I've been following the blogs of some Volunteers I knew in Niger. Most of them have finished their service or will do so soon. One blog in particular articulated the weirdness and wonder of the culture shock that accompanies return to the US so well, I asked the newly returned Volunteer if I could use it. He said yes, so in his own words…

“One of the things I think I’m having the hardest time with is reconciling the existence of both here and Niger. I realize now that when I was over there, the United States kind of stopped being a real place. I knew it was there, I remembered that it was a cool place to live with lots of stuff. I heard about it on the news. I talked to people there regularly, but it didn't really exist. Time over there was on hold while I was gone. Now that I'm back I realize that that's not the case. Things have changed. And, I'm faced with the fact that it really is a place. And people really do live like this completely oblivious to the rest of the world. And they're quite happy that way. It's like my head isn't big enough to hold a world view that contains both extremes. I can't bring myself to not expand the picture to still contain Niger, but juxtaposed in my mind, Niger and the US coexisting makes no sense.

“So I guess I'm wrestling with that dilemma. At the same time, I'm trying to figure out how to readjust my life here to account for the various things I've learned or habits I've picked up in Niger. I have come to the conclusion that I have entirely too much crap. I have so much stuff in my room that I don't need. At all. In any way. Most of it doesn't even really have any sentimental value.

“One of the things that's disturbed me the most is that when I was hanging out in Burlington, just walking down the main shopping drag in Church St., I was amazed at how tangible this deep seated urge to buy was. I could feel it like I feel the force of gravity. Somewhere deep in my unconscious I was driven. I had money in my wallet and it needed to get spent! Where is this coming from? I didn't even really want anything, except to spend money on shit I didn't need. I don't need to buy a Wii, I can play the one at my friends' apartment. But because I really did want one, I was compelled to drift into game store after game store. I resisted, but still had this nagging desire to spend money.

“Is the subliminal advertising demon so thoroughly pervasive and effective? Or was I just caught up in the collective unconscious flock? I don't know but it was really frightening. Watching the news is a similarly unsettling experience. I was never aware, I mean really consciously aware, of how sensationalist the news here really is. Now that I've spent 2 yrs completely unexposed to it, it's amazing. The way they put together stories, and choose their words, even the presidential campaigns sound like sporting events. They make every little story seem like a life or death struggle. It's something I hardly ever saw in international news.

“I keep saying that the peace corps is the best deprogramming machine the government doesn't realize it's paying for. I think it's very true. Don't get me wrong, I still very much love America. But there are some frightening undercurrents at work that were just not visible until I spent time completely free of them. It is really amazing how much the media influences, if not outright controls, us.”

Ring a bell? I think some of us still have at least moments when we feel this way. As the world shrinks, how important it is for Americans to realize there are so many ways of being in that world, most of them not American! Lucky for us we got a head start in Peace Corps.
## RPCVs of WI – Madison Officers & Contacts

### Elected Officers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Phone</th>
<th>Email</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>President</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:mafeutz@uwalumni.com">mafeutz@uwalumni.com</a></td>
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<tr>
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<td>Ana Zambie</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:azambie@matcmadison.edu">azambie@matcmadison.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Walt Zeltner</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:chartk@charter.net">chartk@charter.net</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Laura Buchs</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:llbuchs@hotmail.com">llbuchs@hotmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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### Event Chairs

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Chair</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family Brunch</td>
<td>Clare Vogel</td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:cvogel@wisc.edu">cvogel@wisc.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freeze for Food</td>
<td>Rick Lackey</td>
<td>213.8878</td>
<td><a href="mailto:meisa@charter.net">meisa@charter.net</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Peter Joyce</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:peterjoyce@sbcglobal.net">peterjoyce@sbcglobal.net</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Tabling Events</td>
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<td>International Dinners</td>
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</tbody>
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### Other Contacts

