

PEACE CORPS

Times

Fall 1999



Director Gearan (third from left) talks with Volunteers in Guatemala.

Message from the Director

Dear Volunteers,

Over the last four years, I have had the privilege of serving as the 14th Director of the Peace Corps. As I have told thousands of Volunteers in nearly 30 countries, it's been the best job in Washington because I have had the chance to see first hand the enormous difference that you make in the lives of so many people. Visiting with you at your sites have been memorable and enormously inspirational experiences.

But just as your service overseas as a Volunteer will come to an end, my own tenure as director has drawn to a close. I have accepted a new and challenging opportunity to become the next president of Hobart and William Smith Colleges in Geneva, N.Y. My family and I look forward to this next step in our lives, but we will always cherish the support and friendship of the Volunteers and staff in the field.

Because of your work, the Peace Corps has a bright future. This year, we anticipate that more Volunteers will be serving than at any time in a generation. Volunteers are serving for the first time in South Africa, Jordan, Mozambique, and Bangladesh. There is bipartisan support in Congress for expanding the Peace Corps to 10,000 Volunteers early in the next century. The Crisis Corps is enabling RPCVs to help communities recover from natural disasters and humanitarian crises.

Perhaps as much as anything, however, the Peace Corps has a strong future because of the spirit of idealism that each of you represents. Your service stands as an antidote to cynicism, and it has never been more important to the promotion of peace.

Again, it has been an honor for me to serve as the director of the Peace Corps. I thank you for your service and wish each of you the very best in all of your future endeavors.

Sincerely,

Mark Gearan

CBS News Spends 'Sunday Morning' with Volunteers in Jordan

When Yasmina Ramian and Erin VanLuven arrived in Amman last year as part of the second group of Volunteers to serve in Jordan, they knew it would be an exciting challenge. But they could hardly have imagined that their family and friends back in the States would wake up one Sunday morning, put down their newspapers, and see them on national television, talking about what it's like to be a woman in the Peace Corps today.

That's exactly what happened on August 22, when CBS News' "Sunday Morning" ran a 12-minute story on the two Volunteers and the instrumental role that Her Majesty Queen Noor of Jordan played in opening the Peace Corps program in her country. The story was reported by Alison Stewart (a former VJ on MTV), who spent three days capturing how women—who now make up 60 percent of the Volunteer corps—are shaping the face and impact of the Peace Corps.



During a tour of the Dana Nature Reserve, PCV Yasmina Ramian shows Her Majesty Queen Noor some of the crafts made by local Jordanian women.

Queen Noor was born and raised in the United States before she married the late King Hussein of Jordan. During the interview, she told of an entry in her childhood diary. "I listed the careers that I longed to one day be able to pursue, and the Peace Corps was at the top of the list," she said.

Today, the Queen is actively involved with many of the organizations where Volunteers work. "I think they [the Volunteers] arrive with an openness

► See Jordan visit...page 8

Peace Corps Puts Its Stamp on the '60s

Has your family been collecting the stamps on the letters you send home? Now, you'll be able to save the Peace Corps stamps they send you. That's right, the Peace Corps is featured on a U.S. postage stamp, along with images honoring man's walk on the moon, the Beatles, the Vietnam War, Martin Luther King's "I Have a Dream" speech, and other icons of the 1960s. The 15 stamps are part of the U.S. Postal Service's "Celebrate the Century" series and were selected by a public vote last year. The 1960s stamps were issued on a commemorative sheet and became available for purchase from post offices across the United States in September.

The image on the new Peace Corps stamp, which features a Volunteer working with local farmers in Ethiopia, is a replica of one of several Peace Corps paintings by Norman Rockwell, the celebrated American artist. Director Mark Gearan and senior U.S. postal officials unveiled the stamp during a picnic and concert held in June in Washington to celebrate the "Next Generation" of Peace Corps Volunteers serving overseas (see article on page three).

"We know that it is the Peace Corps that truly works to bind this world together, to spread the word of what the American people really mean and what the values of this country really are," said Deborah Willhite, the Postal Service's Senior Vice President for Government Relations.



The new Peace Corps stamp is a replica of Norman Rockwell's depiction of a Volunteer in Ethiopia in the 1960s.

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PEACE CORPS TIMES

A publication for Peace Corps Volunteers serving worldwide.

EDITOR
Susan Buchanan
LAYOUT
Anastasia Miller

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The *Peace Corps Times* welcomes Volunteer submissions. Accounts of Volunteer experiences, news on projects, adventures, or general perceptions of life overseas will also be considered. Submissions cannot be returned. We reserve the right to edit for style, clarity, and length. Black and white and color photos are acceptable. We regret, however, that we cannot return them. Please identify all photos clearly. Peace Corps reserves the right to use any writing, photos, and artwork in other publications.

