

From: Returned Peace Corps Volunteers of South Florida admin@rpcvssf.org
Subject: February 2015 News
Date: February 3, 2015 at 1:34 AM
To: Marvin Hancock tmhr@me.com

RP

Returned Peace Corps Volunteers of South Florida went to Haiti for a service trip and took over 100 children from homeless shelters to Everglades National Park for the 16th year, and that is just for starters, read more, and get involved!



NEWSLETTER

February 2015



"The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in service to others"

-Mahatma Gandhi

[Renew your membership today](#) and let us serve together once again. Unpaid memberships will lapse on March 1.

Picture to left, youth at the Annual Everglades Outing.

Everglades Outing, Record Year, 228 Participants

Feb 2, 2015

The Annual Everglades Outing is RPCVSF's flagship member event every year. The Outing gave more than 100 kids from under-privileged backgrounds living in shelter the opportunity to see, learn about, and experience the amazingly unique ecosystems, plants, and animals that their home - South Florida - has to offer. Along with an army of caring adults, including 70 RPCVs, 18 guests, 6 rangers, a fire ranger, 14 Kiwanis and 14 Peace Corps applicants the participating kids learn all about alligators, birds, wetlands, and rocklands while spending the whole day active and outside. This year we were especially honored by a visit from NPCA President Glenn Blumhorst, NPCA Staffer David Fields and Peace Corps Third Goal Coordinator Meleia Egger.

RPCVSF Creates Interpreter Bank

In December RPCVSF partnered with Cuban American Bar Association to provide much needed cultural and language translation and comfort to unaccompanied minors. This month Catholic Charities and Educate Tomorrow are looking to also partner with RPCVs to provide mentoring

RPCVSF Board Members

President

Virginia Emmons
McNaught
Niger, 2000-2002
Co-Founder &
President
Educate Tomorrow

Vice President

Sue Trone

and support to recent refugees from Honduras, Guatemala, Burma, Haiti, Mexico, Congo, Nepal, Cuba and El Salvador. These are just a few examples of how RPCVs in south Florida could be a great resource to our multi-ethnic community. Therefore, RPCVSF is building an Interpreter Bank. The vision is that community members can reach out to the board any time they have a need for an interpreter and members can be called on to support.

RPCVs with foreign language proficiency can be a huge help during times of need. RPCVs who are available may be asked to support as interpreters for newly arrived immigrants, especially our unaccompanied minors project. Look out for an RPCVSF event email and fill out the registration form with your foreign language skills to become a member. Contact [Caryn Lavernia](#) for more details.

For more information about CABA's Special Immigrant Juvenile Project please click here [Special Immigrant Juvenile Pro Bono Project Proposal](#) or contact: Matt Tanner (Costa Rica, 2006-2008) tannermateo@gmail.com

For more information about Catholic Charities and Educate Tomorrow's need for mentors for refugees, please contact Hannah Tarrien (Nicaragua 2012-2014) hannah@educatetomorrow.org

"Life is Circular" From Riverside House, Little Havana

Larry Silvester, served in the Philippines in the 60's, and then worked at Peace Corps under the direction of Sergeant Shriver, who he says, "...is one of the most unforgettable people I have ever known." But Larry's Peace Corps mates called him a "sell out" for his 40+ year career in commercial real estate finance. He enjoyed the tangible results of his work but when Larry retired in 2008, he was asked to serve as the finance chair for the Riverside House, a 43 year prison ministry and halfway house under contract with the Federal Bureau of Prisons. They currently serve about 150 offenders who are released 3-6 months before the end of their sentence through finding employment, teaching critical life skills courses, and assisting with a positive transition to Miami Dade. "It's challenging work, sometimes like trying to walk up the down escalator, but to the extent we are successful, Miami is a safer place to live and work." Larry's conclusion, "Life is circular, I started out working life in the Peace Corps and I am back serving others and feeling rewarded and fortunate to be still able to serve... I don't have a good reason to stop. My health is still good and I enjoy the challenge of being with young people serving others in need of a helping hand. The Riverside House's "Thinking for Change" life skills classes are weekly classes for 12-15 people, but they far exceed that so they in seeking volunteers, Spanish speaking preferred, to assist. The day/times are flexible. Please contact Larry if you are interested in volunteering at larrysilvester@me.com RPCVSF thanks Larry for his continued service and dedication to making our community a better one.

Membership Renewals Due

Georgia, 2005
Area Director Asia &
Oceania, Best
Buddies

Secretary

Mary Lamberts
Thailand, 1970-1972

Treasurer & Webmaster

T. Marvin Hancock
Colombia, 1963-1966
Retired International
Bank President &
CEO

Membership Chair

Barbara Junge
Attorney
Togo, 1985-1987

Fair Trade Market Director

Linda Whitmyre
Malaysia, 1967-1969

Co-Founder & Governance Chair

Greg Zell
Nigeria, 1962-1964
Attorney

Directors

Elizabeth Coomber
Mali, 2010-2012
Outreach
Coordinator
Deliver the Dream

Grace Dessa
Nicaragua, 2003-
2005

Your dues, allow us to do amazing work in the community and create a sustainable source of revenue for on-going projects. Consider it as another way of giving back all that you learned while in Peace Corps. Membership was due for renewal on January 1, and it will lapse if not paid by March 1. You can renew on our website, rpcvsf.org, by clicking on this link [Join or Renew RPCVSF Membership](#). You can also check your "Renewal Due On" date by clicking on "View Profile," which will appear in the lower left of the home page just after you log in. If your membership is due for renewal, please consider becoming a Lifetime Member (65 years and older is \$150, and under 65 years is \$300). Please e-mail any membership questions to membership@rpcvsf.org.

