

# CONTACT

gkcptp.org



Greater Kansas City Chapter of People to People International

February 2011, Volume 2, Issue 1

## Inside:

Topic	Page
Annual Meeting	1
President's Message	2
Americas Meeting	2
Board Slate	3
Colombian Pilot Connects	4
Calendar	4
Membership Report	5
Board Candidates	6
Military Committee Update	7
Icebreaker photos	8
Great Commanders	8

## MEMBER APPRECIATION/ ANNUAL MEETING

*GKCPTP invites you to a Membership Appreciation Dinner!*

Due to a generous donation, we are inviting members in good standing (dues paid for 2011) to a free brunch at the Grand Street Cafe on Sunday, March 13 at 1:30 p.m.

A limited number of seats are available, reservations will be processed in the order received. Adults only, please.

**Sunday, March 13, 2011 1:30 p.m.**

**Grand Street Cafe**

**4740 Grand Street**

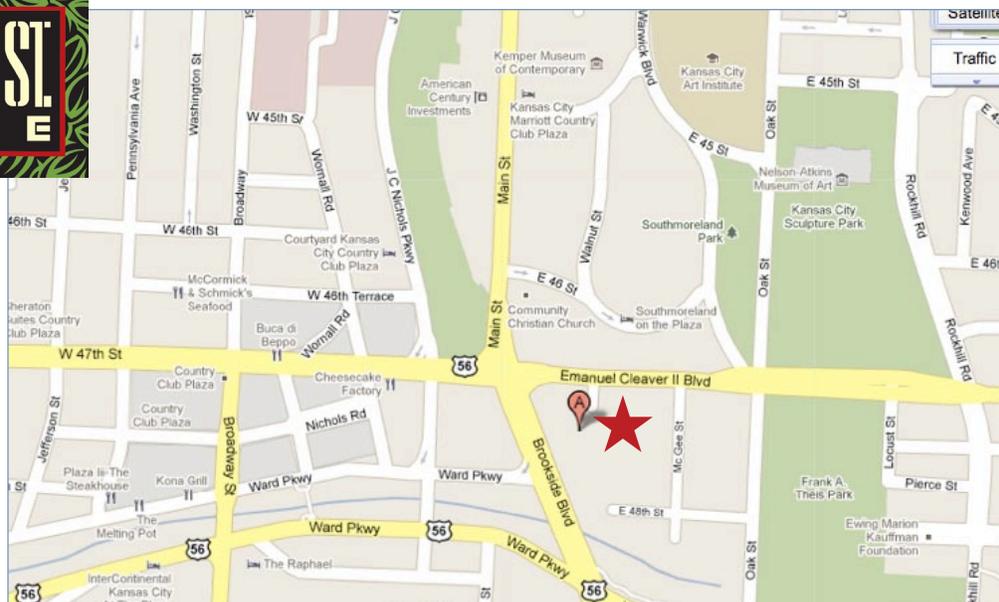
**Kansas City, MO 64112**

RSVP no later than *March 4, 2011* in one of the following ways:

1. At the GKCPTP website: [www.gkcptp.org/annual\\_meeting2](http://www.gkcptp.org/annual_meeting2)

-or-

2. Call Jane Kohl at 913.631.6454



# PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

*"Volunteering is the ultimate exercise in democracy. You vote in elections once a year, but when you volunteer, you vote every day about the kind of community you want to live in."*

~ unknown



Dear Friends,

This column is somewhat bittersweet as it is my last as your president. I will begin by saying that the future of GKCPTP is in great hands with Renee Stevenson on the ballot for the presidency. Renee is well qualified and brings great energy and creativity along with significant leadership experience.

You might note a new vice president position on the slate. Under the revised bylaws last year, we now allow for a third vice president to help with administrative duties. Paulette Markel has agreed to hold this position. With this addition, and stability of the remaining executive board, you can look forward to a great year ahead.

