



Think Global, Act Local

Fall 2011 — Volume 45, Issue 3

The newsletter of the Milwaukee Peace Corps Association

From the President

It's been an exciting summer and fall for Peace Corps and for the MPCA. We got off to a great start with our annual summer picnic. We had a great crowd, good weather, and lots of tasty food. The good food and camaraderie didn't stop there - our Peace Corps Partnership Lunch at Casablanca raised a lot of money for some good projects in Africa.

On the national level, thousands of RPCVs gathered in Washington DC in September to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of Peace Corps. If you couldn't make it, be sure to ask about it at any of our upcoming events this winter. Mike Farmer, Paul Kinsley, Ephraim Frankel, or any of our other members who were there would be more than happy to share with you.

As Peace Corps has celebrated a big milestone this year, there have been discussions nationwide about the past, present, and future of Peace Corps, and several of these conversations have occurred in Congressional offices. In August, several Milwaukee-area RPCVs met with a staffer for Sen. Ron Johnson. A few weeks later, another group met with Rep. Gwen Moore, who has always been a strong advocate for Peace Corps. Similar meetings were held across the country, and this was followed up by a Capitol Hill Day in Washington as part of the 50th anniversary celebrations.

These meetings focused on three issues. First, we sought support for a garden to be constructed on the National Mall as a permanent commemorative to Peace Corps and the ideals it represents. Second, we sought support for the Katy Puzey Volunteer Protection Act, which would permanently codify a lot of the recent changes the agency has implemented to better protect volunteers. Finally, we asked for Congress to give Peace Corps the financial support the Obama administration has requested, which would support an increased number of Volunteers abroad and help programs open in several new countries that are requesting Volunteers.

Finally, I'm excited to see two new faces on our Board. Chris Reed-Waddell (Kazakhstan '07-'10) will be taking over on membership, while Meghan Jones (Thailand '08-'10) will be overseeing our grants and giving programs. Meghan and Chris bring a lot of energy and enthusiasm to the Board, and leave us without any vacancies for the first time in quite some time!

I hope to see all of you at our holiday potluck!

Wend na siigi laafi,
Chris

MPCA RPCVs with Rep. Gwen Moore



Family & Friends Brunch 2011

Join the Milwaukee Peace Corps Association on **Saturday, November 12, from 10 am—1 pm** at the St. Francis Brewery (3825 S. Kinnickinnic Ave, St. Francis) in recognizing and celebrating the many contributions that parents and families make towards their volunteer's service. All families, Returned Peace Corps Volunteers, prospective volunteers, and those interested in Peace Corps are invited to attend. The event will feature a Peace Corps informational panel, and provide an opportunity to ask questions and mingle.

The morning will also include an optional brunch buffet, which is available for \$14 per person.

Please RSVP by November 10 to info@milwaukeepeacecorps.org or by contacting Maggie Krochalk: krochamb@yahoo.com

If you are able to help with set-up or carpooling to St. Francis, please indicate that in your RSVP. We are looking forward to seeing you there!

MPCA Board Meetings & Social Hour

The MPCA Board typically meets on the fourth Thursday of the month from 6:30-8:00 pm at East Library in Milwaukee (1910 E. North Ave.). As these are open meetings, MPCA members are welcome to attend. The real fun, however, begins at 8:00 pm, when we adjourn to Von Trier's, right across the street from the library (2235 N. Farwell), for drinks, free popcorn, and great conversation. You are welcome to join us! In November, because of the Thanksgiving holiday, the board will meet on **Tuesday, November 22**, at 6:30 pm, with the social hour to follow at 8:00 pm. We will *not* meet in December. Come and meet some new people and share your Peace Corps stories!

Holiday Potluck

Join us for the annual Holiday Potluck on **Saturday, December 3, at 5:00 pm** at Gordon Park Lodge (2828 N. Humboldt Ave.). Please bring your favorite dish from your country of service to share. We will have a taste-testing contest and prizes will be given to the top three dishes, voted on by you! Tableware and non-alcoholic beverages will be provided. Please feel free to bring wine or beer to share.

The cost of the potluck is \$3 for MPCA members and \$4 for non-members. Part of the proceeds will be donated to a non-profit organization in the community, as yet to be determined. T-shirts and calendars will be available for purchase. Come and celebrate the holidays with your friends from MPCA! It's the most diverse and most delicious potluck in town!



Calendars for Sale!

Get your 2012 Peace Corps International Calendar, featuring beautiful pictures from Peace Corps countries of service. You can purchase calendars at the Family & Friends Brunch and the Holiday Potluck or by going online: www.milwaukeepeacecorps.org

The cost for MPCA members is \$8 and for non-members the cost is \$10. If you buy ten or more calendars, they only cost \$6 a piece! What a bargain and a wonderful holiday gift idea!



