



# YACHASPA

Quechua for “sabiendo” or “knowing”...

Newsletter of Amigos de Bolivia y Perú, Inc.

## Amigos Meet in Chicago at NPCA Conference

Meeting in a large and ornate hotel in Chicago is a far cry from the Andes, but somehow the Peace Corps spirit was evoked at the 2004 NPCA conference – energetic, committed, diverse, and downright cranky at times. In addition to the 10 Peru and 4 Bolivia RPCVs who had pre-registered for the conference, others registered onsite or just showed up.

Patt Behler and my “Peru” nametags were spotted by Peru RPCV, Jeff Ghelardi, who had stopped by the hotel lobby while preparing for a friend’s wedding. He joined us for lunch and inspired us with tales of

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*Procession of Flags, Chicago, NPCA’s 25th Anniversary Conference*



## Peru Coordinator Update

What a pleasure it was to read the articles from current Bolivia y Peru volunteers in our last issue!

We RPCVs not only hold fond memories of our time spent working in our host countries but also are proud that others, motivated to represent the high aspirations of our country for peacemaking, are in host countries living and working with

los Bolivianos y los Peruanos.

Those of us who attended the NPCA conference in Chicago in August waxed nostalgic, of course, but we also talked about possible ways in which our organization could help ongoing projects in Bolivia y Peru. Through the Kantuta Fund, we hope to increase the dollars that we gather here in the United States for support of pro-

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Fall 2004

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*Amigos de Bolivia y Peru, Inc.* is a nonprofit corporation, affiliated with the National Peace Corps Association. As an affiliate of NPCA, *Amigos* is one of approximately 140 organized groups of returned Peace Corps volunteers, former staff and friends who work together and separately. *Amigos* promotes and supports a variety of activities for the purpose of enhancing cooperation and understanding among the peoples of Bolivia and/or Peru and the peoples of the United States.

*Yachaspa*, the newsletter of *Amigos de Bolivia y Peru*, is distributed quarterly with the following anticipated deadlines for submitting materials to the editor: Spring Issue-March 15th; Summer Issue-June 15th; Fall Issue-September 15th; Winter Issue-December 15th.

Articles are welcome and may be submitted to [brownr@westminster-mo.edu](mailto:brownr@westminster-mo.edu).

*Yachaspa* is distributed to members by mail or electronically in .pdf format. Past issues are also available at [www.amigosdeboliviayperu.org](http://www.amigosdeboliviayperu.org) on the *Amigos* web site .

Let us know if you've visited Bolivia or Peru recently...or know a good book or resources of interest to other *Amigos* members.

## Amigos T-Shirts...

White T-shirt with *Amigos de Bolivia y Peru* logo in red (see newsletter first page or web site for logo) ~ also listed: *Kantuta Projects* and web site address of *Amigos de Bolivia y Peru* ~ is available for \$18 including postage and first class postage handling.

With the exception of the first orders for L and XL sizes, t-shirts will not be ordered and subsequently mailed until after November 30, 2004. Indicate size (S, M, L, XL) when ordering.

Deadline for ordering is **November 30, 2004**. Send check made out to: *Amigos de Bolivia y Peru* to: *Amigos de Bolivia y Peru*, PO Box 901, Flora Vista, NM 87415.

# Rendezvous Cochabamba 2005

From your feedback, current probabilities appear to be a minimum group of around twenty will fly directly to Santa Cruz, Bolivia, avoiding the high altitude of La Paz for those with heart conditions. (Charter of a Boeing 737, for example, has a seating capacity of 137 and is not feasible at this time!!)

Some participants will travel to Bolivia and/or Cochabamba on their own and meet with the rest of us on August 6, 2005 for a

banquet. Some small group side trips are still under consideration in and around central Bolivia (Tocoalla, Heifer International animals, Kantuta projects.).

The possibilities for another relatively low altitude connection to Cuzco-Machu Picchu, Peru (10,000 feet altitude.) are also being explored.

**Second banquet in Peru?** Let me hear some feedback in a few weeks.

If you want to be included on the *list serve* for Rendezvous Cochabamba 2005 contact me at [rustadkg@earthlink.net](mailto:rustadkg@earthlink.net).

If you do not have an e-mail address and want to receive postal notices (versus e-mail notices,) contact Ken Rustad, Rendezvous Cochabamba 2005 Coordinator, PO Box 901, Flora Vista, NM 87415.

*Ken Rustad*  
Rendezvous Cochabamba  
2005 Coordinator

## Peru Coordinator Update (continued from p. 1)

jects in which our volunteers are involved.

Through the Private Sector arm of the Peace Corps, I am still working on coordinating our efforts to donate computers from a U.S. school district to needy educational sites in Peru. Even though this may not take place until next year, we will keep you posted and will continue to accept pledges from you.

At the Country of Service meeting in Chicago, we offered some hand-crafted necklaces from Arequipa for a donation to the Kantuta fund; they went like hot cakes! We hope to establish a contact with the artisans in the market there who make this jewelry so that we can offer more to members and others who are interested. If any of you are planning a trip to Arequipa, please get in touch with me if you are interested in helping with this project.

Another item on my *Amigos* agenda is to develop regional get-togethers to include both Peru and Bolivia RPCVs and host country nationals who live in the United States. I've had calls from old friends from my 1962-64 group saying that, if there were a gathering nearby, they would like to come. Even though many training groups have reunions periodically, we can also try to get people from various groups together.

Any other projects that you know of that can support our interests and efforts? Any other money making projects that you think would work? Any other ideas? Send them by e-mail or snail-mail to me!

I'd like to encourage each of you to submit articles to be included in this newsletter, whether as a result of a trip back to see the places where you worked and the friends you have kept in touch with; or, you can let all of us know the news about your Peruvian friends and families that you

continue to hear from by posted mail or by e-mail. Incidentally, isn't it "fun" writing e-mail to Peruvian friends in Spanish? When I do it, I keep my *diccionario de español* VERY handy. Come to think of it, I believe the one I use is the one that the Peace Corps gave to me years ago during training when I was in the Spanish class every day at Cornell with Señor What-was-his-name?!

