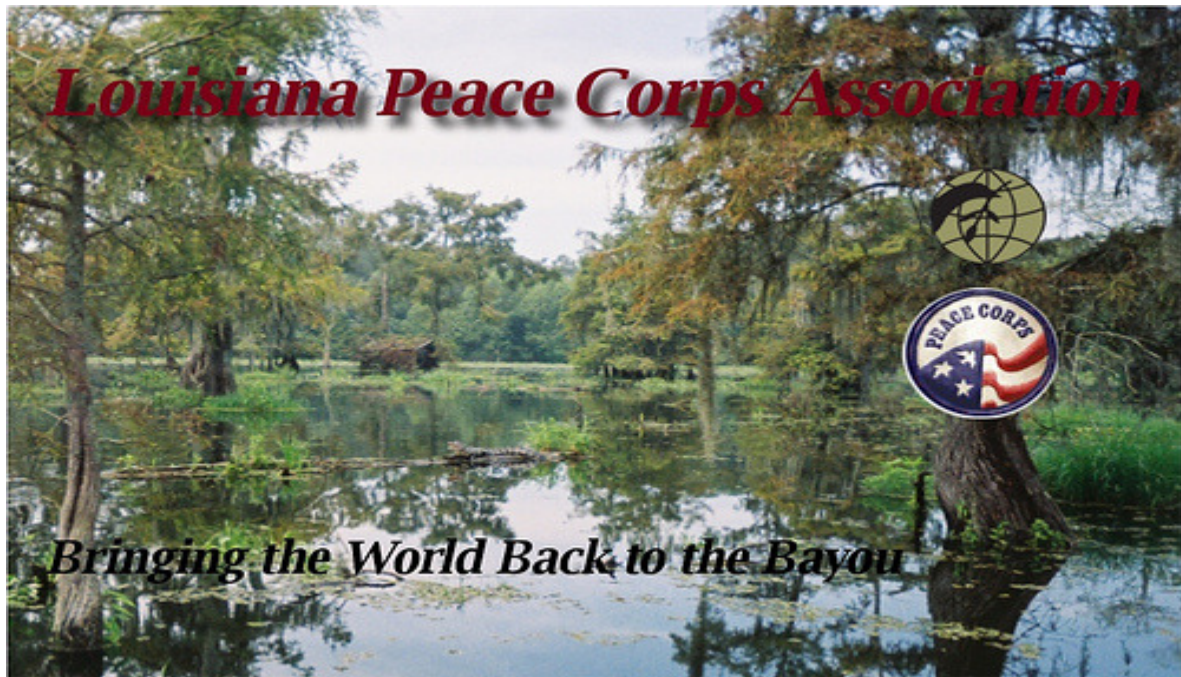


The LPCA Newsletter

Vol. 316, Issue 3G
February 14, 2010



Contents:

- Letter from the Editor
- Letter from LPCA President Ryan Mast
- Several Event announcements
- Info and an appeal from the Baobab Leadership Initiative
- A brief review of the Peace Corps-Third World-Technology connection (don't laugh, it exists)
- Upcoming LPCA Board Meeting Agenda (FYI, anyone can attend!)
- Other Stuff

(Editors Note: This Newsletter is designed to be printed out, read on paper, and then used to wrap dishes when you move, practice origami or trade for a Gambit Weekly, because they cost the same. We also recommend you print this at work to save money.)

Letter from the Editor

I recently had the privilege of speaking to the Sunrise Rotary Club of Metairie as part of Ryan Mast's awesome Third Goal efforts here in the region.

There were about a dozen people - mostly older, white businessmen - in attendance. After I gave a little spiel about the Peace Corps' past, present and future, I got the usual round of questions many of us are by now very used to: What did you eat? How qualified were you beforehand? Where did you live? What was your best/worst experience? Did you get sick?

Then, one of the more elderly gentleman piped up: "I was in the military, fought in Korea, and since I got back I get all kinds of benefits, from tax breaks, to preferential hiring, to lifelong free healthcare. What do you get as a Returned Peace Corps Volunteer?"

Being the first time a stranger had ever asked me that, I paused to think, then realized how sorry the answer was, and said, "Beyond three months of medical benefits immediately upon return and a couple of field-limited and competitive college scholarships, nothing."

"Wow," he and few others gasped. After my presentation, the gentleman approached me and said,

"People come up to me all the time and thank me for my service. I'd like to tell you the same. Thank you for your service to our country."