Inquiries and letters should be sent to:
Peace Corps Times; 1111 20th Street, NW;
Washington, D.C. 20526
You can also send an e-mail to pctimes@peacecorps.gov

Letter From The New Editor

Dear Volunteers:

Writing has been a major form of expression for Peace Corps Volunteers for decades—with letters home, journal entries, and articles in hometown newspapers. Another way many PCVs have expressed themselves, and connected to other Volunteers, is by sharing experiences in this publication. The magazine has a long history and tradition of linking the Peace Corps family worldwide. In print since 1961, the *Times* is published several times a year to keep you informed about significant Peace Corps events and Volunteer projects around the world.

It's with joy that I am now a part of this great legacy as your new editor. When I was a TEFL

teacher with the Peace Corps in Mongolia (1993-95), I looked forward to hearing about my fellow PCVs in each edition. And now from the "other side," I look forward to hearing about all of your great challenges and accomplishments!

As PCVs, your lives and jobs are as diverse as you are from one another. The *Times* is your forum to share the diversity of "the Peace Corps experience," so let us hear about what's going on in your communities. Feel free to respond to articles and issues in this edition by writing a letter to the editor. I look forward to hearing from you.

With great admiration,
Susan Buchanan (RPCV, Mongolia)
Editor

Make Sure You're Y2K-OK

Where will you be when the ball drops on Times Square this New Year's Eve? Maybe you plan to ring in the New Year eating tamales and shooting off fireworks in Guatemala, or toasting *na zdaroviya* throughout the night as each of Russia's 11 time zones enters the new millennium. Regardless of your celebration plans, there's a chance that you could be affected by the computer problem known as Y2K: When calendar date systems on some computers fail to roll over correctly to the year 2000.

Over the last year, Peace Corps staff at headquarters, country directors, host country officials, and staff at U.S. embassies have worked to identify anticipated problems and develop

country-specific contingency plans for Volunteers to follow in the weeks and months leading up to the year 2000. The contingency plans provide Volunteers with information based on everyday living needs and dependability on computer-based technology within each country and community.

Make a smooth transition into the next millennium by staying informed about anticipated Y2K issues in your country and community. Read and follow the in-country contingency plan, and stay in close contact with your Volunteer Advisory Committee and your Peace Corps office. For more information, ask your Country Director for copies of "Y2K Thoughts of the Month," provided by headquarters.

Did You Know ??

The term "computer bug" was coined in the 1950s by Navy computer pioneer Grace Hopper after a moth got into one of her machines and it went haywire.
Source: *The Washington Post*

DENNIS THE MENACE



"IF HE EVER JOINS THE PEACE CORPS, THEY'LL NEVER HAVE ANY PEACE."

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Send a 'Millennium Message' Back Home

Want to let your families and friends in the States know how you intend to celebrate the new millennium? The Peace Corps press office wants to help you share your plans for New Year's Eve and what you plan to do in the first year of the 21st century.

Tell us about how your community will celebrate the big event and what you, as a Peace Corps Volunteer, hope to accomplish in 2000. Send us your "millennium message," and we'll distribute it to your hometown newspapers around the holiday season. E-mails are strongly encouraged, but neatly-written or typed letters or postcards are fine, too. Also, if you can, send us a few photographs of you at your site.

Please include the following information: your name, country of service, hometown and state, and name of your local newspaper. Your "millennium message" must reach Washington by Dec. 1, 1999. Please send messages to: Dana Topousis, Peace Corps Press Office; 1111 20th Street, NW; Washington, D.C. 20526 e-mail: dtopousis@peacecorps.gov

off the Wire



PEACE CORPS NEWS

Peace Corps Holds 'Mega-Staging' in D.C.

Remember your staging, that day in Washington, Philadelphia, Miami, or San Francisco, when you finally felt like you were about to become a Peace Corps Volunteer? There was the paperwork, the icebreaker to introduce you to your fellow trainees, the colored yarn for your bags, the discussion about your fears and aspirations, and some information about what you could expect when you arrived at your post. Then there was that fascinating talk about Peace Corps "policies," and some of you were subjected to a series of vaccinations.

When every staging is at last over, there is always a lot of excitement and anticipation in the air as trainees put on their backpacks, make their last phone calls home, and head off to the airport—a sense of energy that people outside of the Peace Corps never get to experience. So earlier this year, the folks in staging and the director's office decided to use that energy and turn up the volume to help celebrate a significant milestone—this year, there will be the highest number of Volunteers (more than 7,200) serving overseas than at anytime in the last 25 years.

