

KhabarNameh

خبرنامه



Newsletter of
Peace Corps Iran Association

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From the Editor

Joan Mickelson Gaughan (Rasht/Lahijan, 1964-66)

Salaam!! Khosh amadi!!



Because the relationship between Iran and the United States so deeply engages us, **Carolyn Yale's** discussion of PCIA's advocacy mission in her presidential column is of primary interest. This issue also highlights three aspects of our Peace Corps service in Iran: our reasons for joining the Peace Corps, our adventures once we got there, and its impact on our later lives. **Mary Elaine Hegland** (Mahabad, 1966-68) describes the impetus for her joining the Peace Corps, and **Dave Shannon** (Sahneh, 1974-76) recounts his venture into Iranian winemaking. We also provide a link on our website to stories of the deadly earthquake in 1968 in Khorasan as experienced by four volunteers in the country. Finally, **Genna Wangsness** tells the touching story of two volunteers whose professional and personal lives could not have evolved as they did had it not been for their service in Iran.

Two cultural institutions—one modern and one ancient—are explored as **Cameron Cross** carries a review by one of his students of the film that gave his column its name, Kiarostami's *Nema-ye Nazdik (Close-Up)*, and "**Rom Rom**" begins a series on perhaps the oldest sports institution in the world still in existence and one in danger of becoming extinct, the *zurkhanae* (house of strength).

Mary Marks' Books column carries reviews of two books that should interest you, one of which is her own, *Walled In, Walled Out: A Young American Woman in Iran*. For her achievement, we offer our congratulations!! There is also information on two gatherings: Group 16 in Brattleboro VT in August and the PCIA conference in Annapolis in late October.

So, gentle reader...befarma'id.

IN THIS ISSUE:

From the President	2
Trivia Corner	2
Recollections	3
Beeya Bereem!	4
Khorasan Earthquake and the Peace Corps	5
Where Are They Now?	6

Books, Books	8
Nema-ye Nazdik	9
Group 16 Reunion	9
In Memoriam	9
Annapolis Conference Registration Form	10

From the President

Carolyn Yale (Shiraz, 1974-76)

Message on Behalf of the PCIA Board



This is a challenging time—not only for Americans but also for so many other people and countries. As I write, news of terrorist attacks in Tehran is painfully fresh: We send our condolences and sympathies to the people of Iran. We can only hope that trauma such as this will be turned to peacebuilding.

We are confronted by the clear fact that what we do (individually and as a nation) affects others, sometimes globally. We are challenged these days to think deeply about what we consider to be true and morally right, and how this translates to our actions. The disconnects between what we consider true and important, and what transpires in media and politics, are disturbing and prompt us to react. But for all the venting and protests, healing takes more than reaction.

PCIA is a small but unique organization that translates experience and interests into action. These are some of the opportunities to look for:

- Volunteer. The Board has solicited nominations to fill a vacancy on the Board (rounding out to nine members) and will welcome Andy Mott (Shiraz, 1965-67) as a new Board member in July. The Board needs the support of volunteers with skills and leadership of many kinds—for example, Peace Corps Iran history; promoting people-to-people contacts between Americans and Iranians; and public outreach in the United States.
- Please come to the PCIA biennial conference/reunion in Annapolis, October 29-November 1, 2017. The PCIA website has details: www.peacecorpsiran.org/annapolis-conference-and-reunion. The conference offers a chance to network, learn, relax, make and renew friendships.
- Join the Advocacy committee and help change the narrative about Iran-United States relations. There are many ways to ‘advocate’ in the spirit of the PCIA mission statement, that is, to advance peace and understanding between Americans and Iranians. The core of advocacy is engaging in constructive dialog and in bringing neighbors, students, colleagues from work and, yes, politicians, into that dialog. It is important to keep in mind that lobbying (in the sense of actions to sway political decisions) is only one tool for advocacy and, for PCIA, certainly not our most important activity.

In fact, I recently received a wonderful contribution to understanding advocacy from Mary Marks, the former *KhobarNameh* editor and Board member who has, since leaving these posts, completed and published *Walled In, Walled Out: A Young American Woman in Iran*. I extend praise and thanks to Mary for this accomplishment: Highly recommended.

