

2010

rpcv

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President's Memo

2010 Review

This year was another solid year of celebration, projects, socializing and planning ahead. Some new faces were present at a number of our activities. It is so good to see and hear from recently returned volunteers and to say hello again to those whom we have not seen in a while.

Donna Fieblekorn (Nepal '83) spoke to us about Nepal at our February International Potluck. Donna has served as a volunteer in Nepal, Ukraine, Kyrgyzstan and the East Caribbean, and has worked for Peace Corps as well as a trainer in the Ukraine. She has a wealth of experience to bring to our group. It was wonderful to hear her stories and see all of the many clothing and household items to touch and hold. This country is truly unique in

many ways; the range of elevation from the lowest to the highest peaks in the world awed everyone. Her people stories were wonderful.

We worked two landscape projects in coordination with ICCF in April and May. This relationship has been a good one over the years. We spent two Saturday mornings doing cleanup and plantings for two different homes being prepared for new low income tenants. Thanks to everyone who pitched in. There were lots of sore muscles and many good feelings taken away from both jobs.

The summer pool party at the Pohlad's was well attended. We finally met some new returnees who could travel in February due to bad weather. This social has become the "welcome back party" for recent COS volunteers.

Our Fall dinner out at Mingten was a great time. There many new faces present.

Even though we did not have a formal fundraiser this year, we took in \$400 at our

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rpcv west michigan

rpcvwestmichigan.org



2010

Yard Sale Fundraiser:

Plan now to help make our *Yard Sale* a success. Save your items for the sale. Saturday, September 17. 8 - 3, at 2228 Madison, SE. We need volunteers that day and the evening before to help setup. We also need help taking things down and doing a donation.

NPCA Membership:

Please renew your membership, if you have not already done so, by visiting:

<http://peacecorpsconnect.org>

Items of Note

Be Connected and Be Informed

Stay Up to Date

Our website is the best place to find the updates you need. If you have not subscribed to our email list, you should take a minute to do that. Go to <http://rpcvwestmichigan.org> for info.

Renew Your Membership

Please take a moment at the beginning of the new year to renew your membership.

You can do this at

<http://peacecorpsconnect.org> or at <http://rpcvwestmichigan.org> for more information.

Calendar of Events

Please see the Calendar Section of this newsletter with our 2011 events. Details are posted and emailed.

Yard Sale Fundraiser

This year is our main fundraiser on Saturday, September 17 at 2228 Madison SE. Please start saving your goods and come help out Friday to tag and sort or Saturday for the sale and cleanup.

2011 PC Calendars for Sale

The best RPCV Calendars are for sale to help benefit our group. These are produced yearly by the Madison, WI RPCV group and are spectacular,



International Potluck

This year our Annual International Potluck will include a Welcome Home and a Sendoff for returning and leaving volunteers. It will be on March 5th. Make sure you are on our email list and/or visit our website for more information about this event.

John F. Kennedy and The Peace Corps



President Kennedy first proposed the idea of the Peace Corps on October 14, 1960. On March 1, 1961, President Kennedy signed the Executive Order to create the Peace Corps.

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annual meeting for sales of calendars, coffee, chocolate, honey and salsa. Thanks to those who contributed with goods and money.

We agreed to support a project providing prosthetic limbs in Haiti that Ben Byl recommended to the group. There is a local West Michigan connection with that project.

I have a special thanks for Gary Marsh who attended the 50th Anniversary events at the University of Michigan in October. You can read about his experiences during that weekend in this newsletter.

There are many Madison, WI RPCV Group calendars for 2011 still available. Please let me know if you would like to give them as gifts. More info on our website.

Members at the December meeting voted in the following officers:

President	Mark Coleman
Vice President	Ken Schilling
Secretary	Donna Fiebelkorn
Treasurer	Vicki Craig

We welcome Donna to the officer roster. Donna is also serving as a liaison to Washington, D.C. regarding planning and information sharing with the 50th Anniversary plans.

Of course, this next year will be focused on commemorating the 50th anniversary of the Peace Corps. I hope you all will find ways to share your story with the greater West Michigan area and help give a great send off to any volunteer about to leave as well as to welcome back all returning volunteers into the RPCV fold.

Mark Coleman, President, RPCV West Michigan
December, 2010

PEACE CORPS

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Gary March, Gabon 1
in the middle back row.

