



BRINGING THE WORLD BACK HOME

RPCV NEWS

www.rpcv-wa.org

April 2006

WASHINGTON STATE PEACE CORPS ASSOCIATION

Starting in May/June, the WSPCA newsletter will be delivered to you in an electronic format unless you request a paper copy via wspcaeditor@yahoo.com

More details to follow in the next two newsletters. The printed newsletter represents the greatest recurring expense for WSPCA in terms of money and manpower. Over the past several years, electronic distribution has become commonplace for newsletters, and is also more eco-friendly. Comments? Let us know at wspcaeditor@yahoo.com or contact any of the WSPCA officers.

We will provide the newsletter to the email address that you have submitted to us, so let David Bane, the recently elected WSPCA President (wspcavp@yahoo.com) know if you have recently changed your email address.

Proposal for WSPCA Activism on Immigration Policy

sent to the WSPCA listserv by Joana Ramos, Brazil 73-75

I would like to propose that WSPCA get involved with this [immigration] issue, and am willing to track it & be the contact person for our group. There are folks locally (as well as nationally where immigration bills are presently up for consideration in Congress) working on this. I welcome your feedback & participation. [This issue will be on the agenda at the April meeting/potluck (see pg 2)]

— see background articles on pg 3-5 —

WSPCA Officers - 2006 Election Results

President

David Bane, Honduras, 01-03; Crisis Corps, USA - Hurricanes Katrina & Rita, 05

Vice-President

none

Treasurer

Temma Pistrang, Kenya, 72-74

NPCA / PC Liaison

none

Membership Coordinator

Jennifer Samnick, Togo, 02-04

Officers-at-Large (3)

Hugh Ho, Kyrgyzstan, 99-01

none

none

"The good we secure for ourselves is precarious and uncertain until it is secured for all of us and incorporated into our common life."

(Jane Addams, Nobel Peace Prize winner, 1860-1935)



WSPCA Meeting/Potluck

When: Saturday, April 8, 6:30pm (meeting), 7:30pm (potluck)
Where: Sala Sweet's home at 5412 South Othello Street
(off Seward Park Ave S), Seattle
(206) 285-2876

Our April meeting/potluck will be held on Saturday, April 8 at the home of Sala Sweet in the Seward Park neighborhood of South Seattle. The meeting will start at 6:30pm, and the potluck will start at 7:30pm. All are encouraged to attend both events.

The meeting agenda includes:

- Approval of March meeting minutes
- Treasurer's report
- Old Business: election results, May NPCA regional meeting, May University of Washington nominee party
- New Business
- Announcements

WSPCA Eats Out

When: Friday, April 14, 6:30pm
Where: La Carta de Oaxaca, 5431 Ballard Ave NW, Seattle
(206) 782-8722

Join us for the "April Eats Out" at 6:30pm on Friday, April 14 at La Carta de Oaxaca, located in the heart of Ballard in Seattle. There are currently 25 volunteers in Mexico, working in the following sectors; environment/water, business services, and Technological Research and Development.

Please RSVP to David Bane at wspcavp@yahoo.com or (206) 632-7179 for both events.

WSPCA OFFICERS

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AT-LARGE

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AT-LARGE

Open

AT-LARGE

Open

RPCV Book Tour Comes to Seattle

submitted by Ellen Hildebrand, Guatemala

When: April 18, 20, 22
Where: Lake Forest Park, Kirkland, and Seattle

I'm a Portland, Oregon, author with a book being released next week about my experiences as a Peace Corps Volunteer in Guatemala in the early 90s. I'll be touring in Seattle the third week of April. The book, titled "When I Was Elena," is a March 2006 Book Sense Notable.



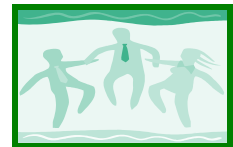
Ellen Hildebrand

Tuesday, April 18, 7pm
Third Place Books
17171 Bothell Way NE
Lake Forest Park, WA 98155
(206) 366-3333

Saturday, April 22, 2pm
Elliott Bay Book Company
101 South Main St.
Seattle, WA 98104
(206) 624-6600

Thursday, April 20, 7pm
Parkplace Books
348 Parkplace Center
Kirkland, WA 98033
(425) 828-6546

More information can be found on my website: www.ellenurbanihildebrand.com



next hangout

last Tuesday
in April

4/25/06

7 to 9 pm

Shultz's
in the U-District

(children welcome)

4114 University Way NE,
Seattle

(206) 548-9461



From David

We have lots of exciting things coming up for the group, and we look forward to your participation! Our new officers will soon start their work, and are ready to make our group the best. In addition to the new electronic version of our newsletter, we will soon be re-starting our movie nights and conversation groups. We are going to work hard to put our best foot forward for the NPCA regional meeting and nominee party for University of Washington students, both to be held here in Seattle in May. We are also working on new community service opportunities, and the Speakers' Bureau. There are also some other exciting projects that we are working on, but aren't quite ready to roll out. Also, we are looking for someone in the downtown/Capitol Hill/Central District area who is able to host our May meeting/potluck on Sat., May 13. Please contact me at wspcavp@yahoo.com or (206) 632-7179 if you can help us.

