

The Herald

News for those who served with the Peace Corps in Eritrea and Ethiopia.

MONTHLY ARCHIVES: JULY 2011

Fiftieth Anniversary

Posted on [July 15, 2011](#) by [bhillenbrand](#) | [3 comments](#)

The Countdown to the Big Weekend

Plans for the September celebration marking Peace Corps' 50th Anniversary in Washington are falling into place. Buy your tickets now to take part in all the drama, excitement and fun of this historic event

by **Barry Hillenbrand (Debre Marcos 63-65)**

Thousands of returned Peace Corps Volunteers are coming to Washington in September for a long weekend of celebrations marking Peace Corps' 50th birthday. Beginning Wednesday, September 21st, and continuing on through Sunday, the 25th, dozens of events, big and small, are planned to bring together RPCVs who answered the call made by President John F. Kennedy 50 years ago to provide technical assistance to countries asking for it, to help people understand the U.S. and to bring better understanding for foreign peoples back to the U.S.

E&E RPCVs events and other offerings

Ethiopia and Eritrea Returned Peace Corps Volunteers, E&E RPVCs, have scheduled two big events for the weekend. The first is a big **buffet-reception at the Ethiopian Embassy**. Washington's U & 18th Street area restaurant Axum will serve up an ingeria and wat meal with all the trimmings. Two bars will serve Ethiopian beers, as well as California wines and tej. Live Ethiopian music will make for a lively evening. (See "The Schedule" below for more details.)

E&E RPCVs is also organizing a morning of talks, panels, and video links with Ethiopia to bring us up to date on what is happening in Ethiopia and Eritrea, as well as hearing about what people are doing to continue projects in Ethiopia. (See "The Schedule" below for more details.)

And then there will be various small **reunions of training groups**. The Big Weekend is a chance to reconnect with old friends. If your training group or town of service is getting together during the time provided on Saturday afternoon, the 24th, from 2:00 - 5:00, please let me know so we can include it in our listing of activities. Please note where you will be so that all those interested can get in touch, and include the name of the contact person and email or telephone number. When we post the activities at the hotel, we will then ask for a local contact so that all those who wish to participate can get in touch for any details. Please respond to Nancy Horn, at horn.n@att.net (See "The Schedule" below for more details.)

E&E RPCVs will have a 2-room **Hospitality Room** at our hotel beginning on Thursday afternoon, September 22nd. It will not only be a place to meet-and-greet but will have other activities as well.

- **Silent Auction:** To raise money for our RPCV Legacy Program projects we will hold a silent auction. We have several items already that were purchased recently in Ethiopia whose bids will start at between \$5 and \$100. If you have any items you would like to contribute, please contact Nancy Horn (horn.n@att.net) to let her know what you have and what you suggest the “start price” should be.
- **Opportunity to share digital photos** via DVD player on a TV: Is anyone in the DC area able to loan us a DVD player from Friday afternoon through Sunday morning? It would be great if you could. To rent one from the hotel would be VERY expensive. Contact Nancy Horn (horn.n@att.net) if you can help the group out.
- **E&ERPCV Authors:** Nancy is assembling a list of authors among us who would like to share their writings on Saturday, September 24, from 1:00-2:00. We are trying to plan how many would like to share something about their books and perhaps sell and sign a few. Please let me – Nancy Horn, horn.n@att.net – who you are, the name of your book, and if you would like space and time to say something about your book. The book need not necessarily be about Peace Corps, but something you would like to share with us about what you have been doing in your after-PC life.
- **Snacks and drinks** – bring some to share: plus cups, serving ware & napkins.

Other events

The National Peace Corps Association, the NPCA, is going glitzy with a black tie gala. The NPCA is also sponsoring some panel discussions and advocacy work. A counter party has been organized by those who would rather take a pass on black tie affairs. And naturally there will be ceremony at JFK’s grave at Arlington Cemetery and a march of RPCVs across the Memorial Bridge to the National Mall. Street parties. Seminars. Photo and art exhibitions. And, as they say on TV, much, much more. A very full weekend.

Who is coming

Click on “[Attending the 50th](#)” at the top of each page on this site to see whom we know is coming. If you are and your name isn’t on the list, send a note to Marian and marian@haleybeil.com. Contact your friends who aren’t on the list and urge them to join in the celebration.

So here’s what you need to do to join the celebrations.

FIRST OFF, BUY TICKETS FOR THE BIG WEEKEND

In order to participate in those events specifically for Ethiopia & Eritrea RPCVs —namely the Injera-and-Wat Buffet Reception at the Ethiopian Embassy, the Saturday morning Breakfast Form, and one of the Training Group reunions—you need to purchase tickets. We made that easy. Do it on line.

Please click on the links below which will allow you to register — and pay for — for the three main events for E&E RPCVs. Registering will not only assure you a place at the table (and drinks to boot) but also allow us to plan properly for these events.

- Click [here](#) to purchase tickets for the Injera-and-wot buffet reception at the Ethiopian Embassy on Friday, September 23.
- Click [here](#) to purchase tickets for the Saturday morning breakfast meeting of all E&E RPCV at the Marriott Hotel.
- Click [here](#) to purchase your ticket for the poolside Happy Hour reunion of the Ethiopia II (1963–1965) training group on Saturday afternoon.

SECONDLY, MAKE SURE YOU HAVE A HOTEL

The headquarters hotel for E&E RPCVs is “[Crystal City Marriott at Reagan National Airport](#),” address: 1999 Jefferson

Davis Highway, Arlington, VA 22202. Special discounted group rates still available for our group during the reunion period.