Thanks for all your hard work this past year and I look forward to working alongside you all in the New Year!

Sincerely,

Virginia Emmons McNaught

President, RPCVSF, Niger 2000-2002

2005
Educator, Florida
Virtual

Emily Eisenhower,
PhD
China, 2000-2002
Program
Coordinator, U of
Miami, Office of
Civic Engagement

Byron Hauser
Ukraine, 2011-2013
Professor, Miami
Dade College

Caryn Lavernia
Vanuatu, 2005-2008
Chief of Staff, City
Year Miami

Corey Lewis
Haiti, 2002-2004
Manager of
Corporate Relations,
Center for Literature,
Miami Dade College

Matt Lord
China, 2009-2011

Lindsey Nieratka
Honduras, 2004-
2006
Environmental
Expert

Julie Scheidegger
Lesotho, 1989-1991
Educator, Pine Crest
School

Mariyn Page

Marshall Islands,
1966-1969

Patty Phares
Samoa, 1972-1975

Bob Sogge
El Salvador, 1967-
1969

Austin Swift
Burkina Faso, 2010-
2012
eIntern US Dept of
State & Graduate
Assistant, U of
Miami

Hannah Tarrien
Nicaragua, 2012-
2014
Associate
Development
Director, Educate
Tomorrow

Doris Vincent
Venezuela, 1964-
1966
Retired International
Credit Card Services
Professional

Members at Large

Even though we have
a few hundred
members we are
always seeking
assistance to lead
events, groups, and
small projects. If you
have a desire to get
involved at any level,
please contact

please contact
Virginia Emmons
McNaught by email:
president@rpcvsf.org

Fair Trade Market - Madécasse Chocolate for Valentine's Day

Contributed by Linda Whitmyre, Fair Trade Market Director, Malaysia 1967-69

The Madécasse chocolate company was founded by Madagascar RPCVs Tim McCollum and Brett Beach. Whereas most fair trade cocoa beans are exported for processing, the Madécasse chocolate is produced in Madagascar. This provides the people of Madagascar with 4 times the economic impact as the beans alone ... jobs, equipment, materials for the chocolate production and packaging all come from the local economy. This is the "bean-to-bar" concept! Madagascar is home to some of the world's finest cocoa beans. And with Madécasse, only natural farming practices are used with high importance given to habitat conservation and creating biodiversity. Madécasse's chocolate is highly praised by the chocolate community, including the 2011 Good Food award for its milk chocolate and the 2009 New York Chocolate Show's "Best in Show" prize for the 70% cocoa. And Martha Stewart raved about it in the February 2015 issue of Martha Stewart Living. The more I read about Madécasse, the more accolades I find. So where can you get some? Madecasse bars are at Whole Foods (\$4.99 per bar, at times they're on sale). Or, you can buy a gift box in their online store. Using the code LEMURLOVE gives you a 15% discount on their Valentine gift box. Order by February 10 to assure arrival by February 14.

Get some bars for a gift, or for yourself ... they are truly special!

RPCVSF Travels to Haiti

Contributed by Greg Zell, Nigeria 1962-64

In January, 12 South Florida RPCVs and family traveled to Haiti. Upon arrival in the land of vodou, we made a list of everyone we wanted turned into a toad but forgot to submit it. The first thing to hit us in Port au Prince was traffic and ruleless driving. Our savvy tour operator, Jacqui, arranged transportation to our hotel. Mercy and merci. At some point, we saw the PaP traffic light. Well, maybe there were 2 or 3. The place is bustling, people always in motion. For a poor country, there seems to be a whole lot of commerce going on.

On our city tour, we discovered our hotel was around the corner and about 3 long blocks from the quake-demolished presidential palace, site of a couple of demonstrations against the government and demonstrations against the demonstrators which did nothing to improve traffic. We were never in any danger the entire trip. We did see a UN patrol truck with soldiers from Chile and occasional armed guards. [Read More](#)

Peace Corps Partnership Dinners

Partnership Dinners raise funds for a currently serving Peace Corps Volunteer's project. Attendees pay usually \$7-10 more than the cost of their meal with the additional funds going to support the partnership project. Whatever amount is raised at the dinner (not including separate donations) is matched 50% by RPCVSF. In the past 5 years (from July 2009 to today) we have sent \$7,821 to Peace Corps Partnership projects, of which \$2,801 has come from RPCVSF dues (the match). In the past 1 year (from July 2013 to today) we have sent \$2,206 to PCP projects, of which \$980 has come from RPCVSF dues (the match).

