

Holiday Party, and more

Greetings from RPCVSF
December 2014

Hello RPCVSF members!

Last month we enjoyed meeting our members and friends at Happy Hours on South Beach, in Stuart, and in Boca Raton, and at our always-popular pool party hosted by Barbara and Daryl Wall (who also will be hosting a kayaking and poolside outing on Dec. 13). We also enjoyed stories from Marilu Villa [Paraguay '11-'13] and Betty Zambrano [Peru '12-'14] at our Peace Corps Partnership Dinner at El Chalan Peruvian restaurant - with your help we raised \$520 for a community library project coordinated by a PCV (from Florida) currently serving in Ethiopia.

This is a great time of year to be outdoors in Florida and our brand new club of RPCV SCUBA divers - coordinated by Jim Scheidegger (Zaire '89-'91) - enjoyed a beach dive last month at Lauderdale by the Sea and will be diving and snorkeling at the Blue Heron Bridge in West Palm Beach on Sunday, December 14. We have divers/snorkelers of all levels and all are welcome to join us. Contact Jim at james.scheidegger@pinecrest.edu to join the dive/snorkel or to get on the list for future dives/snorkel trips.

THIS MONTH our southwest Florida members will [be touring ECHO Farm in Fort Myers](#) (in the afternoon of Saturday, December 6) and learning about sustainable farming techniques being developed for use worldwide. And on that same day (Sat., Dec. 6) we hope you will join us for our always-popular [Holiday Party, hosted by Ana Ciereszko](#) (Grenadines '69-'71) in the South Miami area (conveniently accessible from SR 826/Palmetto Expressway). Please bring an unwrapped gift for a child/youth, and an inexpensive weird gift for the Crazy Santa gift exchange, we also invite you to bring new or gently used books for children - in English, Spanish or French. At the Holiday Party you also can shop at RPCVSF's [Fair Trade Market](#) - a great place for all of your holiday shopping!

If you aren't already in the holiday spirit, we've got an idea for you: please join us for a visit to the Winter Wonderland at Hoffman's Chocolate Factory on Lake Worth Rd., in Greenacres (southwest of West Palm Beach). Santa and Mrs. Claus will be there, along with a display of 75,000 new LED holiday lights. This is a very family-friendly event. We're meeting at 6:00 pm on Sunday, December 14. For more details, click [here: Winter Wonderland tour of Hoffman's Chocolates Factory](#). And we're again going to enjoy some holiday music on Miami Beach at a Wallcast Concert at the New World Symphony, on Saturday, December 20 - please let us know if you plan to join us so that we can plan for a meeting point: [Wallcast Concert](#).

Holiday Shopping

Please be sure to select RPCVSF as your designated charity on Amazon Smile - then with qualified purchases Amazon will give us RPCVSF a benefit! Click [here to register](https://smile.amazon.com/), at no cost to you: <https://smile.amazon.com/>

News from the Fair Trade Market, Contributed by Linda Whitmyre

The holidays are here! This is the time of year the Fair Trade Market (FTM) carries CHOCOLATE BARS! They are great as a small "thinking-of-you" gift or a stocking stuffer. The FTM has many other gift items ... from the small Ashanti bracelet from Ghana to the Tree of Life candelaria from Nicaragua to the unique beaded jewelry from Nepal.

This is also the time of year for the Peace Corps Calendar which is much, much more than a calendar. It is an educational experience and it provides a reason (sometime more than one) for us to celebrate every day.

For your out-of-town friends and relatives, Equal Exchange has gift baskets which include a variety of their items ... coffee, chocolate, tea etc. Shipping is reasonable, even free if you ship \$75 or more to the same [address](#). (www.equalexchange.coop)

Enjoy the Holiday Season! And remember, how you spend your money does make a difference!

Looking forward to the New Year!

