



# PORTLAND NEWSLETTER

FOR

Returned Peace Corps Volunteers of Oregon

June 1990  
Volume 9  
Number 2



## Eating in El Salvador!

You are cordially invited to our June 24th meeting at El Palenque Restaurant. Chalo, the owner, has selected the finest entrées from his El Salvadoran menu just for us. Please call Brenda Michel (666-6292) or Jerry Porter (230-8059) by Friday, June 22, to reserve your seat at the table.



**WHEN:** Sunday, June 24, 1990  
4 o'clock PM

**WHERE:** El Palenque Restaurant  
5738 SE 17th Avenue

The restaurant is 2-3 blocks south of the Kentucky Fried Chicken, which is on the corner of SE 17th and Tacoma, in Sellwood.

**HOW MUCH:** \$10 per person, and includes a 3-entree dinner, 1 El Salvadoran drink, and tip.

**WHO:** You and a friend, buddy, pal, or chum.

**WHAT:** El Salvadoran eats.

**WHY:** Because it will put color in your cheeks.

## August Potluck!

In August we traditionally have a picnic in lieu of a restaurant meeting. If you were at Linda Hendrickson's house for the May potluck/meeting, you heard me bet my life on the existence of picnic tables at Laurelhurst Park. Well, I'm glad I didn't sign anything to that effect because while there's a tiny covered kitchen area adjacent to the restrooms, the tables are canopied by tall trees, no more. Oh Great Spirit, forgive me for my cocky proclamations and spare my life! I humbly suggest we go to Mt. Tabor or the arboretum by the zoo instead. Do mark your calendars for Sunday, the 19th of August. All the details will be forthcoming in the next newsletter. We plan to have "Show-And-Tell" that day. Remember all those stories yet untold because only another PCV could ever appreciate or believe them? Well, reach inside and pull them up -- an eager audience awaits you!

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x

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P.O. Box 802  
Portland, OR 97207

Articles for the July 1990 newsletter should be received by June 28th. Membership is \$7 annually.

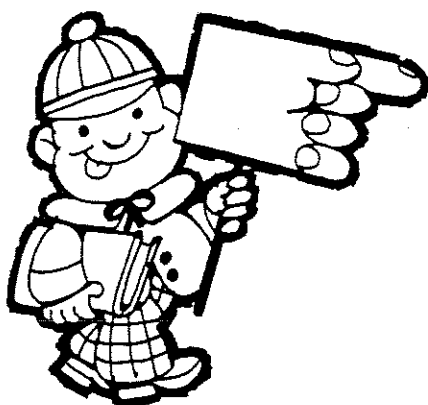


APRIL POTLUCK  
REPORT

Our annual potluck was held on Sunday, April 29, 1990 from 3:30 to 6:30 at the Fulton Park Community Center. Several RPCVs brought items from their Peace Corps experience to decorate the walls. Ira Frankel organized the entertainment and provided the loud speaker system. With persistence he was able to get RPCVs to perform a nice variety of songs and dances learned during their Peace Corps days. Good job, Ira, and thanks to all those who participated.

We had an incredible variety of food to eat, but the most exciting part was the large number of RPCVs, their families, and friends who turned out for the potluck. The Fulton Park Community Center Director stopped counting at 85, so we probably reached 100 in attendance. In large part, we have Brenda and Ira to thank for this because they called all the RPCVs to invite them to come (and, in Ira's case try to get them to perform). For some it was their first RPCV event. Welcome. We hope you join us more often.

Your potluck co-chairs,  
Gabriella & Brenda



MAY PROGRAM MEETING  
REPORT

Our May potluck and program meeting was held May 20th at the home of Linda Hendrickson. About twenty people attended. For the potluck we sampled food from every continent. After a short meeting, our guest presenter, Mariana Bornholdt (university teacher/ Ghana 87-89), showed us slides from the Smithsonian African Art exhibit entitled "Icons of African Art and Power". The slides were divided into four groups: maternal, couples, man, and rides. She had samples from other cultures to make her point: all cultures have their icons; they are just expressed in a different way. Thanks, Mariana, for an interesting presentation.

If you have ideas for a presentation, or you would like to be a presenter at a future program meeting, please call me at 254-5161.

