

From: Returned Peace Corps Volunteers of South Florida Rpcvsf@wildapricot.org
Subject: RPCVSF's [Apr-May 2021] Newsletter
Date: April 9, 2021 at 4:02 PM
To: Marvin Hancock tmhr@me.com

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Returned Peace Corps Volunteers of South Florida is *your* group—please join us for fun get-togethers, community service activities, job/life networking, great events, stimulating conversation, and much more. Read on and get involved!



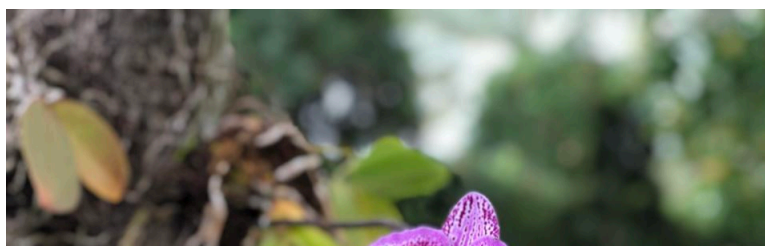
Tropical Currents

The RPCVSF Newsletter

April-May 2021

It may
look
different
in South
Florida
but ...

Spring is
Here!





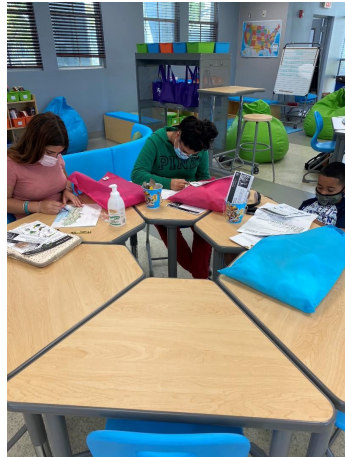
**CELEBRATING 60
YEARS!!**

Zoom Happy Hour

RPCVSF celebrated Peace Corps' 60th with a Zoom (what else) Happy Hour on February 28th. About 15 members attended and we all shared what prompted us to sign up for "the toughest job you'll ever love" and some highlights of what followed. (A number of people mentioned President Kennedy himself as their primary motive for joining.) It was a fun event and interesting to learn about the different experiences over the decades.



Our kiddos couldn't physically be there, but on March 30th, Daniel did a fantastic job bringing the park to them with a Virtual Scavenger Hunt through Everglades National Park!



APRIL 18TH GETTING TO KNOW YOU ZOOM EVENT

RPCVSF Moving Forward...

Brainstorming Zoom Wants **YOUR** ideas on Sunday April 18th at 4:00 pm

Post-pandemic days are getting closer. Somewhere down the road we will be able to meet in person, mask-less. And perhaps we'll feel comfortable exchanging a hug or two or three!!!

The RPCVSF Board is looking to the future and would like **YOUR** input. We have some traditions that for sure will continue, e.g., the Everglades Outing and Partnership Dinners. But we would like your ideas re: events/activities that can be added and where to hold them ... community service volunteer events, family friendly events, discussion groups, a scuba or kayaking day ...

YOU FILL IN THE REST!!!

Please join us via Zoom on Sunday April 18th at 4 PM to share your ideas. Register at <https://rpcvsf.wildapricot.org/event-4240526> to receive the Zoom link. Hope to see YOU there!!!

The 60 Year Celebration Continues

On **Sunday, May 16th at 4pm, RPCVSF will be showing “Kennedy Era Peace Corps Footage.”** This video presents scenes from 60’s Peace Corps sites in Nigeria, Thailand, Colombia and St. Lucia, among others, as well as early volunteers who answered President John F. Kennedy’s call to service. Narrated by Dave Garroway, a well-known television personality of that time, it features an interview with the first Peace Corps director, Sargent Shriver. “Sarge” discusses various aspects of the development of the Peace Corps such as host country requests and skills required, and volunteer application, selection, training and assignments. A highlight of the video is several warm and inspiring messages from JFK himself. Even if you’ve seen it before, we think you’ll enjoy it and hope that you’ll join us! Please register on our website, www.rpcvsf.org, and we’ll send you the Zoom link. Mark your calendars!

The Master of Arts in International Administration presents

REFLECTIONS ON THE PEACE CORPS
a virtual conversation with

DONNA SHALALA
AND

CAROL BELLAMY

Wednesday, April 21 at 6:30pm

RSVP to <http://bit.ly/MAIAPeaceCorps>



Donna Shalala (RPCV: Iran) was formerly President of the University of Miami, served as Secretary of Health & Human Services, and was a member of the US House representing Florida's 27th Congressional District.

Carol Bellamy (RPCV: Guatemala) is chair of the board of the Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund (GCERF), previously director of the Peace Corps, and executive director of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).

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events please visit
maia.miami.edu





We'd like to get to know our members by featuring a new volunteer each newsletter. To introduce yourself and share your experiences email genb714@gmail.com and we'll send you a questionnaire.

Meet RPCVSF Board Member Jamilette Marzo



Where and when did you serve and what was your role?

I was a university TEFL (Teaching English as a Foreign Language) teacher in

I was a university TEFL (Teaching English as a Foreign Language) teacher in Guizhou, China from 2018-2020.

What's one weird quirk, tick, or habit you developed as a result of your time overseas?

I find myself always carrying a roll of toilet paper or a pack of tissues in my bag. This was a common thing to do at site because you could never find any in public or even private restrooms. It also took me a while to get used to having to carry my whole wallet around everywhere I go. Everyone in China, uses a mobile pay app known as WeChat (Weixin) for payment. Yes, its pretty similar to Google Pay and Apple Pay but its literally used everywhere (street food stalls, restaurants, stores, transportation...) as a method of payment.

What's one local custom from your country of service that you wish Americans would adopt?

The deep sense of community and familial ties and the degree to which people care about each other is clearly demonstrated throughout one's daily actions. I found to be extremely heart-warming and believe it has a lot to do with the "we" ideology versus the "I" ideology found throughout the U.S.

How has your Peace Corps experience shaped the person you are today?

I have always considered myself a citizen of the world. That entails an open-mindedness and lack of bias towards any person or place. I believe it was my exposure to different cultures early on in life that led me to this understanding. It was because of this, that I withheld from debating ill-informed misconceptions of people or places with my peers. Not from fear, but from the realization that if they had not experienced or seen it for themselves they would not have understood. With what is going on in the world today and the amount of disinformation, I find myself having changed my stance and am constantly trying to shed light on how the actions of a country do not reflect the people who live in it. Or even that, the action of one person does not define the culture or the rest of the population for that matter.

What would you tell someone interested in joining the Peace Corps?

I would tell them what was said to me, "It is the hardest job you'll ever love". It is a journey which will require a sense of resiliency, adaptability and lack of bias. You must embark on it with an open mind and heart. The experience you have, will completely depend on YOU. At the end you may find what I did, that the time I spent in China had been instrumental to my growth as a volunteer, teacher, woman and human being. I have learned that you can belong to a community that supports you emotionally and mentally without having to be family. I have seen what true sisterhood looks like. Most importantly I have learned that love, kindness and a

systemed looks like. Most importantly, I have learned that love, kindness and a warm smile transcends all language barriers and culture.

TRAVEL



Travel MOVES Again!