I can sadly say that 8 years after I COSed, that was the first time a stranger has said that to me. And it got me thinking.

I believe that a tour in the Peace Corps is no less an important service to America as a tour in the Military, even in times of war. I will expand upon this theme in the next Newsletter, especially as we start thinking about and planning Peace Corps' 50th Anniversary Celebrations and Events. In the meantime, please share your beliefs about whether Peace Corps Volunteers deserve as much respect and therefore similar benefits as military volunteers for their service.

In the meantime, please enjoy this issue, in which President Ryan Mast shares his thoughts on LPCA happenings; we learn more about the RPCV-run Baobab Leadership Initiative; we take a look at what Peace Corps and Technology; and, perhaps most importantly, we learn how you can get involved in the LPCA.

Bilabtasi (Till Soon)

-Josh Norman

write us at

larpcv@hotmail.com

LETTER FROM LPCA PRESIDENT RYAN MAST



Greetings LPCA members,

This has been a very busy spring for the State of Louisiana, filled with emotional highs and soaring optimism for the upcoming year. The same is true for many LPCA members who have been getting engaged in the community in various capacities including: 3rd Goal Initiative participants talking about their experiences, RPCV founded non-profits continuing their efforts in local communities, and recently returned PCVs continuing to find their way to Louisiana. While I am very proud of the efforts that have been put forth as an organization, 2010 continues to hold a lot of potential for the LPCA members and the group as a whole. I encourage everyone to continue to visit our website at www.lapeacecorps.com and follow the email blasts that contain important information about upcoming events. Additionally, if there are social or service events that you feel would be appropriate for LPCA members, please let us know by contacting us on the website or me directly at ryan.c.mast@gmail.com. Finally, stay tuned for the activities in celebration of the 50th Anniversary of the Peace Corps which will begin later this year. I hope this finds everyone happy and healthy and eager to continue living out JFK's vision laid out 50 years ago.

Kindest Regards,
Ryan Mast

Event Announcements

Pot-Luck Supper Tonight!

Bring your favorite International Dish to share with fellow RPCV's and future PCV's
We look forward to seeing you on Wednesday April 14th, at 6:30 pm
At the home of Sarah and Mark Truxillo
935 Burgundy # 3
New Orleans, LA 70116
Please RSVP: sarah.harelson9@gmail.com

Abita Brewery Tour

What: Abita Brewery Tour
When: Saturday, May 8th, 2010 (9:30am – 3:30pm)
Who: LAPCA - Current, Past & Future
Where: NOLA to Abita & Back! (Leave from / Drop off Address: TBA)
Cost: If 25 people commit (with monetary backing) by April 12th, the cost is \$25 / person.
(We are working on a discount for those signed up (& paid dues) with NPCA & LAPCA)
CONTACT: Devon McGuinness / devmcg.rock@gmail.com if you are interested. Please put Abita in the Subject Line.

RPCVs from Kenya to talk and stuff

Mike Madej (RPCV Kenya and LPCA Board Member) and his buddy Jeff are going to be talking with the World Affairs Council of New Orleans this Thursday, the 15th, from 7 to 9pm at the Bean Gallery (637 North Carrollton Avenue) about their experiences in Kenya during the 2008 flawed elections. If anyone is interested in participating in the discussion or if you would like to hear more please come out on Thursday. The World Affairs Council puts on lots of great speaking engagements all over the city to bring the International Community to New Orleans.

Room for Rent

RPCV Sarah Harelson Truxillo's co-worker has a place for rent. Please review this listing if you're interested: <http://neworleans.craigslist.org/roo/1673029124.html>

The Baobab Leadership Initiative

Founded by Cameroon RPCV Amy Webbeking and others, the Baobab Leadership Initiative develops leadership skills and a broader perspective in greater New Orleans public high school students through experiential learning in a different country and culture. This year long leadership program includes student-driven fundraising, speakers, research, team-building, and culminates in a service-learning trip to a developing country. Students become leaders in their communities through a broadened perspective, increased confidence, continued curiosity, and an enhanced awareness of their own ability to achieve success.

The group successfully took nearly a dozen students to Ghana a few summers ago and is looking to do the same again this summer.

And, you guessed it, **THEY NEED OUR HELP.**

Most importantly, they need money. Please consider donating whatever you can, \$1, \$8, \$20, or \$3,891.

They also sell great coffee and chocolate every Saturday morning from 10:00AM-2:00PM at the Hollygrove Market, 8301 Olive Street, proceeds benefiting the group.
www.hollygrovemarket.com.

