Heavy newsletter incoming. Big changes are happening and we are requesting that the RPCV of Buffalo community step up to the plate. The pandemic placed a large dent in nearly all aspect of our daily lives, however, as famous Bills Kicker Scott Norwood put it, the lord doesn’t give crosses to those who can’t bear it. As a professed lapsed Catholic myself (sorry Mom) that has somehow taken on a Calvinist work ethic, I hope that Andy Smith’s letter to our RPCV community ignites a flame that will act as a catalyst for members to join committees, attend events, and increase the outreach to non-member RPCVs of our never-say-die group.

Additionally, the month of May is chock full of activities in the WNY area - including our Outdoor May Social Event at Hofbrauhaus Buffalo on May 27th. Come for the beers, stay for the volksmusik. Further on in this newsletter, Peace Corps address its Sexual Assault problem and the 2021 Lillian Carter Award is open for nominations.

If there’s another incentive to get you out to Hofbrauhaus to learn more about our committees and how your experience and expertise can help us, there will be Buffalo RPCV Mugs! Yes, you read that right. Coffee mugs that can be used as wine mugs, hot cocoa mugs, soup mugs, pencil and pen holding mugs, and any other type of mug that you can imagine.

Any happenings, updates, social events, recipes or items of interest can be sent to buffalorpcv@yahoo.com to be included in the newsletter. Thank you for reading and Happy Mother's Day to all the wonderful mothers out there.

- Brett Claydon
Hey, Buffalo RPCVS: Memberships are due.

Another newsletter, another reminder.

$25. Online (fastest and easiest!) or via the membership form found at the end of this newsletter. Payments can be made via check, Venmo, or PayPal.

**Venmo:** @Buffalo-RPCV

**PayPal:** buffalorpcv@yahoo.com

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**Upcoming Events & Save the Dates**

**Every Monday in May:** IIB’s Buffalo Without Borders TO GO

**May 3rd - June 19th:** Mona’s House FreeThem Walk

**May 4th:** Be in Buffalo's Virtual Career Fair

**May 6th:** Storytelling & Social Change: An Interview with Maria Agui Carter, Award-Winning Filmmaker/Writer/Activist

**May 7th:** RPCV Brainstorming Meeting (Details on this Page)

**May 13th:** Family Promise’s "Let Hope Shine Through" merch campaign

**May 18th:** Albright-Knox’s ARTiFacts - A Virtual Trivia Game Night

**May 19th:** FeedMore WNY’s Sweet Expectations

**May 27th:** Buffalo RPCV Outdoor Social Event (Details Below)

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**RPCV Brainstorming Meeting to Co-Create Event For All Communities Details**

Friday, May 7th from 6 - 7 PM EDT

Zoom Info: https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86053156055?pwd=M0FqRU81Sm1CSDBFNE11WVd6NVhJZz09
May Social Event Details:

Learn more about the current Buffalo RPCV Board and Committees over a few beers, some pretzels, and the occasional Volksmusik performance at Hofbrauhaus Buffalo!

Yes, it is an Outdoor Event and we’ll have a few tables reserved so come on out!
Kind Words from Buffalo Peace House!

Beach Day Plans

BPH residents love beach days and summer picnics or field trips. Logistics for these outings can be challenging, so we’re planning now for this summer’s trip to the beach. Thanks to Lillis McLean and the great returned Peace Corps Volunteers of WNY, Peace House residents will again experience Lake Erie cottage life. (What could be better!?)

A day at the beach is a dream come true for asylum seekers. The peace and relaxation and time away from day-to-day life in a group home gives renewed hope to those whose lives are often filled with stress. Residents also greatly appreciate even half-day trips to museums and local attractions. Our staff is glad to work with volunteers who can make summer fun happen while having a good time doing for others.

Let us know your ideas and available times (716-941-3804). Summer is always too short, so get in touch soon!

Surviving & Thriving – How we weathered the pandemic at our St. Francis Site... with lots of help from our friends...

- A huge shout out to the Erie County Department of Health for on-site testing and needed services.
- Thank you to Frontier Schools for helping all our children stay connected and know they are cared about.
- Thank you to Dottie Laettner for our new stove and for her on-going generosity.
- Thanks to St. Francis Parishioners for February donations – this means a lot.
- Thank you to McAllister Plumbing and Heating for sending their masked repairmen, always on time.
- Thank you to the Buffalo Lafayette Optimist Club who sent Christmas presents for our residents.
- Thank you to Trinity Church for your magnanimity.
- Thank you to Dennis Callahan for the new washing machine and for being “on call”.
- Thank you to Laura Kowal for the Lysol and hand sanitizer – precious commodities these days.
- Thank you to Aldi for curb side service provided with a smile.
- Thank you to Jim and friends for the new and much appreciated dryer.
- Thank you to Paula Hunt for paper products from the Columba Bridgid community.
- Thanks also to the Returned Peace Corps Volunteers of WNY for their on-going support – including cleaning supplies and paper products to keep our house ship-shape.
- Thanks to our many supporters who thought of others during the pandemic and sent a check and to so many more who are in our grateful hearts for sustaining us during COVID!