The Crystal City Marriott will continue to honor the special rate of \$109 a night (a real bargain for D.C.) until September 2 when the rate will revert to its normal high rate. Be forewarned: The weekend of our reunion Washington hotels will be jammed with meetings of the World Bank/IMF, the Congressional Black caucus, etc. Book now for a good rate and a good hotel. The Crystal City Marriott at 1999 Jefferson Davis Highway, Arlington VA 22202 (703) 413-5500 is located steps from hip restaurants, iconic theaters & Pentagon City shopping. It is just a few stops on the Yellow line of the Metro to downtown D.C. including the Mall, the Smithsonian and other attractions. The Metro station is right under the hotel. In addition, the hotel offers a free shuttle to and from National Airport

E&E RPCVs will have a hospitality suite at the hotel, and, of course, people will be meeting around the hotel's newly remodeled bar.

Book by phone: 800-228-9290. Ask for discount reservation for: Ethiopia and Eritrea 50, group code: PECPECA. Be persistent. The reservation operators sometimes can't find our reservation – or get the specific hotel name confused. But if you are persistent or hang up and redial, you'll get the special rate.

You can also book on line by going to www.marriott.com/wascc. If you need them, detailed instructions on how to work your way through the on line reservations site are at the end of this story.

FINALLY, FAMILIARIZE YOURSELF WITH THE EVENTS FOR THE BIG 50th ANNIVERSARY WEEKEND

There is no central organizer of the 50th Anniversary Celebrations. Peace Corps is putting on a few small events and an open house at PC Headquarters. But that's about it. The National Peace Corps Association is sponsoring one big event and several smaller ones. Several ad hoc groups, including our E&E RPCVs, the Peace Corps Fund and Peace Corps Worldwide, are organizing things. With no real central all-inclusive calendar, it is difficult to figure out what is happening and when. A number of events are scheduled concurrently, you may have to make a choice of which event you will attend.

You will find other calendars at [Peace Corps](#), [The National Peace Corps Association](#), [Peace Corps Worldwide](#)

The Schedule

This is a rough guide to the main events.

E&E RPCVs events are indented and titled in red.

• WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 21

3 – 5 pm at Peace Corps Headquarters

Panel discussion of the early Peace Corps years. Details are yet to be worked out.

6 – 8 pm Training at NPCA for those who will take part in Thursday's NPCA's Advocacy Day, when RPCVs will lobby members of Congress on behalf of Peace Corps funding.

• THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 22

All day: NPCA Advocacy Day on Capital Hill

10 am – noon at Peace Corps Headquarters

Panel Discussion on relations with host countries. Speakers have yet to be announced.

• FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 23

All Day Locations around the city.

Day of service organized by the NCPA. For details see [NPCA](#).

1 – 4 pm at the Smithsonian Museum of American History.

The Smithsonian National Museum of American History and the Peace Corps will display a sampling of a collection they have developed that represents the historical role of the Peace Corps. This will be informally displayed at the Museum between 1 p.m. and 4 p.m.

••• 6 – 9 pm E&E RPCVs at the Ethiopian Embassy

Injera-and-Wat Buffet Reception sponsored by E&E RPCVs and the Ethiopian Embassy. All PCVs who served in Ethiopia or Eritrea and guests are invited. Plenty of injera and doro wot plus tibs, keke alicha, shero wot and so on catered by the Axum Restaurant. Two drinks are included in the price. The bar will be serving Meta and Harare beer, tej, California red and white wines and soft drinks.

LaDena Robichaud-Schnapper (Dessie, Awassa 63–66) will perform a coffee ceremony. Famed Ethiopian musician Melaku Gelaw and our own **Charlie Sutton** (66–68 Addis) will play Ethiopian music.

Tickets are required and should be purchased before September 15th. The cost of the evening is \$50 for adults, or \$25 for kids. You can purchase tickets click on this link: <http://eerpcv-buffet-reception.eventbrite.com>
(We strongly urge you buy your tickets now so that we will have cash to pay deposits.)

7 – 10 pm at the National Building Museum

Peace Corps staff and RPCVs are invited to enjoy a special evening with former Peace Corps Directors and RPCV Members of Congress, and other guests. Cost: \$60 including buffet, drinks. For more information click on <http://www.pcstaffreunion.com/>

SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 24

••• 8 am – 1 pm E&E RPCVs at the Crystal City Marriott

Continental breakfast and General Meeting and forum for all Ethiopia and Eritrea RPCVs. A full program of speakers and panels including a live Skype link conversation with the Peace Corps director in Ethiopia, an update on Peace Corps activities by the PC desk officer, a political update on Ethiopia and Eritrea by **Shlomo Bachrach**, a talk by U.S. Representative (D-Cal) and RPCV **John Garamendi** (Metu 66–68), and others.

To purchase tickets (\$30) for this morning-long meeting and continental breakfast, please click on: <http://eerpcv-saturday-morning-program.eventbrite.com>
(We strongly urge you buy your tickets now so that we will have cash to pay deposits.)

8 am – 9:30 am at the Mayflower Hotel

“Mad Men & Women at the Mayflower”

Breakfast sponsored by the Peace Corps Fund at the Mayflower Hotel. A panel will discuss how the Peace Corps was created in 30 days during meetings at the hotel.

Mark Gearan, former Peace Corps Director, will emcee this morning event.

Purchase tickets for breakfast (\$30) at [Peace Corps Fund](#).