Let me hear from you. Y que todos duerman con los angelitos!!

*Patt Behler*  
Peru 1962-64  
Peru Coordinator

## Amigos Meet in Chicago (continued from p. 1)

his PC group's annual reunions, held over many years.

*Amigos de Bolivia y Peru* coordinated two activities at the conference: Friday night, approximately 18 Bolivia and Peru RPCVs (plus spouses and friends) met for dinner at the Rinconcito Sudamericano. We got a taste of typical dishes and pisco sours from our adopted countries and camaraderie as we shared our "peace (not war) stories." All gratitude goes to Frank Salvesson (Peru, 1965-67), an *Amigos* member who lives near Chicago, who made all arrangements with the restaurant. Saturday afternoon, eight *Amigos* members (plus a few spouses) met for an update on *Amigos* business. Ken Rustad (Bolivia 1962-4) sold *Amigos* t-shirts, and Patt Behler (Peru 1962-64) sold necklaces purchased in Arequipa.

One interesting feature of the conference was the Film Festival. I envied current PCVs who can videotape their everyday lives in their communities, so much more evocative of our experience than our still photos. The Film Festival ran from Thursday night through Saturday night, until late each night. One film featured Bolivia RPCV, Dr. G. Marr Burdmann, who returned "after 40 years, to the Bolivian children and grandchildren of the people she served." The 19-minute film is titled "A Peace Corps Reunion: Reminiscence and Reflections..."



The conference's International Marketplace was lively, with booths staffed by a diversity of organizations. Many of the organizations had creative ideas and giveaways, in addition to the traditional vendors of books, carpets, jewelry, etc. The large NGOs (CARE, Oxfam America, American Refugee Committee, Heifer International, etc.) were represented, as

well as smaller organizations (Pedals for Progress, Peace Corps Writers) and several

NPCA affiliates (Friends of India, Morocco, etc.) and RPCV geographic groups like Madison which gave away its remaining 2004 calendars and sold the beautiful 2005 calendars at discount).

Bolivia (1998-2000) RPCV, Ted Liu, president of the Milwaukee RPCV group, was busy promoting fair trade, organic coffee. Peru (1964-66) RPCV, John McAuliff, staffed a booth quickly set up to establish a RPCV group supporting a presidential candidate. Some booths recruited RPCVs for employment, and an adjacent Career Fair attracted RPCVs to interview for these jobs. However, a number of those were universities, recruiting RPCVs to enroll in their graduate programs.

One well-attended session was intended to introduce NPCA affiliates to the long-awaited web-based mem-

bership (relational) database system. Anne Baker, recently promoted to NPCA's vice president, is coordinating the effort with a contractor, AMS. The member interface was promised for "roll out" on the following Monday morning, with the interface for affiliates' membership coordinators to follow after Labor Day. (By October 15, neither were operational, yet NPCA stopped emailing affiliates monthly updates after July.) In an open meeting with NPCA staff, affiliates exerted pressure on NPCA to provide more services to affiliates or else become irrelevant, prompting more affiliates to become independent of NPCA. One suggestion - to host affiliates' websites on NPCA's server - is being promoted on an NPCA email listserv for members.

The Chicago RPCV group deserves kudos for hosting and organizing the conference. Its helpful members were everywhere, pointing the way to hard-to-find rooms in the labyrinthine Palmer House. Upon arriving at DePaul University for the country of service activities on Saturday, Chicago RPCVs met us as the elevator doors opened, guiding us to the assigned classroom. "Costa Rica to the right!" "Bolivia to the left!"

Fortunately, before my wallet was stolen as I was departing Chicago, I had transferred all my notes and cards of contacts to my suitcase. It will take me a year to follow up on all the ideas generated and contacts made at the 2004 Conference!

Gloria Levin  
Peru 1966-68

## Peace Corps 2004: Celebrating a Legacy of Service

Over 900 returned Peace Corps volunteers, former staff and friends came to Chicago August 5-8, for the 2004 National Peace Corps Association's 25th Anniversary Conference.

A Thursday evening welcoming reception was packed with RPCVs eager to socialize. The next morning the Opening Ceremony got off to a rousing start with the projection onto a giant screen of Teresa Heinz Kerry's Democratic National Convention remarks about Peace Corps. Keynote speakers Bank One Executive Vice President Linda Bammann (Philippines 1978-80), Ohio Governor Bob Taft (Tanzania 1963-65) and Wisconsin Governor Jim and First Lady Jessica Doyle (Tunisia 1967-69), and former foreign minister of Thailand Dr. Surin Pitsuwan all spoke compellingly about how Peace Corps impacted their lives. Peace Corps Director Gaddi Vasquez lauded the work of the returned volunteer community and provided a snapshot of today's Peace Corps.

Dazzling dance performances by

Muntu Dance Theater and Natya Dance Theater punctuated the program, which culminated in the awarding of The Sargent Shriver Award for Distinguished Humanitarian Service to Dr. Kevin Denny and The Loret Miller Ruppe



Award for Outstanding Community Service to RPCVs of Hawaii.

At the Saturday morning Presidents' Forum and NPCA Annual General Meeting, group leaders and RPCVs had a chance to learn about and discuss issues concerning the National Peace Corps Association. Last summer in Portland, OR, the Presidents' Forum asked the NPCA Board to study ways to improve its performance.

In Chicago, the gathered group leaders had the opportunity to consider a report on this effort. The proposals put forth in the report, if approved, would reduce the Board's size and change its composition, via an amendment to NPCA Bylaws to be placed before the NPCA membership for a vote this fall. After discussion, the Group Leaders voted overwhelmingly to endorse the proposed changes.

