

CONNECTICUT RPCV

Newsletter – December 2015



Peace Corps

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UPCOMING EVENTS

Sunday, December 6, 2015

[ANNUAL CTRPCV HOLIDAY PARTY](#)

Saturday, January 9, 2016

[DARIEN BOOK AID](#)

April 2016 (Date and time TBD)

[CONNECTICUT FOOD BANK](#)

June 2016 (Date and time TBD)

[HOLE IN THE WALL GANG CAMP](#)

CTRPCV Officers

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Treasurer: Mike Hilton

Mjhilt@comcast.net

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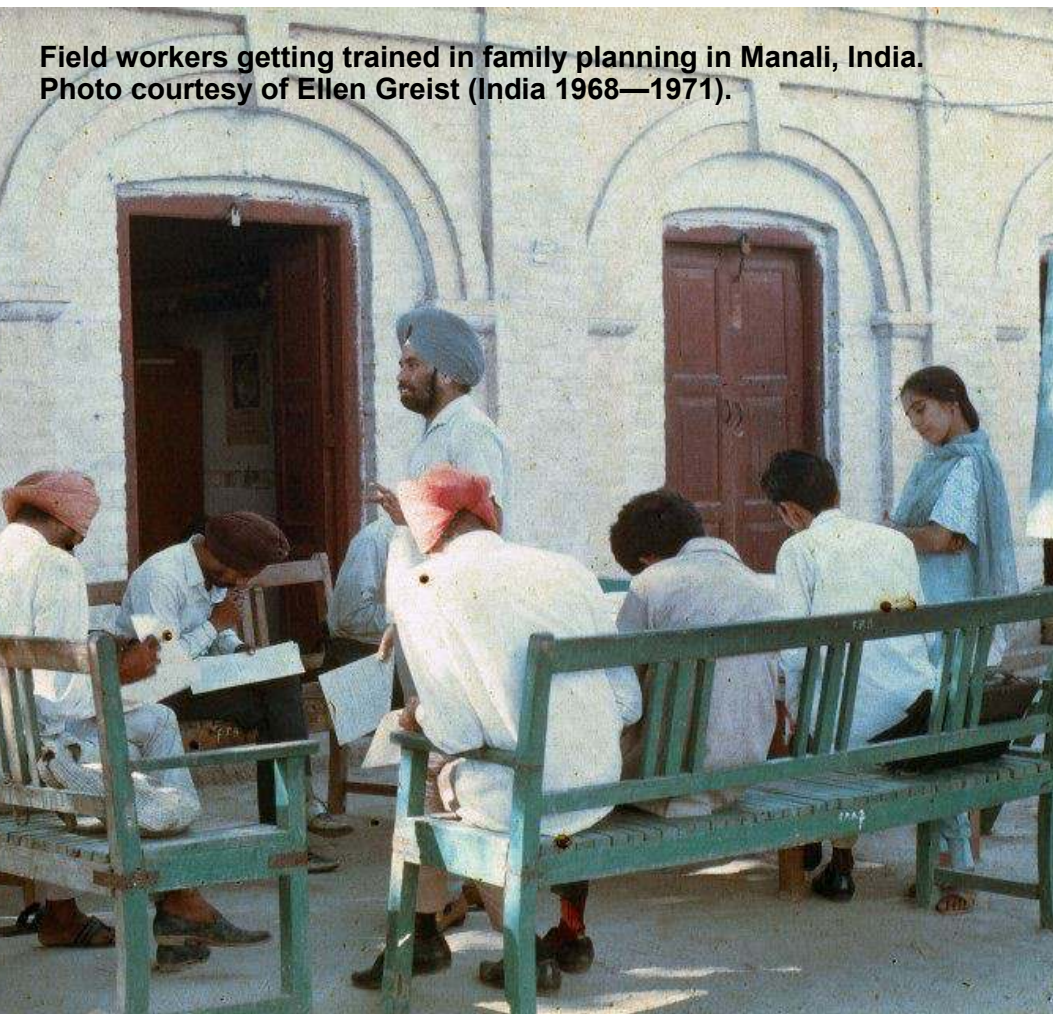
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Field workers getting trained in family planning in Manali, India.
Photo courtesy of Ellen Greist (India 1968—1971).



ANNUAL CTRPCV HOLIDAY PARTY

Come and share a fun filled evening!

Joan & Jeff Leonard have been kind enough to open their home to our CTRPCV group for a HOLIDAY PARTY on **December 6 from noon to 3 PM.**

Our hosts will prepare a main meat dish and CTRPCV will supply the soda and paper/plastic products. Attendees are asked to bring your favorite holiday appetizer, side dish or dessert to share. If you'd like, bring some wine or beer, but eggnog and soda will be served.