PTPI will be hosting the *Americas Regional Meeting* (ARM) here in Kansas City May 12-15. It will be a wonderful opportunity for our chapter to shine as we assist in planning this event. We are showcasing our Military Officer Sponsor program by including a *Know Your World* (KYW) presentation on Saturday, May 14 at the ARM luncheon. Chapter members who cannot attend the entire conference will be able to purchase a ticket for the Czech Republic KYW presentation/luncheon. If you're interested in helping with any of the events for that weekend, please let me know.

I would like to thank all of the board members for their service, but especially those that are stepping down as their terms are ending. Gabrielle Reilly, Jerry Keith and Jim Malouff have all contributed to the organization in major ways. The wisdom, talent and work ethic of the board has set a great example of leadership for our organization and I am so thankful for their generous gifts. They truly exemplify working for a better community through volunteer service.

My thanks goes to Joan Barrett, who coordinated the *Contact* newsletter for the past couple years. There are many people behind the scenes that are also deserving of appreciation, such as Bob Zurcher, flag chairperson, Gary Lofstrom, newsletter layout, and the many volunteers on the military and programs committees. Most importantly, thanks to my family for their love and support.

It has been my great pleasure to serve this organization. I know that this experience will serve me well as I take on a new responsibility as a PTPI Board of Trustees member.

Warm regards,

Pat

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# AMERICAS

REGIONAL MEETING

Americas Regional Meeting

May 12-15, 2011

Kansas City, Missouri

Hotel Phillips

106 W 12th Street

Kansas City, Missouri 64105

Reservations: 816.221.7000 or 800.433.1426

People to People International, the Greater Kansas City, Missouri Chapter and your regional officers are planning a spectacular event for the fourth annual Americas Regional Meeting. All trustees, chapter members and interested friends are welcome to participate in a program that encompasses:

- Community Service Work
- "Know your World" Luncheon
- Meet and greet with Mary Eisenhower, directors and staff
- Roundtable topic-driven discussions
- Optional sightseeing
- Tour of PTPI World Headquarters
- Networking, sharing and learning

In conjunction with this program, the Greater Kansas City chapter will be assisting with several of the events. If you would like to volunteer for an hour or two of your time to help with these events, please contact: prez@gkcptp.org.

## Pay Your 2011 Dues Now!

Annual membership fees for 2011 are past due! You may renew on-line or by mail if you haven't already done so. New members that joined July 1, 2010, or later are considered paid through 2011 as a courtesy.

Individual	\$30
Family	\$45

Pay online at [www.gkcptp.org](http://www.gkcptp.org), or mail a check to GKCPTP, P.O. Box 22365, Kansas City, MO 64113

Your membership in GKCPTP also includes membership to People to People International, our parent organization. A portion of member dues is forwarded to PTPI annually.

# 2011-2012 Proposed Slate of Officers and Board Members

## Greater Kansas City Chapter, People to People International

The Greater Kansas City Chapter of People to People International is successful because of the caring volunteer service of *many* members. The following individuals have agreed to serve on our board of directors for the next term(s). Please express your gratitude by voting on the ballot by March 6, 2011.

OFFICE	CANDIDATE	WRITE-IN CANDIDATE
President	Renee Stevenson	
1st Vice President-Membership	Karen Haber	
2nd Vice President-Programs	Jane Kohl Waggoner	
3rd Vice President-Administrative	Paulette Markel	
Treasurer	Seema Joshi	
Secretary	Kim Nitz	
<b>Term expiring 2012</b>		
Director	Dan Karp	
Director	John McCreadie	
Director	Siew Lau	
<b>Term expiring 2013</b>		
Director	Irina Kobzeva-Pavlovic	
Director	Inga Barringer	
Director	Toni Cracraft	
<b>Term expiring 2014</b>		
Director	Linda Peterson	
Director	Betty Olberding	
Director	Donna Koontz	
Immediate Past President	Pat Burnett	NA

3



Check this box to vote for entire slate, or enter write-ins for specific exceptions.

