



Columbia River Peace Corps Association

Serving our community. Engaging the world.

NEWSLETTER

June 2010

Vol. 30, Issue 6

www.crpca.org

CRPCA Plans Another Awesome Summer by Bill Stein, President

Whether we chose to move to the Pacific Northwest or chose to stay here after growing up here, one thing I think we all share is our appreciation for the best summers on planet Earth. As our region's rains begin to let up, CRPCA's activities naturally move from indoors to outdoors. The point of this month's rah-rah text is to get folks excited to participate in some of these great activities.

This summer CRPCA is hosting both a local campout at Champoeg 6/25-6/27 and a West regional campout at Crane Prairie 8/12-8/16. We've reserved group seating at a Portland Beavers baseball game 6/20 and a Portland Timbers soccer game 7/10. Mitch Auerbach is leading a hike with great views of Mt Hood on 7/05. We're again inviting Peace Corps nominees to our annual picnic at Washington Park 7/17. We'll also bicycle over Portland's bridges in Bridge Pedal 8/08, and we're planning a group tour of the Bull Run watershed (probably 10/02).

Neither the campouts nor the ballgames are fully subscribed at this writing. Please sign up today, as two of these events are in June. Follow the prominent links at <http://www.crpca.org> or use the contact info associated with each event as listed in this newsletter.

One thing that won't change as we move outdoors is the awesome sharing that takes place at our events. This year I've heard remarkable stories about cultural practices in Sierra Leone, misadventures in Russian-built airplanes, and life on a remote island in Tonga. Who knows what gems await you at the next CRPCA event you attend?



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The Columbia River Peace Corps Association Newsletter is published monthly by the CRPCA for the benefit of its members. The CRPCA serves Returned Peace Corps Volunteers and others in Oregon and southwest Washington who share an interest in serving the cause of peace and global development.

To join CRPCA and/or the National Peace Corps Association, please 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 by e-mail to: newsletter@crpca.org.

RPCV Filmmaker Seeks RPCVs to Profile

Allen Mondell (RPCV Sierra Leone), a filmmaker based in Texas, contacted CRPCA seeking an RPCV he can feature in his forthcoming documentary tentatively entitled, "Waging Peace: Letters from the Peace Corps." Here is the text he sent:

The film will focus on the experiences of a few former volunteers who continue to promote the values long associated with Peace Corps service. We will highlight those former volunteers who are now working in education, public service, environmental stewardship, or human rights. Through compelling visuals and one-of-a-kind stories, we will put a face on those volunteers who signed on to make a difference overseas, and who are now making a difference in their own communities across the U.S. For instance:

- Someone who is articulate, with both a natural ability to communicate and a charismatic personality who would feel comfortable speaking on-camera.
- Someone who has a visually interesting job, volunteer role, or even an artistic endeavor that promotes the values associated with Peace Corps.
- Someone who has maintained a close relationship with their Peace Corps community, fellow volunteers, and who has kept visual material (journals, letters, photos, videos) from their overseas assignment.
- Someone who plans on returning to their community within the coming year.

If you or an RPCV friend anywhere in the USA is interested in participating in this project, please contact Allen at allen@mediaprojects.org or 214-826-3863. Also check out the [Media Projects web page](#).

Welcome to New Members

Emily Harrington and Dennis Vilorio, Panama 2007-2009; Eric Hasham, Nepal, 1995-1997; Patty Lyons, Jamaica, 2006-2008; Katherine Tremont, Nominee.

Seeking Volunteers for August Campout

Seeking Saturday dinner planning volunteers for the NW Regional Campout, August 12-16. As hosts, CRPCA is providing dinner on Saturday. Help us plan the meal! Contact: Karen Cellarius, 503-998-5572, karen@cellarius.org. (Even if you can't help with planning, please join us for this fun 4 day event with RPCVs from around the Northwest. Reserve your spots online at <http://www.crpca.org/regional.html>)

Refugee Family Update

by Adrienne Karecki

On May 22nd the Maigre's moved to a much larger apartment at New Columbia. I will be working with IRCO to assess furniture needs for the family. RPCVs and community members have continued to graciously donate food and clothing items, of which the family is greatly appreciative.

