

The HERALD

Fall 1993 — Number 10

A publication of Ethiopia & Eritrea RPCVs, an affiliate of the National Peace Corps Association

FORMER VOLUNTEERS SEEK NEW INTERNATIONAL ROLE

by Joseph J. Bell (69-71)

See page 3 to learn how
you can use your
CURRENT skills to help
Ethiopia and Eritrea

Joe Bell has been working for the past six months to organize a program for Ethiopia and Eritrea RPCVs to return to those countries in the late summer of 1994, as tourists, as participants in a short-term service program and also to work as partners with the host countries and the Peace Corps to prepare the way for Peace Corps Volunteers to return to service in Ethiopia and Eritrea. The following are some comments from Joe.

My own experience with the return to Ethiopia and Eritrea project leads me to think this might be more than rhetoric. I would like to begin to conceive of ourselves as part of that larger process that is happening worldwide and includes Ethiopians and Eritreans who can now communicate with us directly, thanks to computers.

Volunteers that I served with suggested to me a couple of years ago that we go back for a visit. We speculated about a service project at a reunion in Massachusetts, but it seemed a fantasy. The Berkeley conference and enthusiasm of many other Volunteers, as well as new Peace Corps staff such as Patti Garamendi (66-68) [see page 6], made it seem possible. The encouraging words of Ethiopian and Eritrean embassy officials gave strong hope.

Since my meetings in August in Washington with various Peace Corps staff members, the President of the National Peace Corps Association, and Ethiopian and Eritrean embassy officials, too much has happened to recount in detail here. In sum, various former Ethiopia XII (69-71) Volunteers are involved in obtaining

THERE WERE MANY EXCITING aspects to the Peace Corps conference this past July in Berkeley. For me, as a Sierra Club member and environmental lawyer, the high point was listening to Carl Pope, director of the Sierra Club, issue what amounted to a call to diplomatic action for former Volunteers.

Carl spoke of a new age of international politics that is much more influenced by local activists than high level diplomats and much more focused on sustainable development than resource consumptive projects. The age of computers and electronic bulletin boards has the potential to radically alter the process and the content of diplomacy, he suggested.

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New international role

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and sharing information we will need to go back to Ethiopia and Eritrea in late summer, 1994.

While we have received encouragement from Peace Corps officials that we might be able to aid them in the placement of PCVs in Ethiopia and Eritrea, we have also been cautioned that they have a process for opening new programs that must be followed. We are still attempting to learn what our role in that process might be.

Those of us who want to go back next year have received some words of caution from Ethiopians in this country and via international electronic bulletin boards regarding ethnic strife in Ethiopia at a level that could jeopardize our trip, as well as the return of the Peace Corps. (It has been reported for some time that it may not be safe to travel in the Harrar

area or to Dire Dawa.) This is sad to hear, and is especially ironic since Eritrea seems to have moved quickly and more smoothly to nationhood. On the other hand, I have recently received information that Joseph Murphy, a former PC/Ethiopia country director, travelled all over the country as recently as August with no fear or problem.

We are presently attempting to collect the most current reports from persons in the countries and will share the information as received. In the meantime, the Peace Corps staff indicates that there will be a survey team going to Ethiopia and Eritrea before the end of the year to discuss the possible return of the Peace Corps with the two governments. [See page 6]

While we must be as circumspect now, as we were during the 60s and 70s, about the indirect, and even unanticipated, effects of our actions on the

political structure as well as the U.S. government context in which we are proposing to operate, we should not be easily intimidated or let fear of the unknown hinder our efforts.

Others, such as the Ethiopia IIs (63-65), are making their own plans for a reunion in-country in 1995. [See page 4] Wayne and Laurie Kessler (64-66) continue their family project with Eritrea. [See page 5] The Thirst for Learning Foundation focuses on providing educational materials offering those who cannot travel an opportunity to contribute, too. [See page 16]

Please write me with your thoughts, or fax them, and let me know if you want to join our network of former Ethiopian and Eritrean Volunteers in action.

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News from the Horn

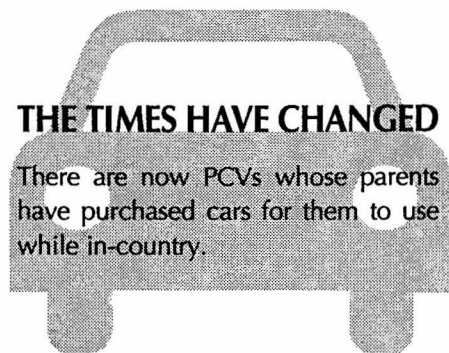
- ETHIOPIA & ERITREA RPCVs has received an impassioned article from "The Oromo Community in Washington State." It includes accounts of abuses, both historical and current, of the Oromo people as well as charges that the current Ethiopian government is committing violations of human rights. RPCVs who would like to receive a copy of the article should contact ETHIOPIA & ERITREA RPCVs, 4 Lodge Pole Road, Pittsford NY 14534-4550.

- *This from the October 20th Rochester, N.Y. Democrat & Chronicle:*

"ETHIOPIA HEALTH OFFICIAL WARNS OF AIDS SPREAD

"Addis Ababa, Ethiopia — AIDS is spreading rapidly in Ethiopia, and hospitals have reported an average of 335 new cases each month since July, an official said.

"Dr. Mengistu Mihret, head of the National AIDS Prevention and Control Office, estimated that 43,000 people have AIDS in Ethiopia. Mengistu said Monday that as many as 500,000 people were estimated to be infected with the AIDS virus."



BACK TO ETHIOPIA AND ERITREA

A PLAN OF ACTION FOR ETHIOPIA & ERITREA RPCVS

by Leo Cecchini (Eritrea 62-64)

Two financially frustrated desires were raised repeatedly and throughout the recent RPCV Conference in Berkeley — to increase the Peace Corps presence abroad and to return interested RPCVs to their countries of service to help once more. A response to these desires that overcomes the financial hurdles was presented at the country reunion/meeting of ETHIOPIA & ERITREA RPCVs. The concept introduced would expand the Peace Corps presence abroad by returning RPCVs to their country of service at no cost to the Peace Corps budget.

At the meeting a wide spread interest among these “veterans” to return to help the new country of Eritrea shape its own identity and the ancient country of Ethiopia reestablish its unique contribution to African history was expressed. This “push” on the part of the RPCVs is complemented by a “pull” by the Ethiopians and Eritreans who keep asking for the veterans to return to once again work the special magic they brought to these countries so many years ago. The trick is to bridge the “push” and the “pull.”

Several persons and groups are already working to get involved in this building/rebuilding. Two spoke of their efforts to help with education in Eritrea and Ethiopia. Another spoke of a planned visit by a group of RPCVs who will hopefully lay the groundwork for restoration of a Peace Corps program in the two countries. However, these efforts are limited by finances.

Another idea was presented at the meeting in Berkeley which would open substantial funding for Ethiopia and Eritrea RPCVs interested in returning to these countries. The core of this proposal is to utilize already existing development programs to bring the

spirit of the Peace Corps back to Eritrea and Ethiopia. As such it represents a valid, effective means to channel the “push” and “pull” into productive work.

Basically, the proposal is to organize interested RPCVs into a body that could contract with major aid donors to deliver their programs. Most development monies are spent through services contracted with a large population of Private Voluntary Organizations (PVOs) and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), and the RPCVs would group into such a body for contracting aid work.

