



rpcv/w

**Returned Peace Corps Volunteers
of Washington, DC**

2010 – 2011 ANNUAL REPORT

(August 2010 – July 2011)

RPCV/w Board – August 2009-July 2010

President: Tamar Schiffman (Uzbekistan/Ukraine 2001-2005)

Vice President: Bea Tijerina (Ghana 1997-1999; Zambia 2006)

Secretary: Joe Ford (Zambia 1994–1996)

Treasurer: Allison Francis (Ghana 1997-1999)

Membership Director: Arvis Layton (Honduras 2003-2005)

New Members Director: Andrienne Konstas

Communications Director: China Dikerson (El Salvador 2007-2009)

Web Director: Doug Trapp (Madagascar 2003-2005)

Programs Director: Liza Cushion (El Salvador 2001-2003)

Special Events Director: Brandon Roche (Honduras 2003-2005)

Social Activities Director: Natacha Vacroux (Romania 2004-2006)

Community Service Director: Corey Quinlan Taylor (Benin 1997-1999)

Development Director: Chris Austin (Kenya 2003-2005)

Peace Corps 50th Anniversary Volunteer Coordinator – Kristina Owens

(This is a non-board member position, created with the sole purpose of organizing the events for Peace Corp's 50th Anniversary)

Dear friends,

RPCV/W has had a year worth celebrating. As we entered the 50th Anniversary year of the Peace Corps, our own community experienced a boost in membership, member participation, and an increase in the amount and diversity of events and programs.

This year we honored Senator Chris Dodd as our Peace Corps champion and presented his office with a commemorative plaque at the RPCV/W Holiday Party. Senator Dodd has been a strong supporter of the Peace Corps throughout his career, beginning with his own Peace Corps service in the Dominican Republic.

Our community came together to support the third goal through our "Partnership for Peace" program. Our charity of the year, Academy of Hope, was selected by our own members. Through funds raised at the holiday party silent auction and through the exciting Peace Corps Open, we were able to support Academy of Hope with over \$2,000. We hope to expand this program in the future and provide even more support to worthy non profits in the DC area.

Other RPCV/W signature events such as the Wreath Laying Ceremony at John F. Kennedy's gravesite, the Cherry Blossom picnic and the annual summer barbeque at the Capital Yacht Club were well attended.

This year also brought new opportunity to our board and our community. RPCV/W took on the great responsibility of coordinating the capstone event of the 50th Anniversary of the Peace Corps, a ceremony and walk of flags to take place Sunday, September 25 2011 at Arlington National Cemetery. Throughout the year, RPCV/W's board, 50th Anniversary Committees, and supportive friends have raised funds, planned, coordinated and made possible a thoughtful and moving program that celebrates Peace Corps' founders, participants and hosts, and honors the lives of those who died in service. We hope to see you all this September for this special occasion.

As I transition off the board after four years, I am amazed at how far we have come as an organization. I look forward to what our powerful community will accomplish in the future. I know that the next 50 years of RPCV/W, like the next 50 years of the Peace Corps, will be full of new ideas, fresh perspectives, and a constant drive to bring back the lessons learned in the Peace Corps and make our community a more globally aware, tolerant, and peaceful place.

My best wishes,

Tamar Schiffman Lechter
RPCV/W President
Peace Corps Uzbekistan and Ukraine 2001-2003

