



CAPCA Newsletter

July-August 2007
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A Publication of the Chicago Area Peace Corps Association

NOM PARTY SHOWCASES PEACE CORPS

Nominated PCVs celebrate their departure with PC Staff, RPCVs, friends and family

Jeri Titus (Morocco, 92-94)

Nearly 200 returned Peace Corps volunteers, Peace Corps nominees, invitees and families gathered at the Peggy Notebaert Nature Museum for the Chicago Peace Corps Regional Office's annual Nomination Party. The May 22 event is an opportunity for those people applying or considering applying for Peace Corps to meet RPCVs and others and ask questions. Attendees included over 30 people who had been invited to serve as PCVs as well as about 50 parents and family members of current PCVs.



(Photo of soon to be departing PCVs)

Jody Olsen, Deputy Peace Corps Director, came in from Washington, D.C. to serve as the guest speaker. She shared her stories about the global impact of Peace Corps and the praise she hears as she travels around the world meeting with leaders of countries hosting PCVs.

A special Presidential Award was presented to RPCV Ella Lacey (Malawi 1995-97) from

Carbondale in honor of her significant post-Peace Corps volunteer commitment.



(Jody Olson (right) presents award to Ella Lacey (left))

CAPCA provided the refreshments for the party. CAPCA President Trina Janes explained CAPCA and its Grants Program. "You are in the Peace Corps for two years, but you are an RPCV for the rest of your life. CAPCA is here for the rest of your life," Janes explained. Attendees were given a CAPCA newsletter and grant guidelines.

CAPCA Hopes to Expand Mentoring Program

Jeri Titus (Morocco, 92-94)

CAPCA began a mentoring program earlier this year which paired newly returned RPCVs with professionally established RPCVs. The goal of the program is to assist the new RPCVs with the professional and social transition as they return to the US and look for employment.

Thirty Chicago RPCVs (15 mentor/mentee pairs) participated in this pilot program which was part of a cooperative agreement between the National Peace Corps Association and Peace Corps. Three regions were chosen for the pilot program: Miami, Portland, Oregon and Chicago. The program was kicked off in January with a training session at the Garfield Park Conservatory attended by the mentors and mentees and facilitated by representatives from NPCA and Peace Corps headquarters.

Feedback from both the mentors and mentees has been positive. Most have continued to meet periodically for the mentors to help the mentees with re-entry issues, career advice and networking. As all the participants are quite busy, most mentors and mentees have commented that they wish they had more time to meet more often as the sessions are beneficial to both parties. Participants are hoping to plan group activities to trade their experiences working together.

Marnie Sanborn, the CAPCA newsletter editor and RPCV, Cameroon 2003-2005, was paired with mentor, Myra Janus, Ghana, 1966-1968. "I am very happy with my experience in the program, due to the interaction I have with my mentor", commented Marnie. "She makes an incredible effort to keep our relationship strong and I greatly appreciate that. Because CAPCA hosts events about once a month, this keeps RPCVs motivated to act as impromptu mentors/mentees. Before I was even a mentee, I enjoyed attending CAPCA's social events to help me adjust back to the US and form new friendships."

Jeri Titus's new role on the CAPCA board is Mentoring Program Coordinator. "I'm excited to take on this role since I'm in a career transition myself after recently finishing five years as a recruiter in the Chicago Regional Peace Corps", said Jeri.

In my new role, I would like to build on the pilot program and provide more opportunities for

RPCVs to mentor others. We will begin building a database to track RPCVs willing to serve as mentors. Are you willing to serve as a mentor to newly returned RPCVs or are you a newly returned RPCV who would like to be matched with a mentor? If you are interested, please contact me at jerititus@yahoo.com. Let me know your professional experience and interest and contact information so we can pair you up.

CAPCA Volunteers at North Park Village Nature Center

Jen Marks (Bolivia, 97-99)

On Sunday, July 8th fifteen CAPCA volunteers helped North Park Nature Center maintain their nature preserve. Volunteers spent the morning searching for and removing invasive plant species and helped seed and maintain the lagoon and wetlands. Nature center staff were grateful for the additional help in promoting and protecting the wildlife and plants.

North Park Village Nature Center is located on the northwest side of Chicago and includes a forty-six acre nature preserve and an educational facility. The nature preserve features trails that wind through woodlands, wetlands, prairie and savannas. A discovery room, a hands-on table of natural objects and interactive displays are highlights of the Nature Center. Programs offered include public programs for pre-schoolers, school age children, families and adults; an eco-explorers summer camp and outreach programs.