The dramatic Chicago skyline provided the perfect backdrop for the Sunday morning procession of flags. Conference participants walked along Lakeshore Drive and gathered beside the Buckingham Fountain, where a bagpiper stood at attention. CAPCA conference Vice-Chair Chuck Sheftel (India 1969-72) offered words of remembrance for the volunteers and staff that have lost their lives while in service and then the flag of Niger was presented to Donna and Chelsea Mack in honor of their son and brother, fallen PCV

Jeremiah Mack (Niger 1995-97). The Macks have founded Fallen Peace Corps Volunteers, [www.fpcv.org](http://www.fpcv.org). Following the piping of "Amazing Grace," white doves were released.

After relinquishing their flags, conference participants filled the audi-



torium of the Chicago Art Institute for the closing ceremonies. His Excellency Hedeyat Amin-Arsala, the vice president of the Provisional Government of Afghanistan, spoke of his special connection to Peace Corps: while in the U.S. he trained early groups of Peace Corps volunteers and his wife Betsy is a returned Peace Corps volunteer. MSNBC political analyst Chris Matthews (Swaziland 1968-70) shared rapid-fire memories and reflections on his Peace Corps service. The auditorium erupted in cheers at his statement, "You have to come to a country in some other uniform besides that of tourist or soldier or oil executive."

Bobby Muller, President and Founder of the Vietnam Veterans of America Foundation and Nobel Laureate for his work with the International Campaign to Ban Landmines, might seem an unusual choice as Peace Corps conference speaker. However, as NPCA Presi-

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## PC/Bolivia Update...

Saludos a nuestros amigos: You don't get too many days like today in La Paz. The sky is that incredible, clear blue, and a few fluffy clouds punctuate the air around Illimani. It's warm and sunny. Spring has finally arrived!

The political situation in Bolivia remains uneasy, which – for Bolivia – is not unusual. While President Carlos successfully spearheaded a national referendum on oil and gas, the stagnant economy, rising unemployment rates, escalating civil unrest among indigenous populations, and mounting antipathy between the executive and legislative branches of government continue to cast a shadow over Bolivia's political situation.

Like many federal agencies, we have been struggling with budget issues and will be reducing our trainee intake for Bolivia next year to 60 trainees annually. In other words, we'll have about 120-130 Volunteers in country. We would certainly encourage any of our *Amigos* who are willing to contribute through the Peace Corps Partnership Program to contact us. We would welcome your collaboration on funding projects!

Our Volunteers continue to do great work. For example:

Through a USAID Small Projects Assistance grant, one agriculture volunteer is working with local farmers to build a water-conserving irrigation system. The system will improve production of organic crops – including lettuce, carrots

and strawberries – which are popular in local markets and sell at three times the price of non-organic produce. This volunteer is also working on an apiculture project to help local women develop non-traditional honey products such as shampoos and soaps.

A business volunteer working in one of the poorest regions in Bolivia has trained over 50 indigenous women weavers in basic business practices. As a result, the women have increased family income through cost analysis, improved handicraft product development, and increased market access. Most impressive is the fact that this volunteer provides his capacity-building workshops in Quechua, the region's native language.

An integrated education volunteer in the Cochabamba valley is working with teachers and handicapped students to help promote Bolivia's educational reform. In addition to training teachers on interactive teaching methodologies that can be adapted to their special needs students, she trains students in cooking, hygiene and sanitation. The training focuses not only on improving student health, but also on developing independent living skills through daily activities.

An environmental education volunteer is promoting environmental protection through youth clubs. Working with her Bolivian counterpart, she helps teachers design an environmental educa-

tion curriculum component, and has successfully formed three youth ecology clubs in rural communities. Club members have conducted a variety of environmental education and conservation activities including earth day celebrations, tree plantings, and environmental health fairs.

In the drought-stricken Chaco area, a volunteer is working with community members to construct nearly 700 rainwater catchment systems by the end of 2004. The Volunteer initiated a training and certification program for masons and other community members, allowing this technology to be replicated at significantly reduced costs. Families now have reliable access to clean water in their homes.

Finally, I will be bidding a fond farewell to Bolivia in the coming months. My five-year tour as Bolivia's Program and Training Officer (PTO) will end in mid-December. A request to extend my tour until the end of January 2005 is pending in order to ensure a smooth transition for the new PTO. Moving on will be a bitter-sweet experience. While I am ready for new challenges and new adventures, I will truly miss so many people in Bolivia, and so much of this country's beauty and rich culture. I wish all of our *Amigos* happy trails, and hope you will give a warm welcome the new Bolivia PTO early next year. Vayan con amor y paz.

- *Charna Lefton*

## PC/Peru Update...

Almost three years ago, Peace Corps reinitiated its program in Peru after a 28-year absence. For the first few weeks, PC/Peru was run out of a “closet” in the Agriculture office of the U.S. Embassy and as an organization was made up of a staff of two individuals. Today, PC/Peru has 70 Volunteers working in 3 Projects within 4 Departments. On Friday, September 16<sup>th</sup>, an additional 41 trainees arrived to join the program.

PC/Peru currently has a staff of 17 individuals and has established col-

laborative relationships with over 25 governmental and non-governmental agencies.

Kate Raftery, who served as advisor to Peru re-entry as well as Country Director in Peru for the past 32 months, will be leaving Lima to take a position as Chief of Operations for the Inter-American and Pacific Region of Peace Corps in Washington.

While this is disappointing news to the Volunteers, staff, host

country agencies and US Mission personnel in Peru, we all wish Kate and her daughter Elizabeth all of the best in their new endeavors and are excited for Kate as she begins the next phase of her career with Peace Corps.

Thanks to Kate Raftery’s leadership, work ethic and faith in the mission of the Peace Corps, PC/Peru has re-established one of the finest programs in the world.

