



An Affiliate of the National Peace Corps Association

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March, 2021

Again this year our March newsletter will not be following the usual format of the reporting of previous and upcoming gatherings.

However, we have scheduled a

Pedals for Progress collection in May and certainly hope to be able to enjoy and schedule the activities we have missed this past year, including:

- Spring dinner
- Summer Picnic
- Cow Harbor Parade
- Fall Gathering in Eastport

This is the Press Release sent out by **Lyn Dobrin**, our Media Coordinator. Thanks to Lyn as well as to **Kathy Williams-Ging** and **Bette Bass**, who each year coordinate our collection. This is our 18th year of coordinating with Pedals.

Thank you to **Brian (Korea '67--70)** and **Gina Richardson** who originally secured this site in Middle Island last year and were able to reschedule it for this May.

Pedals for Progress Recycling Bikes and Sewing Machines Collection on Saturday, May 15, 2021

It's time to put those old bikes and sewing machines to good use. Returned Peace Corps Volunteers of Long Island is collecting used bicycles and sewing machines on Saturday, May 15 (rain or shine) from 11 am to 2 pm, at the United Church of Christ, 271 Middle Country Road, Middle Island (enter parking lot on Church Lane). Items collected will be refurbished by the international project Pedals for Progress & Sewing Peace and sent to Tanzania in East Africa.

Anyone with an adult or child's bicycle in repairable condition or a working portable sewing machine is urged to donate the item. The program does not accept "bikes for parts," disassembled bikes or tricycles. Since it costs \$40 to collect, process, ship, rebuild and distribute each bicycle, a donation toward shipping costs is necessary (suggested minimum \$10 per item). All cash and material donations are fully deductible and a receipt will be provided on site.

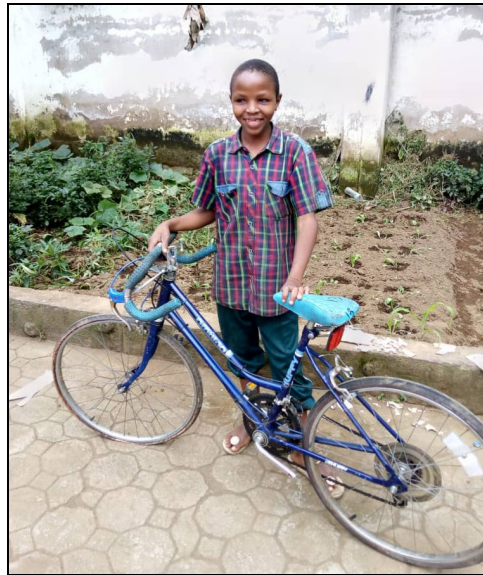
This is the 18th bike/sewing machine collection organized by Returned Peace Corps Volunteers of Long. Since beginning this collection, RPCV of LI has collected 1611 bicycles and 227 sewing machines.

Pedals for Progress collects bicycles and sewing machines annually and transfers this material wealth to those more needy. To date, more than 161,446 bicycles and 5,482 sewing machines have been shipped to developing countries in Latin America, Africa and Eastern Europe. In these countries the bikes are reconditioned by partner agencies and distributed at low cost to poor working adults and children.

These bikes provide reliable transportation for commuting to school, work, transporting product to market and accessing health care and

other services. Remen Eliona, a Tanzanian schoolboy, describes how difficult it was for him to get to school each day: “I live a long way from school and had to get up very early and walk, I was already tired when I got there in the morning. In the evening he would arrive home very late and exhausted.” With his bike he says, “I will be swiftly riding to and from school. I will moreover spare my energy for class sessions and am now confident to boost my performance. I do not have enough and proper words to describe my joy and happiness at this time.

Remen Eliona from Tanzania uses his new bike to get to school.



Sewing machine shipments help initiate educational programs and generate income opportunities that may otherwise remain out of reach for many people. Steady employment for adults is vital to the development and success of struggling communities.

