Impressions of the 1991 National Conference of RPCV's

by Ken Coffeen

Arriving in Washington, D.C., I imagined I would be attending the grandest and most impressive conference ever. While I experienced many great moments, harsh realities intruded on my overall enjoyment.

For me, a volunteer in the early sixties, it was a thrill to finally see Sargent Shriver, the first director of the Peace Corps. His speech inspired us to look to the future. He wondered aloud what the Peace Corps would look like at its fiftieth anniversary. He said the people in the audience had the power to shape the future of the Peace Corps and to thereby change the world. He hoped the Corps would grow in size to 12,000 or 18,000 volunteers. He envisioned a Corps serving in similar roles both internationally and also within our nation’s borders. Personally, I would like to see domestic service as an option for an extended term of service to assist disadvantaged areas in this country.

The opportunity to hear and see Dr. Mohammed Unis, the founder of the amazingly successful village banking system in Bangladesh was my second thrill. He argued that the poor cannot be truly free. Therefore he asked that we consider freedom from poverty to be an element of the concept of personal freedom. He also pointed out that natural disasters are not entirely natural. With the world’s poor living in a condition of constant financial crisis, natural calamities are intensified. Reserves maintained throughout the world could have minimized the suffering and prevented thousands of deaths which recently occurred in his country.

The friends of Ecuador arranged and sponsored several events which were most meaningful to me. The Ecuadorean embassy staff treated us as honored guests with the polite, formal style that is characteristic of the culture. An Ecuadorean diplomat commented that he viewed the long term continuation of people to people contact through the Peace Corps as vital to mutual support of the friendship between Ecuador and the U.S.A. He didn’t see internal programs of national service replacing it because of the continuing need for international understanding fostered by the Peace Corps. Seven of my own training group from 1964 were there. Boy, were they old! (It was good to see them alive.)

Volunteer day was a grand idea carried off successfully though apparently on a "wing and a prayer" in typical Peace Corps fashion.

Having the conference in a circus tent was the thing I liked least. It was noisy, hot, crowded and seemed unnecessary in a city with many meeting facilities. The exhibit and vending area suffered from being in tents as well. A simple, spacious traffic flow was lacking. Our calendar promotion suffered from the access limitation. Finally, much time was lost in just getting from one event to another. Such griping brings back memories of the Peace Corps doesn’t it? I sure am glad that I didn’t miss this event even with it’s occasional flaws.
It is time to submit nominations for the new slate of officers. Verbal and written nominations will be accepted for the positions of President, Vice-president, Secretary, and Treasurer until the adjournment of the September meeting. If you can't attend the meeting call Nancy Westbrook at 241-5332 to throw your hat in the ring or nominate a friend.

The 1992 RPCV Calendar is now available and Don Sauer, 244-3732 (h), is the new person in charge of distribution. See his article elsewhere in this newsletter for new distribution policies and procedures.

The deadline for the next newsletter is September 19. Since the ballot goes on the cover of the October newsletter and we need to allow for it to be returned before the October meeting, time will be short. Material submitted after the deadline probably will not appear in the October newsletter. Send submissions to PO Box 335, or call me at 249-6094 (h) or 266-9565 (w).

I read Drew Stoll's article, "Imaginary Trip to Punta Sal", while a Life-styles of the Rich and Famous show naming the top 10 vacation resorts in the world was playing on the tube. I'd take the trip to Punta Sal over anything Lifestyles had to offer. But how do I get my kids to sit through a three hour dugout canoe ride and then take a three hour hike? Maybe in a few years when their legs are closer to adult length.

World Roots needs you! The newsletter could really use a regular column. Since the departure of Loose Lips this publication lacks soul. Attempts to lure Ursula from Isthmus were unsuccessful—the Cap. Times was able to offer money whereas self-fulfillment is the only reward we offer. So if you have an itch to pen a few paragraphs per month, please get in touch.
Wrestling With the Peace Corps

by P.F. Kluge

Evanston, III.