In June, nearly 200 trainees convened in Washington for what came to be known as the "mega-staging" before departing for their service in China, El Salvador, Ghana, Niger, and Romania. The trainees were there to represent every Volunteer in the field who is part of the "next generation" of Volunteers who will be serving overseas when the new millennium arrives. The idea was that bringing together so many Peace Corps trainees, who were taking off for distant parts of the world, would be a great way to draw public attention to the contributions that Volunteers are making around the world and help with recruitment efforts.



Two trainees bound for El Salvador enjoy the sights, sounds, and tastes of the "mega-staging" picnic and concert at Georgetown University.

In addition to the usual information sessions, over the course of a three-day mega-staging, the trainees met with members of Congress (including several RPCV members), the head of USAID, ambassadors from the countries, CNN Washington Bureau Chief Frank Sesno, and a panel of RPCVs, who talked about how their service influenced their lives and careers.

The mega-staging concluded with a picnic on the campus lawn at Georgetown University with all of the trainees, Director Mark Gearan, Sargent Shriver (the first Peace Corps director), music by local musician and RPCV Cindy Cain (see profile of her on page 6), political satire from comedian Al Franken, and the official unveiling of the new Peace Corps stamp by the U.S. Postal Service.

With local television coverage and articles in *The Washington Post* and dozens of hometown newspapers, the mega-staging allowed more people across the country to take part in the Peace Corps experience, and to learn about what a difference all of you in the field are making in the lives of people in your communities.

Civil Unrest, Conflicts Force Suspension of Three Peace Corps Programs

An increase in random bombings in Uganda and the outbreak of fighting between Ethiopia and neighboring Eritrea over border disputes forced the Peace Corps to suspend its programs in Uganda and Ethiopia earlier this year. (The program in Eritrea was suspended last year.) All 43 PCVs from Uganda and 58 PCVs from Ethiopia were evacuated safely to Kenya, where they were given the option of transferring to another country or returning home. No word at this time about when or if the programs can be re-opened.

In April, 33 PCVs in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia were moved to Bulgaria to ensure their safety during the NATO airstrikes in neighboring Kosovo. While in Bulgaria, the Volunteers participated in training activities and took some much-needed annual leave. Because State Department travel restrictions remained in effect at the time, the Volunteers COSed about a month later. With the end of the conflict in Kosovo, the Macedonia program has been re-opened, with a new training class scheduled to arrive in October.

South Africa One PCVs Welcomed Home

In July, one month after they finished their two years of service as the first group of Volunteers to serve in South Africa, five members of South Africa 1 participated in a forum at Peace Corps headquarters to talk about their experiences, challenges, and observations while living in that extraordinary country.

All 32 South Africa 1 Volunteers worked in schools in rural villages in the Northern Province as community resource Volunteers, helping to improve the skills of local teachers and to generate support in the community for the schools, which were devastated by apartheid. The five RPCVs—Michelle Chen, Jude Cleland, C.D. Glin, Nina Hernandez, and John Keith—spoke at length about the paradox of South Africa: the incredibly poor black townships where they lived, which had little or no resources, vs. the white areas that were wealthy and much more developed. The RPCVs also described what it was like to be trailblazers in a country that knew almost nothing about the Peace Corps, and whose people knew little about Americans. They hoped they laid a foundation to make it easier for future Volunteers.

Several of the panelists said that while the racial and ethnic diversity of South Africa 1 posed its own set of challenges (the group was more diverse than most trainee groups), the friendships and working relationships they developed with each other helped South Africans understand how Americans can overcome differences. "The South Africans saw us and said, 'Wow! They can co-exist and have fun,'" Glin said. Hopefully, their example can prove useful for South Africans who are working to overcome the legacies of apartheid.



Five RPCVs from South Africa 1: (front row) Nina Hernandez, Earl Yates (first country director), Michelle Chen, (back row) C.D. Glin, John Keith, and Jude Cleland.

Notes

From *Around the World*

Traveling Tradition

ONE OF THE MOST DIFFICULT CHALLENGES facing teacher trainer programs is reaching out to educators in rural areas. After working with the Armenian English Language Teachers' Association to conduct methodology workshops for teachers in the capital, 11 education PCVs decided to join a traveling road show to take the same training out to the countryside. The *Traveling Teacher Show*, funded by a grant from the U.S. Information Agency, takes PCVs to remote sites in Armenia once a



The *Traveling Teachers* pose for a shot in one of the rural schools where they conduct methodology training.

month to conduct seminars and share information and new ideas about English teaching methodologies. This ongoing project was started by a group of Volunteers in 1994, and it continues to grow and prosper today. Traveling teachers have been working to improve the traditional teacher-centered approach to educating students in secondary schools by introducing more progressive, interactive classroom methods. Workshop topics range from American slang to poetry writing to teaching literature. Participants walk away from the event loaded with handouts prepared by the Volunteers and useful teaching skills to take back to their classrooms. PCV Stephanie Saenger reports, "Both the American and Armenian teachers enjoy the presentations and learn a lot from these cultural exchanges."

