



# ReConnections

A monthly newsletter of the West Cascades Peace Corps Association

[www.westcascadepca.org](http://www.westcascadepca.org)

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*Happy  
Holidays and  
WCPCA  
Wishes You a  
Wonderful  
2016!*

## For the Calendar...

**Tues. Dec. 1:** Peace Corps Health Volunteer panel 6 - 7:30 pm at the UO in room 225 of Friendly Hall. Come out to support and contribute!

**Wed. Dec. 2:** Support the local RPCV run NGO CREATE! by visiting the Mosaic Fair Trade Collection at 28 E. Broadway 5 - 7 pm. See p.6 for details!

**Sat. Dec. 5:** See you at the Curry For a Cause fundraiser at Central Presbyterian Church! See front page article at right!



## Dec. 5th Curry Feed Fundraiser!

The West Cascades Peace Corps Association (WCPCA) will serve a "Curry for a Cause" dinner on Saturday, December 5 from 5-8pm at the Central Presbyterian Church, 555 East 15th Avenue in Eugene. The cost is \$10 for adults and \$5 for children 12 years and younger. All profits from this year's event will go to community based projects supported by Oregon Peace Corps Volunteers.

The WCPCA is affiliated with the National Peace Corps Association, headquartered in Washington, D.C. Several Returned Peace Corps groups are in the Northwest, including the ones in Portland and Eugene. Our purpose is to live John Kennedy's third goal for Peace Corps service - make a positive difference when we come back home.

For the WCPCA this means having fundraisers with the proceeds going to currently serving Peace Corps Volunteers with Oregon connections. Over the last ten years, the WCPCA has funded \$30,000 for 40 projects to Oregon volunteers. Most Peace Corps projects require matching funds from local communities while Peace Corps volunteers most often depend on Peace Corps Partnership



## Peace Corps Calendars are Almost Gone!

by Gary Cornelius, South Africa  
2012-2013

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](mailto: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.

There are only **22 calendars** left and they will be available for sale in person at the Curry Feed on December 5.

grants.

This year the WCPCA has chosen to help fund a “Let Girls Learn” project in The Gambia. In collaboration with Michelle Obama and the Peace Corps, “Let Girls Learn” projects are a commitment to expand access to education for girls around the world.

The “Curry for a Cause” will include dinner, live music (*see p. 5*), information about the Peace Corps today and will show Peace Corps Partnership slides sponsored by WCPCA. Tickets may be purchased at the door and from Returned Peace Corps Volunteers. For more information, please Board president Julia Harvey at her email address listed on the last page of this month’s newsletter. We hope to see you there!

## Annual Membership Meeting and Potluck

By Nicolette Ulrich, Senegal 2011-2013

This year our Annual Meeting and Potluck was held at the home I share with Roger Brubaker and Denise Silfee (both Thailand 2011-2013) on November 15th. Close to 20 other RPCVs joined the party, sharing food, stories and preparing for the upcoming year. There were many regular faces present, and even some new faces to join the West Cascade Returned Peace Corps family. During the evening, a short presentation was given by Nicolette about her service in Senegal from 2011-2013, and also about the recruitment process at the University of Oregon. At the end of the evening, the annual voting process took place, and all those running were awarded their position on the board.





## Thai Cooking Class a Success!

*By Juliet Bender, Mexico 2009-2012*

In early November, Jeem Peterson again offered a Thai cooking class to WCPCA members. Ten participants watched Jeem cook four delicious dishes and then enjoyed eating them! For this cooking class, he prepared Hot and Sour Prawn Soup, Massaman Curry, Drunkard's Noodles, and Chicken with Cashew Nuts.

The event took place at Juliet Bender and Charles Goldsmith's house. We all had a great evening eating wonderful food and enjoying each other's company. Nobody went home hungry!



## **Still Searching: Help Us Find a Home For Our World Map!**

As many of you know, West Cascade Peace Corps Association put together an incredible booth and display for the Lane County Fair this past summer. One of the hands-on projects was to provide the materials for community members to paint an 8' x 12' mural of the world, including a Peace Corps logo and the handprints of participants.

Even though this summer is long behind us, we are still in search of a home for our World Map. The WCPCA would like to donate the map as a wall installation at a location such as a local school, business, or community building. The map is in three panels. If you have a suggestion or know of a place that might be interested, please contact Nicolette Ulrich at [pcorps@uoregon.edu](mailto:pcorps@uoregon.edu) with a lead! We want to give our mural back to the community and need your help to find the perfect home! You can also see more photographs of the World Map in progress at the WCPCA Facebook page. You don't have to have a Facebook account to view the page! Check it out!

## BOOK CLUB PICKS FOR 2016

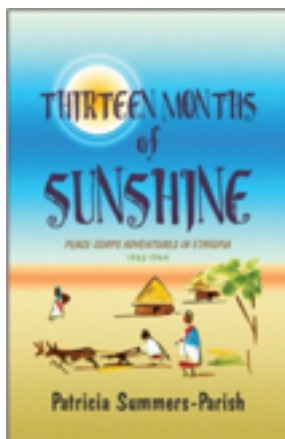
By Juliet Bender, Mexico 2009-2012

Are you interested in reading books about Peace Corps experiences around the world? If so, the WCPCA book club is the place for you! The book club meets every other month to discuss a selected book written by a Returned Peace Corps Volunteer. For example, in November 2015 we read a book about a PC volunteer who served in Nepal.

