

RPCVWMI hosts "A Passing of the Torch" at Wealthy Street Theater

Thanks to Baker College

Culinary Institute for our special Anniversary Cake

President's Memo

2011 Review

The 50th anniversary year of the Peace Corps, was a celebration for returned volunteers, and the communities and countries served. Kindled by this golden anniversary, our RPCV group had an outstanding year of growth, community outreach and education and commemorating the spirit that created the Peace Corps. The entire Peace Corps community also mourned the loss of Sargent Shriver, the driving force and first director of the Peace Corps, who passed away early in the year.

Our local anniversary celebration began with a showing of the documentary film "A Passing of the Torch" at the Wealthy Street Theater, as part of the National Peace Corps Week events. Many new and old returned volunteers attended and stayed for a

discussion afterwards. The annual International Potluck followed that same week. Attendance at this event was one of the largest gatherings of returned volunteers in many years. Donna Fiebelkorn arranged for a beautiful, commemorative cake from Baker College Culinary Arts Program and Peace Corps memorabilia to share. Billy Smith encouraged everyone to give an impromptu sharing of their PC experience. This was a nice introduction for those departing soon and a touching validation for those newly returned volunteers. This year we invited new returnees and recruits with their families to attend this dinner. This is the beginning of a new tradition for our group, a send off for soon to depart volunteers. Returned volunteers brought cultural artifacts, photos

and materials from their countries of service to share in regional displays.

A proclamation was made on the floor of the Michigan State Capital in February by

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RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP

Please take a moment at the beginning of the new year to renew your membership if you have not done so already..

You can do this at

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

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.

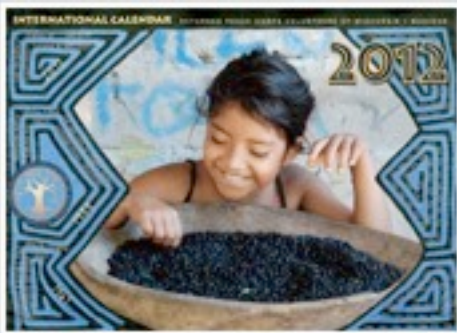
CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Please see the Calendar Section of this newsletter with our 2012 events. Details will be emailed for every event.

FACEBOOK

[Like Us](#)

2012 PC CALENDARS FOR SALE



Get yours at a reduced price before they are all gone. \$10.00 each.

The RPCV Calendars are for sale to benefit our group. They are produced yearly by the Madison, WI RPCV group and are spectacular, informative and nostalgic. Get one at the Intl. Dinner, or email

rpcv@rpcvwestmichigan.org

International Potluck

This year our Annual International Potluck will continue to be a Welcome Home and a Sendoff for returning and leaving volunteers. It will be on March 3rd. Make sure you are on our email list and/or visit our website for more information about this event. Plan your favorite international dish now.

Peace Corps is commemorated with a proclamation in Lansing at the Capital with Senator Steven Bieda and RPCV's.



Senator Steven Bieda in commemoration of the 50th Anniversary. Jody Alexiev, Donna Fiebelkorn, John Clemo and other rpcv's from the South East RPCV group were present (see photo). Our RPVC group helped with two house projects of the Inter City Christian Federation in the Spring, coordinated by Ken Schilling. Thanks to Ken and Yvonne, Jody Alexiev, Carolyn Chapman, Brian Peceny, Paul Ippel, Mark Coleman and Wolfgang Pohl pitching in with landscaping and clean up of two distressed Grand Rapids properties. Greg and Lisa Pohlad hosted a summer splash get together in August which was well attended despite the rain. Newly returned volunteers joined our group at that event as well.

Many of our group went to Washington D.C. for both the Folklife Festival and the national Anniversary Celebration. The Washington travelers planned impromptu gatherings of RPVCs from across the country added to the "gala" ambience everywhere.