Trivia Corner

By “Rom Rom”

Varzesh-e Bastani

Rooted in Iran’s pre-Islamic past and often associated with the heroes of the *Shahnameh*, the *zurkhaneh* is a sacred place where an athlete trains not only his body but strives also to advance spiritually in order to be of service to the suffering and oppressed. Rigorous physical exercise is accompanied by equally demanding moral training. Neither social position nor reputation is taken into account. Only men who are chaste, modest, and free from evil thoughts are allowed and if these virtues are abandoned, the athlete is ordered to leave.

The zurkhaneh athlete is reminded to imitate a tree which, as it grows bigger and stronger, bends its branches toward the ground and pushes its roots deeper into the earth.

In future issues, we will examine the zurkhaneh building and the instruments used by the athletes.

Recollections

Edited by Dave Devine (Zahedan, 1971-73)

My Father's Advice

By Mary Elaine Hegland (Mahabad, 1966-68)



"If I were young, I'd go into the Peace Corps." That was what my father, Reverend Norval Hegland, suggested to me when I was a college junior. It made sense since he had a streak of adventure in him. As a young man, he was setting off for a mission in South Africa when World War II stopped him. Later, the "Lutheran Eskimo Mission" called him to serve in Teller, Alaska, where he flew the church's Piper Cub airplane to various remote village missions.

I followed his recommendation and taught English in the girls' high school of Mahabad, the largest Kurdish city in Iran. Those two years established the pathway for the remainder of my life.

Fascinated by the different culture and way of life in Iran, and perhaps influenced by my unusual childhood, after leaving the Peace Corps I studied cultural anthropology. In June 1978, I traveled back to Iran for my Ph.D. research. While living in "Aliabad," a village not far from Shiraz, I was able to observe at first hand the dynamics of the Iranian revolutionary movement, as villagers focused on the national political conflict.



Mary Hegland

Most of the local people became supporters of the revolutionary movement upon hearing about and observing the brutal behavior of government forces, especially after violence right in the village. I found that local-level politics and the local political system and political understandings channeled people's analyses, decision-making, and activities during the Iranian Revolution. I wrote about these political dynamics in *Days of Revolution: Political Conflict in an Iranian Village* (Stanford University Press, 2014).

For most of "Aliabad's" villagers, it was only after deciding to join the revolutionary movement that they turned to political participation and resistance. The organizational method available to them at the national level for political involvement consisted of the Shia Muslim framework of rituals, symbols, myths, personnel, networks, and sites. Since the revolution, however, many "Aliabadis" have begun to question how Shia Islam and its rituals have been applied to government. Having returned several times recently, I am now writing a book about the dynamics of religion and politics in "Aliabad."

Looking back fifty years and pondering what an effect those few words—"If I were young, I'd go into the Peace Corps"—have had on my life, I am grateful. My time as a volunteer put me on a course to a wonderful, unique, and adventurous life. I have become close to many Iranians and attached to the country and its people. My Iranian experiences have also brought distress, depression, and anxiety as developments in Iran have unfolded and my friends face problems. Despite that, I would not exchange my past for another kind of life. For that, I have my father and his words of advice to thank.

[A review of Mary's book by Tom Ricks (Mashhad/Mahabad, 1964-66) can be found in *KhabarNameh*, September 2014, p. 5.]



**Peace Corps Iran
Association**

Conference and Reunion

"Preserving the Legacy and Advocating the Future"

Oct. 29–Nov. 1, 2017

Loews Hotel Annapolis, MD

Beeya Bereem!

By David Shannon (Sahneh, 1974-1976)

Making Sharob in the Peace Corps



According to Iranian legend, *sharob*, or wine, was discovered by a girl despondent over her rejection by the king. The girl attempted suicide by drinking the spoiled residue left by rotting table grapes. Instead of poisoning the girl, the fermented *must* caused her to pass out. She awakened the next morning with the realization that life was worth living. She told the king of her discovery of the intoxicating qualities of the spoiled grape juice and was rewarded for her find. He married her and we enjoy her discovery today in its many forms.