The advantages of an aid contractor composed of RPCVs include, but are not limited to, the following:

- The RPCVs are motivated by the highest of ideals, they are people who know and care for the countries.
- They offer the best experience since all are veterans of grass roots work in Ethiopia and Eritrea.
- Within the several thousands of Ethiopia and Eritrea RPCVs exist all the skills required for any development project.
- Many RPCVs are at a stage of life where they can give a year or two to “volunteer” service and participate at a modest cost to the contracting agency. This would make the RPCV contractor very price competitive for development contracts.
- The recipients, the Ethiopians and Eritreans, have specifically stated that they want the former PCVs to return to help them and presumably prefer them to other partners for their development.

While a bit more complex than other suggestions for RPCVs to help Ethiopia and Eritrea, this proposal would yield a much larger channel for RPCVs to return to the two countries and work a little more “magic.” I have begun to try to organize the contracting body. I have already discussed it with several key U.S. Government officials concerned with aid to Ethiopia and Eritrea, including the Deputy Administrator of AID, AID’s Deputy Assistant Administrator for Food and Humanitarian Assistance, Lois Richards (Ethiopia 62-64), and the new Director of AID in Ethiopia, Margaret Bonner (Ethiopia 67-69), who all find merit in the idea.

Let’s bridge the gap between the “push” and the “pull” to bring veteran PCVs back to Ethiopia and Eritrea and in the process markedly increase the Peace Corps presence in the world.

Do you want to participate?

The necessary first step will be to determine the potential *resource base* from which an Ethiopia-Eritrea RPCV aid contractor, tentatively named REPCORPS for Returning Ethiopia-Eritrea Peace Corps, can draw in setting up its organization and in staffing contracts actually obtained.

Those who support this proposal and would like to help launch it, and/or participate directly in it, are invited to contact:

ETHIOPIA & ERITREA RPCVS
4 Lodge Pole Road
Pittsford NY 14534-4550

Please detail your skills, be they in the area of education, health, agriculture, etc.

THE TWOs

ETHIOPIA & ERITREA II RPCVS PLAN IN-COUNTRY REUNION FOR 1995

In October fourteen Ethiopia and Eritrea II RPCVs convened at the home of Haskell Ward in Griffin, Georgia to begin planning a 1995 reunion. The consensus was that the reunion should be held in Ethiopia and Eritrea. The group also began to consider projects in those two countries for which funds might be raised or for which RPCVs might provide some form of contributory service during the return visit.

Other business included appointing several planning committees to explore the feasibility and details of the return, and preparing a newsletter and a questionnaire that were sent to all Ethiopia and Eritrea II RPCVs. The group also decided to consider establishing a non-profit organization to raise funds for projects in Ethiopia and Eritrea. [see box at right]

The group's newsletter said that the possibility of opening the 1995 trip to all Ethiopia and Eritrea RPCVs "... will be explored further by the [Ethiopia & Eritrea II] steering committee and a canvass of [all Ethiopia & Eritrea II RPCVs] may be taken on the subject should there be sufficient expression of interest by other Ethiopia and Eritrea RPCV groups."

Members of the Ethiopia and Eritrea II Reunion Steering Committee include Warren Fritz; Fred Gage; Bob Matthai; Katie Schultze; Haskell Ward, chair; and Gayle Washburn. Other committees include Project Definition (chair Warren Fritz); Travel/Logistics (chair Fred Gage); Communications (chair Gloria Curtis); Finance (co-chairs John Lesch and Warren Fritz); and Fundraising (chair Bob Matthai).

Copies of the Ethiopia and Eritrea II newsletter and questionnaire can be obtained by contacting Gloria Curtis, 6322 Allison St., Arvada CO 80004.

Ethiopia & Eritrea II funding survey seeks ideas and contacts

The political turmoil and food shortages of recent years have left the people of Ethiopia and Eritrea with critical needs in health, education, agriculture and many other sectors.

A survey is being conducted by Ethiopia and Eritrea II Fundraising Committee to assess the potential for raising funds for worthy projects in Ethiopia and Eritrea. The survey will gather information on 1) which sectors and projects have been identified as high priority by Ethiopians and Eritreans; 2) which groups and agencies are already carrying out such projects; and 3) which foundation, corporate, individual and government funding sources in the U.S. might consider contributing to projects in Ethiopia and Eritrea.

All Ethiopia and Eritrea RPCVs are encouraged to share any ideas, information and contacts they have related to these topics. Please call or write:

Bob Matthai, Chairman
Ethiopia and Eritrea II Fundraising
Committee
24 Beverly Drive
Avon CT 06001

The Kessler File

Every issue of *The Herald* seems to have a report about either Wayne or Laurie Kessler (64-66) and the good things they have been doing to help restore the educational system in Eritrea following the war. I felt they deserved a regular column in the newsletter. Ed.

ERITREA 1993

by Laurie Kessler

WHEN WAYNE RETURNED from Eritrea in 1992, he said, "next time it's your turn because you can offer expertise in ESL." So, with an invitation from the Minister of Education to work at the Curriculum Development Institute (CDI), I left California on July 3 (from the National Conference of Returned Peace Corps Volunteers in Berkeley) and spent seven weeks in Eritrea. I joined the English Panel of the CDI, where I helped to prepare reading textbooks for grades 8, 9 and 10 and gave eight workshops to other members of the CDI — those working on geography, history, science, math, etc. My supervisor, Paul Highfield, had worked in the field as a patriot in the liberation movement, preparing curriculum, training teachers and so on. He coordinated the work of three volunteers I had helped to recruit through an ESL newsletter. Two of us worked at the CDI; the other two taught English to school directors in summer courses at the Teacher Training Institute. We all agreed that our work was useful, that our colleagues and students were enthusiastic, and that we were glad we had volunteered. Now, we'll see if we can recruit others.

As Wayne had done, I stayed with old friends, Ghebrecristos and Mhret, their

daughter-in-law and their four grandchildren. I was the only person there to sleep alone every night and to brush my teeth with toothpaste (the children thought it was soap). I ate with the family and in the evenings I shared mangos or mandarin oranges. The children loved the fruit, and I enjoyed balancing out the high protein main dishes. Very special delights in staying with this family were renewing my friendship with Mhret and, through her efforts as my teacher, regaining enough fluency in Tigrinya to enjoy using it around town.

Ghebrecristos had taught with Wayne and me in Adi Teclesan during Peace Corps days, and since then we had corresponded with him and another fellow teacher, Ghebremical. I got to know Ghebremical's family members — all of them added since we had been together long ago. He and Ghebrecristos made sure I met former students. Several are especially memorable: Mebrat helped me to shop for a *zuria* (traditional dress); Hakisier had me to her wedding; Kiflemariam, now a colleague with an M.A. in ESL, accompanied me to Adi Teclesan and showed me around the University of Asmara; Mehari told me of being in prison for seven years and in the field as a patriot for fourteen.

Other treats included finding the goldsmith who had made our rings in 1965; knowing the book shipment had arrived in Massawa [shipped by the "Books for Eritrea" project organized by Wayne and Laurie, see *The Herald* #8]; being given a traditional dress by the Woki Village Development Committee; and attending functions at the Baha'i Center (I had originally heard of the Baha'i Faith there).

Because it was the rainy season everything was green and crops were growing well everywhere I went — quite a difference from Wayne's visit before the rainy season last year. Many houses and public buildings had been newly painted and parks were being tended. The whole impression was of peace, safety and industriousness because all aspects of rebuilding the country are being addressed.

