BUFFALO RPCV

NEWS OF THE RETURNED PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEERS OF BUFFALO, NEW YORK

Bringing the Peace Corps to Western New York

Vol. XIII: No. 4 April 2019

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Do you have an announcement or item of interest to RPCVs? All area RPCV’s/Peace Corps supporters/interested persons are invited to submit event announcements, news items or other items which may be of interest to the Western New York RPCV community. You may request for the information to be placed in the newsletter or as a separate email. Items submitted may be subject to editing and/or editorial discretion. Submit to: buffalorpcv@yahoo.com

Check out our webpage!  www.buffalorpcv.org

Join Us on Facebook!

http://www.facebook.com/groups/45930918164/

RPCV / BUFFALO BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Upcoming Events and Save the dates:

- April: TBD
- May: annual send off and welcome home event is May 15th at Chestnut Ridge Park from 6:00-8:00 p.m. [https://www.peacecorps.gov/events/19_vrs_wbso_buffalony_20190515/](https://www.peacecorps.gov/events/19_vrs_wbso_buffalony_20190515/)
- June: tentative date: with Teacher of the year Mandy Manning June 9-11th. Annual meeting dinner following Mandy presentation. Let There Be Light Fundraiser June 18th at Silo City
- July: Bison Baseball game Thursday July 18th: Italian night
- August: United Way Day of Caring August 21st

Highlights
Former RPCV Buffalo board member, Tim Hartigan (Thailand, TEFL, 1989-1991) is running for one of the three open At-Large seats on the Buffalo Board of Education. RPCVS supported his fundraiser held at the Buffalo Irish Center.

Let There be Light International appeared in the March issue of *BuffaloSpree*. [http://digital.buffalospree.com/buffalospree/march_2019/MobilePagedArticle.action?articleId=1468030#articleId1468030](http://digital.buffalospree.com/buffalospree/march_2019/MobilePagedArticle.action?articleId=1468030#articleId1468030)

Sarah Baird, founder and executive director of Let There Be Light International, donates solar lights to very vulnerable families in off-grid parts of East Africa, focusing on Uganda and Malawi.

by Matthew Biddle
 RPCV of Buffalo has been asked to share many things:

From board member Jeri Titus:

*If you haven’t heard about the Health Justice for Peace Corps Volunteers (https://www.healthjusticeforpeacecorpsvolunteers.org), this group is focused on helping PCVs who are/were sick or injured during service get support and benefits. Many make it through service without any significant medical issues, but some do not. Some PCVs experience poor medical care in country, some RPCVs struggle to get care and support after separation, and a few do not make it home: https://files.peacecorps.gov/multimedia/pdf/policies/PCIG_Investigative_Review_of_a_Volunteer_Death_in_Peace_Corps_China.pdf

This group has been instrumental in getting some changes but far from being finished:

“The Sam Farr and Nick Castle Peace Corps Reform Act of 2018 will improve access to medical care for volunteers, strengthen accountability and oversight, and enhance procedures to reduce the risk of crime in the countries in which volunteers serve.”

But now the leader, Nancy Tongue of HJPCV is stepping down without a ready replacement to continue the work so they are asking for help to keep it going or else the group will be dissolved.

She has done an amazing job at the cost of her own health. I have been there with her since the beginning of Health Justice, and I have immense respect for the work she has done. Undoubtedly, you know that that work is not done. The Peace Corps, while meaning well, is a huge organization that often loses sight of the needs of PCVs in its enthusiasm to constantly expand while still keeping costs down. Volunteers die because of these oversights. Volunteers suffer long-lasting health problems because of these oversights. Even when the Peace Corps handles health care well in country, that support evaporates for many when they return home.

Other organizations, like The Fourth Goal (https://thefourthgoal.com), are stepping up to help, as Health Justice has done. The question now is:

**Should Health Justice for Peace Corps Volunteers continue the fight?**

If Health Justice is going to continue, then it will need people to run it. There are a lot of tasks: answering emails from PCVs, RPCVs, and their family members who are asking for help; talking to the NPCA, the Peace Corps, members of Congress, and other advocacy groups about the way forward; and more. This was never a job for one person, and, if you feel that Health Justice should continue, then it shouldn’t be a job for one person going forward either.

If you want to be a part of Health Justice going forward, contact me at healthjusticetransfer@gmail.com by April 20, 2019.

