Thank you for your patience in receiving this newsletter. It will be rewarded with gratitude, robust updates, and links to all different types of engaging media - both local and internationally focused. Peace Corps has a new Acting Director, Carol Spahn; the Buffalo RPCV Community outdid themselves on MLK Day, and we finally have A Towering Task movie premiere and Q&A session date set. It is on Feb. 28th at 3PM and the Q&A session will be focused on how refugee and immigrant impact Buffalo RPCVs and intersect with ideals of the greater Peace Corps community. You’ll be able to find all of this inside this month’s newsletter. I’m about 85% recovered from the Bills loss to the Chiefs but let’s face it, as Peace Corps Volunteers, we’ve all dealt with failure and it only enhances the resiliency of being a Buffalo sports fan.

Any happenings, updates, or items of interest can be sent to buffalorpcv@yahoo.com to be included in the newsletter. Thank you for reading and enjoy.

- Brett Claydon

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**Highlights**

**Attention all Buffalo RPCVS - Membership is due!**

Membership is $25 and can be done online or via the membership form found at the end of this newsletter. Payments can be made via check, Venmo, or PayPal. Thank you in advance.

**Venmo:** @Buffalo-RPCV

**PayPal:** buffalorpcv@yahoo.com

[Visit our website](#) to sign up online! Paper applications are available at the end of this newsletter.
A huge **THANK YOU** to all that donated and committed to our National Day of Service for Martin Luther King Day! Below are a few photos from our donations to the Buckets of Love program from the International Institute of Buffalo this past Martin Luther King Day.
A Message from one of our members:

Hi everyone,

My best wishes for a Covid free and successful New Year. I would like you to keep in mind a day each for the people at Peace House at my large cottage at Snyder Beach this summer. I had spoken to Mary Callahan about this possibility if we all have received a vaccine and all else is in place. We did this a year ago last summer and it was very helpful for everyone. However, we need Peace Corps help. The days can be planned on weekends because so many of you are younger and working. Please let me know what you think of this idea. Thanks.

- Lillis McLean

lillismclean@gmail.com

The Oath with Chuck Rosenberg -

The Oath with Chuck Rosenberg Podcast - Listen in on revealing and thoughtful conversations with fascinating men and women who took an oath to support and defend our Constitution and our nation – leaders in law enforcement, the military, the intelligence community, and many more. What inspired these people? What drew them to this work? How did they overcome adversity and failure? And what are the lessons for our country and our democracy as we move forward? These captivating stories exemplify what is best about our nation: integrity, civility, service, humility, and collective responsibility.

Carrie Hessler-Radelet served in – and was Director of – the Peace Corps, whose volunteers tackle the most difficult problems in communities around the globe.

Click here to listen to the podcast with Carrie Hessler-Radelet (RPCV, Western Samoa ’81-’84, 19th Director of the Peace Corps).
Upcoming Events & Save the Dates

February 11th: Peace Corps & Peacebuilding through a Diversity Lens

February 15th: Virtual Movie Club

February 25th - March 5th: Peace Corps Week

February 28th: Buffalo RPCVs - A Towering Task Q&A

Date: Monday, February 15th at 7PM

Come join Buffalo RPCV Members every month to discuss films for the North Park Theatre Virtual Cinema list! Through North Park Theatre’s Virtual Cinema, individuals are able to rent new movies for 3-5 days.

Join here: https://caboces-org.zoom.us/j/91239035740

Meeting ID: 912 3903 5740
Passcode: 517367
Points of Interest

Peace Corps Community for Refugees

As returned Peace Corps volunteers concerned about the refugee crisis, we engage the Peace Corps community in supporting refugees. We believe that RPCVs have the commitment, adaptability and cross-cultural skills to make a significant contribution to this global humanitarian effort.

The Peace Corps Community for Refugees provides updates on refugee policies, offers volunteer opportunities, and provides tools on how you can successfully advocate for refugees in your community! Check them out here.

Check out this virtual field trip to Freedom Wall here in Buffalo, NY; a mural consisting of painted portraits of both prominent local and national black leaders and activists throughout history. As it zooms in on each portrait, there are recordings of their actual voices or voice overs of their message. Awesome art, even more awesome people.
Carol Spahn Named Acting Director of the Peace Corps

January 20, 2021

WASHINGTON – The Peace Corps is pleased to announce Carol Spahn as the agency’s acting director. She has been delegated the authorities and responsibilities of the director and will fill the role until the Biden-Harris administration selects an individual to serve in the position. (An earlier version of this press release stated Spahn was the chief executive officer. President Biden has since designated her acting director.)

