



Western Montana RPCV News

DECEMBER 2014

VOLUME 23 #4

Upcoming Events:

SUNDAY, FEB. 8
Potluck at Russ and Shannon's. 236 Dixon 5:30 PM

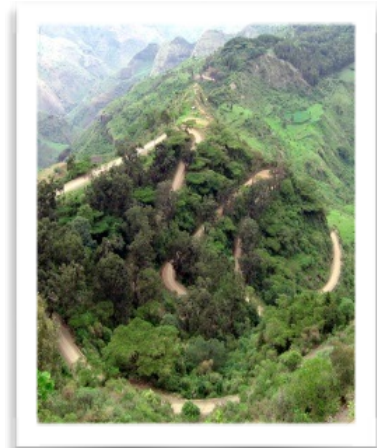
MARCH 1 - 7
Peace Corps Week

SUNDAY, MARCH 22
International Food Fair and Cultural Festival at U of M

2015 GOAT CHASE
JUNE 12, 13 & 14!!!!
2015!!!!!!!!!!!!
Flathead Lake!!!!



Lynne and Otto Koester, back in Ethiopia and a photo of the mountains of the area where they will be for 5 to 6 months.



President's Report

Dennis C. Bangs (Ecuador 70-72)

The year is coming in the end in western Montana and that means it is time to reflect on the past year and the activities of the Western Montana RPCVs over the last few months and look forward to the upcoming year.

First I want to thank Jackie Johnson (Nicaragua 2000-01) for hosting the well-attended potluck in September where we got to enjoy her hospitality and back yard as well as hearing a presentation about the plight of the people on the Mexico, Arizona border by former Missoula resident, Scott Nicholson. Then thanks to all of the people who came to my home in October. I want to especially thank Tobie Wiest (South Africa 2001-03) who honored us with a presentation about her recent experience as a Peace Corps Response volunteer in Georgia, which she had just finished this summer.

And a really big big thanks go out to Reggie and Scott Spaulding (Fiji 1993-96) for stepping up and hosting the Christmas potluck. It turned out to be another very well-attended and fun event.

The week after the potluck in Missoula I had the privilege of attending the first of what may become many gatherings of Bitterroot RPCVs. Russ Lawrence and Jean Mathews (Peru 2009-11) invited returned volunteers from the area to attend a gathering. Clover Quinn (El Salvador) and her husband hosted the gathering and they had a good turnout and are looking forward to having more.

The final thing I wanted to mention for the end of the year is that we still have quite a few calendars available. Remember, this is our only fundraiser of the year so take advantage of the order form on page 5 to get yours and make your contribution to our efforts before the year is out.

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The WMRPCV Newsletter is published quarterly by and for the non-profit Western Montana Returned Peace Corps Volunteers. All dues paying members receive a copy and are encouraged to participate in it's creation by sending comments, articles or other submissions to:

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All newly returned volunteers will receive two free copies before they are requested to join.

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The Western Montana RPCVs welcome the following new members:

Sandip Deo from Nepal.

Paul Yamauchi from Skokie, Illinois who was in Ecuador.



Peace Corps Response experience shared:

At the October potluck in Missoula, Tobie Wiest (South Africa 2001-03) shared her recent experience as a Peace Corps Response volunteer in Georgia. Tobie is retired from a career in academia and gave the group a detailed account of the work she was doing with the local people trying to preserve and protect historical archives. She highlighted the work she was doing as well as the opportunity that Peace Corps Response offered for someone of her experience and talent to help out in a very specific scenario.

We appreciated her sharing the experience with us and maybe she encouraged someone in the audience to look closer at Peace Corps Response.

Joining Efforts for Peace:

Thanks to the enthusiastic participation by a number of WMRPCV members the Western Montana Returned Peace Corps Volunteers had a visible presence at the annual Jeannette Rankin Peace Center 'Peace Party'. The Peace Center does a lot in our community to foster peace and understanding as well as encourage an international perspective in our outlook with their Fair Trade Store. Each fall they hold a celebration and fundraiser with a huge silent auction, a live auction of locally produced, internationally flavored meals and live music. This year ten people from the WMRPCV group attended, so we were able to have a table with our name on it and get a little recognition. In addition to myself, the people who participated were Jackie Johnson (Nicaragua 2000-01), Tish Herries (Sierra Leone 1964-66) and her husband Dave, who also represented 'Veterans for Peace', Sharon and Pat Sweeney (Lesotho 1986-88), Tony Hoyt (Liberia 1967-69/ Guatemala 1974-75) Michelle, Jane Duncan (Namibia 2003-04) and Gerry Blackman (Uzbekistan 2004-05). Thanks to you all for your enthusiastic

Lynne and Otto off to Ethiopia:

Long time members of the WMRPCVs are off on a new, but maybe familiar adventure. Lynne and Otto Koester were volunteers in Ethiopia in the 60's and just retired from the University of Montana. They happily accepted an invitation from the University of Gondar in Ethiopia to work at the University for a 5 to 6 month period. Congratulations and good luck, and maybe we will hear from them about their adventures..