Volunteers had a great time helping out and socializing with other volunteers. "It's really a great way for CAPCA members to get involved and meet other RPCVs," said Trina Janes (Morocco 91-93) CAPCA Board President. CAPCA organizes quarterly volunteer opportunities. The next event will be held in the fall. For more information or to get involved in an upcoming CAPCA volunteer event, please contact Jen Marks (Bolivia 97-99) at jenmarks@hotmail.com.

Summer Solstice BBQ kicks off summer with the cicadas!



Archers, jugglers, croquet masters and cicada lovers ventured out to Highland Park to celebrate the summer solstice at RPCV Chuck Sheftel's home. Good times were had by all!



Future PCVs chat with recently returned PCVs.



Sports and Entertainment!



SAVE THE DATE!

Former Peace Corps Volunteers and Peace Corps' Friends and Family,

Please reserve the date of **September 29th** for

The Chicago Area Peace Corps Association's

19th Annual Founder's Day Gala

Riva Restaurant on Navy Pier

Saturday, September 29th

Reception 6 pm o Dinner 7 pm

Silent Auction until 8:30 pm

The Founder's Day Gala is CAPCA's largest fundraiser of the year and serves to support CAPCA Global Outreach Programs, as well as bringing together one of the country's largest groups of RPCV's, Peace Corps' families and friends.

Within the past year, your contributions have made it possible for CAPCA to fund a potable water project in the Kyrgyz Republic managed by a PCV from Lake Forest, a school furniture repair project in Armenia managed by a PCV from Granite City, an interactive classroom in Guatemala managed by a PCV from River Forest, a geography education project in Samoa managed by a PCV couple from DeKalb, and a global education project at a high school in Chicago's Austin neighborhood.

Guest Speaker: Jerome McDonnell

Host of "Worldview" – WBEZ, Chicago Public Radio

Mr. McDonnell provides global affairs coverage of world issues with in-depth conversations on international issues and their local impact. McDonnell has a Peter Lisagor award and has been recognized by the Illinois Broadcaster's Association for "Best Public Affairs Program in a Series".

Please join us in celebrating and recognizing the continued contributions of Chicagoland Peace Corps Volunteers – past and present – by attending the 19th Annual Founders Day Gala on September 29th.

RSVP

To purchase tickets or for more information, please contact Eileen Gallagher:
(773) 720.6798, egallagh@nmh.org

CAPCA BOARD MEETING MINUTES 4 APRIL 2007

- **Open** (Trina): The meeting was called to order at 6:10 p.m. with Eileen Gallagher, Trina Janes, Ann Meehan, Marnie Sanborn, Micah Strand and Jeri Titus in attendance.
- **Secretary's Report** (Ann): The March minutes were approved with several corrections. A motion was called by Jeri with a second by Eileen.
- **Treasurer's Report** (Trina): No news yet on a baby for Eva. The only expense this month is \$120 for food and drinks for the March 22nd advocacy meeting. We have income from new and renewing memberships.

Committee Reports

- **Fundraising Committee** (Micah and Eileen): 2007 Founder's Day Planning: After out ruling LUMA (too expensive) and the International House at the University of Chicago (because it's already booked), the dynamic duo investigated Pops for Champagne, Ben Pao, Riva, Lincoln Park Zoo and Grand Lux Café. They are penciling in Ben Pao and Riva (and tying its location to its proximity to WBEZ at Navy Pier). Eileen and Micah will also look at Carnivale, Berghoff and Quartino's.
- **New Website Planning** (Trina): Mike has called for pictures to be included on the rotating photo section. We discussed combining the recently-returned and new-to-Chicago sections in the resources section and including links for mentoring, housing, graduate schools and career services. People are going to email ideas to Marnie and she will gather them together to send to Mike. We also suggested making the grant information section more prominent.
- **Third Goal Committee** (Marnie): NPCA Mentoring Project: Marnie reported on her experience. Several of the mentees want to get together after work. NPCA has sent out a lot of surveys.
- **Peace Corps Office Update** (Jeri): Because Jeri's job ends on 18 May, she will no longer be the Peace Corps Office liaison for the board. Her new role will be the mentoring liaison.
- **NPCA Update** (Trina): Because CAPCA offered seed money for the virtual community project, other groups have ponied up. To date, \$7,700 (of the \$10,000 needed) has been pledged. The NPCA Group Leaders' Forum is coming up on June 30th. Allegra Troiano (the president of the Milwaukee RPCV chapter) is the only one running for the Midwest Representative for the NPCA Board and was nominated by CAPCA.
- **Membership Committee** (Trina): We have seven new or renewing members. We will soon be working on a joint membership letter with the Northeastern IL group.
- **Advocacy Committee** (Trina): The March 22nd Advocacy event featured Jonathan Pearson from NPCA who talked about the program called US in the World. Twenty-three people RSVPed but only 6 showed. Boo!
- **Community Service Committee** (Trina): Wallace has resigned from the board to spend more time with his family. CAPCA will look into doing the Chicago River Clean Up on Saturday, May 12th. Trina will look for a replacement chair of this committee.
- **Grants Committee** (Trina): Update on Funded Projects: Second time PCVs the Otts were awarded \$500 to do a world map project in Samoa. Trina will wire them money shortly.
- **Social Networking** (Trina): April 10 at LuLu's in Evanston: Ann pointed out that it is unclear that the date has changed from Wednesday to Tuesday. Future Events: Jeri will talk to the owner of a Moroccan restaurant near the Rockwell el stop. The June event will be a BBQ held at Chuck's house on Saturday the 16.
- **Next Meetings**: Wednesday, May 2 at Haymarket at 6:00 p.m. and Wednesday, June 2 at LUMA at 6:00 p.m.
- **Close** (Trina): The meeting was adjourned at 7:55 p.m. with a motion by Jeri and a second by Eileen.