“It is an honor to serve the Peace Corps and our country,” said Spahn. “From my time as a volunteer in Romania to my years as a country director in Malawi, I have loved my work for the Peace Corps, the American people, and the people of the countries where I have served. I am grateful the Biden-Harris transition team has accorded me the privilege of serving in this new role.”

Spahn brings more than 25 years of public and private sector experience to the acting director position. Most recently, she served as Peace Corps’ chief of operations in the Africa Region covering Eastern and Southern Africa. Previously, she was the country director of Peace Corps/Malawi for five years.

Spahn served as a Peace Corps volunteer from 1994 to 1996 in Romania, where she worked as a small business advisor. Before returning to the Peace Corps as Country Director, she was the senior vice president of operations at Women for Women International. Prior to that, Spahn was executive director of Accordia Global Health Foundation. She also served as vice president, chief financial officer and treasurer of Small Enterprise Assistance Funds and held positions at leading private sector institutions, including GE Capital and KPMG Peat Marwick.

Spahn holds a bachelor’s degree from the Catholic University of America and a master’s degree in international development from the George Washington University Elliott School of International Affairs.
Peace Corps Commemorative Extension Act signed into law

Here’s some bipartisan good news: The Peace Corps Commemorative Extension Act was signed into law on January 5. It extends the authority of the Peace Corps Commemorative Foundation to establish a commemorative work on Federal lands in the District of Columbia to commemorate the mission of the Peace Corps and the ideals on which the Peace Corps was founded.

The Peace Corps community are grateful for the work by Returned Volunteer Rep. Joseph Kennedy III in introducing and championing the original legislation for the memorial, and for securing passage of the extension in the House in December. And in the Senate, it was Senators Rob Portman and Jeanne Shaheen who led the way, with both houses passing the legislation unanimously. Read the full story here.

Community Achievements - February 2021:
Making History

Janelle Jones (Peru 2009–11), above, has become the first Black woman to serve as chief economist for the Department of Labor. Jalina Porter (Cambodia 2009–11), below, is the new deputy spokesperson for the U.S. State Department — also the first Black woman to serve in that role.

Juan Gonzalez (Guatemala 2001–04) has taken up responsibilities as special assistant to President Biden and National Security Council Senior Director for the Western Hemisphere. Returned Volunteers earn recognition for work toward equity in health and forest stewardship, take on new roles in journalism, and more.
February Forum: A Focus on Diversity, Peacebuilding, and the Work We Do

Peace Corps & Peacebuilding Through a Diversity Lens

Thursday, February 11

Thursday, February 11 at 12 p.m. EST: Join Global Reentry for an important conversation about how Peace Corps and allies in the work of peace-building can and must bolster efforts to include more diverse voices and agents of change. That’s critical for work in the fields of peace, security, and conflict resolution. This forum will focus on new initiatives and ongoing efforts, and will offer practical takeaways on fostering diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging. For starters, Global Reentry know that intentionality matters.


— Change in Dates —

PEACE CORPS CONNECT
for the 60th anniversary of Peace Corps
Washington, DC | September 24 – 25, 2021

NEW UPDATE: With the ongoing concerns about COVID-19 across the United States and around the world, we are taking precautions to make sure that Peace Corps Connect can be held safely. [The conference will be a virtual global event held over two days, on September 24 – 25, 2021. If conditions permit, additional in-person events will be organized at the same time in Washington, D.C. and across the country. More information will be forthcoming in the next weeks.]

Buffalo RPCV Newsletter
If any RPCVs are local Rotary members or can connect with any local Rotarians, the Buffalo RPCV group is looking to partner with Rotary Clubs in the Western New York area to form a committee to help carry out community service projects for both organizations. An example being the Peace House in Hamburg.

Please reach out to a Board Member if you are a Rotary Club member or know of any members of local Rotary clubs that the Buffalo RPCV Group can connect with.

We still have a few Calendars and Note Cards left! Calendars are $10 and Note Cards are $8 for 10. If you would like to place your order, please email jerititus@yahoo.com with your order specifics. Pickup or Shipping is available. Please note that an additional $2.50 is added if you are shipping calendars.

Want to pay via Venmo? Our name is @Buffalo-RPCV. Thanks and we look forward to your orders!
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:
____________________________________________________________________
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

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