This all means that there will be lots of interesting and rewarding ways for you to contribute your ideas and skills to our group! Don't hesitate to let us know how we are doing, and how we can do better.

- David Bane, WSPCA President

RPCV Representative Sam Farr Rips Immigration Bill

by Tom Ragan, staff writer of The Santa Cruz Sentinel

January 21, 2006

Rep. Sam Farr, D-Carmel (RPCV, Columbia), spoke out against a strict federal immigration bill Friday, comparing the measure to the sort of discrimination that thousands of interned Japanese-Americans endured during World War II, rolling his eyes and sarcastically saying of the bill's supporters: "What a great way to win friends and gain influence."

The congressman's comments came during a get-together in Watsonville in which several City Council members submitted their wish list to Farr and a pair of his state counterparts: Sen. Abel Maldonado, R-Santa Maria, and Assemblyman Simon Salinas, D-Salinas.

The Border Protection, Antiterrorism and Illegal Immigration Control Act of 2005, known as HR 4437, passed the Republican-dominated House in mid-December by a 239 to 182 margin.

The piece of legislation has been highly controversial, especially among farmers who rely on illegal immigrant labor to harvest their crops across the country.

Labor shortages, they say, are the direct result of stepped up enforcement along the border, which can often translate into higher prices at grocery store produce departments.

That's why many farmers also oppose the extension of a border fence in Arizona and Texas, one of the bill's proposals tacked on at the last minute by conservative Republicans.

Farr said he thought it was "ridiculous" that the bill would "make it a felony" for those who hire illegal immigrants, or for those who harbor them, noting if a church takes care of illegal immigrants, its members are subject to being convicted of a felony.

"It's one of the worst bills that has ever passed the House," said Farr. "It would require states to build jails where millions of undocumented workers would be imprisoned while being processed for deportation.

"It's worse than what we did to the Japanese-Americans during World War II."

The good news, however, is that the bill has to pass the Senate, and most likely won't in its original form, according to Jessica Schafer, a spokeswoman for Farr.

"It's going to be a while before the Senate comes up with its own bill," she said. "But there's virtually no way it's going to pass the Senate as is."

The more conservative and hardline Republicans say the bill is just the thing to put a stop to illegal immigration, which is costing federal and state governments millions of dollars each year in social service and health service demands.



Paradoxes of Immigration Hit US Senate

Huge protests across the country heat up this week's legislative debate.

by Gail Russell Chaddock, staff writer of *The Christian Science Monitor*

March 27, 2006

How does the United States count the cost of at least 11 million immigrants living and often working outside the law?

For business groups - now urging a path to citizenship or other legal status for such workers - it's the lower cost of a head of lettuce, new home construction, or a restaurant tab, because these people will do the work that Americans won't.

For local officials across the country - no longer just those near a border - it's the strain illegals pose to schools, hospital emergency rooms, law enforcement, and other social services, driving municipal budgets deep into the red.

For illegal immigrants and their supporters - rallying by the hundreds of thousands around the country in the run-up to this debate - the issue is freedom from fear.

But one of the most pervasive costs of a broken immigration system, acknowledged by all sides, is the cost of deception.

"Today's immigration policy is almost founded on lies," says Mark Krikorian, executive director of the Center for Immigration Studies. "It presupposes lying by almost everyone involved."

Bringing honesty to the system without deporting millions and jeopardizing major sectors of the US economy is the tough task before the Senate Judiciary Committee, as its 18 members struggle toward consensus on a new strategy for immigration reform.

Senate majority leader Bill Frist has set Tuesday to begin debate on the topic. That means the Judiciary panel has one last day - Monday - to work out a comprehensive plan, including a new guest worker program and a path to citizenship for those already working illegally. If it fails, Senator Frist will introduce his own plan Tuesday, which, like the House bill, aims only to gain control of US borders.

