

President's Letter

Dear Friends,

I want to thank you for the opportunity to serve as president of the Greater Kansas City Chapter of People to People during the upcoming year. As many of you know I served as chapter president during 2007-2008, but had to resign before completing my term due to the illness of a member of our immediate family. I am excited to return and work with the board and chapter again.



I must thank Karen Haber for the great work she did as chapter president and for everything she continues to do to help me with my transition to president. She has been invaluable in ensuring the chapter continues to run smoothly.

Our new board of directors will be holding a retreat in the near future to determine priorities for the upcoming year. I would like the input of chapter members in determining what programs and priorities should be addressed during the upcoming year. I am particularly interested in programs that will appeal to those chapter members who do not participate in the International Military Student (IMS) program. Please send me an email with your thoughts on the direction of the chapter at prez@gkcptp.org.

If you are a chapter member participating in the IMS sponsorship program you will be receiving information on the new class of students set to arrive the third week of June. The Badge Ceremony for the departing class and sponsor recognition programs will also be coming up. Thanks to all of you who participate in this program that has done so much for the reputation of the United States. Watch this news bulletin for all upcoming events.

I look forward to meeting old and new members of the chapter and to continue the work of my predecessors in leading such a great organization.

Warm regards,
Larry Dolci

A Spring Trip to Israel

by chapter member Maggi Choplin

In March (2013) we traveled to Israel and Jordan with other Catholics from the Kansas City area to visit religious and historical sites for twelve days. Our tour started in Tel Aviv where we walked off our jet lag on the beaches of the Mediterranean. We spent the first part of the trip visiting Caesarea, Nazareth, Cana and Tiberias. A highlight was having mass at the Mount of Beatitudes with a stunning view of the Sea of Galilee. We renewed our baptismal promise at the Jordan River watching some groups celebrating a full immersion baptism.

Jerusalem was gleaming with all of the structures in white stone; there was so much to see with great historical and religious significance. One of the highlights was walking in the walled city and hearing the church bells then learning that a new pope had been elected. We ended the Israel part of our tour by visiting Masada and floated in The Dead Sea. Part of our group traveled on to Jordan where we visited Petra, one of the new Wonders of the World. Our tour guide in Jordan, Iyad, spent quite a bit of time helping us understand the culture of Jordan as well as some Arabic words. Iyad referred to our group as habibis, which he told us meant loved or special ones, whenever he would try to round us up he would call his habibis to him.

We took a tour in the back of a pickup to the immense desert of the Wadi Rum and had the opportunity to

take a camel ride in the desert and visit a Bedouin tent. This was the desert where the movie Lawrence of Arabia was filmed. We ended our Jordan trip in Amman and learned that water is only delivered one day per week to households and businesses in that city. The question we were frequently asked upon our return was security. We felt extremely safe at all times and never encountered any issues that made us feel uneasy. We highly recommend a visit.



Old Jerusalem with the Dome of the Rock mosque featured in the middle



Paul and Maggi at Crusader Castle in the Jordan desert

Adventures In Mumbai

by Kim Nitz

Last fall, when I discovered the opportunity to apply for an India study abroad program as part of my Masters in Social Work (MSW) at KU, my husband Joel knew how excited I was and encouraged me to do it. I have always wanted to visit this country of more than 1 billion people, and knew this was a great way to travel, with the added bonus of built-in academic lectures and site visits focused on societal issues. A few months later, I found myself headed to Mumbai, India, population 20 million, with nine other younger women and our professor who is a native of India.

The journey is always a great part of the fun, and we had lots of quality time to get to know each other, arriving in Mumbai approximately 24 hours after departing Kansas City. We took up residence on a campus of the Tata Institute of Social Sciences, where we were surrounded by local students and faculty and really got to experience the nuances of Indian food, culture and academic life. And, yes, monkeys were scampering around campus.

Over the course of a packed two weeks, we set foot in the Arabian Sea, visited the Gateway to India, toured the Taj Hotel, site of the 2008 bombings, visited a Krishna temple, thoroughly enjoyed the Gandhi museum, and explored many street markets. We experienced a more Westernized perspective while attending a very edgy play in an upscale theater district. Each day was an adventure, whether in transit with traffic as dramatic as you might imagine, or visiting the home of a former Bollywood movie star who is married to a friend of our professor, or making a site visit to an agency where disabled young people are able to get surgeries they need, and learn skills towards independent living. I appreciated the lectures on social issues such as domestic violence, poverty, hunger, and care for the aging, alongside learning about governmental practices and priorities, in a country that became independent from Britain rule only in 1947.