The following is taken from the website of Montana Public Radio.

In This Year Of Ebola, A Montana YMCA Is Its Brother's Keeper

Wednesday, September 24, 2014



MTPR

By [Eric Whitney](#) : Reporter, Colorado Public

Chris Siegler (center) in Freetown, Sierra Leone, in 2011. Siegler has forged a relationship between the YMCA in Missoula, Mont., and the one in Freetown. (Courtesy of Kirk Siegler)

It started with the obvious question: "How can we help?" That's what Chris Siegler wanted to know when Ebola struck Sierra Leone. And the answer to that question shows that it's not only big international groups that can assist Ebola-ravaged countries.

Siegler has had a long relationship with the West African nation. He was a Peace Corps volunteer there in the late 1960s with his wife, Jeannie. After the 11-year civil war ended in 2002, the Sieglers went to visit. Chris, who's on the board of the [YMCA](#) in Missoula, Mont., came across a [YMCA](#) in Freetown, the country's capital. And so a partnership was born.

"There's a tremendous similarity between the Y in Sierra Leone and the Y in Missoula," Siegler says, "in the fact that it's constantly looking for how the organization can serve the community better."

Missoula's Y has been [raising money for Sierra Leone](#)'s since 2004, sending close to \$100,000 to help fund programs for kids and teach job skills. They've also brought staff from Sierra Leone's Y to Missoula to study. And now the Missoula Y is doing its part to help its sister organization in Sierra Leone.

When Siegler asked how to help, the answer was: "You can help by just giving us some funds for basic supplies, the chlorine buckets, [chlorine bleach](#)." That's how the Missoula Y began offering aid. Now it's also paying for "delivering food to families that are quarantined in their home for the 21 days while they're trying to determine if anybody in the household is affected by Ebola."

Christian Kamara, CEO of Sierra Leone's YMCA, is grateful for the assistance. He says the "outbreak of the Ebola deadly disease is something that is psychologically really affecting people here. Also, the economy is going down as well, because life is really not that normal." He says there are no longer social gatherings in Sierra Leone, as people are trying to avoid physical contact with one another to prevent the disease's spread. People are unable to work because of quarantines. Schools are closed, including those the Y operates — most of its facilities are closed — and there is no longer commercial air service into the country.

So far, Missoula's Y has raised about \$3,000 to support the Y in Sierra Leone. Part of the money is being used to produce radio ads in the local language, telling how to recognize the symptoms of Ebola and promoting a hotline for medical help. Right now the international community is raising tens of millions of dollars to fight Ebola in West Africa. The money coming out of Missoula so far is but a fraction of that, but Kamara says it makes a real difference.

"We don't need millions of dollars, we don't need thousands of dollars," Kamara says. "Whatever we could have, that could be able to support a family, support a home, support a community, support a village not to die, I think that's what we need now."



