



MNRPCV News

*Minnesota Returned Peace Corps Volunteers
Serving RPCVs and the Community*

Winter 2009

2009-2010 MNRPCV Board

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Mission Statement

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

MNRPCV Membership

by Renada Rutmanis

My name is Renada and I have a confession to make – the day I took over as the MNRPCV board member in charge of membership records was the same day that I finally filled out my own membership form. Sure, I had been cyber-stalking the group for a few months and had attended one community service event at the Jeremiah Program, but I didn't officially become a member until my first board meeting.

So what had I been waiting for? I'm still dedicated to the Peace Corps mission, so it wasn't a lack of interest. And having just returned to the Twin Cities after a lengthy absence, I wanted to meet interesting, open-minded people, and I knew an RPCV group would be full of them. My only answer is that life was hectic and becoming an official member kept getting put on the back burner.

It was easy to join, and didn't cost very much, but once I filled out that form I wanted to know more about why becoming a member was so important, so I went to the MNRPCV website and investigated. Here are just some of the benefits of membership:

- Subscription to the MNRPCV quarterly newsletter, which helps keep members up to date on all things Peace Corps, including local and national news, stories about local returned Peace Corps volunteers, and all you need to know about getting more involved with MNRPCV.
- Invitations to multiple social and community activities where RPCVs have the chance to give back to the community, promote Peace Corps' third goal, and hang out and socialize with one another.
- A chance to help raise money for MNRPCV grants. These grants are a great opportunity for recipients to continue their Peace Corps work, at home and abroad, and the money is often raised during fundraising dinners. Do good and eat well at the same time? Yes, please!
- Connections to other RPCVs and your local community. I think this one speaks for itself.

Not bad for \$15. What does all this mean for you? If you're reading this article because you've received a hard copy of the newsletter, then you're already a member! Keep your membership current by looking at your mailing label for your membership renewal date and renew when it comes time. If you're reading this article on the MNRPCV website or at a friend's house, congratulations! You've made the first step toward continuing your involvement with Peace Corps. Now take the next step and fill out a membership form so that you can take advantage of the full range of membership benefits.

Joining Peace Corps required a big commitment and lots of preparation – but was definitely worth the effort. Joining MNRPCV or renewing your membership only requires a few questions and a few bucks – after that, your level of commitment is up to you. Still have questions? Email me at renada21@yahoo.com. I look forward to adding your name to the membership list!





Peace Corps News

Excerpted from press releases at www.peacecorps.gov

Peace Corps Director Aaron S. Williams Delivers Welcome Speech to Peace Corps Staff and Current and Returned Peace Corps Volunteers

September 17, 2009



Peace Corps Director Aaron S. Williams was ceremoniously sworn-in by former Peace Corps Associate Director and former aide to President Kennedy and Sargent Shriver, Senator Harris Wofford... Director Williams reflected on his first four weeks on the job and announced his intent to focus on targeted growth, broad innovation across all operations and a commitment to bringing the Peace Corps Volunteer experience home to help promote a better American understanding of other nations and cultures, also known as the Agency's 3rd goal.

Peace Corps Volunteers in the Philippines are Safe

September 29, 2009

In light of the recent flooding in the Philippines, Peace Corps can confirm all volunteers currently serving in the Philippines have been contacted by Peace Corps staff and are safe. No volunteers are serving in or near the area affected by the heavy rains and floods.

Peace Corps Samoa Volunteers are Safe and Accounted For

September 30, 2009

All 35 Peace Corps Volunteers serving in Samoa are safe and accounted for after a large earthquake near Samoa triggered tsunamis in the area.

Peace Corps Suspends Volunteer Program in Guinea

October 20, 2009

Peace Corps has suspended its volunteer program in Guinea due to ongoing safety and security concerns related to recent political instability. All 94 Peace Corps/Guinea volunteers are safe and accounted for and are currently participating in a conference in Mali... The nation of Guinea has been a longtime valued partner of the Peace Corps. To date, over 1,000 Peace Corps volunteers have served in Guinea since the program was established in 1962. Peace Corps volunteers in Guinea worked in the areas of secondary education (math, physics, chemistry, and English); public health; natural resource management (agroforestry); and small business development.