For more information please contact **Kathy Williams-Ging** at (631) 549-4873 (email ktsging@optonline.net) or **Bette Bass** at (516) 606-1400 (email bettembass@gmail.com)

The Peace Corps is celebrating its 60th anniversary this year. Members of the RPCVs of Long Island see as their mission both to serve in the communities where they live and to support programs in developing countries.



TCP Global Project

Following is a letter from **Helene Dudley** (RPCV Colombia, Albania/Slovakia), co-founder of [TCP Global](#), an affiliate group of the National Peace Corps Association (NPCA). Our group contributed \$100 to this project.

Dear Returned Peace Corps Volunteers of Long Island,

If you served in Colombia, Ghana, Guatemala, Kenya, Liberia, Nepal, Niger, Nigeria, Peru, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Togo, Uganda or Zambia, TCP Global invites you to learn about our virtual community and economic development work in your country. If you served anywhere else, we invite you to connect us to potential new [partners](#).

[TCP Global](#) has more than twenty years of experience building zero-overhead, sustainable micro-loan programs and recently passed the \$1 million milestone in loans issued. See the attached congratulatory letter from Peace Corps Director, Jody Olsen.

Our [team](#) recently expanded to include six evacuees who added new energy to our loan program. We have no paid staff and 100% of donations are distributed as micro-loans with nothing withheld for overhead in the U.S. or abroad.

The National Peace Corps Association serves as the fiscal agent for TCP Global, which is one of its Community Fund partners. The long-term vision is to join forces with other RPCV-led projects to provide not just micro-loans but also improve health care, environmental protection, water and sanitation, electric and internet connectivity and education to improve the quality of life in small and remote communities so that migration will one day be a choice rather than a necessity. The NPCA provides grants and support for RPCV initiatives that may one day join our efforts.

To learn more about TCP Global or to bring a loan program to your PC site, or to learn other ways to get involved, contact tcpglobal@peacecorpsconnect.org

Our RPCV group is co-sponsoring the following project, along with Westbury Arts and the Ethical Humanist Society of LI.

Thank you for **Arthur Dobrin** for suggesting our involvement.

Call for Volunteers: Volunteer Corps for the Westbury Union Free School District



Dear Friends,

Westbury Arts is happy to share with you a volunteering opportunity with Volunteer Corps. This is a pilot program for the Westbury Union Free School District **to bring students and community members together for mutual benefit.**

Volunteers will collaborate with Westbury students by providing a variety of practical, fun and academic experiences. These can include:

- tutoring
- mentoring
- leading discussion groups
- taking students on virtual tours
- civic engagement
- networking

This program is designed to create a greater sense of community and togetherness while enhancing the education of the students. We are confident that this program will have a positive impact on both the students and the volunteers.

To become a volunteer and learn more about the program, please contact Arthur Dobrin at arthur.dobrin@gmail.com

PEACE CORPS/ RPCV NEWS

We're marking the events in 1960 and 1961 that led to the creation of the Peace Corps. And we seek inspiration in how we can reimagine Peace Corps for a changed world.

At 2 a.m. on October 14 the Peace Corps community kicked off 60th anniversary celebrations with a once-a-decade gathering: We returned (virtually) to the steps of the student union at University of Michigan to commemorate the impromptu speech by John F. Kennedy that helped launch the Peace Corps.

The questions that caught the zeitgeist: “How many of you who are going to be doctors are willing to spend your days in Ghana? Technicians or engineers: how many of you are willing to work in the Foreign Service and spend your lives traveling around the world? On your willingness to do that, not merely to serve one year or two years in the service, but on your willingness to contribute part of your life to this country, I think will depend the answer whether a free society can compete. I think it can. And I think Americans are willing to contribute. But the effort must be far greater than we've ever made in the past.”

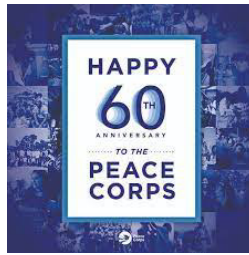
[Read more here.](#) (CTRL click to follow the link)

JFK at the Union: 2 a.m., October 14, 1960. Photo courtesy Peace Corps

November 2 marked the anniversary in 1960 of [a speech at the Cow Palace in San Francisco](#), in the final days of his campaign for president, in which Sen. John F. Kennedy proposed “a peace corps of talented young men and women, willing and able to serve their country in this fashion for three years.”

