



Milwaukee Peace Corps Association

Volume 43, Issue 5
April 2007

We want YOU

At the Volunteer Send-Off Celebration!

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Tina Maz and her daughter Neera hope you can make it!

Monday, April 16th, 2007
at the

Gordon Park Pavilion
2828 N. Humboldt Blvd.
Milwaukee, WI 53212-2630

Come join us at the 2007 Volunteer Send-Off reception being hosted by the Minneapolis Peace Corps Office and the Milwaukee Peace Corps Association. The reception will be an opportunity for you to celebrate

your PC experience with new volunteers and their families being welcomed into the organization. Meet families of currently serving volunteers, newly returned RPCVs, the rest of our MPCA community, Ryan, our PC Minn. recruiter, and Tina Storck, another recruiter. A panel discussion and presentation by former Volunteers will be featured. Whole Foods will supply light snacks and Alterra will provide coffee.

Event Schedule:

5:45 pm - 6:30 pm: Meet and greet returned Peace Corps Volunteers, departing Volunteers, families, and friends!

6:30 pm - 8:00 pm: Volunteer Send-Off program

Please feel free to invite family members and friends or anyone who would be interested in attending!



Nominee Carol Palmert with RPCVs Amy Olen and Rebecca Cors

Please RSVP with your name, number attending, and contact information to Ryan by Monday, April 9th (800-424-8580, option 1, ext. 1483, or rkattner@peacecorps.gov.)



The President's Soapbox

by Allegra K. Troiano

Thanks for being patient waiting for this newsletter. A lot has changed at MPCA since you got our December issue. We have a new newsletter editor, Amy Olen, and a new web master, Marcus Cano. I was greatly relieved to know that our board positions were filled (there were 4) and that we could start to focus on new directions for MPCA when I heard that Bill Schutten, our treasurer, is now resigning because he's moving on to a new career in Madison. Good luck Bill! So is there anyone out there that wants to be MPCA treasurer? It's an easy job using Quick Books, so it's just a matter of learning a simple computer program and punching in some numbers. Please contact Bill for the full scoop: whschutten@uwalumni.com

MPCA had a very busy year last year. Besides our annual picnic, parent brunch, and holiday party, we collected and sent 2,000 books to PCVs Megan Lan and Levi Barclay in Honduras and Amanda Watkins in Tanzania. All 12 Mbags and 2 boxes arrived safely in Honduras. We're still waiting to hear about the books sent to Tanzania.

In addition, we did workshops with 65 Girl Scouts, and 100 Brownies; we hosted one of 9 countrywide 45th Anniversary Open Houses with Peace Corps and NPCA; we had a very successful Parent Brunch with 80 participants, and we had a well-attended annual picnic and Holiday party.

So what other organization can you join for a mere \$15.00 and know that your money is hard at work for you and for others? For those of you whose memberships have lapsed, we would like you to rejoin, and for those of you who wonder what we do, check out the recap below of the Peace Corps Partnership projects/donations that MPCA supported in 2006 and MPCA's Budget recap.

I am proud of MPCA's board, its members, and all the work that we do to keep MPCA a vibrant organization, which continues to support the 3rd goal of Peace Corps. Happy Spring! -- Allegra

MPCA'S projects/donations in 2006**

International

• MPCA donated \$150 to WI PCV, Adam Goodberg to purchase 30 harmonicas for his community in Moldova.

• MPCA donated \$350 to the PCP Project:

Therapy Room in Romania.

• MPCA donated \$350 to the PCP Project:

Butcher Shop in Togo.

• MPCA donated \$3,989* to the PCP Project:

Public Library in Tanzania.

• MPCA donated \$745* to the PCP Project:

Girls' Internships in Benin.

*These PC Partnership donations were possible because of a generous donation from an anonymous donor.

Local

• MPCA donated \$300 to Lutheran Social Services for a Somali family who was resettling in the Milwaukee area.

• MPCA donated \$500 to Global Giving for its Hurricane Katrina Rebuilding Fund.

Budget Recap for 2006**

Opening Balance: **\$8,317.33**

Total Revenue: **\$10,634.03**

Total Expenses: **\$12,386.86**

Closing Balance (opening balance plus total revenues, less total expenses): **\$6,564.50**

****If you are interested in the full report, email me at akt@wi.rr.com, and I will be happy to send it to you.**

Notes from the Field: Messages from two of MPCA’s prior grant recipients

Tanzania: *Amanda received substantial funding from MPCA for the Kifumbe public library through PCP*

February 5, 2007 -- Greetings from “the wilds of Tanzania.” My name is Amanda Watkins and I am the honored yet undeserving recipient of your financial assistance. On behalf of my villagers and myself, we humbly thank you for your generous kindness. We offer in repayment the only gift we have -- a glimpse into our amazing village.

