From the Membership Chair

Dues! Dues! Dues!

Please check your mailing label. If the expiration date in the upper right hand corner is 1/92, it's time to pay your dues. We set our dues at $1 per month ($12 for a full year), although we don't always make this dues structure clear. With some exceptions, if you joined us directly rather than through the National Council of RPCV's, your membership expires on December 31 and needs to be renewed. You can renew for a full year by filling out the form on the back page, then sending it and a check for $12 ($17 for a joint membership, meaning 2 people at the same mailing address joining the RPCV's of Wisconsin - Madison) to RPCV's of Wisconsin - Madison, P.O. Box 1012, Madison, WI 53703. Mark the envelope ATTN: MEMBERSHIP. Dues can be paid in person to either John Gaska or Walt Zeltner at the next two or three meetings. Reduced membership rates are available for those in difficult financial circumstances.

If you join us directly, you can also join the National Council by enclosing a check for a total of $32 ($44.50 for joint membership in both organizations). I will pass on the money and your membership information to the National Council—probably in early March. I urge you to join the National Council if you have not already done so, since they can provide the national forum for the views of RPCV's which is not possible with our local group.

If you stop receiving your newsletter, it means that I do not have any record of your paying your dues. To avoid this frustrating situation, please send in your dues promptly! It makes life much easier.

Walt
I have changed jobs, so those of you (Buck primarily) who have been dropping off your newsletter submissions at my office will have to find an alternate way to get things to me. My new work location is at the Hill Farms State Office Building and I will only be there 20 hours per week. Walt Zeltzer has graciously offered to allow his office and mail box on the U.W. campus to be used as a drop-off point. Contact him for details about dropping things there. Another possibility is my mail box (actually a file folder out in the hallway in front of the faculty mail boxes) at the U.W. Business school—Commerce Building, first floor.

As you should have already deduced from the above, I am going back to school—pursuing an MBA. In the spring I expect to carry a fulltime course load, which means my free time will be minimal. I am really enjoying putting together the newsletter, and would prefer not to give it up entirely, but I am going to need some help. I would be happy to teach the desktop publishing software I am now using to someone who would agree to help out. You can name your own title—assistant editor, associate editor, or editor-in-chief (with me assuming the role of assistant)! You certainly don't need your own microcomputer; I am currently using the U.W. Macintosh labs.

I have investigated the possibility of us using bulk mail for the newsletter and any other large mailings we might do. The basic requirement is that we mail 200 or more pieces per mailing. There is a $75 annual fee and a one-time $75 fee for a bulk mail ID number (optional but a real work saver). Our mailing cost per newsletter would be reduced from 29¢ to 19.8¢, and could be reduced still further if we have 125 or more pieces being sent to zip codes beginning with 537. Also, when we get our 501(c) status, we can send a copy of the documentation to the Post Office and get our basic cost per piece reduced to 11.1¢!

We reached the threshold of 200 with last month's newsletter, but will we sustain it with the bulk of our membership due to renew in the next month or so? I will raise this question at the December general meeting.

The deadline for the January newsletter is Thursday, December 19. Please send material for the newsletter to P.O. Box 335, Madison, 53701 or call me at 249-6094(h) or 267-0406(w) for short items or to make other arrangements for submission.

Dean Jefferson

Meeting Notice: Wednesday, December 4, 7 p.m.
Union South, 127 N. Randall Ave.
Vote on donation to Zaire evacuees from Calendar revenues.

Future meeting dates:

Thursday, January 9, 1992
at Union South, 127 N. Randall

Friday, February 7, Potluck,
Home of Carrie Loranger and John
Gaska, N4301 Hwy. TT, Columbus;
Contact: Carrie or John, 414/623-4530.

Monday, March 2,
at Union South

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Newsletter Policy

Since we're always trying to get new members, we'll send three copies of our newsletter to anyone we think will be interested. After that, you have to pay to stay on our mailing list. Details can be found on the back page. ONE EXCEPTION: Contacts in other RPCV organizations can continue to receive our newsletter if they will send us theirs.
PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

My grandfather used to constantly caution: "The world is going to hell in a hand-basket." I always attributed this advice to the cynicism of old age. Until recently.