Peace Corps Announces Eighteen Percent Increase in Applications

October 22, 2009

Peace Corps recruited 15,386 applicants in fiscal year 2009. This represents the largest amount of applications since the agency began electronically recording applications in 1998 and is an 18 percent increase from fiscal year 2008... As of September 30, 2009, 7,671 Peace Corps and Peace Corps Response volunteers and trainees are serving worldwide in 74 host countries. While the average age of a Peace Corps volunteer is 25, 6 percent of Peace Corps volunteers are over 50 and the oldest currently-serving volunteer is 85. Sixteen (16) percent of volunteers are minorities and 60 percent are women. Eighty-nine (89) percent of volunteers hold at least a bachelors degree.

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.



Welcome to New Members!

Thank you and welcome to our new members who have joined MNRPCV in the past few months!

Nancy B, Afghanistan, 1972-1974

Deborah H, Senegal, 1982-1984

Gregory H, Peru, 2007-2009

Laura H, Bulgaria, 2007-2009

Caron M, Niger, 1966-1968

Sia M, Mauritania, 2008-2009

Sally O, Uzbekistan, 2000-2001

Derek O, Uganda, 2007-2009

Aaron O, El Salvador, 2007-2009

Robert P, Ghana, 1967-1969

Charlie R, Cameroon, 1978-1981

Angela T, Peru, 2007-2009

Jennifer T, Madagascar, 2008-2009

Ann U, Costa Rica, 2006-2008

Joan V, Bolivia, 1967-1969

Jessica V, South Africa, 2007-2009

Paul V, South Africa, 2007-2009

Samoa Tsunami Fundraiser

Miriam Krause (Samoa 2000-02)

Several Minnesota RPCVs recently organized a fundraiser to support rebuilding efforts in Samoa following the September 29 tsunami that



hit both American Samoa and Independent Samoa. John Malone, Anne O'Connor, Dick Anderson, Mandy Roesch, and Miriam Krause – all RPCVs who served in Samoa – gathered at Psycho Suzi's in North Minneapolis on October 17 with approximately 40 friends, family, and supporters. Attendees enjoyed good food and conversation, as well as Samoan music and a laptop slideshow.

With the assistance and support of Brian Juntti, Director of Marketing and Communications at Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity, the fundraiser was able to include a raffle for numerous prizes, generously donated by local businesses and individuals. Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity will be helping to create a targeted fund for Western Samoa Habitat for Humanity so that all money raised at the fundraiser will go to rebuilding homes in Samoa. Altogether more than \$1300 was raised.

Thank you very much to all who contributed! If you would like to make a donation, please send checks to Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity, 3001 4th Street SE, Minneapolis, MN 55414-3301, and write "Samoa Tsunami Relief" in the memo line.

Get your tote bags!

Christi Williams (Poland 1996-98)

At \$5 a pop now is the time to stock up on MNRPCV tote bags. They are a perfect size for groceries or projects on the go. They stylishly raise awareness about MNRPCV and they help you reduce and reuse. Get extra for gifts and to have on hand. We like to leave a stash in our car so we are ready for last minute groceries. They will be available at the November 7th Scandinavian Dinner and the Holiday party. Feel free to contact me (quiltzilla@gmail.com) directly if you need some sooner than that.

Communications Survey

We are in the process of conducting a survey about how our members get information about MNRPCV. Thank you very much to those who have already filled out the survey!

If you have not yet filled it out, please go to http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=qwTUcNrQ9eWXbrs565SK6g_3d_3d

It should only take about five minutes to complete.

Preliminary results will be presented in the next newsletter!



Annual Picnic Report

Miriam Krause (Samoa 2000-02)

This year's annual picnic was a great success, with approximately 40 people in attendance at Rhoda Brooks' lovely lake-side home in Excelsior. Board nominations and elections were held, and the new Board roster can be found on the front page of this newsletter. Attendees enjoyed a typically spectacular MNRPCV pot-luck, great conversation, and the annual bonfire.





Treasurer's Throne

Gregory Hochstetter (Peru 2007-09)

Hello all my fellow Returned Peace Corps Volunteers. I would like to introduce myself. If you were at the annual picnic I was the one who volunteered for the Board of Directors. I just got back from Peace Corps Peru in August and my time in Peace Corps helped me grow very fond of Peace Corps and I want to promote, educate and inspire others about it. Now I am on the Board of Directors as the treasurer.



