

CONNECTICUT RPCV

Newsletter – March 2016



Peace Corps

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Jonathan playing word games with kids.

Photo courtesy of Jonathan Rosario (Paraguay 2011-2013).



UPCOMING EVENTS

Tuesday, March 1, 2016
[PC 55th ANNIVERSARY
EVENT AT UCONN](#)

Wednesday, March 2, 2016
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Monday, March 21, 2016
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Saturday, July 2, 2016
[HOLE IN THE WALL
GANG CAMP](#)

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Treasurer: Mike Hilton
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Join us at UCONN to learn about the last 55 years of Peace Corps, and the programs available in 2016 and beyond.

Peace Corps Recruiter Kathy Fidler will hold a 55th Anniversary presentation that will take place at UConn on March 1st at 6 pm. She would love for CTRPCVs to attend and bring photos from service to show to prospective applicants.

For more information, please contact Kathy at (401) 252-1161. If you are interested in attending, please email Kathy at kfidler@peacecorps.gov for details.



CELEBRATE PEACE CORPS WEEK!

WHEN: Tuesday, March 1 from 6–7:30 pm
WHERE: New Haven Free Public Library
133 Elm St, New Haven, CT 06510

You're inspired to help an under-served community overseas -- invite your family and friends to support your Peace Corps journey. In honor of the 55th anniversary of the founding of the Peace Corps, we welcome you and your loved ones to a special presentation at the New Haven Free Public Library designed to address the questions and concerns of family and friends. The event will feature Returned Peace Corps Volunteers (RPCVs) accompanied by their family and friends who will discuss topics such as safety & security, health, staying in contact, and how Volunteers evolve as a result of their service experience.

If you know of anybody interested in applying for Peace Corps service, or that simply wants to hear of our experiences, please forward this event to them.

The panel is currently full, but please feel free to come and enjoy the event! Once the event is over, we will be walking over to Anna Liffey's Irish Pub and Restaurant to continue our conversations. Anna Liffey's is just two blocks away.

Questions? Please contact Shannon McBride at smcbride@peacecorps.gov.

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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soul de cuba cafe®

cuban cuisine and more

WHO: Members of the CT Returned Peace Corps Volunteers

WHAT: (1) Board nominations/elections (Secretary, Member-at-Large, Social Media Director, Newsletter Editor, Membership Coordinator. (2) Fun social with great food!!

WHERE: Soul de Cuba at 283 Crown Street, New Haven, CT 06511

WHEN: Monday, March 21, 2016 at 7 pm

WHY: Members nominate and elect the Board of Directors at an Annual or Special Meeting. After official business is done, we will spend time together!!

So far, nominations include Jillian Corley for Secretary and Al May for Member-at-Large. We welcome any other nominations that members recommend. Once members are elected, we will enjoy a delicious evening Cuban dinner.

We will have our instant raffle for our CTRPCV Community Service Fund. Please bring something, perhaps from your world travels, a jar of homemade jam, a great book that you read, a plant, etc. Someone once brought a beautiful cake that she made and decorated. Use your imagination... it makes the instant raffle more fun!

We can seat about 20 people, so YOU MUST RSVP to MaureenShanley@hotmail.com. Questions or comments? Please contact either Maureen Shanley or Terese Maineri at President@ctrpcv.org.



WHAT: Packing boxes for the poor in Nicaragua

WHEN: **Saturday, March 26th**

TIME: 10 am - 1 pm

WHERE: William Evans Painting Co., 394 Main St., Bridgeport, CT 06604

ORGANIZOR: Maureen Shanley

ATTIRE: Please dress in layers since there is very little heat in the warehouse.

CT Quest for Peace is a faith-based non-profit organization that provides humanitarian aid to the poor of Nicaragua through a variety of educational, healthcare, arts and microfinance initiatives. CTRPCV will help with the Humanitarian Cargo Aid program. Cargo shipments provide quality goods to the poor, creates funding for community programs, and builds relationships between you and the people of Nicaragua.

We will meet at Bill's warehouse (394 Main St., Bridgeport, CT 06604) from 10 am–1 pm. Just follow the signs to the Port Jefferson Ferry. At the entrance (black iron gates), take a right and we are the second building on the left. Bill will have all the packing supplies. Everyone is welcome to come and lend a helping hand.