As I sat on my futon reading the afternoon paper last Halloween eve, I grew more and more dismayed to learn that "Phase II" of the Middle East peace talks was being held up by arguments over where it should be held. Footsteps on the front porch stirred me from my reading and I threw open my front door to greet several trick-or-treaters...and their parents. One mom peered cautiously over her child's shoulder as I dropped a bag of M&M's into the plastic pumpkin that the child extended toward me. Even the teenagers were accompanied by parents. What happened to the Halloweens of my childhood when costumed kids roamed the streets accepting unwrapped caramel apples from elderly ladies? When did the elderly ladies become psychotics who plant razor blades in apples and poison candy?

Resuming my reading, I flipped through the sports section. A football player was about to be fined $1,000 by the National Football League. His crime? After catching a touchdown pass, the player jogged over to a disabled boy who's wheelchair was on the sidelines and gave the football to the boy. It seems NFL rules prohibiting players from giving away regulation pigskins supersede an individual's impulse to acknowledge our common humanity.

How does one make sense of a world dominated by lunacy? In Zaire, demonstrators are burning their country down. This may be effective in eliminating the zaniness of Mobutu's regime, but it's also likely to impede future growth. Thirty-nine percent of the voters in Louisiana seem to think an ex-Klu Klux Klansman can bring sanity to their state. And a Kansas legislator wants to pay poor women who stop having babies by obtaining Norplant (the 5-year contraceptive that can be implanted under the skin); while a Wyoming legislator is proposing that his state buy babies by paying economically disadvantaged women to put their babies up for adoption.

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Perhaps what's needed most in this world of ours isn't a rejuvenated economy or a democratic president (although in my opinion, the latter would certainly help!), but a willingness to listen to and understand each other. This is where I feel our role as Returned Peace Corps Volunteers has the most importance. The first RPCV slide show I attended was overwhelming. In 15 minutes, we traveled from the coast of Kenya to the rainforests of Ecuador to the mountains of Nepal. "Whew!" I remember thinking, "Where else in this country could I find a group of Americans who have lived in so many different countries and experienced such a variety of cultures?" Yet regardless of which country (or countries) we served in, we all seem to agree with Stephen Vincent Benet who wrote:

Our earth is but a small star in the great universe, yet of it we can make, if we choose, a planet unvexed by war, untroubled by hunger or fear, undivided by senseless distinctions of race, color or theory.


Happy Holidays!

Nancy
EVACUEES FROM ZAIRE NEED ASSISTANCE

RPCV's of Wisconsin-Madison is pleased to welcome David Olson and Agnes (Ngalima) Kawaya and their family to Madison. David, Agnes, their three children, and a niece were forced to evacuate Zaire recently and arrived in the United States with little more than the clothes on their backs. Over 12,000 ex-pats have fled Zaire, and according to David, some Peace Corps volunteers had to fight their way out of the country with the aid of the Belgian army.

David has had a long involvement with the Peace Corps. Just prior to leaving Zaire, he was teaching ESL and American History through a contract with the United States Information Service.

David, Agnes and the five children (David and Agnes had a baby on November 6) are in immediate need of a vehicle so that David can seek employment, and so that the family can get back and forth to medical appointments, etc. Mike and Marcy Reed have a van which they are willing to donate, but it needs tires and brake work. At their November 17 meeting, the Board approved giving $100 from calendar profits to David to help meet his transportation needs. The Board also decided to ask members to vote on giving David $400 from calendar profits at the December General Meeting. If approved, this money ($500 total) will be given to David to either fix up the Reeds' van and buy some auto insurance, or to buy a better vehicle, if one is located.

Also, if anyone has any employment leads, please contact David at 276-7985. David has a bachelor's degree in communication from the UW-Madison and the equivalent of a master's degree in agriculture with a specialization in apiculture (bees). His primary work experience has been in the areas of education, management training, communication, and agriculture. He is fluent in French.

Slices of Life
Memorable Moments from our Peace Corps Service

My recent column to start off this newsletter feature, brought a response from Margaret Friedler who served in Guatemala. She wrote of a similar experience with a sneak thief on a bus. She also relates a much more pleasant surprise to contrast with the negative image presented by the attempted robbery. So read on, be inspired to share your experiences, and become a guest columnist.

