

Friends of Kyrgyzstan

JULY 2007

FOKGZ Welcomes new board members!



President Brian Cowan.

Brian was a K-11 volunteer who served in Issyk-kul oblast in the Jeti-Ogus rayon village of Orgorchor.

Brian was a TEFL volunteer who used his connections in his native Tennessee to coordinate a book drive that resulted in 7,100 books being donated to his school in Orgorchor.

Brian was also in country during the

Tulip revolution and counts this as one of the most interesting parts of his service.

Brian is currently living in Boston and has just completed his first year of law school. In addition to being our newly elected President, Brian is working for the New Hampshire Public Defenders Office.

Brian says he decided to run for the position of President to “put his money where his mouth is” and put some of the desires he had vocalized to the group as NPCA Liaison into action.

Brian’s goals as president include increasing the number of RPCVs who are members of the National Peace Corps Association. Brian also wants FOKGZ to take a more active role in supporting current volunteers in Kyrgyzstan and those nominated to go. Brian also wants to clarify and better articulate the mission of Friends of Kyrgyzstan.



NPCA Liaison Julie Lusher Rotherham

K-5 TEFL volunteer Julie Rotherham served in the city of Kyzul-Kiya in the southern province of Osh.

While in Kyrgyzstan, Julie organized and facilitated a democracy conference for 50 teachers. The conference earned the honor of being the first group allowed access to the Kyrgyz Parliament Building.

Julie also fondly remembers teaching baseball, distributing over 500 pairs of eye-glasses, and working with local teachers and motivated students.

Like most RPCV’s Julie also has some sad stories to tell of bride kidnapping and traveling through war torn Tajikistan. These sad stories though are eclipsed by the memories of teaching and friendships with Kyrgyz children.

After completing her service Julie worked with American Councils which gave her the opportunity to complete some of her goals that were left unfulfilled.

Back in the states, Julie has been a teacher at a rural school in central Virginia until recently when she has taken on the role of mother to 15 month old twin girls. Julie is beginning to think that motherhood is truly “the toughest job you’ll ever love.”

Julie decided to run for NPCA liaison because she feels strongly that Kyrgyzstan needs support from people, like RPCVs, that truly know and understand the situation there. Julie’s goals as NPCA liaison include increasing awareness of FOKGZ among recently returned volunteers and increasing membership. Julie also looks forward to reconnecting with Peace Corps friends.

Special points of interest:

- ◆ **Meet the new board!**
- ◆ **FOKGZ awards grant to orphanage**
- ◆ **Help send school supplies to Kyrgyz schools**
- ◆ **Visit the new FOKGZ café press site**
- ◆ **Find two free ways to support FOKGZ!**

Summer Reading by Kyrgyz RPCVs:

[Love And War In Afghanistan](#) by RPCV Alex Klaitis

[What Kills What Kills Us](#) by RPCV Kurt Olsson

[Abandon: Love and Communism in Central Asia](#) by RPCV David Gallagher

[This is Not Civilization](#) by RPCV Robert Rosenberg

Other Central Asia Reads:

[So Many Enemies, So Little Time: An American Woman in All the Wrong Places](#) by Elinor Burkett

[Three Cups of Tea: One Man’s Mission to Fight Terrorism and Build Nations...One School at a Time](#) by Greg Mortenson et al.

[Great Game: The Struggle for Empire in Central Asia](#) by Peter Hopkirk

[The Lost Heart of Asia](#) by Colin Thubron

Buy them through **igive.com** at Barnes & Noble and 2% goes to FOKGZ!

Friends of Kyrgyzstan



Returning Treasurer Brandon Boyle

Brandon Boyle was a K-2 vol-

unteer in “the city of lights” Bishkek. Brandon taught English for special purposes such as business applications or government.

Brandon now works in Albany, New York in the field of community development financing. Brandon is married and has two rambunctious boys.

Brandon’s goals for continuing his position as Treasurer include making more grants to the needy in Kyrgyzstan and providing financial continuity.

Brandon is looking forward to moving to the Boston area sometime this summer.



Secretary and Newsletter Editor Linda Lee Blaine

Secretary Linda Lee was a K-7 volunteer on the south side of Lake Issyk-kul in the village of Saruu.

Linda Lee taught English to high-school -aged students in the village and also received grant funding to set up an English language resource room for her village.

After Peace Corps, Linda Lee got her MBA through the Peace Corps Fellows program at Western Illinois University and is now the director of Prairie Tech Learning

Center, a community technology center, in Monmouth, Illinois.