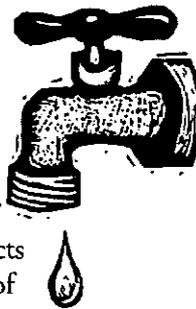


Stand Up, Woman!

PCV STEPHANIE ETTINGER TEAMED UP with 14 female Volunteers in Bolivia to help a **BOLIVIA** group of young rural women in Cochabamba gain a new and stronger sense of themselves. The Volunteers raised funds to sponsor a free, week-long conference called, "Stand Up, Woman!" The purpose of the conference was to motivate young women to set goals and have faith in their abilities. Twenty-one young women were given the opportunity to practice poise and speaking skills and engage in thought-provoking discussions about their future roles in Bolivian society. Interactive workshops focused on women's issues ranging from health, career choices, and domestic violence, to human rights. "The seminar's goal was to encourage self-esteem, leadership, and communication skills in the young women," Ettinger explains. "The project was a success. The women left with a greater sense of their own value and the drive to make their dreams come true."

Better than Evian

FEW THINGS ARE MORE IMPORTANT for any community than a steady and dependable source of clean water. PCV John Shumlansky's experience as a compliance officer and safety investigator of consumer products prepared him for his current job of helping Kenyans gain access to clean water. Shumlansky is working with his community to rid the Kangaita water supply of bacteria, parasites, and a host of other problems caused by heavy rains. "The pond that currently supplies the water is often muddy and filled with leaves that clog the pipes. The system requires constant upkeep and the flow of water is periodically interrupted," he says. To combat these problems, he and his counterparts are developing a plan to pipe clear, clean stream water that flows from nearby Mount Kenya into more than 240 residents' homes. The new water system will have proper sedimentation and filtration features, plus shut-off valves for cleaning and maintenance. "The residents of Kangaita are encouraged by



KENYA

Spelunking 3,000 Years Into the Past

HEAD LAMP IN HAND, NATURAL resources Volunteer Christopher Poulos set out on a mission to explore the mysterious ancient Talgua cave near his town in eastern Honduras. He hit a snag, however, when he learned the Honduran Department of Anthropology and History had erected a big iron gate to deter visitors from disturbing the site. The cave was first discovered in 1994 by several Peace Corps Volunteers, who were amateur cave spelunkers. Archaeological excavations of jade, pottery, and preserved human remains prove the indigenous society that inhabited the cave predated the Mayan civilization, making it the oldest known culture in Honduras. Later named the "Cave of the Glowing Skulls," an ancient cemetery was discovered entombed in the walls of one of its chambers.

Intrigued by the history and tall tales he had heard, Poulos made a weekly pilgrimage to the cave, volunteering to help the engineers who were constructing a visitors center in preparation for an expected boom in tourism. He ultimately became a part of the project to develop the site for tourism, and earned **HONDURAS** his way through the gate and into the cave. "I have assumed the role of preparing the local communities for the advent of foreign and national visitors," says Poulos. "The idea is to offer the tourist traditional foods, culture, transportation, and hostel accommodations without damaging the cultural richness of the area."



Inside the cave...PCV Christopher Poulos explores the cave of lore and mystique in Talgua, Honduras.

the possibility of a new water system that will not only reduce the potential for serious illness, but will also provide a dependable supply of drinking water," Shumlansky says.

Local Preservation in the Face of Global Change

"SMALL ISLAND COUNTRIES HAVE A HUGE potential for environmental problems so I was somewhat intimidated being the only environmental Volunteer in the Kingdom of Tonga," writes PCV Stephanie Hunt. Armed with an appreciation

TONGA

for the natural world, Hunt set out to teach the youth of Tonga how to sustain the fragile environment of this Pacific island nation. With funds from a Small Projects Assistance grant, she coordinated four environmental awareness camps stressing the importance of coral reefs and mangroves, community management of fisheries, and the loss of biodiversity on islands. Other topics ranged from overuse of pesticides to the importance of proper waste management.

Volunteers and Tongan youth leaders from different island groups have collaborated to follow up on the camps by initiating village beautification projects, including tree plantings, new trash bins, clean-up activities, and adopt-a-beach programs. "This collaborative effort highlighted the different skills of Volunteers and identified shining stars within the youth community," says Hunt.

Environmental problems in Tonga, according to Hunt, have resulted from a population boom within the last 10 years, coupled with increased importation of new products—including their non-degradable packaging. "Tongans aren't used to metals and plastics," Hunt said, explaining that traditionally, they didn't have to worry about man-made packaging and threw their shells and peels on the ground with little worry since they would naturally decompose. "Now that they have new packaging materials that require proper dis-

posal, we are working on environmental education projects to rid the islands of the trash that has accumulated," Hunt says. Other issues Hunt hopes to address in future camps include management of inshore fisheries which are becoming depleted, and sustainable forestry.