One day while riding a bus in Guatemala City I noticed two women get on. Neatly dressed, each carried a top coat over her arm. They stood near me. When my seat partner arose to leave I also stood up to allow her easy passage from her window seat. As I did this I reached down for my bag in my lap which was partially covered by the standee's coat. I found my bag open and when I reached in I actually took hold of the ladron's hand. Unbelievingly we stared at one another for a moment then she quickly took off for the side door. What a weird sensation. It soon became evident my seat partner had not been as fortunate as I when she returned and made a fruitless search in her former seat for something. The accomplice had gotten her.

To balance that story: My birthday was coming up. I must have been either lonesome or homesick so I invited my class from Los Mixcos to my house in Palencia for a food demonstration. I told them it was my birthday, but not to bring me any presents. The day came and I was busy with preparations. We were going to make chili with ground meat and Proteas, a protein substitute. Suddenly I began to hear singing, beautiful harmonious singing. There was my group - standing outside of the fence serenading me and waiting to be invited in. How I wish I had a tape recording of their singing. And those dear people brought me presents. A bar of soap, a pan dulce (sweet bread); a student's mother made me a charming pillow and most precious of all, a young girl gave me a picture with the caption, "Sin ti nada. Contigo todo." (Without you I am nothing. With you I am everything.) A precious memory.

Send your stories for "Slices of Life" to Ken Coffeen, 1619 Reetz Road, Madison.

RPCVs of WISCONSIN MEMBERSHIP UPDATE:

ADDRESS CHANGES


The work phone number for John Gaska, our new Treasurer, is 608/262-8273.
**Dates to Note**

**Upcoming Events**

**M** November General Meeting - Wed., Dec. 4, 7 p.m., Union South, 227 N. Randall

**C** National Council Discussion - Sat., Dec. 7, 9 a.m.
Meredith Green’s house, 2975 Rimrock Rd., Meeting to discuss the future of the National Council; Contact: Meredith, 271-0998.

**H** Holiday Potluck Party - Sat., Dec. 7, 6 p.m.
Sophia Zermuehle’s house, 317 Bordner Dr., Contact: Sophia, 233-7886.

**A** Global Education Committee - 6:00 p.m.
Every other Monday
Red Oak Grill, Union South, 227 N. Randall

**N** Newsletter Deadline - Submit material to:
Dean Jefferson, 249-6094 (h), 267-0406 (w)
P.O. Box 335, Madison, 53701
Note change in office phone number!

**Future Events**

Freeze for Food 10K Race / 2K Walk - Saturday, January 25, 1992
Contact Deb Stapleton at 244-8609 if you can help.

February General Meeting and Potluck - Friday, February 7, 1992
Home of Carrie Loranger and John Gaska, N4301 Hwy. TT, Columbus; Contact: Carrie or John, 414/623-4530.

Winter Retreat at Camp Lucerne - Weekend of February 21-23, 1992
Karen King will provide more details as the weekend approaches, but everybody mark your calendars!

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**ARCHIVIST / HISTORIAN Needed**

Our group has a dense history, with many cherished memories. Our Archivist/Historian stores and adds to our archives.

Wade DallaGrana and Bob Cowell have done very good work; and Bob has just retired. We need a new Archivist. It is a light and very enjoyable task.

At a minimum, all you have to do is 1) preserve the Box of stuff that is our History, 2) receive historical documents and films and disks which are handed you, and put them in the Box and 3) maintain an up-to-date set of Newsletters. If you’re so moved, fill in some of the gaps (e.g., old posters)

But having all this stuff under your desk will probably provoke history as a hobby, for awhile. Wade collected mementos from us all, and was very good about taking photos. Bob gathered a complete set of Newsletters (Walt and Karen probably have sets, too), and built up an Index of all we have, and wrote a few "5 Years Ago" columns. It’s actually interesting to read our old newsletters; and of how many groups can you say the same?

To volunteer, call Nancy 241-5332.
Dear Returned Peace Corps Volunteer:

The World Wise Schools program at the Peace Corps of the United States, together with the National Geographic Society, invites you to "extend" your Peace Corps service—by about an hour. Our two organizations want to draw on your experience as a Volunteer, whether you returned last year or 25 years ago.