These “ambassadors of peace,” he said, “would be a volunteer corps, and volunteers would be sought among not only talented young men and women, but also Americans, of whatever age, who wished to serve the great Republic and serve the cause of freedom, men who have taught or engineers or doctors or nurses, who have reached the age of retirement, or who in the midst of their work wished to serve their country and freedom, should be given an opportunity and an agency in which their talents could serve our country around the globe.” [Watch a clip here.](#)

Adapted from the Peace Corps website([peace corps.gov](http://peace-corps.gov))



By WorldView Staff

The anniversary was commemorated during Peace Corps Week, February 28 – March 6, 2021.

This year the Peace Corps celebrates 60 years since President John F. Kennedy established the agency in 1961. The theme for the anniversary is “The Peace Corps through the Decades: Sixty Years, Countless Stories” and was commemorated during Peace Corps Week, February 28 – March 6. There will be activities throughout the year celebrating the Peace Corps.

The anniversary and Peace Corps Week commemorate international peace and friendship, volunteerism, and service. Over 60 years, more than 240,000 Americans have served in 141 countries. After working alongside local leaders around the world, these individuals returned home ready to share their skills and passion for service with communities in the United States. “As the Peace Corps celebrates our 60th anniversary, I am reminded of how far we have come and what an unprecedented time we are in now. The past 60 years have truly prepared us for this historic moment. During a pandemic that has touched every corner of the globe, it’s clear that we are all in this together,” says Acting Peace Corps Director Carol Spahn. “As we look to the next 60 years, I know the Peace Corps will continue to be a community of people—all over the world—willing to do the hard work of promoting peace and friendship.”

To join the commemoration, [check out](#) photos of returned Peace Corps Volunteers from each decade since 1961 and key milestones that shaped our history.

Ways to celebrate:

- Visit our [Peace Corps Week webpage](#) to find virtual celebratory events, read stories of service, and more.
- Learn about the Peace Corps’ [history](#) via our website or [our video](#).
- Host a virtual [international festival](#) anytime throughout the year!
- Teachers and other community leaders can host a [virtual talk](#) in their classroom, club or meeting in which a returned volunteer will speak about their service.
- Help students learn about the Peace Corps through the decades and around the world by using a [Peace Corps lesson plan](#).
- Apply to [become a Volunteer](#)! Although COVID-19 has restricted the agency’s ability to send Americans abroad, the Peace Corps is still taking applications and will send Volunteers to the field as soon as the health and safety of Volunteers, staff, and host communities can be assured. For more information on current openings and to learn more about how COVID-19 may impact service departure, please visit our [Volunteer openings page](#).

About the Peace Corps: The Peace Corps sends Americans with a passion for service abroad on behalf of the United States to work with communities and create lasting change. Volunteers develop sustainable solutions to address challenges in education, health, community economic development, agriculture, the environment and youth development.

Through their Peace Corps experience, volunteers gain a unique cultural understanding and a life-long commitment to service that positions them to succeed in today's global economy. Since President John F. Kennedy established the Peace Corps in 1961, more than 240,000 Americans of all ages have served in over 140 countries worldwide.

PEACE CORPS CONNECT | JULY 29–31, 2021

Howard University, Washington, D.C. + Online

We hope that we'll be able to come together in person for our annual conference, hosted by Howard University. But wherever you are in the U.S. or around the world you can join us—because we'll have a robust digital program.



A message from Acting Peace Corps Director Carol Spahn on the Contributions of the Peace Corps to the Fight against the COVID-19 Pandemic in the U.S.

President Biden has pledged to combat the COVID-19 pandemic with a whole-of-government effort, mobilizing all available resources. What does this mean for the Peace Corps as we prepare to return vaccinated volunteers to service?