*The Staff of PC/Peru*

## PC/Peru...Tough Question, Easy Answer

Nations and international organizations spend more than \$55 billion annually to better the quality of life of the world’s 2.7 million residents living in poverty.

The *New York Times* ran an article by Celia Dugger on July 28<sup>th</sup> which caught my attention, and caused me to think of the Peace Corps’ \$320 million sliver in this \$55 billion pie. The article analyzed experiences from various development banks and non-governmental organizations, comparing strategies and looking for examples of successful development.

The article posed an essential question, “Does aid really work?” Part of the challenge with this question of course is how one chooses to define “aid” and/or “development.” Each of our PCVs may struggle with this question and these definitions. If they do, that is ok, and in many ways that struggle is a part of Peace Corps service.

PC/Peru and it’s Volunteers are committed to defining these terms based not on our own perceptions as North Americans living in Peru for a short period of time, but instead based on what we are told by our clients in the communities we serve, and the counterpart agencies with whom we develop a PCV’s role and our project plans.

Project Plans change annually based on host agency and PCV feedback. They will evolve yet again in November as we undertake the Project Status Reports for Peace Corps Washington (our annual reports on PCV contributions).

All Volunteers and RPCVs have witnessed that, as the community and host agency get to know the Volunteer better, their ideas for how the PCV can best serve the community and contribute to the

agency evolve. How many PCVs did the exact same thing their second year that they did during their first? Very few. That is what we anticipate based on PC experiences from around the globe over 43 years.

PC/Peru operates with the idea of working closely with Peruvians to define “aid” and “development” in the terms of those Peruvians, and to respond to those definitions to the best of our ability, with committed, dedicated two-year service. Reality drives service. Volunteers’ ability to learn and adjust to reality dictates success.

Peace Corps works to promote dignity of those living in poverty, and part of promoting dignity is recognizing that the poor are capable of identifying their needs and telling us where we fit in to their

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## Tough Question, Easy Answer (continued from p. 7)

development priorities. Being client driven and service oriented is the essence of “bottom-up” or “grassroots” development, the slowest and most tedious way to work in development or aid. It is also Peace Corps’ niche, our small sliver of the \$55 billion pie.

I read Ms. Dugger’s article shortly after visiting 32 PCVs in the field, having recently completed Site Visits to Peru #2 Health and Peru #3 Youth PCVs, as well as Site Development in communities where Peru #1 Health PCVs are serving.

In addition to visiting Volunteers within my programs, I had the opportunity to cross paths with numerous Business PCVs, their counterparts and their clients and work partners in the communities they serve. As I read through the comments by the international aid and development organizations interviewed in Ms. Dugger’s article, I found it very easy to answer the *New York Time’s* question as to whether “aid works,” based entirely on comments from PC/Peru PCVs, the Peruvian residents we serve in our assigned communities and the counterpart agencies with which we align ourselves to make a sustainable contribution.

Here is a small sampling of what I was told by the people we are here to serve:

“She is the great equalizer. She has brought all of us together as a community, although I doubt she knows it.” (Community member speaking about a Peru 2 Community Health PCV in Piura)

“When we heard a North American was coming to our community, we didn’t know what to expect. We thought she would be different than us, and want to separate herself from our ways and our culture. She is not that way. She eats what we eat, works with us in the fields and shares our laughs and our tears. We now realize that we are all equals. While she may be from another country, a more developed country, the way she treats us as equal raises the self-esteem of this entire community. We feel more confident as a result of having a PCV in our community.” (Community member speaking about a Peru 2 Community Health PCV in Piura)

“She has been in Peru for a year and a half now. I look at the calendar occasionally and do the math. I know the time is running out for her service. While I understand we can request a replacement PCV, it won’t be the same. She is such a part of this organization, this town and my family. I don’t want to talk about it.” (Counterpart speaking about a Peru 1 Business PCV in Piura)

“He sets the example I tell my children to live by.” (Community member speaking about a Peru 2 Community Health PCV in Ancash)

“The quality of our work has improved since the arrival of the PCV. We realized shortly after she came here, that we had fallen into a rut, a routine of our activities. The PCV has shaken us out of this and helped us to feel excited and

engaged in our work.” (Counterpart speaking about a Peru #3 Youth Development PCV in Piura)

“It appears PC is about relationships, and person to person contact. When you look at XXXX work, you realize she is here for everyone and does her best for everyone. She has been willing to help us out in just about anything that comes up.” (Community member speaking about a Peru 1 Community Health PCV in Cajamarca)

“She is a part of this community. She is a part of this town. Her contribution is that and the fact she does everything we do, and tries her best to help us out in whatever it is we are doing. I am not sure how to answer your question. What do you mean “contribution”? I will just tell you that if you took her away with you right now, this town would be very upset with you; all of us, kids adults, ancianos.” (Community member speaking about a Peru 2 Community Health PCV in Ancash)

“She energizes us with new ideas and her enthusiasm.” (Counterpart speaking about a Peru #3 Youth Development PCV in Cajamarca)

“She treats everyone in the community as equals. There are no favorites for her here. We see the way she interacts with all of the kids at the school for example and know that she likes all the

*(Continued on page 9)*



## Tough Question, Easy Answer (continued from p. 8)

kids, no matter their grades, their parents or their house. She is the same way with adults. If we are going to change this community for the better we need to interact with each other the same way.” (Community member speaking about a Peru 2 Community Health PCV in Piura)

“She is a member of our team who brings a different perspective to the work we do. Subsequently, it is better.” (Counterpart speaking about a Peru #3 Youth Development PCV in Ancash)

“He is a man of his word. If he says he is going to do it, he does it. We watch those things in this town.” (Counterpart speaking about a Peru #3 Youth Development PCV in Ancash)

“The PCV allows us to keep a finger on the pulse of reality. When we meet to talk about the project,

everyone listens more closely when she speaks, because we know that she lives in the community, sees the reality and hears the comments of the residents that we don’t get to hear.” (Counterpart speaking about a Peru #2 Community Health PCV in Cajamarca)

“We are so swamped with paperwork and reports that the actual project unfortunately has to take a backseat occasionally. It shouldn’t be this way, but funding dictates it. That is not the case for XXXX. She can dedicate 100% of her time to her community and the reality of the project in the field. It is essential for us to have a PCV in the project if we are going to have any clue about the reality the people face in the communities our project strives to serve.” (Counterpart speaking about a Peru 2 Community Health PCV in Ancash)

“If you tried to take the PCV from this town right now, I would pop the tires on your Toyota.” (Community member speaking about a Peru 1 Business PCV in Ancash)

“Does aid work?” From what I am being told by the people they serve, the answer is simply, “Yes”.