I am enclosing a photo of three mamas who arrived at 6 am to be tested for HIV/AIDS, hours before the nurses were scheduled to start, simply because they wanted to set an example for other women. Having this seminar on HIV/AIDS in June 06 was the first formal education in Kifumbe on the topic. Many had never heard of the disease before. Over 62% of those tested that week were women and 80% of those tested positive were female.



The second photo is of Douglas Kisunga, a person living with HIV/AIDS educating the villagers at the seminar. Nearly 45% of the adult population came to hear his lecture and receive HIV/AIDS education. It was an amazing week.



The last photo is of some of my favorite people -- the kids of Kifumbe. Kilala, Edita and Happy are cousins and love to play at my house. They are energetic and bright girls and I want them to have a



safe and nurturing environment to grow up in. I hope the library serves girls like them; they have never before seen a coloring book or crayons. I would love for their imaginations to expand, so they see the options that are open to them, outside the village boundaries.

--Amanda Watkins

Honduras: *Megan Lan and Levi Barclay write about their water projects*



We recently had the pleasure of training a community where we helped to design a water system. We worked with a Spanish NGO on three different educational sessions: (1) training the community “water management group” (junta de agua) in system upkeep and maintenance, (2) training water system users, and (3) training of the recipients of new houses in the use and maintenance of toilets and sinks.

“Toilet training” went off without a hitch. We talked about the importance of hygiene in maintaining health. Then we talked about how toilets and sinks can help improve hygiene, how to use them, how to take care of them, what to put and what not to put in them. We even discussed the intricate inner workings of the toilet – truly amazing technology! The most challenging part was explaining exactly how to use the toilet – there was a lot of giggling during this section. But two goofy gringos can get away with things that other fellow Hondurans cannot, so it was no big problem!

A water system can run between \$15,000 and \$30,000 for materials alone. NGOs purchase the materials and oversee design and construction of the water system, while communities contribute to the project with manual labor. Once the NGO finishes the project, it leaves the community to run and maintain its own water system. This is where the difficulties come in – often, the junta de agua lacks the knowledge needed to effectively run the system. Fortunately, our goal is to get the communities one step closer – not to attain perfection!

MPCA and Girl Scouts Collaborate

by Mary Mueller

Curious young minds were eager to learn! On March 24, MPCA brought the world home to Brownies and Jr. Girl Scouts at Camp Alice Chester, located near East Troy, Wisconsin.

The lovely wooden lodge overlooking the lake was an ideal setting for “World Thinking Day,” a day designed to help Girl Scouts think about what life is like in other countries and their “sister” Girl Guides around the world. MPCA was well prepared to effectively meet the Girl Scout objectives and the third goal of Peace Corps.

Interactive, fun activities and mini-language lessons from ten countries were presented by 11 returned Peace Corps Volunteers and 5 of their international friends. By all accounts, especially the girls’ enthusiasm and smiling faces, it was a win-win collaborative effort.

Partnering with the Girl Scouts is a great way to foster global understanding and to promote Peace Corps service and ideals to the next generation of volunteers.

This event was rescheduled from February 24 due to a big winter storm. MPCA would like to thank all the volunteers who presented and to those

who prepared and were unable to come in March. You are the heart and soul of MPCA!



Genny Kirk and Girl Scouts



Peter Lee speaking Thai to the Girl Scouts



Girl Scouts gettin’ down

THANK YOU, BILL SCHUTTEN, AND BEST OF LUCK IN MADISON!

MPCA would like to thank Bill for his dedicated service as Treasurer to the MPCA board. Bill is moving to Madison, WI to work in renewable energies. Good luck, Bill, in your future endeavors and thank you for all you have done for MPCA!



Welcome New Board Members!



Amy Olen has taken on the position of Newsletter Editor for MPCA. Amy was a Peace Corps volunteer in Guatemala from 2002 to 2004. She lived in the heart of the Guatemalan rainforest in northern Alta Verapaz, in a small town called Chisec. Amy returned to her hometown of Milwaukee after Peace Corps to begin her graduate studies at UWM. She is currently a medical interpreter at St. Francis Hospital and volunteers for Deep Roots, Inc., a non-profit organization made up of RPCVs and World Teach volunteers that funds scholarships in Guatemala, Namibia, Nepal and Zambia.