Three days after I returned, our son, Colin, left for Eritrea to teach environmental subjects at the Teacher Training Institute for a year. He was born in Kenya and feels close ties to Africa, so we are happy he's in Eritrea as a volunteer on the "parent-funded" program.

FINALLY RPCV LEADERSHIP AT PEACE CORPS

Well, the choice has been made and approved. **CAROL BELLAMY** (Guatemala 63-65) is the first RPCV to be appointed Director of the Peace Corps. Carol, a New York politician with a long history of service in the city and state, was most recently the Managing Director of the Public Finance Department of Bear Stearns, an investment banking firm. *

Nine of her first ten top (political) appointments at Peace Corps are RPCVs. **CHUCK BAQUET** (Somalia 66-68), who was a short-list member for the

directorship and Ambassador to Djibouti, is Deputy Director. **JACK HOGAN** (Venezuela 64-66), the highly regarded Acting Director during this transition time, will run overseas operations. Our own **PATTI GARAMENDI** (66-68), another short-lister, is Associate Director of recruiting and selection. **JUDY HARRINGTON** (Venezuela 65-67) heads Volunteer services; **STANLEY SUYAT** (Philippines 66-68), Management; **CHRISTOPHER HEDRICK** (Senegal 89-90), returned Volunteer services. The regional directors include **VICTOR JOHNSON**

(Liberia 63-65), Inter-America; **SANDRA ROBINSON** (Togo 82-86), Africa; and **FRED O'REGAN** (Swaziland 69-72), Eurasia and the Middle East. The only non-RPCV in this group is **MARGARET GOODMAN** who will be Regional Director for Asia and Pacific. She comes from the staff of the House Foreign Affairs Committee where she was a strong supporter of the Peace Corps.

* If you would like to learn more about Carol, **KAREN DEWITT** (66-68) has a lengthy bio of her in the October 15 *New York Times* (p. A26).



Peace Corps programs - what's hot, what's not

SUSPENDED: 29 Volunteers were evacuated from Burundi on October 31st following a military coup in that country on the 25th.

Is Peace Corps going back to Ethiopia and Eritrea?

While Peace Corps Volunteers are not at this moment scheduled to return to Ethiopia or Eritrea, a Desk Officer in the African Region at Peace Corps/Washington has been assigned to both countries. Peace Corps Director Carol Bellamy reports that whenever she meets anyone from Ethiopia or Eritrea their first question to her is "when are Volunteers going back?"

That decision depends, it has been learned by ETHIOPIA & ERITREA RPCVs, on budget limits and what Congress

gives the Peace Corps for operating expenses in FY '95.

Before Ms. Bellamy came on board there was talk from the Africa Region that there would be PCVs in both countries by July 1, 1994. Reality has now set in.

11/25 Now there is word that with the closing of the Peace Corps program in Burundi [see "What's hot, what's not"], there is new consideration being given to sending PCVs to Eritrea in the near future.

An RPCV opinion of the new PC Director

The following editorial, which appeared in THE BERKSHIRE EAGLE, November 8, 1993 is by Dick Lipez (62-64)

A doubtful Clinton appointment

When Carol Bellamy, the long-time New York pol, was nominated by Bill Clinton to be Peace Corps director last July, many of the agency's partisans groaned. Ms. Bellamy was a former volunteer, (Guatemala 1963-65), and having a director with corps experience is something the Peace Corps alumni network had promoted unsuccessfully for years. But as a New York City Council president and then investment banker she had no recent international experience.

Mr. Clinton, moreover, had earlier rejected a number of first-rate candidates for the position — other former volunteers with both broad international experience and fresh ideas — because, he reportedly told his staff, he wanted “a name with bounce.”

Now Ms. Bellamy is on the job, and her plans for the agency don't bode well. Since its Kennedy-era founding, the Peace Corps has had three aims: low-level “people-to-people” aid to Third- (and now Second-) World countries; educating the world about Americans; educating Americans about the rest of the world. The clearest successes have been with the third goal. More than 150,000 Americans have left their two-year stints with an intimate knowledge of life among the Incas, or the Tutsi, or the Afghans, which is an invaluable personal and national resource.

The aid part of the program has always been problematical. Some well thought-out programs in nutrition, sanitation, education, etc., have worked well. But there have been fiascos galore, like the 1989 West African rice dam project that threatened to reintroduce a deadly snail fever to one unlucky locale.

The questions the Peace Corps should always be asking are: What are the needs? Can we help meet them? How? In an interview, Ms. Bellamy was asked about her goals for the Peace Corps. Her first was to get 10,000 volunteers into the field, up from the current 6,000. Her second was to hit the road and remind the United States and the world that the Peace Corps still exists. But in those places where the agency is doing good, thoughtful work, no one needs to be reminded. It sounds as if Ms. Bellamy — who is expected to return eventually to New York politics — is more interested in empire-building than in solving problems. Mr. Clinton seems to have gotten bounce at the expense of sense.

News from the National Peace Corps Association

Only the name has been changed

The name of our parent organization has changed from the National Council of Returned Peace Corps Volunteers to the National Peace Corps Association (NPCA) following a vote by the membership at the Berkeley RPCV conference. The change was called for for two reasons: 1) the original name was long, unwieldy, and unrememberable; and 2) the organization wishes to appeal a broader base than just Returned Volunteers which includes Peace Corps staff, parents of PCVs and RPCVs and other friends of the Peace Corps.

Immunization grant awarded

ACTION has agreed to provide the National Peace Corps Association with a grant for \$50,000 to plan and develop an early childhood immunization program. This program is to be a model for additional NPCA sponsored service programs as well.



THE GOOD NEWS AND THE BAD NEWS

The 1994 Peace Corps budget will increase — by less than 1%.

PRESIDENT CLINTON SPEAKS TO RETURNED VOLUNTEERS

A videotaped statement by President Bill Clinton was presented at the Berkeley RPCV conference last July. The following is the text of that statement:

I am pleased to have this opportunity to address the annual Conference of Returned Peace Corps Volunteers. You are a vital expression of the freedom, liberty and humanitarian values that distinguish our great nation. You have made many friends, and shared your skills and energy with people struggling for a better life throughout the developing world.

Many who don't serve often sympathize with people in poverty, but you've done more. You've lived with them, and you've worked for them. You've learned to sing the songs; dance the dances; tell the stories that define and unite people all over this world.

The great untold story, however, is that you continue to serve after you return home. Through the National Peace Corps Association and its 105 affiliated groups, you are in the vanguard of vital progressive activities here at home.

You teach hundreds of thousands of school children about the world through your global education programs. You help to build low income housing. You create youth service programs, and you help to clean-up our environment. In many ways, you are the inspiration for my National Service Program.

I want to thank the leaders of the National Peace Corps Association, Chairman Doug Siglin, President Chic Dambach and conference organizer John Knapp, for their tireless efforts to build this organization into the powerful force it has become. America is just beginning to recognize the tremendous resource of the 140,000 Peace Corps people who know the world as few other do, and who share an extraordinary commitment to the highest human values.

And for the first time, with the confirmation of my friend Carol Bellamy, the Peace Corps itself will have the benefit of a director who is a former volunteer.

We are proud of you. Our administration will do everything possible to support the Peace Corps and to help the community of returned volunteers to fulfill the third goal of the Peace Corps . . . to bring the world back home.

Copies of the speech on video cassette are available for \$10 + \$3 s&h from the National Peace Corps Association. Write: Clinton Speech, NPCA, 2119 S St, NW, Washington DC 20008.

