

## Third annual RPCV picnic in the Adirondacks!!!

July 12th

- Where:** Johnsburg, NY Camp of John & Lyn Kucij, Directions at the end of this announcement.
- When:** 11:00am 'til dark, food at 2:00pm, Saturday, July 12<sup>th</sup>.
- What:** Gather on 32 woodsy acres with a clear, cold mountain stream, friends who share your zest for international life and travel, opportunities to hike, toss horseshoes, play wiffleball, and enjoy flowers and good company.
- Who:** RPCVs and their families, and other assorted international types
- Why:** 'Cause RPCVs of NENY will provide beverages and basic, all-American picnic grub. Bring a lawn chair, sunscreen, your favorite bug spray, and a salad or dessert or international dish to share. We've been drinking the stream water for 18 years without a problem, but if you'd prefer, bring a jug of water with you.
- RSVP:** is helpful, but we won't turn you away without one...John and Lyn Kucij 518-372-9578 or lkucij@juno.com or Steve Hoyt at 518-732-7618 or steveh@albany.net.

**Directions:** From the Northway, take exit 23. Take Route 9 through Warrensburg. Several miles beyond Warrensburg, turn Left onto Rte. 28 and take it for approx. 11 miles until you get to the traffic light in Weavertown. (There's a realty office, a Lincoln Logs model home and an old church which is Beaver Brook Outfitters at the intersection.) At the Weavertown light, turn Left and go a couple of miles to the Hamlet of Johnsburg. Turn Left onto South Johnsburg Road. (Just before Mosher's log cabin diner.) Go 1 mile to your first right, which is Hudson St. Take Hudson St. 2.something miles until you see a NYS Fisherman's Parking Lot on your left. Just beyond the parking lot is our road--there's a Kucij sign on one of the trees. IF YOU CROSS the little bridge that goes over Paintbed Brook or you come to Paintbed Road, an old logging road, YOU'VE GONE TOO FAR. The cabin is about ¼ mile up our road. It can be rough for little cars, but is passable when driven slowly. If you wish, park in the fisherman's lot and walk the rest of the way.

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## What's been going on?

Well, we have had some great speakers this spring, and it will continue this summer. If you haven't been able to make our monthly meetings (1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday of every month at the Latham Biryani Restaurant—*see August mtg. location change below*) let me tell you what you've missed, besides a good crowd full of interesting questions.

Starting in March we had a great presentation by one of our members living in Watkins Glen, Mark Maxam (Kenya '94-'96). Mark has started his own non-profit called Jua that installs solar lighting systems in schools in rural Kenya. Our group has nominated Mark for the National Peace Corps Association's Sargent Shriver Award for this initiative. At the same meeting, we also had a really good presentation on Korea by Young Sung, a Korean student who was visiting and working in the area for several months. Young was very pleased by the hospitality of this RPCV group. He has since returned to Korea.

In April, our own Bill Batt gave an interesting presentation on his recent trip to India and Thailand. May brought a great presentation by Eliot Cressweel, Laura Van Duesen and Bob Von Achen who returned last year from Morocco. They shared three different but also similar perspectives on North African culture.

And this month we had a presentation by Daniel Connolly and Peg Clemente of SUNY's Center for International Development (CID), an organization that presently focuses on developing democratic institutions in countries in Africa, Central America, the Middle East and elsewhere. Peg shared some of her experiences starting out as a PCV in Tunisia and then living and working in other developing countries. CID also sponsors monthly speakers at the SUNY Central building in Albany. Check out the CID's upcoming speakers on our webpage.

Every year, members visit classes around the area in honor of Peace Corps Day, and this year was no different. Don Hegeman organized the schools and presenters this year, and we had over a dozen people participate--some presenting at two or three schools--on their experiences as volunteers. It is always great fun to let kids know about the fascinating world out there, and they love to hear about it. – **Continues on the next page**

## So! What's coming up?

More speakers, including quite possibly: Diana McDonald, who will be returning shortly from Benin, Steve and Jeanette Gottlieb after their trip to Kenya, and many other RPCVs or others involved in international development. Also coming up is the Kucij's annual Adirondack Picnic Extravaganza at their beautiful camp near Crane Mountain! This is a favorite event with nearly everybody. While we are there, I'd like to take a few minutes to talk about the group, how we've developed the group in the past year and where people would like things to go in the future. Then we'll party, hike and hang out.