There are two kinds of college seniors, I've noticed. Some have their lives planned before graduation. Eyes ahead, forward march. You hope they get what they want -- only not too easily. I have a weakness for the other ones, who emerge from four years at a liberal arts college wondering what next. Those are the ones who ask about the Peace Corps.

Their question gives me more trouble than they know. When I think of my Peace Corps years -- Micronesia, in the late 1960's -- I think of a time and place that are gone from me now and a younger self, gone too. My loyalty, curiosity, nostalgia run to islands named Saipan and Palau, not to the U.S. agency that sent me there.

When the invitation to celebrate the Peace Corps' 30th anniversary in Washington arrived, I hesitated. The program, which begins on Thursday, is crowded with speeches, workshops, job fairs, receptions, dinners and dances. There are 125,000 former Peace Corps volunteers; 7,000 or so are expected in Washington.

Reading on, I noticed that the Peace Corps hadn't lost its knack for devising ceremonies that could turn out to be poignant or, maybe, embarrassing. There's to be a commemorative parade, volunteers marching behind the flag of the country they served in and a "living world map" a kind of tableau vivant. There's also Volunteer Day, which will be spent cleaning up rivers, planting trees, painting and repairing the houses of the poor. No Peace Corps occasion is complete, I guess, unless we have spent time working for nothing. It comes back to me now, what I used to resent: the whiff of strenuous virtue.

I have never quite made my peace with the Peace Corps. It has to do with the matter of using, and getting used, and it came in three stages.

First, we had to wonder whether we weren't being used by our Government. This was especially true in Micronesia, which the U.S. had captured in World War II and had administered since then. The U.S. needed to win hearts and minds. The Peace Corps program was one of the most publicized -- "The Peace Corps is going to Paradise," recruiting posters proclaimed -- and the largest: 900 volun-
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**Dates to Note**

### Special Events

**MA** Muskies Game II - Monday, Sept. 2, 6 p.m.  
Warner Park, meet in Section D  
7 free tickets, call Dave Wakeley for yours!  
255-1339 (h), 258-7446 (w)

**PL** Potluck Meeting - Friday, September 6  
Potluck meal 6 p.m., Meeting 7 p.m.  
Hosted by John Clark, 2322 West Lawn;  
Near Edgewood School, 238-9909.

### Regular Fare

**M** General Meeting - 7 p.m.  
Union South, 227 N. Randall  
Elections, Monday, October 7.  
Nominations? call Nancy Westbrook 241-5332

**G** 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), 266-9565 (w)  
P.O. Box 335, Madison, 53701

**T** Sunday Brunch - Every Sunday 10 a.m. to noon  
Lakefront Cafeteria, Memorial Union  
On the terrace, weather permitting.  
Let's revive this RPCV Madison tradition!
1992 CALENDAR

READ THIS***READ THIS***READ THIS***READ THIS***READ THIS***READ THIS***READ THIS

In an effort to coordinate the distribution of the 1992 International Calendars in an efficient way I want to share the following procedures.

1. Five individuals, Jim Good, Henry Nehls-Lowe, Julie Olsen, Rose Ann Scott and Buck Trawicky, will each receive 25 calendars in appreciation for the major contributions all have made in creating and distributing the calendar.

2. Members who wish to sell these calendars to friends and coworkers may do so at the discretion of the Coordinator (me). I prefer to have you sell a small batch, give me the money, get another batch and then sell those. This is important so that I can maintain inventory control, keep track of the money and direct our product toward larger orders if they materialize.

3. Credit will be extended to members for Calendar purchases at the discretion of the Coordinator (me). For example, Buck's credit limit is 5 calendars. Others may be more or less.