If you weren't there here's who you missed

Other speakers at the conference included Secretary of State Warren Christopher, Senator Harris Wofford (Ethiopia, Director 62-64), Congressman Sam Farr (Colombia 63-66), then Acting Peace Corps Director Jack Hogan (Venezuela 64-66), Sierra Club Executive Director Carl Pope (India) and Peace Corps Director designate Carol Bellamy (Guatemala 63-65).



RPCV '94

The National Peace Corps Association 1994 national conference will be held in Atlanta, Georgia July 28 to 31, 1994. Finally an opportunity for y'all in the South to reunite and reconnect. Save the date.

P.S. ETHIOPIA & ERITREA RPCVs needs a volunteer living in the Atlanta area to be our planner/organizer/contact person. If interested, write Marian Haley Beil, 4 Lodge Pole Rd, Pittsford NY 14534.

Minutes of the Ethiopia & Eritrea RPCVs meeting July 3, 1993, U.C. Berkeley during the National Conference of returned Peace Corps Volunteers, chaired by Frances Fisher LaCroix (62-64), Co-chair

1. **MARIAN HALEY BEIL** (62-64) [news-letter editor & keeper of the data base and dues] requested those in attendance check their personal data in the computer printout and also help supply names and information of missing RPCVs. She added that this data base is not for sale. A request was made to add member skills to the data base. There is \$2905 in the group's bank account which comes for the \$15 per year membership. The major expense is the newsletter.

2. **FRAN FISHER LACROIX** stated that the Steering Committee had made a decision the group funds could be used to support worthwhile projects, but decisions need to be made regarding what the group's focus is and which projects should be given priority. Some possible projects might be:

- a. Support in-country Volunteers with supplies
- b. Send new or used equipment
- c. Participate in short term educational projects

3. Projects requesting funding were:

- a. **WAYNE KESSLER's** (64-66) "Books for Eritrea" group which is shipping used textbooks to Eritrea for teacher resources.
- b. **JOHN RUDE's** (62-64) "Thirst for Learning" group which raises funds to support educational development in Eritrea and hopes to raise 1/2 million a year. Aregai Tekle, professor at Northern Arizona University, itemized the needs he felt Eritrea has. So far there are 14 branches of this group. Tom Gallagher (62-64) described the San Francisco chapter, headed by a Bay Area Eritrean.
- c. **JOE BELL** (69-71) described a project to help get the Peace Corps back into Ethiopia and Eritrea. RPCVs would return to their countries and prepare assessments of sites, projects, etc. for Peace Corps Volunteers. He

will seek endorsement from the Peace Corps, but he said twelve members of the XIIs were planning to return on their own in 1994 with or without the backing of the Peace Corps. Of those in attendance at the meeting, 27 indicated that they would be willing to return on a short term basis. Wayne Kessler commented that the Ministry of Education in Eritrea is not looking for teachers, but rather Americans to work side-by-side with Eritreans.

d. **DENNIS ECKBERG** (62-64) suggested a project to write geography and history resource books about Ethiopia and Eritrea using Ethiopians and Eritreans as co-writers.

A motion was passed to give:

- a. "Thirst for Learning" \$300
- b. Joe Bell's Ethiopia XII group \$150 to assist in their efforts to help re-establish the Peace Corps in Ethiopia and Eritrea.

[Note: Earlier this year E&E RPCVs donated \$300 to "Books for Eritrea."]

4. **CYNTHIA TSE KIMBERLIN** (62-64) described her involvement as a member of a United States delegation to observe and evaluate the Ethiopian election in June, 1992 and the Eritrean referendum, April 23-25, 1993. The U.S. and other countries were part of an international observer group that showed support for the democratic process.

Cynthia's observations of both Ethiopia and Eritrea included:

- a. Learning the democratic process will take many years.
- b. There were differences of opinion among observers as to the success of specific regional elections.
- c. The presence of outside observers helped draw the world's attention to what is going on in Ethiopia and Eritrea.

d. For in-depth information on the Ethiopian elections, Cynthia recommends reading "An Evaluation of the June 21, 1992 Elections in Ethiopia" published by the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs, in conjunction with the African American Institute, c.1992.

4. **DAVID ARNOLD** (64-66), a journalist who had recently traveled to Addis, described Ethiopians today and felt that they do not have as clear picture of themselves for the future as do the Eritreans.

5. **WAYNE KESSLER** gave a slide presentation of Eritrea "Then and Now" showing the enormous destruction caused by the war. Especially interesting was the new role of the women who participated the ELF movement and today appear quite Westernized in their dress and seem to have a new place in society.

6. **LEO CECCHINI** (62-64) explained how RPCVs, if they are serious about getting back into Ethiopia and Eritrea, can form themselves into NGOs (non-governmental organizations) which can contract with aid-giving organizations to provide desired services — most effectively, due to their knowledge of the country, and most cost-efficient, due to their willingness to volunteer. He felt that there will be considerable money available in the next few years, especially to Eritrea because it is the newest country in Africa.

7. **ROBERT VAN BUSKIRK**, a new Fulbright scholar to the University of Asmara was introduced. He will be teaching physics. His specialty is watershed management.

Minutes submitted by Carolyn Wood Kneedler (62-64).

ETHIOPIA AND ERITREA RPCVS/GROUP NEWS

DEAR MEMBERS

The National Peace Corps conference held at UC Berkeley in July was significant for several reasons:

1. There were 37 registered E&E RPCVs attending the conference and approximately 15 others who attended various related activities. Four members of the ETHIOPIA & ERITREA RPCVs Steering Committee were there.

2. With a theme of ecological harmony, a wide spectrum of environmental speakers raised and heightened awareness of the importance of stewardship of our earth in coming decades. Ethiopia and Eritrea RPCVs need to become informed and involved in this endeavor on the local and national levels. Our grandchildren will reap the benefits.

3. Two important proposals were presented and endorsed concerning Ethiopia and Eritrea.

- Dr. Aregai Teclé, from Eritrea, and John Rude (62-64), who were instrumental in the founding of the Thirst for Learning Foundation made a presentation. The foundation provides educational materials for Eritrean schools and hopes to raise \$500,000 during 1993 and 1994. **ETHIOPIA & ERITREA RPCVs voted to donate \$300 to this group.**

- Joe Bell (69-71) described a project designed by a group of Ethio XIs for RPCVs to return to Ethiopia and Eritrea in August, 1994 to reconnoiter and assess whether the Peace Corps could reestablish programs in those countries in the near future.

Additionally the group is exploring the possibility of the RPCVs devoting time and energy to a service project while in country. **ETHIOPIA & ERITREA RPCVs voted to give this group \$150** to help finance the continuation of these plans. (The National Peace Corps Association has since endorsed this project.)

[See Joe's article beginning on page 1 for additional details.]

4. Dennis Ekberg (62-64) suggested a project for ETHIOPIA & ERITREA RPCVs — to write and/or produce geography and/or history resource books about Ethiopia and Eritrea to be used by students until the dearth of text books in those countries can be remedied. [See From our mail on page 15 for a letter from Dennis which more fully describes this project.]

5. Leo Cecchini (62-64) spoke of how we can form ourselves in an NGO (non-governmental organization) which can contract with various aid-giving organizations to provide desired services in our two host countries. He felt that there will be considerable money available in the next few years for Eritrea because of its status as the newest country in Africa. [See page 3]

All of these ideas are excellent ways for our group to extend and expand our Ethiopia and Eritrea heritage in caring and beneficial ways to rebuild Big E. It is

encouraging and heartening to see a revived, humanitarian concern for these countries on the part of returned Volunteers. The seed money the group donated to the two projects is an indication of our support and a move in the right direction. We know the country, we know the culture and we know the need. A few, or many, might get involved on short- or long-term aid projects, but it's up to us to get going now, when the need is great.