WWW.CAPCA.ORG

CAPCA BOARD MEETING MINUTES 2 MAY 2007

Open: The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. with Shayne Bell, Eileen Gallagher, Theresa Fernandez, Trina Janes, Tara Leitzell, Jen Marks, Ann Meehan, Mike Prokopeak, Marnie Sanborn, Micah Strand, Sue Suhling and Jeri Titus in attendance.

Secretary's Report: Ann Meehan
The April minutes were approved.

Treasurer's Report: Trina

Deposits were made for calendar sales, the Calvert Fund interest and membership dues. Withdrawals for the project in Samoa (see May-June Newsletter) were processed.

Board Appointment of Jen Marks: Janes

With Wallace's resignation from the board, Trina asked Jen to take over as community service chair. Jen was a volunteer in Bolivia in the late '90s, works for the American Academy of Pediatrics, and previously organized our volunteer event in October at Ginkgo Organic Gardens.

Committee Reports

Calendar Sales Recap: Tara Leitzell

250 calendars for 2008 will be sent to Trina's office and will be available at future CAPCA events.

Fundraising Committee: Micah Strand/Eileen Gallagher

2007 Founder's Day Planning: Micah reported that we need to sell 80 tickets to make a profit if we are to hold the dinner at Riva's at Navy Pier. The room can hold up to 110 people. We settled on \$80 ticket price for dinner which includes a CAPCA membership, \$125 gets a tour of the station and \$200 gets the all of the above plus a mention in the program. Micah is in charge of room logistics while Sue is working with the speaker. The next step is to plan for the silent auction.

Grants Committee: Susan Suhling

- Funding guidelines: The preferred location of the grantee's hometown is the greater Chicagoland area, thus allowing for funding projects from northwest Indiana and southeast Wisconsin.
- Review funding criteria and materials: With the exception of the aforementioned residency requirement, no changes were made.

New Website Planning: Mike Prokopeak

Mike will get an update to the board by the end of the month.

Third Goal Committee: Tara Leitzell

Tara will pass on mentoring information to Jeri.

Social Networking: Shayne Bell

- May 8 at Tangine: 30 people have RSVP'd!
- June 16 Summer Solstice BBQ at Chuck's: The soiree will be held from 4:00 to 7:00 p.m. Shayne will include the Metra schedule on the invitation so people can coordinate pickups at the Highland Park station.
- Future events: July's event will be at the Folk and Roots Festival in Welles Park (hosted by the Old Town School of Folk Music) on Bastille Day at 12 noon

Peace Corps Office Update: Jeri Titus

Nomination Party on May 23: After some discussion, we decided to give the office \$250 for food. CAPCA and the grants program will be promoted at the event. Additional copies of the Newsletter will be distributed as well.

Membership Committee: Theresa Fernandez

Joint letter with Northeast Illinois Group: Helen has carefully gleaned people from the NPCA book and will help us with the letter which will go out in early August.

Advocacy Committee: Gavin Morgan
No updates.

Community Service Committee: Jen Marks

Jen will investigate ideas and email them to the board for approval.

NPCA Update: Trina Janes

On 30 June, Trina will run the annual Group Leaders' Forum meeting in Washington.