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<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Calendar Coordinator</td>
<td>Melissa Kaltenbach</td>
<td>249.3545</td>
<td><a href="mailto:sauri_s@hotmail.com">sauri_s@hotmail.com</a></td>
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<td>Calendar Customer Service</td>
<td>Ken Coffeen</td>
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<td>Rose Ann Scott</td>
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<tr>
<td>Donation Coordinator</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global Education</td>
<td>Marc Brand</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>At Large</td>
<td>Don Sauer</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Anne Riordan</td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:iambrad@chorus.net">iambrad@chorus.net</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ulaanbaatar-13, Mongolia (Via China)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Membership</td>
<td>Brad Hinkfuss</td>
<td>242.9573</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newsletter Editor</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registered Agent</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:terry.stark@dot.state.wi.us">terry.stark@dot.state.wi.us</a></td>
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### Listserv

<table>
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<tr>
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<td><a href="http://groups.yahoo.com/group/rpcv_madison/">http://groups.yahoo.com/group/rpcv_madison/</a></td>
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### Websites

<table>
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<tbody>
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<td>RPCVs of WI – Madison</td>
<td><a href="http://www.rpcvmadison.org">http://www.rpcvmadison.org</a></td>
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<td>NPCA</td>
<td><a href="http://www.rpcv.org">http://www.rpcv.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Peace Corps Online</td>
<td><a href="http://www.peacecorpsonline.org">http://www.peacecorpsonline.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Peace Corps</td>
<td><a href="http://www.peacecorps.gov">http://www.peacecorps.gov</a></td>
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**Camping!**

Saturday, June 7, 2008

The Summer Campout will be at beautiful White Mound County Park in Sauk County. The park has miles of hiking trails as well as an outstanding lake and beach area. To get there; take Hwy 14 west from Madison to Spring Green and Hwy 23. Take Hwy 23 north to county road GG and then take county GG less than 2 miles to the park entrance. There’s a nominal fee to enter the park and camping is $3 per adult and $1 per child.

We have reserved campsites 54 through 59.

Remember to bring a dish to share at the potluck on Saturday afternoon. We’ll eat at around 4:30 or 5:00. Also, bring some breakfast. Breakfast isn’t exactly a potluck, although we do share. We plan to chip in for firewood bundles at the park ($3 for a big armload) to eliminate emerald ashborer worries.

Questions? Call Terry Stark (233-9140) or Ken Coffeen (224-1164).

We hope to see you there!
Meeting Minutes

We met on April 16 at 7:00 pm in the Red Gym.

President Mary Ann Feutz called the meeting to order, then passed the chair to Walt Zeltner, who directed the session. The meeting focus was the distribution of funds from the proceeds of sales of the 2008 Calendar, and the meeting was divided into two parts. First, representatives of each of the groups requesting funds presented their case, identifying their group, their mission, and their current identified need. Once the speakers had completed their presentations, RPCV members decided how best to apportion the sales proceeds.

RPCVs received nineteen requests totaling $27,500; $15,000 was the total authorized for donations. Walt noted that the RPCV purpose “is to give away money to worthy projects.” He passed around a table listing the requests; members had earlier received a fuller description of each project as part of the February/March issue of the RPCV newsletter, World Roots. With the gap between the money 

Number of Requests: 19  Total Authorized for Donations: $~15,000  Total Requested Donations: $ 27,500

* To be used to purchase water testing kits.
** An award of $1,000 could be made once Mike and/or Marcy attend a meeting to answer questions about their proposal.
requested and the money available, Walt stressed that RPCVs would not be able to fund all requests fully: “If you asked for $2000, you probably won’t get the full $2000.” He then directed the groups to make their presentation, asking that they limit themselves to no more than five minutes and allowing them for RPCV members to ask one or two questions on the project.

