



ReConnections

A monthly newsletter of the West Cascades Peace Corps Association

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For the Calendar...

Thurs. Sept. 10: **Book club** at the home of Rolly Thompson. See p. 3 for details.

Thurs. Sept. 24: Join us for a **pub night and going away party** for WCPCA member Denise Silfee at Hop Valley Brewing in Eugene! See p. 5 for details!

Sun. Sept. 27: The next **Board meeting** at New Day Bakery on Blair in Eugene, 6 - 8 pm.

Mon. Sept. 28: Volunteer with WCPCA members at **Food For Lane County, 6-9 pm** at 770 Bailey Hill Rd. in Eugene.

Coming Next Month...

Sun. Oct. 11: Mark your calendars! Bring the family or a friend to an afternoon at **Pfeiffer Vineyards** located west of Junction City. See p. 3 for details!



August Picnic

by Julia Harvey, Tonga 1990-1993

Members gathered on August 9th at the home of Rosa and Bob Watada for the annual WCPCA pool party. The weather was gorgeous and the setting relaxing. We enjoyed a great barbecue, good company and a tour of Bob's Japanese garden that he is creating. Two kids (mine) had a blast in the pool. Thank you to the Watada's for hosting!



Peace Corps Calendars are Here!

by Gary Cornelius, South Africa
2012-2013

The 2016 International Peace Corps calendars, produced annually by the Madison, WI RPCV group, are now available.

Selling calendars has been a long-time fundraising project of WCPCA, with profits going to support the many PCPP projects of Oregon volunteers we donate to each year.

Calendars are \$12 each, or \$10 each if five or more are ordered at the same time. If ordered from afar, calendars are \$15 each, which covers postage for mailing. Calendars will be available at upcoming WCPCA events, and directly from Gary Cornelius, WCPCA Secretary and calendar project coordinator. He can be reached at garycorn@quixnet.net, or by phone at 541-912-1518.

Calendars are a nice addition to any RPCV kitchen or office, or as holiday gifts to friends and relatives. The 2016 calendars include beautiful photos from Peace Corps countries, including Namibia, Moldova, Jordan, Peru, Sierra Leone, Ecuador, Thailand, Tanzania, Ethiopia, Poland, Mexico, and Turkey, most of which are countries where WCPCA RPCVs served. The calendar also includes interesting statistics and fun facts about each country represented, and various holidays celebrated in each country.

Postcard Pub Night

WCPCA members came out for beers and dinner with a side of postcard writing on Wednesday night, August 26th at Falling Sky on Blair. The postcard project was begun during the Lane County Fair as one of two community outreach projects. Seven currently serving PCVs responded to an online request for PCVs

interested in receiving postcards from the States to share with their students and community members. Fairgoers to this year's county fair, adults and children, were able to stop by the WCPCA booth and write a postcard to someone serving overseas. To round out the packages, RPCVs wrote postcards as well. The envelopes will be sent out at the end of August.

Currently serving volunteers include two individuals from Oregon: **Jessica Walker** is an education volunteer in Botswana who is originally from the Portland area.

WCPCA recently helped fund Jessica's library project. **Jake McGrew** is an education volunteer from Oregon currently serving in Ukraine.

Other volunteers who will receive postcards include: **Matt & Kathrina Konfirst**, from Chicago and serving in Guyana; **Lia Killeen**, from San Francisco, serving in The Gambia; **Rae Sterrett** from Illinois, serving in Ecuador; **Jenny Wininger** from Indiana and serving in Thailand; and **Gina Leow** from New York and currently serving in China. Thank you to everyone who participated!



Book Club is Back For Fall!

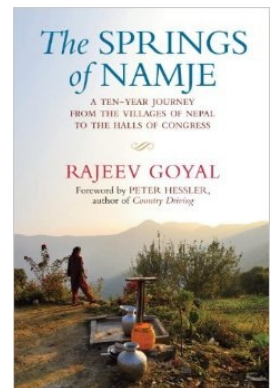
by Josette Green, Costa Rica 2007-2008

If it is September then it is time for the West Cascade Peace Corps Book Club to resume. Whether it's your first time joining or you are a veteran, you can be guaranteed of a lively conversation often accented by each of our own Peace Corps stories.



Thursday, September 10th at 6:30 pm is the next meeting at the home of Rolly Thompson. The book to be discussed will be *In The Shadow of the Volcano* by Maureen Klovers. Klovers recounts her experience teaching in the most dangerous slums of Quito, Ecuador.