Discover Virtual Volunteer Opportunities in Western New York Here!
Dear RPCVs of Buffalo,

I am writing to inform you that there will be major board positions that will need to be filled come July 1st. Jeri Titus who has served on the board since January 2014 and took over the treasury position in July of 2014 retired from the Passport Agency on March 31st and will be returning to Chicago this summer. I have also decided to step down from the board. I have served on this board since 2007 as Programming Chair followed by Membership Chair and have served as the Chairperson since 2009.

It has been a pleasure being part of the Returned Peace Corps Volunteers of Buffalo Board. I am so proud of all that we have accomplished in the last decade and a half. Highlights include celebrating the 50th Anniversary of the PC at the Buffalo Yacht Club and at the Frank Lloyd Wright Boat House, sendoff parties, Thanksgiving Dinners, making apple cider, and Peace Corps week events. I have no doubt the board will continue to have success in the future.

However, success takes commitment and RPCV of Buffalo needs more people to become involved as board members or serve on committees.

Other current board members and the year they began to serve:

• Audrey Seidel: 2009
• Ginna Coon: 2011
• Tony Agnello: 2016
• Lisa Ried: 2019
• Brett Claydon: 2020

In November of last year, we posted the following committees:
On May 27th, the board is hosting a social event and we hope that you will join us to meet current members, learn more about the committees, and become involved as of July 1st. Our annual meeting will be on Thursday June 10th at 7:00 PM virtually via Zoom.

I cannot stress this enough, the need for a greater commitment by members to step up as a board member and or committee member is crucial if you want to see this organization to continue to be active in the near future.

Please contact buffalorpcv@yahoo.com if interested in becoming involved.

I will continue to support RPCV of Buffalo but am asking you to become more involved. I look forward to attending monthly events here in Buffalo in person or virtually.

Best regards,

Andy Smith
Chair of RPCV of Buffalo

JOIN OUR AMAZING TEAM!

We're looking for visionaries interested in working with us to make Buffalo and our world a better place.

Send an email to buffalorpcv@yahoo.com!
The USA Today investigative piece published last week shines a light on a deeply disturbing problem: the experiences of a number of women who have been victims of sexual assault while serving as Peace Corps Volunteers. “It takes immense courage to come forward, especially given how the initial reports of these women were handled,” writes Maricarmen Smith-Martinez, Chair of the Board of Directors of National Peace Corps Association. “And let us be unequivocal: There must be zero tolerance when it comes to sexual misconduct within the ranks of Peace Corps staff.”

Peace Corps Acting Director Carol Spahn issued a statement the same day the news story was published, outlining how the agency is addressing these very serious issues. All incidents chronicled in the story have been referred to the Peace Corps Inspector General for investigation. Spahn also made sure that returned Volunteers know they can reach out directly to the Inspector General, as well as to the agency.

“We underscore that call throughout the Peace Corps community,” Smith-Martinez writes. “We must ensure your voices are heard. And on behalf of myself, the board and staff at National Peace Corps Association, we want you to know that you can reach out to us as well. We are here to listen — and to support you.”

The NPCA statement notes that previous legislation, particularly the Sam Far/Nick Castle Volunteer Protection Act, staked out reforms that should have prevented some of these problems. Now, with no Volunteers in the field, is the time to ensure the agency is in full compliance with that law.

Read the full statement from Maricarmen Smith-Martinez on behalf of National Peace Corps Association.
Dear President Biden: Double the Peace Corps!

All eleven living former Peace Corps agency directors have signed on to a letter to President Biden with a ringing message: “Now is the right time for the Peace Corps to build back better than it ever was before.” The letter calls on the Biden administration to commit to raising the number of Peace Corps Volunteers in the field to a sustained level of 15,000 over the next decade, beginning by increasing the agency’s annual budget to $600 million by FY 2025. This funding level would support our five-year goal of 10,000 Volunteers, consistent with bipartisan reauthorization legislation currently advancing in both chambers of Congress.

“That is why we are encouraged by renewed bipartisan leadership in Congress to maintain that bipartisan tradition for the Peace Corps. New legislation, the Peace Corps Reauthorization Act of 2021 (H.R. 1456), which has been introduced by Representatives John Garamendi (D-CA) and Garret Graves (R-LA), will advance the policy goals we seek.