From December 1 to 7, the nation's schools will celebrate National Geography Awareness Week, incorporating the theme "Geography: New Worlds to Explore." We invite you to join in that celebration by bringing your Peace Corps experience to a classroom near your home. You could show photographs, wear indigenous clothes, bring in art, play music, dance, cook a meal, or read folk tales—in short, whatever you're comfortable with to bring your Peace Corps experience to life.

Your participation will bring to a classroom something of the people and places you knew as a Volunteer and allow young students to explore a world many never knew existed. It's an opportunity to join in our ongoing effort to establish geography firmly in the American curriculum. (Indeed, geography is included as one of the five core subjects among the President's and governors' National Education Goals for the year 2000.)

The week is sponsored by the U.S. Congress. It's created to help spread the word that the study of geography is essential. Teachers and students nationwide will concentrate on geography-related activities during the week. As a Returned Peace Corps Volunteer, you have a rare, firsthand understanding of geography and a simple means of sharing it. We can't think of a better way to introduce young people to the world beyond our borders.

Please join us in the effort by volunteering again. To be matched with a school, fill out the form below and send it to World Wise Schools, Peace Corps, 1990 K Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20526, or call 1-800-424-8580, Ext. 2283. (If you don't have a school in mind, leave "Preferred school" blank and we will select one for you.)

Sincerely,

Paul D. Coverdell
Director
Peace Corps of the United States

Gilbert M. Grosvenor
President and Chairman
National Geographic Society

Name_________________________________________Daytime phone ( )_____________________

Street_________________________________City__________State______ZIP Code__________

Preferred school________________________
Our new president Nancy presided, very ably of course. Gordon was not to be seen. (See last Newsletter, under "Elections," for reason.)

31 were there, including several totally new (not born again) people, and Norm Gaffney from Baraboo, and Peter joyce with friend, (who never comes to meetings, but only to drink beer afterwards), and Mike McQ and Liliana and 2 kids, fresh up here from Chicago. We introduced ourselves, and said what had been the hardest question to answer, back in our countries. Our favorites: Why do white people talk to their animals? and Why are litterboxes? (After all, señorita, your cat lives outside all day.)

Money (John): we have in our operating accounts $5184, categorized thus: 624 Gen'l, 5 Savings, 523 Cardinal Benefit for Refugees, 4023 Global Ed grant.

# Reports on Recent Parties:

1) The Baby Shower for Barb and Henry, at the Cowells' — for party details, see last Newsletter; if you want to contribute for diaper fees, call Sharon 241-2392.

2) Halloween I (Laurie Lambert's): it was all of weird people, some of them friends of Laurie's housemates, and no reflection on her at all. They, however, thought we were weird. 3) Halloween II, at Deb and Dave's, was also packed and varied, with many strange costumes. Lena loves being a devil. (And wearing horns does change how you view the world.) Our hosts were Star Trek people; Dave makes a most convincing Data. This is surely a very soothing role in his work with the criminally insane.

# Upcoming Events (mark your pocket calendars):

New Members Slide Show (and Slides from Old Shy Members): as in your last Newsletter. Sat, Nov 9 — you missed it.


International Thanksgiving Potluck (Gina, Sharon): Saturday, 23 Nov. 6pm—midnight, Union South. We have two rooms reserved, space enough for food and dancing both. Bring food, lots of it. Some will cook turkeys. (Lori will do one; she loves to cook turkeys, and Laurie wants to help.) Bring international guests (foreigners, to you), esp. from your country. Bring a donation for the local food pantries. We'll perhaps have a Nigerian DJ of high report. We'll mail out a postcard to all our local members, and we'll invite Chicago and Minneapolis. We'll ask everybody for a couple bucks, to help pay for expenses.

Jim Smith, our local PC recruiter, thanked us for recent recruiting help, and asked for more (recruiting w/ the ag and life sciences students, and out at MATC). He showed a PC video on the "World-Wise" geography program for school kids, for nat'l geography awareness week, Dec 1-7. Any middle- or high-school teachers interested in this program should call Jim, 262-1121(w).

Holiday Parties: we traditionally have a Christmas Party at Sophia's, and a New Year's Party as well. Will anyone volunteer to host a New Year's Eve Party? Tell Nancy 251-5332.