Finally, welcome to all new members! And as a reminder, we are open to all who would like to join the group, not just RPCVs. Hope to see you at an upcoming event.

*Steve Hoyt (Niger '94 – '96), President*

**\*\*\* NEXT MEETING LOCATION CHANGE \*\*\*** In August, we won't be meeting at Latham Biryani, instead, join us on **Tuesday, August 5, at 6:00 pm** at the **Hegeman's house** in Valatie. It'll be a potluck dinner, but we won't let anyone starve if you can't bring something. Please RSVP to Don at 518-392-9704. Directions: Take exit 11 from I-90, go south on Rte. 9 for one mile. You will see a railroad overpass, and before you enter the tunnel under the tracks, turn a sharp Left onto Rte. 32. Go 2 miles, at the stop sign take a Right. Go through town and then bear left onto County Rte. 17. Go 2 miles, then take a left onto Rte. 66. Go 1/4 mile and turn Left onto Ashford Rd.. The Hegeman's house is the first house on the Right, it has a green mailbox.

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## Terry Amrhein Runs for NPCA Board

Terry Amrhein is running for the Board of the National Peace Corps Association (NPCA). Terry currently serves as the Advocacy Coordinator for this chapter and as Advocacy Chair for the NPCA. NPCA members who served in Central and Southern Africa can vote for him. Ballots have already gone out. In about one year, Terry has done a great deal to help Peace Corps expand its advocacy network and has been working to advance the New Peace Corps Charter bill in Congress. If you can vote for him, please do! For information on NPCA Advocacy, visit the Advocacy Network webpage at [www.NPCA-Advocacy.net](http://www.NPCA-Advocacy.net)

## Energy Policy

*Submitted by David Borton*

U.S. energy policy is designed for the short term profit of U.S. energy businesses. Deregulation, Gulf Wars, and energy subsidies are examples of the lack of long-term thinking.

The long-term reality is that, as finite stocks of oil and natural gas are depleted, the rate at which we are using up the resources is increasing. U.S. "production" of oil has been in continuous decline since 1970 and most of the rest of the world is following suit.

The current example of natural gas is symptomatic. U.S. storage of natural gas cycles from summer-filling- to winter- emptying. This last winter, supplies went from being at the top end of the range to being at the bottom end. Meanwhile more of our electricity is coming from natural gas, thus reducing the gas available for storage. The result is an increase in the price in the summer, the normal low-price time of year.

Unless we have unusually benign weather, our poor energy policies will provide another "crisis" soon.

## Job Hunting in Albany

A couple of our members are job hunting in the Albany area. Please send any job leads their way.

**Bob Van Achen** (Morocco '00-'02) is looking for a job teaching English at the college or high school level, or would be happy to get involved with adult education. Phone: 518-426-7955 or e-mail: [rvonachen@yahoo.com](mailto:rvonachen@yahoo.com).

**Laura Van Deusen** (Morocco '00-'02) is looking for a job "that I can sink my teeth into...a challenging, positive work environment in the area of immigrants/refugees/immigration, community or economic development, community relations or special events." Phone: 518-426-7955 or e-mail: [moroccomama@yahoo.com](mailto:moroccomama@yahoo.com).

## Buy Fair Trade Coffee from a Guatemalan Community

RPCV Tom Doyle (Panama '67-'68) is selling coffee produced by families in San Lucas Toliman, a community located on the shores of Lake Atitlán, Guatemala. You can find Tom at area farmers markets, including those held Saturday mornings in Troy and Rensselaerville. All proceeds from the sale of the coffee go

directly to the people of San Lucas Toliman. If you can't wait to see Tom to find out more, contact Ken Huebert at the project office in Minnesota, phone: 507-354-3667 or e-mail: huebert@newulmtel.net or khuebert@dnv.org.