• • • Afternoon E&E RPCVs training groups

Various Training Group reunions will be holding reunions and meetings. (If your group is having a gathering and is not listed here, please let me know at BarryHillenbrand@mac.com

• **2 - 5 pm Ethiopia I** vets and their guests will gather in the Crystal City Marriott Hotel's pub for an informal lunch after the morning presentations. Participants will order off the pub's menu. And in the immortal words of Sean Fitzgerald after having ordered drinks for all in the pub saying, "When Sean Fitzgerald drinks, everyone drinks," he then explained to the bar tender on presenting him the bill, "When Sean Fitzgerald pays, everybody pays."

If coming to this part of the event please inform **Leo Cecchini** (62-64 Asmara) at leo@cecchini.org,

• **3 - 5 pm Happy Hour for Ethie II's** will be a multi-hour event held around the pool at the Crystal City Marriot. The reunion will be, says organizer **Gigi Ott Wietecha (Makela, Dessie 63-65)** "a time to reconnect, reminisce & share memories of our time in Ethiopia. As **Haskell Ward (Nazareth 63-65)** recently wrote: 'John Edward's passing, reminded me of our mortality' So this grand get-together should be a great source of satisfaction for those of us who are still eager and able to travel." Spouses/partners/friends/children all welcome. There will be an open bar. Cost of the party: \$25. Check this link to purchase tickets: <http://ethi2-happy-hour.eventbrite.com>

• **CJ Smith Castagnaro** (Harar, Debre Zeit 64-69) is working on organizing a gather of Volunteers who served in **Harar**. Contact CJ for more details at cjsmithc@yahoo.com

• **Don Schlenger** (66-68) is putting together an event for the **Utah VII** training group. Contact Don at schlengerd@bellsouth.net for more details.

Saturday night

There are several dinner/party options. Among them are:

Option 1: Many training groups and friends are thinking of organizing dinners. The area around the Marriott is loaded with restaurants awaiting business. The **Ethie II** group, for example, is considering booking the Harar Mesob Ethiopian Restaurant near the Marriott to continue our get-together over dinner. Those interested please send a message to: EthieTwo@gmail.com

Option 2: The NPCA is sponsoring a black tie dinner at the Reagan Office Building. The cost is \$250 for members and \$300 for non-members. Chris Mathews is MC. More details at [NPCA](#).

Option 3: 6 - midnight The Peace Corps Fund will hold the Third Goal Bash — a party & dance to live and recorded ethnic music at the Smith Athletic Center at George Washington University. No black ties required. Raffle. Come before or after other events. To purchase tickets (\$33) and for more info go to [Peace Corps Fund](#).

• SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 25

10am - noon at Arlington National Cemetery

RPCVs from all countries will assemble at the Amphitheater at Arlington for a program honoring JFK and Sargent Shriver, as well as fallen PCVs.

Noon: RPCVs will march behind the flag of their Country of Service over Memorial Bridge to the National Mall and Lincoln Memorial. (**Gather at the Eritrea and Ethiopia flags.**)

1pm - 5pm NPCA is planning a block party, either on the Mall or on the street outside Peace Corps Headquarters. Plans have not yet be finalized.

The Big Weekend marking Peace Corps 50th Anniversary promises to be a memorable event. So you should register soon not to miss out. See you in Washington in September.

Detailed Instructions for making a reservation at the Marriott online:

- Go to www.marriott.com/wascc where you will find the home page for the Crystal City Marriott.
- On the right side of the page is "Check Rates & Availability" (It should have a - in a small box in front of that text. If there is a - inside the box, click on it to get the +.)
- Enter the dates, number of rooms and number of guests you would like to reserve.
- Several lines below is "Special Rates & Awards" with a + inside a box in front of this text. Click on the + to get a - in the box.
- Find "Group code" in the list below.
- Enter PECPECA for our group code.
- Click the red button "Check Availability"
- On the new page you will see under the "Special Rates" tab "ETHIOPIA ERITREA 50"
- Click on the circle in front of "109.00 per night" to select it and more options will appear from which to choose.
- Once you've made these selections, click on the red button "Continue."
- Fill in your personal and billing information.
- Click on the red button "Continue."
- Review your registration information.
- Click on the red button "Complete Reservation."
- In about 30 seconds you will receive a "Confirmation Number." Write it down.
- You will also receive an email confirmation of your registration.

Posted in [Fiftieth Anniversary](#)

3 Comments

Third Goal

Posted on [July 15, 2011](#) by [bhillenbrand](#) | [Leave a comment](#)

Coffee Cup Toasts to Peace Corps

The Idaho RPCV group celebrates Peace Corps' birthday in grand traditional style

by **Sam Greer (Addis 66-68)**

During March and April 2011, the Idaho Historical Museum in Boise celebrated 50 Years of Peace Corps with displays from fifteen countries representing places where Idaho PCVs served. The opening week activities included an Ethiopian Coffee Ceremony that I helped coordinate on First Thursday Night.



BIRTHDAY BUNA IN BOISE: Sam Greer assist Belaynesh Tesfamariam in coffee ceremony

Over 250 guests enjoyed that evening's traditional ceremony hosted by Belaynesh Tesfamariam whose family is one of those whose Habitat Home was built with local RPCV labor. Also assisting Belaynesh and me were Essey Tilahun, son of the PE instructor at the school I taught at 45 years ago. Essey's fiancé, Bruktawit Antalew, also joined in.

More than 5,000 people visited the two month exhibit in Boise. It travelled to East Idaho in the spring, and will end up in North Idaho in the fall. The moving forces behind this in depth Peace Corps experience are Heather Jasper (Morocco, 2005-07) and Kristi Brumley (Bulgaria 1998-2000). The accompanying photo was taken by Pat Hughes (Thailand 1971-74).