We would appreciate an RSVP so we can prepare ahead of time. Please let Maureen know what food item you plan to bring. **Call Maureen at 203-775-9222 or email MaureenShanley@hotmail.com so that we will know how many people are planning on attending** and so we don't end up with 12 desserts and no appetizers, wine or beer.

Please bring something special for the raffle... an item that would make a nice gift for a friend or family member. In the past we have raised \$550 at this event for our CTRPCV Community Service Fund. Since we are asking for a higher quality raffle item for this Holiday Event, the price of instant raffle tickets will be higher than normal: \$10 for 1 ticket & \$25 for 3 tickets. As always, the proceeds will go to our Community Service Fund.

In addition we are asking people to please bring a non-perishable food item to donate. Food items collected will be given to Al May (Costa Rica, 1970 - 1972), who will donate them to a local food bank on behalf of the CTRPCV.

If you have any questions about the holiday party on the day of the event, please call Joan Leonard at 203-457-7007 or email Joan at jaleonard@snet.net.

*** If you attend any of our events, please make sure to take photos to share on our website! You can send photos with a short description to president@ctrpcv.org***

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DARIEN BOOK AID

If you can make it, please RSVP to Maureen Shanley at 203-775-9222 or MaureenShanley@hotmail.com.

Darien Book Aid is a non-profit, all volunteer organization dedicated to fostering peace and friendship through the distribution of free books. Approximately 60% of DBA's shipments fulfill requests from current PC Volunteers. DBA needs volunteers to pack boxes, select books to ship, sort books and much more. As Returned Peace Corps Volunteers, you know how much of an impact educational materials can have on a community.

You can also bring books! Frequently requested books include:

- * Preschool to teen levels, fiction and non-fiction
- * Classics - and simplified classics
- * Dictionaries in English, Spanish, French and picture dictionaries
- * Encyclopedias/other information on CD-ROM (PC format)
- * English readers and grammar books
- * Crafts & how-to books
- * Health, "Where There is No Doctor" type books
- * Science
- * Agriculture, vegetable gardening, beekeeping, animal husbandry
- * Ecology and environment
- * Books in Spanish or French for native speakers in all subjects
- * Paperback editions of recent novels (mysteries, fiction, etc.)
- * National Geographic - no more than 5 years old
- * Textbooks (not older than 10 years) with up-to-date content are accepted

For more information about Darien Book Aid, you can visit their website at <http://dba.darien.org/>. If you are interested in volunteering individually, you can call 203-655-2777 or email darienbookaid@yahoo.com.

DATE: Saturday, January 9, 2016

ADDRESS: 1926 Post Road, Darien, CT

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CONNECTICUT FOOD BANK

MEMBER OF
**FEEDING
AMERICA**

The mission of the [Connecticut Food Bank](#) (CFB) is to alleviate hunger. They strive to do this by supplying food products and resources to their member agencies and promoting public awareness about the problem of hunger. The Connecticut Food Bank is a private, nonprofit organization that works with corporations, community organizations, and individuals to solicit, transport, warehouse and distribute donated food. By soliciting the food industry for products that will not sell or items that are wholesome but might have some cosmetic flaw, CFB reduces waste and feeds people.

CFB annually distributes more than 15 million pounds of food to nearly 700 community food assistance programs in six of the state's eight counties annually. Donations come from the food industry, through community member and corporate contributions, and via government subsidies.

At the CFB donations are organized and sorted by products before they are distributed at the warehouses. Member programs send representatives to the warehouses to shop for food that is then distributed to those who need it most at local food pantries, soup kitchens and emergency shelters.

The CTRPCV helps with sorting food products every April. The date and time for 2016 is still TBD.



CTRPCVs have participated in volunteer days at the [Hole In The Wall Gang Camp](#) in Ashford, CT. Since 1988 the camp has served as a non-profit residential summer camp and year round center for children coping with cancer and other life-threatening diseases. All of the camp's services are free of charge. This unique camp, created by Paul Newman and his friends, provides a sense of normalcy for children who may have missed out on aspects of their childhood. We changed bed linens (about 150 beds) for the campers who arrived the next day. It was truly a rewarding project and well worth our time and efforts.

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Volunteer opportunity in Bridgeport

The International Institute of Connecticut (IICONN) is a non-profit, non-sectarian agency dedicated to helping foreign-born persons achieve self-sufficiency. Their services include

refugee resettlement, English and citizenship classes, counseling, translation/interpretation services and legal assistance. IICONN advocates for fair and equitable treatment of immigrants, refugees and others, and works to increase public awareness of the contributions of foreign-born persons to American culture and values.



