



September, 2022

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**Along the Caspian coastal road near Babolsar, 1968
Photo by Ed Seiders (Noshahr, Chalus, 1967-69)**

From The Field - PCIA Board Newsletter

September, 2022

“Out beyond ideas of wrongdoing and rightdoing, there is a field. I will meet you there.”

Jalal ad-Din Rumi

Ja-ye Jackie (Jackie's Place)

By Jackie Spurlock (Abadeh, Riz/Zarrinshahr, 1974-76)

Finding Our Own Corner

These are troubling times. Of course, we are all old enough to have experienced troubling times in the past, and in fact, most any period can be troubling. That's the nature of life here on our small planet. But these particular times right now are especially troubling for those who care about Iran and its people.

If you're like me, you may feel overwhelmed and at a loss as to how one person could make a difference. But as I go about settling into my new home, a retirement community in Portland, OR, I see that there are things I can do to

participate in the life of this small corner of Portland, to make it more liveable, to facilitate relationships, to help things run smoothly here.

I just ran across this quote by the designer and architect Charles Eames: "Choose your corner, pick away at it carefully, intensely, and to the best of your ability, and that way you might change the world".

As I see it, if we're each picking away at our own corner, all that effort will add up to some pretty significant change. But only if we each do our own part.

In peace and camaraderie,
Jackie

Dooreh-ye Ketaab, PCIA's Book Discussion Group

By Jackie Spurlock (Abadeh, Riz/Zarrinshahr, 1974-76) and Jim Goode (Tuysarkan, 1968-71)

Here are the remaining titles to be read and discussed in 2022's *Dooreh* (book group).

- This week! September 14 - Bakhash, Shaul. *The Fall of Reza Shah: The Abdication, Exile, and Death of Modern Iran's Founder*. I.B. Tauris, 2021. Paperback edition, May 2022.
- November 9 - Gaughan, Joan (Lahijan, Rasht, 1964-66) *The Shuster Mission to Iran: Leaving Something Worthwhile Behind*. Real Nice Books, 2021.

Doorehs are held in odd-numbered months, on the **second Wednesday**, at 5:00pm Pacific (8:00pm Eastern).

A Zoom link will be emailed to you close to the meeting date. If you have never

attended a Dooreh, please email Doug Schermer (Semnan, Shahrud, 1966-67) doug@peacecorpsiran.org to ask for that Zoom link. If you have attended previously, we have you in the list, you're good.

Looking forward to seeing you at a Dooreh!

[Jackie Spurlock](#) (Abadeh, Riz, 1974-76) and [Jim Goode](#) (Tuysarkan, 1968-71)

Iran Issues Discussion Group

Monday, September 26, 5:00pm Pacific (8:00pm Eastern) Moderated by John

Salamack (Bojnurd, 1965-67). This is a monthly friendly virtual discussion of current events having to do with Iran. All are welcome. Meetings are held on Zoom, on the fourth Monday of every month. If you have never attended the PCIA Iran Issues Discussion Group and would like to receive the Zoom link, [let us know](#). Questions? Email [John Salamack](#).

Advocacy. Paul Barker (Bidokht, Shiraz, Tehran, 1971-76)

- PCIA sent an **Action Alert** on 8/9 to encourage and support our members in writing letters to the editor to advocate for a return to the Nuclear Agreement (JCPOA). If you have written to your editor on this topic, we at PCIA would like to know. Please keep us posted by [responding here](#).
- On August 12, three PCIA members - Skip Auld (Mahallat, 1973-74), Peter Deekle (Borujerd, Natanz, Zahedan, 1968-70) and Pat Wand (Colombia 1963-65) **met with Maryland Senator Chris Van Hollen's staff** to advocate for the Peace Corps Reauthorization Act and for a return to the

Iran Nuclear Agreement. Skip reported, "We came away from the visit feeling that the Senator is very supportive of diplomatic resolution of issues with Iran, and of return to the JCPOA". PCIA encourages you to set up a meeting with your own Congressional leader(s). And keep us posted!

- In late August, PCIA joined 14 other organizations in signing [this letter to President Biden](#), commending him for continuing to seek to restore the JCPOA and for favoring diplomacy in resolution of the nuclear issue with Iran.

