National Peace Corps Association
Group Leaders Forum (GLF)
October 4, 2008 in San Francisco, CA

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 10:35 a.m. by Ben Bellows, GLF Coordinator. Frank Yates, Friends of Ghana, served as the meeting's parliamentarian.

Eligibility of voters was confirmed and a quorum established, totaling 42: 27 in person and 15 by phone.

Eligible onsite voters (27) were Bruce Anderson (Charlotte, NC); Jessica Matthews (Columbia River, Portland, OR); David Miron (First Coast, FL); Abby Wasserman (Colombia); Martha Brown Gould (Congo); Frank Yates (Ghana); Jensy Richards (Kenya); Jack Dougherty (Macedonia); Sandra Lauffer (Malawi); Jay Davidson (Mauritania); Tim Resch (Morocco); Diane Choplin (Niger); Mike Goodkind (Nigeria); Carolyn Nickels-Cox (Thailand); Juliet Dervin (Heart of Texas); Mike Learned (LGBT RPCVs); Allegra Troiano (Milwaukee); Jayma Brown (Northern California); Sarah McMeans (Philippines); Arianne Burger (Colorado); Arlene Goldberg (Hampton Roads, VA); Geraldine Gillio (New Jersey); Chris Glaudel (Sacramento Valley, CA); Rose Wills (Santa Barbara); Joana Ramos (Seattle); Randall Donohue (Ventura County, CA); Joe Hindman (West Cascade, Eugene, OR).

Eligible voters by phone (15) were Gloria Levin (Bolivia/Peru); Juli Powers (Atlanta); Shayne Bell (Chicago); Lyndsey Wilson-Williams (Burkina Faso); Pat Reilly (Liberia); Barbara Janes (Pakistan); Roger Weiss (Dominican Republic); Thais-Lyn Trayer (MEGOBARI Foundation); Tony Gasbarro (Northern Alaska); Emily Eisenhauer (South Florida – Miami); Molly Mattessich (Washington, DC); Kate Schachter (Wisconsin – Madison); Mike Murray (Saint Louis); Mona Melanson (San Diego); Tom Penniston (Shriver Peaceworker Program).

Approval of Minutes from 2007 Meeting

Ben Bellows, GLF Coordinator moved that the minutes from the 2007 GLF meeting, held June 30, 2007, be approved. The motion was seconded and approved by voice acclamation.

Group Recognition and Awards

NPCA Board Chair Jan Guifarro and President Kevin Quigley presented the 2008 awards to member groups at the Annual General Meeting that preceded this meeting. Anne Baker, NPCA Vice President, asked the award-winners to stand and be recognized by the Group Leaders Forum:

The 2008 Loret Miller Ruppe Award for Outstanding Community Service:
to **Project Wizard of the World (WOW), Friends of Malaysia.** Project WOW brings RPCVs from Malaysia to grade school classrooms around the country in an effort to fulfill the third goal of Peace Corps - bringing the world back home - by promoting global awareness and cross-cultural understanding among young Americans. The 42 RPCVs of Project WOW use Malaysian folktales as a gateway for children to gain broader cultural understanding of Malaysia. In 30 states, over 3,300 elementary school students have gained some familiarity with Malaysia via these folktales, multi-media presentations, flashcards, show-and-tell, discussion, and Malaysian memorabilia - all provided by Tourism Malaysia and corporate donors such as Tuttle Publishing, G2, Inc., with support from DHL, Malaysia. Project WOW has been has been remarkably successful in organizing the project, engaging RPCVs, and reaching out to their communities nationwide.

2008 Electronic Media Award Winners

First Place: Heart of Texas Peace Corps Association for their website
Second Place: Minnesota Returned Peace Corps Volunteers for their website
Third Place: San Diego Peace Corps Association for their website
Fourth Place: Friends of Kyrgyzstan for their e-newsletter

2008 Print Media Award Winners

First Place: Amigos de Bolivia y Peru for the newsletter ***Yachaspa*** **(Knowing)**
Second Place: Friends of Nigeria for the ***Friends of Nigeria Newsletter***
Third Place: Central Missouri Returned Peace Corps Volunteers for the ***Central Missouri RPCV Newsletter***
Fourth Place: San Diego Peace Corps Association for the ***Pacific Waves*** newsletter

Updates

Regional Meetings:
Anne Baker reported on 2008 Regional NPCA meetings. Objectives for these meetings were to facilitate networking and improve communication with the greater Peace Corps community; build capacity for NPCA member groups to best achieve their mission; and share information on key programs for maximized group engagement and impact.