I will gather the names of everyone interested in helping, put them in contact with each other, and as a group, they can decide how to go forward. I will make sure that they have all the passwords they need to send out emails, and all the contact information that they need to keep the group running. I will answer questions about what we have done in the past. I will not run the group nor will I tell anyone else how to run the group. If no one steps forward by April 20, 2019, or if those who step forward feel that they aren’t going to be able to do the job with the people they have, then the email and Facebook page will be shut down. The website will be changed to indicate that the group is no longer active, and we will let others carry on the fight.

-- Felicia

Also from Jeri:

* Here’s a great article about my friend Tony, who is a member of the Western Montana RPCV group https://missoulian.com/news/local/refugee-front-line-arlee-man-spends-week-at-hospitality-center/article_0fca1121-0ff1-5ea2-9626-484e0fcd87c1.html
*From Ellen Dussord, RPCV who retired last year from UB:

THE Alison J. Des Forges MEMORIAL COMMITTEE INVITES YOU TO
AN INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON
Climate Change and Africa: Impacts and Responses

Human beings originated in Africa about 100,000 years ago and have developed societies during the last 100 years that have contributed to climate change, which makes the globe inhabitable for our species and many others. This symposium will examine manifestations of global warming in Africa, its differential impacts on African populations, and the successes and failures of African and international institutions as they attempt to mitigate the climate change process, develop sustainable economies, and ensure social resilience.

Schedule of Events

9:00 REGISTRATION AND WELCOMING REMARKS
9:30-11:45 HUMAN IMPACTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE

Insecurity and Climate Change in Dryland West Africa: Disentangling the Dynamics in the Countryside
Leif V. Brottem, Cornell College

Niger Delta, Climate Change, and Trauma of the Future
Cajetan Ibekwe, University of Alabama

Xenophobia under a Changing Sky: Emigration from the Sahel to Europe
Jesse Ruben, American University

107 CAPEN HALL NORTH CAMPUS UNIVERSITY AT BUFFALO

12:00-1:00 LUNCH

1:00-2:30 POVERTY AND POLITICS: ENERGY AND FOOD RESOURCES

Regreening: Recent Progress in Africa and Opportunities to Improve Crop Production and Restore Resilience to Climate Change
Robert Winterbottom, EverGreening Global Alliance

Cultural Politics of Energy and Unity in Post-Genocide Rwanda: Methane Extraction on Lake Kivu
Kristin Dougherty, University of Rochester

2:30-4:00 HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS

Effects of Kenya’s Mega Infrastructure Projects on Environment in the Coastal City of Lamu and the Plight of Environmental Activists
Catherine Narweya, Human Rights Watch

Climate Change and Security: Displacement, Scarcity and Increasing Competition for Natural Resources
Marcelo Ortegano, Human Rights Watch

4:00-4:30 WRAP-UP GENERAL DISCUSSION

Sponsors: Alison Des Forges Memorial Committee; University at Buffalo; Bailey Center for Law and Social Policy; UB Department of Civil, Structural, and Environmental Engineering; UB Department of Comparative Literature; UB Department of History; UB Gender Institute; UB Humanities Institute; UB Jesuit Asian Chair in American Culture; UB RITBIW Institute; UB Department of Political Science; UB Sustainability; UB Office of the Vice Provost for International Education.

This symposium honors the life and work of human rights activist Alison Des Forges (1942-2009).
For more information, please email Roger Des Forges at rogers@buffalo.edu.
Ellen Dussord at dussord@buffalo.edu or Shuan Ilim at irami@buffalo.edu.
It is membership renewal time and if you haven’t officially joined our local group, please consider joining.

RETURNED PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEERS OF
BUFFALO, NEW YORK

2019 MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

RPCV/Buffalo membership is open to all returned Peace Corps Volunteers, active and friends of Peace Corps. Please complete the following and return with your membership dues (15.00 annually) payable to RPCV/Buffalo:

RPCV/Buffalo
c/o Jeri Titus
P.O.Box 650
Buffalo, NY 14205

Please check

Renewing Member _____ New Member _____

Are you a member of the National Peace Corps Association? Yes _____ No _____

I. Personal Information:

Name: (first) ____________________________ (last) _________________________________
Address: __________________________________________________________ (apt) _______
City: _______________________________________________________________________
State: __________________________________________ Zip: _________________________

Telephone: ___________________________ Cell: ______________________________
E-Mail: ______________________________

II. Peace Corps Service Information (if applicable):

Country(ies) of Service: _______________________________________________________________________
Dates of Service: ___________________________________________________________________________
Primary Service Role: ______________________________________________________________________