



# Western Montana RPCV News

SEPTEMBER 2015

VOLUME 24 #3

## Upcoming Events:

**SATURDAY, SEPT. 26**  
**Potluck at 100 Erika**  
**Ct. 6PM**

**OCTOBER**  
**POTLUCK**  
**TBA**

**JUNE 10, 11& 12**  
**2016 GOAT CHASE**  
**The 25th Annual**



*Chris Siegler, tending the "Rum Shop" at the August Potluck*

### President's report.

*Dennis C. Bangs (Ecuador 70-72)*

The lazy, hazy days of summer are passing us by and the activities of fall are approaching. Before getting on with what is coming up I want to thank the people who made the summer another fun one. In July Tony Hoyt ( Liberia/Guatemala 67-69/74-75) and Michelle once again hosted a great potluck on the Jocko River. Then in August Heidi Halverson and Steve Torcoletti (Jamaica 84-86) opened the 'Rum Shop' on Lenore Ct. for a great summer potluck.

Now fall is upon us and a new Peace Corps rep. is on campus, although some of us already know him. Peter has included a little introduction and welcome on the following page. Make sure to contact him if you can help out at any of the events.

We also have a lot of calendars to sell for our annual fundraiser, and if you haven't picked them up or ordered them they will be at Mary's for the September potluck. Other potlucks will follow, but the dates haven't been set yet, so pay attention to the emails and the website.

Once again this year the WMRPCV group is going to have a presence at the Jeannette Rankin Peace Center Peace party, but it isn't happening until October so there is nothing to report at this time.

Finally, don't forget about the 25th annual Goat Chase next June.

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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 its creation by sending comments, articles or other submissions to:

Dennis Bangs 1729 North Ave. West, Missoula, MT 59801,  
<[wmrpcv@yahoo.com](mailto: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](mailto:wmrpcv@yahoo.com)

Treasurer: Mary Younger  
251-2292  
[mmjyounger@aol.com](mailto:mmjyounger@aol.com)

Missoula Area Rep:  
Tony Hoyt 726-3384  
[humbird2@blackfoot.net](mailto:humbird2@blackfoot.net)

Helena Area Rep:  
Julie Dietrich Kelly  
(406) 444-1344  
[jdnmk@yahoo.com](mailto:jdnmk@yahoo.com)

Emissary Contact Bunny  
Sims 728-4316  
[bbsims2@yahoo.com](mailto:bbsims2@yahoo.com)

Campus Representative  
243-2839  
[peacecorps@umontana.edu](mailto:peacecorps@umontana.edu)

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**The Western Montana RPCVs welcome the following new members:**

Larry Frankel and Martha Whitman who live part time in Arlee and served in Liberia and Cameroon.

Ben Bledsoe from Missoula who served in Tonga.

Emily Rich from Helena who is serving in Ecuador.

Kathleen Wright from Whitefish who served in El Salvador

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**From the new Peace Corps Rep. on campus**

Hamjambo jamani!

And greetings from the depths of the UM Career Services office. My name is Peter McDonough, and I'm the new Peace Corps representative - the new Amber, if you will. I've met many of you at various pot-lucks and get-togethers, and you may have even come to my house this past spring when we sent the newest nominees off with good wishes and scattered advice regarding toilet paper. As it is officially my first day on the job, I want to formally greet you all and tell you a bit about this coming year.

A little about myself - I served in Tanzania from 2008 to 2011 teaching science, math, and sex-ed at a small secondary school in the rural southern highlands. Like for many of you, those few years have come to define who I am. I still dream in Swahili, and I still get giddy at the prospect of a hot shower.

I had the pleasure of helping last year with the infamous "3rd goal," tabling and giving presentations with Amber. It goes without saying that she set the bar for what a campus recruiter can do, and thanks to her I am already decently acquainted with challenges and responsibilities that go with the job. But no recruiter can do it without the support of the RPCV community, and I can say even from my limited experience that the help you all gave last year was instrumental in making the efforts of this office a success! From tabling to publicly sharing stories, and the fabulous turnout at the Nom Party, it is clear that this is a wonderful and active community.

And so I am shamelessly asking for your support once again! The beginning of the school year is the most important time for planting that seed in students' minds and getting them thinking about Peace Corps - that means tabling, giving class talks, accosting people at the farmers market, the works. If you are interested in helping by tabling an hour here or there, joining info sessions, or sharing stories alongside your fellow RPCVs, I will be grateful for any support you can give! I will be putting together a schedule of events and sending it out to everyone soon. In the meantime, please email me at [peacecorps@umontana.edu](mailto:peacecorps@umontana.edu) and let me know you're interested.

With that I will leave you. Thank you again for everything you do, and we will see each other soon.

Kila la heri,

Peter



*The following comes from the Peace Corps Public affairs office. Sally is known to several WMRPCV members.*

### Montana Educator Brings Spirit of Service Abroad

OAKLAND, September 10, 2015 – When President Kennedy came to Great Falls, Montana, in 1963, Sally Heard was thrilled. She recalled standing in the crowd within two feet of the president’s motorcade. Like so many Americans, Heard revered Kennedy and was especially excited about wanting to serve in the newly established Peace Corps.