“This bill is visionary. It creates a clear blueprint for the agency’s future, one that we all share, to ramp up volunteer numbers to meet the tremendous challenges faced by our international partners while facilitating the American peoples’ reengagement with the world.”

Read the entire letter to POTUS from the former directors.

NPCA Board of Directors Town Hall | Thursday, May 6 at 8 PM Eastern

Who are your NPCA Board Directors? Why do they serve on the board? What does it mean to serve this way — and help lead the Peace Corps community? In this virtual town hall, current and past board directors share why board service is meaningful for them — and the value it brings to the community. They’ll offer highlights and insights from their experience on the board, and they’ll field audience questions. (They may even encourage you to consider running for a seat on the board.) Nominations for member-elected director positions are due June 9, 2021. Here’s some background on the nomination and election process. Learn more and register for the Town Hall.
Nominations Open for Peace Corps’ Lillian Carter Award for Older Volunteers

From April 26 to May 23, the Peace Corps is accepting nominations for the award to honor returned Peace Corps volunteers who served at age 50 or older.

WASHINGTON – Today, nominations for the Peace Corps’ Lillian Carter Award will open and be accepted until Sunday, May 23, 2021. This biennial award honors outstanding individuals who served in the Peace Corps at age 50 or older.

The Lillian Carter Award was established in 1986 in honor of President Jimmy Carter’s mother, Lillian Carter, who, at age 68, served as a Peace Corps health volunteer in India. Lillian Carter’s commitment to Peace Corps service was an extension of her dedication to humanitarian efforts at home and abroad.

“Nearly 14,000 older Americans have answered the call to service and advanced the Peace Corps’ mission of promoting world peace and friendship. These volunteers bring their rich life experiences to the communities they serve,” said Acting Director Carol Spahn. “The Lillian Carter Award is given to one outstanding senior volunteer who demonstrates that service–both at home and abroad–can be impactful at any age.”

Those who are interested in nominating a returned Peace Corps volunteer for this award can do so here.

Candidates for this award must demonstrate a commitment to civic engagement and service, with a track record of supporting the Peace Corps’ mission. They should also have a history of advancing the Peace Corps’ Third Goal of strengthening Americans’ understanding of the world and its people.

Over 240,000 American citizens—13,898 of whom served over the age of 50—have dedicated themselves to promoting world peace and friendship since the Peace Corps was established 60 years ago in 1961.

For the 60th Anniversary of Peace Corps, show your colors

The NPCA Store is your stop for Peace Corps gear: classic Peace Corps T-shirts, ball caps, mugs, and more — including high-quality Peace Corps face masks with adjustable ties, nose bridge, and filter pocket. And your purchases help bolster programs to support work by and for the Peace Corps community.
Vintage Peace Corps Poster of the Month

Make America a Better Place.

Leave the Country.

Of all the ways America can grow, one way is by learning from others. There are things you can learn in the Peace Corps you can’t learn anywhere else.

You could start an irrigation program. And find that crop yield and fruit trees look a little different. With there isn’t enough wheat to go around in Nepal.

You could be the volunteer who helps bring a Javanese village to life, for the first time in three hundred years. And you could wonder if your country has enough, in Watts, in Detroit, in Appalachia, in its Indian reservations.

Last year, for the first time, Peace Corps alumni counted a hundred thousand volunteers who are now out at work everywhere.

Peace Corps Volunteers Campaign
MAGAZINE AD NO. PC-1089-68—7” x 10” (110 Screen)
Also Available: Ad No. 1090-68—9½” x 12¼”
Volunteer Agency: Young & Rubicam, Inc. 
Volunteer Coordinator: H. George Wolff, Merck & Company, Inc.
Do you have an announcement or item of interest to RPCVs?

All area RPCVs, Peace Corps supporters or 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

RPCV Buffalo Board of Directors

Andy Smith (Costa Rica), Chairperson
Jeri Titus (Morocco), Treasurer
Tony Agnello (Afghanistan), Secretary
Brett Claydon (Namibia), Newsletter Editor & Membership Webmaster
Lisa Ried (Lesotho), Social Media Coordinator:
Ginna Coon (Ethiopia), Programming
Audrey Seidel (Colombia), Programming

Follow Us!

Visit Our Website!
RETURNED PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEERS OF
BUFFALO, NEW YORK
2021 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 (25.00 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: ______________________________

I. Peace Corps Service Information (if applicable):

Country(ies) of Service:__________________________________________________________
Dates of Service:______________________________________________________________
Primary Service Role:___________________________________________________________