A highlight of our itinerary was a personal tour of the Shavaji Nagar slum, where 600,000 live in a community surrounding a garbage dump, where many of the residents work. It was the experience of a lifetime, especially with the children who viewed 10 American women walking through their narrow streets as a reason for a parade! A group of perhaps 50 young boys and girls assembled and followed us for hours, delighted to show us their newly constructed school and to test their English words. As we heard them and

responded, the kids would high-five their mastery of the language, and we would high-five how engaging and happy they were to meet American friends.

There were low points too, particularly when encountering the child beggars, including those who were likely not working for a bit of food, but for a boss who would collect their proceeds from the evening. It is a difficult thing to see the pain in their faces and not be able to truly help, especially as a mom.

I was initially nervous about having Indian food for 3 meals a day for 2 weeks, but truly enjoyed it so much that I never even gave in to the McDonald's visits of some of my colleagues, where they enjoyed McAlloo Tikki., the local veg option. I grew especially fond of the green breakfast chutney containing coriander and mint, eaten with lentil doughnuts or steamed rice cakes called idli.

The experience was fulfilling on so many levels. I am grateful for having visited India, and as I arrived back in Kansas City, I tried to picture the reaction of a Mumbaiker coming here for the first time into suburban neighborhoods with wide streets and no real traffic. It would have to be quite a culture shock!

Highlights and casual observations on India:

- It is staggering to me that India has holds 17% of the earth's population and only 2.8% of land mass. We also learned that more than 8% of the Indian population still lives in tribes, mostly in the Northeastern states.
- The chaos of crossing a busy city street has never seemed like a challenge in large cities I've visited. In Mumbai, that all changed, but I readily found my more assertive side and felt great accomplishment in getting us all across the streets safely!
- The traditional women's clothing is stunning, which made us Americans feel under-dressed in the classroom and on campus. The vibrant colors and styles truly create a beautiful scene in a bustling city.
- I got to experience feeling like a true "foreigner," with blonde hair – the first time in my travels that someone has stopped and asked me to pose for a photo with their family and baby!
- The warmth and genuine sense of community among the people we met was a powerful part of this cultural adventure, and reminds me of People to People's focus of "peace through understanding."

Sponsors Connect with Vietnamese Student Officer

Information provided by member David Tyrrell

GKCPTP sponsor, David Tyrrell, clearly remembers a few months ago when he was reviewing the list of possible countries sending military students to the Command and General Staff College (CGSC) at Fort Leavenworth. As a People to People Kansas City sponsor, he looks forward to meeting new international officers and their families.

He was almost in disbelief when he read the words, "Vietnam." His emotions ran high. This region of the globe includes the geographic once known as South Vietnam, and of course, the location of the Vietnam War – the longest war in United States history up until the conflict in Afghanistan.

As a Vietnam War Veteran, David thought this was an incredible opportunity. Through People to People he could personally be part of a sponsor team supporting an officer from a geographic area with a checkered past with the United States. David got his wish. David and his wife, Leticia, were assigned to sponsor Maj. Coung Nguyen, and his family.

David said, "This year we have the extraordinary opportunity to share our values with Maj. Nguyen and his family. We hope that this exchange will impact his viewpoints, which in turn will impact his interactions with all he meets throughout his military career and life, especially in his home country."

It turns out other sponsors with ties to the Vietnam War era also sought a relationship with Maj. Coung Nguyen. His other sponsors include:

- [Maj. Lan Dalat](#) – military sponsor and former refugee from Vietnam (he was age 13 when he and his family escaped by boat in 1981).
- [Roger Donlon, US Army Ret.](#) – Leavenworth-Lansing sponsor and winner of the first Medal of Honor in Viet Nam



At this past January's Icebreaker event, Maj. Coung Nguyen of Vietnam (center with white shirt) got to better know his sponsors for his year at the Command and General Staff College (CGSC) in Fort Leavenworth.