Your signature and date, please:

X \_\_\_\_\_

There are 3 ways to record your vote:

1. Go green and vote electronically: [www.gkcptp.org/ballot](http://www.gkcptp.org/ballot).
2. Mail this ballot by March 6, 2011 to GKCTP, P.O. Box 22365 Kansas City, MO 64113.
3. Bring this ballot to the annual meeting on March 13, 2011.

# COLOMBIAN HELICOPTER PILOT MEETS RESCUED POLITICAL HOSTAGE 2 YEARS AFTER THE FACT

On October 21, 2010, one of our own international military students had the unique opportunity to meet in person the fellow Colombian that he helped rescue in July of 2008. The personal meeting occurred at a special book signing held at Unity Temple on the Plaza in Kansas City, Missouri.

Here's the story. Former Colombian presidential candidate Ingrid Betancourt was captured on February 23, 2002, by the left-wing FARC (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia). Ms. Betancourt was kidnapped along with her aide, Clara Rojas, by a group of rebels who stopped their car while the women were campaigning in a region of southern Colombia controlled by the FARC. She spent the next six-and-a-half years in the depths of the jungle as a prisoner of the FARC.

In 2008, Colombian armed forces, using U.S. intelligence technology, cracked the rebels' communications system and tracked their movements by monitoring cellphone and satellite phone usage. On July 2, 2008, armed forces disguised as rebels rescued Ingrid Betancourt, three U.S. defense contractors and 11 other hostages, in a daring operation.

LTC Fabian Giraldo, a current international military student at the Command and General Staff College (CGSC) was part of the team that rescued Betancourt. In fact, he was commanding a fleet of 32 helicopters ready to react in case Plan A (a deception plan with two helicopters) failed. Giraldo and his unit had created a detailed Plan B, and were ready for the worst case situation. Thankfully, Plan B was unnecessary, as the first team successfully convinced the rebels they were rebel allies and freed the captives.

Due to the circumstances, Giraldo did not meet the captives in person. However, Betancourt was on a recent book tour in Kansas City and Giraldo's sponsors, Sharon Valasek and Gary Lofstrom, invited him to attend the event. "I noticed the event on the calendar of the International Relations Council (IRC), and thought that Fabian might know of her story. Little did I know that he was part of the heroic rescue team," says Valasek.



Sharon Valasek, LTC Fabian Giraldo and Ingrid Betancourt

Valasek tipped off Vivan Jennings, the owner of Rainy Day Books, and Jennings made special accommodations for Betancourt and Giraldo to meet just before the presentation and book signing.

"Ingrid Betancourt was visibly moved to meet one of her rescuers. It was very gratifying to help them connect," adds Valasek.

## CALENDAR

DATE	EVENT	LOCATION	TIME
2/14/2011	11-2 Opening Flag ceremony	Eisenhower Auditorium, Lewis and Clark, Ft. Leavenworth	9:00 a.m.
2/16/2011	KYW (Know your World) Botswana	Eisenhower Auditorium, Lewis and Clark, Ft. Leavenworth	3:30 p.m.
3/4/2011	11-1 Spring Food Fair, invitation only; must RSVP—please bring 2 dishes	Riverfront Community Center, 123 S. Esplanade, Leavenworth, KS 66048	6:00 p.m.
3/9/2011	KYW Suriname	Eisenhower Auditorium, Lewis and Clark, Ft. Leavenworth	3:30 p.m.
3/13/2011	Membership Appreciation/Annual Dinner-RSVP required	Grand Street Café, 4740 Grand Ave., Kansas City, MO 64112	1:30 p.m.
4/8/2011	11-2 Spring Food Fair, invitation only; must RSVP—please bring 2 dishes	Riverfront Community Center, 123 S. Esplanade, Leavenworth, KS 66048	6:00 p.m.
5/12-15	PTPI Americas Regional Meeting registration deadline April 15th	Hotel Phillips, 106 W 12th Street, Kansas City, MO 64105, RSVP: 816-221-7000	

Note: 11-1 class graduates June, 2011; 11-2 class graduates December, 2011.