Regional meetings were held in Atlanta on March 29, 2008 and in Seattle on May 3, 2008, with additional GLF Breakout meetings in the afternoon of October 4, 2008 (after the GLF itself) in San Francisco, and a virtual meeting to take place some time later in the year. These meetings were made possible by a $10,000 grant to NPCA from the RPCVs of Wisconsin-Madison for this purpose. In scheduling these meetings to coincide with the Expos held the following day in both Atlanta and Seattle, NPCA was able to leverage funds for maximum benefit (in this case from the Cooperative Agreement with Peace Corps, which helped pay for travel expenses in getting both Kevin and Anne to those cities).

Atlanta and Seattle Meetings:

Atlanta – March 29	Seattle – May 3
12 people from 10 groups	**22 people from 12 groups**
Issues Discussed	**Issues Discussed**
• Membership – What does it mean – How to grow it – Should there be a membership fee or not • Fundraising – How to do it – Finding the right projects to support – Channels for supporting projects • Leadership – Succession Planning	• Membership – How get more people involved? – Avoid burnout – What do members want? • Fundraising – How to raise funds – How to invest/use funds • Governance – Technical – structure, bylaws – Turnover, officer burnout • Going electronic – implications? • Relations with Peace Corps

There were comments and observations from Bruce Anderson (Charlotte, NC RPCVs) who attended the Atlanta meeting and Joana Ramos (Seattle RPCVs) who attended the Seattle meeting. Scott Watenpaugh (Northern California) asked if there were any "learnings" or conclusions that came out of the two meetings. Anne talked about the similarities of issues and the differences depending on the groups and that no specific conclusions evolved, just good helpful discussion and the exchange of ideas. She encouraged group leaders to read the extensive notes on the meetings as posted to the website: http://www.rpcv.org/pages/sitepage.cfm?id=1852

Virtual Community:
This presentation was made by Erica Burman, NPCA Director of Communications, following the background and introduction by Anne Baker.

Some Background:
In 2005 NPCA staff and interested members prepared a Request for Proposal for the creation of a virtual Peace Corps community that would be put in place and administered by NPCA. In 2006 the NPCA Board endorsed the Virtual Community plan concept. $400,000 would be needed over three years to implement. In 2007 NPCA Groups showed support and with a match contributed $21,000 to implement improvements to NPCA website. Expenses to date (8/30/08) for group funds are $4,740 with $16,687.50 remaining.

Project Deliverables and Opportunities in 2008:
Data base expansion to include all individuals in the data base has been completed. Adjusting on-line self-service membership options and automatic direct deposit of member dues to group accounts (no more rebating) are on hold. Anne reported that a number of funding opportunities have now arisen to allow NPCA to move forward

aggressively in building the virtual community (which will address these issues and more).

These opportunities include online mentoring program expansion, June meeting on the future of Peace Corps at Pocantico, an anticipated Chrysler Foundation grant of between $25,000 to $50,000, connection with the Gates Foundation for Africa Rural Connect, and the outcome of the Changing Our World Feasibility Study for 50th Anniversary Fundraising.

Peace Corps Social Networking Site:
Erica Burman then discussed plans and task force participants for a Peace Corps Social Networking Site. The task force's role is to help create the vision/mission of the site and to provide on-going advice, guidance, and networking to ensure that the Peace Corps Social Network website is an award-winning project, truly representative of the entire Peace Corps community and their many initiatives. Members include those with internet, social sites, and other important areas of expertise. Kevin Quigley and Erica Burman are the two NPCA staff members on the task force.

Subject to approval of the NPCA, the primary responsibilities of the task force are:

- Fundraising
- Ensuring the inclusion of existing social networking efforts
- Job description and recruitment of a full time employee to manage the project
- Preparing Requests for Proposal
- Determining vendor selection, goals, timetables, deadlines

Existing networks that contain Peace Corps content, such as Wiki, Facebook, Yahoo! Groups, Peace Corps Writers, LinkedIn, will all be accessible through the site. Critical ingredients of success require that it be community driven, have an open platform, be inspirational in brand and design, and possess expandable technology and infrastructure.

Next steps and timelines for the task force include:

- Confirmation of the independent role of the task force and the inclusion of existing social networks
- Finalizing funding sources for launch and to sustain through year three.
- Identifying vendor and a full time employee to manage the site.
- Setting beta site at end of January 2009.