Board News

- **Conference.**

Mark your calendar for the 2023 PCIA conference - May 25 to 28 (Memorial Day weekend) at the David Rubenstein Forum at the University of Chicago. More info coming soon. Questions? Email Jeanette - jeanette@peacecorpsiran.org or Doug - doug@peacecorpsiran.org

- **Future of PCIA Task Force Update**

The final report from the Task Force on the Future of Peace Corps Iran Association is due in October and appears to be on track. That does not mean that PCIA is going to disappear any time soon. We have years to go and promises to keep. But common sense calls for us to plan for when PCIA is no longer viable and to begin strategizing to keep our legacy going forward. Questions and input on this project may be directed to Task Force co-chairs [Bill Brandon](#) (Shiraz, 1964-66) and/or [Chuck Kaminski](#) (Kermanshah, 1969-71).

- **Have You Changed Your Contact Information Since 2019?**

Do you have a new snail mail address? A new email address? A new phone number? We need to hear from you.

[Genna Wangsness](#) (Shiraz, Tehran, 1965-71) and [Doug Schermer](#) (Semnan, Shahrud, 1966-67) are working to update PCIA's records now that Covid is (hopefully) in the rear mirror. Thus far we have found several members with new contact information. We believe there are more.

It appears some members have moved into an apartment or retirement community. If that applies to you, we encourage you to talk with the activities director about sharing some of your photos, artifacts, and stories about Iran with your new friends. You can contact Jackie Spurlock for some ideas at jackie@peacecorpsiran.org.

We have learned about others who have passed on. Genna oversees the memorial book and lists those who have died in the obituary column of the *KhabarNameh*. If you know of a member who has died recently, please contact genna@peacecorpsiran.org. We have posted a link to the most current memorial list on our website. [Click here](#) and then on MEMORIAL BOOK in the left column.

Bottom line, please send snail mail, email, and phone number updates to genna@peacecorpsiran.org and/or doug@peacecorpsiran.org.

- **NPCA Affiliate Group Network Meeting. Report by Jeanette Gottlieb.**

The National Peace Corps Association (NPCA) Affiliate Group Network Annual Meeting was held virtually on August 27th. There were a number of positive announcements relating to NPCA and affiliate groups functions. First Dan Baker has become the new Interim Director and CEO of NPCA. You may know him from his work with returned volunteers. Second, the new Affiliate Group Coordinator is Christina Owens. In addition several steps are being taken to facilitate communications among groups including a Facebook page and the affiliate group newsletter. Members should go to peacecorpsconnect.org for more in-depth information. [Jeanette Gottlieb](#) and [Doug Schermer](#) attended for PCIA.

- **Help Needed**

From **Chuck Kaminski** (Kermanshah, 1969-71): Once again, PCIA is looking at applying for funding assistance, this time with our upcoming Chicago conference. If you or someone you know has grantwriting experience and can help us out, please email [Chuck Kaminski](#) or [Jeanette Gottlieb](#).

Member News

- From Genna Wangsness: This fall, HBO is starting a mini-series on the Iran and America relationship. RPCV **Michael Metrisko** (Songhor, Mamazan, 1970-73, who was one of the three Iran PCV hostages) was interviewed at length via Zoom, with a filming session in Washington. Watch HBO ads for date and further information.
 - **Tom Klobe's** (Alang, Kordkoui, Gorgon, 1964-66) most recent book is now available, *The Islamic Ceilings of the Cappella Palatina in Palermo* ([Mazda Publishers](#)). It is a direct result of his Peace Corps experience in Iran where he was introduced to and began his studies of Islamic art. Tom says, "We never know where the Peace Corps experience ends". Congratulations, Tom!
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We Get Mail

- **From National Peace Corps Association (NPCA)**

Register Now. Annual General Membership Meeting: 24 Sept 2022, 2:00pm-3:30pm Eastern (11:00am Pacific), on Zoom. NPCA is your broader Peace Corps community. Join their Board of Directors and Staff to hear a report on key achievements and initiatives at NPCA; engage in a membership forum discussing Board-proposed actions for what lies ahead for NPCA; and learn more about how you can engage with NPCA. To register, [click here](#).

- **From Partnering for Peace**

[Partnering for Peace](#) is proudly hosting the second annual Rotary-Peace Corps Week, Sept 19-23, 2022. This is an opportunity for members of these organizations to collaborate, leverage efforts and resources, and to co-create projects that will have an even greater impact. [Click here for more information and ideas](#). Email: events@partneringforpeace.org

Shopping on Amazon?

Check out [AmazonSmile](#). It's a simple and automatic way to support PCIA, at no cost to you. When you shop at smile.amazon.com, you'll find the exact same prices and shopping experience as at Amazon.com, with the added bonus that Amazon will donate a portion of the purchase price to PCIA.