Makindu Children's Program

An evening of wine and cheese at Blackbird Wine and Atomic Cheese, located on NE Fremont at 44th, on Wednesday June 16th (about 5:30 to 8:30) will be a fundraiser for the Makindu Children's Program, the Oregon-based supporter of the Makindu Children's Center in east Kenya. Blackbird will donate a portion of the evening's proceeds to MCP. There will be music, raffle items and Kenyan crafts for sale as well. The Center provides core assistance to orphans and vulnerable children and their guardian families in an area about halfway between Nairobi and Mombasa.

Contact: Steve Randolph (Kenya '77-80)
3245 NE 57th Ave
Portland OR 97213
503-419-4177
srandolph@oregonfoodbank.org
www.makindu.org

Summer 2010 CRPCA Events

June 2010

Thursday, 6/03, 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm - Service Activity at the Oregon Food Bank, [7900 NE 33rd Dr](#) in Portland. **RSVP to service@crpca.org** or call Tom at 503-267-3943. Please see our [Service page](#) for additional details.

Saturday, 6/05, 8:30 pm - [Starlight Parade](#). This year we return to marching in Portland's premier community parade. **Contact Rich Ireland (parade@crpca.org or 503-246-0479)** if you'd like to march in country-of-service attire holding the flag of your country-of-service.

Monday, 6/07, 7:00 pm - Restaurant Gathering. [Zien Hong, 5314 NE Sandy Blvd](#) in Portland. Enjoy Vietnamese/Chinese with a bit of Thai items thrown in as well. Street parking is available, plus the restaurant is a 10-15 minute walk from the [Hollywood MAX station](#). It also is served by the [#12 bus line](#). Dinner cost will run about \$10-15 per person and the restaurant also accepts MC and Visa. **RSVP by Fri 6/04** to Mitch Auerbach, social@crpca.org, 503-505-2160.

Wednesday, 6/09, 6:30 pm to 8:00 pm - Book Club. Location at the home of Lee Norris, [3748 SE Salmon St](#) in Portland. The book to read is [Half of a Yellow Sun](#) by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie (2006). Feel free to bring snacks to share.

Saturday, 6/12, 9:00 am to noon - Service Activity: Spruce up [Tryon Creek State Park](#). **RSVP to service@crpca.org. This event will fill up quickly, so please sign up now!** If necessary, you can drop out later. If you know of a good place nearby to meet afterwards, please suggest it to service@crpca.org.

Sunday, 6/13, 5:00 pm to 8:00 pm - Business Meeting, Potluck and Program. Location at the home of Mary Lopez, [1218 SE 53rd Ave](#) (near Hawthorne) in Portland. All are welcome! Here is the draft agenda/schedule:

Time	Agenda Item / Activity
5:00-5:05	Approve 2/6/10, 3/14/10, 4/11/10, 5/16/10 business meeting minutes
5:05-5:10	Budget Update

Time	Agenda Item / Activity
5:10-5:15	Elect 2010-2011 board members Most positions were filled on April 11. The following positions will be open for nominations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Newsletter Editor • Co-Events Coordinator • Co-Social Coordinator
5:15-5:20	Consider funding requests for projector and parade supplies
5:20-5:45	Award summer 2010 grants
5:45-6:00	Provide feedback on new CRPCA website
6:00-7:00	Potluck dinner (please bring a dish to share)
7:00-8:00	Program: Haiti update from Mercy Corps

Sunday, 6/20, 2:05 pm - Portland Beavers baseball game outing, at [PGE Park](#) in Portland. Spend Fathers Day watching the PCL Beavers (AAA affiliate of the San Diego Padres), in possibly the last year of professional baseball in Portland, take on the Tacoma Rainiers (AAA affiliate of the Seattle Mariners), in the company of CRPCA friends. We've reserved 20 tickets in [section 115](#). Tickets are \$12 each; reserve them TODAY by clicking the live link on our website's [Events page](#). On the following page you can choose how many tickets to order, then you can pay by credit card or any other PayPal method. Tom DeMeo (service@crpca.org or 503-267-3943) will mail your tickets to you. Also contact Tom if you'd like to make arrangements to pay by cash or check.