As a group we have formidable clout. There are over 1,200 of us on our data base. We have a friend in the Senate in Harris Wofford. And Patti Garamendi and John Coyne are in leadership positions at the Peace Corps.

So, what would you like to see happen? In what time frame? With what money? What will you do to help any project succeed? We need your concrete and specific ideas on how to proceed. We need RPCVs who will act, once again, in brave new ways.

Sincerely,

Frances Fisher LaCroix (62-64)
Chair of the Steering Committee

FYI...

The following notices are reports of communications received by E&E RPCVs. They do not constitute endorsements.

- The following is excerpted from a notice received from *The Friendship Force*, a private, non-profit international citizens exchange organization founded in 1977. The organization has the support of President and Mrs. Carter, and Mrs. Carter is the Honorary Chairperson. Since its founding, over 100,000 "Ambassadors" have participated.

"FRIENDSHIP FORCE AFRICA SERIES OFFERS A PROGRAM OF TRAVEL AS A FRIENDSHIP FORCE AMBASSADOR ON AN EXCHANGE TO ETHIOPIA AND ERITREA, FEBRUARY 16 – MARCH 3, 1994.

"An opportunity to explore and learn about an ancient center of civilization, its dynasties, antiquities and vast contributions to humankind, is offered to the purposeful and discerning traveler. Along with the old, you will discover the emergence of new directions and hope for the future as these two recently formed governments actively participate in the global community. From a base of stability and peace, the citizens of Ethiopia and Eritrea will welcome you to join them in friendship. Come and see for yourself the wonder of this remarkable part of our planet.

"As a Friendship Force Ambassador, your two-week journey begins in Addis Ababa From there your travel continues on Ethiopia Airlines . . . to the four famous ancient cities of Bahar Dar, Gonder, Lalibela and Axum

"The highlight of your journey is a three-day homestay hosted by Addis families. . . .

"You [then] fly to Asmara and spend the day in the modern capital of Eritrea. . . . An optional trip to the ancient and beautiful seacoast city of Massawa, in the process of repair after having been badly damaged by the war, may be

arranged for those who wish to sample the exceptional seafood and have a swim in the Red Sea. . . .

The cost of the exchange per person will be \$2650.00. Costs for visas and required immunizations are additional. Space will be limited.

For more information write: Ann Bassarab, c/o The Friendship Force, 57 Forsyth St, 9th Fl, Atlanta GA 30303. Tel. 404 875-4922, fax 404 688-6148.

- "African Zion: The Sacred Art of Ethiopia," a show of 100 Ethiopian Orthodox Christian religious artifacts dating from the 4th through the 18th century are being exhibited at the Walters Art Gallery, 600 N. Charles St., Baltimore, Maryland through January 9, 1994. (For a full review of the show see the November 4th issue of *The Washington Post*, page D2.) The show will then travel to the Schomberg Center for Research in Black Culture, New York, (February 1 to March 29, 1994); the Menil Collection, Houston (April 21 to June 16, 1994); the Museum of African American Life and Culture, Dallas (September 28 to November 30, 1994); DuSable Museum of African American History, Chicago (December 23, 1994 to February 26, 1995); the Fogg Art Museum, Cambridge (March 20 to May 15, 1995); the Cincinnati Museum of Art (August 25 to October 29, 1995); and the Museum of African American Art, Los Angeles (November 12, 1995 to January 7, 1996).

Also showing at the Walters is the photo exhibit "A Legacy of Faith: Ethiopian Orthodoxy in the United States."

- The June 28, 1993, issue of *In These Times* has an article on Eritrea by Dan Connell which tells of Eritrea's efforts to institutionalize democracy, reconstruct its infrastructure and revive

the economy. It speaks strongly against the U.S. lack of aid for the country.

- The West Cascade RPCVs of Eugene, Oregon are selling a 11" x 15" full color reproduction of a watercolor of an Ethiopian boy by James Cloutier (Kenya 65-66) as a fundraiser to support AIDS-orphaned children in Uganda. The limited edition of 50 prints are signed and numbered by the artist and are available for \$25. Write them at: PO Box 5462, Eugene OR 97405.

- In the "Living Section" of the September 15th *New York Times* there was a lengthy article on Ethiopian and Eritrean food. It told of the Ethiopian and Eritrean restaurants in New York which have become community centers for expatriates in the city as well as purveyors of injera and wat.

When in the Big Apple look in the phone book for the Abyssinia, The Blue Nile, the Ghion, Finfinae, Cafe Ethiopia, the Massawa Zula and Selam for a blast from the past.

- The October issue of *Travel & Leisure* had a long article on Ethiopia by Eddie Harris entitled "The Africa Tourists Never See."

F R I E N D S

• Members of **ETHIOPIA/ERITREA II** (63-65) met in mid-October to plan a reunion in-country in 1995. They set up committees to handle various aspects of such a trip plus and have prepared a newsletter, "NewsFax" communications and a survey for group members. They are also exploring fundraising. [See page 4 for more details.]

• **BILL COLE** (PC/Ethiopia Doctor, mid-60s) called from Seattle where he was recuperating from a liver transplant performed at the University of Washington Hospital. He assured me that he had not contracted his Hepatitis C during his Peace Corps service! Following his recovery, Bill will be returning to Juneau, Alaska, where he lives with his wife, Lynette.

• **JOHN COYNE** (62-67) has articles in the November issues of both *Child*, in which he compares the youth of his father to that of his son, and *Men's Journal*, where he writes of Harry Cooper, an overlooked golf great of the past.

• This past July **RAY DONALDSON** (62-64) participated in the "Pastors for Peace" caravan of vehicles which took food and other necessities to Laredo, Texas which were then to be shipped to Cuba. The project's purpose was to raise awareness in the US of our economic blockade of Cuba and its effects on the people of that country, as well as to urge the normalization of relations between the two countries.

• On September 15th **CRIS GROENENDAAL** (Korea 71-72) began performing the title role in *THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA* at the Pantages Theatre in Toronto. He had previously played "the Phantom" in the Canadian national touring production and on Broadway.

• **U. S. REP. PAUL HENRY** (64-65) [R-Mich.] lost his battle with brain cancer on July 31, 1993.

• Nyle Kardatzke (62-64) writes that he has become a vagabond.

• Writer **DICK LIPEZ** (62-64) hopes to return to Ethiopia in January.

• **KATHLEEN MOORE** (65-66) spent August and September in Ethiopia.

• **SENATOR HARRIS WOFFORD** (Ethiopia Director 62-64) is working vigorously in preparation for his 1994 campaign for reelection. If you'd like to help, financially or otherwise, write: Citizens for Senator Wofford, PO Box 76780, Washington DC 22013.

LOST & FOUND

When a query is received about an Ethiopia or Eritrea RPCV, I send the request to that RPCV if I have his/her current address. The listings below are for RPCVs for whom I have no current information. Can you help? Ed.

• Bob Irwin, who was working for the Ministry of Education in Eritrea this past summer, has brought a letter for **PAUL SUGARMAN** (Gondar 68-70) from one of his students. If you know the whereabouts of Paul, please contact E&E RPCVs or Bob Irwin at 292 Crescent, San Francisco CA 94110. Tel: 415 641 4051.