Posted in [Third Goal](#)

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PCVs in Ethiopia

Posted on [July 15, 2011](#) by [bhillenbrand](#) | [1 comment](#)

No good idea wilts for lack of cash

From latrines to computers Peace Corps Partnership Program in Ethiopia funds a wide range of projects for PCVs

by [Janet Danzl Lee \(Endeber 74-76\)](#)

A PCV'S STOLEN IPOD and shoeshine boys who came to the rescue were the impetus for a Peace Corps Partnership Program grant sponsored by PCV Bridget Kelly of Gebre Guracha in early 2011. Once her tormentors, these same shoeshine boys outran her to the bus stop, caught the thief, and proudly held the recovered booty up high on the return trip through town. This unexpected gesture of heroism brought together the bullies and the bullied into an endearing relationship with shared meals and an occasional movie at Bridget's home. Not long after, one of the boys, Dawit, became seriously ill. The boys knocked at

Bridget's door, and Dawit was escorted to the hospital where he was diagnosed with pneumonia, given medication, and sent back to recuperate on the streets. After spending a sleepless night herself, Bridget embarked upon a plan to find more permanent shelter for the boys and the idea for the Kuyu Boys' Boarding Home was born.

Keith Keyser, was also touched by the children at his site in Finote Selam who shined shoes, peddled gum or lottery tickets, or just hung out with nothing to do. He had spoken to city officials who were interested in working with him



BIGGER THAN AN IPHONE: Bridget Kelly and some local kids explore technology

needed financial assistance to enable them to complete the projects, and the donors are assured 100 percent of their donations support the work at hand.

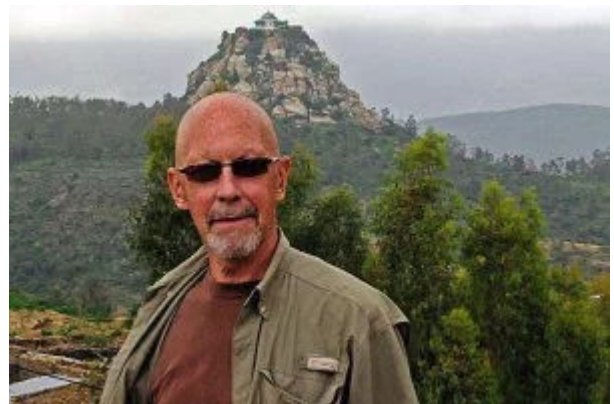
Once a PCV decides to embark on a project, s/he must garner community support, which must contribute financially or in-kind at least 25 percent of the cost of the project. The PCV must then complete a lengthy proposal, which is signed by the Volunteer, community partner, and the Country Director. It is then forwarded to The Office of Private Sector Initiatives, where it is approved or returned for additional information. Once it is finalized, a summary of the project is posted on the Peace Corps Partnership [web site](#) and the PCV is allowed to solicit funds and direct donors to the site. Credit card donations are accepted and the donor immediately receives a receipt with a follow up letter from Peace Corps headquarters. The site is updated regularly and both the PCV and donors can watch the progress of the grant as the donations arrive. PCVs send out appeals to contacts via email and other social media. The use of Facebook has been quite effective in promoting the projects and soliciting funding. Although the burden is primarily on the Volunteer to raise the necessary capital, when the fund is nearing completion, the remaining amount is quickly capped off and the grant is fully funded. Special corporate grant money may be used for this purpose.

The PCPP funding is wired to the bank account of the Volunteer and then the real work begins ordering materials and supervising the project. The PCV must account for all expenses and write a final report detailing whether the goals and objectives of the project were met, the impact on the community, and future anticipated outcomes. The PCV is

in setting up a library. He then became aware of the work that was being done in Mekelle by Peace Corps Volunteers, both current and returned, working with Yohannes Gebregeorgis and the Tigray Library and Literacy Development Project. He attended the library dedication in August 2010. Fashioning a Peace Corps Partnership Program grant after the successful one developed by the Mekelle volunteers, Nicholas Strnad, Shelley McCreery, and Danielle Hoekwater, Keith embarked on a quest of his own to raise the capital needed for a library project.

These are just a few examples of eighteen projects that Peace Corps Volunteers have sponsored since Peace Corps was reintroduced into Ethiopia in 2008. Other projects include the establishment of a community mill, building neighborhood latrines, a “Second Chance Café,” a poultry farm, and reservoir construction.

The Peace Corps Partnership Program had its start worldwide in April 1964 as a mechanism for project assistance to Volunteers in their communities from U.S. donors. Today there are over 700 small-scale, community-initiated projects that cover a broad range of endeavors related to water, education, English language and learning, business, health, and agriculture. The grants provide the Volunteers with much



LIBRARY BUILDER: Keith Keyser near Finote Selam

highly encouraged to send thank you notes to the donors and to regularly apprise donors of the progress of the project throughout.

The PCPP funding does make a real difference in the day-to-day lives of the recipients. As testimonial, each month, two sections of a three-week Introduction to Computers course is taught at the PCPP-sponsored computer lab at the Segenat Children and Youth Library in Mekelle, enabling boys and girls to receive basic knowledge of computers and computing. The classes are taught free of charge by experienced IT professionals.

To view current Ethiopia PCPP requests click on this Peace Corps [link](#), key in “Ethiopia” and check out and support current Ethiopian projects.