50th Anniversary Ceremony at Arlington Cemetery – Organizing process

On August 3, 2010 at Local 16 in Washington, DC, RPCV/W launched its efforts to organize a ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery for the 50th Anniversary of Peace Corps, which took place on September 25th, 2011. Kristina Owens volunteered to be the general coordinator for this event. The amount of work and dedication that she put into this effort was truly extraordinary. As a first step, she organized 5 committees, each responsible for a different task: Arlington, Parade, Communications, Development and Social and Outreach. Committees met monthly in order to address issues for which each committee was responsible. As the ceremony date approached, the committees met almost on a weekly basis. The committees were responsible for a variety of tasks, such as obtaining permits from the National Park Service and Arlington Cemetery, searching for speakers, sending invitations to U.S government officials and foreign dignitaries, raising funds to pay for the event, printing programs, organizing the parade of flags route, borrowing flags from Peace Corps, organizing first aid stations, ambulances, trash clean up, etc. Most committee consisted of RPCV/W members of all generations, from recently returned to the earliest serving volunteers. We had volunteers who served in Colombia 1, and in Brazil's first groups. The RPCV/W Board also had a 50th Leadership Committee which oversaw the committee's efforts and reported back to the Board. RPCV/W worked with both NPCA and Peace Corps HQ to ensure that the 50th Anniversary ceremony reflected properly on 50 years of the Peace Corps. A comprehensive report will be done by the end of 2011.

Finances

Our treasurer, Allison Francis did an excellent job in keeping RPCV/W's finances balanced during the fiscal year 2010-2011. For the fiscal year August, 2010 – July, 2011 RPCV/W had total expenses of \$22,890, total PNC income of 18,650 and PayPal income of \$25,471. She also kept our payments up to date with the RPCV/W Post Office Box, and kept other payments, such as insurance, non-profit DC fees, and taxes up to date.

Web Director:

Our Web Director Doug Trapp did a great job in regularly updated the newly-implemented RPCV/W web site with upcoming events and new information as needed. Doug worked with Kristina Owens (50th Anniversary Coordinator) and others on posting information on the site about RPCV/W's event in Arlington to commemorate the 50th anniversary of Peace Corps, including progress on the \$25,000 fundraising goal. Doug also carried out elections for the 2011-12 RPCV/W board.

Communications

From Summer 2010-Summer 2011, China Dickerson served as Communications Director of RPCV/W. During her term, in addition to being the point of contact for RPCV/W events and activities, she was responsible for the publishing and dissemination of RPCV/W's Seasonal and Weekly Newsletters. She redesigned the Seasonal and Weekly Newsletters making them better organized and more professional in format. Two Seasonal Newsletters were sent out during her term, one in the Spring and the other in the Fall. Also, approximately, 52 Weekly Newsletters were sent out during her term. Both publications have over 1100 subscribers. Ms. Dickerson also managed and maintained RPCV/W's Facebook and Twitter accounts.

Community service

During the 2010-2011 Fiscal Year, our Community Service Director, Corey Quinlan Taylor organized the following events:

In September, 2010 he organized a clean-up of invasive species of ivy at the National Arboretum.

In November, 2010, in partnership with the Latin American Youth Center (LAYC), he organized a group of Returned Peace Corps Volunteers to participate in the Fannie Mae Help the Homeless Walkathon.

On December 18th, in partnership with Iona Senior Services, he organized a group of Returned Peace Corps Volunteers to deliver food to Senior Citizens.

On February 10, 2011, in partnership with Peace Corps, he organized the Peace Corps Open Forum, hosted by Peace Corps & RPCV/W.

On March 7, 2010, returned Peace Corps volunteers participated in the Global Gender Forum: Women Working for Women at George Washington University.

On April 4th, 2010, in cooperation with Gallaudet University and Capitol Hill Rotary Club, Corey organized an American Sign Language Workshop at Gallaudet University.

On May 3, 2010, returned Peace Corps volunteers participated in a fundraiser for Ambassadors of Hope Youth Leadership Exchange, at Medaterra Bistro and Bar.