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# Membership Report

Thank you to those members that have renewed by paying 2011 dues. We appreciate your continued support and participation in GKCPTP!

We have had many new members in the last several months, and we ended 2010 with a total of 180 member units. (A membership unit is an individual, couple, or family who join as one membership.)

We encourage all members to get involved with chapter activities, such as the Deanna Rose event and committees.

We also encourage you to recruit new members. Inviting guests to an activity is a great way to introduce them to GKCPTP.

Please contact Karen Haber at [karen@kchaber.com](mailto:karen@kchaber.com) or 816-741-9518 with any membership questions or concerns.

<b>Welcome New Members</b>	<b>Recruited by...</b>
Jimmy and Florence Adegoke	IMSD
Carol and Peter Bachhuber	PTPI
Paula Beth Bain	PTPI
Cindy Baugh	PTPI
Megan Beck	PTPI
Emily Bibens	Sharon Valasek
Jan and Iveta Blahut	Sharon Valasek/Terry Smitka
Ashley Bloom	Karen Haber
James and Hortense Burr	PTPI
Kelli Canfield	PTPI
Chip and Pat Cody	Don and Barbara Gerhard
Beverly Cook	PTPI
Vijay and Tetyana Dawar	Pat and Dahlia Saldana
Steve and Cathy DiGiacinto	PTPI
Jan Dowell	Janet Clifford
Michael and Molly Droge	Pat and Dak Burnett
Kelly Jackson and Robert Tanenbaum	Sharon Valasek
Alan and Jeannette Jennerich	Irina Kobzeva-Pavlovic
Don and Mary Lewis	Larry and Barbara Dolci
John and Evelyn McBride	Mark and Mary Florence
Thomas and Joan McKee	IMSD
Shane Nelson and family	Nelson Markel
Michael and Susan Newburger	Chuck and Karen Haber
Rudy and Patt Papenfuhs	Paulette Markel
Kevin and Jeanette Prenger	Seema and Rahul Joshi
Craig and Heather Roeder	Sharon Valasek
Stan and Linda Shipman	Gwenn Puetz/Bill and Linda Fronk
Lebert Shultz	PTPI
Ross and Mary Shuman	Dak and Pat Burnett
Cyprienne Simchowicz and Jerry White	Gabrielle Reilly
Gary and Judie Stang	Sonia Eichenwald
John and Rose Thorsky	Kim and Joel Nitz
Pat and Cheryl Toby	Dak and Pat Burnett
Don and Marcia Whetsel	Seema Joshi
Ying Zurbuchen and family	Paulette Markel

# BOARD CANDIDATES

## Betty Olberding

Betty and Duane Olberding have been members of Greater Kansas City People to People for just two years, but their experience in the sponsor program for international officers goes back well beyond that 24-month span. During their 25 years as Leavenworth sponsors, Betty served as treasurer and president of the International Spouses Organization and co-chaired Leavenworth-Lansing Operation International in 2007-2008.



No stranger to organizational involvement away from Fort Leavenworth, Betty has served several positions with the Rainbow Chapter of the American Business Women's Association. She was named the group's member of the year in 1991.

A graduate of University of St. Mary with degrees in accounting and business administration, Betty's professional experience has been as an accountant in the accounting and banking industries. Now retired, she is self-employed in income tax preparation and finds more time to pursue personal interests.

Betty and Duane are parents of four grown children and dote on three grandchildren.

## Linda Peterson

Born in Seoul, Korea, the biological daughter of an American father and Korean mother, Linda Peterson was adopted by an American military family at the age of four. Having moved nearly a dozen times by the time she was 18 and nearly 30 times to date, she brings real awareness to the international concept of Greater Kansas City People to People.