IICONN provides immigration services to over 3,000 individuals in CT each year

IICONN is looking for volunteers to become mentors to our refugee client one day a week for one hour. When a refugee arrives in Bridgeport, they often come with nothing and know no one. A mentor would be a liaison between the client and the Bridgeport community. Mentors can do a variety of activities with their mentee. They may bring refugees grocery shopping, they may cook a meal together or they may just do something fun to build a friendship.

For more information, please visit the IICONN website at www.iiconn.org/.



These children were born in refugee camps. IICONN resettled their families in CT, and each year serves over 100 new refugees

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National
Peace Corps
Association



Chances are, if you served as a Peace Corps Volunteer, you came home in good health and—possibly with assistance from the NPCA—quickly moved on to a job or a graduate school program. While the vast majority of us lead healthy and productive lives following our service, some experience health issues that can challenge us in life's transitions after our Volunteer service. Other Peace Corps community members may reach out to the NPCA or one of our affiliate groups seeking assistance for a personal life-altering situation, in hopes that fellow alums might be able to offer support.

That's why the NPCA has designed **the new Peace Corps Community Fund to include a Benevolent Fund** that will help our community members in such circumstances. [Your support for the Community Fund will help Returned Peace Corps Volunteers \(RPCVs\) in need.](#) It's as simple as that.

The Benevolent Fund allows the NPCA to create a safe community and network of support for RPCVs and former staff facing special circumstances. This network can be lifesaving. Last year, we reached out to the community on behalf of Malaysia RPCV Norm Sapoznik, who was in need of a transplant kidney. Another Malaysia RPCV, Ann McAvoy, responded to the appeal and dipped into her personal resources to fly across the country to [donate her kidney](#). In cases such as this, the Benevolent Fund will support the selfless efforts of individual RPCVs and strengthen the bonds among our alumni. [You can help make this possible with a generous gift to the Peace Corps Community Fund.](#)

In recent years, the formation of the NPCA affiliate group "Health Justice for Peace Corps Volunteers" has brought to light the personal, medical, and financial challenges some individuals in our community are facing. A San Francisco RPCV who struggles with an illness from his Peace Corps service is in need of some basic home-healthcare assistance but cannot afford the support based on limited income and high medical bills; a Philadelphia area RPCV fears he and his family will lose their home as he faces a heart transplant stemming from a disease he's believed to have incurred during his service; in Boston, The *Boston Globe* reports on a local RPCV, injured in a motorcycle accident in Africa, who is homeless. As organizations such as the Wounded Warriors Project (for military veterans) and the American Foreign Service Protective Association (for foreign service officers) seek to assist members of their respective communities, the time has come for the Peace Corps community to harness the energy and empathy of *our* community to provide similar support for RPCVs and former staff in need.

I invite you now to lend a helping hand for RPCVs who exhaust their resources and have nowhere else to go. Please support the Benevolent Fund with [a tax-deductible gift of \\$50, \\$100 or more](#) to help the NPCA continue building networks of support and advocating on behalf of RPCVs in need.

I hope you'll take a moment right now to respond. Our Peace Corps community needs your support.

In service,
Glenn Blumhorst
President & CEO
RPCV Guatemala 1988-91

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Hello,

I am reaching out to you regarding Passport Specialist job opportunities for RPCV's with non-competitive eligibility. The State Department is hiring and seeks RPCV's as candidates for positions in the Bureau of Consular Affairs, Passport Directorate at passport agencies across the country. In Boston alone we brought on four RPCV's using non-competitive eligibility within the past year!

The Passport Specialist position is a full time federal position within the Department of State's Bureau of Consular Affairs, Passport Services Directorate. Positions are located at the Boston Passport Agency and at other passport agencies around the country. Excellent benefits, including a tuition reimbursement program, are available.

For more information and to apply, interested individuals with non-competitive eligibility can email me woodmt@state.gov or PPTjobs@state.gov their cover letter confirming eligibility for NCE and interest in the position, a resume fully supporting their qualifications for the position, and a college transcript (with supporting documentation) confirming they meet one of the job's educational requirements.

More information is in the announcement which is attached or available through this link: <http://www.peacecorps.gov/resources/returned/careercen/careerlink/jobs/10851/>

Thanks again for your help with spreading the word about this RPCV career opportunity - I appreciate it very much.

Michael Wood
RPCV Liberia
Former Peace Corps staff, Boston Regional Office

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Peace Corps

The Legacy Project: Prominent World Leaders Who Were Influenced by PCVs



Guess the Purpose of these Unique Objects from Around the World



147 Ways to Help Pay for Graduate School



On #GivingTuesday, Help the Peace Corps Let Girls Learn



What it's like Living and Working as a Native American in Mongolia

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MISCELLANEOUS

Have an event or community service idea?