The Christmas Party will be at Sophia Zermuehlen's, 317 Borchner Dr. 233-7886. This will be on Saturday, 7 Dec. (Dita del Diablo in Guatemala, when we banish spooks.) From 6 or 6:30 onwards. (We have to promise to straighten up afterwards, and wash all the dishes, because Sophia is overwhelmed with teaching work this semester, and spiders too.) Bring a potluck dish. And bring one wrapped gift from each person you bring, for the Gift Exchange. The kids will get kids' gifts, unless they want to play with the big guys. (The adults engage in a quaint display of restrained greed, which we'll explain on the ground.) The gift should be something thoughtful but inexpensive, or a treasure you've outgrown, or a horror you can no longer stand. (It's the contrast between the treasures and the horrors — blender cozies, bowling trophies, macrome lampshades — that produce the artistic tension.)

Freeze For Food 10 km Run: will be on Sat, 25 Jan. Deb thinks this may be her last year as Maximum Leader. At least, she's running in the race, because it's Tradition that the M. Leader can't retire until she's done this. To make it easier to recruit the eventual replacement, Deb is breaking all the tasks into committee-sized jobs, and she wants helpers. To help, in howsoever modest a fashion, call her at 244-8609.

Asian Slideshow-Potluck: the Africans have done it, the Americans have done it: it's time for the Asians to do it, especially those cocky Nepalis. (Who said they'll do it after the New Year; they have too many academic-success novenas to perform, first.) Nancy muttered that perhaps we should ask the Pacific Islanders to do this instead: they're certainly energetic enough. (But would your first culinary choice be a pig-and-poi potluck? Well, said the guys from Three Lakes, that beats Porcupine On A Stick, for sure.)

Winter Retreat Feb. 21-23, Camp Lucerne. You'll get details as the time approaches (we know about your attention span). Note, though, that Lent next year begins on the following Wednesday; this will be carnival weekend.

# Ongoing Projects:

92 Calendar (Don): Hot news: we are Sold Out, all 5000, as of 1 Nov. This has never before happened. (Last year, we had about 300 left over, and thought that pretty good.) Profits, after the setaside for next year's Calendar, will be ca. $3000-4000.

In past years, the period from Nov 1 to the end (Jan-Feb) has been when we made half of our total sales. And Earth Care Paper, which has already taken 700, says they'll want another 700. We'll likely get other bulk orders. And we've yet to send out postcards to past quantity-purchasers, reminding them of their deep needs. The unsatisfied demand may be huge.

So, the predicted Question arises: do we shut up shop early, or do we print another batch? Thankfully, Don raised this question at our last meeting, so we could think about it, and so he and his colleagues could get numbers together. (We felt so clever.)

The smallest economical quantity to print is 3000. If we sell only 1500, we'll break even on expenses for this second printing, without touching the income from the first run. We should be able to sell 1500, easily. So we said AYE, let's print another 3000.

(Peter's friend, who knows professional publishing, was full of praise for our Calendar. It's not just the doing parents who say so: our baby really is beautiful. And, we wonder, just how big is our ultimate economic niche, anyway? The Calendar sells itself, especially as it increases in excellence each year. But surely there's an upper limit to our market. Is it 10,000? half a million?)

Global Education Project (Carolyn Peacock): The Video—cum—Manual—cum—Calendar part of the project should be out in January sometime. (And will probably be yet another boost to our Calendar sales.) This will consist of interviews
and written material on the 12 Calendar countries.

Interviewing, on video, has begun. 2 interviews are done, and the rest are set up. The technical video work is being done by an enthusiastic pro, to whom we'll eventually give a modest honorarium. More slides are needed for some countries (esp. Somalia, Tunisia, India, and Honduras). The aim is to produce and send out 125 copies of the video, with its accompanying written packet. Writers are needed, for the individual countries (esp. for Tunisia, Honduras, Peru, Colombia, Nepal). And we need tapes of non-copy-righted ethnic music. Helpers will definitely be needed for marketing, distribution, and publicity. Call Carolyne, 833-9453.

As you'll note, if you're reading every word of the Newsletter in your bathtub, Ken has started a column on "Slices of Peace Corps Life". Send him your stories. 276-9453. 501(c)(3) (tax-exempt status): Buck and Gordon will finish this up. Gordon's job is to goose Buck.