*Ken Goodson*  
Programming Director  
PC/Peru

## PC Collection at the JFK Library

The John F. Kennedy Presidential Library in Boston houses a Peace Corps Collection, including items of archival value from and about PCVs. Although the Collection was initially intended to cover only the years of the Kennedy Administration (1961-1963), that restriction was later removed, extending to the current day.

In 1989, the Library began soliciting materials directly from RPCVs for inclusion in the Collection. In addition to materials such as those described by Pat Edmisten in the accompanying article, the collection also preserves and makes available to scholars and others, audio-taped oral histories of RPCVs that document their PC experience.

The archivists had been updating the website at [www.jfklibrary.org/fa\\_rpcv\\_oh.html](http://www.jfklibrary.org/fa_rpcv_oh.html) listing of audiotapes received, but this service ended around September 2003, so newer acquisitions are not viewable on the web. Currently listed on the website are one oral history each from Bolivia (Steven Baines, 1995-1997) and Peru (Isaiah Zagar, 1964-1966) RPCVs, both submitted while incoming tapes were still being posted on the Web.

The Collection's Oral History project was initiated in 2001 and is headed by RPCV Bob Klein, a member of the first group of PCVs to go overseas. Bob had interviewed his Ghana I colleagues for a manuscript (unpublished) and requested that the JFK Library

house the tapes. He then began interviewing other RPCVs, and the PC Oral History project was born.

While anyone can listen to the tapes, using the Library's modern equipment, no funds have been available to transcribe them. The project is about to be incorporated as a not for profit (tax exempt) organization, with the intent of raising funds to transcribe the tapes and cover project expenses.

Located in Tucson and strictly a volunteer, Bob Klein drives around the country for weeks at a time in his old car. He stays in PC "hospitality houses," recruiting and training RPCVs to be interviewers. He also conducts dozens of interviews in his travels. He has recruited and trained sixty interviewers all over the U.S. But with 170,000 RPCVs, each with their own story to tell, many more interviewers are needed.

I coordinate the project for RPCV/Washington, DC. Conducting interviews enables me to "journey" to places I'll never visit - a tiny Pacific island of 65 inhabitants, a Berber village in the Atlas Mountains of Morocco or in war-torn West Africa. When the interview is completed, I mail the audiotapes, a signed Deed of Gift, an interview summary and identifying information to the Archivist of the Peace Corps Collection, James Roth.

I always encourage interviewees to simultaneously record the inter-

view, so they'll have their own copy. If you are interested in being interviewed, contact me ([g.levin@comcast.net](mailto:g.levin@comcast.net)), and I will attempt to connect you with an interviewer in your area.

How can you actively participate in the Oral History project? (Contact Bob Klein, [ayzee@att.net](mailto:ayzee@att.net), if you are interested in any of the following roles.) First, you can become an interviewer. If a veteran interviewer is not available to train you, self-training aides can be used, including audiotaped clips from earlier interviews, so that you don't have to attend training sessions. Second, fundraising and grants development skills are needed for supporting the project. Third, you could volunteer to produce a history of PC in Bolivia or Peru, in time for the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Peace Corps in 2011.

The Country of Service History Project is another Bob Klein brainstorm.. He writes: "Peace Corps itself has done very little to preserve the narrative history of what Peace Corps Volunteers have done (and not done) in the countries in which we have served." It is up to RPCVs themselves to make sure the real story of Peace Corps is told.

*Gloria Levin*  
Peru, 1966-68

# Donating to the Peace Corps Collection of the JFK Library

In July, 2000, I donated two hundred letters and postcards, photos, training materials, newspaper clippings, and a copy of my book to the John Fitzgerald Kennedy Library Peace Corps Collection. I had seen the notice about the Collection in the July, 1996 issue of RPCV Writers and Readers ([www.PeaceCorpsWriters.org](http://www.PeaceCorpsWriters.org)) while working on The Mourning of Angels, a novel informed by the nearly two years I had spent in Peru. After the book was published in 2001, it seemed fitting to donate my own Peace Corps collection to the library.

While writing the novel, I wondered if I'd ever be able to part with those fragile and personal pieces of myself, or whether I would save them for my son and grandchildren. They'd surely be interested in the details of that historically significant time, wouldn't they? My grandchildren would one day be impressed with their grandmother's derring-do, when she joined a fledgling organization and set off for who-knows-where in Latin America, wouldn't they?

The letters and cards I donated were the same ones I had written home twice a week from Arequipa, and

later, Ica. They had been of immense help to me while writing the novel because they were chock-full of the harsh, funny, and tragic details of everyday life. Ordering them chronologically, I was able to retrieve and then re-create the lives of those with whom I had trained and worked.

For those of you new to the Collection, its purpose "is to document the experiences of Peace Corps volunteers and staff by collecting and preserving letters, diaries, manuscripts, books, photographs, audiotapes, films, drawings, and other items created during or after one's service." I was glad that, after an evaluation of my materials, archival staff found them suitable.