• The former Miss Judy Hodges (65-67) who served in Debre Zeit/Bishoftu would like news of:

▶ Berhane who worked at the boule in Debre Zeit; her husband, Yohannes, a pilot at the Airborne and their daughter, her namesake, Yudit Yohannes.

▶ PCVs **FRITZ HOEBEL** (65-67), **DON CERIO** (66-68), **DEBBIE & JIM BULGER** (66-68) and **FRANCES SCULLY** (65-66).

▶ Any students or teachers at Aste Lebeu Dengel Wonag Segid School.

▶ Any students or teachers at the Airborne Elementary School especially Yene Shawul.

▶ News of Musi Ayele who used to do the news in English on TV and had a radio jazz program, as well, in Addis and drove a lemon-yellow Jaguar.

▶ Senayte Zerom and her cousin Hagos Kafil of Harrar, Dire Dawa and Addis.

Write: Judy Hodges Kiriazis
22 rue Mayet
75006 Paris, France
tel: 42732922



What ever happened to Malcolm Donald???

He's selling condoms in Africa.

Malcolm is now the Overseas Representative in Conakry, Guinea for Population Services International (PSI). PSI is a non-profit organization which develops, operates and provides technical assistance to health and family planning programs in developing countries, i.e., they sell condoms as a way of controlling AIDS.

Since leaving the Peace Corps — Malcolm was an Ethie I — he picked up a Masters in political science at Berkeley, then over the next three decades lived and worked in twenty-six Third World countries, owned a soft-ripening cheese manufacturing and distribution company in rural Maine, directed a four million dollar AID population policy project for The Futures Group, raised mushrooms in Barfleur and Ghisonnacia, France, got married, raised three boys, went through a divorce, and worked for the International Road Federation, which made feasibility studies for the Saudi Arabian Government. Oh, yes, he was also Chief Financial Officer for Travelair, a newly created travel company in Vienna, Virginia. Fourteen jobs in thirty-three years.

Now he's back in Africa where he'll direct the single largest family planning intervention in the country, a comprehensive, nationwide program integrating public and private sector family planning and AIDS/STD prevention.

Write Malcolm at: PSI/USA, 1120 Nineteenth St NW, Washington DC 20036

Have you found a long lost friend and you'd like to share the tale? Write *The Herald*.



Ethiopia and Eritrea RPCV leadership at Peace Corps

Ethiopian RPCVs have moved into the "new" Peace Corps, not in large numbers, but in significant places. Four Ethis are now on board within the Peace Corps building. As stated previously, **PATTI GARAMENDI** is Associate Director of Recruitment and Selection. Her Special Assistant in this division, the largest in the Peace Corps, is **JOHN COYNE** (62-67). **STEVE BUFF** (64-66) is a management analyst in the Office of the Inspector General, and **WOODY JEWETT** (66-69) is back for a second tour at the agency, this time in the Office of Planning and Budget. (Besides Volunteer years, Peace Corps service is limited to five years at any one time. This is Sargent Shriver's famous "In-Up-and-Out" policy.)



Book notes

Advance praise for *GOING UP COUNTRY: TRAVEL ESSAYS BY PEACE CORPS WRITERS*, edited by John Coyne (62-67), has been received by Charles Scribner's, who will publish this first collection of travel essays by RPCVs in March, 1994.

Norm Rush, a former PC director in Botswana (78-83), and author of *MATING* and *WHITES*, writes, "Peace Corps Volunteers make great informants and tutors for those who would travel seriously in far places outside the upholstered corridors of organized tourism. These travel essays — vivid, direct, searching, entertaining — by ex-Peace Corps volunteer writers offer incontestable proof of it."

Paul Theroux (Malawi 63-65) says, "*GOING UP COUNTRY* is a book of marvels, a wonderful collection of Peace Corps memories. It reminded me of some of the best days of my life."

John Heminway, host of PBS "Travels" writes, "The English-reading world has long canonized the British as the best travel writers. This rich, funny, gritty compendium of American writers may well readjust the balance to the western side of the Atlantic."

South African report

To continue my notes from this part of the world, my prediction last year that the cease-fire would hold in Mozambique appears to be on target. The cease-fire is now one year old and ably managed by the UN peace keeping forces, a sharp contrast to similar situations elsewhere, such as Somalia or Angola. In Mozambique's case, the warring parties were spent and had no desire to continue fighting. The UN entered with a clear mission and with the right numbers and composition of personnel to do the job.

When I took my third American investor to Mozambique in May I was very pleased to see the progress being made. I saw plenty of businessmen exploring possible ventures and the government showing a more positive face to these visitors. The main concern now is how the new government will take shape and if the present regime has the capacity to accommodate its former enemy. Not an easy job, but I predict that they will come to agreement and reinforce the favorable trends of today.

South Africa is another story. While violence continues to cause concern about its future, I see no "civil war" in the cards, but a somewhat violent division of the country, not unlike what we see in the former Soviet Union. This is of course a very risky statement, however events of the day reinforce this prediction that I have been making of going on two years now.

Most of you will have seen something of the new "Freedom Alliance" that has abandoned the negotiations for a new government, and formed an alliance of convenience, usually referred to as a coalition of "conservative" whites and blacks. I have a hard time understanding what "conservative" means when applied to a black South African since I

have yet to meet one who wants to cling to the past.

I see the drama here unfolding much as I expected. The country will be divided into several new countries or, alternatively, several very autonomous states in a loose confederation, again similar to the former Soviet Union. The route this development will take is now becoming clear. In the first phase the "Freedom Alliance" will essentially carve out a large unit as its "turf," define it and defend it. At the current pace of events this will happen before the elections scheduled for next April. This will force the present government and the ANC to assert their authority. Here's the rub, they will have no force with which to assert their authority.

It is not clear that the present government is prepared to use force to bring the Alliance into line. However, if it does direct the army to bring the departed regions back into the fold, I am certain the army will not carry out the order. This is, to put it mildly, a very controversial point of view. I defend my position by noting that the central member of the Freedom Alliance is the Afrikaner Volksfront which is headed by several retired army and police commanders. I do not think it is mere happenstance that the leaders are all military and paramilitary, but a calculated message to those in the group and outside that the Volksfront is linked to the present military. Another factor is that a basically white organization such as the army will have a hard time coming to grips with having to enforce national integrity for what will be a black dominated government, especially when that challenge comes mainly from whites.

I have had people vigorously dispute this opinion, essentially arguing that the army will obey the orders of the govern-

ment, with one emphasizing that this "mercenary" army will do whatever its paymaster tells it to do. I obviously do not share their confidence for several reasons, not least of which being that it is hard to define who the government is and who it represents.

The ANC has apparently come to the same conclusion about the army as have I, and is rushing to incorporate its armed units into the army, an action not likely to be accomplished before the split in the country. Moreover, the ANC armed units have not been integrated into those of other black political groups sharing their side of the political equation, such as the PAC's Apla. The net result is that the ANC will find it does not now have the power to enforce national integrity with its own forces and will have to allow the Alliance to go its own way entirely, or offer a very loose confederation of independent states.

This will not be the end, however. After establishing the principle of independent states, the "Alliance" will then break up to pursue each party's own nation building. Net result, perhaps three, maybe four, "New South Africas."

