

2004



Peace Corps Week

Let us know how you celebrated Peace Corps Week

Help us plan for the Peace Corps' 44th anniversary. Send newspaper articles, letters, or an e-mail telling us about your experience.

Peace Corps Day Coordinator
Paul D. Coverdell
Peace Corps Headquarters
1111 20th Street, NW
Second Floor
Washington, DC 20526

800.424.8580,
press 2, then ext. 1961

You join thousands of returned Peace Corps Volunteers who are dedicated to educating Americans about other cultures and peoples. As America's goodwill ambassadors, you embody a tradition of service that has encouraged more than 170,000 people to serve in the Peace Corps in 137 countries over the past 43 years. Your continued commitment to the Peace Corps' mission is vital to the promotion of world peace through friendship and understanding. By carrying out third goal activities at home, you enable Americans to better understand the world, themselves, and others. You may even help inspire the next generation of Volunteers.

The materials in this kit are designed to help you set up your presentation and share your stories during Peace Corps Week. In this newsletter, you will find some helpful tips and a selection of websites that offer background information about countries in which Peace Corps Volunteers have served. You can use the Peace Corps fact sheet for your own reference or as a handout for your audience. If you speak to a class, encourage the teacher to sign up for the Paul D. Coverdell World Wise Schools

program to take advantage of the year-round global education resources it offers.

You may also want to participate in one of the events being organized around the country by Peace Corps regional offices and returned Volunteer "alumni" groups. For more information about these and other events, contact the Peace Corps office in your area (www.peacecorps.gov) and the National Peace Corps Association (www.rpcv.org). They may be able to direct you to a group, school, or organization interested in hosting a speaker. Whatever third goal activity you choose, have fun and take pride in your ongoing service to your community and the world.

The resources provided here are simply ideas to get you started. In addition to your memories, you undoubtedly have letters, crafts, photographs, videos, music, books, currency, clothing, recipes, and more treasures from your country of service that can help bring your stories and Peace Corps friends to life for others. Make your plans today—you'll be glad you did!



Poster

A world map highlighting all the countries where PCVs have served will help illustrate your talk. If speaking with students, leave the map with the teacher so it can be used as a classroom resource all year long.

Bookmarks and Stickers

The bookmarks feature recent photographs of PCVs, and the stickers feature the Peace Corps logo. Both direct people to the Peace Corps website. Supplies are limited, but if you need additional bookmarks or stickers, please call or send an e-mail.

Paul D. Coverdell World Wise Schools

Give any teachers you work with the Paul D. Coverdell World Wise Schools brochure and teacher enrollment form, which provide information about signing up for the Peace Corps' year-round global education program.

Peace Corps Fact Sheet

Get the latest details on the Peace Corps and share this information with others.

Press Release

Complete the press release and send it to your local newspaper three weeks prior to your presentation to bring attention to your activity benefiting area students or others.

Sample Letter to the Editor

Write a letter to the editor of your local newspaper during Peace Corps Week.

RESOURCES

Presentation Planning Checklist

1 Find a Community Group, Classroom, or Organization to Host You

Consider your location options. You can speak to a community group you volunteer with, visit a school in your neighborhood, present to a religious organization you belong to—your options are endless. You can also contact your local RPCV group and the National Peace Corps Association at www.rpcv.org or 202.293.7728. They may be able to provide resources for your presentation or direct you to a group, school, or organization interested in hosting a speaker.

2 Discuss Your Presentation With Your Host

Speak with your host before the event. Together, tailor your presentation to the age, needs, and interests of your audience. Find out what the group knows about your country or region of service. Discuss any audiovisual needs you may have. Determine the size of the audience and an appropriate length for the presentation.

3 Promote Your Presentation

Offer to brief the group, school, or organization prior to your presentation. With your host, complete a press release and send it to your local newspaper three weeks prior to your presentation. You could also write a letter to the editor of your local newspaper.

4 Prepare Your Presentation

Establish the main points you want to cover. Think about what kinds of questions your audience might have about your country of service and your interest in becoming a Peace Corps Volunteer. Remember, audiences are interested in subjects related to their own experiences. Schoolchildren want to know about kids their own age. A

local business group may want to know about workplace issues, information technology, the environment, and so on. Prepare handouts in advance to distribute to the audience. Use the materials in your presentation kit and on the Peace Corps website to help develop your presentation. Determine which props you will bring to enhance your presentation. Practice your speech alone or in front of a group of friends.