Submit Your Photos

Each month, *From the Field* features a photo submitted by one of our members. We invite you to submit your own photos of Iran, from either your Peace Corps years or recent trips. Send to jackie@peacecorpsiran.org.

Thanks to everyone who has submitted recently, and keep `em coming!

Find Us on Facebook

For some time, we have had a lively Facebook group, with over 400 members. We post articles, photos, questions, and comments about Peace Corps in Iran or Iran itself. We invite you to **click here** and ask to join. Be sure and answer the membership question you will see there. We will accept your request within a day or two, and you're in!

We also have a Facebook page, open to the whole world. **Located here**, this is a public page that features news about Iran and PCIA. We add photos and videos regularly. The purpose of the FB page is to engage our visitors to consider Iran with a more complete and nuanced view, in the spirit of Peace Corps' Third Goal. Hope to see you participating in both of our Facebook venues. Invite your friends too!

We Accept Donations

Supporting PCIA with your donations is crucial to our success because we don't charge dues. Donations support our biannual conferences (our next one is planned for May 25-28, 2023, in Chicago), as well as our many other advocacy, legacy, civic engagement, publishing, and member connection projects. If you are proud of your Peace Corps experience and believe that PCIA leverages and amplifies your ideals and your voice as an RPCV, we invite you to donate as you are able, either through **PayPal** or by **printing this form** and mailing it with a check. We are

grateful.

Membership

Membership in PCIA is free (no dues). We welcome everyone who shares our values of peace, diplomacy, cultural understanding, and preserving the legacy of Peace Corps Iran. Members do not need to have served in the Peace Corps or lived in Iran. To become a member, [click here](#). You will find that you must first join the National Peace Corps Association (it's also free), and in doing so, you will then have the opportunity to join PCIA.

PCIA Mission Statement

Peace Corps Iran Association advances peace and understanding between Americans and Iranians through outreach, education, and advocacy, and upholds the legacy of Peace Corps in Iran. Adopted February, 2017.

Peace Corps Iran Association is a registered 501c3 nonprofit based in Portland, OR. We are affiliated with the National Peace Corps Association.

Title: *From the Field* comes from the Rumi quote at the top of each issue: "Out beyond ideas of wrongdoing and rightdoing, there is a field. I will meet you there." Jalal ad-Din Rumi. The idea is that PCIA is operating in a field that is outside of the conflict between our two governments as to who is right and wrong. In that field we meet all those who, like us, find the conflict detrimental and irrelevant in the friendship between the American and Iranian peoples. This newsletter is sent from

that field.

PCIA Board

- [Jeanette Gottlieb](#), President (Noshahr, Hamadan, 1965-67)
- [Jackie Spurlock](#), Vice-President; Dooreh Co-leader; *From the Field* Editor (Abadeh, Riz/Zarrinshahr, 1974-76)
- [Ed Seiders](#), Treasurer (Noshahr, Chalus, 1967-69)
- [Marie Mitchell](#), Secretary (Mahallat, 1974-75)
- [Barb Deekle](#) (Zahedan, 1968-70)
- [Bill Brandon](#), Future of PCIA Task Force Co-Chair (Shiraz, 1964-66)
- [Brad Hanson](#), (Khaf, Shiraz, 1973-76)
- [Chuck Kaminski](#), Future of PCIA Task Force Co-Chair (Kermanshah, 1969-71)
- [Doug Schermer](#), Webmaster (Semnan, Shahrud, 1966-67)
- [Fraser Lang](#), (Isfahan, Tehran, 1968-70)
- [John Krauskopf](#), Anthology Editor (Ahwaz, Kermanshah, Arak, Babolsar, 1965-69)
- [John Salamack](#), Iran Issues Discussion Group Leader (Bojnurd, 1965-67)
- [Kerry Segel](#), (Khonsar, Isfahan, 1969-73)
- [Paul Barker](#), *Advocacy Bulletin* Editor (Bidokht, Shiraz, Tehran, 1971-76)

Other PCIA Leaders

- [Carolyn Yale](#), Board Member Emeritus and Future of PCIA Task Force Member-at-Large (Shiraz, 1974-75)
 - [Genna Wangsness](#), Historian (Shiraz, Tehran, 1965-71)
 - [Jim Goode](#), Dooreh Co-leader (Tuysarkan, 1968-71)
 - [Joan Gaughan](#), *KhabarNameh* Editor (Lahijan, Rasht, 1964-66)
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About this email

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Comments

We welcome your thoughts and feedback. Please submit to

jackie@peacecorpsiran.org

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