MPCA Grant Recipient: Letter of Thanks

The MPCA provided a \$300 grant to support PCV Kevin Kuschel's project in Bulgaria: a summer sports camp for children, ages 7-11. An excerpt of his thank you letter is below.

The sports and health camp (August 8-12) was a huge success, with parents, participants, and my organization excited for future events of this nature. We gave each participant a t-shirt containing the logo of my organization and the name and dates of the event. This made them feel like part of a team and so they worked together and encouraged



each other in very positive ways. When someone would make a mistake or miss a shot when playing some of the sporting events, their teammates would not put them down but sympathized as a team or gave constructive criticism in a way that should happen in every team. It was impressive to witness.

The sports and health camp idea came to me when, after school was let out, I noticed that there were many kids around town, hanging out in the park and doing nothing. It made me wonder if they would like the opportunity to have some constructive use of time, in a camp-like experience. I thought of camps that my friends had talked about when I was growing up, and since I used to play soccer, I thought of soccer camps. Since the city of Chirpan has a soccer team, there would probably be trainers around to help run this camp. My colleagues were enthusiastic about this idea and ran with it... they made it their own. My job became finding additional funding and a few other volunteers who could help me out. Through the MPCA we were able to secure enough money to help the camp run smoothly and I found two volunteers who are into fitness and healthy lifestyle. With their help, along with the help of a local trainer and my organization, we were able to run the camp according to our plans, allowing for flexibility when things didn't run the way we expected.

What we had planned was to hold the sports aspect of the camp in the morning and the fitness and health aspect of the camp in the afternoon. We soon found out that wouldn't work so well since the weather was painfully hot. So on Tuesday we changed our plans, holding the fitness and healthy living aspect in the morning, as well as a little sports, ending slightly early in the afternoon, leaving the kids free to relax and not get overheated. However, we discovered that they actually wanted an afternoon part to the camp, despite the weather, so on Wednesday we did the fitness and health in the morning, with some sports, and more sports in the afternoon. Thankfully the weather had cooled off significantly by Wednesday. Thursday went the same way and on Friday we held a little ceremony at the end of the day and passed out the medals and awarded trophies to the three teams. And so the sports week concluded.

The money you donated helped fund the t-shirts, water for the participants, and the medals that were awarded to the kids. We also had a mini-banquet on the following Monday. More importantly though, it encouraged my organization to actually do the event and they saw how easily it could be done. In a meeting after the event, my organization told me how happy they were with the event, how easy it was to organize and how they are excited about doing future events of this nature. They have already been talking about doing a spring camp out in the Rhodope Mountains during the students' spring break. I'm excited and hopeful that this event will have been the trigger that helped start my organization's future involvement in youth development and it would not have been possible without your help. My organization and I send you our thanks.

Sincerely,
Kevin Kuschel, PCV Bulgaria (Chirpan)
Youth Development Volunteer

Peace Corps Partnership Lunch

The Peace Corps Partnership Lunch, which took place on October 15 at

Casablanca Restaurant, was a great success. Thirty-one people were in attendance for a delicious, vegetarian buffet and to choose two Peace Corps projects in Africa to support with our contributions. As a group we decided to support a project in Morocco that will help distribute 550 wheelchairs to the disabled poor, with an emphasis on children who could start school as a result of receiving a wheelchair. The second project is being planned in north central Rwanda where the closest — yet unsuitable — water source is a thirty minute, round-trip walk away. The money from the Partnership Lunch will go towards constructing two cisterns that will collect rainwater from the roof of the school which has gone through a simple filter. This will provide up to 70,000 liters of clean water for drinking and washing purposes.

Thanks to your contributions and matching funds from MPCA, each project will receive \$334.00. We are grateful to Maggie Krochalk for her efforts in planning this event and to all of you who attended and supported these projects.



Ukrainian Holubtsi Recipe

Submitted by Greg Deuchars, Ukraine '05-'07

With autumn here, there is lots of delicious fall produce to enjoy. If you are looking for something to cook with cabbage, try this traditional Ukrainian recipe for *holubtsi* (cabbage rolls). Comfort food doesn't get more comforting than this!

1 head of cabbage	1/2 cup dry rice
tomato juice	1 carrot, shredded
1/8 cup cider vinegar	1 egg
2 lbs ground beef	salt and pepper

Remove core from cabbage. Boil the cabbage in water until the leaves are tender and can easily be removed. Remove leaves carefully after the cabbage cools.

Boil rice in 1/2 cup water until water is completely absorbed. Rice will only be half cooked. Brown ground beef in a frying pan and drain off excess grease.

In a large bowl, mix ground beef, rice, carrot, egg, and salt and pepper. Scoop palm-sized amount of meat mixture into the center of a cabbage leaf and roll securely. Repeat until all of the meat mixture and cabbage is used up.