Posted in [PCVs in Ethiopia](#)

1 Comment

Journeys

Posted on [July 15, 2011](#) by [bhillenbrand](#) | [1 comment](#)

Fulfilling a Mission

A trip back to Ethiopia with his son, reminds an RPCV of his time as a Volunteer

by John Grap (Dabat [Begemdir], Tulu Bolo, Addis Ababa 73-77)

IN MAY I HAD THE PRIVILEGE of returning to Ethiopia for the third time since serving as a PCV in the mid-1970s. All three times I’ve accompanied humanitarian mission teams working with [ICA](#) — International Crisis Aid.



LIKE FATHER, LIKE SON: Matt and John Grap in Ethiopia

What made this third trip so special is that my 21-year old son, Matt, went with me. Matt is making his way through college while working at our local Target store. In January we explored the possibility of a mission to Guatemala when we learned of the opportunity to go to Ethiopia. Of course, we chose Ethiopia!

During my Peace Corps service I taught at middle schools in Dabat, north of Gonder, and in Tulu Bolo, about 100 miles southwest of Addis, on the Jimma Road. Additionally, I co-managed a school repair project for six months.

Positive Changes

Much has changed in Ethiopia since the '70s. Gone is the dreadful Derg and almost every Ethiopian we met was warm and receptive to Americans. Electricity is more pervasive, there are more wells providing clean water, and Internet cafes (albeit with dial-up service) have sprung up in the most unlikely locations. And, everyone in the cities and towns seems to have a cell phone.

On the Negative Side

Too many subsistence farm families are susceptible to drought and famine. HIV/AIDS continues to ravage large segments of the population. The sex trade is alive and continues to decimate thousands of lives. Unemployment seems high in Michigan where I now live, but it seems significantly higher in Ethiopia. However, more Ethiopians than ever are working to alleviate the suffering of their countrymen.

The ICA

Four years ago ICA established the first full-time health center in Angatcha, about 7 hours south, southwest of Addis, past Butajira and Hosanna where we work. Historically the area of between 250,000–500,000 people has been extremely under-served. The majority of the people are Kambata or Hadia.

ICA also has a children's center in Sebeta for young girls whose parents have died from AIDS, and it runs a large rescue and rehabilitation program for women involved in the sex trade in Addis. The work and energy of the ICA's staff is incredible.

Our Time There

Matt fit in right away, working in the pharmacy of the two clinics we established. He has always loved Ethiopian food – even if he's not a big fan of injera — so he need no adjustment there. He did have a hard time understanding how the pace of change in Ethiopia can be so slow. Fortunately some of ICA's Ethiopian staff helped put some things into perspective for him.

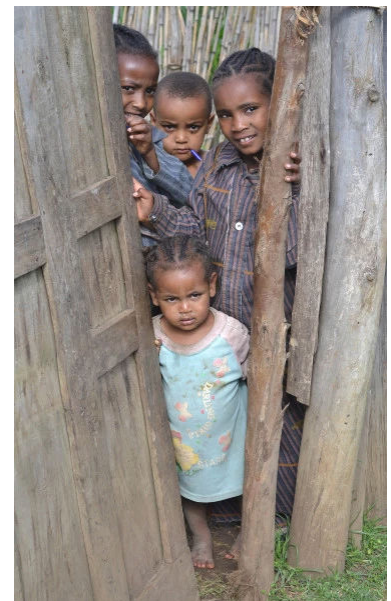
Matt turned 22 while in Ethiopia and the chef at our hotel in Addis, the Kaleb, made him a birthday cake. Later in the evening he spent several hours in the red light district as part of the attempted rescue of a sex trade worker. He'll never forget this birthday.

Again, I cannot say enough about all the great work that ICA does.

My Amharic came in very handy, on many occasions – from working in the field to ordering multiple machiatos. That I remembered as much as I did was a minor miracle.

All three times I've been back to Ethiopia I've felt like I was returning home. I can't wait to go back. Neither can Matt.

Editor's note: John Grap is an editor and photojournalist with the Battle Creek Enquirer in Michigan. To read more about his trip go to <http://melkammenged.wordpress.com/>.



CHECKING OUT THE FERENJ:
Children in Angatcha

Posted in [Journeys](#)

1 Comment

In Memorium

Remembering Ed Corboy

by John Coyne (Addis 62-64)

Ed Corboy, the first Peace Corps Staff Administrative Officer for Ethiopia, died on July 14, 2011 in Silver Springs, Maryland after a long illness. Joan, his wife of 58 years, and their daughter Katie, who was born in Ethiopia, were by his side.

After graduating from Georgetown, Ed went to work at a law firm in Washington, D.C., and it was there that he met and worked with Harris Wofford, the first Peace Corps Country Director to Ethiopia. It was at the law firm where he also met, Joan, a young receptionist. Shortly after they were married Joan became a polio victim. That did not, however, slow her down or keep her from working on her many causes or going to Ethiopia.

In 1962, the Corboys along with their five children moved, with the 275 PCVs of Ethiopia I, to Ethiopia. Ed claimed that dealing with us in Ethiopia caused his gray hair, however, I clearly remember seeing him at one of our first dinners at Georgetown University during training and he was gray then. I remember thinking: well, if this old guy can go to Ethiopia, then I can too!

The couple continued to have children, one in Ethiopia and two more after their return to the States for a grand total of eight

After the Peace Corps, Ed worked for several years in PC/Washington, and later with the Civil Aviation Board. Joan and Ed stayed close to many RPCVs from those early years, and they and Peggy Drury (Jimma, Dira Dawa, Asmara 62-64) hosted one of the first DC fund raiser for Paul Tsongas (Ghion 62-64) when he ran for the presidency in 1992.

