



ReConnections

A Monthly Newsletter of the West Cascades Peace Corps Association

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February 2016



Upcoming Events

Newsletter Editor Update

Hi! My name is Laurette Garner (RPCV Madagascar 2004-06) and I will be the new WCPA Newsletter Editor. I will be creating and emailing the newsletter from MailChimp and the monthly newsletter will go directly to all members in the membership directory from that platform. Please let me know if you have any questions or suggestions. AND.....the most important part of this message.....I would LOVE contributions to the newsletter whenever possible. I will accept Peace Corps related articles, interesting international stories, happenings in the daily lives of RPCVs and pictures, of course! You may email me directly with contributions: laurettegarner@gmail.com

Thank you!

Camp GLOW 2016

By Coleen Bremner

(Some of the proceeds from WCPA's December curry dinner went to help pay for this camp which was held in The Gambia by southern Oregon PC volunteer Coleen Bremner. Below is a summary of the event which was held January 17-24, 2016)

How does one describe an event that took one whole year to plan and is now completed and over? Well...from the beginning of course.



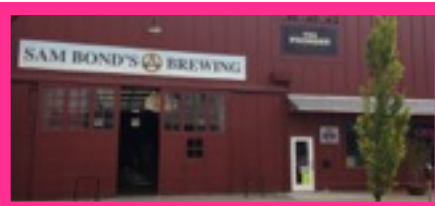
Camp GLOW (Girls and Guys Leading Our World) 2016 has been one of the highlights of my service. It was a chance for six teachers and 24 grade ten students, two boys and two girls from six schools to come together for a week and create something magical.

We ran around the week before camp like chickens with our heads cut off. We were trying to finalize last minute details, shop for everything, make sure counterparts were booked. We were exhausted and camp had not even begun yet. On the first day we eagerly awaited the campers' arrival. As schools showed up we welcomed them to camp.

Book Club
Thursday, February 11th

Join Book Club members at the home of Patty MacAfee at 6:30 for snacks and book-talk! All are welcome. See the bottom of the newsletter for February's book selection.

The week was full of different activities and discussions about gender equality, community involvement, and healthy home life. One day we had a gender swap relay race where campers had to perform activities that are usually associated with the other gender. Girls had to plow the fields and count back change, while boys ran with water buckets on their heads and carried babies on their backs. Discussions that evening focused on such difficult issues as marrying too young, sugar daddies, sexual harassment, mental health, and suicide. These tenth grade girls have been through so much already and still realize the value of education and want to make the best of themselves.



Pub Night
Wednesday, February 24th

Come to Peace Corps Pub night at Sam Bond's Brewing Company from 6-8 PM. Swap stories and socialize with other RPCVs.

We played volleyball, ate various kinds of American foods, i.e., pancakes, and watched the film Mulan. They really enjoyed the movie and understood the key concepts and ideas. This is the day that I realized the campers were really starting to feel empowered and find their own personal voices. I saw them walk into camp not sure about how to be or how to behave and several days later they were sitting on the step laughing and talking about their ideas and dreams. It made me cry, not because of what we had done, but because of how truly wonderful the students were.

On the last day of camp, we held our closing ceremonies and Peace Corps The Gambia's Country Director Jennifer Goette and US Ambassador Patricia Alsup were in attendance. We gave out

for all they accomplished during the week.

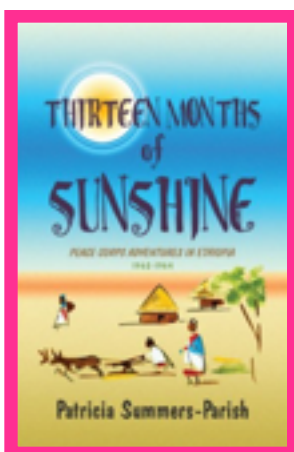
The final morning was full of tears as PCV staff said goodbye to campers and as campers said their goodbyes to one another. We all sang the camp cheer one last time. We walked them to the gate and all threw our hands up into a tunnel for the kids to walk through as we sang our goodbye song.

I am so proud of the work we put into this event and the results of it. Not only were the campers' lives changed, so were ours.



Potluck
March 20th

Join other RPCVs for a feast and presentation. Bring a dish to share and come listen to a presentation by Sandy Belson, a recent Peace Corps Response Volunteer in Guinea. More about Sandy below.



Mark your Calendars!

WCPCA Campout - August 12-14

Do you remember cooking over an open fire, or using a latrine during your PCV days? If so, then you already have experience for the WCPCA summer camping trip.

**Reminder Book Club
Picks 2016**

Organized by Juliet Bender

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 11th

Book: Thirteen Months
of Sunshine,
PeaceCorps
Adventures in Ethiopia
1962-1964

by Patricia Summers-
Parish

Host: Home of Patty
MacAfee

March 10th

Book: To Make a
Difference, A Peace
Corps Memoir, Turkey
1964-1966

by Julie Woods Smith
Olson (member of
WPCPA)