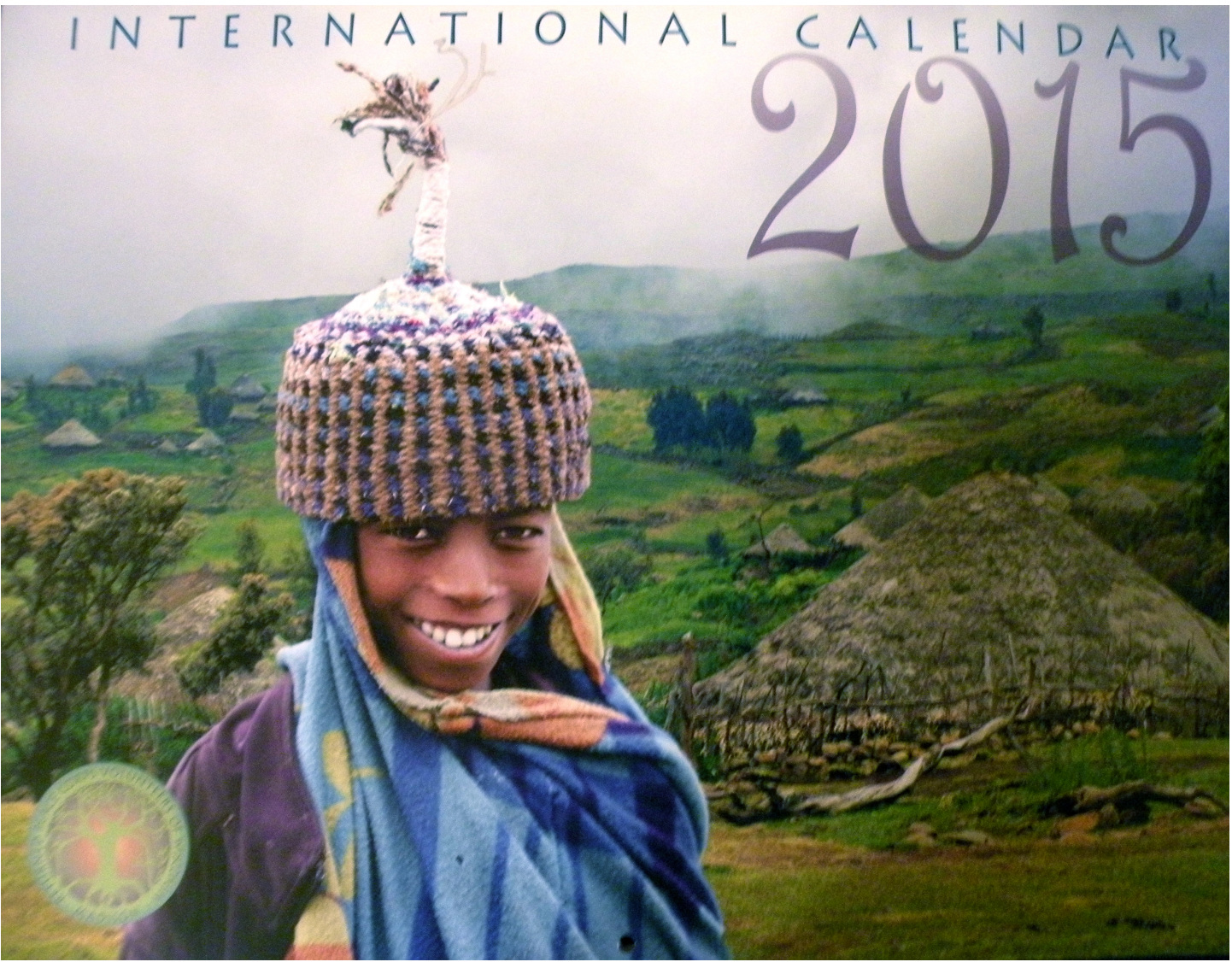
**National
Peace Corps
Association**

Peace Corps Equity Act Language Approved!

A deeply divided Congress struggled - but last week passed - an appropriations bill to fund most of the government for the remaining nine months of Fiscal Year 2015.

With that passage - and with last night's signature by President Obama - came approval of language that will implement the Peace Corps Equity Act. This language will bring fairness to female Peace Corps Volunteers who face the difficult decision when considering pregnancy termination in the rare circumstances of rape, incest or life endangerment.

For the thousands of members of the Peace Corps community who raised their voice for equitable treatment of our volunteers, your actions have led to this important policy change.



**Western Montana Returned Peace Corps Volunteers
help plant the seeds for peace 365 days a year...**

The funds raised from the sale of the International Calendars developed by the Madison, Wisconsin RPCV group are directly donated to a variety of local and international humanitarian endeavors. If you have a project you would like considered please contact us at <wmrpcv.com>. Cost is \$13 per calendar - shipping and handling included. Please complete the order form below and send it with your check payable to 'WMRPCV' to:

Mary Younger, WMRPCV Treasurer
100 Erika Court
Missoula, MT 59803

2015 International Calendar Order

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Phone _____ Email _____

Please send me _____ calendars @ \$13 each (shipping included)
Included is my check for \$ _____, payable to 'WMRPCVs'



Western Montana RPCV News

1729 North Avenue West
Missoula, MT 59801

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

JOIN OR RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP IN WMRPCV OR NPCA

Name: _____

Address: _____ City _____ Zip _____

Phone: _____ E-mail _____

Peace Corps country of service _____ Years _____

Peace Corps job title _____

****Membership dues expire in June of each year unless you are an NPCA member through the Western MT RPCVs.****

- _____ WMRPCV only, \$15.00
 - _____ National Peace Corps Association, includes WMRPCV \$50.00
 - _____ WMRPCV Student/Low Income \$7.50
 - _____ Free membership to all serving Peace Corps Volunteers – This membership, good for service term plus one year after COS, can be activated online by PCVs in the field.
 - _____ First time free - Any RPCV who has never been a member before may join for one year for free.
- TOTAL ENCLOSED:**

**MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO THE WESTERN MONTANA RPCVs and send to:
Mary Younger, 100 Erika Court, Missoula, MT 59803**