Your Program Coordinator,  
Gabriella



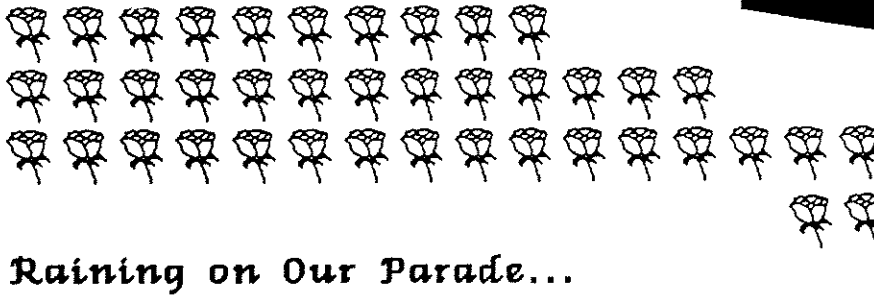
No July Program Meeting  
Let's Meet in Eugene for the  
National Conference!  
July 20-22, 1990

# Don't miss the National Conference in Eugene

by David Arnold, Ethiopia 64-66

Plan now to spend your vacation at the foot of the snow-capped Cascade Mountains, just a 90-minute drive from the Pacific and three hours drive from the High Desert. On July 20th-22nd, the 11th annual National Conference of Returned Peace Corps Volunteers will be held in Eugene, Oregon hosted by the National Council and Eugene's West Cascade RPCVs. The conference, entitled "Peace as Policy," will focus on sustainable development, and preservation of biological and cultural diversity in the Third World.

- ▶ There will be regional and country updates and reunions of an estimated 25 host country "Friends of..." groups.
- ▶ There will be eight sessions on environmental and economic topics, and 20 workshops for lively debate on assorted issues of interest to RPCVs.
- ▶ There will be major speakers from the Third World and the United States, a General Assembly, a Career Fair for job-hunters, an International Fair, five college-level courses offered at the University of Oregon, the making of the Largest Handmade World Map as part of the Global Literacy Campaign, two dances to Latin and African music, a live concert, music around every corner and five lavish meals.
- ▶ Call 503/345-3504 or write to: The 1990 Conference, P. O. Box 5462, Eugene, OR 97405 for information and registration forms.



## Raining on Our Parade...

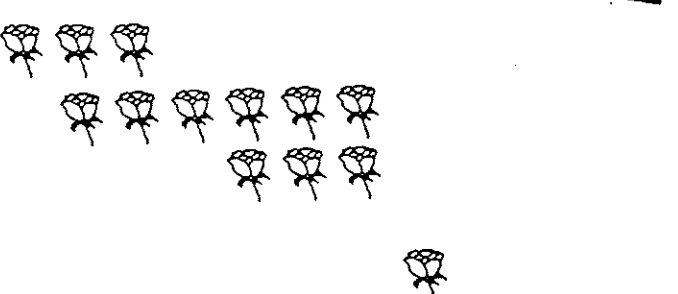
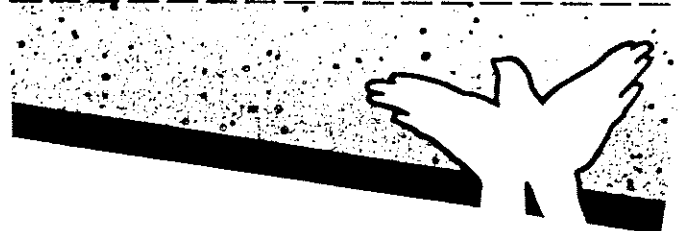
Those of you who valiantly signed up to march in the Starlight Parade are no doubt wondering where we stand on that.... I was told by the receptionist that it is much too late for us this year; the entire process begins in September, almost a year in advance of the event! After an application form, a review committee judges entries. Apparently, competition is fierce and many wannabe's are denied permission to participate. The committee also decides the order of appearance, i.e., who goes first, second, third, etc. I stated matter of factly that I was sure they'd want us, but didn't reveal who "we" were! I've made note of the fact that I'll need to call them again in September to request that the RPCV's of Oregon be

## Come to Eugene

National Conference of  
Returned Peace Corps  
Volunteers  
July 20-22, 1990  
Eugene, Oregon

## Peace as Policy

NAME		
ADDRESS		
CITY	STATE	ZIP
PHONE (DAYS)		(EVENINGS)



put on their official application form mailing list. Once we're in receipt of it, I'll fill you in on the requirements and we'll proceed from there. Perhaps it's not too early to be thinking about (a) spiffy banner(s) for ourselves. Put your Thinking caps on and percolate some ideas. I'm so excited about the 1991 Starlight Parade, I can hardly contain myself. There are lots and lots of RPCV's in Portland. Imagine what a troupe we could be.