The presentations lasted two hours. At 9:07 the meeting moved to discussion and recommendation of funding. Walt asked if there were specific projects that people did not want to fund. Helene Pesche seconded an earlier view expressed by Tom Brodd that this funding be dedicated solely to overseas projects. Three of the current projects are US-based: Club Femenino, Fitchburg Fields Land Purchase, and the Atwood Community Center. It was decided that Club Femenino, an organization in Wausau formed to provide a social support network for refugee women, would receive half of its requested $1000; the other two projects would not be funded at this time. Mike and Mary Read, RPCV sponsors of one of the requests, The Umbuntu Project, were not present to discuss their need; it was decided to set $1000 aside (they had requested $2000) for this project pending a presentation at a future meeting.

All other requests received a funding award of at least half of the requested amount. The meeting adjourned at 9:50 pm in what some might describe as the hottest room on campus.

Calendar News

The Calendar Committee met Tuesday, April 22, 2008, at 7 pm at Rose Ann’s house.

• We reviewed the mock-up website and gave feedback.
• Production is going well and Sue is doing a fantastic job. Great text and the elephant is really cute. Also post cards, note cards, and small bookmarks will be printed.
• Proofing party will be Sunday April 28th, Tom Brodd’s house 6pm.
• Last proofing will be on Wednesday April 30th at Sue’s office and then to the printer May 1st. The color proof will be printed on Wednesday May 7th. Press checks will probably be that following week.
• Rose Ann will contact printers about award submissions.

We discussed the Calendar Unveiling Party, but have yet to set a date.

A new marketing idea is a possible International Calendar signing at local bookstores. Stay tuned for developments!

RPCVs of WI-Madison have been named “Green Heroes” of Madison in an article in Madison Magazine for the production of the calendar with soy ink and distribution of proceeds.

We have chosen half the photos needed for the 2010 calendar and we want to finish the text by Jan 2009 when we will choose 18-24 photos to finish the 2010 calendar and have enough for the 2011 calendar. Our production goal for 2009 is to finish the 2011 calendar in the summer of 2009.

Calendar layout and proofing is done and the calendar delivery date is May 30. Rose Ann Scott e-mailed groups that have purchased calendars in the past and got a great response. In addition, SERVV ordered 2,000 calendars for the first time. As a result, the print run was increased from last year’s 32,000 to 36,000 this year. We have received 73 orders for over 20,000 2009 calendars - so only 16,000 left to sell!

The date for the Calendar Unveiling Party will be announced soon.

The next Calendar Committee meeting is Tuesday May 27th, 2008 7 pm at Rose Ann Scott’s house. All are welcome. Phone Rose Ann at 249.0845 or Melissa at 249.3545 with questions or for directions.

Other News

Family Brunch
The Family Brunch held on May 4th was a great opportunity to connect with families, RPCVs and Peace Corps prospects and staff. Thank you to Clare Vogel for organizing and supervising!
**Issues**

**The Future of Peace Corps**

An article in the April Christian Science Monitor raises issues about Peace Corps and has spurred discussion about the future of Peace Corps.

By Nicholas Benequista Fri Apr 25

If the Peace Corps wishes to help in the fight against HIV/AIDS, it needs to send expertise, not just youthful zeal. That was what Ethiopian officials politely told Peace Corps country director Peter Parr when he approached them last summer with a proposal to send a batch of volunteers to work on the pandemic.

"[HIV/AIDS] is serious business and requires serious people with commitment and capacity," says Meskele Lera, deputy director of the Ethiopian agency overseeing efforts to stop the spread of AIDS, who attended that first meeting with Mr. Parr.

Despite Parr's best efforts, however, about half of his volunteers are straight out of college and still need to be told not to arrive at the office in flip-flops.

But this may be changing. The Peace Corps is no longer just dispatching Americans abroad to teach English or help in the fields. It is tackling more complex issues, like HIV/AIDS and environmental degradation, which creates an impetus for the Peace Corps to professionalize. Now debate is brewing over how the agency can attract greater numbers of older, technically skilled volunteers.