In writing about his father, John relates:

Dad was the first person I knew who jogged. Granted, he always lit up a cigarette the minute he stopped — but was out there doing it in 1970!! He had the track suit and everything. He even wore a headband!"

Ed stopped smoking in 1978.

John fondly remembers his father as "a nice man, with a great sense of humor; and he did a good job raising his kids in so much as none of us wound up on drugs, or in jail or as teenage parents."

Those of us who knew Ed and Joan in Ethiopia and in Washington, D.C. for all these years remember them both as terrific people, with great senses of humor — and they did a good job of raising us too during our two years in the Empire. None of us wound up on drugs, or in jail, thanks in part to Ed Corboy's good parenting. Thanks, Ed. You'll be missed.



Ed telling Harris how a LandRover works.



Ed telling Harris how to get to Dembidolo

Ed is survived by Joan, their eight children — Regina, Bill, Mary, Eileen, Nora, Katie, John and Martin and 11 grandchildren.

A memorial service is being planned for the 50th Anniversary in Washington, D.C. this coming September.

You can contact Joan at:

3158 Gracefield Road
Silver Spring, Md. 20904
Phone: (301) 890-7993

Posted in [In Memoriam](#)

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News of Eritrea

Posted on [July 15, 2011](#) by [bhillenbrand](#) | [Leave a comment](#)

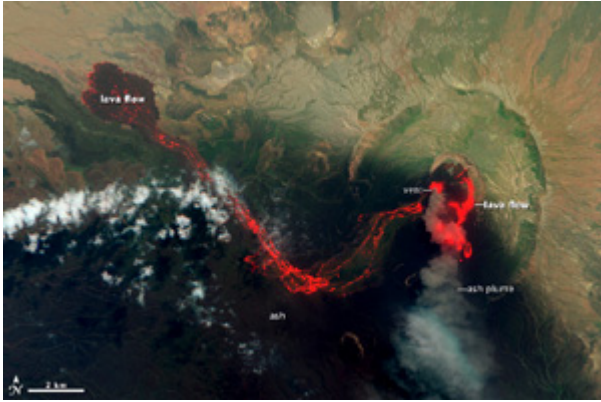
Eritrean News Notes

Compiled by [Barry Hillenbrand](#)

SMOKE IN ERITREA

A volcano in Eritrea erupted for three days in June, its ash cloud spreading out over Sudan and towards Saudi Arabia and forcing the cancellation of some regional flights. The Nabro volcano began belching plumes of ash at about midnight on June 12 after a string of earthquakes. Scientists initially wrongly identified the source of the eruption in the region close to the Ethiopian border as the nearby Dubbi volcano. Airlines cancelled flights to the area. Ethiopian Airlines officials told Reuters they had

cancelled flights to the Sudanese capital Khartoum and neighboring Djibouti, as well as several domestic flights to Ethiopia's north.



DISRUPTIVE SMOKE: Nabro as seen for NASA Satellite

“The ash’s direction and its intensity were very high at first, but the Modis (monitoring) satellite shows a weakening,” said Atalay Arefe, natural sciences professor at Addis Ababa University. Satellite images on the France-based Volcanic Ash Advisory Centre’s (VAAC) website showed the cloud heading toward Saudi Arabia.

Nabro, which had not erupted since 1861, burst into life after a string of earthquakes, the biggest of which measured 5.7. The initial eruption threw an ash cloud 8.4 miles high. Authorities in Ethiopia and Eritrea reported no casualties around the volcano. It was hard to verify these reports because of the difficulty accessing the arid region. U.S. Secretary of State Hilary Clinton cut short her stay in Africa by a day because the ash cloud risked leaving her stranded.

PLAYING AWAY, WALKING AWAY

Thirteen members of an Eritrean soccer club taking part in a regional championship in Tanzania disappeared after the side was knocked out of the tournament. The Eritrean Red Sea Football Club players were due to leave Dar Es Salaam after their elimination from the regional club championship but a head count at their departure point revealed that half the squad was missing. “Thirteen out of 26 players of the Eritrean team have disappeared,” secretary general of the Tanzania Football Federation Angetile Osiah told Reuters. “We have reported the matter to relevant law enforcement authorities for investigation. Some team members colluded in the incident by trying to stamp the passports of the missing players at airport immigration checkpoints, but when a physical head count was conducted, it was discovered that 13 players were missing.”

Illegal immigrants from Ethiopia, Eritrea and Somalia often use Tanzania as a transit point to South Africa and elsewhere. This is not the first time members of an Eritrean team have vanished after a tournament outside the country. In 2009, 12 members of the national squad disappeared in Kenya after competing in a regional tournament.

MORE GOLD IN THOSE HILLS

This year the Canadian company Nevsun Resources started gold production from its Bisha mine in Eritrea and is now producing 1,000 ounces a day. Because of low production costs, the company claims they are making more than a million dollars a day on the project. Now the Australian company Chalice Gold Mine has joined in the gold rush with its Zara project. Chalice Gold Mine’s chief executive, Tim Goyder, says he is sitting on a gold mine, literally, with a reserve of 840,000 ounces. Based on a gold price of \$1400 an ounce, the project will generate a minimum of \$400 million over its seven-year life. He has been granted a license from Asmara and has begun work on the mine. Keep reading the HERALD for more gold stories from Eritrea.