On-the-Job Training

IN RECENT YEARS, LATVIA HAS SEEN A downward trend in the availability of grants and foreign assistance for the burgeoning number of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that have formed since the country gained its independence in 1991. So Volunteers realized a need among NGO staff and members to learn about generating revenue, a new concept to this country. Led by PCVs Stacie Birenbach and Lilita Matison, they embarked on a mission to offer on-the-job training for eight rural NGOs. They conducted four training sessions on the fundamentals of fundraising, including developing a mission statement, marketing for special events, budgeting, and contacting corporate sponsors. Latvian NGO representatives put their new skills to use by hosting a charity fund raising event in the capital city of Riga, where they raised \$4,500. The event drew in 170 guests who participated in a silent auction and raffle. The money was equally divided between the NGOs, which include two chapters of



Tongan youth leader Cliff Finau (center) plants trees with PCVs Stephanie Hunt (left) and Marc Senall (right).

the Red Cross, a diabetes association, an adult education center, two tourism associations, and three NGO resource centers. Since then, each organization has held similar fund raisers in their communities. All the training materials were published in a book written in both English and Latvian entitled, *Nine Steps—a Short Guide to Organizing Charity Events*.

LATVIA



Turning trash into cash—PCV Katie Stauss and the Senegalese women who make purses from plastic grocery bags.

SENEGAL

successful selling the items to people in their villages and to friends of Volunteers, but the training session was designed to help the women explore new markets.

"We want to raise the awareness of these women, so they can market their goods, even if there is not a Volunteer there to help them," Stauss explains. "The problem is that they all have other things that they are selling. They don't really see that there is a big market for this."

But Stauss and the other PCVs are convinced there could be a large market for the goods, both at tourist sites and for export to the U.S., so they are working with an international non-governmental organization to train the women. "When I took some home on vacation, I sold all of them," said PCV Dina Paxenos. "Americans love them. It's only a dollar for a change purse, and they are helping the environment."

Spotlight on: Hospice Development In Slovakia



WITH A GROWING number of sick elderly people and too few hospital beds, the community of Martin, Slovakia, struggled to realize its dream of establishing a prime hospice facility to care for those in need of compassion and comfort at the end of their lives. Two local doctors had a grand vision for their town — to construct a state of the art hospice center — but had no idea how to achieve their goal. Enter PCV Lily Loh with a lifetime of business expertise and some great ideas to help the town set up a system for hospice care.

"Their goals at the time were a little unrealistic," Loh explains. "They needed to take a few steps back and start from the beginning with some strategic planning."

Loh is a former professor of economics and certified culinary chef who has hosted two national cooking shows. Last year, she and the doctors in Martin got together and began laying out a development strategy. Loh networked her way through medical and corporate organizations for possible sponsorships, initiated weekly board meetings and membership drives, and introduced the backbone of maintaining a non-profit facility: finding volunteers and raising money. Before too long, volunteers held fund-raising concerts and bazaars, and soon raised enough money to equip and furnish the new facility—a donated building from the Town Hall big enough to care for 10 patients.

Loh's status as a foreigner in the community drew attention to the new hospice by ensuring media coverage of fund-raising events, which have been attended by the town mayor and the U.S. ambassador to Slovakia. She has even hosted her own event—a cooking demonstration at the local hotel. With the help of Volunteers like Lily Loh, Slovakia is joining the ranks of nations that offer specialized care for terminally ill patients.



Hospice Grand Opening...PCV Lily Loh (center) with the mayor of her town and several others who helped open the new hospice center in Martin, Slovakia, this winter.

RPCV Profile

By John Coyne

Cindy Cain

Singing the Blues From Cameroon to D.C.

Occasionally there's someone in a training group who's slightly different. Someone who, if you will, sings her own song.

There's one in every new batch of Peace Corps trainees. Sometimes it's the guy or gal who wants to take his or her Peace Corps experience and turn it into the next great American novel. Or there's the trainee who dreams of being the first RPCV to be elected president of the United States.

Occasionally, however, there's someone in a training group who stands apart. Someone who, if

"Serving as a Peace Corps Volunteer helped me believe if I could go teach English in Africa, where I didn't even speak the local language, then I could do just about anything, including making it as a singer."

you will, sings her own song. She may or may not be noticed at first. But when everyone breaks into a song on one of those long bus rides, her voice will carry clearly over the rough roads and the other voices. It's then that everyone starts to glance around and notice.

That's what happened to Cindy Cain soon after she arrived in Cameroon in 1986 to teach English. Her voice—and her determination—have carried her a long way from her village in West Africa. And more people have been noticing her ever since.