They also need our support in other ways. Please contact either the LPCA newsletter or the group directly at baobableadershipinitiative@gmail.com

We look forward to your feedback!

If you wish to mail your donation, our address is below.

Baobab Leadership Initiative
P.O. Box 3204
New Orleans, LA 70177

www.baobableaders.org



A possible Peace Corps-Third World-Technology connection

Mali RPCV Mai-Lan Tomsen Bukovec was profiled on ZDNet.com for being one a very few women in the upper echelons of programming at Microsoft Corporation. Bukovec claims her Peace Corps service inspired her to take up programming.

Author Mary-Jo Foley writes: *“Tomsen Bukovec says she didn’t think a lot about computers and technology while growing up. Her family moved across a variety of U.S. embassies in the Far East and Russia, as her father was a career diplomat. She joined the Peace Corps after graduating from the University of California at San Diego with a degree in U.S. history and creative writing and was assigned to a forestry department post in rural Mali. There, she started thinking about how much technology could have made record-keeping and distribution better — and the technology-interest seed was planted. “All the technological infrastructure we had in the U.S.,” things like digital cameras, e-mail, etc., “could have made such a big difference” in Africa, she says.”*

Read the whole article at: <http://blogs.zdnet.com/microsoft/?p=5835&tag=coll;post-5835>

This story produced an interesting discussion on Facebook of the use of Open Source technology in the PEace Corps, and how it might benefit the Third World and Peace Corps volunteers.

Some comments:

Jayne Cravens Pro - How about some Open Source women worth watching?! Do PeaceCorps members promote free open source tools like OpenOffice and Firefox?

April 9 at 10:38am · Report

Marco Piña - thank you jayne! open source is the way to go, especially in the developing world. one of the volunteers in st. vincent introduced ubuntu. we definitely should introduce linux and other open source technology to our peace corps countries.

David Posey

Jayne, Marco - There are plenty of us promoting the use of open-source software in our communities.

So, for those of you who understand what I'm talking about, is promoting Open Source software a good way to bring technological advancement into the Third World? And should Peace Corps be embracing a drive like that?

Upcoming LPCA Board Agenda

*The next LPCA Board meeting will be on April 22, at 7 p.m. at Board Member David Wessel's house. (An experience not to be missed!) Please note, anyone can attend and participate in Board meetings. **THAT MEANS YOU.***

Agenda

1. Committee Reports and Updates
2. Event organization/protocol for announcements
3. LPCA survey
4. Political support statewide and in CNO
5. 50th Anniversary organizing
6. 3rd Goal update
7. Board member changes

If ANYONE wishes to add agenda items or attend the Board meeting, please contact larpcv@hotmail.com.

THE LOUISIANA PEACE CORPS ASSOCIATION BOARD

Here are the your Board Members of the Louisiana Peace Corps Association for 2010:

Ryan Mast	President
Bruce Ingber	Vice President, Service chair
Devon McGuinness	Vice President, Social co-chair
Sarah Truxillo	Vice President, Social co-chair

Brian Lockett	Treasurer
Aimee Lyons	Secretary
Michael Hornsby	Membership Coordinator
Michael Grodsky	Web Coordinator
Mike Madej	Grant Coordinator
David Wessell	Director-at-large, 50 th Anniversary Liaison
Josh Norman	Newsletter
Veneeth Iyengar	Baton Rouge Liaison
Ruth Mentley	Lafayette Liaison
Tony Li	Tulane Liaison

Other Stuff

- From Mike Madej, LPCA Board Member and Grant Coordinator: *“I would like to thank Aimee Lyons, Libby Bryant, Devin McGuinness, and our special out of town guest Glen Miller for helping out last weekend at the French Quarter Festival. This motley crew was slingin' drinks at the Abita Beer tent and the Southern Comfort Tent keeping the thirsty audience refreshed on Saturday night during the FQFI in front of the Brass Band Stage. Long lines and long shifts were the special of the night, but everyone who volunteered held their own and kept the drinks a flowin'. I personally would like to say "Thank You" for making this event a success, for representing the LPCA and for keeping the FQFI a free event. I hope everyone had as good of a time as I had. FQFI WHAT!?”*
- The Newsletter Editor/Publisher/Writer/Drinker would like to announce the death of the Tilt-Shift Photo Contest. No entries were submitted, despite the awesome, free, professional service the Newsletter team could have provided. So, blah.