International Military Student Sponsorship

Provided by Sharon Valasek

Class 14-01 Sponsorship Status

A big thanks to new and ongoing sponsors for “signing up” to host an International Military Student (IMS). The 14-01 class of IMS arrives mid-June 2013. Your commitment and generosity are greatly appreciated. One of our military committee members will be calling you in about two weeks to provide your sponsor assignments. With just two weeks to go, we are in need of 10 additional sponsors. Please consider sharing the sponsor experience with a neighbor, friend or colleague who you believe might enjoy the program and do a good job.

Recruit Just One

If every GKCPTP member recruits just one new member, our membership could double in a year. We all have a friend or family we know who would really enjoy membership in GKCPTP whether it is sponsoring an International Military Student (IMS) or enjoying contact with other cultures through our other programs. Now is the time to contact one or more individuals. You can share information about the sponsor program briefly and then the military committee can provide additional details. Bring prospective members to chapter programs such as cultural events, sponsor briefings, visits with IMS, etc. Encourage prospective new members visit our website. Most of all, your enthusiasm about the program based on your own experience is the best recruiting tool. That one-on-one conversation is how many current sponsors learned about this rewarding program.

Sponsor Briefing May 29 at Californos Restaurant

Please plan to attend the Sponsor Briefing session on Wednesday, May 29. At this briefing, there will be important information about sponsoring presented by the International Military Student Division (IMSD) from Fort Leavenworth and the GKCPTP military committee. The Fort will provide a background on the IMS program at the Command and General Staff College (CGSC), funding, guidelines, and tips for enhancing the sponsorship experience. The military committee will provide sponsor packets (sponsor assignments from other organizations, sponsor guide, culture guide, culture gram, etc.) at the briefing.

Wednesday, May 29, 2013

6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

Californos Restaurant

4124 Pennsylvania Ave.

Kansas City, MO 64111

(816) 531-7878

Appetizers and coffee/tea/soda provided

Please contact Sharon Valasek at 816-213-5847 or svalasek@kc.rr.com or Sonia Eichenwald at 913 851-0873 seichenwald@aol.com with any questions. You may also provide our contact information to prospective sponsors. Thank you for your support of the sponsor program.

Homestay Host Program

by Vicki Brawner

Homestay Hosts Needed for August Visitors

People to People offers us several opportunities to be "citizen diplomats," both familiarizing ourselves with other cultures as well as sharing our own with those of other nations. The Homestay Host program offers such an opportunity with a short time frame commitment of usually a few days per homestay. A Homestay Host opens his/her home to one or more visitors, usually PTP members from other countries who have requested staying in an American home for a few days while in the Kansas City area. It is the host's responsibility to provide lodging, some meals and perhaps some transportation either to events that the visitor is attending or general sightseeing. Arrangements can be worked out directly between host and guest. Often transportation can be relegated to other GKCPTP members able to help.

Homestays are an ideal way to leave visitors feeling some of our Heartland hospitality and establishing reciprocal contacts for any travels on our own agenda. It is a win-win for all involved. If you would enjoy this experience please contact Vicki Brawner (info following), Homestay coordinator, for placement on the list of willing homestay hosts. When an opportunity arises, you will be contacted to see if you can accommodate visitors for dates in question. Broaden your circle of friends around the world.

We may need host families for a few students from China during the first part of August. So if you are interested in this unique and rewarding experience, please contact:

Vicki Brawner

Email: Vicki05@att.net

Phone: 913-669-0442

Membership

by Betty Olberding

New Members Are:

Marlin and Linda Cone
Larry and Vicki Hedlund

Recruited By:

Dan & Rosemary Karp
Larry and Barbara Dolci

Welcome to our organization! It's truly wonderful to have these new members join through referrals from current members. We need for all of our members to continue inviting your friends into our organization. We currently have 142 members and would like to increase to 172 members by year-end. For additional information please contact me at: betty_olberding@yahoo.com, or telephone: 913-772-8684.

Meet our New Board Members

Larry Karl Hedlund

Larry attended high school in St. Joseph, Missouri. He graduated from the University of Kansas in 1968 with a BA and is an alumni member of Theta Tau Professional Engineering fraternity.

Larry has been the principal owner of Hedlund and Associates since 1973. His company specializes in industrial marketing communications. The firm's customers all compete nationally and internationally and focus on a wide range of markets: food manufacturing, conveying, petrochemical, machine tool, welding, equipment fabrication and work truck accessories. The company also aids a number of foreign manufacturers with their U.S. marketing. These firms are based in Germany, Great Britain, Canada, Japan and India.