Marcus Cano A native of San Antonio, TX, Marcus Cano received his BA in International Studies from Southwestern University in Georgetown, TX. After a short stint as an analyst in the energy industry, he joined Peace Corps Burkina Faso as a Health Volunteer. He went on to become a consultant for the Carter Center's Guinea Worm Eradication Program, which allowed him to work with the Burkinabe Ministry of Health. His likes are: March Madness, Rock Climbing, only the very latest African "hits," and his camel Guantanamera. His dislikes are: the current job market, mac/pc incompatibility, the high cost of good cheese, and his addiction to cookies. He is now preparing to reenter academia with MBA ambitions and is starting his own trading company with local Burkinabe partners.



Congratulations!

Congratulations to Allegra Troiano for her nomination to the Board of Directors of the National Peace Corps Association. As an NPCA Board Member, Allegra would represent the Midwest, which includes states as far west as Colorado. Best of luck, Allegra! This nomination is a tribute to your hard work with MPCA and your dedication to Peace Corps.

Advocacy Coffee and Conversation

by Cheryl Nenn



Jonathan Pearson and Cheryl Nenn

Thanks to everyone who joined us at our 1st Annual Peace Corps Advocacy Coffee and Conversation event at Alterra's Lakefront Café on Sunday, March 25th. Two prospective volunteers joined a group of RPCVs to talk about advocacy issues related to Peace Corps as well as other issues of concern to former and currently serving Peace Corps Volunteers, such as fair trade, international affairs, global poverty, and HIV/AIDS.

Jonathan Pearson from the National Peace Corps Association (NPCA) joined us to discuss our successes this year, which included removing a proposed provision to allow members of the Military to finish out their service in Peace Corps. While former or retired military staff are encouraged to join the Peace Corps after their service, this provision had safety and political implications for currently serving volunteers and threatened one of the fundamental tenets of Peace Corps— independence from the military.

Jonathan thanked Milwaukee RPCVs for all the calls that they made to our federal Senators and Congressional Representatives supporting Peace Corps funding in this year's federal budget. This was the best grassroots effort by Peace Corps in a long time!! The federal budget is still not finalized, and Representative Paul Ryan (R-Green Bay), who did not sign on to the "Dear Colleague" letter advocating for Peace Corps funding, serves a vital role on the Budget Committee. Please call him as a Wisconsin resident and request that he support Peace Corps and International Affairs funding as part of this year's budget at 202-225-3121 (House Switchboard)! *Thanks for your advocacy!!*



Proposed Peace Corps Volunteer Empowerment Act!

Senator Chris Dodd of Connecticut (Dominican Republic 66-68) has introduced the Peace Corps Volunteer Empowerment Act (S.732), which addresses a number of issues of interest to the Peace Corps community. A companion bill will be introduced in the House by Congressman Sam Farr (Colombia 64-66). The legislation makes suggestions regarding funding, fundraising by volunteers, funding for "third goal" activities by returned volunteers, recruiting, membership/medical screening, and more! Due to the major implications of this legislation on Peace Corps, NPCA is conducting a survey to ascertain information from the Peace Corps community and make sure that our views are reflected constructively. This survey is independent of Peace Corps and any members of Congress, although the results will be disseminated broadly, including to interested members of Congress, the Peace Corps, and the community at large.

Access the survey at:

<http://www.rpcv.org/pages/survey.cfm?id=82> (or from the NPCA homepage—click on advocacy).

Let us hear from you! Summaries of key sections of the legislation are listed along with questions on whether you agree/disagree with various proposals. Each section also provides space for comment. We suggest you skim the complete survey first to make sure you have time to comment on parts of the legislation you feel most strongly about. If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact Jonathan Pearson, NPCA Advocacy Coordinator, at advocacy@rpcv.org or Cheryl, NPCA Advocacy Coordinator, at nennc@aol.com.

Calendar Of Events

April 2007

Monday, April 16th

Volunteer Send-Off - Gordon Park Pavilion
2828 North Humboldt Ave

Friday, April 20th: Come and say farewell to Bill!

Ethnic Eats, 6 pm Vientiane Noodle Shop
3422 East National Avenue, Milwaukee 53215

Saturday, April 21st

Annual River Clean Up with
Friends of the Milwaukee River, 9am – 12pm

May 2007

Thursday, May 3rd

Social Night at Hotel Metro, 6 pm
411 East Maston Street, 53202, (414) 272-1937

Monday, May 21st

MPCA Board Meeting, 6:30 pm - 8:15 pm
East Library, 1910 E. North Avenue, Milwaukee, 53202

Saturday, May 26th

Group Hike at Schlitz Audubon Center, 10 am
1111 East Brown Deer Road, Milwaukee 53217, (414) 352-2880
Meeting point will be at the front of the Center. Carpooling is available
<http://www.schlitzauduboncenter.com/about.htm>

June 2007

Thursday, June 14th

Picnic Dinner and the Alterra Música del Lago Series,
7 pm, Alterra at the Lake, 1701 N. Lincoln Memorial

Monday, June 18th

MPCA Board Meeting, 6:30-8:15pm
East Library, 1910 E. North Ave., Milwaukee, 53202

Our Rivers are in Trouble! We Need your Help!