So why no civil war? My prediction lies in my analysis that with the main war-making machine standing on the sidelines, if not supporting the split-up of the country, the possibilities for a long, protracted conflict are reduced to the point that any violence will be short-lived and dissipated in the effort to build new, independent states. Those who postulate the ANC armed units facing the army in an all-out civil war fail to appreciate the ANC's sagacity in only taking on battles it can win.

Where does this leave the planned elections? If the solution is a loose confederation of independent states, the

elections will be held in each state as desired. In any case, the election set for next April will go ahead in the rump South Africa to confirm the ANC's power.

Given the preponderant power of South Africa, the rest of the countries in the region will be shelving most of their parochial pursuits while paying close attention to events here. And while what happens here will have influence on their own situation, the bottom line is that the "regional power" will be so wrapped up in itself and its own problems, that it will not have time to bother its neighbors. Finally the resulting several "New South Africas" individually will not hold sway over the region like the present country.

I enjoyed the chance to see all the Ethiopia and Eritrea RPCVs in Berkeley. I would appreciate any assistance in circulating my idea on bringing interested members of our group back to the two countries. The Deputy Director of USAID, our former colleague Lois Richards (62-64) who is another senior official in USAID and the new Director of USAID in Ethiopia all find merit in the proposal. I think it makes sense and will find plenty of support. The first step is to find out how many of our group are interested.

Leo Cecchini (62-64)

The Ekberg book project proposal

It was great seeing you, and all the other Returned PCVs at the reunion in July. It is always inspiring to see us together as a group. It made me feel young again.

I have thought about a project for our Ethiopia & Eritrea RPCVs to undertake. I see a critical need to get books into the hands of the teachers and students in Ethiopia and Eritrea. We had a similar need here in Prince William County, Virginia! Let me explain.

In Prince William County we identified a need to get the history of the County into the hands of the citizens and the students in the school. We decided upon republishing historical works that had already been produced. What does that have to do with Ethiopia and Eritrea? (I hear you ask). When Wayne Kessler and Joe Bell spoke at our country reunion it struck me that in addition to the need for surplus text books, and a revised curriculum for Eritrea and Ethiopia, there is a need to develop new teaching materials. As RPCVs we have in our collective experience enough material to produce history, geography and even science books for the schools. We can aim the material at any level and meet the curriculum needs that are defined by Eritreans and Ethiopians. The books we produce need not have buckram bindings and last for a thousand years; they can be easy to produce and easy to distribute. The cost of printing is relatively low, and I believe that we should be able to get various firms to "corporate" sponsor such publication.

For example. *DISCOVER PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY* was written for elementary school kids. It has activities which teachers can guide students through. It is sufficiently detailed so that it is also of interest to adults. A companion book deals with numerous historical figures in county history. RPCVs have sufficient knowledge and artistic ability in our group to produce similar books on Ethiopia and Eritrea.

HOME PLACE was composed entirely of newspaper articles that our local newspaper wrote on various communities in the county. Given the reams of materials that have been produced about Ethiopia and Eritrea over the years, I know that a similar publication could be assembled and produced. A book similar to *HOME PLACE* would be useful to student and citizen alike.

CONFEDERATE BATTERIES ALONG THE POTOMAC and *ALONG THE RF & P RAILROAD IN PRINCE*

WILLIAM COUNTY are examples of booklets that were produced from larger works. Sections were reprinted, with appropriate permission, from books dealing with larger topics.

The difficult part of any project is getting someone to organize it and do the work. In this day of scanners and desk top publishing it should not be difficult to produce camera ready copy. We need to know what topics should be covered and for what grade level. We should be able to provide a bridge of materials until the Eritreans and Ethiopians are able to publish their own works.

I know that some RPCVs are returning to Eritrea and Ethiopia next year to look at the curriculum; I would hope that they could bring back examples of ways in which we could help. The wheel does not have to be reinvented each time, and creation of teaching materials can often come from documents that already exist.

I look forward to hearing from you and others.

Dennis L. Ekberg (62-64)

Ed note: Copies of the books that Dennis referred to can be borrowed from E&E RPCVs.

Continued on page 16





THIRST FOR LEARNING FOUNDATION

THE THIRST FOR LEARNING SOCIETY [see *The Herald* #8] HAS refined its mission — to support the reconstruction of the educational system in Eritrea through fundraising, and, to reflect its true purpose, it has changed its name to the Thirst for Learning Foundation.

The foundation has a U.S. Steering Committee (made up of expatriate Eritreans and RPCVs) and five regional chapters in Washington, D.C., Atlanta, Dallas, Seattle, and Los Angeles. There are also groups forming in Toronto, Rome, London and Stockholm. It is an entirely volunteer organization and 100% of the donations it receives will be applied directly to the needs of Eritrea's secondary schools. The Eritrean Department of Education will guide the foundation in determining which schools and programs are in special need of their support.

The foundation is in the process of registering as a Private Voluntary Organization with USAID, and following receipt of tax-exempt status and filing as a non-profit corporation within the State of California, it will conduct a major fundraising drive this winter. The foundation has set a goal of raising \$500,000 during the next year.

Following a presentation describing the foundation at the ETHIOPIA & ERITREA RPCVs meeting at UC Berkeley in July by Chairman Dr. Aregai Teclé, and Secretary John Rude (62-64), RPCVs contributed over \$1,300 to the foundation.

If you would like to make a donation, receive additional information or volunteer to help Thirst for Learning Foundation, write:

Thirst for Learning Foundation
1630 Centenela Ave, Suite 7
Inglewood, CA 90302

or call 503-581-0522

or fax 213 759-0639



From our mail continued from page 15

Hunger Forum participation urged

Earlier this month, Senator Wofford kindly conveyed word of our plans to urge RPCV involvement in regional hunger forums being sponsored by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. RPCVs can, with the particular credibility given by Peace Corps experience, raise questions about how domestic and global hunger may relate to our nations's agriculture policies.

The questions I refer to arise from the following observations:

1. U.S. farm exports sometimes sell at prices that undercut the prices paid to peasant farmers;
2. U.S. farm price policy has long made increased exports a primary aim;
3. Some of the greatest increases in U.S. hunger in recent years are in the rural U.S.

The predominant economic view is that the world is a single, competitive economic system. The above observations suggest the need for an alternate view, one that shows the world to be a place of many economies, where nations are concerned with food security and other national objectives in ways that require competition to be moderated by cooperation.

In a change from our earlier plan, I'll ask that you inform your members that to join forum discussions, they should please request notice of forum dates/locations from: The Congressional Hunger Caucus, ATTN.: John Morrill, c/o The Honorable Tony Hall, 2264 Rayburn HOB, Washington DC 20515.

You may know that Congressman Hall, himself an RPCV [Thailand 66-68], inspired these forums with a fast this spring.

Don Deichman (Colombia 71-74)
RPCV Ad Hoc Hunger Group
12531 Timber Hollow Place
Germantown MD 20874

WORKSHOP ON ENSET—THE TREE AGAINST HUNGER

by Bob Matthai (63-65)

Over three hundred years ago a Portuguese visitor to Ethiopia described *enset* as a "tree against hunger," since anybody who had one was never afraid of being hungry. The potential for using *enset*, sometimes call "false banana," to meet Ethiopia's current and future food needs will be explored at an international workshop in Addis Ababa December 13–20, 1993.

According to Dr. Steven Brandt, one of the organizers of the meeting, "*Enset* is a banana-like plant which is domesticated nowhere else in the world except Ethiopia." Food from the plant is not an edible fruit but is derived from the bulb-like stem base, "trunk" and leaf-stems. *Enset* can reach a height of over 30 feet and a diameter of over 3 feet.