In Persian poetry, grapes and wine appear frequently with symbolic, metaphorical and actual meanings. The *Rubaiyat* of Omar Khayyam is one of the most famous collections of ancient poetry—and it features wine repeatedly: “And David’s lips are lockt; but in divine/ High-piping Pehlevi, with “Wine! Wine! Wine!/ Red Wine”—the Nightingale cries to the Rose...” And perhaps the most quoted: “A Flask of Wine, a Book of Verse—and Thou/ Beside me singing in the Wilderness...”

Recent archeological research has pushed the date of the origin of winemaking in Persia further back than previously envisioned. Excavations at the Godin Tepe site in the Zagros mountains have revealed pottery vessels dating from c.3100-2900 BCE containing tartaric acid, almost certainly indicating the former presence of wine. Before the revolution of 1979, more than a hundred Iranian wineries produced wine. The Iranian grape is so good for making spicy wine that the Australian Shiraz, better known as Syrah elsewhere, is made from the same grape that still grows today in the region of Shiraz.

However, this article is not intended to provide an authoritative discussion of either the history or nature of wine in Iran. This is about the experience of a few Peace Corps volunteers in sampling the wine available in the mid-1970s.

My posting was to Sahneh, a small town on the highway between Hamadan and Kermanshah. The area had a significant settled Kurdish population and groups of nomads passed by the town each year on their seasonal migrations. Sahneh was an exceptionally liberal town with a high school that both boys and girls attended—although classes were segregated. The Peace Corps volunteers in that part of Iran were primarily Agricultural Advisors with a few partners accompanying. My former wife, Julie Fraser, and I were residents in Sahneh, while Jerry Torma, Bruce Baessler, Carlos Christenberry, Ed and Marge Poyner, Gary Briese, and Dave Wheeler were all within an easy bus or *caroyay* [private taxi] ride away.

While I cannot speak with authority about the rest of rural Iran, Sahneh was also exceptionally relaxed about alcohol. Both beer and wine were available in a number of local shops. The beer was imported, Danish SKOL in cans as I recall. But it was the wine I want to talk about. In Sahneh, we had a choice of two wines: red and white. It was the “names” of the wines that most amused us. The red was “Number 12” and the white was “Number 24.” Obviously, the marketing industry had not entered the local scene yet. The white broadly resembled a mediocre Chablis, and the red a mediocre Burgundy. I believe the most complimentary thing I can say about them is that they were “drinkable.” But, having no other choice, we were pleased to be able to purchase wine locally. I am sure there were many volunteers living in the more rigidly Islamic communities who had little such opportunity.

Continued on next page...

Registration Now Open

Peace Corps Iran Association Conference and Reunion

“Preserving the Legacy and Advocating the Future”

Oct. 29–Nov. 1, 2017

Loews Hotel Annapolis, MD

- Program information at www.peacecorpsiran.org (click on the blue box with “Annapolis.”)
- Use the mail-in registration form on the last page of this issue.

Go to www.peacecorpsiran.org for current updates about the conference and reunion.

Home-Brewed Sharob!

But we did not restrict our taste in wines to numbers 12 and 24! Luckily, one of the local crops I was advising on was grapes so the idea of making our own wine naturally came to mind. With Bruce's help, we collected a large quantity of grapes from the local market and mashed them to a juicy pulp in a plastic bin. We then added a bit of yeast and stashed the mess out in the storage shed in our courtyard. Some weeks later (I think) we retrieved the bubbling mess and strained the red "wine-like" liquid out.

And we drank it (Julie, Bruce and myself), knowing that it would never have fooled anyone with a real knowledge or taste for wine. But we happily managed to fool ourselves and get happily tipsy on our home brew – ending up with the appropriate headaches!

It may not have been as fine a sharob as Number 12, but it met Peace Corps standards for local ingenuity and initiative!

(David now lives in New Zealand where he has access to a much finer selection of local wines.)