Our Fall events included one of our semi annual garage sales. This year our garage sale brought in a record return for the twenty year history of this fundraiser. In October, we gathered socially for a fixed menu of Indian dishes at Pal's coordinated by Carolyn Chapman. Area returned volunteers participated in lectures that were part of the adult learning, or CALL, program at Calvin College. Chuck Mast coordinated 13 RPCV presentations over the course of three weeks that were very well received. Thanks to Chuck and to all those who came to share their PC experiences.

The annual Holiday potluck was another very well attended get together. The food and fellowship kindled much conversation. We had a guest visitor, Harvey Somers, President of the Southeast Michigan RPCV group. We will continue to talk with them on how we can effectively work together.

Special thanks to Ken Schilling for donating all proceeds from the Calendar sale to the group. Thanks to Ken Schilling, Mark Coleman and Amy Ortiz for contributions of home canning, local honey, Fair trade coffee and chocolate for sale at the winter meeting to benefit the group funds. Thanks to Kathleen Russell, Vickie Craig, Lenore Schaffer, Paul Ippel, Kay Hislop, Greg Pohlad, Merrilee Benthin, Donna Fiebelkorn and Chuck and Mugs Mast, Mark Coleman and Ken and Yvonne Schilling along with Wolfgang Pohl who helped setup and with cleanup for the yard sale. Thanks to Holly Bryant for staffing the Career Day booth at GVSU in January, Denise Cheng for help with online connections at the Rapidian, John Clemo for offering to also help with online connections and Andy Brown for offering to help with Secretary duties. If I failed to recognize you for a specific contribution of time, donations, or gifts in kind, be aware that your contribution was appreciated and not unnoticed.

Our group exists to share our PC experiences and to support other volunteers in order to continue the circle began in 1961. This year we focused on the Ukraine by supporting three

Membership

At the beginning of 2012 it is clear we have a broad base of support. Your local, or national, dues allow us to underwrite our

modest operational expenses and focus on what we do best to carry on the mission of Peace Corps. Thank you. More at:

<http://peacecorpsconnect.org> or at <http://rpcvwestmichigan.org>

RPCV's of West Michigan			
Amy	Ortiz	Dominican Republic	
Gary	Marsh	Gabon	1961 / 1963
Vincent	Garofalo	Nigeria	1962 / 1964
Richard	Joyce	Phillippines	1962 / 1963
Charles	Mast	Turkey	1963 / 1965
Billy	Smith	Venezuela	1964 / 1969
Brad	Friedland	Chile	1966 / 1968
Tom	Appel	Eastern Caribbean	1967 / 1969
Dennis and Idy	Devinney	Sierra Leone	1967 / 1970
Merrilie	Benthin	Cameroon	1969 / 1972
Paul & Trudy	Ippel	Nevis	1969 / 1971
Ken & Yvonne	Schilling	Liberia	1969 / 1971
Wolfgang & Sandy	Pohl	Jamaica	1970 / 1972
Jim	Jouppi	Thailand	1971 / 1973
Paul	Garriepy	Zaire	1971 / 1974
Brian & Vickie	Craig	Afghanistan	1974 / 1977
Katherine	Russell	Lesotho	1977 / 1979
Sandy	Seppala	Kenya	1977 / 1979
Mark	Coleman	Honduras	1980 / 1983
Joel	Skok	Dominican Republic/ Honduras	1981 / 1986
Barbara	Stanford	Kenya	1986 / 1988
Doris	Werner Higgins	Costa Rica	1986 / 1988
Carolyn	Chapman	Benin	1987 / 1989
Patrick	Simpson	Tanzania United Republic of	1987 / 1990
Greg	Pohlad	Guatemala	1989 / 1991
Lisa	Pohlad	Jamaica	1989 / 1991
Kara	Nasif	Gabon	1989 / 1992
Shelli	Fyneweever	Nepal	1993 / 1995
Gail	Zemmol	Ecuador	1994 / 1995
Blake	Bartrand	Kenya	1996 / 1998
Jodie	Alexiev	Bulgaria	1997 / 1999
Mary	Murphy	Kyrgyzstan	1998 / 2000
Donna	Fiebelkorn	Ukraine	1999 / 2002
Brent	Benner	Peru	2000 / 2002
David	Bleckley	Senegal	2002 / 2003