First, our staff at posts have been hard at work developing plans for future programming through the lens of COVID-19, including looking at Volunteer assignments and host country needs. The communities that Volunteers will return to have been changed, as we have, by the experience of the pandemic. Peace Corps service will look different, with increased mitigation measures being put into place to protect the health and safety of our Volunteers, host country staff, and host communities. Our overseas staff are working to support the agency mission in a

changed world, consulting with host country governments, and reimagining what future Volunteer service will look like.

Second, while we continue to plan for our overseas return, I am excited to announce that the agency is prepared to meet this global moment starting right **now**, by fielding the second-ever domestic deployment of Peace Corps Response Volunteers (PCRVs). We have been asked by Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for assistance with its massive undertaking of vaccine distribution across the United States. The PCRVs, members of a cohort that will be comprised of evacuated Volunteers who completed service in 2020, will serve in Community Vaccination Centers (CVCs) and will provide crucial administrative, logistical, and language support for a period of three months. FEMA's vaccination plan calls for equity to inform all aspects of the federal vaccination effort. The PCRVs who contribute to this effort will bring valuable cross-cultural experience, language abilities, and adaptability garnered during their time overseas as they contribute at home. Volunteers will be vaccinated at the CVCs as a condition of their service, which will reduce risk to themselves and those with whom they come into contact.

Our larger Peace Corps family, including thousands of RPCVs, have been meeting the needs of the COVID-19 era throughout their communities for the past year. By launching this historic input of Peace Corps Response Volunteers, we honor their spirit of service and further engage the Peace Corps community for the common good.

Thank you to each one of you for the service you give to one another, at home and abroad.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Carol Spahn". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Carol" and last name "Spahn" clearly legible.

Carol Spahn
Acting Director

NPCA ADVOCACY

Bette Bass --Advocacy Coordinator for Returned Peace Corps Volunteers of LI
Bette Bass is the liaison between The National Peace Corps Association and Returned Peace Corps Volunteers of Long Island. Her role is to help carry out strategies to advance key public policy initiatives designed to recognize, honor and support the Peace Corps and its alumni. She is in regular contact with Jonathan Pearson, the NPCA Advocacy Director.

On the Advocacy front, we are in the process of setting up virtual Zoom meetings with our local representatives. I know I attempted this last fall, but it didn't work out. If you are interested in participating in a 15-20 minute meeting with your Congressional Representative, please contact me at :bettembass@gmail.com. I have already been in touch with some of you who previously expressed interest.

We will be advocating for the Peace Corps stressing the new fiscal year Peace Corps budget, as well as H.R.1456, the Reauthorization of Peace Corps Bill, redeployment plans, and other pertinent matters.

This is especially important now, when Peace Corps currently has no Peace Corps Volunteers in the field.

All five of the New York State Returned Peace corps Volunteer affiliates of NPCA are in the process of setting up joint meetings with Senator Schumer and Senator Gillibrand's offices.



Also as part of ongoing celebrations of the Peace Corps 60th Anniversary, on April 2nd Bette was part of a panel sponsored by the Public Affairs Office of the American Embassy in Addis Adaba, Ethiopia. During the Zoom conference, 4 panel members spoke to 45 participants from Ethiopia and other African countries. Each panel member spoke for 5 minutes about highlights of their experiences in Ethiopia, followed by an interactive question and answer period.

A big thank you to all of you who have taken action in support of Peace Corps!

For those not interested in virtual meetings at this time, we also have the following continuing letter writing campaigns:

On student debt: One item that has been a long standing issue but not addressed in H.R. 1456 involves providing more relief for volunteers or applicants facing heavy student loan debt. One reason is that Peace Corps issues are a subset of the broader student debt debate occurring now. With this in mind, we have posted [this action](#) at : <https://advocacy.peacecorpsconnect.org/email-congress#/68i> inviting individuals to weigh in with Congress on the student debt debate and to personalize their messages to share their personal experiences.