Pro-immigration demonstrators, meanwhile, are expected to rally at the Capitol Tuesday, following a 500,000-strong rally for illegal-immigrant rights in Los Angeles, and other protests in Denver, Phoenix, Milwaukee, Chicago, Philadelphia, and Tucson, Ariz. Organizers say they'll march in 30 more cities before the Senate vote next month.

Last year, the immigration debate on Capitol Hill was overshadowed by the Minutemen - an armed civilian posse out to stop illegal border crossings. But the prospect of congressional crackdown on illegal immigrants, including the enforcement of penalties against employers who hire them, is drawing record numbers of immigrants into the streets, with a powerful coalition of business, church, and union groups behind them. Their message: These are good people who work hard, pay taxes, and should not be treated as felons.

"Polls show that people do recognize the value of immigration, including illegal," says Peter Schuck, a professor at Yale Law School in New Haven, Conn. "On the other hand, it is a violation of law, and people have just found strategies to live with it."

For employers who hire illegals, that means not looking too closely at documents. Only three employers were fined for hiring illegals in 2004, down from 417 in 1999, according to a report by the Government Accountability Office in August 2005.

"It's a dysfunctional system that breeds disrespect for the law," says John Gay, senior vice president of government affairs and public policy at the National Restaurant Association and a co-chair for the Essential Worker Immigration Coalition.

"Many employers see this as a game: If they ask people to provide proper documents, they leave." Restaurants that knowingly violate the law, he adds, gain an unfair advantage.

Not only is there a disincentive because there is no enforcement of the law, but if employers examine someone's documents too closely, they can be pursued by the Justice Department for employment related discrimination.



Paradoxes of Immigration Hit US Senate (cont'd from pg 4)

"We are digging ourselves into a hole by turning a blind eye to illegality," says Jared Bernstein, director of the Living Standards Program at the Economic Policy Institute. "All kinds of unintentional consequences surface when you do that, including paving the way for armed vigilantes on the border."

One of the most toxic issues in the debate is whether the flood of immigrants, especially the 500,000 undocumented workers who enter the country each year, are driving down prospects for low-skilled Americans. A new report by the Center for Immigration Studies finds that states with the largest increase in immigrants also saw larger declines in natives working.

"This isn't just some parlor game for economists: Low-skill native workers are hurt by flooding the market with immigrants," says Mr. Krikorian.

Another point of deception in the system is the limited enforcement the nation's immigration laws. "We don't allow state police making traffic stops to ask about a driver's legal status," says Sen. Jeff Sessions (R) of Alabama, a member of the Senate Judiciary Committee. "What does that tell you about how serious we are about enforcing our immigration laws?"

Last week, business owners in Costa Mesa, Calif., called on the City Council to suspend a new policy that allows police to enforce federal immigration laws, which they say are hurting business. Nearly every state has proposals pending to address illegal immigration.

"This is a justice issue: You can't have 11 million people being vulnerable and exploited," said Joshua Hoyt, executive director of the Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights, in a conference call after Chicago demonstrations last week.

"There is a politicization of this issue in the immigrant community in a way that has not happened in the past," he added.

MEMBERSHIP FORM

Please fill in the appropriate information to update your status with either WSPCA or NPCA. Please make all checks payable to WSPCA. Thanks!

Check here if this is an address change

Annual Membership Options

- \$50 - NPCA and WSPCA single membership
- \$65 - NPCA and WSPCA couple membership
- \$15 - WSPCA only single membership
- \$22.50 - WSPCA only couple membership
- \$7.50 - WSPCA only low-income

Recently COSed RPCVs receive a free 1-year trial membership in NPCA and a free 3-month trial membership in WSPCA

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I would like my newsletter sent as a paper copy by mail

I am a current NPCA member Yes No Exp. Date? _____

Peace Corps Info

Country of Service/Years _____

Position _____

Current Job Title _____

mail form to: WSPCA, PO Box 55914, Shoreline, WA 98155-9998



Upcoming Events

April

April 8 - WSPCA Meeting / Potluck (p.2)

April 14 - WSPCA Eats Out (p.2)

April 18, 20, 22 - RPCV Book Tour in Seattle (p.2)

April 25 - Hang Out at Shultzy's (p.2)

and coming up:

May - West Region NPCA-affiliated Group Leaders Meeting and annual PC/WSPCA nomination event in Seattle

August 3-6 - RPCV West Region Campout (another PC 45th Anniversary event), Dworshak State Park, near Orofino, Idaho

Satellite Groups

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Paulette Thompson at 2006 Regional Meeting

New Officers, New WSPCA Initiative (p.1)

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Check out our website!
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