## Letter from China

Tammy Kelly (China '00-'02), who joined us for a couple meetings earlier this year, is again in China, teaching English. Here's the first part of the letter she sent us in April. We hope to publish the rest of it in our next newsletter. In the meantime, you can find the entire letter on the website ([www.rpcv-ny.org](http://www.rpcv-ny.org)).

Hi Steve and fellow RPCV's,

Well, the recent news of SARS has become the focus and "the war" has taken the back burner with the main Chinese news...although most people really aren't sure what is really happening with SARS. As you might have heard, Peace Corps China Volunteers were evacuated due to SARS. Trace Foundation, the organization I work for, said Trace teachers could leave, but I have decided to stay for now. So far, there hasn't been any report of SARS in Qinghai Province. Besides that, teaching and lesson planning keep me busy. The students are active and this makes teaching seem more meaningful. I have been doing a bit of hiking in the hills that surround the city. On a clear, dust free day, the view is spectacular. I have included a blurb about an event I had a few weeks ago. Please pardon spelling and grammar errors ☺...Happy Spring! Peace, Tammy

*An Hour for Cao Bing, part one*

*by Tammy Kelly*

It was Monday. I had spent a long day lesson planning and then helping two of my Tibetan students fill out applications to study overseas for one month in the Philippines. A chance of a lifetime for such students, who come from far away, remote villages in China's Northwestern Qinghai Province.

I stood waiting for bus #2 and looked up into the pale blue sky of Xining, the capital city of Qinghai. The weather was brisk, but soon the winds would pick up and dusk would follow. The bus turned the corner and came to a jolting stop. I climbed on and slipped my one kuai (dollar) in to the coin slot. Thankfully, the bus was nearly empty, a rare occasion in China. I sat down and put my heavy blue knapsack in the plastic seat next to me.

Six stops later, I stepped off the bus. I walked up the lane toward my gray apartment building. As I walked, I smiled or said, "Ni hao (hello)" to the vendors, where I buy various daily supplies, like bottled water, real overseas chocolate ☺, tissues or notebooks. I nodded to the sweet potato man and waved to the yogurt lady. She proclaims her yogurt is the best around, all because the previous foreign teacher used to buy yogurt from her. True, it is pretty good. The other yogurt I have tried in this region, has a strong smoky flavor...for me that's ok when eating BBQ chicken, but not dairy.

I came to the "noodle family", as I call them. I always eat my beef noodles and "hui man", a pasta dish with a spicy sauce and chopped vegetables, here. The first time I ate at this place, the noodle family served me tea, as one typically does in China. What is different and special to this region is that instead of sugar, salt is added to the tea. When I first tasted it, I couldn't finish the tea. Now, I drink it like hot broth. It feels warm and nourishing in these dry, cold winter months.

In the evenings, the noodle family sets benches and make-shift tables outside their small restaurant. Here they roast lamb kabobs and round delicious bread, called "bingzi"; when it is roasted it is called "cao bing." Even though the strong wind whipped up the day's debris of sand, twigs and various colored plastic bags, I decided to sit outside on the bench. I enjoy talking to the proprietor. He speaks slowly to me and his "putongua" or standard Chinese, is quite good. On a good day, I have little trouble understanding his basic meaning. When he speaks to other customers, he quickly and comfortably slips into speaking Qinghaihua, the local dialect. The noodle family are Hui Zu, a Muslim minority in China. Their physical features are Chinese, but their white caps (men) and head scarves (women) distinguish them from the Han majority.

***Latham Biryani - We have to put in a plug for this great restaurant.***

*They serve up delectable food at our monthly meetings.*

*Located at 638 Loudon Road, Latham, near Hoffman's Playland*

*Here's what Metroland has to say, "You'll find lots of traditional Indian/Pakistani cuisine here, including lamb curry, chicken curry, rice dishes and tandoori chicken. On-off premises catering, takeout and delivery available." Serving 11am -10 pm, Tues.-Sun., phone: 782-1510*