Over the last five years, Cain has been making her living singing and playing a jazzy kind of blues at places in the greater Washington, D.C., area. She's played at the Kennedy's Center's 10th annual open house. Last year, she released a new CD. And in June, she was one of the featured performers at the Peace Corps' three-day "mega-staging" (see article on page one).

"I've been singing since I was kid," says Cain. "I was in the high school band, then I played in a bluegrass band with one of my professors at Oklahoma State University, where I got my journalism degree. But back then, I never thought of pursuing a career as a singer."

After graduating from OSU, she took a stab at being a reporter for a small town newspaper. "It wasn't too long before I realized that I didn't have the temperament for daily newspaper life. I grew weary of writing stories about crime, human tragedies, and natural disasters. So I decided that the Peace Corps was the adventure I was missing in my life," she recalls.

Cain put her heart and soul into her job as an English teacher. But she kept singing in her spare time. "It wasn't anything special. You know,

Volunteers would be out together, we'd sing on the way back from the bars to our training site."

As she was nearing the end of her tour, when she was in the capital city of Yaounde, Cain's singing became more than just a part-time hobby.

"We used to go to a place called Le Papillion, which had a house jazz band known as OBEM 4," Cain recalls. One night, Patrick Murphy, another Volunteer, urged me to get up on stage and sing. So I did. Later, the woman who owned the restaurant asked if I wanted to keep singing with the group. I couldn't resist the offer. The band became OBEM 5, and for the last three months of my tour, I had a secondary job, singing at Le Papillion. It was only then that I thought seriously about singing full time."

After leaving Central West Africa, with her Peace Corps experience and journalism degree in hand, Cain went to work on Capitol Hill as the press secretary for a congressman from Oklahoma. After work, she would perform at open mike nights at local clubs. Eventually, she formed her own group, C.C. & the Rhythm Toys, and their first release, "Gettin' a Feel for It," was selected by a northern Virginia music magazine as one of the best local releases in 1994. The next year, Cain made the move to life as a full-time singer.

"It's incredibly challenging to run a business. I have to operate as booking agent, take care of the administrative and financial details, as well as perform. My Peace Corps experience was a perfect groundwork for going into music. I learned how to manage multiple priorities and live within a budget. Most importantly, it helped me believe if I could go teach English in Africa, where I didn't even speak the language, then I could do just about anything, including making it as a singer," she says.



Jazzing it up at Georgetown...Cain plays to a crowd of Peace Corps trainees during the "mega-staging" in D.C.

And making it is what Cain has done. For the last three years, she's had a weekly appearance at Kramer Books, a popular place in D.C. where Mary Chapin Carpenter used to sing in her early days as a musician. Today, Cain keeps a packed schedule of gigs, fronts as the lead singer for some of the area's hottest musicians, and has found her strengths as a singer. "I think my strengths are phrasing, timing, pitch, and singing from the heart," Cain says. "She's got a voice that will fill up a room," says Bill Kisluk of *Blues Access*.

Cain wrote lyrics for four of the tracks on her first CD "Love Contest," which was nominated by the Washington Area Music Association for five of its prestigious Wammie Awards, including best blues and jazz vocal and best debut recording. Listening to Cain, you can hear touches of Billie Holiday and Sarah Vaughan. The music is cool, energetic, and seductive. And after listening to it once, you want to play it again—and again.

On the CD's sleeve, Cain thanks the people who played a role in helping her make it happen. Toward the end, she pays tribute "To Le Papillion in Yaounde, Cameroon, for my first gig . . . To my Peace Corps buddies, friends, and fans who've come to my gigs over the years."

Cain says serving as a Volunteer gave her the courage to get up on a stage and sing in front of people. "I also learned it's important in life to do things that make me feel good. Singing does that for me. I'm happy to be singing the blues, and by the looks of my bank account, I now have a right to."



John Coyne was a Volunteer in Ethiopia and is the manager of the Peace Corps recruiting office in New York.

Cindy Cain sings with a Cameroonian jazz quartet in 1988.

Volunteers Help Map the World For Young People

When Barbara Jo White was serving as a Volunteer in the Dominican Republic in 1988, she faced a dilemma familiar to thousands of Peace Corps Volunteers—a lot of eager, curious students living in a poor country eager to learn about the world, but few educational materials to help do the job. So like every successful Volunteer, White employed a little ingenuity: She decided to have her students paint a map of the world on the wall of the school and called it, naturally, the “World Map Project.”

But as many Volunteers know, the World Map Project didn't come to an end with White's service in the Dominican Republic. What began as a geography lesson plan for one class of students in a small village in the Caribbean has, more than 10 years later, become a popular and effective way for Volunteers and teachers in 45 countries to help young people learn about world geography. The World Map Project has even made its way to the United States—many returned Volunteers who now work as educators use the project in their classrooms.

