

Peace Corps Week 2008

Dear Peace Corps Family,

Barka da salla! Happy anniversary! Thank you for planning to celebrate the Peace Corps' 47th year of making a difference abroad and at home. During Peace Corps Week, you are joining thousands of other returned Volunteers who are dedicated to educating Americans about other cultures and people and the tradition of service that has encouraged more than 190,000 of us to serve in 139 countries. By taking part in Peace Corps Week, you may inspire the next generation of Volunteers.

Peace Corps Week is your time to shine. Your kit can help you prepare to share your Volunteer stories. We've put together tips and a selection of websites that offer even more resources to get you started. Some of you may prefer to speak in schools, faith-based organizations, or clubs; others may host a brown bag lunch at work; and still others may organize another kind of event with fellow RPCVs. You may write to your local newspaper or be interviewed on a local radio show. Maybe you will host your own Peace Corps photo exhibition or musical/dance performance. However you decide to bring the world home to your community, take advantage of the resources we've prepared for you, be sure to have fun, and then, afterward, let us know what you did so we can make the next Peace Corps Week even better.

Best wishes from your Peace Corps Week team,

Peace Corps Week Specialist Vivian Nguyen (Niger 2003-2005)

Peace Corps Week Assistant Fran Quintana (Madagascar 2003-2005)

FOR EXAMPLE...

"I shared my Peace Corps experience with my co-workers. I brought in a traditional Paraguayan dish and shared the national drink, yerba maté, with the attendees. I also brought in many crafts and shared a few stories that I had written while I was there. I laminated the poster to use during my presentation and used the Peace Corps website to find facts on Paraguay. I received positive feedback from the attendees, and I have been asked to present again during Cultural Diversity Day in October."

Deborah Burr, Paraguay 1998-2000



Thank you for your continued commitment to Peace Corps service.



**Hausa greeting in West Africa for every holiday or special occasion.*



Resources

For presentation resources

call 800.424.8580, ext. 1961,
or e-mail pcweek@peacecorps.gov.

For more information about events

contact the Peace Corps office in your area by scrolling down to "Find Local Events" at www.peacecorps.gov. The National Peace Corps Association has local information at www.rpcv.org under "Affiliates."



Let Us Know How You Celebrated!

Help us plan for the next anniversary of the Peace Corps. Send newspaper articles, letters, or an e-mail telling us about your experience. Photos of your Peace Corps Week activities are also welcome.

Peace Corps Week Coordinator
Paul D. Coverdell Peace Corps Headquarters
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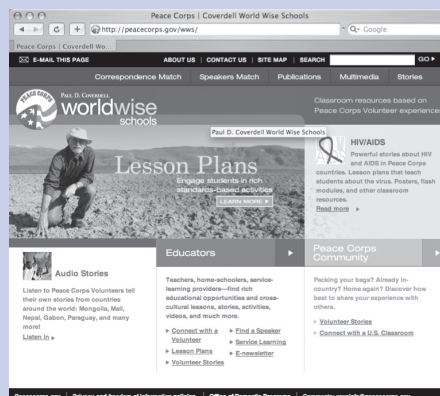
Web content is continually being developed to provide news about your country of service and even strategies for preparing and giving presentations. The Peace Corps website contains information about the countries where Volunteers serve, the kinds of work Volunteers are doing in the field, and the agency's current initiatives.

In Your Kit

The **world map poster** highlights the countries where Volunteers have served, and can help illustrate your talk. If you speak to students, consider leaving the map with the teacher so that it can be used as a classroom resource all year long.

Use the **fact sheet** to get the latest statistics on the Peace Corps.

Hand out the **stickers** to those you speak with as a lasting reminder of your presentation and of the Peace Corps. You can arrange to give extra stickers, fact sheets, or a world map to your local library. Contact us for more information.



add energy to any event. Teachers can bring a returned Volunteer speaker to their classroom any time through the **Speaker's Match program**. Don't forget to give host teachers a brochure and extend an invitation for them to join the **Correspondence Match program**. This is an exciting opportunity for a classroom to communicate year-round with a Volunteer serving overseas.

Links

Peace Corps Week website
www.peacecorps.gov/pcweek

See "Presentation Resources." Visit throughout the year to find great new items, stories, and ideas.

Tech-Savvy Ways to Upgrade Your Presentation
www.peacecorps.gov/multimedia/pdf/former/hotline/hotline011507.pdf

From *Hotline*, January 15, 2007. Click on the links in the article for more resources.

Speakers Bureaus
www.rpcv.org/pages/sitepage.cfm?id=21

Learn how sharing slides, photos, souvenirs, and host country attire brings the world into a classroom or community setting.