In his off hours, Larry enjoys spending time with the families of his two daughters and his wife Vicki. Vicki and Larry are active members of Christ's Church Anglican. He is also a dedicated volleyball player and participates in a number of regional and national seniors' games. His other passion is woodworking, designing and building furniture in his workshop.

Paul Choplin

Paul Choplin has worked as a Senior Analyst at Quintiles, a pharmaceutical research company, for the past fourteen years. Paul and his wife, Maggi, have been a member of KC People to People for the last six years. They have sponsored international officers at Ft. Leavenworth from Bosnia, Moldova, Estonia, South Africa, Thailand and Brazil. They also are sponsoring a student through GKCPTP attending UMKC from Malaysia. Paul and Maggi participated in a GKCPTP trip to visit Bogota, Colombia PTP chapter in September 2012, and the group also visited officers that had previously attended the General Command and Staff College at Ft. Leavenworth. Paul graduated from William Jewell College with a B.A. degree in Psychology and the University of Missouri with an M.Ed in Counseling.

Julie Vosilus

Julie Vosilus is no stranger to People to People and its overall mission. Growing up in an Army family, she learned to have her bags packed, because there were places to go and people to meet. Home was a traveling address located in Georgia, Washington, Michigan, Kansas and Germany. Many years ago, Julie served as a student ambassador traveling with People to People to England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales. After graduating from Baker University, she found herself working with the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) serving as an investigator covering a variety of products including animal drugs, devices, food and

medicated feeds.

The US Army Reserves provided a life supplement for eight years with deployments to Iraq and the Horn of Africa. Julie worked with the Provincial Reconstruction Team in Kirkuk, Iraq working on education and health issues. In Ethiopia, she worked as a member of a civil affairs team helping to strengthen animal husbandry practices and healthcare. Julie continues to work for the FDA serving as a state liaison and is fluent in the language of soccer or football depending on where you're located.

Erik Haberkorn

Erik was born in Kansas City and grew up in Osborne, and Emporia, KS. His grandfather, USAR, served in WWII with 10th Mountain Division. He gave Erik a great respect for our nation, the military and encouraged Erik through his Eagle Boy Scout award. His first international experience was with two AFS students, Niklas from Germany and Yuan, one of the first students allowed from Mainland China. Erik followed that up with his own eight-week exploration of Europe. While attending college, Erik was the defensive captain of his football team, and after graduation, he coordinated continuing education seminars for the Kansas City Metropolitan Bar Association. Currently, Erik works for ReTouch, full service design-build contractor.

Chapter Calendar

DATE	EVENT	LOCATION	TIME
5/13/13	Parade of Nations	Eisenhower Auditorium, Lewis and Clark, Fort Leavenworth	TBD
5/15/13	Know Your World: Bahrain	Eisenhower Auditorium, Lewis and Clark, Fort Leavenworth	3:30 p.m.
5/17/13	13-01 Sponsor Appreciation Ceremony	Eisenhower Auditorium, Lewis and Clark, Fort Leavenworth	7:00 p.m.
5/29/13	14-01 Sponsor Briefing	Californos, 4124 Pennsylvania, Kansas City MO 64111	6:00 p.m.
6/13/13	13-01 Badge Ceremony	Eisenhower Auditorium, Lewis and Clark, Fort Leavenworth	TBD
6/14/13	13-01 Graduation	Main Parade Field, Fort Leavenworth	TBD
6/19, 6/20, 6/21	14-01 Arrivals	TBD	TBD
6/21/13	Summertime Music Event	Holyfield Winery	TBD
7/9, 7/10, 7/11	14-01 Icebreakers, By invitation only	Frontier Conference Center, Fort Leavenworth	6:00 p.m.
7/17/13	Know Your World: Moldova	Eisenhower Auditorium, Lewis and Clark, Fort Leavenworth	3:30 p.m.
8/8/13	Frida Kahlo, Diego Rivera and Masterpieces of Modern Mexico, docent led tour.	Nelson-Atkins Museum	TBD
8/21/13	Know Your World: Philippines	Eisenhower Auditorium, Lewis and Clark, Fort Leavenworth	3:30 p.m.

Note: 13-01 class graduates June, 2013; 13-02 class graduates December, 2013; 14-01 class graduates June, 2014.