5 Give Your Speech

In the opening remarks of your speech, inform the audience of your presentation format and explain your background. Interact with your audience and invite their participation throughout the presentation. To enhance the content of your speech, use statistics, quotes, and visual aids and include a few funny stories and personal anecdotes. Incorporate demonstrations of local customs. Be aware of the length of your presentation. Wrap up with a question-and-answer session. Be sure to thank your host and the audience for taking part in Peace Corps Week.

6 Follow Up

After the presentation, contact your host to ask for feedback and follow up on any promises you made during the speech—such as answers to any questions you could not answer then but offered to look up. Display your books, maps, and artifacts in an exhibit case at the school or organization. Mail copies of newspaper articles about your presentation to the Peace Corps or otherwise describe how you celebrated Peace Corps Week. Offer to return to the school or organization for follow-up visits throughout the year.

Preparing Your Presentation

When you returned from your Peace Corps service, you probably brought home hundreds of stories, photographs, and memories. Engage your audience by taking an interactive approach to your presentation. Use artifacts, ask questions, and conduct activities relevant to your talk.

If you don't know where to begin, try narrowing your focus. Address the special interests of the audience while talking about a subject you love. Begin with an overview of the Peace Corps and your host country, and then focus on one aspect of your service. Following are some ideas to get you started. Be creative!

Music

Present the traditional music from your country of service. What role do musicians play in that society? Where and when do they perform? Contrast the country's traditional and contemporary music. Describe the instruments. Bring some in and play the music. Let the audience play, too.

Literature

Present examples of folk tales, proverbs, and oral history from your host country. How do they reflect different elements and themes of the society? Have your audience give examples of similar tales from their backgrounds.

Draw parallels between the examples. Read selections of past and contemporary literature from your host country.

Family

Tell your audience about the families you lived with as a Volunteer, in training or at your site. How many people were in the family? What holidays or anniversaries did they celebrate? How? Describe the home. Describe the responsibilities of each family member within the household. What did they do for fun? How did the family handle an emergency or other crisis? Show photographs of the house and the family; bring textiles or other knickknacks that may have been displayed in the home; read letters that the family has sent you.

Cultural Activities

Help students begin to understand the perspectives of other cultures. The Peace Corps' latest curriculum guide, *Building Bridges*, offers lesson plans in cross-cultural understanding and gives schoolchildren an opportunity to understand more about how culture can affect behavior and attitudes. Download the PDF version from the Paul D. Coverdell World Wise Schools website at www.peacecorps.gov/wws.

Internet Resources

The Peace Corps website has information about all the countries where there are Volunteers, an atlas, lesson plans, a timeline highlighting events in the 43-year history of the agency, a presentation planner, information on the kinds of work Volunteers are doing in the field, and the agency's current initiatives. The Kids World section of the site contains information geared to younger audiences. Use these and other free resources to fill out your presentation.

Useful Websites

Peace Corps
www.peacecorps.gov/pcweek
www.peacecorps.gov/wws/pc/rpcv/planner/
www.peacecorps.gov/pics

National Peace Corps Association
www.rpcv.org

News
www.bbc.co.uk

Country Maps and Flags
www.theodora.com/maps

NPCA Program Places Speakers in Classrooms

The NPCA is launching a Web-based program to match Peace Corps speakers with classroom teachers. Although the program will be initiated in Boston, Denver, and San Francisco, RPCVs are encouraged to look for speaking opportunities nationwide. Check the NPCA's website for more information.

Promote Peace Corps Week

Raise Awareness: Press Release

Included in this kit is a press release for you and your host to complete and send to your local newspaper. A press release is important to help raise awareness among educators and other organization leaders that returned Peace Corps Volunteers are a year-round community resource. Don't be shy! Here's how to get the word out:

- Print your name and phone number in the space designated "Contact."
- Fill in the other blanks with the appropriate information.

- Mail the completed form to your local newspaper's assignment or news editor between February 9 and February 12, 2004. For large city newspapers, direct the release to the education or metro area editor. Feel free to make copies of the press release and send them to local radio and television stations as well.
- Follow up with a phone call to the newspaper several days prior to your presentation to see if the editor needs more information.

Questions about press issues?