Volunteers and host country educators are not the only people singing the praises of the World Map Project. It's been commended by former president Jimmy Carter and featured in *National Geographic*, on the “Today” show and CNN, and the U.S. Postal Service has taken the project on a national tour.

The concept for the project is simple. The map can be painted on just about any surface—cardboard, posterboard, cement walls on the inside or outside of a school, drywall, foam board, press board, particle board, plywood, canvas, plastic, or even rice sacks sewn together. Once the drawing is finished, the painting—and the fun—begins. Student mapmakers have used acrylic or latex house paint, colored markers, colored pencils, crayons, or colored tissue paper. The key to the project's success, however, is to let the students do the work, which can be finished in a couple of days. More importantly, however, the map can be a source of pride and a part of the school or community for many years after it's completed.

If you are interested in starting a World Map Project in your school or community, you can find information in *The World Map Project Handbook* at your Peace Corps office.

After you and your students complete your map, be sure to let Barbara Jo White know how it comes out. White's mailing address is: 1700 Holt Place, Raleigh, NC, 27607; or you can send her an e-mail at beejaywhite@hotmail.com.



The World Map Project brings students and communities together through teamwork around the globe.

Actress Roughs It With Volunteers in Suriname

Hollywood actress Ashley Judd took time off from her movie-making schedule to visit Suriname for a week of cultural immersion and a taste of what it's like to serve as a Peace Corps Volunteer in that beautiful country. The trip was arranged by *Marie Claire* magazine for its May 1999 issue, which featured a six-page account by Judd of her stay in Suriname. Judd had wanted to join the Peace Corps while a student at the University of Kentucky, but her career took a different path, and she set aside her dream of serving as a Volunteer. She used her trip to shine the spotlight on the culture of the Asawai people of Suriname and convey her admiration for the Volunteers who serve there.

“The Volunteers are remarkable,” she writes. “Every single one of them has flawlessly adapted to the lifestyle of no electricity and no running water... They absolutely love the people they live among...”



Ashley befriends a young Asawai child in the Amazon rain forest basin.

Judd grew up in the rural South without many of life's creature comforts, which helped her adjust to what Volunteers face every day. Some things, however, were more challenging, like the giant mosquito that chased her in the jungle and bathing in a river with a



Judd (center) visited several Volunteer sites during her stay in Suriname.

little food from the previous night's supper floating by.

Over the course of the week, Judd got to meet with a lot of Volunteers, including Becky Beno, Anastasia Norton, and their husbands Hiapo Emmons-Shaw and Matt Scherer, who are also PCVs. She then stayed with PCV Gina Corpening and her husband, PCV John Corpening at their hut with its hammocks, mosquito nets, and outhouses. All of the Volunteers helped her to experience much of the rich Asawai culture during her short stay. Judd went hiking, participated in the morning ritual greetings, shopped in the local market, drank rainwater, and danced with women and kids in the village.

“I was blessed to see that the spirit of people in faraway places and in disparate conditions is still just the inextinguishable spirit of life,” Judd writes. Judd, who is the sister and daughter of country singers Wynona and Naomi Judd (“The Judds”), has starred in such flicks as “Heat,” “A Time to Kill,” and “Kiss the Girls.” Upcoming films include “Eye of the Beholder” and “Double Jeopardy.”

Volunteer Q&A




John Maruschak may well have the distinction of being the only Peace Corps Volunteer in the world whose possessions include a two-humped camel named Joe. We caught up with John in the ancient Gobi Desert in Mongolia, where he works as a teacher trainer and travels by humpback camel in his free time.

What are the virtues of traveling by camel?
There are few good roads in the remote areas of Mongolia. So, a rugged animal that requires little water and has fur to protect it from the thirty-below-zero winters is the perfect mode of transportation. One of the most interesting things to see in the countryside in Mongolia is the herdsman who ride through my town by camel and tether them by the market. Even after a year here, I still look out my office window in awe when I see a camel parked in front of the government building.

Tell us a little about Joe.
Camels are really fascinating creatures. They are soft and hairy animals that make strange “whooping” sounds. They also tend to spit a lot. So far, however, I have found Joe to have a pleasant disposition. Camels can live to be about 30 years old, so at seven, Joe is the perfect age—not too wild-spirited and not too sedentary either. Once he gets running, he can really move!

How would you describe riding on the back of a camel?
At first, climbing aboard a two-humped camel is pretty easy. The camel lowers itself by tucking its legs under its body, then you just climb on. But when the camel stands up, it is kind of like a crazy hydraulic lift that throws you around. Fortunately, the soft humps are there to cushion the whiplash.

...And the benefits of camel ownership?
Having a camel is a fun and interesting way for me to become integrated in my Mongolian community. Oh yeah... I can also get free camel hair sweaters for the cold winter.

