



MNRPCV News

Minnesota Returned Peace Corps Volunteers
Serving RPCVs and the Community

Spring 2009

2008-2009 MNRPCV Board

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Nancy Weis-Sarfo, Burkina Faso 02-04
612-501-9597

NEWSLETTER LAYOUT

Elsa Frettem, India 68-70
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WEBMASTER

Valerie Aas, Cameroon 93-95
612-729-1952

Mission Statement

To serve Returned Peace Corps Volunteers and the community by providing service to others and fostering appreciation of cultural diversity.

Twenty Five Again

by Jane Bardon

Do you have culture shock? We have been asked that many times since Jack and I returned to the US after serving two years in the Peace Corps in Turkmenistan. I'm not sure what it means, so I probably haven't experienced it. However, we are experiencing prolonged chronological shock.

There are two aspects to this phenomenon. First there is the shock of returning to the 21st century. Life in a Turkmen village has not changed much for centuries. It is a simple life where most families have some animals; a cow, a few chickens, and maybe a goat. They have a small plot where they grow a little bit of food for their own use. Families still hang on to many aspects of their former nomadic existence. Their homes are empty except for a few items of clothing, blankets, mattresses, and cooking gear. It would be easy to pack up and go on to a better pasture. But they are not free to move. The communist legacy of control still keeps them bound to the village of their birth. So what century were we living in? Perhaps the 19th, or is it the 16th? At least it's an earlier time with the minor addition of problematic gas and electricity and TV sets that deliver propaganda straight to the home. The setting appears to be static compared to the US with our constant change - always billed as human progress. Here our homes hold a plethora of material goods. Food comes packaged, canned or frozen. Continual, conflicting, and unavoidable information assails us from all directions. It is far from the simple life of the Turkmen village.

We face a second chronological shock in our return home. It is not a usual one for returned Peace Corps Volunteers. But, now we have to both act and admit our age. One of the salient aspects of our Peace Corps service was the surprising opportunity to be 25 again. We knew most PCVs were young, often just out of college. But our group turned out to have many 22 year olds and no one over 30. The group arriving a year later had the same age range. So what are a pair of senior citizens supposed to do? Our only choice was to become virtual 25 year-olds. We went through ten weeks of training with our wonderful young colleagues. We slept and ate on the floor with them. We carried our backpacks and walked or used public transportation. We had the same \$2.50 a day living allowance. We encountered the same problems and obstacles in our work and living arrangements. We all tolerated the ongoing intrusiveness of the government officials, the KNB (secret police), work supervisors and others. We struggled with the cumbersome bureaucracy that characterizes any US government agency. Our shared empathy kept us going when things got tough - which was often. In an environment where it was difficult to get anything done, we were encouraged by the successes and accomplishments of all of the PCVs. Our own work as Health Educators was successful; we managed to teach basic health to hundreds of people, we worked in AIDS/HIV education and we published the first three-language medical dictionary in Turkmenistan. But, we are proud to say that we also succeeded in keeping up with our young colleagues in all aspects of our challenging life.

Continued on p. 2

Jane Bardon, Turkmenistan
MNRPCV President





Peace Corps News

Excerpted from www.peacecorps.gov

JODY K. OLSEN NAMED ACTING DIRECTOR OF PEACE CORPS

January 16, 2009 - Dr. Jody K. Olsen was asked this week by President-elect Obama's transition team to serve as acting director of the Peace Corps, effective as of noon on Tuesday, January 20, 2009. Dr. Olsen will assume the role of acting director until President Obama's Administration selects an individual to assume the role of director.

"I am honored by the trust the transition team has placed in me, and grateful to be representing the Peace Corps, one of America's finest agencies," said Dr. Olsen. "From the time I served as a Peace Corps Volunteer in Tunisia up until now in my role as acting director, it has truly been a privilege to serve the agency."

Dr. Olsen has had a long and distinguished career with the Peace Corps, beginning as a Volunteer in Tunisia from 1966 to 1968, teaching English and developing community health programs. In 1979 and 1980, she was Peace Corps country director in Togo, a program which focused on education, health, and agriculture.