Peace Corps Kids World
www.peacecorps.gov/kids

Photographs
www.peacecorps.gov/photo_gallery

PAUL D. COVERDELL WORLD WISE SCHOOLS
Coverdell World Wise Schools offers a rich variety of free cross-cultural publications, award-winning videos, folk tales, lesson plans, and more. You'll find multimedia resources: posters, digital videos, slide shows, and podcasts that will

Preparing Your Presentation

1

Find a Venue

Contact your local RPCV group or look online to find youth, faith-based, retirement, special interest groups and clubs, and professional associations in your area.

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, write a press release and send it to your local newspaper three weeks before your presentation. Consider writing 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 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. 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 Talk

In your opening remarks, introduce your topic and background. Engage your audience; use statistics, quotes, visual aids and personal anecdotes to encourage their participation. Include funny stories and demonstrations of local customs. Be aware of the length of your presentation; too short is better than too long. Wrap up with a question-and-answer session. Be sure to thank your host and the audience for taking part.

6

Follow Up

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

Be a Star in Your Community by Promoting Your Event

We want to help you promote your Peace Corps Week event. Visit the Peace Corps Week website for press release tips and sample templates to get the word out about your Peace Corps Week activity. You can also contact the Peace Corps Office of Press Relations with the “who, what, where, when, why, and how” of your event for assistance.

E-mail pressoffice@peacecorps.gov

or call

800.424.8580, ext. 2230.

When you returned from your Peace Corps service, you probably brought home many 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. Some ideas to get you started follow. Remember to have fun and 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 them, too.

FAMILY

Talk about the host 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 the family 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 knickknacks that may have been displayed in the home; read letters that the family has sent you.

LITERATURE

Present examples of folk tales, proverbs, and oral histories from your host country. How do they reflect different elements and themes of the society? Ask your audience for examples of similar tales from their backgrounds. Draw parallels between the examples. Read selections of past and contemporary literature from your host country.

CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

Help students begin to understand the perspectives of other cultures. The Peace Corps' publication *Building Bridges* offers lesson plans in cross-cultural understanding and gives schoolchildren an opportunity to understand more about how culture affects behavior and attitudes. Get the free PDF version from the Coverdell World Wise Schools website at www.peacecorps.gov/wws.

Peace Corps Week Favorite Reflections and Suggestions

RPCVs, families of serving PCVs, and friends of the Peace Corps offer some excellent suggestions that have helped make Peace Corps Week a rewarding experience for them and for their communities.

We celebrated Peace Corps [Week] at the Neighborhood Unitarian Universalist Church in Pasadena, California. About 17 countries were represented at our “International Hall of Show and Tell.” Teenage church members modeled traditional costumes from India, Bali, and Cameroon, and we all feasted on *mafay*—a peanut stew from Senegal.

Lee Brainerd, Senegal 1972-1973

I volunteered to do my presentation during our local library's brown bag program. It was very well-received, and I really enjoyed having the captive, interested audience. The audience was made up of many retirees, local businesspeople on their lunch hour, and others. I found the letters that I had sent home over the course of my two years to be very useful and more representative of my first impressions.

Lisa Teyema, Cape Verde 1999-2001

Here are some of the ideas I used when talking to groups of middle schoolers:

1. I told them they could take only two bags and they were packing for two years. What would they take? We listed these things. Then I told them they would have no electricity or hot water, it would be very hot, and there would be lots of bugs. We revised the list. Next, I told them what I had packed: a hair dryer, fancy purse, and a tape player. Then I asked them what I should have left home.
2. We talked about and listed the kinds of things we could do to help out in developing countries. We listed teaching, building things, and medical help.
3. We talked about language differences and different cultures, including the nationalities represented in their school. We talked about how language and cultural differences influenced behavior.

Time went fast; I could have gone on for hours!

Kathy Vanegmond Duncan, Eastern Caribbean 1989-1991

Members of the Minority Peace Corps Association shared their Peace Corps experiences with 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, Guinea 1994-1996

The Greater Birmingham RPCVs helped students at an inner-city school called 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, and invited school personnel and parents to the dedication ceremony, which included a geography bee with the students and presentations by RPCVs who had helped with the world map project.

Susan Seay, Eastern Caribbean 1972-1973

On March 1, I had a special Peace Corps Day with my Spanish classes. I told them what I took with me to Côte d'Ivoire and showed them what I brought back. They were surprised to see my Peace Corps-issued passport full of visas and me with a full head of hair! I set the mood with some '60s music played on a small battery-run cassette player like the one I had with me overseas, and stories about the U.S. during that time. I talked about John F. Kennedy's vision and the Peace Corps mission and about what appropriate and sustainable development mean. I conveyed what I learned from the villagers with whom I lived and worked and what I learned about myself. I continued my presentation the following day with photos and slides. We talked about living and adapting to a different culture and the meaning of “culture.” I used the materials in the [kit] that I received; the map hangs in the front of my room along with an old Peace Corps poster. This is the fifth year that I have celebrated the Peace Corps anniversary with my students.

Richard Sidy, Côte d'Ivoire 1969-1971