JFK Wreath Laying Ceremony, May 29, 2011; Arlington National Cemetery

2011 Academy of Hope Ball & Bee, June 3, 2011

Social Events:

Our Social Events Director, Natacha Vacroux, did an amazing job in successfully organizing an impressive number of events:

RPCV/W 50th Anniversary Happy Hour, celebrating Ghana

Where: Ghana Cafe, Logan Circle

When: Wednesday, Sept. 15 from 5:30 pm to 8:00 pm

Turn out: about 65 people

RPCV/W Rooftop Happy Hour

Where: The Reef, Adams Morgan

When: Wednesday, Sept. 22 from 5:30 pm to 8:00 pm

Turn out: about 30 people

RPCV/W 50th Anniversary Film Screening and Happy Hour, celebrating Chile

Where: AFI Theater Cafe, Silver Spring

When: Thursday, October 7 from 6:00 pm to 9:00 pm

Turn out: about 12 people

RPCV/W Newbie Happy Hour

Where: Eighteenth Street Lounge, Dupont Circle

When: Thursday, October 14 from 5:30 pm to 8:00 pm

Turn out: about 60 people

RPCV/W Happy Hour

Where: Finn & Porter, Penn Quarter

When: Wednesday, October 27 from 5:30 pm to 7:30 pm

Turn out: about 25 people

RPCV/W 50th Anniversary Happy Hour and Pakistan Flood Relief Fundraiser

Where: Recessions, Downtown

When: Thursday, November 18 from 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm

Turn out: see Tamar's write-up

RPCV/W Post-Thanksgiving Happy Hour

Where: Meridian Pint, Columbia Heights

When: Tuesday, November 30 from 5:30 pm to 8:30 pm

Turn out: about 30 people

RPCV/W Happy Hour Pub Crawl on H Street

Where: 5 venues on H Street

When: Friday, November 30 from 5:15 pm to 8:15 pm

Turn out: about 10 people

RPCV/W Happy Hour

Where: 14K, Downtown

When: Wednesday, January 12 from 5:30 pm to 7:00 pm

Turn out: about 40 people

RPCV/W 50th Anniversary Dinner, celebrating Malaysia

Where: Malaysia Kopitiam, Dupont Circle

When: Saturday, January 22 from 6:00 pm to 9:00 pm

Turn out: about 30 people

RPCV/W Virginia Happy Hour

Where: Cafe Asia, Rosslyn

When: Wednesday, February 3 from 5:30 pm to 7:30 pm

Turn out: about 40 people

RPCV/W Happy Hour

Where: Chef Geoff's, Downtown

When: Tuesday, March 8 from 5:30 pm to 8:00 pm

Turn out: about 12 people

RPCV/W Happy Hour and 50th Anniversary Fundraiser

Where: Marx Cafe, Mt. Pleasant

When: Wednesday, March 23 from 5:30 pm to 8:00 pm

Turn out: about 25 people

RPCV/W 50th Anniversary Photography Exhibit and Reception, celebrating India

Where: Stewart Mott House, Capitol Hill

When: Thursday, October 7 from 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm

RPCV/W Virginia Happy Hour

Where: Carpool, Ballston

When: Thursday, April 21 from 5:30 pm to 7:30 pm

Turn out: about 12 people

RPCV/W 50th Anniversary Happy Hour, celebrating Brazil

Where: Rumba Cafe, Adams Morgan

When: Monday, April 25 from 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm

Turn out: about 30 people

RPCV/W Happy Hour with the Young Professionals in Foreign Policy and 50th Anniversary Fundraiser

Where: White Tiger, Capitol Hill

When: Friday, May 6 from 5:00 pm to 8:00 pm

Turn out: about 75 people

RPCV/W 50th Anniversary Dinner, celebrating Thailand

Where: Thai Kingdom, Downtown

When: Tuesday, May 24 from 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm

Turn out: about 20 people

RPCV/W Happy Hour

Where: Looking Glass Lounge, Petworth

When: Thursday, June 16, 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm

Turn out: about 45 people

RPCV/W 50th Anniversary Pan Jazz concert and after-party, celebrating St. Lucia

Where: Kennedy Center, Foggy Bottom

When: Monday, June 21 from 5:30 pm to 8:00 pm

RPCV/W Maryland Happy Hour

Where: Jaleo, Bethesda

When: Wednesday, July 6, 5:00 pm - 7:00 pm

RPCV/W 50th Anniversary Film Screening, celebrating Columbia

Where: Museum of Natural History

When: Thursday, July 7, 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm

Development

Thanks to our Development Director, Chris Austin, this was a very successful year for RPCV/W in terms of fundraising. Thanks to his organizational skills, and with the help of other RPCV/W Board members, the organization was able to break previous fundraising records at both the Holiday Party silent auction and in calendar sales.