When not at work, Linda Lee can be found roaming Illinois with her new camera in hand or creating strange lumps in the Monmouth College ceramics studio.

Linda decided to run for the position of secretary and newsletter editor to stay involved and to help the board improve communication with the membership.



Doing some BBQ'ing this summer? Check out the FOKGZ apron on cafepress! (story page 4)



Returning Central States Representative Alice Perijan Lee

K-7 TEFL volunteer Alice Lee served her first year in Karl Marx (Kara Koo) on the south side of Lake Issykul and the second year in Balykchi.

Alice moved sites mid-service due to some strange incidents at her site involving a curse, sheep’s blood on doors and desks at the school, and a friend’s attack and subsequent hospitalization. (Needless to say, it is a long story!)

One of Alice’s biggest accomplishments in Kyrgyzstan was the establishment of an English language resource center in Balykchi.

Alice was also the GLOBE program coordinator her second year in Kyrgyzstan and attended a conference in Kiev. Alice also participated in a week –long environmental camp.

Alice now works as an ESOL instructor for Richland College (a recent winner of the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award) in Dallas, Texas.

Alice is a founding member of Friends of Kyrgyzstan and has held the position of Central States Representative since the inception of the board.

Alice plans to continue working on fundraising for the group as well as working with area groups to support Friends of Kyrgyzstan and the development of Kyrgyzstan.



Webmaster Kristoffer Rees

TEFL volunteer Kris served in Naryn City in the Naryn Oblast from 2002 to 2004 as a K-10 volunteer.

Kris is currently a graduate student in the Department of Central Eurasian Studies at Indiana

University. Kris is also a graduate assistant in the Inner Asian and Uralic National Resource Center and he maintains their website at: www.indiana.edu/~iaunrc.

Kris married Ainura Musuralieva, a neighbor and friend during his Peace Corps Service, in the summer of 2004. Kris remained in Kyrgyzstan after COS'ing working at the University of Central Asia in Bishkek.

As our new webmaster, Kris plans to work to keep the site’s content fresh and to develop the site into a portal for all people interested in PC Kyrgyzstan, FOKGZ and or Kyrgyzstan in general.



Friends of Kyrgyzstan

Thank You Emilia Rastrick, Jonathan Sidhu and Becca Ripley!

As our new board starts their tenure, we would like to thank the members of the board who are stepping down after giving their time and energy to the board of directors. Our past president, Emilia Rastrick has been a member of the board since FOKGZ inception and Emilia is planning

on using her new free time on local projects helping kids at her school and her new pastime, dragon boat paddling!

Retiring Web guru Jonathan Sidhu plans to continue helping out as needed on the website while he is busy baby proofing his

house as he anticipates his 8-month-old twin boys learning to crawl!

Newsletter editor Becca Ripley is devoting her time to working on her Masters degree in Washington DC.

Thank You!!!

FOKGZ Gives \$500 Grant to the Kind Family Children Home

The FOKGZ board recently voted to give a grant of \$500 to a Peace Corps Partnership Project submitted by Peace Corps Volunteer B. Parker from Colorado. The project has been fully funded and is now being implemented!

Below is the description of the project that was submitted.

Kind Family Children Home was created by two families in August, 2004 out of the need to help the homeless children they saw in their community. Currently, Kind Family Children Home houses 27 children and is only able to grow a small percentage of their own food for feeding their children and livestock and thus rely on both food and monetary donations to further cover these needs. They realize that dependence on outside sources is not sustainable and can be unreliable and thus they desire to be self-sufficient. The goal of this project is to increase productivity and self-sufficiency,

through the purchase of a tractor, trailer, plough and mower. Kind Family Children Home requests the assistance of the Partnership Program to assist them in purchasing the farming equipment which will allow them to farm the 6 hectares of fallow land they own, but can not currently cultivate due to lack of resources.

This project will directly affect the children of the orphanage the most, as they will have more and a greater variety of food to eat. In addition, Kind Family Children Home will rent the farm equipment to local community members as Semyonovka Village currently does not have any farming equipment at its disposal. This will provide income generation for Kind Family Children Home to maintain the farming equipment and purchase other necessary items for the children, while providing a much needed service in the community.

FOKGZ supported this program through the Peace Corps Partnership

Program. The Peace Corps Partnership Program (PCPP) connects small, community-initiated projects with partners in the United States for financial support.