Those skilled volunteers may come from the droves of retiring baby boomers.

The Peace Corps has already moved to welcome them, most recently under director Ronald Tschetter, who has tried to attract this demographic by making the medical screening less onerous, and by recruiting from both the AARP, and the retired teachers' association. The number of applications from people over 50 has risen by 60 percent since Mr. Tschetter began actively pursuing retirees in September, according to Joellen Duckett, a Peace Corps spokesperson.

"You can't replace that experience," Tschetter said in an interview in Addis Ababa. "The same kind of passion that these young people have, these people have...but they have 30 years of experience to bring along with it."

These steps may not go far enough, according to Kevin Quigley, president of the National Peace Corps Association for former volunteers. Mr. Quigley advocates more drastic reform to attract older volunteers: breaking with the tradition of sending volunteers to the field for 27 months.

Quigley says he would be delighted to serve the Peace Corps again in Thailand, but, like many others, he cannot afford two years away from work. He envisions changes that would allow older professionals to travel to the field intermittently over the course of several years, while the rest of the time providing guidance to local partners via e-mail, phone, and Skype. Quigley says he has growing support among lawmakers for a significant reform of the Peace Corps in time for the agency's 50th anniversary in 2011.

"We absolutely are at a historic moment for the Peace Corps," says Quigley.

That historic moment has come later for the Peace Corps than for some of its counterparts. Once identical agencies from Japan and Britain have since overhauled their operations and re-focused their attention on making measurable contributions to development.

Japan's overseas volunteer program was incorporated about a decade ago into its international aid agency after receiving criticism that the program was more helpful to its volunteers than to the beneficiary countries. Now Japanese volunteers work alongside paid Japanese professionals.

"By integrating, we can put them into a better program," says Sadako Ogata, who heads Japan's overseas development agency. "It's not just volunteerism, as such, but volunteerism which can have more effect under different schemes."

Britain's Volunteer Services Overseas (VSO) now accepts volunteers of any nationality, and carefully vets applicants based on their experience and professional credentials. The average age of the VSO volunteer is 41, compared with 26 for the Peace Corps. VSO can be more selective in part because they send fewer volunteers abroad (they currently have about 1,500 volunteers) and because they allow placements as short as a few weeks.

"There's a big difference between the two organizations," says Patricia Sellick, VSO's country director for Ethiopia. "VSO is an organization that combats global poverty through volunteerism; it is not a cultural exchange program."

The difference is increasingly narrow in places like Ethiopia, where the Peace Corps is operating with funding from the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), President Bush's flagship program to fight HIV/AIDS. In total, the Peace Corps has received more than $50 million from the fund over five years, making work on HIV/AIDS an increasingly prominent part of its portfolio and leaving an indelible mark on the Peace Corps experience.

In Ethiopia, volunteers like David and Marcy Aldacushion, both skilled IT professionals, are not being posted to a thatched hut in a placid village as they expected, but to a modern apartment in a lively city. To fight HIV/AIDS, their skills are desperately needed in urban areas, where the pandemic is most acute and medical services need technical support.

"The world has progressed," said Mr. Aldacushion after spending a recent morning trying to build a computer-network firewall for an HIV/AIDS clinic. "We have to help them with what they need now."

The debate over the Peace Corps's future, however, may focus as much on its political role as its technical one.
According to David Caprara of the Washington-based Brookings Institution, the Peace Corps could play a key role in combating anti-Americanism. He is calling for a massive increase of US volunteers overseas, pointing to a poll by Terror Free Tomorrow that found that 60 percent of Indonesians and 75 percent of Pakistanis held an improved view of the US following humanitarian assistance in those countries, which included volunteering.

Former Peace Corps director Carol Bellamy, however, points out that the organization is one of the last few agencies in Washington that has not been politicized, and warns that retooling the agency as an instrument for US popularity could end its political innocence.

