



BUILDING BRIDGES



"How wonderful it is that nobody need wait a single moment before starting to improve the world."

- Anne Frank

PEACE CORPS PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM RECOGNISES RETURNED VOLUNTEER GROUPS

The Office of Private Sector Initiatives would like to give a special thanks to all the Returned Peace Corps Volunteer (RPCV) groups who have helped to support Peace Corps Partnership Program projects this past year. In fact, in 2007 and 2008 RPCV Groups donated to more than **150 Partnership Program projects** in **40 countries**. Though Volunteers typically rely on family and friends to fund a large portion of project costs, without the support and contributions from RPCV groups, and other donors, many projects would never get off the ground. We thank you very much!

DONOR SPOTLIGHT: RETURNED PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEERS OF WISCONSIN, MADISON

The Returned Peace Corps Volunteers (RPCV) of Wisconsin, Madison is an RPCV group that has taken the third goal of Peace Corps very seriously, "to help promote a better understanding of other peoples on the part of Americans." In fact, their website (www.rpcvmadison.org) states that they are "...a non-profit organization dedicated to bringing the world back to our communities." The idea for starting this RPCV group came about in 1981 over drinks at a downtown Madison establishment. At this meeting, four former Peace Corps Volunteers became determined to start a group, which was more than reminiscing and sharing "war stories," but rather mixing social, business, educational, and charitable activities. Since that meeting over twenty years ago, the RPCVs of Wisconsin, Madison have certainly achieved this initial objective. Currently, the group plans and attends several

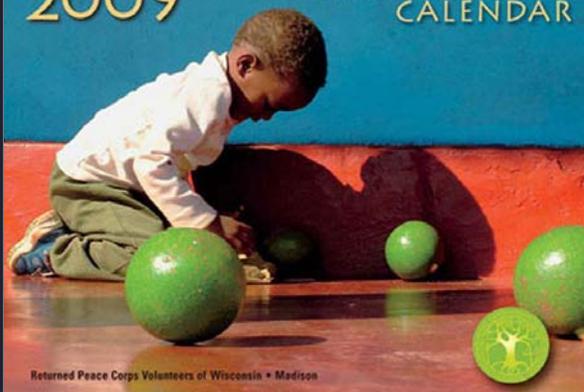
events, some of which include a 10K race that takes place in January called *Freeze for Food*; managing information tables at community fairs; and the creation and dissemination of a yearly International Calendar. (Read more about the International Calendar in the box below.)

One way the RPCVs of Wisconsin, Madison link local community members to international communities around the world is through their continued support of the Peace Corps Partnership Program. In fact, a percentage of the profits from the yearly International Calendar sales is donated to the Peace Corps Partnership Program for Volunteer projects. This has allowed the Partnership Program to fund Volunteer projects quickly and serves as a direct connection between host communities, Volunteers, and the members of the RPCVs of Wisconsin, Madison.

Special thanks to Rose Ann Scott for providing information and contacts.

2009

INTERNATIONAL
CALENDAR



Returned Peace Corps Volunteers of Wisconsin • Madison

SUPPORT PROJECTS ACROSS THE GLOBE, BUY AN INTERNATIONAL CALENDAR

Every year, the RPCVs of Wisconsin, Madison produce a beautiful, full color International Calendar, where 100% of the profit goes directly to support development and educational projects all over the world. With pictures from countries where Peace Corps Volunteers serve, facts about each country, recipes, holidays, and examples of the local languages, the calendar not only raises funds, but truly serves as an educational tool. Additionally, this calendar may also be used as a fundraising tool for other RPCV groups. Currently, more than 70 RPCV groups purchase the International Calendar from the RPCVs of Wisconsin, Madison for their own fundraising events. Many of these groups give a percentage of their proceeds to support Peace Corps Partnership Program projects. Find out how you or your RPCV group can take part by visiting <http://rpcvcalendar.org/>.

INTRODUCING COUNTRY FUNDS

Are you a Returned Peace Corps Volunteer group and want to find a way to support your country of service? Are you a donor who is interested in contributing to projects in a particular part of the world? Now, the Peace Corps Partnership Program has a way for you to direct your donations to the country of your choice. As with our other Special Funds and Partnership Program projects, all donations to Country Funds are **tax-deductible** and **100% of your donation** will be applied to Partnership Program projects in your chosen country. Please visit www.peacecorps.gov/contribute and click on the "Donate to Country Funds" link. You will be directed to a list of available Country Funds, where you may choose the one that best fits your interest.

WISCONSIN STRIKES AGAIN – BUILDING LATRINES AND PLANTING TREES IN MALI

More than 2.6 billion people—over 40 % of the world's population—do not have basic sanitation, which was the case for a school serving three villages in Mali. The 159 students and their teachers had no way to relieve themselves during the school day, rather they were expected to wait or use a nearby field. In 2007, the local community and a Peace Corps Volunteer created a project plan to build three latrines, which when full, could later be used as fertilized soil for fruit trees (see box for details).

Once the project was introduced to the wider community, members of the surrounding villages were excited to participate. They were able to contribute 36% of the total project cost through labor and local materials such as sand, gravel, mud bricks, and tools for the construction of the latrines. With the community members, the Volunteer submitted a Peace Corps Partnership Program application to raise \$511.00, the remaining amount needed to cover the cost of cement, reinforcing bars, and plastic sheeting. The project was funded with support from many generous donors, including another RPCV group in Wisconsin, the Milwaukee Peace



Corps Association (MPCA), Inc. The MPCA is an organization made up of former Peace Corps Volunteers and families, who are interested in continuing their promotion of Peace Corps ideals through cultural education and supporting both local and international development organizations.

Once funds from the MPCA and other donors were allocated to the project, the construction process took place. For now, the 159 students and their teachers are benefiting from readily available and sanitary latrines. Eventually, after proper use of the latrines, the community will plant fruit trees over the three original sites, and new sites will be created. In the future, the teachers and students will look forward to fresh fruit for the school and a sustainable orchard. And perhaps, if all is successful with these first three latrines, more will be constructed throughout the villages.

Without the generous donation and continued support of groups like MPCA, projects such as this would not be possible. Find out how your RPCV group can link with Peace Corps Volunteers around the world through the Peace Corps Partnership Program.

WHAT? LATRINES THAT GROW FRUIT TREES?

The latrines built for the village school in Mali, profiled in the previous article, are not just simple latrines or pit toilets; they are specially constructed to filter human waste. The filtration process results in germ-free, nutrient rich soil. If the latrines are used correctly, once full, the remaining area of the pit is filled with regular soil, and a fruit tree is planted above. By the time the roots of the tree grow down one meter, the waste will have already been filtered and naturally sanitized, leaving only rich soil contributing to the tree's growth. These trees will provide sanitary and nutritious fruit for the students, teachers, and surrounding community members.