I didn't censor myself before sending the letters. Years from now, if anyone uses them to learn about the early Peace Corps, I want them to have a full picture of, at least, my experiences. In regard to my concern about removing the materials from my progeny, I received a reassuring letter from a JFK Library archivist: "Dear Ms. Edmisten: First, thank God for mothers who save all of their children's correspondence. They are an archivist's dream....As for your children and grandchildren, please be assured that they will have access to the letters here at the Library. We will

preserve the letters by storing them in climate-controlled stacks and perform preservation maintenance on them. This will allow your grandchildren's grandchildren to enjoy reading about your experiences in Peru." My son thought it was a great idea.

After making the donation, I received a thank you letter: "It is donors like you who make the legacy of the Peace Corps a much more tangible one...." With the letter were two copies of a "deed of gift" form that I signed, returning one for the Archivist of the United States. You can access the Peace Corps Collection at:

[www.jfklibrary.org/fa\\_rpcv.html](http://www.jfklibrary.org/fa_rpcv.html)

The Mourning of Angels can be purchased from XLibris.com; Amazon.com; Barnesandnoble.com, or an inscribed copy from me: at [pedmiste@uwf.edu](mailto:pedmiste@uwf.edu)

*Patricia Edmisten*  
Peru III, 1962-64

# Organizing a Reunion of Your Peace Corps Group

(Part I: Finding the Members)

It all started when a member of my training group (Peru urban community development, Syracuse University in 1966) found *Amigos* via our web site ([www.amigosdeboliviayperu.org](http://www.amigosdeboliviayperu.org)) and emailed a query as to whether his group had ever had a reunion. This inquiry has led to a planned reunion, to be held in mid-May of 2005 in Santa Fe, New Mexico. We began with enthusiasm – picture Mickey Rooney gleefully shouting at Judy Garland in an old movie: “Hey, gang. Let’s put on a SHOW!” In future issues of *Yachaspa*, I will document our reunion planning process, in hopes that *Yachaspa* readers may be inspired to organize their own reunions and learn from our experience. This first installment describes the laborious process of searching for our fellow trainees.

Unlike many of the early (1962-1966) Peru groups who have stayed in contact, most members of my group said *adios* in 1968 when we left Peru and then lost contact. No more than a few (of 47) have ever been members of NPCA; so far as I can determine, I am the only one who has ever been a member of *Amigos* and the only current member of NPCA. So this was going to be a challenge.

I enlisted Karen Behling Cejka, my longtime friend, and more recently, Joan Borgos, as members of the coordinating committee. We divided up tasks. My first assignment was to find members of our group. Fortunately, I had saved the booklet of trainee biographies which lists all the members

and includes their 1966 photos (jogging one’s memory). Equally important is the inclusion of the correct spellings, full names (e.g., middle initial), hometown and college – information that often proved helpful. Seven of our group (mostly Washington, DC-based) had attended a Peruvian embassy reception associated with the 40 +1 NPCA conference. This was a start. I checked old PC directories (commercially published at periodical intervals); 2001 is the date of the newest PC directory. Finally, as membership coordinator of *Amigos*, I have access to a list, some entries dating back to 1986, that, although very inaccurate, has some information on a fraction of PCVs who served in Bolivia and Peru. However, NPCA and *Amigos* consider these lists confidential since the RPCV may not have given explicit permission to release the data. (Like college alumni offices, I am willing to contact someone you are searching for and leave it to that person to contact you.) I did ask one college alumni office to inform a graduate that I was looking for him. However, I don’t know how to interpret his lack of response, i.e., he’s not interested, the college never contacted him or the address was incorrect.

Although Google was my salvation, it still required significant ingenuity and resourcefulness on my part. The “easy finds” are academics who are fully documented on the Web via their institutions’ website; many have their own home page, sometimes with a photo, but definitely with an email address. For others, you can try including “Peace Corps” or the

country of service, along with the person’s name, in a Google search.

I found several odd entries via Google. For example, a woman’s complaint to her zoning commission about traffic was mentioned in the local newspaper and thereupon showed up via a Google search. I also learned that another member was an attorney in Michigan, having found, via Google, a legal decree that listed the name of our missing member as the appellate attorney in a case pertaining to the defendant’s right to a translator at his initial trial. The appellate attorney declared that he spoke Spanish. Bingo!

At times, you learn more than you need to know on Google, like reading the gory details of one member’s divorce decree! You learn tricks along the way, e.g., include the current or a recent year in the search term to find the most recent information on the person, filtering out outdated information. Learn how to use Google’s “cache” function (highlighting the search term in yellow, saving time in scanning long documents for the person’s name) and “Advanced Search,” which allows you to discard any words or phrases that you know are not relevant to the person you are seeking. (As an illustration, Googling my name yields 222 items, many of which pertain to a Gloria Levin who is an authority on crocheting. Deleting the word

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“crochet” via Advanced Search reduces the items by 70.)

A search of Peace Corps Online’s ([www.peacecorps.org](http://www.peacecorps.org)) Bulletin Board function uncovered two missing people. (One has such a common name that I never would have found him had he not listed himself there.) The NPCA website ([www.rpcv.org](http://www.rpcv.org)) includes, under Members Only, a directory search of about 9,500 people, including their County of Service and years served. (If you never listed yourself or your data are out of date in this directory, do it now.) If you know the person’s profession, you can search via the professional organization. Lawyers can be found via Martindale-Hubbell’s directory or local Blue Books, often available in the reference section of your library. I found the phone number of an architect with the help of the local chapter of the American Institute of Architects to which I hoped he belonged.

Women PCVs who married after PC were a particular challenge because none had retained their maiden name. (This is less of a problem nowadays when it’s more common to retain one’s name after marriage or at least hyphenate it.) All our couples had divorced post-PC; some of the women had remarried or resumed using their maiden name. (If you know the maiden name, try it in your searches.) Some of the divorced members will know the whereabouts of the ex-spouse;

others may have to ask their (now adult) children for this information. (This brings up the touchy situation of ex spouses who are not willing to see each other at the reunion. Reunions are never uncomplicated.)