Khorasan Earthquake and the Peace Corps

The Khorasan earthquake of August 31-September 1, 1968, had an epicenter in Dasht-e Bayaz, a small village south of Mashhad, Khorasan Province. The death toll from the quake, which occurred in the middle of the afternoon, approximated 15,000, with most of the casualties in Kakhk, 20 km south of Gonabad (population then approximately 5000). In this web exclusive, four PCIA members describe what they saw and what they did to help the victims of this earthquake.



Cris Klein (Shahr-Kord, Khezri, 1967-69) spent a year living in a tent in the village of Khezri where one of her many tasks was to serve as an intermediary between a male medical team and the women in the village. **Bob Greenberg** (Kashmar, Dasht-e Bayaz, 1967-69) not only helped with earthquake relief, but he also saw to the completion of a new school for the children. **Thomas Nelson** (Gonabad, 1966-69) arrived on the scene four days after the earthquake. In addition to relief work, he also helped build a school in one of the villages in the area. **John Holehan** (Mashhad, 1967-71) worked in the Provincial Engineering Office based in Mashhad. As a member of the office team planning the reconstruction effort, he tells of his first visit to Kakhk, one of the villages destroyed by the earthquake, and how he and **Roger Cavanna** (Mashhad, Tehran, 1967-71) assisted U.S. military personnel to deliver relief supplies to remote villages. **Tagi Sagafi-nejad** sent his remembrances of the earthquake that struck his village where his father was the kad-khoda (village chief).

Pamella Cavanna (Rezaiyeh/Tabriz, 1968-69) submitted a collection of Roger's B&W negatives that have been scanned and posted to the web. We also have photos taken by **Jim Durfey** (Semnan, Shahrud, Mashhad, 1967-70).

Read these stories about earthquake relief exclusive to our website:

<http://www.peacecorpsiran.org/the-august-31-1968-khorasan-earthquake/>

Where Are They Now?

By Genna Stead Wangsness (Shiraz/Tehran, 1965-71)

A Tale of Two Architects



Jeffrey Shorn (Kerman/Ahwaz, 1966-68), from Long Beach, New York, graduated from Brooklyn's Pratt Institute in 1966 with a Bachelor of Architecture degree. Joining the Peace Corps, he trained in Blue Knob, Pennsylvania, as part of Iran 14. The Peace Corps' goal for this group was to create teams of three volunteers each, made up of an architect, a draftsman, and a surveyor. Assigned to Kerman, Jeffrey's group included **John Gluth**, also an architect, and **Al Imhoff**. Jeffrey began making Iranian contacts, learning about the city, and practicing Farsi. Mornings were spent at the office or making site visits, expanding his knowledge of the Persian culture and surroundings. Spending afternoons bicycling around Kerman—a "very Persian city in character" according to Jeffrey—he discovered the "Jewish ghetto" where he was made to feel right at home. Here, he began designing a new bathing facility which, to the best of his knowledge, was completed.

His growing ease with the city and his job was short-lived, as Peace Corps had two architects in Kerman, and Ahwaz had lost theirs. Director Glen Fishbach came to Kerman and together they decided Jeffrey would transfer. In Ahwaz, he began working on schools and clinics and taught English at night to adults and art classes at a boys' orphanage. He designed a prototypical library for Empress Farah Diba, which could be used in several cities around Iran. The only drawback to Ahwaz in Jeffrey's eyes was the heat, as much of the year it reached 120 degrees.

In 1968, he was introduced to the American consul. They talked about Iran's proximity to Iraq and Jeffrey's interest in the Marsh people who occupied the Iraqi Marshlands in the south. Offered the consul's beat-up yacht and the ship's captain, he and **Carl Penton** (Ahwaz, 1966-69) embarked on an extraordinary journey. From Abadan, they traveled up the Shatt-al-Arab River, the natural border between Iran and Iraq. They found an incredible landscape of marshes, 30-40 foot high reeds, islands, and several villages—all constructed from marsh reeds growing in the marshes. This was prior to Saddam Hussein, and the marshes were still intact enabling thousands of Marsh Arabs to make their living off the marshes, primarily by fishing and raising water buffalos. Invited to have tea with the gracious and generous Marsh people, they sat on carpeted reed mats, with beautiful reed arches overhead. Slowly heading north on the Shatt-al-Arab—known in Persian as Arvand Rud, "Swift River"—they were taken back in time, what seemed like 5000 years: Jeffrey expected Noah's Ark to float down the river into the Persian Gulf. Ending their journey in Basra, they traveled by bus to Baghdad and Babylon before returning to Iran. Forever impacted by this experience, Jeffrey completed his tour and returned first to New York and then moved to California.