For the annual Holiday Party, Chris, with the assistance of other Board Members, collected in-kind donations from sponsors from around the Washington Metro Area and beyond, which were auctioned off to party attendees, generating a total of nearly \$4,000.

Chris also distributed calendars to all Board members so that they can assist in the sale of Peace Corps Calendars. RPCV/W sold 250 calendars at \$10 each, generating a total of \$2,500.

In total, RPCV/W generated \$5,415 in fundraising for the 2010-2011 RPCV/W Board year.

Peace Corps Partnership Program

Thanks to our Vice-President, Bea Tijerina, The 2010-2011 Partnership for Peace Program was highly successful. The application process was updated to reflect some lessons learned from last year. Twelve applications were submitted after the Request for Proposal process. Three organizations were selected to present their proposals to the general membership at the Partnership for Peace (PfP) reception held on November 9, 2010. Members voted at the event and online with the winning organization selected on November 17, 2010. The 2011 charity of the year selected was the Academy of Hope.

Throughout the year, RPCV/W raised \$1,200.00 that was donated directly to the Academy of Hope to provide support for their community-based education programs and expansion efforts. Some funds were raised from our annual silent auction, the 2nd Annual Peace Corps Open and at Happy Hours. Given the challenge of raising funds for the 50th Peace Corps Anniversary we were very successful in supporting the Academy of Hope this year.

In addition, we highlighted the Academy of Hope's activities and news items on our listserv, newsletters, and on our website. We sent RPCV/W representatives to their annual Ball and Bee fundraising event and invited their staff to attend our events throughout the year. Due to the success of the program we hope to continue with this format in the 2011-2012 year.

Peace Corps Open

Our membership director Arvis Layton took the lead for a second year in a row and successfully organized the 2nd Annual Peace Corps Open, which took place on Saturday, February 26th at the H Street Country Club in DC. For a second year in a row, this event attracted a large number of mini-golfers. Thanks to Arvis' efforts, we are very pleased to announce that we raised \$622 for the Academy of Hope, our 2011 Partnership for Peace Charity. These monies will aide Academy of Hope in providing adult education programs to DC residents. While DC has one of the nation's highest rates of people with graduate and post graduate degrees, it also has one of the nation's highest rates of illiteracy and people without a high school education.

Special events

With the exception of the 50th Anniversary ceremony, the events below are usually the most time consuming to organize. Brandon Roche did an excellent job in organizing the following events:

The Holiday Party in December broke records for attendance, funds raised via the silent auction, and amount of fun had per person.

The Cherry Blossom picnic in early April was a great time and a great excuse for RPCV/W members to get out to the Tidal Basin and see the blossoms.

The Summer BBQ at the Yacht Club was a sellout crowd with real BBQ, lots of sunshine and a great afternoon.

Programs

Our Programs Director, Liza Cushion always found novel and interesting ways of keeping the membership entertained. Below are the events that she organized:

Ice skating

Five people joined RPCV/W on Saturday, January 22nd for an afternoon of ice skating at the National Gallery of Art Sculpture Garden Ice Rink.

Wine tasting

On Saturday, March 26th 17 people joined RPCV/W to check out the best of local Virginia wine by taking a tour of three North Loudoun wineries, including the Sunset Hills Winery, Bluemont, and Veramar.

Camping trip

RPCV/W sponsored a camping trip to Elizabeth Furnace group campsite in George Washington National Forest, Virginia. Ten people joined the festivities on July 23rd and 24th