These connections not only achieve goals in the host community, improving the quality of life for its members, but they foster international understanding between the communities and partners. Since its inception in 1964, the Partnership Program has assisted thousands of Peace Corps Volunteers, in every Peace Corps country, in order to benefit the health and well-being of their host communities.

To learn more about the Peace Corps Partnership Program visit them on the web at <http://www.peacecorps.gov/index.cfm?shell=resources.donors>

The Friends of Kyrgyzstan board would like to thank all the members who donated to FOKGZ to make this grant and our continued work possible! Thank You!

Pet Projects

Help the Delta Pi's in Dallas collect teaching supplies for village schools in Kyrgyzstan.

Central States Representative Alice Lee is working with the local Delta Pi (Dallas) branch of Delta Kappa Gamma to collect and send teaching supplies to village schools in Kyrgyzstan.

Several currently serving volun-

teers have helped collect lists of needed supplies and will distribute the supplies directly to the teachers in need. We are focusing mainly on math supplies, but will also be sending needed supplies to teachers in other areas (such as science, physical education, English,

etc.). If you would like to help, your donations will be used either to directly purchase supplies or to help pay for shipping costs. Please contact me at aliceinkyr-gyzstan@yahoo.com and I will give you an address to which you can send checks.

Have a Pet Project you are working on to support K-stan?

Submit it to Linda Lee to be included in the next edition at lindalee_b@yahoo.com

Friends of Kyrgyzstan

Fundraising!

Help us give more grants to projects in Kyrgyzstan!

Visit our Café Press Site!

When you purchase a Friends of Kyrgyzstan item at our cafePress store Friends of Kyrgyzstan receives 15% of the purchase price.

<http://www.cafepress.com/fokgzshop>



The site contains a mixture of clothing and home items from t-shirts to trivets! There is even a Friends of Kyrgyzstan

Barf Bag available! Friends of Kyrgyzstan items are great exposure for the group, make fantastic presents and help us make more grants to Kyrgyzstan!



Don't see an item you would

like? Request it and we will attempt to design it for you! (Please note we are not professional designers!) Send your suggestions to

lindalee_b@yahoo.com



Join NPCA!

Friends of Kyrgyzstan is an affiliate group of the National Peace Corps Association. Friends of Kyrgyzstan receives \$15 for every person who joins NPCA and chooses FOKGZ as their affiliate group.

In addition to helping FOKGZ survive, NPCA does a variety of things to help support the goals of Peace Corps. To find out more visit:

www.rpcv.org

Ways to give back that cost you NOTHING!

Shop On-line with www.igive.com and give back to Friends of Kyrgyzstan!

Select Friends of Kyrgyzstan as your charity at www.igive.com and a portion of each purchase goes to Friends of Kyrgyzstan without adding a dime to your total. Many of the biggest on-line retailers are members of igive.com including Barnes and Noble, Land's end, Babies R Us, Expedia.com and hundreds more!

The screenshot shows the iGive.com interface. At the top, there's a navigation bar with 'MY iGIVE', 'SHOPPING', 'SPECIALS', 'MY CAUSE', and 'iGIVE.COM'. Below that, a banner for 'Linda Lee' promotes a fundraiser for Friends of Kyrgyzstan. The main content area is divided into several sections: 'shopping search' with a search bar, 'a-z stores' listing various retailers, 'my stats' with links to shopping, bonuses, and tax deduction, 'my settings' for account management, and 'tell-a-friend'. There are also promotional banners for 'Extended sizes' from Lands' End, 'priceline.com', 'OfficeMax', and 'Coldwater Creek'.

The screenshot shows the GoodSearch website. The header includes the GoodSearch logo and the tagline 'YOU SEARCH WE GIVE'. Below the header, there's a search bar with 'Web', 'Images', and 'Video' options. A search result for 'Friends of Kyrgyzstan (Albany, NY)' is displayed, with buttons for 'Clean Results' and 'Sponsored Results'. The page also features a sidebar with 'COURTESY OF THE BEE' and 'NEWS' sections, and a 'NEWS DOING GOOD!' section with a profile picture of a woman.

Don't Google, Good Search!

The next time you are searching the internet for a good Manti recipe, use Good Search and you will earn one cent per search for Friends of Kyrgyzstan. You can even download a convenient search feature to your tool bar so you don't have to visit the site to search and raise money for Friends of Kyrgyzstan.

Members have already done more than 1,100 searches for Friends of Kyrgyzstan this year! If all of our members started using Good Search, those pennies would quickly add up to more grants to support projects in Kyrgyzstan!