Place holubtsi in a circular pattern at the bottom of a large pot or slow cooker, so that they stand on end and support one another. Add as many rings and layers as needed. Cover the holubtsi with tomato juice. Add the cider vinegar. Simmer on low heat for at least 2 hours. ENJOY!

MPCA Board of Directors

Have you met your MPCA board members? If not, you'll find us at all MPCA events. You can also join us at regular board meetings at 6:30pm on the fourth Thursday of every month at the East Library, (1910 E. North Ave., Milwaukee).

- President:** Chris Wilson (Burkina Faso 05-07)
- Vice President:** Kevin Kuschel (Honduras 81-84)
- Treasurer:** Tom Felhofer (Malawi 89-90)
- Membership Coordinator:** Chris Reed-Waddell (Kazakhstan 07-10)
- Grants and Giving Coordinator:** Meghan Jones (Thailand 08-10)
- Editor:** Gail Rautmann (Poland 94-96)
- Historian:** Paul Kinsley (Turkey 65-67)
- Calendar Coordinator:** Greg Deuchars (Ukraine 05-07)
- Special Projects Coordinator:** Michael Farmer (Nepal 63-65)
- Member-at-Large:** Dzidra Benish (Poland 92-94)
- Events Coordinator:** Maggie Krochalk (Togo 91-94)

Bobby and Sharon Marie, Partners in Senior Adventures, Go to Capitol Hill

Submitted by Bob and Sharon Richardson, Slovak Republic '96-'98

We were very fortunate to be able to participate in the National Peace Corps Association's 50th Anniversary Capitol Hill Advocacy Day in Washington, D.C., on September 22, 2011. We began this adventure as advocates for the Peace Corps the evening before at the University of the District of Columbia, where we met our team captain, Kate Schachter, and other team members, Carol Kuhlmann, Sarah Sanders, Kathleen Simon, and Allegra Troiano --- all from Wisconsin.

At this orientation session we were advised to wear good walking shoes the next day to walk the long halls of the House and Senate office buildings, with their hard marble floors. We were given packets of information prepared for us by the NPCA on three different pieces of legislation that we would be asking our Wisconsin Senators and Representatives to support and pass: (1) the authorization of an outdoor memorial near the National Mall to mark the lasting historic significance and the ideals of the founding of the Peace Corps in 1961, thereby honoring the past of the Peace Corps; (2) the Kate Puzey Peace Corps Volunteer Protection Act of 2011, which will improve training and support of volunteers impacted by physical and/or sexual violence, thereby honoring the present of the Peace Corps; (3) and the 2012 Fiscal Year Peace Corps funding, which would ensure a future for the Peace Corps.

The Advocacy Day kickoff began at 8:00 AM at the Lutheran Church of the Reformation, two blocks from the Capitol. We found our team members and took off walking to the offices of our Wisconsin Senators and our Wisconsin Representatives. We attended meetings scheduled by the NPCA with Harry Stein, Legislative Assistant to Senator Herb Kohl, and with Alan Elias, Legislative Assistant to Senator Ron Johnson. Our meeting with Alan Elias was part of Senator Ron Johnson's, "Coffee with Constituents," and the Senator made an appearance at the coffee, talking briefly with each group there. Both Senators' legislative assistants listened to us as we advocated for the three pieces of legislation.

Our Wisconsin team also visited Representative Jim Sensenbrenner's office and met with Todd Washam, his legislative assistant. We then visited Representative Reid Ribble and met with Paul Bleiberg, his legislative assistant. Both of these Representatives' legislative assistants listened to us as we advocated for the three pieces of legislation, just as our Wisconsin Senators' legislative assistants did. Our own House Representative is Gwen Moore, and our team stopped at her office and spoke briefly with Chris Goldson, her legislative assistant. As with the Senators' assistants, our team left packets of information with the Representatives' legislative assistants.

We believe that our team helped educate these Wisconsin staffers about the history and importance of the Peace Corps' mission of promoting peace and friendship around the world, and hopefully they will persuade their bosses to support and pass these three pieces of legislation.

After a debriefing session with the NPCA, we ended our day on Capitol Hill with an Advocacy Day Reception in the beautiful Kennedy Caucus Room of the Russell Senate Office Building. We enjoyed some good food and drink and listened to various speakers, including a few Congressmen who have served in the Peace Corps (e.g., Sam Farr, from California), recalling that fifty years to the day, on September 22, 1961, Congress passed legislation to create the Peace Corps, and challenging their audience to continue its support of the Peace Corps. We are grateful that we could participate in this very special, unique celebration of the Peace Corps' 50th Birthday.