4. The preseason price of $4.00 for members will exist through the September 1991 meeting. At adjournment the member price moves to $5.00. The price to those other than members of RPCVs of WI/Madison is $6.50.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Don Sauer
Distribution Coordinator

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** CALENDAR SUMMARY **
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Other RPCV organizations have our permission to use any material of interest in this newsletter.
Imaginary Trip to Punta Sal

by Drew Stoll          Tela, Atlántida, Honduras

Parque Nacional Punta Sal is a proposed national park on the north coast of Honduras. It is the most diverse natural ecosystem in Honduras.

To familiarize yourself with Punta Sal, I will bring you on a mental tour of the area. The tour starts in the port city of Tela. From Tela we’ll travel east through Garifuna villages located on the Caribbean coast.

The Garifuna people are descendants of African slaves that migrated to Honduras from the Caribbean Islands. Their culture focuses on fish and they have retained many of their African traditions, including their own language. You can buy some of Honduras most delicious seafood in these villages. The Garifuna’s warm smiles hearty laughter and friendly dispositions make their villages a joy to visit.

Next, we’ll travel down a sand road that winds through coconut plantations bordered by the Caribbean on one side and a brackish lagoon on the other. From here we’ll travel down a strip of land to the next Garifuna village called Miami.

From Miami we’ll take a three-hour dug-out canoe ride through mangrove-lined lagoons. In the lagoons we’ll see many birds, monkeys and maybe catch some fish. We can also venture across a narrow branch of the lagoon to go for a three-hour walk down the beach to Punta Sal peninsula. While hiking, we’ll see fishermen using cast nets, pelicans, crabs and iguanas. If we get thirsty, we’ll cut open a coconut and drink its milk.

When we reach the peninsula, we’ll snorkle in the coral reef that surrounds Punta Sal and see coral formations and beautiful tropical fish. After somesunbathing, we’ll hike on a path that meanders through the tropical rain forest. In the forest, we’ll see colorful birds, exotic tree species, monkeys and, if we’re lucky, a jaguar. Farther down the peninsula our path will change into one of coral stones. We’ll finish our tour by watching a sunset from the end of the peninsula. This adventure will bring us through one of the most ecologically diverse areas of the world.

The Tela chapter of the Honduran Ecological Association (AHE) is the leading group working to make Punta Sal into a national park. The chapter is working with the Congress of Honduras to pass a law forming the park. The chapter also has a new office in downtown Tela. This office is being used to promote the formation of the park, environmental education and to provide tourists with information about visiting protected areas of Honduras.

We invite you to visit the office. If you know a group that would like to prepare display about an environmental issue or a protected area, we would be happy to display it. The office also has an environmental education library available to anyone with an interest. We hope you visit the office to get more information about Punta Sal and other protected areas of Honduras. Please spread the word.
Donation Request – $100

July 19

RPCV's of Wisconsin-Madison:

Dear Gordon,

I am the Peace Corps Volunteer serving in Tela, Honduras. I called you about having the Returned Peace Corps Volunteers of Wisconsin help me buy a slide projector for my project. I was able to find a used slide projector just before I left for Honduras for $100. Would your organization still be able to reimburse me for the cost of the projector? Unfortunately, I did not get a receipt, because I bought it through a newspaper ad. I have enclosed some information about the project I am working on. Thank you very much for your time, consideration, and energy.

Sincerely,

Drew Stoll

Gordon Malaise

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ADVISORY PANEL CONFIRMED ➤ Five new members of a 15-member presidential advisory council on Peace Corps programs and policies have been confirmed by the U.S. Senate. They are Craig R. Stapleton, president of Marsh & McLennan Real Estate Advisors of New York and Stapleton Associates, a real estate firm in Greenwich, Conn.; Tom G. Kessinger, president of Haverford College in Pennsylvania who served as a Peace Corps volunteer in India in the early 1960s; John J. McCarthy, a member of the administration of California Gov. George Deukmejian who now is associated with McCarthy & Daly, an international trade and consulting firm, and who also served as a PCV in India from 1968 to 1970; Niaru Sudarkasa, president of Lincoln University in Pennsylvania who is an expert on African development; and Myron A. Wick III, a former Peace Corps volunteer in Colombia, who is an associate in the investment banking firm of McGettigan, Wick & Co. of San Francisco and chairman of the Breakthrough Foundation, an organization which works with at-risk youths. Stapleton and Sudarkasa were named to one-year terms while Wick, Kessinger and McCarthy were appointed to two-year positions.