Between 1981 and 1984, Dr. Olsen served as regional director for the Peace Corps, managing operations in 17 countries. She returned to the agency in 1989 to serve for three years as chief of staff, during which time the agency expanded into 25 new countries. Dr. Olsen returned to the agency again in 2002 to serve as the deputy director, a position she has held until becoming acting director.

Dr. Olsen holds a bachelor's degree in sociology with a teaching certification from the University of Utah, a master's degree in social work from the University of Maryland, and a Ph.D. from the University of Maryland's College of Education.

Dr. Olsen has received numerous awards for her leadership and public service including: the Alumni of the Year Award from the University of Utah; the Alumni of the Year Award and Alumni Hall of Fame distinction from the University of Maryland's College of Education; the Marita Houlihan Award (for outstanding efforts and commitment to fostering international exchange) from NAFSA; and an honorary doctorate in International Sustainable Development from Michigan Technological University.

Twenty Five Again (Continued)

Now we are safely back in the US. There are no KNB watchers. We can live in our own house, sleep in our own bed, and use plastic money. We also have returned to our normal chronological age. We are again past 70 with grown children and grandchildren who will never believe that we were 25 again just a short time ago.

So if you have an urge to re-live your youth and are motivated to serve your country for two years and to offer your skills to better life for people in a far-off country, think about the US Peace Corps. Call or email us we would be glad to tell you how to get involved or find more information. (651-484-7989 or travelfolks@yahoo.com).



Jane and Jack Bardon with Turkmen friends

PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEERS RETURN TO RWANDA

January 26, 2009 - Thirty-five Peace Corps Volunteer trainees depart the United States next Wednesday for Rwanda, officially reopening the Peace Corps/Rwanda program after a 15-year absence....The Volunteers will work in this East African nation in the areas of health and community development, and will collaborate with other United States government partners to support the Government of Rwanda's strategy to combat the HIV/AIDS pandemic. Many of the Volunteers who will work on HIV/AIDS prevention and care will receive support from the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) program.



2008 Holiday Party

A beautiful winter evening brought a lively group of Minnesota RPCVs to the home of Charles (Korea 1971-73) and Terri Stander for our annual holiday party. The kitchen filled with exotic creations and tempting odors as everyone brought their specialties to share. There were big pots of steaming stews on the stove, crock-pots with their enticing contents plugged into the wall, plates of salads with fruit, vegetables and unknown ingredients, breads of many kinds, and of course the delicious deserts, all waiting for eager appetites.

After the repast, President Jane Bardon thanked Charles and Terri for their ongoing hospitality and presented them with certificates for a year of free membership in MNRPCV and a gift certificate for a local restaurant. Membership Chair Carri Anderson (Kenya 2002-04) described membership options. Social Chair Maggie Kozak (Burkina Faso 2002-04) announced upcoming social events. Community Service Co-Chairs, Gary Bank (Kenya 1990-92) and Carol Fairbrother (Romania 2002-04) invited everyone to participate in MNRPCV service opportunities. Mary Adams (Latvia 1995-97) showed our current fund-raising items for sale, 2009 Peace Corps Calendars and MNRPCV Tote Bags.

The eagerly anticipated World Geography Quiz of 2008 was prepared by Christi Williams (Poland 1996-98), Miriam Krause (Samoa 2000-02) and Carri Anderson (Kenya 2002-04). As the contest began, the five teams searched their minds for the answers to the challenging questions.

Members of the winning 2008 Geo Quiz team were invited to help prepare the 2009 Geography Quiz. They are: Eric Angell (Kenya), Charles Stander (Korea 1971-73), Lisa, Bob Quinn (Thailand), Amy and Richard Earle (Guatemala 1973-76), Lisa Boyd (Central African Republic 1990-92), Anne Kanyusik (Bangladesh 1998-2000) and John Rederer (future Stander son-in-law). Congratulations to the winners!

A hearty “Thank You” goes to Social Chair Maggie Kozak (Burkina Faso 2002-04) who coordinated the party, to our hosts, to the three “Geo Quiz Masters”, to all of the MNRPCV Board Members and others who helped, and to everyone who brought food for the party and/or to contribute to the neighborhood food shelf.