I want to keep you all updated on our finances. First, I want to let you know that our calendar sales are going well. We ordered 250 and have almost all of them claimed, so we will be ordering 50 more. Our calendars really help our income, so it will be nice for everyone to pitch in. Some highlights of our expenditures include our Grants program (\$1880.00 for our 2009 MNRPCV Spring Grants), and also only \$177.80 on the Jeremiah Program which helps single mothers build life skills. So right now, we have \$4955.05 in our bank account at US Bank, a Certificate of Deposit at City County Federal Credit Union worth \$5,923.32, and we have an account with Microenterprise (a micro-lending organization) with \$3,185.54 for a total balance of \$14,063.91.

If you have any questions you can contact me at greghochstetter@hotmail.com.



2010 International RPCV Calendars

Jane Bardon (Turkmenistan 2003-05)

Don't miss your chance get your 2010 International Calendars! The great color photos and concise data about the Peace Corps countries in the photos make these calendars a useful and enjoyable addition to any home or office. They are also an excellent teaching aid for students of any age. MNRPCV is still able to sell the Calendars for \$10.00 each this year. Calendar sales provide a significant part of the funds for MNRPCV Grants to PCVs and RPCVs.

Thank you to everyone who has purchased calendars so far, or is now selling them to others. There is still time to get more calendars! You can buy calendars at the November 7 Scandinavian Dinner or get them from: Mary Adams (NE Minneapolis) madams@ccfcu.org (612-521-0649) or Elsa Frettem (Saint Paul) elsa@gonzalez.com (651-428-1765).





50th Anniversary Cookbook

Cindy Jurgensen (Kiribati 1981-83)

November 1 is the deadline for submissions to MNRPCV's cookbook commemorating the 50th anniversary of Peace Corps! If you read this after the deadline has passed and you still want to contribute, contact Cindy.

To contribute:

- **Select** a recipe from your host country or another country served by Peace Corps
- **Submit** chosen recipe by email as a MSWord attachment to Cindy at cindyjurgensen@gmail.com OR write (legibly) or type your recipe and mail to: Cindy Jurgensen, 4209 Browndale Ave., St. Louis Park, MN 55416
- **Write** 2-4 lines explaining the significance of the recipe and how it fits into the culture of the country. Include your name, country, and years of service; and phone number and email address (for the committee only; neither will be printed in the cookbook)



If you have questions or if you would like to help produce the cookbook contact Cindy at cindyjurgensen@gmail.com (952-925-3118). And please help spread the word to your fellow RPCVs – we'd like this cookbook to include a wide collection of Peace Corps countries.

The PEACE CORPS 50th ANNIVERSARY will be in 2011!

Plan your special Anniversary Project now!

For questions or to let us know about your project, contact Jane Bardon, MNRPCV 50th Anniversary Liaison janebardon@yahoo.com

Community Service Events

Gary Bank (Kenya 1995-97)

JEREMIAH PROGRAM – Tuesday, Nov 17 – 4:30pm
Location: Jeremiah Program Minneapolis location
Watch for a listserv announcement. At this “Cook for Kids” event we will prepare and serve a meal for a group of mothers and small children. The menu will include shepard's pie, green salad, fruit salad, bread, beverages and dessert. Due to the size of the kitchen, only four RPCVs can help in the kitchen, but we encourage others to drop off homemade desserts which are very popular.
RSVP to Gary at gtbank@msn.com



SEPTEMBER CANOEING REPORT

At this event, we helped the Friends of the Rum River with their annual river clean up. We had a great time paddling downriver from Isanti. This part of the river had not been cleaned for many years; thus we came up with a great collection of junk including car tires, wheels, most of the rest of a truck, a chair, a snowmobile, and lots of junk. It was a worthy job and a fun day.





Upcoming Social Events Winter 2009

Maggie Kozak (Burkina Faso 2004-06)



Monthly

TOASTMASTERS - 1st and 3rd Thursday of every month - 6:45 to 8:45pm

Improve your public speaking skills with Toastmasters

Location: Roseville City Hall, NW corner of Lexington and County Road C. See the receptionist in the main building for room location.

Contact person: Brian Ahern at 651-497-7168 or at BJA85@hotmail.com.

November

FUNDRAISER DINNER – Saturday, Nov 7, 6:00pm

(ATTN: Please note change in food preparation details!) Come delight in fine foods of Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Iceland and Finland. A suggested donation of \$10 gets you a ticket into a world that, contrary to popular belief, is a beautiful rainbow of tasty foods. There is still room for a couple more cooks if you have a favorite recipe or want to show off your heritage.