Help MPCA clean up one of Milwaukee's Rivers!

This year, MPCA has its own site, which will be the Menomonee River at North Avenue. The best place to meet is at the intersection of North Avenue and Menomonee River Parkway (north of North Ave.) at 8:50. The Cleanup is from 9:00-12:00 noon, and all supplies will be provided. You should bring boots and wear old clothes. All ages are welcomed!



Jenn Murray, Megan, Brian Sweenie, Tina Chan Sweenie, Laine Phillipa, Cheryl Nenn and Joel Robertson at the December Holiday Party.

What would YOU like to do? Contact us to suggest an event!

For more information on the listed events, or to suggest an event, please contact Tina at:
tinachan75@yahoo.com

MPCA Membership/Renewal Form

Name _____

Country and Years of Service _____ Assignment _____

Address _____ City _____ ST _____ ZIP _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Milwaukee Peace Corps Association membership is not restricted to RPCVs, but is also open to prospective volunteers, PCV parents or anyone whose goals are the same as those of the Peace Corps. Anyone interested in being added to the mailing list can contact Peter Lee at lee@uwm.edu. Unfortunately, due to production costs, if we do not receive your dues after 3 months, we'll have to remove your name from the mailing list. Paid members will receive an MPCA Directory. If you pay dues to the National Peace Corps Association and list yourself as being affiliated with the Milwaukee group, your dues are paid with your national membership.

All renewals are due on January 1.

- \$15.00 Minimum MPCA Dues (New members \$7.50 after July 1)
- \$22.50 Common Household (New members \$11.25 after July 1)
- \$50.00 MPCA and NPCA dues
- \$_____ Other donations

Please fill in this form and send it with a check made out to Milwaukee Peace Corps Association to:
Milwaukee Peace Corps Association
P.O. Box 511322
Milwaukee, WI 53203-0221



Peace Corps Fellows Program in Community Development

Western Illinois University

"Where is the road of life taking you?" "Is your job unfulfilling?"
"Is it time for that master's degree that you've been putting off since PC?"

The Peace Corps Fellows Program in Community Development at Western Illinois offers RPCVs the opportunity to earn a master's degree with a specialization in Community development. After campus coursework in one of six departments, Fellows serve an 11-month paid internship in which they gain practical experience while leading grassroots community and economic development projects.

Very generous financial benefits are provided to all Fellows, including a full tuition waiver, a monthly stipend, and an Americorps education award upon completion of the internship. Applications are accepted for January and August enrollment.



For more information:

Peace Corps Fellows Program
503 Currens
Western Illinois University
1 University Circle
macomb, IL 61455-1390
309-298-2268 or 800-526-9943
www.peacecorpsfellows-wiu.org
Email: PCF@wiu.edu

Milwaukee Peace Corps
Association
P.O. Box 511322
Milwaukee, WI 53203-0221

Email:
information@milwaukeepeacecorps.org

On the Web at
milwaukeepeacecorps.org

Year Founded: 1968
Paid Members: 70

President:

Allegra K. Troiano
(Senegal '80-'82)

Vice President:

Mary Mueller
(Guatemala '96-'98)

Treasurer:

Bill Schutten
(Cameroon '02-'04)

Newsletter Editor:

Amy Olen
(Guatemala '02-'04)

Social Events Coordinator:

Tina Chan Sweenie
(Niger '97-'99)

Membership Coordinator:

Peter Lee
(Thailand '65-'67)

Website Manager:

Marcus Cano
(Burkina Faso '03-'05)

Advocacy Coordinator:

Cheryl Nenn
(Ecuador '95-'97)
(Crisis Corps-Honduras '99)

Calendar Project Coordinator:

Tennie Bickham
(Liberia '66-'68)

MPCA Historian:

Paul Kinsley
(Turkey '65-'67)



New for 2007: This year, MPCA will dedicate part of the newsletter to a theme that will be announced in the previous newsletter. If you have a story or an idea for article that fits that theme, we would love to share your story in the newsletter. For submissions, questions or suggestions, please contact Amy Olen at amytolen@gmail.com.

JUNE NEWSLETTER THEME: *Write about the weirdest food situation you had as a volunteer. What did you eat? Where? Why?*

MPCA is a community of former and future PC 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 RPCVs and for those returning from abroad.

Friends of Milwaukee's Rivers
Saturday April 21
9 am - noon
2007
River Cleanup
milwaukeeRiverCleanup.org
United Water, THE EDGE, Gilbane, etc.