Turkmenistan 2003-05 Volunteers plus Maya



Holiday party – the best meal in town!



Geography Quiz Team at work



Geography Quiz winners: Front: Erik Angell, Charles Stander, Lisa. Back: Bob Quinn, Richard and Amy Earle, Lisa Boyd, Anne Kanyusik, John Rederer



Nancy Weiss-Sanfo



Lauris Grundmanis and Maggie Kozak



MNRPCV Financial Report (Jan. 13, 2009)

Treasurer Edward (Jack) Bardon, RPCV Turkmenistan 2003-05

Income	
National Peace Corps Rebate	\$90.00
Donation	\$20.00
Calendars	\$980.00
Membership	\$60.00
Checkbook interest	\$0.08
Tote-bags	\$65.00

Total Income **\$1,215.08**

Expenses	
Newsletter	\$190.37
Jeremiah	\$32.51
Christmas Party	\$30.00
Cedar Riverside Grant	\$500.00

Total Expenses **\$752.88**

Beginning Balance
US Bank December 10, 2008 \$8,836.27

Ending Balance
US Bank January 13, 2009 \$9,298.47

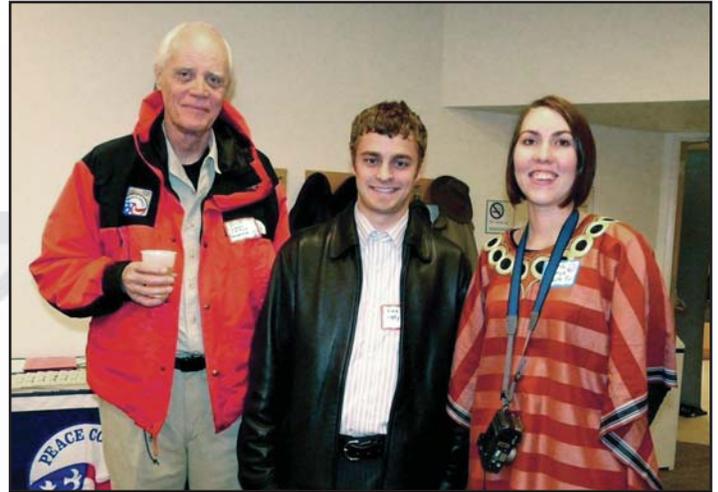
Balance at CCFCU \$5,733.69
Balance at Microenterprise \$3,154.00

Grand Total **\$18,186.16**

More MN PCVs

Jane Bardon, Turkmenistan 2003-05, President

Snowy roads and heavy traffic did not deter the future PCVs and their families who gathered at the Edina Library on December 8 for the last Minneapolis Regional Peace Corp Office Send-off. The event honored the nine future Peace Corps Volunteers from the Midwest who are leaving for their assignments around the world.



RPCV Dick Anderson, Applicant Alex and PC Staff Tina Storck at Send-off

The Send-off was coordinated by Peace Corps staff member Tina Storck, who spoke about her PCV experience in Kenya. Dick Anderson, who has served in Iran, Samoa and Tanzania, and Ryan Kattner, who is now the only Peace Corps staff member in Minnesota, also talked about their lives as PCVs. Jane Bardon, MNRPCV President, described Peace Corps service as joining a new family and invited new PCVs to think of MNRPCV as “the group to come home to.”



Lauren Dees (Madagascar) and her family.

Raise Your Voice for MorePeaceCorps National Day of Action – Tuesday, March 3rd

As budget constraints threaten to diminish Peace Corps' presence around the world, a MorePeaceCorps National Day of Action is planned to demonstrate to Congress that increased funding is needed for a bigger, better and bolder Peace Corps.

We need YOU to participate on Tuesday, March 3rd. That's the day when MorePeaceCorps campaign volunteers will be walking the halls of Congress to urge support for increased Peace Corps funding. Your phone calls, emails and faxes will help support these volunteers by showing citizen support for the Peace Corps. Visit www.morepeacecorps.org for details as the Day of Action approaches. Contact jonathan@rpcv.org if you can be a volunteer leader in this effort.