Busy with young children in the ’60s, Heard wasn’t able to join the Peace Corps immediately. But she maintained a desire to travel abroad and help communities in need as she raised a family, worked at Great Falls Montessori School, and volunteered in her community over the years. “I did a lot of church and school work. All of my kids were in 4-H, and I volunteered with the organization for 17 years,” said Heard. “Volunteering was a key thread throughout my whole life. And serving my country was a very motivational thing for me.”

Several years ago while Heard was at a leadership camp, a couple of friends who’d been Peace Corps volunteers urged her to serve. Heard decided to take the plunge.

“They looked at me, and said, ‘why don’t you do it now?’ That started it,” explained Heard. “A year later, my application was in. I was sent to Botswana in September 2012.” Botswana has one of the highest rates of HIV infections in the world. Heard was asked to help tackle this major problem by serving as an HIV/AIDS educator. “It’s a middle-class country now, which is why the Peace Corps left, but we came back to help with the HIV/AIDS pandemic,” commented Heard. She lived and worked in Pitsane, a small village outside the capital, where she taught an AIDS/HIV life skills program at the middle school. She said she taught classes six days a week to several hundred students. Documentary films from the “Steps for the Future” (Steps) program were the focal point of her classes.

The Steps films are used by trained facilitators like Heard to generate discussions and actions to help stop the spread of infections. Heard’s students proposed many ways they could help Botswana achieve its goal of eliminating new infections by 2016. One of the main challenges is lack of public discourse around the issue. “Students planned to talk about it in their villages,” Heard said. “Some went to church and asked the pastor to hand out condoms.” In addition to working at the middle school, Heard also got the opportunity to use her expertise as a Montessori educator. Montessori schools worldwide are based on the principle that children learn best under conditions of greater freedom and independence than traditional schools provide.

When the Pitsane school closed for vacation, Heard went to the capital to train teachers for the country’s first Montessori school, because the teachers who’d been hired couldn’t get permanent visas. “Here she was with this beautiful school and no trained teachers,” commented Heard. Subsequently, the school opened, and 160 students are already enrolled, according to Heard. She said she plans to return to Botswana in September in order to visit the school and see how it is doing.

Jumping in to help to start a new school in a foreign land may have thrown others for a loop. For Heard it was simply part of taking things as they come, an attitude she feels was key to her success as a Peace Corps volunteer. “I had no expectations, and everything that happened was absolutely wonderful,” Heard said. “Expectations are things that drag us down if they don’t happen.” From teaching about AIDS/HIV to training new teachers, Heard brought an open attitude and dedication to service to her work in Botswana.



The International Calendar Project began in 1987 as a way to share Peace Corps experiences with home communities and to raise money for grassroots projects in the countries where we served or in which we live. The Calendar pictures are windows into our memories and introduce you to the people who welcomed us so warmly into their communities. Nearly every day lists important festivals, birthdays, and holidays from around the world. Since 1961 more than 200,000 Americans have spent time serving in communities overseas. The International Calendar is designed as a teaching aid, introducing varied life styles, terrain, foods, occupations, and crafts from around the world. The Calendar always features countries in which the Peace Corps is currently active or has been hosted in the past.

**The Western MT Returned Peace Corps Volunteer** group is proud to be a part of this partnership and has supported humanitarian efforts in Montana as well as in other countries. If you have a project you would like considered for a donation, please contact us at [www.wmrpcv.com](http://www.wmrpcv.com).

Cost is \$12 per calendar plus \$2 shipping and handling. Please complete the order form below and send it with your check payable to “**Western MT RPCVs**” to:

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

### 2016 International Calendar Order Form

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ email \_\_\_\_\_

Please send me \_\_\_\_\_ calendar(s) @ \$14 each (shipping included)

Enclosed is my check total for \$ \_\_\_\_\_.



*One of the first group photos from around 1992 at Swan Lake.*



## ***Goat Chase Retreat Turns 25*** ***From Steve Torcoletti***

It seems like yesterday when the first Goat Chase Retreat took place on the shores of Swan Lake in 1991. Goat Chase has grown in size and the venue has changed but the spirit of friendship and the sharing of our Peace Corps experience continues each and every year.

We want to have a special celebration next year in honor of the 25th anniversary, to be held at the Flathead Methodist Camp, June 10-12, 2016. We are going to form a committee to plan Goat Chase 25 and if you are interested on being on it, please contact me, Steve Torcoletti at [torc@me.com](mailto:torc@me.com).

We are also hoping to get as many RPCVs and their families to make it to Goat Chase 25 as possible. We have a wonderful core group that comes every year and they have been the glue that has kept Goat Chase going. Next year we want to get as many former volunteers that have been to Goat Chase one or more times in the past to return. We will make a strong effort to contact them and encourage them to come.

We would like your input on what you would like to be included in next year's festivities. We are hoping to have a live band and boat trips to Wild Horse Island. We are open to new ideas to make next year special and fun. One idea was to have games from the countries where we served be played by kids and kids at heart. Maybe you have other ideas on ways we can incorporate our countries of service into the weekend.

We want to make Goat Chase 25 special. Put the dates on your calendar now and talk to your RPCV friends. We can do this!

***Thanks to Mary Younger for the photos.***



***One of the more colorful storytelling events***



# 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**