Close: Trina

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

NEXT CAPCA BOARD MEETING IS 7 AUGUST 2007



MEMBERSHIP FORM

Chicago Area Peace Corps Association National Peace Corps Association

Please make check payable to CAPCA.
Mail to Chicago Area Peace Corps Association, PO Box 1149, Chicago, IL, 60690

New Member

Renewal

New Address

- One year FREE for newly returned PCV.
- Individual \$15 for CAPCA only.
- Individual \$50 for CAPCA and NPCA.
- Family \$22 for CAPCA only.
- \$500 Lifetime Membership to CAPCA only (does not include NPCA dues).

- \$ _____ Unrestricted Donation to CAPCA.
- \$ _____ Restricted Donation for _____

- Do not include my name or contact information in a CAPCA or NPCA directory.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ **State:** _____ **Zip:** _____

Home #: _____ **Work #:** _____ **E-Mail:** _____

Country/Years of Service: _____

Peace Corps Job Assignment(s): _____

Current Position and Employer: _____

How did you hear about CAPCA? _____

Enrolling in both CAPCA and NPCA will give you a subscription to our newsletter and to the award-winning national magazine *WorldView*, and all rights and privileges of membership pertaining to both organizations.

www.PeaceCorpsWriters.org/

<http://peacecorpswriters.blogs.com/>

*Where Returned Peace Corps
Volunteers write about their world.*

RPCV Spotlight

A letter from Past Newsletter Editor, Robert Hogan (Estonia 98-00)

The ambassador arrived as classes were changing. When the school mascot and the school director (in a suit and tie) and the town's mayor (in a suit and tie) and I (in a suit and tie, too) appeared in the school lobby, the hallway and stairwell quickly became clogged with students. The director had to clear a path for the ambassador to walk down as she came in the main door.

The second the ambassador walked through the door, she took right to the kids. She stopped and turned and looked at all of them lined up and said hello and good morning. She told one girl she had a nice Santa's cap on, talked a few seconds with one boy, and told another girl she had cute ponytails. Later, she thanked the school director twice for having those students lined up to greet her. I told her that wasn't planned at all. They were just curious. Both teachers and students kept asking why the ambassador was coming to their school to see them.

So a politician and 45 minutes to talk, together with an auditorium full of teenagers, could be a disaster. Not at all in Tapa.

When the ambassador said that all of her colleagues were killed in the WTC on 9-11 and the only reason she was still alive was because she wasn't there that day, you could have heard a pin drop the kids were so attentive.

I had a class with 11th graders before the ambassador arrived. So I told them we needed some "plants" to ask questions if she indeed called for questions. It took us 40 minutes to get decent questions (something other than Do you like Estonia?) and then another 15 minutes to get three volunteers to ask them. So, yes, after her presentation, the ambassador asked for questions. One second went by, two, three, four, and a hand shot up. It was one of my "plants," who was afraid she was going to stumble on the word "politics." But no problem. She asked if it was difficult being a woman in politics. The ambassador went over and hugged her and said we women have to stick together! It was all really, really great.

After serving as the CAPCA Newsletter Editor for some time, RPCV Robert Hogan returned to his host country to teach English. As you can tell, his experiences in Estonia continue to be rewarding.

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*One-year presidential appointment that expires in September.

-----Upcoming CAPCA Events -----

10th Annual Folk and Roots Festival!

Date: Saturday, July 14

Time: Noon onwards

Location: Welles Park in Lincoln Square just off the Western Brown Line stop

Cost: \$7 donation is suggested to support the host, the Old Town School of Music

RSVP: Shayne (Shayne111@yahoo.com) or call 847-212-2295).

Annual Summer Camp Vista Trip 2007

When: July 27-29, 2007

Location: Dundee, Wisconsin – About 2.5 hours from Chicago, near Kettle Moraine.

Cost: approx. \$60, includes lodging, beer, and food! RPCVs, family, and friends welcome! Rain or shine! Hiking, biking, swimming, gourmet food, conversation, games and much more! Communal eating, dormitory living very comfortable, clean showers. Bring sleeping bag or bedding and a towel, tent optional.

RSVP: Brian DeFilippo, bmd8991@aol.com, 847-650-1080 by July 23. Also let me know if you can take some passengers or if you need a ride! See you there!

Grant Park Music Festival

When: Wednesday, August 15

Time: 6pm

Location: Millennium Park

CAPCA will be getting together to enjoy the Grant Park Music Festival in Millennium Park August 15 at 6pm. Bring a picnic dinner and enjoy some good tunes with us! Further details will be provided on the listserve.



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