Please contact Maureen Shanley at 203-775-9222 or maureenshanley@hotmail.com to let her know if you are able to help with this project. When she is at the warehouse you can call her cell: 203-788-0163.

For information about CT Quest for Peace go to www.nicaragua-quest-for-peace.org/. If you want to bring donations, CT Quest is always looking for SUMMER clothing, school supplies for children, books in Spanish, wheel chairs, kitchen utensils, and bed linens. A list can be found on our website.

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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If you can help with the packing of books, please contact Maureen so that she will know who is planning on attending this event.

(MaureenShanley@hotmail.com or 203-775-9222)

ADDRESS: 1926 Post Road, Darien, CT 06820

DATE: Saturday, April 16, 2016

TIME: 9 am–12 pm

One year when we were packing books at Danbury Book Aid, a PCV on his way to the airport to return to his PC post in Africa stopped by DBA to thank them for the books they had sent to him and to tell them the difference that these books were making in his village. His visit made us (CTRPCVs) realize that our few hours of packing boxes of books for PCVs IS REALLY IMPORTANT. Perhaps some of you read books that were in the PC library in your country that DBA had sent. Please give a few hours to return the favor and support a PCV who is now serving.

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:

- * Children's books - for all ages - preschool to teen levels, fiction and non-fiction
- * Classics - and simplified classics
- * Dictionaries in English, Spanish, French and picture dictionaries
- * Encyclopedias on CD-ROM. 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
- * 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.



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a seriousfun camp

On Saturday, July 2, 2016 we will be volunteering our time 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 life-threatening diseases. All of the camp's services are free of charge. This unique camp, created by Paul Newman, provides a sense of normalcy for children who may have missed out on aspects of their childhood.

We will help to change bed linens (about 150 beds) for the campers who will arrive the following day. It will truly be a rewarding project and well worth our time and efforts.

If you would like to attend, or for more information, please contact Lois Fucci at lafj@att.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



The following is an email we received from the creators of a new documentary about the Peace Corps called "A Towering Task". The CTRPCV is not in any way affiliated with this documentary either directly or financially. We have, however, agreed to help promote it as we believe it will be an important documentary that will shed light on the realities of the Peace Corps as an organization. The email has been edited for length.

Dear RPCVs,

We're at a tipping point in our history. There are a growing number of people in our communities who do not know about the Peace Corps, are surprised to learn that the agency still exists, or do not know the impact volunteers have both in communities around the world and here at home.

The ideals of the agency - of strengthening the global community - often get buried under the political demagoguery of an election year and daily commitments to work and family.

Telling the story of the Peace Corps and fulfilling our 3rd Goal promise can understandably fade into the background.

You can help us tell that story and raise awareness on a national scale.

We are asking for your support for a new documentary about the Peace Corps called "A Towering Task." (For campaign video, click [HERE](#))

The documentary will be the first of its kind to take an in-depth look at the successes and challenges the agency has faced in its 55 years of existence. Our goal is \$1 million by the end of March. With the help of the [National Peace Corps Association](#) and RPCVs like you, we can do it. And half of what we raise will go directly to the NPCA, who work for you.

"[A Towering Task](#)" features an all-star cast, including President Jimmy Carter, Senator Harris Wofford, climate activist Mike Tidwell, Representatives Sam Farr and John Garamendi, Journalist Bill Moyers, and Peace Corps Deputy Director Jody Olsen.

How You Can Help

1. Donate to the crowdfunding campaign. All donations are tax-deductible.
2. Share the crowd-funding link with your friends and family. For social media, please use the hashtag [#IgnitePeaceCorps](#).
3. Show your support on social media through Thunderclap - Click [HERE](#).
4. Ask your organization or company for their support. Ask them to donate, match donations, or host a fundraiser (e.g. Jeffersonian Dinner, 5K run/walk, or inter-department competition).