MNRPCV Awards Grants to RPCVs

Jane Bardon, Turkmenistan 2003-05, President

The MNRPCV Board of Directors awarded grants to three Minnesota RPCV projects in December. These awards were given to organizations or individuals whose work would further the Purpose and Mission of the Minnesota Returned Peace Corps Volunteers. The grants awarded totaled \$1500 for the three projects. Monies for the grants came from MNRPCV Fundraiser dinners, sales of calendars and T-shirts, annual membership dues, and other donations. The next round of grant awards will be offered in the spring of 2009. Grants will be available at that time for currently serving PCVs from Minnesota or the Midwest area to further their work in the field as well as other qualified applicants. See www.mnrcv.org for guidelines. MNRPCV Grant Awards Advisory Committee Members for this round of grants were Nancy Erstad (Micronesia 1970-1972), Leslie Everett (Zaire 1973-1975) and Jane Bardon (Turkmenistan 2003-2005).

The MNRPCV Fall 2008 Grant Recipients are:

Building Construction for NGO and IREX Seminars

Applicant: Dan Kane (Moldova 2005 -2006), Austin MN

Organization: 'Recuperare', Telenesti, Moldova

RPCV Dan Kane is returning to Telenesti, Moldova to continue his work there with a local NGO. 'Recuperare' is the only human services agency in this poor village of 6400 people. One purpose of the project is to assist with the extensive necessary remodeling of a building recently donated to 'Recuperare' by the local unit of government. The remodeling will depend on an equal dollar amount of local match in labor or materials. The project also includes transportation for IREX students to attend 4 seminars on Volunteering, Grant Writing and Community Service. The seminars will be lead by in-country professionals as well as Dan Kane.

MNRPCV Grants Awards Committee: This is a significant extension of an RPCV's work in his host country where he plans to return to carry out part of the project.

Bi-lingual Services for Somali Refugees

Applicants: Doris Rubenstein (Ecuador 1971-1973), Cheryl Campion (Kenya 1974-1977), Connie Diercks (Guatemala 1969-1972), Minneapolis MN

Organization: Cedar Riverside People's Center, Minneapolis MN

The third mission of the Peace Corps is to bring the world back home. In the case of the Cedar Riverside People's Center (CRPC), the world has come to Minnesota: East Africa has come to Minneapolis' West Bank! The CRPC Clinic is located in the West Bank area and serves residents

of eight low-income high rises which house an estimated 15-20,000 Somali immigrants and refugees, the largest population of Somalis outside of Mogadishu. In 2008 to date, the Clinic has provided primary health care to over 3,700 unduplicated patients through over 11,500 encounters. The CRPC Clinic has earned the nickname "the Somali Clinic" for the exceptional care given to this group and for the number of Somalis who consider it their "medical home." One of the primary reasons for this is the Clinic's efforts to provide care in ways that are both medically sound and culturally respectful, particularly in the employment of bi-lingual staff. This grant will underwrite the activities of the Bi-lingual Outreach/Patient Education worker.

MNRPCV Grant Awards Committee: This project demonstrates how three RPCVs have translated their experience in Peace Corps to providing services to immigrants in the US. This is the first opportunity MNRPCV has had to support culturally sensitive services to immigrants as specified in our Mission Statement.

Community Networks Partnership Between Riverland Community College, Austin, MN and Kherson National Technical University, Ukraine

Applicant: Chandler Harrison Stevens (Ukraine 1999-2001), Austin MN

Funds will be used to support Ukrainian students at Riverland Community College as part of the Community Network partnership between the two colleges. Matching funds may be available from Friends of Ukraine and/or Riverland Community College Education Committee.

MNRPCV Grant Awards Committee: This is an extension of an RPCV's work in his host country combined with involvement of US college students. Matching funds are available from other sources.

Editor's Note: We are always looking for new voices to appear in the MNRPCV Newsletter. As members of MNRPCV, this is your publication, so feel free to submit material!

We would love to see letters to the editor, photos, news articles, anecdotes, or anything else related to MNRPCV.

For more information or to send a submission, contact Miriam at mok4747@yahoo.com or 763-412-9315.



