



Western Montana RPCV News

JUNE 2013

VOLUME 22 NUMBER 2

Upcoming Events

**JULY 27, SAT.
Potluck at Tony and Michelle's on the Jocko, 3 PM. Call 726-3384 for directions**

**2014 GOAT CHASE
JUNE 13, 14 & 15!!!!
2014!!!!!!!!!!!!!!
Flathead Lake!!!!**



Goat Chasers basking in the sunshine at Flathead Lake

President's Report

Dennis C. Bangs (Ecuador 70-72)

Once again summer brings the end of the school year and activities surrounding schools and a new crop of newly nominated Peace Corps Volunteers and time for the Goat Chase Retreat and other summer oriented potlucks.

Thanks again to Lynne and Otto Koester (Ethiopia 68-70) for hosting the potluck for the newly nominated volunteers in May. Along with the representative for Peace Corps on campus Brad Haas (Dominican Republic 05-07) we enthusiastically cheered them on and gave them as much advice as we thought they could use.

In March Bunny and Bruce Sims (Philippines 73-76) hosted a fun potluck as well. They introduced the group to their son's wife recently arrived from the Philippines. Don Sims (Bulgaria 04-06) had completed a couple of Peace Corps response programs in the Philippines and also found a wife.

In June we enjoyed great weather for Goat Chase as the picture above and the next page attest. We will continue with our summer potlucks at Tony and Michelle's on July 27th.

Also we have received the calendars for our fundraiser. You will find more details and ordering details inside.

Inside this issue:

President's Report	P1
Goat Chase	P2
Int. Calendar	P3
Mano a Mano	P4

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:

Dennis Bangs 1729 North Ave. West, Missoula, MT 59801,
<wmrpcv@yahoo.com>

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

OFFICERS:

President/ Newsletter Editor:
Dennis Bangs 549-1631
wmrpcv@yahoo.com

Treasurer: Mary Younger
251-2292
mmjyounger@aol.com

Missoula Area Rep: Tony Hoyt 726-3384
humbird2@blackfoot.net

Helena Area Rep: Jennifer Wintersteen 443-8593
wintersteen@mt.net

Emissary Contact Bunny Sims 728-4316
bbsims2@yahoo.com

Campus Representative
Brad Hass 243-2839
peacecorps@umontana.edu

The Western Montana RPCVs welcome the following new members:

Heather Bing from Gallatin Gateway who was in Rwanda.
Grant Copenhaver from Missoula who was in Namibia.
Melinda Reed from Helena who was in Russia (Far East).
Josh Vanek from Missoula who was in Latvia.
Sherry Sheme from Kalispell who was in the Philippines.
Noah Jackson from Missoula who was in the Philippines.



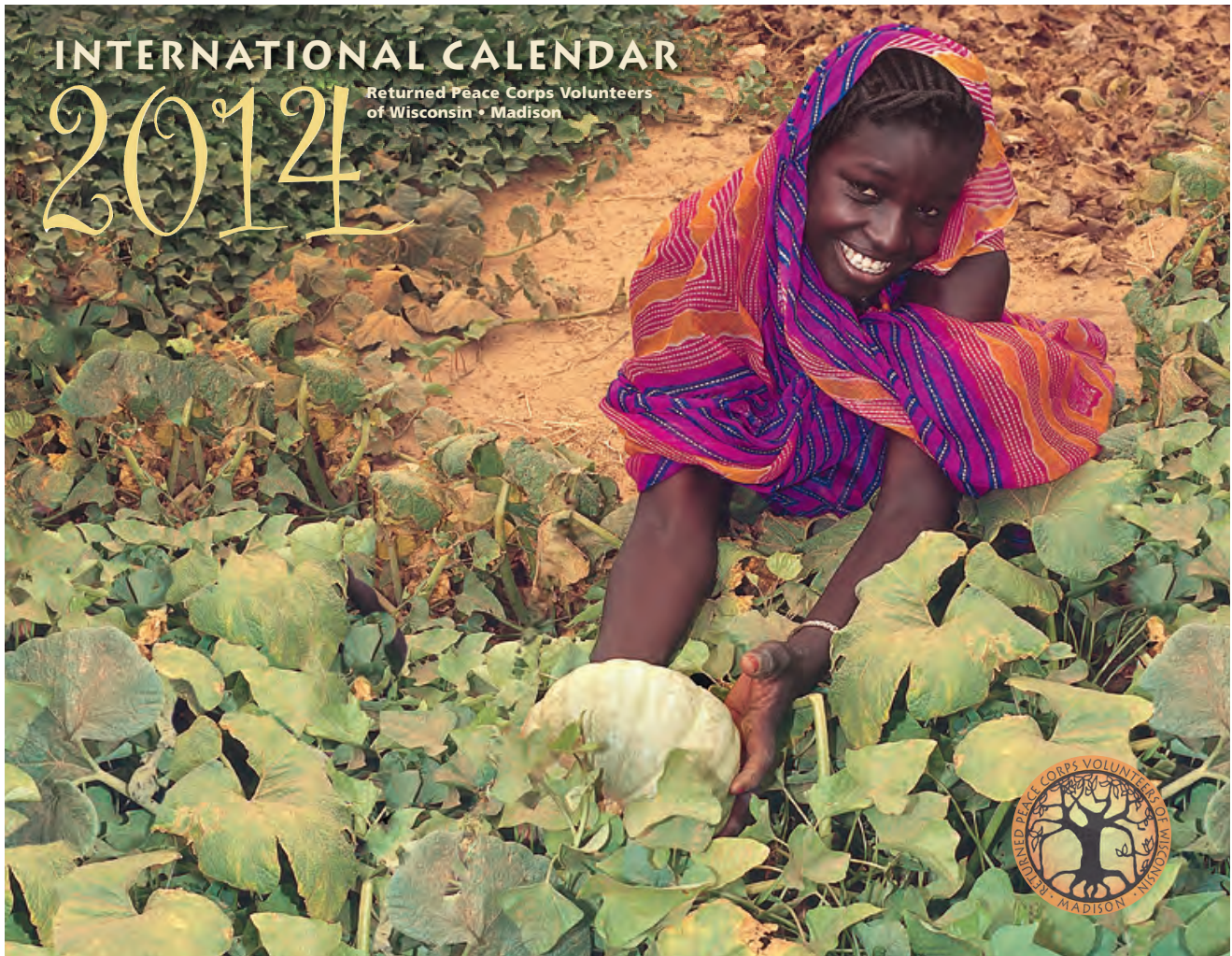
More sunshine, great food and friends at the Goat Chase Retreat