# Regional/National Activities:

Nancy, true to her campaign platform, is avid to help organize a tighter Midwest Regional organization. She wants to write the other local groups and suggest a regional meeting. She solicits our suggestions. Don suggested, and we all nodded yes, that this is a fine idea, and should be in seasonal symmetry with the summer's National Conference (partly so we can be in time to help influence the National Conference). Thus, it should be in the Winter or early Spring. Perhaps as early as January or February. It could be combined with the Chicago group's winter ski party at Kettle Moraine. Then we'd all have an incentive to go, not just the organization fanatics. But in any event, at least 7 of us are interested in attending such a gathering, and doing some work while there.

The National Council is undergoing various changes and shocks, all money-related: they're deep in the hole. Such a situation in a membership-based group naturally produces feelings of abandonment, and worthlessness.

Lyn Gray has resigned as exec. director, and the NC is not going to hire a replacement for the foreseeable future; instead, they'll divvy up her tasks among the other staffers. The NC is strapped for cash, and is discussing all kinds of cuts, even very extreme ones (e.g., no paid staff at all, and an office in someone's home).

The National Council solicits everyone's suggestions and thoughts on direction and policy and financial salvations. We had no time to get deeply into this right away, but these comments were made, by various people:

1) The National Council does wonderful things, for which we are grateful. They just do not manage their operating budgets realistically. This is a DC disease. Their overhead is too high, and their expectations of cash flow have been too optimistic.
2) They should not expect to be able to function properly without a paid staff, or without some kind of real office.
3) But it is not necessarily necessary for the office to be in DC. Lobbying could conceivably be well-done by the local DC Group, as one of their main tasks. (Most DC people are government-savvy by their very nature.) Perhaps the most major task of the National Council would then be to help put on the yearly National Conference (cheaply, affordably, and at a reasonable profit). But there must be active well-functioning Regional Groups to do much of the work we currently expect from the National Council.
4) Ah, but this ignores other good things we want our National Council to do (serve as a grant umbrella, represent all RPCVs, improve PC, change the nation, etc.).
5) Mike McQ did a survey of the country's PC groups, and found that only half their members were also members of the National Council: clearly, these people did not feel that the NC was valuable enough to the pay the dues (or the dues were too high).
6) We want the National Council to publish yearly financial statements, like other organizations.

This is a big topic. We'll talk about it again at the next meeting. And perhaps it should be our Saturday afternoon discussion topic, at the Winter Retreat in February.

# Totally New Business:

Deadwood Committee (Nancy): Proposed: Should Mike McQuestion, past-president of the Chicago group, be made an automatic member of the Deadwood Committee (which is made up of all our past-presidents); and should this courtesy be extended to like persons, in the future? The Answer was No: he has to become our own past-president first. However, we will invite him to attend our Deadwood Committee meetings; he just won't be taught the secret handshake and other signs of recognition, nor is he eligible for the pension, or for one of the better rooms in our retirement home in Biaboe. (The Deadwood Committee, named by Don Sauer, is our Council of Elders, and consists of Doug Brown, Bob Cowell, Kathleen Quinlan, Sharon Lewadowski, Tim Turner, Don Sauer, Meredith Green, Bob Merideth, Rose Ann Scott, Ken Coffeen, Gordon Malaise. Doug is lost; Tim and Bob M have moved away; the rest are among us still.) The current Officers, with the Newsletter editor, etc., and the Deadwoods, will meet Nov 17th for their yearly long-range discussion.

World Series Appreciation Letter (Buck and Don): The Braves and the Twins performed exceptionally high art in the World Series. Even the most ignorant of us were entranced by their play. We should write a letter of thanks to both teams, and send each a Calendar (for the dugout, not the managers). Don and Dave and the other cognoscenti should draft it. All, resolutely, said Oh, alright: AYE.

Rose Ann brought up Gulf War refugees: the local chapter of Physicians for Social Responsibility have a sister hospital in Iraq. Do we want to send our Cardinal Bar Benefit monies there? Answer NO, we don't want to open up that can of worms again. Send it to the Friends, as decided last meeting.

And we then adjourned, down to the Red Oak Grill. Norm, who's closed out his hardware store, talked about going to Peru this winter, to see how it's changed, and if they still remember him. The Nepallians discussed the etymologies of Nepali river names. Patrick McQuestion tried to hide from all the monitory adults, and Lena cadged piggyback rides. All promised to read On the Shoulders of Giants, the only interesting sociology book ever written.