MONGOLIA PROGRAM STARTS ➤ After a two-day train journey from China, two dozen Peace Corps volunteers arrived late last month in Mongolia to establish a new service program there. The volunteers will live in Ulan Bator, capital of the remote Central Asian country, where most will provide English instruction. Most of the group is under 30 except for Mary and David Bernheisel, 49 and 54, of Accokeek, Md., who left jobs at the Library of Congress and a boating business to help the Mongolian Health Ministry set up a computer system.
VALUED LIVES, SIMPLE JUSTICE

This is what Citizen Advocacy is all about. You don't have to
look very far to find a person whose life is not valued. People
with developmental disabilities are a large yet silent minority
of people who are isolated, rejected and ignored by society.

Artis, who is a young African-American man, needs a "big
brother". Artis is currently in jail, but he will soon be out,
and he will need someone to check in with and talk things over.
Artis loves basketball and to dance, especially rap!

Pao is a Hmong man in his 20's. He loves to fish. Pao does not
speak English, so he needs a man who speaks Hmong to help him out
when concerns arise.

Jenifer is a young woman with beautiful eyes in her late 20's
living at Central Wisconsin Center. Jenifer needs an advocate-
guardian. Her family does not have much contact with her, and
she needs someone to get to know her and keep an eye on things in
her life.

Irene is a woman in her 70's who needs a person who cares about
what happens to her. She has had some bad experiences in her
life, but she is very affectionate and loves music and to dance.

Alex and Dwayne live in Deerfield. Alex needs a "big brother", a
good role model. Dwayne, Alex's dad, needs some practical help
dealing with mail, applying for jobs, getting into a literacy
program.

What Citizen Advocacy offers is the opportunity to be a part of
simple justice. People caring about other people in their
communities, people getting involved in the lives of people with
developmental disabilities. People forming lasting, volunteer
relationships where friendship and hard-nosed advocacy create
fuller, more valued lives and a better community for all of us.

There are a lot of ways to get involved in Citizen Advocacy.
Becoming an long-term advocate is only one of them. Short-term,
need-based advocacy is always needed. Citizen Advocacy depends
on community contacts to do its "business", both people who know
of people who are in need of advocacy, and people who know of
potential advocates. Citizen Advocacy also has an advisory
committee with a wide variety of people, and is looking for a few
more.

Feel free to call 255-4355 with any questions, or stop by 1501
Williamson Street. We look forward to talking to any RPCV
members about a potential future with Citizen Advocacy.

CITIZEN ADVOCACY
Newsletter Subscription Information

All RPCVW, Inc. members receive the newsletter on payment of annual dues shown below. To avoid record-keeping hassle, 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: __________________________________________
                        __________________________________________
Present Job: __________________________________________  Telephone: __________________________
            __________________________________________
PC Job: __________________________________________

Please make checks payable to RPCV’s of Wisconsin, Inc. and send to:

RPCV’s of Wisconsin, Inc. - Madison Chapter
P.O. Box 1012
Madison, WI 53701

marked Attention Membership!

QUESTIONS? PROBLEMS? Call Walt Zeltner at 608/835-3083 most evenings and weekends.
Or try 608/262-2470 weekdays and ask for Walt.

Returned Peace Corps Volunteers of Wisconsin
Madison Chapter
Dean Jefferson, Editor
P.O. Box 1012
Madison, WI 53701

Rose Ann Scott
2714 Oakridge Exp. Date
Madison, WI 53704 1/92