Requested donation is \$10 each for those that would rather not cook.

Location: 669 Summit Ave, St. Paul, 55105

Contact person: Christi Williams at quiltzilla@gmail.com or 612-825-7203.

WINE TASTING – Sunday, Nov 8 – 1:00pm

Bring your wine palette to Alex Bailly's open house and wine tasting! Bring a picnic item to share or purchase cheese, crackers, and sausage, if you like. Admission includes complimentary Alex Bailly wine glass. Cost: \$10/person. To facilitate carpooling of designated drivers, please RSVP by Nov. 6 to maggiekozak@yahoo.com or 651-387-7581.

Location: Alexis Bailly Vineyard, 18200 Kirby Avenue, Hastings MN 55033

For directions, see: <http://www.abvwines.com/visit.htm> or call 651.437.1413

POTLUCK BRUNCH – Sunday, Nov 15, 10:00am-2:00pm

Location: 3604 17th Ave. S., Minneapolis

RSVP to Christi at quiltzilla@gmail.com or 612-825-7203.

ROCHESTER DINNER – Friday, Nov 20, 7:00pm

Location: Nupa's, 1035 Civic Center Dr NW, Rochester, MN 55901

RSVP to Angie at angelasgupta@yahoo.com

December

ANNUAL HOLIDAY PARTY – Saturday, Dec 5 – See back page for details

January

MOVIE NIGHT – Wednesday, Jan 20, 7:00pm

Enjoy a movie in the company of your fellow RPCVs – we'll determine which movie closer to the date!

RSVP (or for more information) contact Miriam at mok4747@yahoo.com or 763-412-9315

Planning Ahead

ITASCA SKI WEEKEND - Feb 5 – 7

This annual MNRPCV tradition is a great opportunity to spend quality time with your fellow RPCVs and families and to do some skiing at the headwaters of the Mississippi River. We have reserved the entire Mississippi Headwaters hostel in Itasca State Park. The lodge will hold 31 people in 6 bedrooms (4 to 6 people per room so there will be sharing). To see the cabin, go to <http://www.himinnnesota.org/groups.htm>

The price is \$45. Only full payment reserves a spot! Slots fill quickly, so hurry now! Mail your check to: Curt Rahman, 4209 Browndale Ave., St. Louis Park, MN 55416 Questions? Contact Curt Rahman at 612-207-5411.

PEACE CORPS DAY EVENT – Saturday, March 6, 1-2:30pm

Location: Hennepin County library: Walker library branch, 2880 Hennepin Ave., Minneapolis

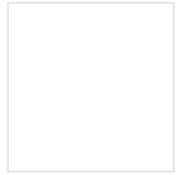
Details to be announced!

Plan an MNRPCV Event

Do you have fabulous ideas of fun and exciting social and/or community events? If so, we invite YOU to host an event! Please email maggiekozak@yahoo.com or call 651-387-7581 for more information.

Stay up to date on the latest MNRPCV Community Events and Social Events by checking the [mnrpcv yahoo listserv calendar \(http://groups.yahoo.com/group/mnrpcvEmailList/cal\)](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/mnrpcvEmailList/cal), Facebook page, or website (www.mnrpcv.org).

MNRPCV
P.O. Box 6413
Minneapolis, MN 55406



*Check your mailing label for
your MNRPCV Membership
Renewal Date.*



MNRPCV Annual Holiday Party and Potluck **Saturday, December 5, 6-9pm, St. Paul MN**

Location: Standers' home, 533 Portland, St. Paul, MN 55102-2218

The MNRPCV Annual Holiday Party is one of our biggest events of the year! Please bring a **dish to share** and a **non-perishable food shelf donation** (think protein, like beans or peanut butter).

Babysitting will be provided, so feel free to bring the kids!

Bring money to buy your stash of **RPCV calendars** (\$10/each), along with all the geography knowledge you can muster for our brain-busting **geography quiz!**

Coming from out of town? Twin Cities RPCVs would love to host visitors!

Contact Maggie at maggiekozak@yahoo.com or 651-387-7581 for more information.

Directions: Take Hwy 94 to the Dale Street exit, go south on Dale to Portland, turn left on Portland. It's on your left halfway down the second block. Obey parking signs.

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