Upcoming Social Events Spring 2009

Maggie Kozak, Burkina Faso 2004-06, Social Chair

Mark your calendars for the following 2009 Social Events, listed below! Attending a fun social MNRPCV event is a great way to start the new year!

Calendar of upcoming events:

Tuesday, Feb. 24th 6 p.m – Metro Dinner

Vina Plus Vietnamese Restaurant, 1821 University Ave., St. Paul, MN (Located at University and Fairview Aves (NE corner/Griggs Building). Please RSVP by Feb. 19th to Eric at eric-angell@riseup.net.

Restaurant's website: <http://vinaplusrestaurant.tripod.com/>

February 6-8, 2009 – Itasca State Park Ski Weekend (FULL—sorry, all spots are already reserved!)

Thursday, Feb. 26: 5 p.m. – Happy Hour at the Chatterbox Chatterbox Pub: 2229 E 35th St, Minneapolis, MN 55407 Tel. (612) 728-9871, <http://www.chatterboxpub.net/> Host: Maggie Kozak (tel. 651-387-7581; email: maggi kozak@yahoo.com)

Sunday, March 1: 2:00 p.m. – Ice Skating at the Depot The Minneapolis Depot: 225 Third Avenue South, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55401 Tel. 612.375.1700, \$8/adult admission; \$7 skate rental Host: Maggie Kozak

Friday, March 6: 6:00 p.m. – Metro Dinner at True Thai restaurant Please RSVP to Maggie by March 1. Thanks! True Thai: 2627 E Franklin Ave, Minneapolis, MN 55406 Tel. (612) 375-9942, <http://truethairestaurant.com/> Host: Maggie Kozak

Saturday, March 7: 6:00 p.m. – Fundraiser Dinner at Elsa and Bernard's – Latin American theme Elsa and Bernard's: 669 Summit Ave, St. Paul MN 55105 Tel. (651) 428-1765, Elsa cell Host: Maggie Kozak

Thursday, March 12: 5 p.m. – Happy Hour at Hell's Kitchen Hell's Kitchen: 80 S 9th St, Minneapolis, MN 55402 Tel. (612) 332-4700, <http://www.hellskitcheninc.com/> Host: Maggie Kozak

Thursday, April 23: 6:30p.m. – Metro Dinner at Harry Singh's Please RSVP to Miriam by April 16. Thanks! Harry Singh's Original Caribbean Restaurant: 2653 Nicollet Ave. S., Minneapolis Tel. (612)729-6181, <http://www.harrysinghs.com/>

Please consider hosting a social event! Outdoor events, game nights, movie nights, metro dinners, and/or anything you can imagine are welcome!

6 Contact Maggie (call 651-387-7581 or email maggi kozak@yahoo.com) with the details and she'll get the word out!

Jeremiah Program

JEREMIAH DINNER: 'Cook for Kids' Tuesday, April 7

Every few months members of MNRPCV have the opportunity to "Cook for Kids" through the Jeremiah Program. Christi Williams often bakes fresh bread to bring to the kitchen. Mary Adams may make a dessert or main dish. Gary Bank, who coordinates MNRPCV's contribution to the program, brings whatever else is needed to make a complete meal. Those available to cook and serve the meal gather at the Jeremiah Program's kitchen in their building, tucked between the Basilica and the freeway near downtown Minneapolis. (The program also has a facility in Saint Paul.)

But the Jeremiah Program is more than a kitchen. The building is a residence for up to 40 resourceful young mothers who are working for a better future for themselves and their families. These young women are all students as well as mothers. They attend classes at MCTC (Minneapolis Community and Technical College). They arrive for dinner with their book-bags, babies and strollers in tow. To participate in the program, they must be high school graduates or have a GED, be enrolled in a post-secondary education program, be unmarried, and have one or more children under five years of age. These young women also must have the maturity and drive to succeed in their studies and to move forward in their personal lives.

Sharing food and conversation with these young women over the dinner hour is an inspiring experience. The Jeremiah Program is one service organization that seems to have it right. Funding for the Jeremiah Program comes from a variety of private and public sources.