News of Ethiopia

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Ethiopian News Notes

compiled by **Barry Hillenbrand**

MELES JAMMING WITH THE CHINESE

In search of new markets and sources of natural resources China has been making lots of friends in Africa with its foreign aid and trade. But it has also been helping some of the more repressive regimes in Africa with a Chinese specialty: controlling the press. The Ethiopian Free Press Journalists' Association (EFJA) has demanded that China put an end to its complicity in jamming Ethiopian Satellite Television and other reputable broadcasters such as the Voice of America and Deutsche Welle Amharic Services.

Ethiopian Satellite Television (ESAT), which recently resumed transmissions to Ethiopia after nearly two months of interruption, claims that the China has been providing technology, training and technical assistance to Ethiopia to enable it to jam ESAT's transmissions to Ethiopia. After investigating the matter, EFJA has confirmed the allegations with sources inside and outside of Ethiopia.

Kifle Mulat, President of EFJA, noted that stifling freedom of expression and undermining efforts to spread democratic values in Ethiopia sets a bad precedent in the whole of Africa. "Ethiopia is not only the seat of the African Union but also a historic symbol of freedom in Africa as the only African nation that has never been colonized. Aiding tyrants to stifle their people and block the free flow of information is tantamount to committing unwarranted crimes against the freedom-loving people of Africa that are making sacrifices to exercise their inalienable rights and free themselves from corrupt tyrants who are hampering progress in the continent," Ato Kifle said.

PRINT JOURNALISTS DETAINED

Ethiopian authorities have been holding a newspaper columnist according to local journalists. Reeyot Alemu, a regular contributor to the independent weekly Feteh, was expected to spend the next four weeks in preventive detention under what appears to be Ethiopia's sweeping anti-terrorism law. Alemu is the second journalist picked up and held without charge in less than a week and taken into custody at the federal investigation center at Maekelawi Prison in Addis. Deputy Editor Woubshet Taye of the weekly Awramba Times is the other journalist arrested.

Local journalists said they believe Alemu's arrest could be related to her columns critical of the ruling party. Alemu's June 17 column in Feteh criticized the public fundraising methods for the Abay Dam project, and made parallels between Prime Minister Meles Zenawi and Libyan leader Muammar Qaddafi.

Ethiopian authorities said that the two journalists it detained planned to sabotage the country's power and phone lines and recruit others to work with arch-foe Eritrea to destabilize it. "The group was caught while plotting to sabotage electricity and telephone lines in an attempt to wreak havoc in the country," according to Demelash Woldemikael, assistant commissioner of the country's federal police. Ethiopia's sweeping anti-terrorism law criminalizes any reporting authorities deem to "encourage" or "provide moral support" to groups and causes the government labels as

“terrorists.”

Alemu was picked up at a high school in Addis Ababa where she teaches English, according to the journalists. Police then searched her house. Ethiopia has six journalists currently behind bars, behind only Eritrea as the nation detaining the largest number of journalists in Africa. Eritrea holds at least 17 members of the press in its secret prisons.

NO DAYS OF RAGE

A group calling itself the Ethiopian Youth Movement set May 28 as the “day of rage” against what it said was Meles Zenawi’s authoritarian regime. The day was chosen to coincide with the 20th anniversary celebrations of victory of Ethiopia’s ruling party. Online networks and the blogosphere claimed that thousands of Ethiopians had subscribed to the cause, giving rise to feeble hopes of a rare challenge to Meles’s hold on the Horn of Africa country.

But on the appointed day, tens of thousands of people turned out in Addis to fervently celebrate the ruling party, the Ethiopian People’s Democratic Front, in a brief — but colorful — party. At Meskel Square throngs chanted praises of Meles in a solid show of support. The Opposition, which may be brave on line, was nowhere to be seen. No Arab Spring in Ethiopia.

Writes former U.S. ambassador to Ethiopia David Shinn, “Since the beginning of the Arab Spring, protest in Ethiopia has been muted. The government-controlled radio and television have given limited coverage to the protests in North Africa and the Middle East, but persons with access to satellite TV are well aware of the issues. There have been reliable reports of increased arrests of persons who support the political opposition to the ruling Ethiopian People’s Revolutionary Democratic Front. Ethiopia keeps a tight rein on any group that threatens EPRDF control in the country.”

COMMUTED SENTENCE FOR MENGISTU’S MEN

Ethiopia has commuted the death sentences of 23 of former dictator Mengistu Haile Mariam’s top officials convicted of genocide in 2008. Their sentences were reduced to life imprisonment. Mengistu and dozens of others were sentenced to death for the murder of thousands during a 17-year rule that included famine, war and the “Red Terror” purges of suspected opponents. The ex-president and his senior officers were convicted after a 12-year trial that ruled that Mengistu’s government was directly responsible for the deaths of 2,000 people and the torture of at least 2,400 others.

Ethiopian President Girma Woldegiorgis announced the act of clemency following an appeal for leniency by a panel of heads of religious institutions, as well as an expression of remorse by those convicted. The group does not include Mengistu, but comprises several high-profile figures from the Mengistu-era such as Legesse Asfaw, known as “the butcher of Tigre,” former vice-president Fisseha Desta, and former prime minister, Fikresellassie Wogderes. They have been behind bars since 1991 and have publicly apologized for their crimes. Mengistu, who has lived a life of



IN JAIL: Journalist Reeyot Alemu



THREE CHEERS FOR MELES: Pro-government demonstration on 20th Anniversary of Meles’ victory

comfortable exile in Zimbabwe since he was driven from power in 1991, is unlikely to face any punishment as President Robert Mugabe has refused to allow his extradition.

EGYPTIAN-ETHIOPIAN DÉTENTE?