Brenda Michel



## THE UNITED STATES PEACE CORPS: NEW OPPORTUNITIES IN THE 1990s

For nearly 30 years, Volunteers of the United States Peace Corps have proven every day that citizen service to others does make a difference. Their work in more than 100 nations has significantly improved the lives of millions of people -- including those of the Volunteers themselves. To respond to the problems, challenges and opportunities of the 1990s, the United States Peace Corps has developed a set of initiatives designed to put our Volunteers in the center of the great concerns of this decade, both overseas and at home.

### INITIATIVES ABROAD

\* **Historic Expansion** - The United States Peace Corps is on the leading edge of dramatic changes taking place in the world today. Upon entry into Poland and Hungary, in June, 1990, Peace Corps will serve in 70 nations -- including half of all developing nations. Within the next 18 months, Peace Corps will enter more new countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America and Europe than in the previous 18 years. Peace Corps can be a catalyst for improving relationships with all countries where there has been a history of tension, suspicion or a lack of communication. Its goal is to have Volunteers serving in virtually every nation that requests legitimate assistance.

#### \* **New Program Initiatives**

\* **Environment** - Destruction of the environment is a serious threat to all life on our planet. Preventing this destruction will become a major objective of our Volunteer efforts worldwide. In September, 1989, the Peace Corps entered into a collaborative agreement with the Environmental Protection Agency under which the EPA will help train Peace Corps Volunteers in pesticide management, waste disposal techniques, water pollution prevention, reforestation and environmental education. The Peace Corps currently has more persons working as natural resource professionals in other countries than any other environmental or conservation organization in the world.

\* **Small Business Development** - With the increasing interdependence among national economies and the rise of market-oriented systems in developing nations, the need to build strong economic foundations in both rural and urban areas is vital. Additionally, increasing life expectancy (up from 53.7 in 1970 to 61.5 in 1990) and increasing urbanization have led to a critical need for jobs formulation. Peace Corps will expand its work in small business development. Volunteers will provide marketing and production advice as well as help improve business techniques for enterprises from farming to banking.

\* **Urban Programs** - Fully 44 percent of the people in developing nations now live in urban areas. By the year 2025 the number of urban residents throughout the world should increase five fold with two-thirds of this growth occurring in the developing world. Rapid urbanization has brought increased health problems, joblessness and a host of other difficulties already familiar to us in this country. As part of Peace Corps' new urban development initiative, Volunteers are being recruited and trained to respond to these new challenges.

\* **Strengthening Traditional Programs** - From the earliest days of the Peace Corps, the vast majority of its Volunteers have worked in the areas of agriculture, education and health.

Historically, **education** has been the single largest program area. Peace Corps instructors have taught more than 5 million people in developing countries to speak English, the international language of commerce. **Eastern European nations, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and many others are looking to Peace Corps to help teach their people better ways to communicate with the rest of the world.**

Thirty-five thousand people die each day worldwide as the result of starvation. Because there is such a desperate need for more and better food, and because agricultural enterprises comprise the largest source of employment and income (37% of GNP) within Peace Corps countries, **agriculture** will remain a significant program area for our Volunteers.

**Health** programs -- from immunization to guinea worm eradication -- will also remain important. More than 14 million children under 5 years of age die each year, with 10 million dying from four major illnesses, preventable by low-cost actions.

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## PC Budget: Is \$181 Million Enough for Expansion?

The 1991 Peace Corps budget is currently being considered by the House Foreign Affairs Committee. All RPCVs need to communicate with your representatives in Washington regarding the budget. Their names and addresses are listed in the "Government" section at the front of your local telephone book.

Even though the figure of \$181 million for Peace Corps represents a \$12 million increase over the 1990 budget figure, most of the new dol-

lars are targeted at eastern Europe.

There is considerable concern that existing funds will be siphoned off to support Peace Corps' entry into Hungary, Poland and Czechoslovakia.

In your letters, encourage support for a budget which will allow existing programs be strengthened, with sufficient funds be allocated for Peace Corps to return to countries in regions where we already have some history and experience.





Bringing The World Back Home

## WORLD WISE SCHOOLS

Surveys show many Americans, particularly the young, have a serious lack of knowledge of geography, language and other cross-cultural subjects due to the low priority these subjects are given in basic education curriculums. unwittingly we are restricting our future ability to compete, jeopardizing our standing in a world rapidly growing more sophisticated.

In 1989, U.S. Peace Corps Director, Paul D. Coverdell, created the *World Wise Schools* program, which brings the first-hand geographic and cross-cultural expertise of Peace Corps volunteers serving overseas directly into the elementary and junior high school classrooms of the United States. Through the exchange of letters, artwork, artifacts, and other educational materials, the volunteer becomes a window through which American students can view and experience new countries and cultures. This will ultimately link 6,300 PCVs in 66 nations with a classroom in the USA.

Teachers throughout the United States may participate in the *World Wise Schools* program by completing a simple form. They are encouraged to request a particular Peace Corps country or region with which to be linked in order that the program have maximum relevance to the teachers' current lesson plans. Sometimes it is possible to link a school with a volunteer from the same town.

Materials provided by the volunteer may apply to more than one academic subject or classroom, such as science, geography, foreign languages, social studies, history, art, etc. Materials about other Peace Corps countries, describing a variety of training programs, are also provided on a routine basis from Peace Corps administrative offices in Washington, DC.

## University Fellows Program

The Board of Education of New York City, Columbia University, and private donors such as Xerox, are working together to bring the teaching skills, cross-cultural sensitivities, and "can do" approach of recently returned Peace Corps Volunteers to children in Harlem and the South Bronx. In return for 2-year teaching commitments to inner-city schools, former volunteers receive 1) fellow-ships to Columbia University Teachers College, 2) university-subsidized housing, 3) yearly Board of Education salaries, and upon completion of the program, 4) professional accreditation.

Organized in 1985 to strengthen math and science education, the program has had many successes. One RPCV was named New York City's Rookie Teacher of the Year, and nine others were cited for excellence by President Reagan. Students of one RPCV had the highest passing rate in the Regents Chemistry Examination of any class in the school during the past 15 years. Another RPCV fellow had the school's highest attendance rate, and a student of another became a national finalist in the Westinghouse Science Competition!

Accustomed to improvising overseas, Peace Corps Fellows have a high tolerance for shortages of textbooks, supplies, and equipment. Board of education officials also believe the Fellows enrich their classrooms with their experiences from Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Board Director Gerald Brooks says, "They often come in with a greater understanding of, and empathy for, children who are poor, and their attitudes permeate the classroom."

Peace Corps wants to increase the number of RPCVs working with at-risk children by replicating the New York City program in other school systems and universities. For information:

Office of Private Sector Relations  
United States Peace Corps  
1990 K Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20526  
(202) 245-6360



# From the National Council



NATIONAL COUNCIL OF  
RETURNED PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEERS  
1319 F Street, NW, Suite 900 • Washington, DC 20004  
(202) 393-5501



Linda Gray

Dear RPCV Group Members:

On March 1, I began my duties as the new Executive Director of the National Council of Returned Peace Corps Volunteers, replacing Timothy Carroll. Recently returned from overseas, I was attracted to this position by past Council events, such as the 25th Anniversary celebration and the Journals of Peace, which had evoked deep feelings as I read of them from afar. I doubt that any of us realized when we entered Peace Corps to what extent that experience would stay with us and become a part of us. The response of RPCV's from everywhere to the call of these and other National Council events revealed the universality of the "Peace Corps effect" on each of our lives. It also gave us a first glimpse at the power we could wield as a united force.

During my service in three Peace Corps countries a common refrain of disappointment has been, "But I'm receiving so much more here than I'm giving." The answer of course is that the opportunity to give, to serve, will be there the rest of our lives, and that our Peace Corps experience was the training ground for our life's service. And the National Council has carried that answer further, at least for me, by showing the value of and beginning the process of bringing us together.