Finding personal information about the person is one thing; finding a specific email address or phone number is another altogether. After all, knowing from your Google search that the person participated in a bridge tournament or finished in 352<sup>nd</sup> place in a 10K run or appears in a family genealogy does not give you a phone number or email address. Several online sites can be used to search for telephone numbers (e.g., [www.whitepages.com](http://www.whitepages.com); [www.infousa.com](http://www.infousa.com); [www.anywho.com](http://www.anywho.com); [www.555-1212.com](http://www.555-1212.com); etc.) However, while I frequently found telephone numbers (and sometimes addresses), more than likely, they were long outdated, telephone numbers were disconnected, etc.

In your search, you will find tempting offers to find a person, for a fee, whose listed age is the same as the person you’re seeking. Accumulate all the names you can’t find via conventional means and, for approximately \$15, you gain access to advanced online search tools for 24 hours. If you have access to Lexis/Nexis (an expensive search tool for the legal profession), try its people search function.

I either telephoned or emailed to determine if the person reached was, in fact, who I was seeking and to alert them to our reunion effort. With only one exception, people were delighted (even astonished) to have been found and often wanted me to update them on all 47 members of our group.

Once I had accumulated a critical mass of people, I emailed a questionnaire to the known and verified persons. Included in the questionnaire was a request for any information known about any of the missing people. (One “missing” was found when another member unearthed an unlisted home phone number, given to him when they ran into each other on the street a decade earlier.) The questionnaire also determined availability for a reunion (available dates and logistical preferences), roles for which the person would volunteer, and permission to make the person’s email address available to others in the group.

The interim result of my search? From the group of 42 (five additional members are now known to be deceased), I have verified email addresses for 38. I have received an email reply from or spoken with 37 people, 21 of whom intend—and several others are interested but not yet able to confirm—to join the reunion. Several, who cannot attend, wish to participate in online activities, such as trivia contests, updating biographies, viewing digital photo’s from the reunion, etc. I

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## Organizing a Reunion (continued from p. 13)

have found no trace of 3 people and accept the possibility that one or more of them may have died. One person has not responded; it's hard to know how to interpret a non-response or what to do about it. At this point, one faces an ethical dilemma (i.e., whether to assume nonresponders don't want to be found and respect their right to privacy or to assume another rationale and keep pursuing them).

Many people, beset by spam, have set their email account to automatically screen out emails from unknown senders. The subject line of your email should be carefully prepared, to avoid keywords that might be filtered by the person you're trying to reach. I am ambivalent about sending an email that prompts the recipient to click (before opening the message) that the email has been read. If you get no response, you may need to follow up with a phone call, if you have the number and if you think the person would be receptive. (I usually judge this on my assessment of whether PC was known to be a good experience for the person or not.)

Be prepared to waste many hours on fruitless searches. Also, steel yourself for lack of interest from the very people you spent many hours and long distance calls searching for. A distinct side benefit is that your cerebral neurons will get a workout, as your brain goes into overdrive, thinking creatively! You may make new contacts along the way. For example, in search for x, a recently retired member who left no forwarding address, I contacted someone who had recently published an article with x to obtain a recent email address. This new person (not an RPCV) has his own fascinating background in global development.

Most important, be persistent. Every time I feel that I have exhausted all means for finding someone, I think of a new idea to pursue, along a convoluted route. Just today, I sent a blind email to a woman found on

Google who shares the uncommon last name of a group member for whom I had no information other than what has in the training booklet. She responded that the missing person sounds like her uncle and gave me some information on his last known employment. Another benefit is putting people in touch who did not know they live in the same city.

Contact me ([glevin@comcast.net](mailto:glevin@comcast.net)) for additional tips on organizing a PC reunion. (Of course, you can use these tips for finding former PC friends, independent of a reunion.) The moral is to keep connected to PC via NPCA and *Amigos de Bolivia y Peru*, so you can be found easily in the future. Keep Amigos informed of RPCVs you find; in fact, even better, recruit them as members!

*Gloria Levin*  
Peru, 1966-68

## A Little Something Extra...

In Southern Louisiana, the word *lagniappe* is used with great pride to give a local flavor to the Friday supplement of the *Times-Picayune*, the New Orleans paper. I initially saw the term as another example of the continuing influence of French culture. It wasn't until I went shopping in the old French Market and an extra few pecans were added to my purchase. The vender called it "lagniappe" and I understood the term's deeper origin. I was transported back to la Cancha in Cochabamba of the 1960's where I served as a Peace Corps Volunteer. (\*)

The linguistic similarities were too striking to be pure coincidence. Webster confirmed my etymological suspicions. "Lagniappe from Quechua la ñapa or la yapa." - (an addition according to the *Diccionario Americano* <http://usuarios.lycos.ed/americalatina/dicci.htm>). However, this derivation fails to account for the

circumstances in which a common Andean expression had surfaced in the swampy lowlands of French Louisiana. As an architect rather than a linguist, I supplied the following narrative to explain this verbal migration.

In 1763, French Louisiana became a Spanish colony and remained so for 40 years. In place of civilian and military authorities from France, local officials were appointed from Spain and her American colonies. Evidently, one or more families were posted here from the Andes, possibly arriving with members of their household staff.

In fact, the first Spanish governor, Antonio de Ulloa, served previously in the same position in Huanacavelica in Peru (1758-1764). Once established in New Orleans, he married by proxy Francisca Ramirez de Laredo who, no doubt traveled with members of her household staff.

In New Orleans and in South America, it was necessary to go marketing frequently. I imagine that one of the Quechua speaking servants was charged with the same task in New Orleans that she carried out in Peru.

I suspect that after one such purchase, the servant insisted on "la yapa." The vegetable vendor, in order to avoid a fuss, gave her another onion. Bystanders began to use the same expression. "La yapa" or "la ñapa" became "lagniappe."