To join us at the next MNRPCV "Cook for Kids" night, contact Gary Bank at gtbank@msn.com. For more information about the program or about other volunteer opportunities with the Jeremiah Program call (612) 692-8711 or see www.JeremiahProgram.org.



*Gary, Mary, Jane, Jack, Travis, Jennifer
at Jeremiah House*



Join the Team

As you all know from belonging to organizations of any kind, it's a lot more fun if you are involved in the planning and implementing of activities. Your MNRPCV Board of Directors invites you to join the team and become more involved. There are opportunities in many areas of our organization.

- This year we will be emphasizing membership retention and recruitment. You could help with maintaining membership records, recruiting new members, greeting people at events, and sharing your ideas for increasing membership.
- Are you interested in public speaking? We need someone to coordinate speaking engagements for MNRPCV. You would pass along speaker requests to the membership and keep a record of speaking engagements.
- Are you a writer or photographer? You could contribute to our newsletter or website.
- If you have expertise in marketing, or just like to sell things, you could help with product sales such as calendars, tote bags or T-shirts. We also need help keeping records of our sales.
- We have an ongoing program of great events, but there is always room for people to do the planning and organizing. You could plan or help with one event or work

with the Social Committee throughout the year.

Join the MNRPCV Team. We need your ideas and input and we want you to share in the fun. Contact the MNRPCV President, Jane Bardon at (janebardon@yahoo.com) or any Board Member or Committee Chair listed on the front of this newsletter.

You Can Be an MNRPCV Member for only \$15.00 for One Year!

Anyone who shares the goals of MNRPCV (*Minnesota Returned Peace Corps Volunteers*) may become an Active or Associate Member by paying annual membership dues. Fill out the form below and mail it with your payment to MNRPCV (or just the form for newly returned RPCVs). As a dues-paying member you will receive a subscription to MNRPCV News and you will be contributing to our Grant Awards Program as well as helping to support our ongoing activities. We would like to have you join us as a full member and have you on our membership list with other active participants in MNRPCV. *For membership questions, contact MNRPCV Membership Chair, Carri Anderson (anderson_carri@yahoo.com), or president@mnrpcv.*

MNRPCV Membership Application/Renewal

NAME _____
 Address _____
 Phone: _____ Email: _____
 RPCV? (yes/no) _____ Current/former Peace Corps Staff? _____
 Country and years of service _____

Membership is FREE for any RPCV for one year after his/her COS date. **Please fill out the form and mail it to MNRPCV anyway**, so we can send you MNRPCV NEWS and put you on our mailing and contact list. Membership is \$15.00 per year for all others. RPCVs or former Peace Corps staff members are eligible to be Active Members, others may join as Associate Members.

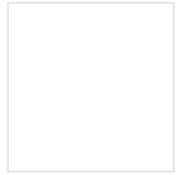
Payment Enclosed \$_____. Please make checks payable to MNRPCV.

Send this form with your payment to:

MNRPCV, PO Box 6413, Minneapolis, MN 55406 – Attn: Membership

If you prefer to join through NPCA (National Peace Corps Association), go to www.peacecorpsconnect.org. NPCA membership is \$35 per year plus \$15 to choose MNRPCV as your member group.

MNRPCV
P.O. Box 6413
Minneapolis, MN 55406



Check your mailing label for
your MNRPCV Membership
Renewal Date.



MNRPCV Spring Slide Show

Saturday, late March or early April, 6:00pm, Minneapolis

Watch your email for date and details on the Annual Slide Show to be held at Padilla Speer Beardsley in Minneapolis again this year.

What are you doing for Peace Corps Week?

PEACE CORPS WEEK **2009**

February 23—March 2

Join thousands of RPCVs in promoting world peace and friendship during the agency's 48th anniversary celebration, which kicks off during Peace Corps Week and runs through the end of 2009. Share your personal Peace Corps stories about your country of service with your community—and help Americans increase their understanding of the world and its people. Visit www.peacecorps.gov/thirdgoal to order your free activity kit with goodies for your audience. The site includes ideas, suggestions, and resources to help you set up your talk.

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All events are announced via email on the mnrpcvEmailList. Join this listserv from www.mnrpcv.org/ContactUs.html