The last book club meeting of 2015 will be on **Thursday, November 12th at 6:30 pm** at the home of Charlie Goldsmith and Juliet Bender. November's selection is *The Springs of Namje* by Rajeev Goyal. In 2001, Peace Corps Volunteer Rajeev Goyal was sent to Namje, a remote village in the eastern hills of Nepal. Brimming with idealism, he expected to find people living in conditions of misery and suffering; instead he discovered a village of happy, compassionate people. There his story begins.



Both books can be purchased online. Go Oregon-local and purchase your books from Powell's Books! Visit their website at Powell's Books. Neither book appeared in a catalogue search at the Eugene Public Library.

You will continue to find book club's presence at each of our events this fall. We are continuing to sell the past book club books as a fundraiser for Peace Corps Partnership Projects. For only \$5 a book, you can enjoy a journey to a new destination written by a RPCV and support the project of a currently serving Oregon Volunteer!

Please see the membership directory for addresses to homes hosting book club meetings. We hope to see you there!

Calling for a New Newsletter Editor!

Hello all WCPCA members (and prospective members)!

We are still looking for an interested individual to take over the WCPCA monthly newsletter! Current editor, Denise Silfee (Thailand 2011-2013) will be heading to Sudan for ten months as an English Language Fellow around October 1st. If you are interested in putting together the newsletter, please contact Denise at denise.silfee@gmail.com. Thank you for considering!

You're Invited: To An Afternoon at Pfeiffer Vineyard

by Wayne Thompson, Peru 1964-1966

You will not want to miss our October potluck! On **Sunday, October 11 from 2-5** WCPCA members and families are invited to **Pfeiffer Vineyards located west of Junction City**. For a

small cover charge (TBD, but between \$5-\$10 per person) everyone can enjoy appetizers and fine wine in a beautiful setting.



Pfeiffer Vineyard in Junction City. Photo from oregonpinotnoirwine.com.

It will be harvest and crushing time for Robin and Danuta Pfeiffer, who established their winery 31 years ago. Although not a Peace Corps Volunteer, Robin spent several years in Chile during the 60s, taught Spanish in District 4J for awhile and raised chickens and sheep before deciding on establishing a vineyard. Danuta had been a TV personality prior to their planting 70 acres of pinot gris and pinot noir in 1984, making it one of the oldest vineyards in Oregon. Since then, the Pfeiffer's solar powered winery has won numerous awards and the expanded tasting rooms and gardens make it a unique experience.

Pfeiffer Vineyards is about 45 minutes from Eugene, roughly 25 miles away. The Pfeiffer's would like an estimate of how many people hope to attend. Please email me at cwt1542@gmail.com with how many people you will bring. Then stay tuned for information about car pooling to the vineyard for those who are interested. The vineyard address is 25040 Jaeg Road. The blog site is www.pfeiffervineyards.com for a map to the vineyard and other information about the vineyard you might want to read. For example, 90% of the grapes grown by the Pfeiffer's are sold directly to King Estates. The other 10% is kept by Robin and Danuta for their own wine which is sold only at their winery.

Thank you and we hope to see you and your family and friends on October 11!

Membership Directory Update

from Membership Chair Nicolette Ulrich, Senegal 2011-2013

I know many of you are anxiously awaiting our annual membership directory. I will first apologize for its delay. Between transitioning into my new roles and working out some of the kinks, the directory had been moved to the "back burner". However, now that we are smooth sailing, it is at the forefront of my mind. At our last WCPCA Board meeting, I proposed that we begin to work toward an online version of the directory. This would allow the directory to be a "working" document. It would be updated each month and active members would receive the updated copy via a link in an email. There would also be a printable option, for those who prefer hard-copy versions. This move will allow for a more current directory to exist at all times! This initial directory will be available in the coming months! Keep an eye out!



Letter From New UO Representative

Dear WCPCA,

I am excited to be taking over the role of the Peace Corps Representative on the University of Oregon campus. This is a dream-come-true opportunity and will allow me to continue to talk about and spread the message of Peace Corps to new and old students alike. I have been well trained by my predecessors and look forward to diving in during the fall term.

During my Peace Corps service in Senegal (2011-2013), I kept in contact with my recruiter back in Los Angeles. She and I would send emails back and forth comparing experiences and she would often be an on-call therapist on some of my more difficult days. All in all, she was a huge support and walked me through my application and service. I look forward to taking a similar role with potential and new volunteers and being a supportive and informative outlet for volunteers' pre- and during their service.