A Peace Corps 50th Anniversary Celebration Ann Arbor, Michigan October 13-16, 2010

The University of Michigan likes to claim a founding foothold in the formation of the Peace Corps by virtue of candidate John Kennedy's impromptu speech to students gathered around the steps of the Union at 2 a.m., October 14, 1960. Senator Kennedy asked the 5,000, "How many of you would be willing to take your skills to help less fortunate people in poor countries around the world?" Alan Guskin and about 1,000 fellow Michigan students followed Jack Kennedy to Toledo the next night and said, "We would".

Alan, who served in Thailand 1, 1961-1963 and became instrumental in the formation of Vista, the domestic peace corps, as well, was one of the speakers during the 4-day celebration of the Peace Corps 50th anniversary on the University of Michigan campus, October 13-16.

Paul Theroux led a discussion on Wednesday evening and Senator Harris Wofford and former Peace Corps Director Jack Hood Vaughn, a Michigan grad, led a re-creation of the 1960, 2 a.m. gathering at the Union steps on Thursday. A group of drummers from Ghana also performed Thursday afternoon prior to a general reception for some

of the 2331 University of Michigan graduates who also became Peace Corps volunteers. Thursday evening social activist Tom Hayden spoke to a group in the Graduate Library. Photos, works of art and writings submitted by Returned Peace Corps Volunteers were on public display throughout the campus.

One of the highlights of the extended weekend was an informal get together Friday evening; the same way students usually celebrate Friday evenings. The other highlight was participation in University President Mary Sue Coleman's tailgate party at the Oosterban Field House where I met and spoke to Deputy Peace Corps Director Carrie Hessler-Radelet (RPCV Western Samoa 1981-83), then halftime recognition on the football field during the Michigan-Iowa game.

When the halftime activities ran a bit long the RPCV recognition got delayed until the first commercial break of the third quarter. So, even though the game was nationally televised our presence on the field was pre-empted by beer and deodorant commercials and nobody outside the stadium saw us; so much for our 2 minutes and 15 seconds of fame and glory.

Global House Party

We will help Peace
Corps will Celebrate its
50 Year Anniversary,
March 5, 2011

What

A gathering of RPCV's, and other interested people in celebrating the 50th Anniversary of Peace Corps with a simple meal and discussion.

Topic

Food security is a term that refers to one's consistent access to enough food to live a healthy life. A country's food security is often determined by how many households in said country are considered food-secure, meaning they do not live in hunger or in fear of starvation. Worldwide around 1 billion people are food insecure due to chronic hunger and another 2 billion are intermittently food insecure.

Who

RPCV's in West Michigan and others.

Where

Our Savior's Lutheran Church
2900 Burton Street Southeast
Grand Rapids, MI 49546-5199

What time?

6:00pm

What should I bring?

A labeled dish from your host country and a small display that represents your work in your host country.

U. of M. Celebrates

On the sidelines waiting for the half-time, RPCV's get ready to go out on the field with flags and U of M colors.



2011

Calendar of Events

Stay Informed:

web: <http://rpcvwestmichigan.org>
twitter: @rpcvwmi

March 1	Passing the Torch Documentarty, Wealthy Theater	6:30pm
March 5	Global House Party International Potluck/Welcome & Sendoff	6pm
April 23	ICCF Work Day	8am - 12pm
May 8	ICCF Work Day	8am - 12pm
August	Picnic	1pm
September 17	Yard Sale	8am
October	Dinner	tbd
December 3	Annual Holiday Potluck	6pm



50th Anniversary

50th Anniversary - this next year is an big year for the Peace Corps. The Peace Corps budget is increased, it is reaching a half-century milestone and the spirit of helping the developing world could not be greater.

I am asking that all west michigan rpcv's think of how you can share your Peace Corps experience and the impact that it has made.

So, what is your story?

Tell it at our website

RPCVWESTMICHIGAN.ORG

Stay informed about what is happening in Washington, D.C. regarding this topic as well as all of the ongoing news and plans for commemorating the 50th Anniversary of Peace Corps at:

www.peacecorpsconnect.org.

Please renew your membership if you have not already done so. We benefit from your support. More information is on our website on local, or national/local membership opportunities. Thanks.

rpcv west mi

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