Fri-Sun, 6/25-6/27 - CRPCA's 2nd Annual Local Campout. [Champoeg State Heritage Area](#) (birthplace of the State of Oregon), 30 miles from central Portland. The potluck dinner, open to non-campers, will be at 6pm Sat 6/26. CRPCA member adults \$10, non-member adults \$12, children under 18 FREE. Click over to our [Local Campout web page](#) for info on our group tent sites, how to register, directions, etc.

Monday, 6/28, 6:30 pm - Soirée. An informal gathering at the [Lucky Labrador Brew Pub, 915 SE Hawthorne Blvd](#) in Portland. This is 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. You can usually find us in the front room. Kids welcome until 9pm.

July 2010

Monday, 7/05, 8:30 am - Hike to Mirror Lake and Tom Dick and Harry Mountain. Let's cap the 4th of July holiday with a hike the next day. This 6.5 mile hike (round-trip), with an elevation gain of 1,500 feet has everything: an excellent trail, a lake and stunning views. From the summit of Tom Dick and Harry Mountain, you can view the glaciers on Mount Hood, the adjacent Salmon-Huckleberry Wilderness and Mirror Lake just below. Meet no later than 8:30 am at Gateway Transit Center, [1250 NE 99th Ave](#), accessible via the Blue, Green, and Red MAX lines (note TriMet will be on its Sunday/holiday schedule). We'll arrange carpools in the SE corner of the TriMet parking garage. Note that a Northwest Forest parking pass (\$5/day, \$30/year) is required at the trailhead. Please bring at least two liters of water and lunch, wear synthetic layers (no cotton nor jeans) and carry rain gear, just in case. Also, wear sturdy hiking boots which provide ankle support. Leader: Mitch Auerbach, social@crpca.org, 503-505-2160.

Saturday, 7/10, 7:00 pm - Portland Timbers soccer game outing, at [PGE Park](#) in Portland. Watch the USL Timbers, in the last year before Major League Soccer comes to town, take on the Miami FC Blues, in the company of CRPCA friends. Wear green! We've reserved 15 tickets in [section 121](#). Tickets are \$15 each; reserve them TODAY by clicking the live link on our website's [Events page](#). On the following page you can choose how many tickets to order, then you can pay by credit card or any other PayPal method. Tom DeMeo (service@crpca.org or 503-267-3943) will mail your tickets to you. Also contact Tom if you'd like to make arrangements to pay by cash or check.



Saturday, 7/17, 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm - Annual Picnic, a gathering of RPCVs, Peace Corps nominees, and our families and friends. Washington Park Elephant House, picnic site D on the [park map](#). Take one-way Sherwood Blvd downhill from SW Portland's International Rose Test Garden and find parking near or just downhill from the playground along either side of the street. You can also take TriMet's [Washington Park Shuttle](#) from the Washington Park MAX station; just get off at the Children's Play Park (runs every 15 minutes). Main dishes and salads encouraged for the potluck. We'll provide paper supplies, plastic cutlery, water, and cookies.

Monday, 7/19, 6:30 pm to 8:00 pm - Book Club. Location at the home of Bill Stein, [4308 SE Lexington St](#) in Portland. The book to read is [Riding the Demon: On the Road in West Africa](#) by Niger RPCV Peter

Chilson (1999). Prepare to discuss public transport culture in your country-of-service with the book's author! Feel free to bring snacks to share.

Monday, 7/26, 6:30 pm - Soirée. An informal gathering of RPCVs and like-minded individuals. **Note the change in venue for July!** We're joining Global Sistergoods and the Portland Area Global AIDS Coalition's quarterly happy hour on the mezzanine (upstairs) at Hopworks Urban Brewery, [2944 SE Powell Blvd](#) in Portland. Kids welcome until 9pm; there's a nearby play area.