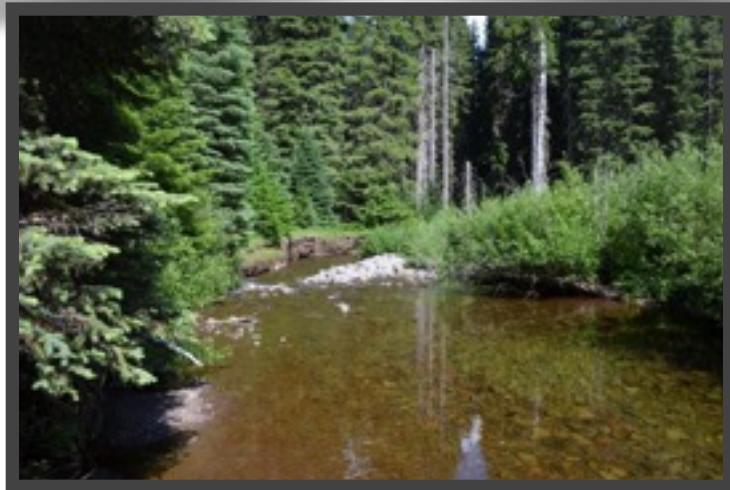
Host: Home of Julia
Harvey

May 12th

Book: Souvenirs de
Nancy: Journals of Nancy
Coutu: A Peace Corps
Martyr, 1994-1996
by Nancy Coutu
(Madagascar)
Host: Home of Dale
Morse

We have a group camp reserved at Lost Prairie Campground (description below), which has ten campsites. More information will follow in the coming months . . . but it's important to mark your calendars with the dates.

Lost Prairie Group Site is located along the Over the Rivers and Through the Woods Scenic Byway and is nestled among the forest in the Cascades at an elevation of 3600 feet. Lost Prairie is only 15 minutes from the McKenzie River National Scenic Trail and Clear Lake. Numerous other trails and lakes are close by as well.



RPCV Event in San Miguel, Mexico

By Juliet Bender

Charlie and I had the opportunity to attend a RPCV potluck event in San Miguel de Allende, Mexico, on January 30, 2016.

San Miguel is 45 minutes away from Querétaro, where we served in the Peace Corps. At this event were former PC volunteers, who served in various parts of the world, e.g., Ethiopia, Fiji, Honduras, and are now living in San Miguel. Also in attendance were the PC Mexico Country Director and staff, as well as some current and former PC volunteers from Mexico. The photo was taken on the front steps of the house of our host.



Know Your 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.

Next Board Meeting:
When: March 13th
Time: 6:00 PM
Where: New Day
Bakery



My Year in Review

(Excerpt)

By Sandy Belson

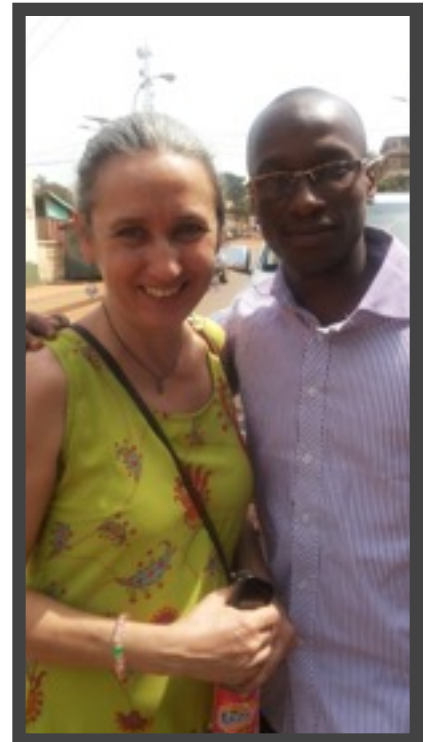
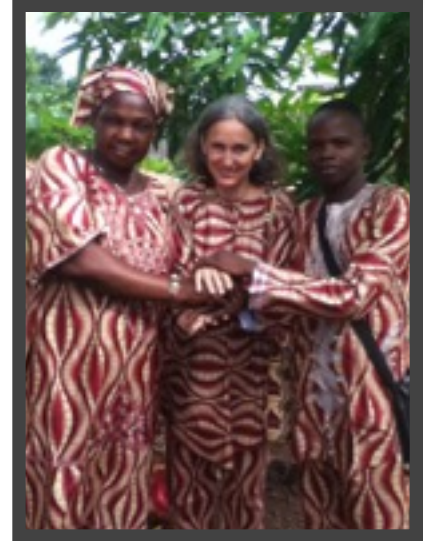
After completing two assignments in Guinea as a Peace Corps Response Volunteer, I wanted to return to Africa. So, early this year, I flew back to Guinea, this time as a Volunteer for Winrock International. Whereas before I had lived in a very small village of Coastal Guinea, this time I lived in Upper Guinea in the city of Faranah. I was a Technical English Education Specialist at the “Institut Supérieur Agronomique et Vétérinaire”, Guinea’s agricultural university. I assessed the language ability of the students, created a curriculum (beginning, intermediate, and advanced levels), and taught technical English to 64 university students and 30 faculty members over two semesters. I really enjoyed teaching!

I am now transitioning back to life in the United States. I spent three months with my parents in western New York, catching the last three weeks of the Chautauqua season. My sister and her youngest daughter were there for my mom’s annual family reunion. We are pictured here in back of my parents’ house. Later, my brother and his wife were able to visit.

I am now floating amongst friends in the Northwest looking for work opportunities. Please let me know if you have any ideas or leads in that regard. My new phone number is 929-375-8252.

Sincerely,

Sandra, Sandy, Sana, or Mamata Gueah



The Peace Corps is guilty of enthusiasm and a crusading spirit. But we're not apologetic about it.

Sargent Shriver