Other Letter Writing Actions: While a lofty goal, we would like to set the challenge of 60,000 messages to Congress in the 60th anniversary year. Through our electronic letter writing and other notifications, we can only confirm 700 messages to Congress during the first three months of the year. Please keep us posted on other communications you are aware of (phone calls, postcards, etc.). Use this link: <https://advocacy.peacecorpsconnect.org/email-congress#/> to contact Congress.

We want to encourage ongoing communications to Congress through this critical year! If you take one of these actions, please let us know through bettembass@gmail.com. Thank you.

Reply Reply All Forward

Please see Bette's posts on how you can help NPCA and Peace Corps by going to our Facebook page

<https://facebook.com/LIRPCV>

OUR FACEBOOK PAGE and WEBSITE

Have you been following our Facebook page where we are posting information about members of RPCVs of LI and other items we think are of interest to people who have served in the Peace Corps?

Check out the site <https://www.facebook.com/LIRPCV>

(Hit Ctrl and click to open) and read about recent LI-RPCV events, as well as items of interest to the Peace Corps community.

We hope that you will "like" the page and also send us news about what you've been up to.

Call or email Lyn Dobrin (Kenya '65-'67) if you have question or items of interest you would like her to post: 516-997-8545; lyndobrin@gmail.com

Our group now has a website! It is on the NPCA Silkstart platform. Ella Dowell, the NPCA tech wizard, assisted Kathy Williams-Ging in launching the website in the Spring of 2019. We keep the website updated with news and upcoming events.

Check it out: <https://rpcvsoflongisland.peacecorpsconnect.org>

ONCE AND FUTURE EVENTS

Spring Dinner

While we have had a spring dinner in May or June for several years, with the current pandemic, we will certainly hold off on scheduling with any restaurant until we can determine the feasibility and safety of meeting.

We had been thinking of an Afghani restaurant in Hicksville. Does anyone have any other suggestions for a future dinner? If so, contact Bette at bettembass@gmail.com or Linda R-Merola (LRM1980@aol.com)

IF NORTHPORT IS STILL ABLE TO SAFELY SPONSOR THE PARADE:

Please consider marching with us this coming September. Marching behind our banner is a great way to help with Peace Corps' Third Goal (Bringing the World Back Home), as well as a fun way to spend an afternoon. After the parade there are harbor front activities, including rides and vendors.

As we walk we receive a warm welcome from the spectators and our fellow marchers.



ANNUAL REQUEST FOR DUES

There is no longer a yearly membership fees for NPCA (National Peace Corps Association). Any one can now join for free. However, NPCA does encourage contributions which will be used to fund projects. People who send donations to NPCA will be called "Project Partners."

All returned PC volunteers will automatically become members of NPCA. To

continue receiving *Worldview* magazine, a person would have to be a Project Partner or have given another type of donation.

They will still process the \$15 membership fee to join the Long Island affiliate if you choose to send your dues through the national organization. Otherwise, you can (please) just send your \$15 check, made out to "RPCVs of Long Island," to Kathy Williams-Ging, 2 Prospect Drive South, Huntington Station, NY 11746

Our local dues are used to support projects that are most relevant to our members. Examples include helping to fund, libraries, school construction, and playgrounds where Long Island PCVs are currently serving.

Thank you!

PROJECT UPDATES



Hope Children's Fund

Larry Hohler, who is very supportive of our RPCV group, is a co-founder of the Hope Children's Fund. He and his wife Yvette have made several trips to Kenya to visit the Home. Some of us have sponsored children there. If you would like to help, please contact Larry at hohlerj@aol.com

Incorporated in 2003, Hope Children's Fund is a New York State Licensed 501(C)3 that provides for the physical and emotional needs of some of the most vulnerable AIDS-affected orphans who were living on the streets of Meru, Kenya. Its goal is to furnish the food, clothing, shelter and medical care that will enable these children to be enrolled in local schools. At the Jerusha Mwiraria Hope Children's Fund Home we expect to provide these children with the tools that will help them to become productive adults.