Although fewer people showed up at this year's retreat we were blessed with great weather and a rewarding boat ride and hike on Wildhorse Island, thanks to Dan and Lisa, friends of Steve Torcoletti (Jamaica 84-86). The other thing that made this year's retreat unique was that a couple of weeks prior to our visit the camp suffered serious wind damage, which made some of the facilities unavailable, so our smaller group was easier for the camp to handle. They did a great job of accommodating us and the weather all day Saturday, including the clear calm evening, lead to a great time by all.

We also concluded the official business of approving the standing slate of officers of the group and had the calendars from the Wisconsin group for distribution. Because we are paying a dollar more for calendars we decided we should also charge a dollar more as well. So as you will notice on the calendar order form the price will be \$11 per calendar or \$13 each if you have them sent to you.

One of the other highlights of the weekend was the presence of Jeanne Younger (Honduras 86-88). She has been a special part of our group ever since a few of us made the trip to Eugene, Oregon for the national RPCV conference over 20 years ago, which led to the affiliation of our group.

We hope to have more people join us next year the second weekend of June once again. For those of you not familiar with the Flathead Methodist Church camp you can visit their website <www.flatheadcamp.org> and find out more about what a great facility it is.



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

2014 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'

The following came from the 'mano a mano' website because of a suggestion from Peter Stoll (Bolivia 67-69, one of the regulars at Goat Chase. Their website is <manoamano.org>.

Mano a Mano staff member reflects on Her first Trip to Bolivia
Posted by manoamano on Wednesday, December 12, 2012

Four months ago, I began working for Mano a Mano International and since have considered myself a very fortunate member of a dedicated and progressive team of Mano a Mano staff supported by a substantial number of enthusiastic volunteers and donors. Shortly after I began, I was informed that I would have the most fortunate opportunity of regularly traveling to Bolivia to see our projects in action, to connect with the Bolivians on staff at our four Mano a Mano counterpart organizations, and lead groups of visitors to experience what is the intricate web of Mano a Mano. I have a great deal of experience interning for nonprofits of various sizes ranging from Amnesty International in Chicago to a tiny organization based in Denver with no paid staff supporting victims of Polio and AIDS in Vietnam. And then of course, there was Peace Corps in Panama which gave me a foundation for empathizing with the conditions and culture of a rural, agriculture-based Latin American community.

Already, after four months of working in the MN office, I have been overwhelmingly impressed by the frugality, effectiveness, sustainability, and passion of Mano a Mano. I never imagined I would find such a valuable nonprofit immediately upon completing graduate school in nonprofit administration and international development. As I gained understanding of Mano a Mano in these last four months I have felt exceedingly privileged to be part of this operation. However, I had no idea how incredible this organization was until my trip to Bolivia.

I had the great fortune of being accompanied by the co-founder of Mano a Mano International, Segundo Velasquez, along with our esteemed volunteers and donors, Richard and Susan Eyre, and their family and friends. Richard and Susan are Bolivian experts owing to Richard's Peace Corps experience in Bolivia and their involvement with Heifer International in Bolivia. Their family and friends, like them, were gracious, adaptable, and attentive to all aspects of how Mano a Mano functions. These qualities were increasingly heartwarming and helpful (for I was also learning) as I traveled alongside them. The trip was jam-packed with visits to rural communities to see water projects of all sorts, roads, clinics, schools, airstrips, two incredible project inauguration ceremonies, and meetings with mayors and community leaders to talk about their community's needs. We were taken to each office of the four separate Mano a Mano organizations for presentations on how each of the four Bolivian nonprofits contributes to the one Mano a Mano mission.