After graduating No.1 in her high school class in Flagstaff, Arizona, she paused in her academic activities to marry and have two sons. She moved to Wichita to be nearer family when she divorced and completed her college education. Three years after moving to Kansas City, she married Bob Peterson and combined a new family with a total of five offspring. Bob owns NBB Company, a business brokerage company that has helped people buy and sell businesses for over 25 years.

Linda and Bob purchased a mechanical contracting company in 2002 and sold it in 2006 at which time she started a small business consulting company which she still runs.

Contact Newsletter GKCPTP

Linda's other organizational involvements have included Girl Scouts of America, reading tutor, literacy volunteer and Asian American Chamber of Commerce.

## Donna Koontz

Donna Koontz has enjoyed great success in the area of facilities management. After many years of owning her own cleaning company, she accepted a position with Midwest Research Center. Her involvement there brought her into contact with international notables such as First Lady Barbara Bush and Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher.



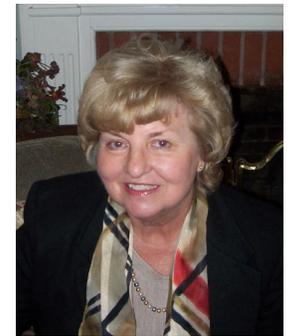
For the past six years, Donna has served as Facilities Management Director for Clay County. During that time, she agreed to be part of Facilities Industries Ambassadors to China, where she participated in an exchange program with Chinese business people.

Donna has served as president of the International Facilities Management Association, and continues involvement with that organization today.

A three-year member of Greater Kansas City People to People, Donna and her husband, Mark, currently are sponsoring their first international military student.

## Toni Cracraft

Toni Cracraft and husband, Ray, are Northland residents and long-time sponsors of GKCPTP programs. They have been Kansas City sponsors for eight officers and their families.



Toni's career in the travel industry has enabled them to make friends around the world. They were delighted this past summer to visit with LTC Timothy Zahn (2008-2009) while they were visiting in France.

They have also enjoyed hosting guests from the International Visitors Council.

Toni has served in many community organizations, including Soroptimist International, a group that works worldwide to promote education, health services etc. for underprivileged women and girls. She served many years in Branson Veterans Task Force, an organization that works to honor veterans. She also served on the board of Branson Arts Council.

Toni states, "It would be my honor to become a working board member for GKCPTP."

*continued on p. 6*

# MILITARY COMMITTEE UPDATE

If you've just been assigned an international military student (IMS), thank you for agreeing to host an officer. Your commitment and generosity are greatly appreciated. The 11-02 class has arrived and ice breaker sessions have been held. By now, you should be acquainted with your IMS and the other two sets of sponsors. Please contact Sharon Valasek at [svalasek@kc.rr.com](mailto:svalasek@kc.rr.com) or 816-213-5847 right away if you haven't yet met your student and family.

Need some ideas for something you and your IMS/family can enjoy together? Consider an ethnic event/festival. There are many held annually in the Kansas City area including the following upcoming events:

- Northland Ethnic Festival at Park Hill South High School on Saturday, April 16 from 11:00-3:30.
- 27th Annual Snake Saturday Parade and Festival on Saturday, March 12. The parade starts at 11:00 a.m. at the corner of 14th & Swift in North Kansas City. This year's theme is "The Irish Rock."
- Ethnic Enrichment Festival held August 19-21 in Swope Park. There are more than 60 countries represented. Come and try ethnic foods and enjoy multi-cultural entertainment in this outdoor park setting.

More information about upcoming events is available at [www.kansascityglobal.com](http://www.kansascityglobal.com).

*continued from p. 6*

## John McCreadie

I was born and educated in England, and received a Bachelor of Science degree there. I worked in electronic research and industrial respirator development, becoming Chief Scientist. Hilda and I married in 1972, and in 1974 we moved to the United States, where I continued working with respirators, becoming a Product Manager and Expert Witness. I became self-employed 1985, and formed my own expert witness and consulting company.

