who were never previously members of CRPCA and who agree to receive newsletters by e-mail.

Annual CRPCA Dues: \$20 FREE initial year membership Newsletter format paper email

National Peace Corps Association

NPCA Annual Dues: \$35 Member 1 \$35 Member 2

Check FREE box for one free year offered to those who closed their service within the last year.

Please mail this form with a check made out to CRPCA for the total of the circles you checked to:

CRPCA, P.O. Box 802, Portland, OR 97207

Columbia River Peace Corps Association
 P.O. Box 802
 Portland, OR 97207

Mail To: