

Central Missouri Returned Peace Corps Volunteers

Annual Newsletter
Fall 2009

Central Missouri RPCVs Officers

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Central Missouri Returned Peace Corps Volunteers is a social, service, and networking group for RPCVs in Central Missouri. The group was formed in 1996 as part of the 35th anniversary of the Peace Corps. It now has contact with more than 175 returned volunteers in Central Missouri.

Our objectives are to provide RPCVs with opportunities to socialize, educate people about the Peace Corps, act as a resource for prospective volunteers, and to promote interactions between RPCVs and the mid-Missouri community.

For more information, contact Karen Davis at centralmorpcvs@gmail.com

Welcome letter from the Board of Directors

Karen Shanteau Davis (Guatemala 1992-1994)

The Peace Corps community in Central Missouri continues to evolve and reach new levels! This newsletter is going out to 175 RPCVs in the region, including our ten Peace Corps Fellows who are pursuing their Master's degrees at the University of Missouri. This will be the third year of the PC Fellows program at MU, and we've enjoyed interacting with these, as well as other, RPCV graduate students from MU.

Also visible on the MU campus is Mike Burden (Mongolia 2007-2009), our PC recruiter. He will replace Tony White on campus and we are thrilled to continue a close relationship with a local recruiter.

This fall, we will be implementing new bylaws that were created to act as flexible guidelines for our organization. You will receive them soon by email. We hope you will take a brief moment to read through them and cast your vote of approval.

As you read through this year's newsletter, make sure to take note of the various events we have

planned for the fall of 2009 and the spring of 2010. Of course, we will continue with our popular community service Adopt-a-spot project. If you have not had an opportunity to do so, join us as we clean up 6th Street from Elm to Broadway in Columbia. We always meet for coffee afterwards, which is a great way to meet other RPCVs in the group.

We particularly want to highlight our "Third Goal" Film Festival on Saturday November 14, 2008 from 1:00 – 9:00 pm in Columbia. Last year's festival exceeded our expectations and we are excited to offer a great film schedule again this year. The festival will be free and open to the public and will feature several documentary films that support the third goal of the PC, which is to promote a better understanding of other peoples on the part of Americans. Come for some of the films or stay for the entire time. Send an email to centralmorpcvs@gmail.com if you are interested in volunteering. We certainly hope to see you there!

New Peace Corps Recruiter begins at MU

By Michael Burden (Mongolia 2006-2008)

Greetings Central MO RPCVs. My name is Mike Burden and I'll be recruiting potential Peace Corps volunteers starting this September through May 2010. I served with my wife Ashley in western Mongolia from 2006-2008. Like you, I benefited tremendously from my PC experience, and I'm eager to work with people who are considering becoming Peace Corps volunteers.

I'll be hosting General Information Meetings once a month, usually in the basement of the Student Success Center on MU's campus across from Ellis library. My office is located there as well, and you can reach me there Mondays and Wednesdays 1-5 and Fridays from 3-5, or by appointment. I'll be asking for a few of you to

come to meetings occasionally to share your experiences and perspectives.

Outside of my recruiting responsibilities, I'm also charged with increasing Peace Corps presence on campus. Ideas are always welcome. You can reach me at burdenm@missouri.edu, (573) 884-2003, or by cell (815) 535-7297. I look forward to working with you to recruit more than 30 qualified candidates this year!

Cheers,
Mike Burden
Peace Corps Campus Recruiter,
University of Missouri-Columbia

Year Three of MU Peace Corps Fellows Program Begins This Fall

By Don Spiers (Venezuela , 1973-75)

It does not seem as if we are three years into the Fellows Program at MU. However, we have now had 10 RPCVs enter the Program and are preparing for the next group to arrive late August. They have likely seen the previous fellows as they interacted with the community, MU students, and our RPCV group. We now have a web site at <http://peacecorpsfellows.missouri.edu/>, and invite you to have a look. The fellows entering this fall served in a number of countries and come from all over the US.

Guy Liuzzi (Political Science – Thailand 2007-2009) attended the University of South Florida in History and International Studies. He toured Western Europe, Eastern Africa, and Southeast Asia prior to entering the Peace Corps, and is currently very interested in pursuing a career that involves world travel. While in Thailand, Guy conducted in-classroom teaching and lesson planning for individuals who were responsible for 200 students. He also led teacher training seminars and workshops, with specific concentration on HIV/AIDS.

Meredith Dorneker (Geography – Peru 2006-2008) received her BA degrees in Geography and Communication from the University of Southern California in 2006. In the Peace Corps, she worked with the Community-Based Environmental Management Program that was associated with Centro ECO (NGO) in Lambayeque. Her many projects in Peru included production of small animals and trees, teaching English and topics on the environment, and the initiation of a woman's group on nutrition. Meredith hopes to pursue a career in higher education that utilizes her interest in geography and Peace Corps experiences.

Andrew Pugliese (Agricultural Economics – Niger 2007-2008) graduated from Allegheny College in 2006 with a degree in environmental science. There he obtained degrees in Environmental Science and Economics. Given these interests, he trained as a Natural Resource Management (NRM) volunteer in West Africa. There he learned the Hausa language and worked on a number of projects that included: development of a Gum Arabic

tree plantation, education of women in development and management of income, construction of fuel-efficient stoves, and development of HIV/AIDS awareness. Ultimately, he hopes to pursue a career in agricultural economics and policy.

Maya Tarter (School of Social Work – Kyrgyz Republic 2004-2006) – learned the Kyrgyz language during training in the Peace Corps. One of her chief duties as faculty was to teach English to students in 4th to 11th grades. She also initiated a summer camp for girls that concentrated on healthy lifestyles. Maya worked with other volunteers in her area and local police in Issyk-Kul to develop police sensitivity training seminars. Her future career interests include being “a part of youth development policy in domestic and international settings”. Eventually, she would like help establish a strong network between youth, their community, and the world.

To learn more, visit
<http://peacecorpsfellows.missouri.edu/>

Virtual Community Created Through *Connected Peace Corps*

By Karen Shanteau Davis (Guatemala 1992-1994)

First there was Myspace and Facebook...now there is Connected Peace Corps. Earlier this year, the National Peace Corps Association launched a new virtual community to serve as a networking vehicle for the PC community.

The mission of Peace Corps Connect is to engage those who served in the Peace Corps, or share the Peace Corps values, to build communities that inform, inspire, and integrate experiences that promote understanding and appreciation of other countries and cul-

tures and sustainable development across the globe.

The site provides a hub of information about the Peace Corps for current, future and past volunteers. It is a great way to reconnect with RPCVs from your country of service and find out about resources for returned volunteers.

To participate in this community, you must create your own profile, which is quick and easy. Go to <http://community.peacecorpsconnect.org> and

follow the steps provided. Once you have completed this make sure and join our group “Central Missouri RPCVs.” We hope to begin using this great resource to help us better create our own local RPCV community.

Create your own profile at Peace Corps' new social networking site:

<http://community.peacecorpsconnect.org>

Future PCVs from Central MO



RPCVs from around the globe join in Central MO



GET READY TO PURCHASE THE 2010 INTERNATIONAL CALENDAR!

Proceeds support small projects from Central MO PCVs currently serving (see next pages for current projects)

Makes a GREAT GIFT!

\$10

LOOK FOR YOUR COPY AT THE THIRD GOAL FILM FEST OR RESERVE YOUR COPIES AT centralmorpcvs@gmail.com



National Peace Corps Association Group Leaders Forum Report

By Frank Yates (Ghana 1973-1975)

The NPCA Group Leaders Forum (GLF) was held in Washington, DC on June 27, 2009. Group leaders attended in person and by conference phone call. I attended by conference call and represented the Central Missouri RPCVs. Ben Bellows, from the San Francisco area, is the GLF Coordinator and also sits on the Board of Directors of NPCA.

Anne Baker, Vice President of NPCA, presented the first report entitled, "Group Capacity Building and Database." Due to stagnant membership in NPCA, they set a goal

for the past nine months (since the previous GLF meeting) to strengthen and grow the NPCA community and enable direct communication and collaboration between NPCA, its affiliated groups, and the members. There are currently about 5,700 members of NPCA and 137 affiliated groups. NPCA was maintaining its previous website at www.rpcv.org, transitioning to a new database to manage memberships and affiliated group information with limited personnel and fiscal resources (see article, page 2), and they were not receiving data from Peace

Corps on recent returnees.

The NPCA has been able to achieve its goals by launching a new social networking website www.peacecorpsconnect.org, securing new grants enabling the hiring of additional staff and consultants, and reaching new agreements with Peace Corps. NPCA is now receiving returnee data each month, placing ads in Hotline, making presentations at quarterly career fairs, and providing information for overseas Peace Corps staff train-

Continued on page 6

Clip-n-Post Central MO RPCVs Events Calendar

Saturday, September 12, 9-11 a.m.:

Adopt-a-Spot clean up

Meet at 6th & Elm for clean up followed by coffee at Uprise Bakery (RagTag Building) starting at about 9:45. Third Goal Film Festival planning meeting during coffee.

Saturday, October 17, 9-11 a.m.:

Adopt-a-Spot clean up

Meet at 6th & Elm for clean up followed by coffee at Uprise Bakery (RagTag Building) starting at about 9:45. Third Goal Film Festival planning meeting during coffee.

Saturday, November 14, 1-9 p.m.:

Third Goal Film Festival

Location TBA (Details at <http://groups.google.com/group/central-mo-rpcvs>)

Purchase your 2010 International Calendar!

Saturday, January 30, 2010 from 5- 8 p.m.:

Wine Tasting at Rock Quarry House

Details TBA

(Details at <http://groups.google.com/group/central-mo-rpcvs>)

Saturday, March 20, 9-11 a.m.:

Adopt-a-Spot clean up

Meet at 6th & Elm for clean up followed by coffee at Uprise Bakery (RagTag Building) starting at about 9:45. Nominations party planning meeting during coffee.

Sunday, April 18, 11 a.m. — 6 p.m.:

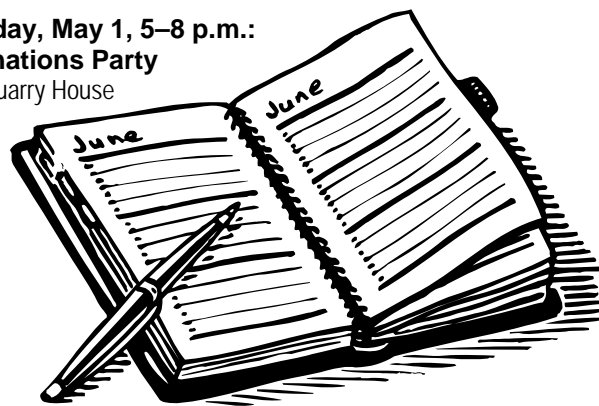
Columbia Earth Day Festival Peace Corps Info Table

Peace Park (Rain Date April 25)

Saturday, May 1, 5-8 p.m.:

Nominations Party

Rock Quarry House



Central MO RPCVs support Zambia volunteer project

Via email from Zambia PCV Lisa Groshong

The Musalila Women's Cooperative is an organization of subsistence farmers living in rural Zambia, more than 70 km from the nearest paved road. With few opportunities for paid work, they have launched several income-generating activities to earn money to send their children to school. They had already planted hundreds of fruit trees, sowed a collective field of maize, placed bee hives, and started building a piggery by the time their nearby PCV arrived and taught them to make crazy-quilt bags and rag rugs using worn-out fabric and sewing scraps. They are selling the rugs to government workers in the district capital.

Money from the Central MO RPCVs bought the group a hand-crank sewing machine, which the women are using to learn tailoring so they can sell school uniforms and produce clothing for their families. Since many of the women are in polygamous marriages, have five to 10 children, and receive little material support from their husbands, the skill provides them a welcome measure of independence and financial security.



Dues support projects

By Karen Davis (Guatemala 92-94)

Did you know that this newsletter is being sent to 175 RPCVs in the Central Missouri area? Last year, 40 of you chose to become official members of our group. For those of you who like numbers, that is 23% of our mailing list. Over the next year, we'd like to see that percentage increase to around 40%. But, we need you!

Most of the dues collected go directly to fund volunteer projects in the field. Our goal is to support PCVs from Missouri in accomplish-



ing small community-based projects. We expect to receive more grant requests this year than ever before. A small percentage of the dues we collect funds group operations,

including the costs associated with this newsletter.

There are two ways to become a member: 1) Send in the membership form accompanying this newsletter with your dues to the address listed; or 2) Select "Central MO RPCVs" as your affiliate group when paying your National Peace Corps Association dues. (For more info on the NPCA, visit www.peacecorpsconnect.org.)

You went into the Peace Corps to make a difference in the world. By pooling our membership dues, we can continue to make a difference.

A Note from the Field — The Global Mamas Project

Thank you so much Central MO RPCVs for your generous donation to Global Mamas. Your contribution has helped tremendously with our bead operations in Odumase Krobo in Ghana's Eastern Region. Not only has the addition of another cabinet and storage bins helped the organization of the office but it has shown our Ghanaian counterparts the importance of proper storage to insure higher quality of their products. Again, thank you for your assistance and know that you have helped make a significant impact on the Global Mamas organization and the lives of women who work with us.

By Emily Henke, currently serving PCV in Ghana



Group Leaders Forum from page 4

ing. The new database system proved to be unworkable, so NPCA has upgraded the previous database to a new version. They are nearly complete in transitioning the database from the old version to the new version.

The new website now has 116 of its 137 affiliated groups established on the site, with an additional 175 groups, representing such entities as GLF, NPCA Board, affiliated group boards, country of service classes, and Africa Rural Connect. There are about 12,800 members registered on the site. NPCA also has presence on LinkedIn, Facebook, YouTube, flickr, and Twitter. NPCA has a monthly eNews newsletter delivered by email and listserves for Global Education and Advocacy. They have also established a new mentor-mentee service for newly returned PCVs, with 288 mentees and 342 mentors signed up so far.

Opportunities for additional growth include the upcoming 50th Anniversary of Peace Corps in 2011, improved relations with Peace Corps, and increased use of social networking tools. The new More Peace Corps program and the Africa Rural Connect program are increasing the momentum.

Erica Burman, Communications Director for NPCA, presented the second report entitled, "Virtual Community, Social Networking and New Media." The goals of the Peace Corps Connect website are to

Engage all of the voices of the Peace Corps Community and be the virtual umbrella under which compelling content, stories, and experi-

ences are exchanged and links are built; Help RPCVs make the Third Goal of Peace Corps a reality (educational connections, funding for projects in country, etc.);

Provide a platform to collect and organize a repository of insightful information and unique knowledge about Peace Corps countries and cultures; and

Provide career, educational, and other relevant service resources that meet the unique circumstances of RPCVs.

Features of Peace Corps Connect include the ability for members to find others who served with them or in the same country; to share photos, blogs, and event information; to view country-specific information pages with news and resources for members; and to participate in message boards and discussions among interest groups. There have been about 66,000 unique visits to the site since launch, with over 7,500 photos, 320 individual blogs, and 90 videos posted. In addition to RPCVs providing profiles on the site (the main focus), there has been a marked increase in trainees and current volunteer profiles.

Africa Rural Connect began website development in April, 2009. This unique, state-of-the-art online community will bring together Africans, current and returned Peace Corps Volunteers, and others who have lived or worked in Sub-Saharan Africa to discuss the region's most challenging agricultural issues. The program will focus on encouraging collaboration and prizes will be awarded monthly for the best submitted plans. The website is www.AfricaRuralConnect.org.

Jonathan Pearson presented the next report on the More Peace Corps program. Over 18,000

have signed the online petition supporting the program. H.R. 1066, Peace Corps Expansion Act of 2009, has been introduced in Congress with 131 co-sponsors. Senate action was expected in July, with reconciliation of House and Senate bills planned for September.

Kevin Quigley, President of NPCA, presented the report on Peace Corps 50th Anniversary plans. The stated goals are to

Make the public aware of the success and impact of Peace Corps;

Advance the Third Goal of Peace Corps—sharing its value with the American public;

Support recruiting efforts to expand Peace Corps; and

Recognize and honor those who have contributed to Peace Corps' success—volunteers, host countries and communities, and national leaders.

Key dates on the calendar are October 14, 2010, commemorating Kennedy's first Peace Corps speech at the University of Michigan; March 1, 2011, honoring the signing of the Executive Order establishing the Peace Corps; and September 22, 2011, which will kick off a week of events in Washington, DC, marking the Peace Corps Act adopted by Congress.

The GLF lasted about an hour and a half. Afternoon sessions for attendees in Washington, DC, included 50th Anniversary planning for geographic groups, country-of-service groups for current Peace Corps countries, and country-of-service groups for past Peace Corps countries; and demonstrations and assistance with the NPCA database, website, new media, and Africa Rural Connect.

Sen. Bond Gives Strong Support to Peace Corps on Senate Floor

From Peace Corps Polyglot, the blog of the National Peace Corps Association

"Mr. President, I have come to the floor to recognize an organization that serves on the front lines of our Nation's Smart Power efforts...the United States Peace Corps."

- Senator Kit Bond, Feb. 26, 2009,
Floor Statements, US Senate

U.S. Senator Kit Bond of Missouri made statements on the Senate floor urging his colleagues to support expansion of Peace Corps and smart power initiatives.

Citing that 22% of the nations where Peace Corps volunteers serve are predominantly Muslim, the Senator made this potent observation: "And it is in these countries, in particular, where I believe the efforts of volunteers are positively shaping and improving the much beleaguered and much misunderstood image of America within the Muslim world."

Senator Bond believes in the More-PeaceCorps campaign, and has gone one step further to urge his colleagues to take action as well. This is a big moment for our mobilization and we need to support Senator Bond's initiative.

Text of the Statement:

February 26, 2009

Mr. President, I have come to the floor to recognize an organization that serves on the front lines of our Nation's Smart Power efforts...the United States Peace Corps.

This week the Peace Corps celebrates their 48th anniversary during National Peace Corps Week.

Since the early 1960s, more than 195,000 Peace Corps volunteers have fostered positive relationships between the United States and nations across the globe through its grassroots efforts.

At present, 7,500 plus Peace Corps volunteers are active in over 75 countries around the world.

These volunteers are exposed to a diverse array of different cultures and languages during their time abroad.

Approximately 22 percent of Peace Corps volunteers are currently working in 16 predominantly Muslim countries. And it is in these countries, in particular, where I believe the efforts of volunteers are positively shaping and improving the much beleaguered and much misunderstood image of America within the Muslim world.

But there is still much work to be done.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting an expansion of the Peace Corps and all of our nation's Smart Power assets. Smart Power initiatives are our non-military diplomatic efforts, including educational exchanges, free trade, public diplomacy, economic and agricultural development, humanitarian assistance, and English language teaching just to name a few.

All of these Smart Power initiatives contribute not only to a better life for so many in need, but also help create the conditions for a more stable, and peaceful world.

America and the developing world will benefit together from a greater investment in these initiatives, and in particular, in a revitalized and enlarged Peace Corps.

Over the past few years, the Peace Corps has received numerous inquiries about entering or re-entering countries where volunteers once served. I have made similar inquiries, particularly with respect to Muslim countries in Southeast Asia like Indonesia.

Engaging moderate, mainstream Muslim countries like Indonesia with our nation's Smart Power initiatives will enhance the conditions for lasting peace and stability. Or, as I like to say, putting more sandals and sneakers on the ground will prevent us from having to put more boots and bayonets on the ground.

The work undertaken by Peace Corps volunteers serves as a fine example of the United States reaching out to foreign neighbors to foster a

greater understanding and dialogue.

The willingness of Peace Corps volunteers to engage people at the local, community level is exactly how we ought to be providing effective and sustainable development assistance.

We need to get back out among the very people we are trying to help, which is why I also believe we need more USAID Foreign Service Officers as well. Providing practical, hands-on assistance that is based on listening to the needs of the local population is a recipe for sustainable and lasting development.

Congratulations to all the members, current and past, associated with the Peace Corps on its 48th anniversary. We thank you for improving the lives of so many and for helping America be a good neighbor to those in need.

Your country is grateful for your service.

Your country is grateful for the goodwill and the seeds of peace that you have sewn or are sewing.

Your country is grateful for your contributions to the safety and long-term security of our nation.

The efforts of you and your volunteers are needed now more than ever.

I will continue to work in supporting your important mission and expanding your ranks.

I can't stress enough the importance of our Smart Power initiatives and the importance in investing in efforts like the Peace Corps.

I am glad to see the new Administration – particularly Secretary of State Clinton – give these initiatives an important public boost.

I look forward to partnering with the new Administration and leading the effort in Congress to make Smart Power initiatives a cornerstone in our foreign policy and in our efforts to combat extremism and terrorism around the world.

Thank you Mr. President.

Central Missouri RPCVs Membership Form

Your dues go to supporting the many wonderful projects of our currently serving Central MO PCVs ~ Thank you!

Renewal

New Member

New Contact Info

Name(s): _____

Street Address: _____

Phone Number (H): _____ (W) _____ (M) _____

Email: _____ Peace Corps Country and years of service: _____

Current Occupation & Employer: _____

If you're a student, what & where are you studying? _____

New RPCV (<1 year) FREE!

Couple \$25

Student \$10

Unrestricted donation \$ _____

Single-member \$15

Total Amount \$ _____

Make checks payable to **Central Missouri RPCVs** and send to:

**Frank Yates
152 Sac Rd. Unit 1B
Sunrise Beach, MO 65079-5539**

I am interested in serving on the following committees:

Community Service

Public Relations

Social

Film Festival

Recruiting

Speaker's Bureau

Central MO RPCVs

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