Thus the challenge I accept with this job is to further the building of a cohesive body from this assortment of open-minded, idealistic and informed people. The coordination of National Council goals and activities to meet the interests and needs of the RPCV groups is therefore essential to me. The National Council is committed to the development of a functioning network of groups around the country which can share ideas and strategies for an increased impact on global awareness and national policy. The Council strives to strengthen the capacities of existing RPCV groups and to encourage the development of new groups. Indeed, the National Council is the groups-- that is, it is the representation of group interests at a national level. To the extent that this is not yet happening, I will try to improve our communications and make it happen better.

Below is a brief summary of some the National Council activities which I think are of special interest to group members. The Board of Directors and I would like your feedback on them.

**DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION (BRINGING THE WORLD BACK HOME):** With financial support from the Carnegie Corporation, the Ford Foundation, A.I.D. and Peace Corps, the National Council has distributed \$76,000 to 18 RPCV groups in the last two years for projects to develop speakers' bureaus, video tapes, slide shows, training manuals, workshops and case studies targeted at school principals and teachers, museum docents, librarians, community groups, and the general public. We conducted 10 workshops around the country last year and mailed 10 resource packets on different development education topics to each of the 150 RPCV groups.

**GOVERNMENT POLICY:** Last year the National Council worked in support of the Global Poverty Reduction Act, and was invited by Congressman John Porter of Illinois to introduce with him at a national press conference the Tropical Rainforest Preservation Act. Both were passed. In addition we testified on behalf of a larger Peace Corps budget, and were successful.

**MEMBERS AND DUES:** The Council distributed \$42,000 to affiliated RPCV groups under our joint dues arrangement. We have developed a computer data bank of 39,000 current addresses of Peace Corps alumni and are drawing up a comprehensive 3-year membership development plan which should bring more RPCV's into the fold of active participants at the local as well as national level. As you are certainly aware, we went through a terrible period when a borrowed computer was removed from our office and data lost. We have recovered now, and you should start seeing the resulting joint member lists soon.

**PUBLICATIONS:** WorldView Magazine's 13,000 readers include the 6,500 PCV's now in the field and is therefore a means of continually attracting new members. It has had stories cited or reprinted by the Miami Herald, Christian Science Monitor, Washington Post and several others. A new publication, the RPCV, is being designed with a focus on what RPCV's are doing now. The Development Education Exchange has focused on development education activities and resources. The Group Leaders Digest is received by all RPCV group leaders quarterly.

**ANNUAL CONFERENCES:** The yearly conferences, which alternate on each side of the Mississippi, are organized jointly with a local RPCV group and are tremendously successful as a means of reconnecting with lost contacts and country-specific issues as well as focusing on our continuing commitment. The West Cascade RPCV's have planned a great conference for this July in Eugene, Oregon, and Washington, D.C. will be the site of the 30th anniversary celebration in 1991.

**"TO SERVE AGAIN":** The Board of Directors has voted to become a partner with Ploughshares, an RPCV group in Seattle, in its project to support a short-term U.S.-Soviet Volunteer Corps in Ethiopia, and a task force is exploring other opportunities and means for volunteer service overseas.

**GROUP LIAISON:** The Council's Group Liaison Committee has just completed its analysis of the RPCV groups survey in which many of you participated last year, and you will receive your copy soon. Also staff and Board members will be at the March 31 meeting of the "Friends of" group representatives to take part in an organizational strategic planning process they are developing and which can possibly be useful to other RPCV groups.

I think I've inherited an impressive array of programs. We are still severely limited by funding constraints, but I believe we can improve our communication and management of resources so that more people will be drawn to supporting our work. As members of RPCV groups you are crucial in helping me improve communication. I promise to write a bi-monthly letter, and would appreciate your responses so I can be sure we're on the right track. We can only do it with your help.

Peace,

Linda H. Gray  
Executive Director

March 12, 1990

## Dear RPCVs of Oregon,

Just wanted to jot something down about my recent 7-week return visit to Ghana, where I served as a volunteer in '80-'82. When I was a PCV, I served one year in a village secondary school teaching math and science in southern Ghana, then changed my second year to rural development in northern Ghana. There I worked with a local, volunteer-based, non-governmental organization dedicated to village development, the Amasachina Self-Help Association.