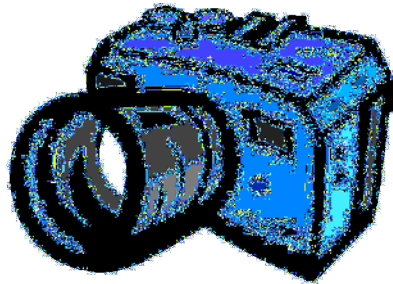
Let's make it happen!!

Share your ideas with us and let's make your ideas come to life. We can help spread the word through our social media platforms and the monthly newsletter. Events can be as simple as "Let's meet up at [restaurant name] on [date]". Email us at president@ctrpcv.org.



CALL FOR PHOTOS!!!

We are redesigning and updating our website and we need your help! If you have any photos from your service or from any of our past CTRPCV events, and wouldn't mind sharing them with us, please send them to our email address, president@ctrpcv.org. For each photo, please attach a description of the photo's contents and yourself. Please include your name, country and years of service along with who/what is shown in the photo and a caption for the photo.



Peace Corps Response (PCR) provides qualified professionals the opportunity to serve in rewarding, short-term assignments, in various programs around the world. When you serve as a PCR Volunteer, you bring your skills and experience to projects in places where you are needed most. PCR is recruiting talented Volunteers to serve in a wide range of positions and countries including Georgia, the Philippines and Vanuatu. Opportunities are available in all six program areas and selected applicants can be in the field as early as January.

If you are interested in learning more about Peace Corps Response, please visit <http://www.peacecorps.gov/volunteer/response/> or send an email to pcresponse@peacecorps.gov to schedule an informational interview with your local Peace Corps recruiter.

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MISCELLANEOUS



HELP WANTED at CTRPCV!

We currently have openings for the following positions:

SECRETARY: Takes notes at board meetings three to four times a year.

NEWSLETTER EDITOR: Designs, updates, and sends monthly newsletter to our members.

FUNDRAISER: Devises ways to replenish our CTRPCV Community Service Fund. All ideas are welcome.

SOCIAL EVENTS COORDINATOR: Hosts/plans restaurant outings, pot-luck dinners, etc.

We are updating our website and need your help! We will be debuting a new section of our website called 'CTRPCV Profiles' in which we will briefly share our members' stories. If you would like to take part, please fill out the questionnaire below and email your responses, along with photos from your service that you would like to have published on our website, to president@ctrpcv.org.

CTRPCV Profiles

Who are you (please include name, country of service, years of service and anything else you want to add)?

Why did you choose to serve as a Peace Corps Volunteer?

What did you do as a Peace Corps Volunteer?

Can you share your favorite memory from service?

How has serving as a Peace Corps Volunteer affected your life?

What advice do you have for prospective Peace Corps Volunteers?

Do you have anything else you would like to share with our readers related to you or your PC service (stories, poems, quotes, etc.)?

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CTRPCV needs more PAID MEMBERS \$\$\$

You are one of over 360 returned Peace Corps volunteers and/or friends of the Peace Corps who are receiving this e-newsletter. The Connecticut RPCV has about 45 dues paying members, but needs more.

If you are interested in participating in the above-mentioned CTRPCV events, please also consider joining our group. [Click here to join and/or pay your annual membership fees!](#) You can also update your contact information, if necessary, on the same page.

Please also consider joining the Connecticut Returned Peace Corps Volunteers Facebook group at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/37593849149/>.

WHY someone should join CTRPCV?

- A chance to break bread with people who are not only like you, but also LIKE you.
- Connect with an RPCV who might just be your neighbor!
- Ability to receive CTRPCV Directory so you can request help with your favorite community service project.
- If you are newly returned RPCV... we will LISTEN to your story because we too have been there! RPCVs are FAMILY. We never tire of hearing your stories, frustrations, what you miss and what you are finding strange about your return.
- Help an RPCV find a new job through the Mentor program. Mentor new RPCVs and help them navigate their transition.
- Help support PCVs and/or CTRPCVs through the CTRPCV Community Service Grant Program.
- Keep in the PCV loop, know about short-term stints if you are interested.
- Find opportunities to continue to serve locally or overseas.
- Find someone who: has kids the same age as yours; others who have married host country nationals.
- Let others know about YOUR art, social, sport or local community service project.
- Spread the GOOD WORD about the Peace Corps.
- We want to add a page to our website that would offer FREE ADVERTISING for CTRPCV members who own a business. Please let us know if you have a business that you would like to have posed on our website.

FYI: Your dues pay our expenses, e.g. room rental for meetings, supplies for potluck meetings, group NPCA membership dues, state filing fees, communication costs (postage, paper, internet costs), etc.

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