Hilda and I have been in People-To-People for 25 years, and in the International Officer sponsoring program for 20 years. I am a past president of the local chapter, and served on the board of directors and several committees. I have traveled extensively in this country and abroad, and have attended several of the People-to-People International conferences.

I look forward to joining the board of directors and continuing the excellent progress of improvement that the chapter has achieved during the past years.

The military committee is a resource available to you. Whether you have a quick question or need advice on handling a more delicate situation, please contact Sharon or any of the members of the military committee. We'll do our best to help.

- Sharon Valasek [svalasek@kc.rr.com](mailto:svalasek@kc.rr.com)
- Sonia Eichenwald [seichenwald@aol.com](mailto:seichenwald@aol.com)
- Pam Felton [pjf@feltonassoc.com](mailto:pjf@feltonassoc.com)
- Nelson Markel [imua@kc.rr.com](mailto:imua@kc.rr.com)
- Terry Smitka [TSmitka@rwbaird.com](mailto:TSmitka@rwbaird.com)
- Tom Waggoner [jkid96@msn.com](mailto:jkid96@msn.com)

It's not too early to think about who you'd enjoy sharing the sponsor experience with. Please consider extending an invitation to friends or family members to join you in this endeavor. The next class of IMS (12-01) will arrive in June 2011. Our committee begins the assignment process in March.

Save February 14 on your calendar for the flag ceremony. Come and see your IMS and observe the IMS and his/her fellow students "post" their country flag, a symbol of the official kickoff of the CGSC course.



Have you and your family and friends joined Facebook? It's become a great way for People to People members to post and share news and photos with our fellow members in Kansas City as well as around the world.

Our chapter and PTPI have Facebook profiles. Visit and become a fan of one or both. Just look for these on Facebook and "like" them in order to be a follower and get updates.

- Greater Kansas City People to People
- People to People International

## Icebreaker Photos: January 2011

(Send us your stories and photos for the next newsletter)



## Great Commander Series

At the Kansas City, MO library

*THE*  
**Great Commanders  
Series 2011**

**JOHN J. PERSHING**  
Presented by Dr. Shawn Faulkner  
Thursday, November 11, 2010

**ALEXANDER THE GREAT**  
Presented by Edward Bowie  
Thursday, January 13, 2011

**GENGHIS KHAN**  
Presented by Dr. Terry Beckenbaugh  
Thursday, February 10, 2011

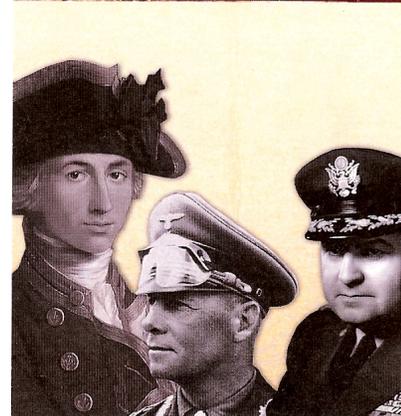
**HORATIO NELSON**  
Presented by Dr. John Kuehn  
Thursday, March 10, 2011

**NAPOLEON**  
Presented by Dr. Mark Gerges  
Thursday, April 14, 2011

**CURTIS LEMAY**  
Presented by Dr. John Curatola  
Thursday, May 12, 2011

**ERWIN ROMMEL**  
Presented by Dr. Mark Hull  
Thursday, June 9, 2011

kclibrary.org | 816.701.3407



### Next Up

## John Kuehn: Horatio Nelson

Thursday, March 10, 2011

6:30pm @ Central Library

RSVP now at [www.kclibrary.org](http://www.kclibrary.org)

John Kuehn of the Military History Department at the Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth discusses Admiral Horatio Nelson, the British naval commander best known for his role in the Napoleonic wars.

Nelson was killed in the Battle of Trafalgar, during which he commanded a force that destroyed the French and Spanish fleets. The victory solidified the supremacy of British sea power. The event is the fourth in the Great Commanders series.