Below is the list of books we have selected for 2016, along with dates and places we will meet. Please join us!! These books can be purchased online at [amazon.com](http://amazon.com), or buy locally at the Powell's Books website. We hope to see you at our upcoming meetings in 2016.

Please find the addresses of book club hosts in the membership directory. Participants are welcomed to bring a snack to share and everyone is welcome!

### February 11, 2016



*Thirteen Months of Sunshine, Peace Corps Adventures in Ethiopia 1962-1964*, by Patricia Summers-Parish

The February 11th book club meeting will be held at the home of Patty MacAfee at 6:30pm.

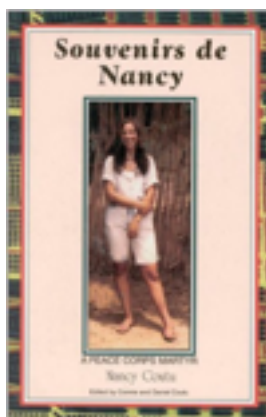
### March 10, 2016

March's book club selection is *To Make a Difference, A Peace Corps Memoir, Turkey 1964-1966* by Julie Woods Smith Olson, also a WCPCA member!



March book club will be at the home of Julia Harvey at 6:30 pm.

### May 12, 2016



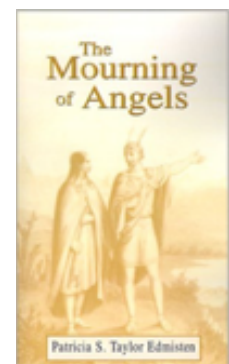
*Souvenirs de Nancy: Journals of Nancy Coutu: A Peace Corps Martyr, 1994-1996* by Nancy Coutu (Madagascar)

The May meeting will be held at the home of Dale Morse at 6:30 pm.

### September 8, 2016

*The Mourning of Angels* by Patricia Taylor Edmisten (Peru 1962-1964)

September book club will be held at the home of Juliet Bender and Charles Goldsmith at 6:30 pm.





## Priscilla Dantas

*By Wayne Thompson, Peru 1964-1966*

Priscilla Dantas usually plays the piano by performing as a soloist in concert halls, churches and vineyards in Oregon or by giving recitals in Brazil, but she has accepted the WCPCA offer to play background music at our “Curry for a Cause” dinner on December 5.

Like a Peace Corps Volunteer, Priscilla understands how to adapt to change. Now a senior at the University of Oregon in the School of Music, Priscilla’s life began in a shantytown just outside of Recife, Brazil, and in a house behind a music conservatory where her father was a security guard. At ten, Priscilla remembers sneaking into the conservatory at night, while her father was working, to play and practice on the pianos. Priscilla quickly began winning local music contests and performing at recitals. Fortunately, West Cascades Peace Corps Association member Bob Crites (Brazil 1964-1966) and founder of Students Helping Street Kids International (SHSKI) in 1997, was in attendance at one of Priscilla’s performances. Priscilla qualified for everything SHSKI stood for, helping “street kids” break the cycle of poverty through education, and was offered a scholarship by Bob.

The rest is history. She is already something of a celebrity in Brazil, winning first place in three consecutive piano competitions, and performing with the Symphonic Orchestra of Recife. Priscilla has been the subject of two Brazilian national television stories and is in demand as a young concert artist in Brazil. Although Priscilla usually plays concertos by Bach, Chopin or Mozart, she has promised to also play Brazilian pieces at our fundraiser. Thanks, in advance, to Priscilla for playing at this year's West Cascades Peace Corps Association “Curry for a Cause” event. We hope to see you there on December 5th! Bring your family and friends, listen to beautiful music, enjoy some good food and contribute to a worthy cause!

If you would like to read more about Priscilla’s story, please visit [Priscilla Dantas: An Advocate of Hope Through Music](#).

## Fundraiser to Support CREATE!, Local NGO with RPCV & WCPCA Connections

Support CREATE! and fair trade artisans from around the world! On Wednesday, December 2nd, join us at Mosaic Fair Trade Collection in downtown Eugene from 5 pm to 7 pm. Learn more about CREATE! and do some holiday shopping. Mosaic will donate 20% of all sales to CREATE!. We will also hold drawings for CREATE! tote bags. Wine and cheese will be served.

CREATE! is a small but successful Eugene-based NGO that relies on appropriate technology and a "self-help" philosophy in its work. The NGO currently has projects in nine rural villages in Senegal. It supports communities that want to improve their standard of living through better access to water, increased knowledge and skills about year-round gardening and fuel efficiency, and earning derived from marketing excess produce from their gardens. Three villages are about to "graduate" from 5-year partnerships with CREATE! and three villages have just begun to partner with CREATE!

WCPCA members have been involved with CREATE! in the past and currently as Board members, interns, and volunteers. The executive director of CREATE! is an RPCV.



### **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 \*New\* Board!**

**Board President:** Julia Harvey, Tonga 1990-1993

**Vice President:** Juliet Bender, Mexico 2009-2012

**Treasurer:** Dale Morse, Nepal 1969-1971

**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

Patty MacAfee, Cameroon 1989-1991

*Please contact Board president Julia for items to be brought to the next*

*Board meeting: [juliaannamarieharvey@gmail.com](mailto:juliaannamarieharvey@gmail.com).*