

# BUFFALO RPCV

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

Bringing the Peace Corps  
to Western New York



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**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](mailto:buffalorpcv@yahoo.com).

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### Save the Date:

- **Saturday, August 18<sup>th</sup>** – 10:15 AM- Noon. “THIRD SATURDAY” EVENT – On the Waterfront
- **Saturday, September 22<sup>nd</sup>** – 9am-3pm - FALL VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY- Habitat For Humanity
- **Weekend of October 16<sup>th</sup>**- ANNUAL FALL KICKOFF- details coming soon!

### Fundraiser:

Fifty 2013 Peace Corps Calendars have been ordered from the RPCVs of Madison, Wisconsin. Please consider buying ~5 to share with family and friends as Holiday gifts, etc. It is our only fundraiser for the year, so let's make it a success! Once the calendars have arrived they will be available from Mac at our events or email him [macmccabe@roadrunner.com](mailto:macmccabe@roadrunner.com) for more details.

### Upcoming Events:

#### Third Saturday Event -



*We wanted to do something down on the waterfront and after doing some research, many phone calls, and all efforts made to keep costs down...we are going to meet on the third Saturday. Almost all of the boat tours for Friday were unavailable.*

Please join us on Saturday August 18<sup>th</sup> at 10:15 AM for the Queen City Ferry Buffalo River History tour! Cost is \$14 for adults and \$10 for children. The tour leaves at 10:30 AM from the Central Wharf. Tickets are sold on the boat and it is first come, first serve. The boat returns at 12 noon. We hope to see you there!

More info: <http://www.queencityferry.com/tours.asp>

Directions: Queen City Ferry docks right in front of the Spirit of Buffalo in the Central Wharf <http://queencityferry.com/map.asp>

#### Fall Volunteer Opportunity –

*Habitat for Humanity works in partnership with people in need to build and renovate decent, affordable housing. The houses then are sold to pre-qualified families at no profit and with no interest charged while Habitat holds the mortgages.*

*Come be part of the RPCV Habitat Team for a day!*

**What:** Habitat for Humanity- 8-12 Volunteers needed. First RSVP, first serve.

**When:** Saturday, September 22<sup>nd</sup>, 9 AM - 3 PM. Please arrive at 8:45 AM for instructions and job assignments.

**Where:** Buffalo, the exact site address will be emailed to you in the days before.

**How:** Please contact Audrey Seidel 716-632-6435 or [amseidel@verizon.net](mailto:amseidel@verizon.net). Be sure to leave name, phone number, and how many will be attending with your reservation.

**\*\*BRING:** extra/your own basic tools if you have any, work gloves, bagged lunch and plenty of drinks- stay hydrated!



## Taste of Diversity Was a Success!

By: Elizabeth Oddy

Thanks to all who came out to help with the Taste of Diversity Festival! There was a wide variety of foods to taste, entertainment, and fantastic people everywhere! If you missed it, watch for it next year. This is not one to be missed!



## A Great Turnout for The Annual Meeting!

By: Elizabeth Oddy



About 20 RPCVs of Buffalo came out to eat, meet, and be merry at one of Buffalo's best! Chef's Restaurant was a gracious host to our group and we look forward to patronizing them again! Please see the attached Annual Report if you were unable to make it for a quick summary of RPCV Buffalo 2011-2012.

## Third Friday Event- Buffalo Bisons Game was a Blast!

By: Elizabeth Oddy



15 people had a fun summer evening supporting the Buffalo Bisons Baseball Game. We raised \$140 from the event that we will put towards our annual Community Thanksgiving Event this fall.

## Something of Interest...

Submitted by: Andy Smith

"Life, Above All" is a movie that tells the story through the eyes of a 12 year old girl who fights the AIDS stigma in her small South African community. It is a moving story and beautifully done that many RPCVs can relate to. Directed by Oliver Schmitz and is based on the novel "Chanda's Secrets" by Allan Stratton.



## RPCV Spotlight: Pam Bos Kefi

### RPCV Tunisia '87-'89

(Photo below: Pam meeting with Haiti Deaf Leaders, May 2012)



Ever since I met my husband in Peace Corps Tunisia in 1989, we have wanted to live overseas again. We started a family and kept thinking about how great it would be to give the kids an experience that would broaden their minds, make them global thinkers. In addition, my husband had been raised in Tunisia and we wanted to have an experience in a country that neither of us could call home.

Finally, after 23 years of marriage and 3 kids later, we hit the jackpot and moved to ...Haiti. My husband had been transferred to the Embassy there and we would be part of the diplomatic community- piece of cake? If we could do Peace Corps, we should be able to do this right? Don't

they take good care of you? All the comforts of home, not like the rough experience of Peace Corps.

We have been down here almost four months and we have experienced our transition like a roller coaster. Some days are a breeze and others make absolutely no sense. I have to say that my life experiences working and living in diverse cultures has very well prepared me to live in Haiti as a whole. My experiences with the kid's school, merchants, hired help and Haitian peers have been interesting and pleasant. I love to analyze cultural and linguistic differences and snafus. It's like doing a cross word puzzle, a fun past time. I do have the chance to hire help at home- so NOT Peace Corps- and I love every minute of learning from our housekeeper about Haitian food, language and principles. I enjoy seeing her learn about us as well.

Security is an issue and Haiti is so unsafe that the Peace Corps was pulled out long ago, with no plans to bring them back any time soon. The Embassy has enough of a challenge to provide all of us with 24 hour security and specialized drivers to work and school. There are many regions off limits to us and a curfew is in place.

High risk security concerns paired with a thick blanket of bureaucracy and my new role as a trailing spouse have been the hardest issues to contend with. The new organizational culture we work and live within is so different from my comfortable old shoe: good old Buffalo non- profit world where I understood the abstracts and had some ability to impact the world around me. I am learning how to 'Just Be,' how not to define a good day by how much of a difference I have made in the world, or at least my workplace. I try to focus on training our puppy, being present for my kids, learning a few new words and of course, how to shower when the water delivery is behind. Getting in touch with people when I can't find access for my cell phone, figuring out how to get school supplies when they simply don't carry them here, learning to drive on the edge of open sewers and get around Volkswagen sized potholes are my new daily successes.

The other day, a friend from Peace Corps days responded to one of my Facebook posts with "I betcha didn't plan on joining the Peace Corps all over again?"

*Pam Bos Kefi was a Peace Corps volunteer in Tunisia in the late 80's where she met and married her Arabic teacher. They both have lived in the US for the past 23 years and have raised three kids. Pam was previously an Executive Director of Deaf Adult Services and International Institute, both in Buffalo New York. Pam currently resides just outside of Port au Prince, Haiti with her two sons ages 15 and 13 and her husband, Hichem, who works for Homeland Security. Their daughter visits from college.*

\*Yes, that's Pam in the Bisons photo! We were lucky to catch her while she was home visiting for a couple of weeks. We miss Pam very much and wish her and her family all the best!