In the new year we're starting a Cooking & Conversation Club - which will meet every other month starting in January (contact us if you are interested: RPCVSF@rpcvsf.org)

While you can see that we have lots of fun events throughout the year to build our strong network of nearly 300 RPCVs throughout South Florida, we're also actively engaged in community service projects. In fact, we are busy planning for our biggest community service project: our Everglades Outing, on January 31, 2015, when we'll host 100+ children from homeless shelters for an educational and fun day at Everglades National Park. Register now to volunteer - this is one of our most popular events and we need dozens of RPCVs to [volunteer: 16th Annual Everglades Outing](#). We'll also have another Everglades Outing on February 21, 2015, for older youth aging out of foster care, and we plan to camp that weekend - please register in [advance: 16th Annual Everglades Outing - Part 2](#). And on March 14 we're planning to help build homes with Habitat for Humanity of Broward County, [click here to register \(space is very limited\): Habitat for Humanity Work Day](#). Please mark your calendars now and plan to volunteer for these great events.

Stay tuned to our website for details, and remember to check our Events and Activities Calendar frequently for updates.

On behalf of your elected Board of Directors of RPCVSF, **AMANI!**

(**Amani** is the word for "peace" in the Swahili language spoken

COMING EVENTS

For more information and to register for these events please visit our website or contact the named organizer.

Saturday, December 6: Afternoon Tour of ECHO Farm, Fort Myers [Irene Brammertz Zaire '88-'90, Malawi '11-'12]

Saturday, December 6: Holiday party at the home of Ana Cierieszko [Grenadines '69-'71]

Saturday, December 13: kayaking outing along the waterways in Surfside/Bal Harbour, followed by lunch at Daryl and Barbara's home [Daryl and Barbara Wall, Ecuador, '71-'73]

Sunday, December 14: SCUBA diving at the Blue Heron bridge in West Palm Beach, with our new SCUBA club, the Peace Corps Divers (PCDs). Contact Jim Scheidegger [Zaire, '89-'91] for [details, at james.scheidegger@pinecrest.edu](mailto:james.scheidegger@pinecrest.edu).

Sunday, December 14: Winter Wonderland Tour of Hoffman's Chocolate Factory, Lake Worth Dr., Greenacres. Contact Marilyn Page [Marshall Islands '66-'69]

Saturday, December 20, 7:30 pm: Wallcast concert at New World Symphony, Miami Beach. "Sights and Sounds of the Season."

Friday, January 9: Happy Hour, Lagniappe, 3425 NE Second Ave., Miami, 7:00 pm [Barbara Junge, Togo '85-'87]

Group travel to Haiti, January 14-21, 2015: We will visit some of the programs RPCVSF has supported, and tour the country's beautiful beaches and countryside - if you want to join us send an email to gregzell@mindspring.com [Greg Zell, Nigeria '62-'64]

Saturday, January 31, 2015: 16th Annual Everglades Outing. Please plan to volunteer for the day (from 8:30 am to 2 pm) - visit our Events and Activities Calendar to register. [Barbara Junge (Togo '85-'87), Mary Lamberts (Thailand '70-'72), Caryn Lavernia (Vanuatu '05-'08), Lindsey Nieratka (Honduras '04-'06), Marilyn Page (Marshall Islands '66-'69), Patty Phares (Samoa '72-'75)]

Saturday, February 21, 2015: As a new event this year, we'll be hosting a second day of our Everglades Outing, for older children and youth aging out of foster care. We also may plan for a night of camping at Everglades National Park. More details will be posted on our website soon. Please plan to volunteer. [Virginia Emmons-McNaught (Niger '00-'02), Barbara Junge (Togo '85-'87), Mary Lamberts (Thailand '70-

'72), Caryn Lavernia (Vanuatu '05-'08), Patty Phares (Samoa '72-'75)]

Sunday, March 1, 2015: Peace Corps Week event. Storytelling event at Books and Books on Lincoln Rd., **South Beach.**

Saturday, March 14, 2015: RPCVSF work day with Habitat for Humanity of Broward County. More details will be posted soon. [Elizabeth Coomber, Mali ('10-'12) and Daryl Wall (Ecuador '71-'73)]