Thursday, 7/29, 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm - Service Activity at the Oregon Food Bank, [7900 NE 33rd Dr](#) in Portland. **RSVP to service@crpca.org** or call Tom at 503-267-3943 by Mon 7/26. Please see our [Service page](#) for additional details.

August 2010

Sunday, 8/08 - [Bridge Pedal](#), the one day each year that all of Portland's Willamette River Bridges are open to bicycles and pedestrians. CRPCA will participate as a team. More info to follow.

Thu-Mon, 8/12-8/16 - West Regional RPCV Campout, hosted by CRPCA at Crane Prairie group camp near Bend, Oregon. CRPCA member adults \$10, non-member adults \$15, children under 18 FREE. More information is available on our [Regional Campout web page](#).

Thursday, 8/26, 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm - Service Activity at the Oregon Food Bank, [7900 NE 33rd Dr](#) in Portland. **RSVP to service@crpca.org** or call Tom at 503-267-3943 by Mon 8/23. Please see our [Service page](#) for additional details.

Monday, 8/30, 6:30 pm - Soirée. An informal gathering at the [Lucky Labrador Brew Pub](#), [915 SE Hawthorne Blvd](#) in Portland. This is 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. You can usually find us in the front room. Kids welcome until 9pm.

Book Club Update

Thanks to the 18 members who participated in our 2010-2011 book club survey! Each respondent elected to check between 2 and 16 books from a list of 40, and following are the ones that rose to the top.

The top six:

- 11 selected Davis, Wade: *Light at the Edge of the World: A Journey Through the Realm of Vanishing Cultures* (2007)
- 10 selected Bissell, Tom: *Chasing the Sea: Lost Among the Ghosts of Empire in Central Asia* (2004); Davis, Matthew: *When Things Get Dark: A Mongolian Winter's Tale* (2010)
- 8 selected Chilson, Peter: *Riding the Demon: On the Road in West Africa* (1999); Hessler, Peter: *River Town: Two Years on the Yangtze* (2001); Thomsen, Moritz: *Living Poor: A Peace Corps Chronicle* (1969)

We're scheduling five of the six for our book club gatherings in the second half of 2010. We'll discuss *Riding the Demon* (with the author!) on July 19, and we'll put off *Chasing the Sea* until 2011 (when the author can attend!). The other four books will be scheduled for September-December. Stay tuned for the dates, and start reading!

The eight next most popular books will be discussed in 2011:

- 7 selected Chayes, Sarah: *The Punishment of Virtue: Inside Afghanistan After the Taliban* (2006); Herrera, Susana: *Mango Elephants in the Sun: How Life in an African Village Let Me Be in My Skin* (1999)
- 6 selected Everett, Daniel L.: *Don't Sleep, There Are Snakes: Life and Language in the Amazonian Jungle* (2008); Kidder, Tracy: *Mountains Beyond Mountains: The Quest of Dr. Paul Farmer, a Man Who Would Cure the World* (2003); Mann, Charles C.: *1491: New Revelations of the Americas Before Columbus* (2005); Troost, J. Maarten: *The Sex Lives of Cannibals: Adrift in the Equatorial Pacific* (2004); Twain, Mark: *The Innocents Abroad* (1869); Weiss, Philip: *American Taboo: A Murder in the Peace Corps* (2004)

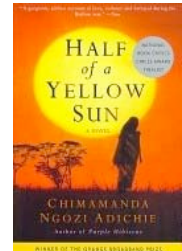
The 16 books selected by 4 or 5 may appear on next year's survey, though in the meantime we're collecting dozens of new titles. The above list should give us plenty of quality reading time over the next year.

CRPCA book club gatherings are really fun and welcoming! Please plan to join us at our next two gatherings!

Wednesday, 6/09, 6:30 pm to 8:00 pm. Location at the home of Lee Norris, [3748 SE Salmon St](#) in Portland. Feel free to bring snacks to share.