Erica also presented several slides with possible design and layout as examples of what pages on the site might look like. Anne Baker then summarized many of the points presented.

There was substantial discussion from the floor and over the phone about some of the issues. Rose Wills (Santa Barbara), Juliet Dervin (Heart of Texas), Gloria Levin (Bolivia/Peru), Jensy Richards (Kenya), Arlene Goldberg (Hampton Roads, VA), and Chuck Ludlam (Asia/Pacific representative on NPCA Board) asked questions about the nature of this social website and how it would differ from sites such as Facebook. Several

people expressed concerns about older members who were less internet savvy or those just not interested in the sharing of information typical of such sites. Mike Goodkind (Friends of Nigeria) noted that his group, comprised of older volunteers, relies heavily on electronic communication and that it crucial to move forward with the times. Other concerns included the cost of such a site and its financial viability. Jensy Richards (Kenya) commented that such a site might be an inducement to join the NPCA.

MorePeaceCorps:
NPCA Advocacy Coordinator, Jonathan Pearson, presented information about the MorePeaceCorps campaign, a project of the National Peace Corps Association. It was given the name MorePeaceCorps to give it a distinctive brand that could focus on its goals.

Purpose of MorePeaceCorps is to build a bigger, better, bolder Peace Corps. Goals are to double the size of Peace Corps by the 50th anniversary in 2011, consider and advance improvements to address future needs and meet the challenges of current volunteers, and expand and unite the voices supporting Peace Corps and its mission at home and abroad.

NPCA's advocacy role has been strengthened. There have been several recent victories on Capitol Hill including: the removal of Peace Corps references from military recruitment legislation and securing an additional $10 million for Peace Corps' budget in 2007. MorePeaceCorps intends to create a broad, energetic and active movement, going beyond the traditional Peace Corps community advocating for a bigger, better and bolder Peace Corps.

Status of MorePeaceCorps since January 2008:

- Rajeev Goyal (Nepal 01-03) hired as Campaign Coordinator
- Over 600 outreach calls made to member group leaders and other stakeholders
- Website (www.morepeacecorps.org) launched
- 80 prominent supporters identified, including former Presidents Carter (US) and Toledo (Peru)
- MorePeaceCorps Campaign goals incorporated into Service Nation Summit
- 100 MorePeaceCorps parties (information and fundraising) held around the world
- Contacts and visits made with more than 1000 supporters in nearly 40 cities and towns in 14 states

Jonathan described two MorePeaceCorps house parties, one in Palo Alto, California, the other in Lewiston, Idaho, and other meetings between MorePeaceCorps advocates with other local elected officials either in Washington or in their home states.

Janet Greig (who hosted the Palo Alto house party with her husband Wiley Greig) energetically described her involvement in and enthusiasm for the MorePeaceCorps campaign.

The next outreach effort will be October 13/14 on college campuses where students are being encouraged to mark the 48th anniversary of John Kennedy's appearance at the University of Michigan calling upon students to serve their countries overseas in the name of peace.

Jonathan finished his presentation by inviting NPCA advocates who might be visiting Washington to let him know so that he could assist in meeting with an individual's congressional representatives for Peace Corps advocacy purposes.

50th Anniversary of Peace Corps:
Kevin Quigley, NPCA's President, brought the GLF up to date on plans for Peace Corps' 50th anniversary. He tied the earlier presentations on the Virtual Community and MorePeaceCorps as working together as resources and a natural link to the 50th anniversary celebrations. Highlights that we know now:

- NPCA is working closely with Peace Corps
- Peace Corps does have a calendar of activities, some of which are on the NPCA website
- Celebration will be on the National Mall, September 22-25, 2011.
- The Smithsonian will sponsor a celebration on September 22, exactly 50 years to the date of the signing of Peace Corps legislation.
- The Smithsonian is acting as sponsor because they have determined that this 50th anniversary is a national and historic event.

Questions, Views, Announcements

GLF Coordinator, Ben Bellows asked for questions, comments from the audience.

The following participants made a variety of comments or questions:

- Arianne Burger (Colorado)
- Tim Resch (Morocco)
- Randall Donohue (Ventura County, CA)
- Jayma Brown (Northern California)
- Sarah McMeans (Philippines)
- Allegra Troiano (Milwaukee)
- Gloria Levin (Bolivia/Peru)
- Scott Watenpaugh (Northern California)

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 12:05 p.m.

Recorder

Recorded and submitted by Mike Learned, Group Leader, LGBT RPCVs