Many of the WCPCA members have been active in events for Peace Corps on the University of Oregon campus. We have wonderful things to look forward to, including the Fall Faire, classroom presentations, and Peace Corps Week in March. I hope I will receive some of the same support you have given in the past in volunteering and assisting in these events. It means so much to have such a diverse group of RPCVs in Eugene and convey a true message in how diverse each Peace Corps post/service can be. You will likely be hearing from me in the coming weeks about upcoming events and scheduling.

Thank you again for your continual active membership with the WCPCA and I look forward to meeting and connecting with more RPCVs in Eugene through this position.

Thank you,

Nicolette Ulrich, Senegal 2011-2013

PUB NIGHTS ARE BACK!

Pub nights are coming back with the onset of fall! And for the first pub night after summer, we're combining a social event with a goodbye party for WCPCA member and newsletter editor Denise Silfee, who will be heading to Sudan around October 1st for ten months. Join us in the back room at **Hop Valley Brewing at 990 W 1st Ave, in Eugene at 7 pm on Thursday, September 24th**. Hop Valley has a full menu of appetizers and food and of course tasty local beer!

Pub nights are a great place for newly returned RPCVs to meet other, local RPCVs, and a great place to reconnect after a busy summer. Come on out to meet new people, connect with friends, and, as a side note, help send Denise off to Sudan! We hope to see you there!



Cap'n Ron with Mr. Luis at the Octavia Wight Home for the Aged

Back to Belize: A Peace Corps Tale

by Dorothy Soper, Ghana 1963-1965

WCPCA member Norma LeBard served in Belize, 1986-1988, joining a team to establish the Octavia Wight Home for the Aged. When she completed her service the staff gave Norma a beautiful oil painting of the center. Recently Norma decided to return the painting. I worked with her to find a way and we did through Friends of Belize, headquartered in Portland.

Our champion is Cap'n Ron, RPCV of Belize, who lives in Portland and is a board member of Friends of Belize. He co-owns Reef Adventures Belize and frequently travels to the country. (Read the fine reviews of the company on Trip Advisor.) Cap'n Ron offered to deliver the painting and Norma sent it to him in Portland. Next came a cheery email from Cap'n Ron about the delivery and several photos of which one is below. Quotes are from his email of 7/7/15.

“Dear Norma, I had the great pleasure of personally delivering your painting to the Octavia Wight Center in San Ignacio on Thursday. We were surprised to find that the director, Mr. Luis, has been at the center for over 27 years and remembers you from your Peace Corps days. He asked me to send you his warm regards and boundless thanks for returning the

painting to its origins. I can share with you that he was genuinely touched and we were all quite emotional.

“My friend, Ashley, accompanied me and she added a special touch to the visit because she has a background in senior care. We were impressed with the quality of the facility and the services provided. We also had the opportunity to chat with a few residents including a retired policeman, a nurse and a retired military man. It is a lovely facility and the staff is clearly dedicated to the physical and emotional care of the residents.

“I would like to thank you for reaching out to find someone for this ‘errand’ and to let you know that it ended up being not a chore, but a great reward to me.”

Norma is thrilled with the outcome and treasures a photo of the painting that she used for the cover of her recently published memoir “A Home for the Elderly in Belize, Central America.”

A fine ending to a Peace Corps tale!

Notice: Membership Dues Will Be Increasing

West Cascade Peace Corps Association will increase the membership dues beginning October 1st. Individual membership will be \$20 and family membership will be \$25. This increase will allow us to further the mission of our group. For example, WCPCA recently helped fund a maternity ward in Zambia. I just received word that the fundraising is complete and the ward will be constructed before the rains arrive. This was an ambitious project by an Oregon volunteer but she raised over \$19,000, with help from WCPCA. Thank you for your support and participation!

Know Your Board!

Board President: Julia Harvey, Tonga 1990-1993

Vice President: Juliet Bender, Mexico 2009-2012

Treasurer: Patty MacAfee, Cameroon 1989-1991

Secretary: Gary Cornelius, South Africa 2012-2013

Membership Chair: Nicolette Ulrich, Senegal 2011-2013

Members at large:

Wayne Thompson, Peru 1964-1966

James Cloutier, Kenya 1964-1966

Denise Silfee, Thailand 2011-2013

Laurette Garner, Madagascar 2004-2006

Stay tuned for the next Board meeting date! All WCPCA members are welcome to attend. You may submit agenda items to the Board president

at juliaannamarieharvey@gmail.com.