Stephen Paul Jacobs

(\*) *It's interesting to note that in the intervening years both the Cancha and the French Market have been transformed. The Cancha has expanded in size and merchandise so that fruits and vegetables have almost been replaced by electronics and other imports. In the French Market, prepackaged spices and other souvenirs have almost replaced produce.*

## NPCA Welcomes New Board Chair Ken Hill



At the recent 25th anniversary national conference, the National Peace Corps Association elected international development consultant Ken Hill Chairman of the Board. Ken served as a Peace Corps volunteer in Turkey in the 1960s and has held numerous professional positions with Peace Corps during his career.

For a press release in .pdf format, click [www.rpcv.org/KHILLRelease.pdf](http://www.rpcv.org/KHILLRelease.pdf).

## Peace Match Online Speakers' Bureau

The Peace Match Online Speakers' Bureau, developed to link returned Peace Corps Volunteers (RPCVs) with teachers throughout the United States, has been operational for six months with a good response: To date, hundreds of RPCVs and teachers have registered for classroom presentations.

Implemented through a cooperative agreement between the Peace Corps and the National Peace Corps Association (NPCA), Peace Match makes it easier for RPCVs to find speaking opportunities and for teachers to identify RPCVs who wish to visit their classrooms. Both educators and RPCVs can search the database by zip code for a match in their areas.

"Peace Match helps returned Volunteers bring their cross-cultural experiences to American students," said Gladys Maloy, NPCA Peace Match program manager. "By connecting RPCVs with foreign-language teachers, for example,

Peace Match provides a wonderful opportunity for RPCVs to do presentations in their host-country tongues."

"Having taught language arts and social studies for many years, I really appreciate the value of Peace Match in enhancing the education of American children, who often don't have the opportunity to travel outside their own communities, let alone to another country," said Eileen Mattingly, acting director, Peace Corps Domestic Programs.

Here is what several RPCVs have said about the program:

"I found the site easy to use, and I am excited about the greater possibility to speak about my experiences. Thanks a lot." (Barbara Smith of Pottsville, Pennsylvania, RPCV Hungary)

"I think the speaker and presentation resources are great." (Erin Polis

of Lake in the Hills, Illinois, RPCV Zimbabwe)

"I presented for a friend at school. The students and teachers were very receptive and eager to learn. This is the reason I signed up for Peace Match." (Laurie Keller of Phoenix, Arizona, RPCV Mali)

"I enjoy talking to students about my Peace Corps experience. It comes alive again each time I do it." (Karen Blackbird of Tempe, Arizona, RPCV Dominican Republic)

With the 2004/2005 school year upon us, now would be a good time to think about sharing your Peace Corps experiences with students and teachers in your community. To register, visit [www.PeaceMatch.org](http://www.PeaceMatch.org). Teachers will then be able to search the Peace Match database and e-mail you to request a presentation. For more information, contact [peacematch@rpcv.org](mailto:peacematch@rpcv.org).



# Amigos de Bolivia y Perú

Post Office Box 901, Flora Vista, NM 87415-0901

## Membership Form

Please complete this form as thoroughly and accurately as possible and mail it to the address indicated above.

Surname \_\_\_\_\_ First Name \_\_\_\_\_ M.I. \_\_\_\_\_  
Street \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_  
State/Country \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone (H/W) \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

[Amigos typically uses e-mail for communication with members to enhance efficiency and reduce costs.  
You have the option of leaving this blank if you prefer not to receive these e-mails.]

Host Country: \_\_\_\_\_ Years of Service: 19 \_\_\_\_\_ – 20 \_\_\_\_\_  
Spouse's Name \_\_\_\_\_ PCV Surname \_\_\_\_\_

[Include spouse's name if he/she is also joining Amigos and indicate the surname used during Peace Corps service.]

Vocations \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_

Please check each box as appropriate and tally the subtotals in the right-hand column.

Annual Dues for NPCA and Amigos	\$50 Individual	\$ _____
	\$65 Couple/Family	\$ _____
Annual Dues for Amigos Only	\$15 Individual	\$ _____
	\$20 Couple/Family	\$ _____
	\$ 8 Student/Retired	\$ _____
	\$ 4 Hardship	\$ _____
Foreign Address (Non-U.S.A. Mail)	\$ 5 Individual/Family	\$ _____
Donation to Kantuta or Other Amigos Project (Optional)		\$ _____
	<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ _____</b>

Make checks out to *Amigos de Bolivia y Peru, Inc.*

<sup>1</sup> NPCA is the National Peace Corps Association.

<sup>2</sup> Recent RPCVs (within 6 months of PC Service) are eligible for a complementary membership. Hardship refers to those members with economic hardships such as unemployment or disability.

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## Celebrating a Legacy (continued from p. 5)

dent Kevin Quigley pointed out in his introduction, when one speaks of peace, one also must speak of war and its effects. Muller offered a blistering assessment of current events that had the audience cheering.

Up next was performer and activist Peter Yarrow with his unique blending of music and message. He quickly had the audience on its feet, swaying and singing to "Where Have All the Flowers Gone?" and "We Shall Over-

come." Throughout the weekend Yarrow had spoken of his admiration for the Peace Corps community, and so as the conference came to a close, Kevin Quigley presented him with a Peace Corps logo pin and declared him to be an honorary returned Peace Corps volunteer.



NPCA President Kevin Quigley visiting with RPCVs in Chicago

Pictures and additional coverage from NPCA are available at [www.rpcv.org/pages/sitepage.cfm?id=951](http://www.rpcv.org/pages/sitepage.cfm?id=951).



*Yachaspa is published quarterly by Amigos de Bolivia y Perú for its membership. The newsletter welcomes articles and other material pertaining to the general purposes of the organization. Except for copyrighted material, items may be reprinted as long as attribution is provided to Yachaspa and Amigos.*

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# YACHASPA

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