"[The Peace Corps] hasn't been put through a sausage machine," Ms. Bellamy says. "The minute that all of a sudden the Peace Corps becomes some kind of public relations effort from some kind of beltway strategy would be unfortunate."

Robert L. Strauss, former country director of Peace Corps Cameroon, had an article on the Foreignpolicy.com website in April which was also featured on NPR's Weekend Edition in May. Go to the website to read the article and numerous responses it got from Volunteers and RPCVs. Here's a short piece of the long article:

"The reason the Peace Corps is overlooked as a development organization has a lot to do with the youth and inexperience of the majority of its volunteers. Equally important is its unwillingness to decide if it is a development organization or an organization with a mission "to promote world peace and friendship," as stipulated by Congress in the Peace Corps Act. It would like to be both, but finds itself falling short on both objectives because it cannot decide which is the more important."

Read reactions to Strauss' article at http://blog.foreignpolicy.com/taxonomy/term/129.

Resources

Searching for International Jobs

Of course the best way to find an international development job is via your network of RPCV friends, but there's nothing that says you can't supplement that search with a few information-rich websites.

THE DEVELOPMENT EXECUTIVE GROUP http://www.developmentex.com/index.jsp

You can search for jobs on this site or sign up for a free weekly newsletter that includes the most comprehensive list of international development openings on the planet. The group offers a membership service that will list you along with other development professionals, but you can also take advantage of their offer to post your CV for free. You can also use the list to identify potential employers, then go to their individual websites to look for career ops.

INTERNATIONAL CAREER EMPLOYMENT CENTER http://www.internationaljobs.org/hotjobs.html

This site also offers a membership that provides employment services, but their free lists are a good place to get started. Scroll down to find specific job categories.

PEACE CORPS http://www.peacecorps.gov

In the past year Peace Corps has really developed career resources. Click on the "returned volunteers" line in the middle of the page to see numerous choices which include a self-assessment, job links, tools, graduate school information and more. You can also join the Peace Corps RPCVNetwork Yahoo! Group. Go to http://groups.yahoo.com/group/rpcvnetwork/ to sign up.

Read reactions to Strauss' article at http://blog.foreignpolicy.com/taxonomy/term/129.
**Book Club**

I thoroughly enjoyed our first meeting and I hope the others in attendance; Char, Darlene, Tom, Clare and Dawn enjoyed it too.

Thanks for hosting Char - I especially enjoyed drinking my three cups of tea!

It was decided that we would set the afternoon of the 4th Sunday of the month as our meeting day.

We have chosen the five months worth of books, which should get us through September. They are:

- **May:** Monique and the Mango Rains by Kris Holloway
- **June:** Leaves of the Banyan Tree by Albert Wendt
- **July:** Catfish and Mandala: A Two-Wheeled Voyage Through the Landscape and Memory of Vietnam by Andrew X. Pham
- **August:** Confessions of an Economic Hitman by John Perkins
- **September:** Desert Queen by Janet Wallach

Book Club meetings will typically be held on the fourth Sunday of the month. The May meeting has been postponed until June 1st due to Memorial Day weekend. The following people have agreed to host meetings. We are still looking for hosts for June and September. Please let Mary Ann know if you are interested in hosting.

**May (June 1st): Mary Ann Feutz**

**June 22:** You?

**July 27:** Margot Kennard

**August 24:** Clare Vogel

**September 28:** You?

As a host, you would be asked to organize the meeting, e-mail reminders and directions to members, and if you like, provide snacks. You would not have to host at your house - a coffee shop, library, or park would be an ideal book club meeting place.

Let me know if you are interested in hosting or if you have any other questions.

Happy Reading!