Call the public affairs specialist at the regional recruiting office in your area at 800.424.8580 (press 1 at the recorded prompt).

Sample Letter to the Editor

Promote your presentation by writing a letter to the editor of your local newspaper during Peace Corps Week. A sample letter to the editor is included in this kit and on the website. You can mail, fax, or e-mail your letter to the editor. Many newspapers also have an online form for letters to the editor. All letters must include your full name, home address, and daytime telephone number for verification. However you deliver the letter, remember to keep it brief—300 words or less.



Presentation Suggestions

RPCVs, families of currently serving PCVs, and friends of the Peace Corps offer an impressive array of suggestions that succeeded in making Peace Corps Day 2003 a rewarding experience for their communities. Check the Peace Corps website for many more.

Living in a retirement building for the past seven years, I was hesitant to show my Peace Corps slides to a group, though I had shared them with friends in my apartment. (Seems most every year I yearn to review them myself.) This year when the information came requesting RPCVs to share their experiences, I responded by requesting the kit and reserving a date on our activities calendar. I was pleased when 28 people arrived, but elated when 18 others attended a repeat presentation because they were unable to attend the first one.

Rachael J. Davis
Philippines, 1981–1984

The Minority Peace Corps Association members shared their Peace Corps experiences in classrooms and at a church. We received Peace Corps Day proclamations from the mayors of Philadelphia and Trenton. We also had a great diversity dinner on Peace Corps Day with more than 30 people attending. We borrowed a microphone from the live band and spoke to the entire restaurant about Peace Corps Day. All in all it was a great day.

Leslie Jean-Pierre, President
Minority Peace Corps Association
Guinea, 1994–1996

The Greater Birmingham RPCVs helped students at an inner-city school, Whatley Elementary, paint a world map. This project allowed students to interact with RPCVs and participate in fun geography awareness activities—making flags and posters of animals from other countries, reading books about other cultures and countries, and answering geography quiz questions. We put the finishing touches on the map on March 21, and invited school personnel and parents to the dedication ceremony, which included a geography bee with the students and presentations by RPCVs who helped with the world map project.

Susan Seay, Program Committee Chair
Greater Birmingham Returned Peace Corps Volunteers
Eastern Caribbean, 1972–1973

I gave a presentation on the Peace Corps and volunteerism at the Longmont Adult Education Program for 17-year-olds and above. We are encouraging volunteerism in our students and hope this will give them some information and motivation for community service.

Judy McClure Wisehart
Friend of the Peace Corps

Our daughter is a PCV in Kathmandu, Nepal. I write a biweekly column for the *Daily Herald*, and the column that runs tomorrow is on Peace Corps Day. I also sent letters to the editors of the *Chicago Tribune* and the *Beacon News* in Aurora. A reporter from the *Beacon News* interviewed us about Mary's Peace Corps experiences—Mary's interview was via e-mail—and will run a feature article on Peace Corps Day. I also taped a 30-minute segment for the local radio station, WSPY, that will run on Peace Corps Day as part of its "Community Calendar" show.

Cecelia Sanders, parent of
Mary K. Sanders, PCV
Nepal, 2002–

I shared my slides and Peace Corps stories with 250 elementary students at Shapleigh Memorial School in Maine. My presentation was a kickoff for the school's book-raising campaign for Caribbean children. I encouraged the students to write notes with return addresses to slip into the books—hoping for pen pals! The books were donated

to Boaters for Books, a nonprofit organization committed to raising the level of literacy among young people in the Caribbean. It is great that we are giving these children an opportunity to learn about the world and make a difference in it.

Grace Spillane Jacobs
St. Vincent, 1984–1986

Reflections

I was inspired to join the Peace Corps during high school, where I heard a former Peace Corps Volunteer talk about the interesting and wonderful work being done by Peace Corps Volunteers. Maybe we too can inspire some others in the process, as we surely need peace work at this time in our history.

Debbie Hurst Rodriguez
Bolivia, 1996–1999

Thanks for organizing Peace Corps Day. I think it's an excellent idea. When asked what the U.S. should do in responding to terrorism, I continue to answer—more Peace Corps!

Suzanne Rapp Picard
Cameroon, 1985–1986

I have done three presentations on the Peace Corps to religious education classes at my church. I felt it was my duty to tell our young people about another way of approaching the challenges in this world.

Gretel Abad
Nepal, 1989–1991