NPCA Advocacy Days, with Herb Kohl's legislative assistant



*NPCA Advocacy Day Reception
Bob and Sharon Richardson, Slovak Republic '96-'98*

Peace Corps



Picture Page



Grocery Shopping in Poland, Dzidra Benish (92-94)



In the classroom in Poland, Dzidra Benish (92-94)

MPCA Annual Meeting
Sunday, January 8, at 1:00 pm
Location TBA

All members are welcomed and encouraged to attend this meeting to plan MPCA events for 2012 and to strategize together about our future!

An Adventure After the Peace Corps Adventure

Submitted by Marti Fine, South Africa '06-'08

I had not really thought about how I would celebrate my upcoming 60th birthday. I know there are some women who have big, swanky affairs, filled with champagne and gourmet food; that's most definitely not my style. Then there are those who would simply cover their heads with blankets and refuse to get out of bed. That wasn't me; I wanted something with adventure, challenge, and the unexpected. In other words, I wanted to be on a bike trip.

For many years my husband Dave and I took week-long bicycle tours during our summer vacations. They were great, but we looked forward to the time when we could take a fully-loaded bike tour; and going across the United States became our ultimate goal. While serving in the Peace Corps we thought the right time might be upon completion of our service - we would be in good cycling shape since we rode our bikes almost daily in South Africa. But it wasn't until this year that we were able to escape what turned out to be a long, miserable Wisconsin winter and flew to California, our bikes shipped before us.

On a sunny morning, February 7, we cycled out of Los Angeles - first down the Pacific coast to San Diego, the Adventure Cycling map guiding our way. We took our time along the beach bike paths and the Pacific Coast Highway. After spending a day in San Diego, we turned east, crossing the Arizona/New Mexico border on February 27. We arrived in Deming, New Mexico, the next day and stayed at a hotel that night, a birthday gift from our thoughtful and creative children. Since our plan was to camp or stay with Warmshowers hosts on most nights, a nice hotel room was a real treat, and especially nice on my big birthday.

I awoke on March 1, ready for just another day on the interstate. Though it was my 'big' day, our job was the same as every other day on the tour: get on the bike and pedal. Dave had been having some tire issues and, 20 miles down the road, he had another flat. I was very happy to be celebrating my birthday doing what I love, but not pleased that we were going to be late getting to Las Cruces, our destination for the day.

While working on the bike, an RV pulled over and a couple about our age, Richard and Jan, got out. As Richard helped Dave with his tire, Jan handed me a plastic bag saying, "I hope you like chocolate." I couldn't help blurting, "I LOVE chocolate and it's my 60th birthday today! This is the best gift ever!" Soon we headed off into the bright morning sun after saying our goodbyes and thank yous, and I was beginning to think the day might turn out OK after all.

After getting Dave's tire fixed at a bike shop in Las Cruces, we found a restaurant a few blocks away where I could get a margarita. While sitting at the bar, I talked with the young man sitting next to me about the bicycle trip he was hoping to do. Soon we joined up with our overnight hosts and as the young man left the restaurant, he said our drinks were on him! I thanked him profusely, not even telling him that it was my birthday and how much it meant to me.

Lee and Cindy, our hosts, took us to a different restaurant for dinner and would not let us pay for our meals. I didn't know how to accept yet another gift, and could they even know it was my birthday? Here I had been worried we wouldn't make it to town in time to have a mini celebration, and now I had received chocolates, a margarita, and dinner. This was just too much.

But it wasn't over yet. At their home later that evening we brought this special day to a close in the manner to which we are most accustomed - with cake and ice cream. Lee had been following our online journal and did indeed know it was my birthday! As I blew out the lone candle on my piece of cake, I was almost brought to tears with the memories of this incredible day and the people who made it so special. Where will I spend my 65th, 70th, 80th birthdays? My hope is that they will bring something just as unexpected as chocolates, drinks and new friends in New Mexico. I have no idea where I will be, but I have a funny feeling it won't be at home pulling a blanket over my head. Fretting about an upcoming birthday? Get on the bike!

Our Mission

MPCA is a community of former and future Peace Corps volunteers and families who continue to promote Peace Corps ideals through cultural education and the support of both local and international development organizations. It also provides social activities and emotional support for Returned Peace Corps Volunteers and those returning from abroad.

Connect With Us!

E-Mail:

info@milwaukeepeacecorps.org

Facebook:

Milwaukee Peace Corps Association

Listserv:

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/MPCA>

Mark Your Calendars!

*We've developed a tentative
2012 schedule of events:*

January 8, 2012: Annual Meeting

April 14, 2012: Peace Corps Partnership Dinner (Latin America)

July 21, 2012: Summer Picnic

October 13, 2012: Peace Corps Partnership Dinner (Asia)

November 10, 2012: Family and Friends Brunch

December 8, 2012: Holiday Ethnic Potluck



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