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Please support a local campaign: Connecticut Returned Peace Corps Volunteer member, Philippa Wood (Guatemala, 2009), is looking to raise funds for [Outside Perspectives](#), a nonprofit expedition program that aims to partner with youth development organizations to provide transformative outdoor experiences. Their immersive wilderness expeditions for under-served youth from New York City and larger cities in Connecticut will help create focus for teens who are often looking for direction. [Find out more and donate HERE!](#)



Below is an email we received recently from CTRPCV supporter Dan Rossano:

I wanted to share some exciting news! I've officially started up a bike touring company called BikeTrex! We're based out of northern Connecticut and plan to lead bike trips all around the New England area to start, then eventually expand to other states and ride international trips!

Why choose us?!

Because we're awesome! I've been riding with groups for over 3 years and have lots of experience. We know where to find the best views, the best restaurants and pubs, and the many hidden treasures of each area we tour. And our leaders are qualified, medically trained, and professional. Get out of the city get out of the house and come enjoy being outside!

Please help me by sharing this information with your friends and family. Sign up for our mailing list for all the latest news and updates. Our first tour starts in May 2016 from Monroe, CT!

Please visit our website: <http://www.ridebiketrex.com/>

Thanks!
Dan

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CTRPCV Members in the News!



CTRPCV's very own Al May (Costa Rica, 1970–1972) was recently written about in the New Haven Register. He recently retired from his position as Development Director of Christian Community Action (CCA) after 14 years of service. CCA is an ecumenical social service organization that expresses faithful witness by providing help, housing and hope to those who are poor in New Haven.

Thomas Beirne III, Vice President of Halsey Associates, a CCA corporate sponsor, says Al is “invaluable, and I think it’s really sad that he’s retiring, but it’s well deserved... His professionalism and demeanor are really just quite irreplaceable.” Thomas DeVitto, Chief Marketing Officer of Blum Shapiro, another of CCA’s corporate sponsors, added “[Al] has a good heart.” We couldn’t agree more. Congratulations Al, on your well-deserved retirement.

The full New Haven Register article can be found [here](#).



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 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/.

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National Day of Action in Support of Peace Corps

In just over two weeks, more than 100 advocates will be holding nearly 200 meetings with key decision makers in Congress.

March 3rd marks our 12th annual [National Day of Action for a Bigger, Better, Peace Corps](#).

Now is the time to capitalize on the momentum of last year's historic funding victory and persuade Congress to increase the budget for next year. More Volunteers, more countries, and better care for currently serving and Returned Volunteers are at stake.

Check out, post and share our [Day of Action video](#)! Then... Support our Advocates!

We have launched a two week crowdfunding blitz to make sure our Capitol Hill advocates have the materials, supplies and training to be as effective as possible.

Standing up for the Peace Corps comes with a cost. Please support our crowdfunding efforts with a gift of \$10, \$25, \$50, \$100 or more.

[Support our Advocates on Crowdrise](#)



Health, Environmental Sustainability, Peace and Security, Economic Development, and Equality and Justice.

We invite members of the Peace Corps community to drive the content of the conference and share their expertise on this national platform.

Session proposals are now being accepted! Deadline is March 18. [Click here](#) for details.

[Learn more](#)

Call for Session Proposals – Apply by March 18th

This year's [Peace Corps Connect conference](#) -- to be held in Washington, D.C. from September 23-25 -- will, among other things, feature a series of workshops and breakout sessions that expand upon five topics: *Global*

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Sign Up By March 10 for Cuba Trip This Spring

Follow the example of President Obama this spring and travel to Cuba!

With NPCA's Next Step Travel you'll explore UNESCO-listed cities of Havana and Trinidad and be immersed in traditional food, dance and music. There's less than one month to register for NPCA's second trip to Cuba in April, so sign up by March 10 to travel at this historic time in U.S.-Cuba relations.

Through 2016 NPCA also offers experiences to learn and contribute from a different perspective -- by working side-by-side with community members in Thailand, Guatemala or the Dominican Republic.

[Learn more about Next Step Travel programs here](#)

Are you #PeaceCorpsProud?

#PeaceCorpsProud is a NPCA initiative to tell the Peace Corps story, from agency invite to life as a RPCV, using content generated by the Peace Corps community, every day, all over the world.

Visit PeaceCorpsProud.org to scroll, filter, search, share, and comment on the Peace Corps experience in real time. To contribute content, include the #PeaceCorpsProud hashtag in posts on Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, YouTube or Vimeo. If you tag it, we'll find it!