This year the HCF board will continue to focus on providing quality educational opportunities to the children we serve in Meru, Kenya. In April, fifteen of our children will be taking the national exams that determine if, when, and where they continue their educational journeys.

October 5th marked the return to school for standard (grade) 4, standard (grade) 8 and form 4 (senior year). All post-secondary school youth returned to their colleges, universities and technical training schools. The remaining children will return to classes on January 9th. In April, a number of our youth will be taking the national exams. These multi-day exams largely determine each child's educational future.

Both boards were able to carry out a highly successful 16th Annual Bi-Continental Run. Veronica Kirima, the home's director, and Kenyan board members held their portion in honor of founder Joseph Kirima, who passed away on January 30, 2020. Veronica Kirima is working hard to supervise the planting of crops on our farm acreage. The yields from the farm reduce our dependence on market prices for the food staples needed to feed the children. The farm produces maize, arrowroot, onions and greens. The children from the home assist in the planting and harvesting of the crops. On the U.S. side, fundraising has been extremely difficult during the pandemic. Many of our fundraisers have been postponed or cancelled. Our craft fairs, a source of income and publicity, have been totally eliminated. Our St. Anselm's Basket Raffle has been postponed indefinitely. Our 4th annual gala has been postponed until July 24, 2021. We are extremely hopeful that 2021 will allow both boards to return to some semblance of normalcy. The one consistent factor has been the steady and consistent generosity of our supporters on both sides of the pond. Together we will get through this pandemic as will the children under our care. We want to give special thanks to our many long-standing donors who make all our work possible. You are changing the lives of some of the world's most vulnerable children . . . forever!!

Please help our orphanage while shopping online. When shopping AMAZON, go to smile.amazon.com and choose Hope Children's Fund as the organization you want to support. For shopping at over 2400 online stores and services other than Amazon, many of which you are probably already using, please go to our website, www.hopechildrensfund.org and click "sign up" under iGive. It is free, makes shopping easier, and you even get a small tax deduction!

. Please help us help the helpless with your tax-deductible donation. Make your check payable to: Hope Children's Fund, P.O. Box 387, Setauket, New York, 11733.

Over the years, one glaring issue for our orphanage has been the lack of **safe, reliable transportation** for the children. We have lacked a vehicle to transport the children to schools, shopping and medical visits. Transportation safety is critical in Meru as the common means of travel--walking, matatus (minibus), boda boda (motorcycles) and lorries (trucks) can be dangerous. Indeed, over the years, two of our children -- Glory and Michell -- have been killed on the road not too far from the home. While having our own vehicle would not provide all the needed transport all the time, it would ensure greater safety for more of our children more of the time. Additionally, a new vehicle will also hopefully help us reach our goal of self-sustainability as hired transportation is a significant part of our monthly budget expenses. We are very fortunate to have received a \$10,000 grant from a "secret" donor to help purchase a vehicle. We are very excited to announce two additional partnerships on the vehicle. **An anonymous donor offered to match the first \$5,000 in donations to the vehicle appeal. This matching donation will be available until June 30,2021.** NYU/PDK (New York University/Phi Delta Kappa) has pledged to donate \$2,000 to the vehicle fund. Mombasa Toyota will provide us with a new Hiace minivan (16 seats) for \$39,000. If we cannot raise enough funds, we will purchase the best used vehicle possible. Kyle Spillane is in the process of setting up a Go Fund Me page for the vehicle appeal. **Please consider donating to the vehicle fund. We have established the following sponsorship levels: Elephant \$2,000 + Hippo \$250 Lion \$1,000 Giraffe \$100 Rhino \$500**

Any donation, small or large, will inch us closer to the goal of safe transportation. Please send your donation to Hope Children's Fund P.O. Box 387, Setauket, New York. Please mark your check or donation "vehicle donation." Thank you in advance for your continued support.

ABOUT US

We are asking for a volunteer to take over the position of Membership on our Long Island RPCV board.

We certainly hope that we can eventually resume normal activities and meet.

In the interim-- be kind, be well and stay positive!