La
Buck

Are you concerned about the environment and about development, about how to deal with both?

Join an affiliated group of the National Council:

RPCVs for Environment and Sustainable Development
c/o Katy Hansen
Box 246
Orange City, IA 51041
(712) 737-2700
COMMENTS FROM THE MEMBERSHIP CHAIR

1. It appears that the National Council will have to cut back on some operations due to budget problems. I have a couple of comments about any such cutbacks.

If you read the Editor's Corner column in this newsletter two or three years ago, you had to put up with my numerous diatribes to the NC to improve their basic membership services. People would send in membership checks and never receive anything back. We once sent the NC a check for $600 or so to cover NC memberships for some 45 of our members who joined the NC through us. Although the check was cashed, those 45 people were only entered into the NC membership records about 8 months later. If I remember correctly, the NC claimed to have about 6,000 members two or three years ago. Yet their membership was only 3500 or so early last year. Why the drop? Several of us feel that the poor record-keeping at the NC was a primary factor. (In fairness, some mitigating factors were present, but an effective national organization has to be able to overcome those problems.)

Those of you who joined us in the past two years may not be aware that the NC had such problems. Why the turnaround? Partly because the NC has finally developed a viable record-keeping system. Even more because Sue Ueberhorst at the NC has done a fantastic job in implementing that system. As our Membership Chair, I may be the only person in this organization who deals with Sue on a regular basis. Over the past year and a half, I have been very impressed with her work on a rather thankless but absolutely vital task. As of now, I am only aware of one mistake in her records for our group. (Sue, I'm affiliated with the RPCVs of Wis. - Madison, NOT the RPCVs of Wis. - Milwaukee!) Three years ago I was complaining loudly about NC membership services. Now I'm very glad to be able to sing the praises of those services, and I apologize for not praising them sooner.

To return to the topic - cutbacks in NC services. After reading the above, I hope you're convinced that one area that CANNOT be cut back by the NC is its membership services. Now that the NC is back up to 7,000 members, it would be criminal to cut back in this area. In particular, if there is any way for the NC to retain the services of Sue Ueberhorst as a paid staff member, they should do so.

A short comment on another area of possible cutbacks - NC publications. Besides membership services, the only other contact most NC members have with the organization is through the quarterly "WorldView" magazine. Once again, I would be afraid that any cutbacks in publishing "WorldView" would be seen negatively by many members. However, cutting the publication rate to three issues a year from the present four, while attempting to keep the same format for the magazine, might not be too deleterious. Two issues a year would probably not give enough contact with members.

2. Our Potluck - Slide Show for new members went off sort of well. The 20 or so people who attended enjoyed really good food, interesting slides and stimulating conversation. The only problem was that we only had one new couple attend. Should we try again in three or four months, maybe in March? Let me know, especially all you new members (Walt Zeltner at 835-3083 (Home) or 262-1321 (Work)).

Walt Zeltner
Membership Chair
Newsletter Subscription Information

All RPCVW, Inc. members receive the newsletter on payment of annual dues shown below. To avoid record-keeping hassles, we would prefer that our members pay through December of the year of joining ($1 per month for each month through December), then pay for a full year membership at that time. Reduced rates are available for those in extreme financial circumstances.

You can also join the National Council of RPCV’s through us by paying a further $20. We strongly encourage all members to join the National Council, which provides us a way to affect national issues.

☐ I want to join RPCVW, Inc. and am enclosing $______.
   ___ Individual - $12 for one year (or $1 per month to next January)
   ___ Joint - $17 (Two people receiving one newsletter)
   ___ Overseas Individual - $20
   ___ Overseas Joint - $25

☐ I am also enclosing $20 for National Council membership ($27.50 for joint membership [two people with the same address] in the NC).

☐ I do not want to join, but would like to receive the newsletter and am enclosing $7 ($15 for overseas) to cover the costs.

☐ I’m Moving! Please change my mailing address on your records.

Name: _____________________________ Country of Service: _____________________________
Address: ____________________________________________________________
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QUESTIONS? PROBLEMS? Call Walt Zellner at 608/835-3083 most evenings and weekends.
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