[Learn more](#)

one world, many stories. scroll. filter. search. enjoy. updated daily.

a hashtag campaign from the National Peace Corps Association (Peace Corps Alumni)



RPCVs in the News



She's the Oldest Serving Peace Corps Volunteer

Alice Carter has traveled a long road to get to where she is today. Morocco, that is. Carter, 87, is the oldest current volunteer in the Peace Corps. She says she's been interested in the world for a long time.

[Read more](#)



Dating Site That Hooks Up Volunteers Leads to a Valentine's Day Wedding

Triple dawwww! Two Returned Peace Corps Volunteers meet through a dating site created by an RPCV couple that targets people who value volunteering -- and they get married on Valentine's Day!

[Read more](#)

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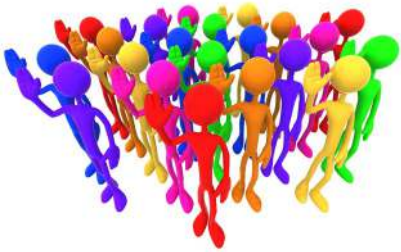
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MISCELLANEOUS

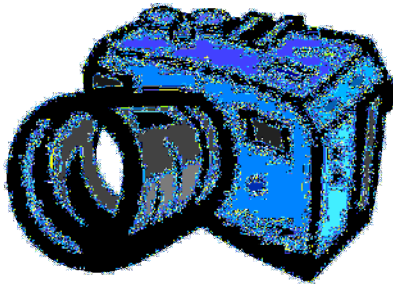
Have an event or community service idea?
Let's make it happen!!

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

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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[COMMUNITY SERVICE DAY](#)

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[DARIEN BOOK AID PLAN, INC.](#)

Saturday, July 2, 2016
[HOLE IN THE WALL
GANG CAMP](#)

CTRPCV Officers

President: Terese Maineri
TMaineri@yahoo.com

Vice-President: Bryan Garcia
Bryan.Garcia@ctgreenbank.com

Treasurer: Mike Hilton
Mjhilt@comcast.net

Social Media: Jonathan Rosario
Rosario014@yahoo.com

Newsletter: Jonathan Rosario (interim)
Rosario014@yahoo.com

Member-at-Large: Maureen Shanley
Maureenshanley@hotmail.com

CONTACT US

E-MAIL: President@ctrpcv.org
POST MAIL: CTRPCV, P.O. Box
1803, Hartford, CT 06144

[Official website](#)
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MISCELLANEOUS

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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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.

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 also searching for the following positions ASAP as Jonathan Rosario has accepted an employment position in Washington DC and will be moving soon:

Newsletter Editor:

- Design the newsletter as you wish! You can keep the current design or create your own. The current design was created using Microsoft Publisher, but you are free to use any program you would like.
- Incorporate new information into the newsletter including new events, advocacy updates, CTRPCV announcements, etc. (Most info. remains relevant for several months, so you would not have to create a completely new newsletter each month. You can simply update the previous month's newsletter)
- Eliminate outdated information.
- Correspond with CTRPCV officers to ensure all information is relevant and up-to-date.
- Email the newsletter at the end of each month to president@ctrpcv.org. Our email coordinator/website updater, Jonathan Rosario, will then make sure to send it to all newsletter recipients on the 1st of each month and upload to our website.

Membership Coordinator:

- Maintain an accurate record of contact information for both current and former members through the use of a Microsoft Excel file.
- Update membership records as new information arises.
- Coordinate membership information with CTRPCV officers when needed.

Social Media Director:

- Maintain up-to-date information across our social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn).
- Create Facebook events as they are planned by the CTRPCV officers.
- Maintain email communication with CTRPCV officers.
- Engage with social media community members by responding to their questions.
- Increase membership.

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CTRPCV needs more PAID MEMBERS \$\$\$

If you are interested in participating in the above-mentioned CTRPCV events, please also consider joining our group. If you would like to join and/or pay your annual CTRPCV membership fees, please go to the NPCA's website at www.peacecorpsconnect.org. Login/Register at the top right of the page. Once logged in, you can choose to pay your CTRPCV membership dues only or make a donation to NPCA as well; the choice is yours.

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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