Mary Ann

---

**Monique and the Mango Rains**

This tender, revelatory memoir recalls the two years Holloway spent as an impressionable Peace Corps volunteer in the remote village of Nampossela in Mali, West Africa. It centers on her close friendship with Monique, the village’s overburdened midwife. When Holloway (now a nonprofit development specialist) arrived in Nampossela in 1989, she was 22; Monique was only two years her senior. Yet Monique, barely educated, working without electricity, running water, ambulances or emergency rooms, was solely responsible for all births in her village, tending malnourished and overworked pregnant women in her makeshift birthing clinic. With one of the highest rates of maternal death in the world, these Malian women sometimes had to work right up until and directly after giving birth and had no means of contraception. Holloway especially noted Monique’s status as an underpaid female whose male family members routinely claimed much of her pay. Monique shared her emotional life with Holloway, who in turn campaigned for her rights at work and raised funds for her struggling clinic. Holloway’s moving account vividly presents the tragic consequences of inadequate prenatal and infant health care in the developing world and will interest all those concerned about the realities of women’s lives outside the industrialized world. (From Publishers Weekly)

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**House for Sale by Owner...Madison...1102 Southridge Dr**

$237,000

*2,058 sq ft*

*3 bedroom (Master suite w/ full bath & walk-in closet)*

*2 full/2 half bath*

*Attached 2 car garage with built in shelves and storage attic*

*Green Built/Energy Star*

*Full finished basement (office/home theater/playroom/1/2 bath/extra storage room)*

*Chemical-free Yard with Small Fenced-in Garden (rabbit/deer proof)*

*Fenced yard/Deck with Veranda/Lot with Mature trees and View of Madison skyline*

*Across the street from Glacier Hill Park (with soccer fields, playground equipment, basketball court, and soon tennis courts and softball), and near Dog Park*

***Great location if you travel (10 min to airport) and only 10 min from UW Campus!***

The nearly $40,000 in upgrades and new updates turn this house into a home you’ll fall in love with. We love our house and Madison, but an out-of-state career opportunity has us selling our dream home and saying goodbye to the RPCV Madison group.

Imagine summer and relaxing on your custom deck watching the sun set over Madison skyline, while enjoying the fenced in backyard or entertaining your friends and family in the newly finished basement with your entertainment center or just enjoying the morning paper in your sunny kitchen...this home has it all...and don’t forget the master bedroom has its own walk-in closet and private master bath. Call today for a showing! 249-3545

Photos available at: [www.1102southridge.com](http://www.1102southridge.com)
SAVE THE DATE!  SEPT 14
ANNUAL PICNIC AND GENERAL MEETING
(Good times and important votes)

All RPCV of Wisconsin-Madison members receive a monthly Newsletter, World Roots, on payment of annual dues shown below. To avoid record-keeping hassles, we prefer members pay through September of the year joining, then pay for a full year membership in September. Members joining between September and December should pay $15; members joining between January and April should pay $10; members joining between May and August should pay $5. Reduced rates are available for those in extreme financial circumstances. You can also join the National Peace Corps Association (NPCA) through us by paying an additional $35. We encourage you to join the NPCA, which provides us a way to affect national issues.

Please note that overseas rates do not include NPCA membership. See above for calculations

____ Individual - $15/$10/$5
____ Joint - $20/$14/$7 (Two people receiving one newsletter)
____ I am also enclosing $35 for each NPCA membership
____ I do not want to join, but would like to receive World Roots and am enclosing $7 ($15 for overseas) to cover costs.
____ I'm Moving! Please change my mailing address.

$____________ TOTAL ENCLOSED

I would like to receive my Newsletter  ____ on paper, by mail  ____ electronically, by e-mail

Name: _______________________________ Date: ____________________
Address: _______________________________
Phone #s (H) ___________ (W) ___________ E-mail: _______________________________
Country of Service: _______________________________ Service Dates: _______________________________
PC Job: _______________________________ Birth date: (Optional - M/D/Y) ___________

Send completed form & check to: RPCV's of Wisconsin - Madison, P.O.Box 1012, Madison, WI 53701