For over a decade during the regime of Egyptian President Mubarak, no Egyptian Prime Minister had visited Ethiopia. But on May 12 Egyptian PM Essam Sharaff arrived in Addis Ababa to join Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles Zenawi for discussions that took place on May 13 at the National Palace.

At the end of the discussions an Egyptian journalist raised a question — is there a problem between Egypt and Ethiopia? The Ethiopian Prime Minister responded unequivocally, “There is no problem between Egypt and Ethiopia that cannot be resolved by Egypt and Ethiopia.” The Prime Minister further assured him that the state of relations between the two countries is good. “Our position is clear. We want to work in cooperation with Egypt for mutual benefit. We have no intention or policy that is designed to hurt others. We told this to the Prime Minister in our discussion,” the Meles added.

The Ethiopian government has achieved what was previously thought impossible: to convince Egypt to rethink its long held position over the Nile River issue. Egypt reiterated that it positively accepts the construction of the dam on the Nile River. Several months ago this stance from Egypt would have been untenable. “We told him in our discussion that Egypt played an obstructive role to our plans to use the rivers. But now we have observed a positive change of attitude,” Meles noted.

Ethiopia has expressed willingness for the “international experts” panel to assess the impact of the dam upon Egypt. “On the part of Ethiopia there is a 100 percent belief that the dam will never have a negative impact on Egypt. The international experts can thoroughly evaluate it. We are willing to form an independent technical group composed of our experts, Egyptians and other international experts. The delegation was happy when we forwarded this idea,” said Ambassador Dina Mufti, spokesperson of the Ethiopian Foreign Minister.

ETHIOPIAN TV PUPPETS

In April CNN’s African Voices service ran a story on Bruktawit Tigabu, co-creator of Ethiopian children’s TV show “**Tsehai Loves Learning.**” For millions of Ethiopian children, it’s the most cherished moment of their day: a wide-eyed, smiling giraffe hops in front of them, crooning funny songs in a language they can understand. The beloved sock puppet, known as Tsehai, is the star of a ground-breaking TV show that’s been revolutionizing childhood education in the east African country. Think Ethiopian “Sesame Street.”



The brainchild of Ethiopian educator Bruktawit Tigabu and her husband Shane Etzenhouser, “Tsehai Loves Learning” is the only children’s TV show in Ethiopia in Amharic, the nation’s official and most widely spoken language. The show uses puppets and animation to teach young Ethiopians about sanitation and hygiene as well as the importance of



BROTHERLY EMBRACE: Meles welcomes Egyptian PM Essam Sharaff

culture and honesty. “They don’t realize that they’ve been taught on TV,” says Tigabu from her cramped studio in suburban Addis Ababa where awards share space with the paraphernalia of puppetry. For more on the show and several long and informative video clips from CNN’s interview with Bruktawit, see <http://www.cnn.com/2011/WORLD/africa/04/26/ethiopia.bruktawit.tigabu/>

ADOPTION FREEZE

Voice of America reported in March that Ethiopia is cutting back by as much as 90 percent the number of inter-country adoptions it will allow, as part of an effort to clean up a system rife with fraud and corruption. Adoption agencies and children’s advocates are concerned the cutbacks will leave many Ethiopian orphans without the last-resort option of an adoptive home abroad.

Ethiopia’s Ministry of Women’s, Children’s and Youth Affairs has issued a directive saying it will process a maximum of five inter-country adoptions a day, effective March 10. Currently, the ministry is processing up to 50 cases a day, about half of them to the United States. A copy of the directive provided to VOA says the reduction of up to 90 percent in cases will allow closer scrutiny of documents used to verify a child’s orphan status.



NO LONGER SO FAST: Ethiopian adoptee and proud father with U.S. citizen papers

Ministry spokesman Abiy Ephrem says the action was taken in response to indications of widespread fraud in the adoption process. “What we have seen so far has been some illegal practices. There is an abuse. There are some cases that are illegal. So these directives will pave the way to come up with [safeguards],” said Abiy Ephrem.

American couples often pay more than \$20,000 to adopt an Ethiopian child. Such amounts are an enormous temptation in a country where the average family earns a few hundred dollars a month. U.S. State Department statistics show more than 2,500 Ethiopian orphans went to the United States last year. That is more than a ten fold increase over the past few years, making Ethiopia the second most popular destination for Americans seeking to adopt overseas, after China.

MORE LAND DEALS

Saudi Star Agricultural Development Plc, a food company owned by billionaire Sheikh Mohammed al-Amoudi, said it plans to invest \$2.5 billion by 2020 developing a rice-farming project in Ethiopia. The company, based in Addis Ababa, leased 24,711 acres in Ethiopia’s western Gambella region for 60 years at a cost of \$9.42 per hectare annually. The company plans to rent an additional 290,000 hectares from the government.

The project forms part of Ethiopia’s plan to lease 3 million hectares, an area about the size of Belgium, to private investors over the next 2 ½ years. Critics have argued that domestic farmers are being dispossessed and the country shouldn’t rent land cheaply to foreign investors to grow cash crops when about 13 percent of its approximately 80 million people still rely on food aid. “There is lots of land in Ethiopia, especially in the lowland areas,” said Chief Executive Officer Haile Assegede. “So, if you develop this lowland area and make Ethiopia self-sufficient in food, I see no problem.” Karuturi Global Ltd., an Indian food processor, plans to produce commodities including palm oil, sugar and rice on 312,000 hectares of rented land in Ethiopia.



INDIA'S NEW RICE BOWL: Indian worker
transplants rice on a new foreign-leased farm in
Gambella

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