Nate	Engle	Madagascar	2004 / 2006
Theresa	Munanga	Kenya	2004 / 2007
Daniel	Westerhof	Paraguay	2004 / 2008
Ryan	Teelander	Micronesia	2005 / 2007
Kari	Hatfield	China	2006 / 2008
Ben	Byl	Madagascar	2006 / 2008
Kate	Neids	Romania	2006 / 2008
Holly	Rogers Rios	Paraguay	2006 / 2008
Elizabeth	Smith	Senegal	2006 / 2008
Michael	Wilcox	Senegal	2006 / 2008
Andy	Brown	Thailand	2007 / 2009
Edna	Bermejo	Mauritania	2007 / 2009
Annie	Bernstein	Ukraine	2007 / 2009
Kristen	Brooks	Ethiopia	2007 / 2009
Melanie	Prins	Thailand	2007 / 2009
Kristian	Woods	Morocco	2007 / 2009
Stephanie	Oegema	Vanuatu	2007 / 2011
Denise	Cheng	Lesotho	2008 / 2010
Jaenell	Ott	Turkmenistan	2008 / 2010
Tyler	Green	Romania	2008 / 2010
Clark	Richter	Philippines	2008 / 2010
Holly	Bryant	Uganda	2008 / 2010
John	Clemo	South Africa	2008 / 2010
Bryant	Holly	Uganda	2008 / 2010
Lenore	Schaffer	Honduras	2008 / 2010
Sarah	Holleman	Morocco	2009 / 2011
Julia	Marsh	Mozambique	2009 / 2011
Lucas	Olson	Ukraine	2009 / 2011
Alyssa	Titche	Senegal	2009 / 2011
Vincent	Lambert	Moldova Republic of	2009 / 2001
Lashawnda	Taylor	Namibia	2009 / 2010
Patrick	Rawsthorne	Kazakhstan	2009 / 2011
Craig	Laurie	Moldova	2009 / 2011
James	Dana	Morocco	2010 / 2012
Diana	Klein	Indonesia	2010 / 2011
Matthew	Newman	Guyana	2010 / 2011



Twenty Years of Semi Annual Garage Sales and this was the best ever!
We raised \$500 through your help.

Thanks to all who contributed goods, time and hands on support to make this happen.

Thanks to those who helped with the ICCF projects.



2011

Calendar of Events

connect:

web: <http://rpcvwestmichigan.org>

twitter: @rpcvwmi

like us: facebook.com

March 3	International Potluck/Welcome & Sendoff	6pm
April	ICCF Work Day	8am - 12pm
May	ICCF Work Day	8am - 12pm
August	Picnic	1pm
October	Dinner	TBD
December 1	Annual Holiday Potluck/Business Meeting	6pm

projects of volunteers from West Michigan with a total of \$1084.76. These volunteers are focusing on literacy and on health awareness. Our support for each project through the Peace Corps Partnership program will be combined with local funds to achieve goals identified by current volunteers and the communities they serve as priorities for development. It is my expectation we will continue to work with this program to identify other projects with current volunteers in other countries. We received an official letter of thanks from Jennifer Chavez Rubio, Director of the Office of Private Initiatives for our contributions. As a 501(c)3 non-profit organization, your cash contribution to our group is tax deductible.

Thank you to Calvin College for a monetary contribution for the CALL speakers and as well to the AAUW who gave our group an honorarium for participating in a panel discussion in Muskegon during the National Peace Corps week celebration.

Members at the December meeting voted in the following officers to continue in their roles:

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

Peace, health and prosperity to your families for 2012. I look forward to seeing you at our upcoming events. Please check the web site for details.

Mark Coleman,
President,
RPCV West Michigan,
December, 2011

rpcv west mi

c/o
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GRAND RAPIDS MI 49505