Peace Corps Partnership Dinners in 2013-2014:
\$700 Phillipines Country Club
\$45 Botswana Local Garden Project
\$516 Dairy Co-op in Nepal
\$545 to Expand Electricity to a Villag ein Benin
\$2,206 in 2013-2014
\$7,821 in the last five years

The next Peace Corps Partnership Dinner/Lunch will be hosted in West Palm Beach on Valentine's Day for Brunch at Indus Indian & Herbal Cuisine, for details click [here](#) or contact Julie Scheidegger (Lesotho, 1989-1991) at julie.scheidegger@pinecrest.edu or 954-798-3505

Upcoming Member Events

WEST PALM BEACH-PARTNERSHIP LUNCH

FEBRUARY 14, 11:30am - Make this a happy Valentine's Day and bring your sweetheart and/or best buddy to Indus Restaurant to sample award-winning Indian fare. Cost per person (to be paid at the restaurant) is \$10.99 for the lunch buffet, not including drink, tax, or tip. The buffet will include many vegetarian delights as well as delectables for meat-eaters. Children are welcome, and those 5 years old and under will pay half-price.

Contact person: Julie Scheidegger at julie.scheidegger@pinecrest.edu or 954-798-3505

PEACE CORPS WEEK STORY SLAM LINCOLN ROAD

MARCH 1 - Please join us to kickoff Peace Corps Week 2015! We're partnering with South Florida's finest independent bookseller, Books and Books, to host an all-RPCV Story Slam. We'll share Peace Corps stories with everyone on Lincoln Rd. Come out and hear your favorite storytellers, and help spread the news about Peace Corps service.

HAPPY HOUR - Miami

Thurs. Feb 12th, 6-8 PM Join fellow RPCVs to decompress after work. Elwoods is downtown's newest and possibly coolest pub. RPCVSF Members get happy hour prices all night! [Elwoods Gastro Pub](#), 188 NE 3rd Ave, Miami, FL 33132

[RPCVSF Cooking & Conversation Club-click here](#)

[RPCVSF Dive Club - click here](#)

MIAMI HEAT - RPCVSF NIGHT

We have purchased a total of 25 tickets and undoubtedly these will sell out. Our Miami Heat contact has saved an addition 20-30 tickets in the same section however he said he cannot hold on to them for much longer. So if you know you want to go, sign up as soon as possible and we can buy more in the same section before they sell out.

Friends and family are welcome to join. If you have any questions, please contact RPCVSF Justin Stivers (Honduras 2008-2010) at justinstivers@gmail.com or (305) 619-9773.

ANNUAL PICNIC FAMILY CABIN RENTALS

May 15-17 - Going to the RPCVSF Annual Picnic? Why not come and stay all weekend? Oleta has abundant trails, kayaking, mountain biking, and air-conditioned cabins that sleep 4 (queen and a bunk bed). For details on the campground click here: [Oleta State Park Web Site](#) to reserve a cabin for your family please register through this form. If you are interested in attending but wish to share a cabin please contact the President, Virginia at emmons@educatetomorrow.org Only 8 cabins are left so book today.

All Upcoming Events-click here

If you have an event or group you would like to organize for RPCVSF or need volunteers for a community project please email Virginia Emmons McNaught at president@rpcvsf.org

Post It! From Our Members

Job Announcements

Riverside House, Miami, is looking to fill 3 positions. For more info, please see the [Employment section](#) within the Members Only menu choice on the left. Also, see the new posting for Peace Corps Campus Recruiters at both FIU and UM.

Fairchild is hiring! we are looking for a Discover Program Coordinator in the Education dept. If you are interested or know anyone that is please see the attached link. [Click Here to Learn More](#) From Kiki Mutis (Bolivia, 1999-2001)

Volunteer Opportunities

[Habitat for Humanity Work Day](#).

March 14th, Broward County, Join RPCVSF members on this amazing community impact project.

[Educate Tomorrow](#), lead by two Returned Peace Corps Volunteers, seeks volunteer educational mentors for youth "aging out of the foster care system." Join us on January 10th, at our annual gala to learn more about the amazing opportunities to do great third goal work with other returned volunteers.

[The Riverside House's](#) "Thinking for Change" life skills classes are weekly classes for 12-15 people, but they far exceed that so they in seeking volunteers, Spanish speaking preferred, to assist. The day/times are flexible. Please contact Larry if you are interested in volunteering at larrysilvester@me.com RPCVSF thanks Larry for his continued service and dedication to making our community a better one.

Interpreter Bank

RPCVs with foreign language proficiency can be a huge help during times of need. RPCVs who are available may be asked to support as interpreters for newly arrived immigrants, especially unaccompanied minors project.

Please fill out the registration form with the languages you speak and your fluency level. Please list if you can speak, read, and/or write.

If you would like to have something posted here, for the next newsletter please send your announcement to Virginia Emmons McNaught at president@rpcvsf.org

[Renew Membership Today, Click Here!](#)

[RSVP for an Event, Click Here!](#)

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