One common theme across the Mano a Mano organizations was that every single project completed by Mano a Mano is still thriving and connected to the organization, such as the clinics which still receive medical supplies donations from the United States

operations. However, each project is financially independent from Mano a Mano thanks to government and community funding. The Bolivians on staff at each organization work around the clock owing to long commutes of up to 19 hours and are fervent believers in our shared mission. All staff wished for more funds to respond quicker to the extensive backlog of dozens and sometimes hundreds of solicitation requests at each Mano a Mano organization. Each request is completed in full by community leaders who worked tirelessly to harness short and long term financial support from their municipality and labor and resources from their communities. But, what inspired me more than the amount of work still to be done was the incredible big picture of the achievements already made and the sense of unity and affection felt across cultures and classes upon visiting communities where Mano a Mano is working.

As many of Mano a Mano's trip participants have experienced, we would leave Cochabamba early and drive half the day around winding cliffs to stumble upon a remote community usually surviving on a strictly subsistence level (if even that). We would stop to talk with community workers and to see projects in various phases of completion. The rural Bolivians I met never expressed any desperation or indigence and they often showered us in food, drink, and appreciation. They showed pride in their work and their union with Mano a Mano, never thanking us for money or materials but always for our collaboration and our expertise. They truly see Mano a Mano as a grasping hand helping to climb one step rather than a handout or seamless contribution.

Despite their integrity, there was a serious thread of injustice woven through the rural communities. Year after year, they talk about how they have less rain than the year before. Fewer of their precious cattle will make it through the dry season and they are losing their children to the city.



We all know the potential of devastation and mass poverty from rapid urban migration. Unlike my experience in rural communities in Panama, rural Bolivians don't have hammocks and I think I know why. They work tirelessly every day and all day. In the Andes, the children bare the marks of hard labor with open wounds on their beautiful faces from cold and wind burns. But, despite this injustice – which they are very well aware of, they never asked for anything other than the partnership of Mano a Mano. The engineers working for Mano a Mano were loved dearly by the community and considered a consistent leader. They are the ones who invented these projects based on thorough studies of the climate, culture, and soil. The engineers call these projects their children because they have invested so much time and skill and because they become profoundly connected with the community. They spend days away from their families to supervise the construction and implementation. It's nothing short of the highest honor to know that I am a little piece of this empowering development work done by the engineers and the communities.

I was already proud to call myself a member of Mano a Mano before I travelled to Bolivia. Now, I feel like rural Bolivians and the Bolivians on staff at Mano a Mano have grasped my hand to lift me just one step closer to truly understanding humanity and the power of teamwork

From the NPCA:

Senate Passes Peace Corps Commemorative:

The United States Senate gave unanimous approval Wednesday evening to legislation that would authorize the establishment of space near the National Mall to mark the historic significance of the founding of the Peace Corps in 1961, and the ideals Peace Corps service represents.

This bi-partisan effort was led by Senators Rob Portman (R-OH) and Mark Udall (D-CO). Please thank them!

The House of Representatives still needs to pass companion legislation in the House. The House bill (H.R. 915) was the first piece of legislation introduced by freshman Congressman Joseph Kennedy III, a Returned Peace Corps Volunteer who served in the Dominican Republic.

Let's make this happen!

Take Action:

If you live in Ohio or Colorado, please take a moment to phone or write Senators [Portman](#) and [Udall](#) to thank them for their leadership and attention in securing passage of Peace Corps commemorative legislation.

If you have a Republican Congressman/woman, we especially want to build stronger, bi-partisan momentum to pass Peace Corps commemorative legislation in the House.

Key Message: [Contact your Representative](#) and ask him/her to “co-sponsor House Bill 915, legislation that will authorize a Peace Corps commemorative in Washington to mark the historic significance of the founding of the Peace Corps in 1961, and the ideals Peace Corps service represents.” Share your thoughts on why the establishment of the Peace Corps is worthy of commemoration.

Current House Republican co-sponsors: Six House Republicans are current co-sponsors and should be thanked for their support and leadership. They are RPCV Congressman Tom Petri (WI), Mike Fitzpatrick (PA), Richard Hanna (NY), John Kline (MN), Markwayne Mullin (OK) and Don Young (AK).

NPCA Advocacy staff person meets with WMRPCV:

Jonathan Pearson, from the NPCA, joined the April potluck in Missoula to introduce himself and explain some of the advocacy work that the NPCA is doing on our behalf and how we can get involved. The above action is an example of the work the NPCA has been working on for quite some time. We were happy we were able to include Jonathan in our gathering during his cross country trip.



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**