Photos

from the field



PCV Carol Umstead captures a young girl in Morocco carrying fruit of the indigenous Argon tree, which contains a medicinal oil.



PCV Charleen Smith rests in the shade with ladies of her village in Katete, Zambia, where she conducts an outreach program in AIDS prevention and awareness.



Enna finds shelter under the giant Taro leaf in Vanuatu during a mid-afternoon shower.
Photo by PCV Erin Zuiker.

Give Us Your Best Shot!



Listen up, shutterbugs! We know you've got about 20 rolls of film stuffed beneath that stack of old Newsweeks. Well, isn't it about time you saw those pics in print?

Peace Corps Times will be honoring the best photos from the field with a little...er...exposure. Exceptional PCV photos will be featured each issue. So send us your glossies and slides. One gig with us and your job with Rolling Stone is just around the corner! Color photos, black and whites, and slides will be accepted. Send your photos with explanations or captions to the address below.

Crisis Corps Continues Work in Central America

Since Hurricanes Georges and Mitch slammed into the Caribbean and Central America last fall, 95 Crisis Corps Volunteers have committed their time and talents to reconstruction activities in Antigua, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Haiti, Honduras, Guatemala and Nicaragua. Many more Crisis Corps Volunteers will be needed in the months ahead, particularly in the harder hit countries where it will take at least several years for countries to fully recover from the devastating hurricanes of 1998.

The Crisis Corps is sending Volunteers to help rebuild damaged water systems, assist communities with crop rehabilitation and soil conservation projects, monitor and evaluate emergency food programs, assist with housing repair and construction, and provide counseling services to those affected by the disaster. Most of these Crisis Corps assignments are three months long. RPCVs and Volunteers close to their COS date who are interested in helping in Central America and the Caribbean over the next year should contact the Crisis Corps by phone at 1-800-424-8580, ext. 2250 or by e-mail at crisiscorps@peacecorps.gov.

▷ Jordan visit, from page 1

that is absolutely critical, an interest in learning and in absorbing and exchanging," she said.

Ramian, who has a degree in environmental studies and works at the Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature, took the Queen and the CBS crew on a tour of the Wadi Dana Nature Reserve, as well as a silver shop where local women make jewelry. VanLuven talked about her work at the Holy Land Institute for the Deaf in Salt, where, among other things, she conducts hearing tests on children at a Palestinian refugee camp and makes ear molds for hearing aids. Both Ramian and VanLuven spoke about some of the difficult challenges of adjusting to the traditions of Muslim culture, such as staying indoors at night, not speaking to men on the street, learning a difficult language, and living alone. Ramian told, with a smile, of her host family's patient efforts to teach her how to milk a goat, and they both described the occasional spells of homesickness. But Ramian and VanLuven said that the Peace Corps experience—contributing to Jordan's development, engaging in the cross-cultural exchange, and making new friends—make the challenges seem small. "I've gained a lot more than I gave up," VanLuven said.

Notices

World Wise Challenges?

Help us help you! Here at World Wise Schools we love hearing about the many amazing WWS experiences that Volunteers enjoy, but we also want to hear about problems as they arise. We can't control some things, such as slow overseas postal services, but we can do a lot to solve other problems, including contacting your U.S. teacher if necessary.

What's a Volunteer to do? Simply contact the WWS In-Country Contact who works in your local Peace Corps office about what is or isn't happening with your match. He/she will forward your information to our office where we will do everything in our power to help you. E-mail your inquiries to wwsinfo@peacecorps.gov (put "Troubleshooter" in the Subject line).

Remember, if we don't know, we can't help you.

And don't forget...if you'd like to join WWS or be matched to an additional classroom, sign up with your WWS In-Country Contact today.

In her closing comments, Correspondent Stewart had this to say about what she saw in Jordan: "It's that give and take that has sustained the Peace Corps' original vision. While Volunteers around the world help their global neighbors, they experience personal victories: learning a language, understanding a culture, or, finally in Yasmina's case, milking a goat. While it's not always easy, the program provides a small step toward fostering peace."



Erin VanLuven conducts hearing tests on children at a Palestinian refugee camp in Salt, Jordan.

Hey, Volunteers! Do you have a story to tell? We know you are out there experiencing cultural riches and project successes, especially now that summer vacation is drawing to a close. How about sharing them with the rest of the world!? "Notes From Around the World" is a forum to highlight your country of service, so don't be modest! Some possible ideas:

- Check out your journal entries for creative, funny, or insightful quotes you jotted down in a moment of philosophical wandering.
- What's the funniest thing that's happened to you as a PCV?
- What kind of unusual or exotic cultural norms exist in your country?
- How is your country, site, or project unique? Think of a short series of questions and answers to let other PCVs in on your fun.