Of course, I made lasting friendships with many Ghanaians I lived and worked with. I've continued to correspond with a few of them over the years, and have hoped to go back to work or visit at some time.

The opportunity presented itself early this year, when I had a good-paying job for two months on a Chinese fishing boat off the coast of Alaska. I made \$5000, which was just what I needed for a trip to Ghana.

I left at the end of March, flew to Lomé, Togo, for 4 days of acclimatizing: I wanted to get used to the weather and environment, speak Ewe (the local language of Southeastern Ghana and southern Togo) again, and get a visa for Burkina Faso.

When I received the visa, I traveled north and west to Ouagadougou, where I spent a few days arranging for a motorcycle and spare parts to be purchased and delivered to Amasachina by Oxfam, whose West Africa office is based in Ouagadougou. Their office in Tamale, Ghana, works with Amasachina.

It was hot! The rains still had a few days to arrive, and travelling was horrendous: dusty and sweltering, with many police, army and customs checks, especially in Burkina Faso.

Then it was on to Ghana and Tamale, where I'd lived, to visit old friends and connect with Amasachina. Bruce and Ann Borquest (also of the RPCVs of Oregon group, now in the Philippines) worked with Amasachina the year before I did.

Our job was to help villages in the district develop their own projects. We'd first go to a village rally, held at night with traditional music and dancing, with some Amasachina workers. At the rally, the village would come together and decide on a development project they wanted to undertake: usually construction of a dugout dam for holding water through the long dry season, construction of a primary school or a latrine, or road improvement. We would then go back to Tamale, the regional capital, to facilitate the project by recruiting the help of government experts, recommending honest bulldozer contractors (for improving roads or building dugouts), procuring diesel and oil for the bulldozer or cement for the blocks to build the latrine, etc. The village would supply the money and labor itself.

My friends in Amasachina wrote me a few years ago that Peace Corps in Ghana was withdrawing its motorcycles from the volunteers, and that the Amasachina volunteers were having a lot of trouble getting around to the villages to do their work. So I was glad to have made enough money to travel to Ghana and buy a motorcycle and other gifts for friends. Amasachina had also received three



motorcycles in January from a donor agency (their exposure has increased following their receipt of the U.N. Environment Programme's Global 500 award last year), and the government is much more supportive of their work, so they have now graduated from needing Peace Corps volunteers.

It was wonderful to see how much Amasachina has grown. They have strong environmental concerns, and are now busy helping villages create woodlots for firewood and building materials in the countryside to reduce tree destruction, thereby resisting desertification. They're also involved in spreading community tree nurseries and creating no-fire zones so brush fires don't destroy so many trees. They're active in adult literacy; providing bicycles, trailers, and training to women so that they can transport loads more easily; helping men's and women's cooperative farms obtain loans for planting; and continuing to work on dams, schools, roads, and latrines. After Tamale, I traveled to southeastern Ghana to visit my old school and former teaching colleagues. Likpe Secondary School was a wonder -- 6 beautiful new classroom and office blocks, a new school lorry, a hand pump, a science block under construction, and part of the dirt road from the town of Hohoe had been recently paved. There were 4 decrepit blocks when I was there, and students formerly had to walk to the stream for water.

The improvement of the school was especially dramatic, but it reflects the general improvement of conditions in the country since I was last there. There's now no black market; corruption among government officials is low; salaries are reaching through the whole



month rather than two weeks; there are new cars, motorcycles, and bicycles on the road; goods are in the markets and stores; power has been extended to the north; and to more places in the south; roads and buildings have been improved or newly constructed. The government, in power for 8 1/2 years (second in length only to the 10-year post-independence government), is very much concerned with the welfare of its people. People still complain, of course, but not once did I hear "You see how we are suffering?" which was a constant refrain when I was last in Ghana.

I had a wonderful time, although I was antsy to get back home during the last week. The sour corn doughs, palmtree sout, and smoked fish were as good as I'd remembered them. The palm wine and mangoes were better. And it was delightful to dust off and use Ewe again.

Warm regards,

Jeff Strang  
1919 NE 10th Ave.  
Portland, OR 97212  
282-3647

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Peace Corps Recruiting Office  
2001 Sixth Avenue, Suite 1776  
Seattle, WA 98121

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