Enset now supplies food and fiber for about 10 million people in Ethiopia, or 20% of its population. Even during the recent famine it served as a reliable food source. Today *enset* is grown in the southwestern highlands of Ethiopia, where population densities are among the highest in rural Africa. However, historically it may have been cultivated over a larger area, as far north as Lake Tana, the Simien Mountains and the Tigre/Eritrea border.

Kocho, the main food from *enset*, cost about Ethi \$0.80 per kilo in the north Omo region in 1992, but as much as Ethi \$5.00 per kilo in Addis Ababa because of limited supply and distribution and increasing demand. Brandt suggests that the growing demand may be related to rapidly rising costs for cereals

in urban markets, and a change in the attitude that *kocho* is "peasant food."

The plant's potential appears to be substantial.

- Its system of cultivation has evolved over thousands of years to meet local conditions.
- It sustains dense populations with little outside assistance.
- It allows farmers to cultivate the same plots for generations without chemical fertilizers and pesticides.
- It has relatively few natural pests and diseases.

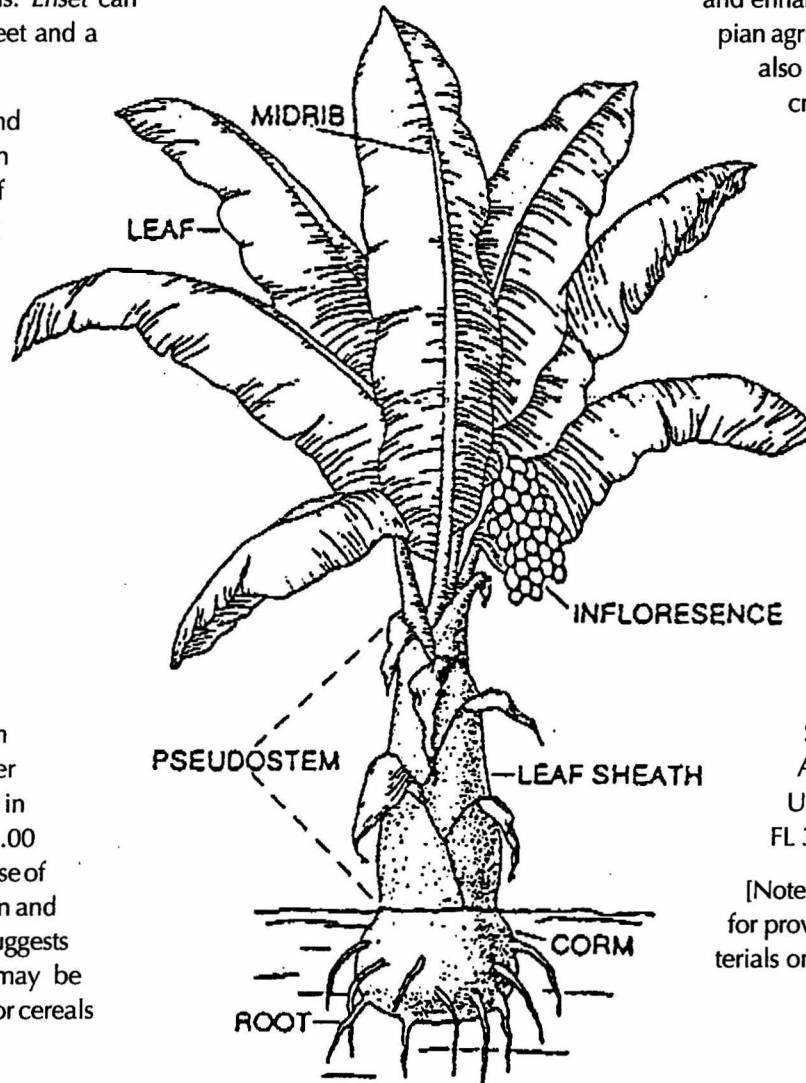
- It is resistant to climatic and environmental fluctuations.
- Its edible products can be stored for months and even years.
- It meets many of southwestern Ethiopia's fiber needs.

"In spite of its importance to Ethiopia," said Brandt, "*enset* agriculture remains one of the least studied and understood agricultural complexes in Africa, let alone Ethiopia. This workshop, which will determine the present state of knowledge on *enset* and develop an interdisciplinary plan for applied and basic research, represents a crucial first step in understanding and enhancing the role of *enset* in Ethiopian agriculture." The research plan will also have to seek answers to several critical questions that bear on the potential for introducing or re-establishing *enset*: where, when, how and why was there a sharp reduction or disappearance of *enset* cultivation from central and northern Ethiopia?

The workshop is sponsored by the Ethiopia Institute of Agricultural Research, Addis Ababa University and the University of Florida. For more information contact:

Dr. Tsedeke Abate, Institute of Agricultural Research, Box 2003, Addis Ababa or Dr. Steven Brandt, Department of Anthropology, 1350 Turlington, University of Florida Gainesville FL 32611.

[Note: Special thanks to Steve Brandt for providing the information and materials on which this article is based.]



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Ethiopia & Eritrea RPCVs membership

Name _____

Address _____

City, state, zip, country _____

Name when in the Peace Corps if different from above _____

Home phone _____

Work phone _____

Dates of Peace Corps—Ethiopia or Eritrea service and city/town of service _____

Group # and type of project _____

Other Peace Corps service - as staff or Volunteer - and years _____

\$35 Annual Dues (which include \$20 National Peace Corps Association membership)

\$15 If you are *currently* a paying member of the National Council

Make your check payable to:
Ethiopia & Eritrea RPCVs

I would like work on

_____ for Ethiopia & Eritrea RPCVs.

Please send to:

Ethiopia & Eritrea RPCVs
c/o Marian Haley Beil
4 Lodge Pole Road
Pittsford NY 14534-4550

KEEP THE GOOD FEELING!

the Boston Area Returned Peace Corps Volunteers are selling "Bringing The World Back Home" shirts and an all new design of three doves on a multicolored field of flight, as a third projects fund raiser.

All shirts available in sizes; medium, large and X-L. 1992 blue tees, tanks and long sleeves are still available in above sizes, supply limited.

All 1961-1993 Peace Corps Countries are now listed on the back of the shirts! White 100% cotton pre-shrunk tees printed sea green. **\$12.00** ▶

Reusable Shopping Bags! Sea green print on natural canvas. Shoulder length straps, true shopping sack dimensions. **\$10.00** ▼



◀ A new design for 1993, printed in five colors on natural or white 100% cotton pre-shrunk tees. **\$12.00** (natural available in X-L only).

Ethiopia & Eritrea RPCVs

Send this form and your check payable to: **BOSTON RETURNED PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEERS, P.O. Box 35364, Brighton, MA 02135**

Name _____
 Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____
 Size _____ Qty _____ Total _____

NEW! 1961-93 World Shirt _____
Dove Shirt _____
Reusable Shopping Bag _____
Blue Tanks and Tees _____

Blue Long Sleeves _____
 (Now \$10.00 while supply lasts)

Blue Night Shirts _____
\$15.00/ea. (one size fits all)
 (Now \$12.00 while supply lasts)

Baseball Caps _____
\$10.00/ea.

Handling Postage **\$4.00**
Grand Total _____

Printed on recycled paper

Ethiopia & Eritrea RPCVs

c/o Marian Haley Beil
4 Lodge Pole Raod
Pittsford NY 14534-4550

Address correction requested