[Half of a Yellow Sun](#), by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie (2006)

A masterly, haunting new novel from a writer heralded by The Washington Post Book World as "the 21st-century daughter of Chinua Achebe," *Half of a Yellow Sun* recreates a seminal moment in modern African history: Biafra's impassioned struggle to establish an independent republic in Nigeria, and the chilling violence that followed.

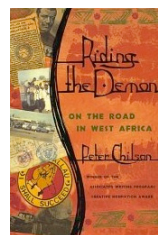


With astonishing empathy and the effortless grace of a natural storyteller, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie weaves together the lives of three characters swept up in the turbulence of the decade. Thirteen-year-old Ugwu is employed as a houseboy for a university professor full of revolutionary zeal. Olanna is the professor's beautiful mistress, who has abandoned her life of privilege in Lagos for a dusty university town and the charisma of her new lover. And Richard is a shy young Englishman in thrall to Olanna's twin sister, an enigmatic figure who refuses to belong to anyone. As Nigerian troops advance and they must run for their lives, their ideals are severely tested, as are their loyalties to one another.

Epic, ambitious, and triumphantly realized, *Half of a Yellow Sun* is a remarkable novel about moral responsibility, about the end of colonialism, about ethnic allegiances, about class and race--and the ways in which love can complicate them all.

Monday, 7/19, 6:30 pm to 8:00 pm. Location at the home of Bill Stein, [4308 SE Lexington St](#) in Portland. Prepare to discuss public transport culture in your country-of-service with the book's author! Feel free to bring snacks to share.

[Riding the Demon: On the Road in West Africa](#), by Peter Chilson (1999)



The raw cultural, political, and economic vitality of West Africa is sought by newcomer Chilson upon Niger's lawless, hair-raising, fickle, murderous--in a word, insane--roads. A freelance rural transportation network props up West Africa's economies. It is overburdened but vital, hideous and intimate, punishing, equalizing, indispensable. It is the bush taxi. Chilson, who spent a couple of Peace Corps years in Niger during the 1980s, returned in 1992 to tap into the bush taxi culture, one that endures in a nation of perpetual

upheaval as a "metaphor for Africa's fight for stability and prosperity." It is also the driver's chance to experience a dollop of freedom and power on roads that are seemingly alive and restless, potentially cruel and violent, and critical expressions of Niger's visceral and spiritual nexus. The cars are the ultimate beaters, little more than mechanical prayers, and the roads are deadly venues, a 100-mile-per-hour free-for-all, where passing on blind curves is a sport and a challenge, and predatory soldiers man roadblocks so common you can see the next from the last. It's not just fun and games though; for Chilson, the roads are "bowls of human soup, microscope slides of society," that afford a glimpse into a world where misfortune is as often as not the work of demons, where out-of-body venturing and hallucinations are, if not common, elemental, and where powerful forces are ready to smite wrongdoers, a valuable containing force in a place gripped by male angst, venality, and religious fervor. Chilson's Virgil is road-savvy Issoufou, a bush cabbie with enough pride in his culture to invite Chilson to take a good look after he has opened doors otherwise locked to [outsiders.to](#) marabouts, the contraband trade, a life lived sur la pointe. If Issoufou offered Chilson "a buffet spread of a nation's economy and politics," Chilson in turns offers it to us, seen through the dark and scary glass of the road.



Richard Rystrom, Carol McCormac Wild, and Anne Kimberly (and Oliver, foreground) enjoy CRPCA's May 24 discussion of Rory Stewart's *The Places in Between*.

50th Anniversary Exhibit Update

26 RPCVs gathered at the Oregon Historical Society (OHS) on the morning of May 22 to discuss the 50th Anniversary of Peace Corps exhibit they're hosting March to May 2011 in concert with the Committee for a Museum of the Peace Corps Experience.



Here's an excerpt from the meeting summary sent by Marsha Matthews, OHS' Director of Public Service...

In discussions of possible exhibit theme goals, we decided that the PCV personal experiences were the central idea around which everything revolves. This means that we need to look at the submissions that have been sent in so far in a slightly different light. Rather than presenting them as examples of cultural artifacts collected in the countries in which you served, you need to think about them as "evidence" of your experiences whether it was a gift from a friend, a teaching tool in your work, a piece that made you happy to look at at the end of a long day...and perhaps the submissions that have been made so far are not the objects that you would choose to illustrate your personal PCV experience - the flashlight that you still have, the shortwave radio you depended on, the bucket that held a week's worth of water - maybe these are the objects that we *also* need to exhibit.

We are asking those who have submitted materials to re-examine what they have submitted and to augment or change their submission with personal experience materials as the group felt that the opportunity to re-think about the objects would be beneficial to the exhibit. If you have not submitted anything so far but now wish to in light of our discussion, now is your opportunity!

...so here's the homework for any CRPCA member who have submitted objects already or those who now want to participate in the exhibit. Note that **submissions are due by July 9 to**

marsha.matthews@ohs.org and that your submission must relate to "something that can be used as evidence." See below for the particulars.

We decided to use the elements as a framework for presenting the PCV experience. The elements loosely follow the 2 year cycle of being a volunteer. The assignment is to think about your personal PCV experience and choose 1-3 stories that fall into any of the following elements listed below. The stories should relate to an object, journal/letter, or a photograph.

Submit a brief summary (full text stories will come later) of your 1-3 choices by JULY 9.

By brief summary, I mean a short paragraph about what your chosen element(s) are, a summary of the story/why you chose it, and the object/document/ photograph that illustrates it. Please send me a digital image attachment (if you have not sent it already).

- Deciding to become a PCV – what motivated you
- Experiences in training
- Assignment
- Housing
- Work experience
- Cultural shock
- Farewell experience
- Return to US – cultural shock
- How did that change what you did when you got back to NW

The exhibit will tell our stories using visual, textual, and audio-visual elements. We need to nail down the visuals before we move on to text and audio-visual elements so other chances to participate are coming. This won't be the only 50th anniversary exhibit in the country next year, but ours will be the best!



2nd Annual Local Campout

CRPCA's [2nd Annual Local Campout](#) will take place **June 25-27, 2010** at [Champoeg State Heritage Area](#), birthplace of the State of Oregon.

Schedule: Check-in 4pm Friday, checkout 1pm Sunday. The potluck dinner will be at 6pm Saturday 6/25.

Our Sites: Our two group sites (Beaver and Heron) will each accommodate 25 people (in tents) and 6 vehicles (no RVs!). Each site has water and electricity. From the group sites, there's a short walk to the parking area or to the pit toilets. Free showers are available in the main campground.

Reservations: You may reserve space for you, your friends, and family on our [Local Campout web page](#). The following page will give you the option to pay by credit card or any other PayPal method. You may also RSVP to Brenda Michel (secretary@crpca.org, 503-408-6933), then pay by cash or check upon arrival. These rates apply to the entire weekend, whether you're staying one or both nights.

- \$10 for CRPCA member adults (up to 2 per household membership)
- \$12 for non-member adults
- FREE for children under 18

Directions:

- 30 miles from central Portland.
- From I-5, take exit 278 and head west. Follow the signs to Champoeg.
- Detailed directions from your location can be generated from the [park's web page](#).
- Once in the park, follow the signs to group tent camping.
- We chose a campground close enough to the Portland metro area so non-campers can come for the big potluck 6pm Saturday evening. Pay the \$5 per vehicle day use fee, park in the Oak Grove day use area, and walk over.

Potential Daytime Activity: [Salem World Beat Festival](#) (28 miles south)

What to Bring:

- Campers: Tents, sleeping pads/bags, stove, lights, and a camp canopy if you have one.
- All: A potluck dish to share (Saturday night), sunscreen, chairs, plates, cups, utensils, and maybe logs for the fire.

Questions: Contact Brenda Michel, secretary@crpca.org, 503-408-6933.

CONTACT US - CRPCA Board Members

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Courtney Martin

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Grants Coordinator:

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