Chuck Kaminski (Kermanshah, 1969-70), born in Brooklyn, obtained his Bachelor of Architecture from Catholic University in Washington, D.C. Joining the Peace Corps in 1969, he trained at an old 1935 CCC camp in Morrison, Colorado, with Iran 23 where, Chuck recalls, "We slept in bunks in the barracks, 'tubed' the nearby river, and learned to have a basic conversation in Farsi. In July, we saw the moon landing in the recreation building on an old black & white TV." His group arrived in Iran in late summer 1969, traveling north from Tehran on the forbidding Chalous Road to the Caspian Sea, where they were housed at an old hotel in Babolsar, in Mazandaran Province. Here, Chuck polished his Farsi and learned to love sturgeon kebabs. Finally, the word came: he would be going to Kermanshah, joining **Stan Glaser** (Kermanshah, 1967-71).



Chuck Kaminsky Jeffrey Shorn

He moved into a multi-story house with “no real kitchen, no western toilet or bath, and not furnished.” But Chuck did have a PC book locker and a cookbook! Working with the local office of Vasarati Keshvar, the Iranian Ministry of Interior Planning, Parks, and Buildings, he designed parks for Kermanshah and other towns and villages in the province. Additionally, he worked on road design, typically *si metre* [thirty-meter] wide roads. “I remember a road trip in the office Land Rover to Gilan-e-Gharb and Ilam. When I arrived, the town mayor came out and we walked the route for the new road. As we left his office, a few residents started to follow us. By the time we arrived where the road was to end, half the town had followed us almost as if a parade was being held. Oh yes, the road was going from the office of the mayor to the mayor’s house!”

After a year, Chuck asked to be transferred into the TEFL program, but his request was denied. Leaving Iran and the Peace Corps, he visited PCVs in Tunisia, then hitchhiked through Europe and Yugoslavia. But after six weeks, he was missing Iran, its history, food and culture, and the friendship of those he had met. Returning to Tehran, he obtained a work visa and stayed, teaching English at the Iran-America Society until the fall of 1971, when he returned to New York.

A chance meeting brought Jeffrey and Chuck together when they met at the New York home of a mutual friend. They soon discovered the Peace Corps connection and other mutual interests, including architecture, and decided that Chuck should join Jeffrey in California. They rented an apartment in the Rudolph Schindler-designed El Pueblo Ribera, a small complex of concrete and redwood cottages situated a block from the Pacific in the San Diego community of La Jolla, and established an architectural firm, Pegasus Architecture + Design.

Immediately, they found a niche in historic preservation. They first became aware of the need to preserve San Diego’s historic architecture when they moved into El Pueblo Ribera. Built in 1922, it was deteriorating; developers wanted to tear it down and build new. Preservation was not yet considered a good thing, but they worked to get El Pueblo Ribera designated an historic district—and succeeded. For the next forty years, they expanded efforts to preserve much of San Diego’s historic architecture and fabric, developing reputations as historic preservation activists. In 2016, they were awarded the SOHO—Save Our Heritage Organisation—Lifetime Achievement Award for their city-wide efforts and their continued focus on La Jolla preservation.

Chuck and Jeffrey eventually went on separate career paths. Jeffrey became a professor of Architectural History and dean of a local architectural school. During his final year as dean, he planned that year’s class graduation at the Salk Institute for Biological Studies in La Jolla with Dr. Jonas Salk as commencement speaker. He served on numerous boards, including California Preservation Foundation, City of San Diego Historic Resources Board, La Jolla Historical Society, and Save Our Heritage Organisation. Jeffrey retired in 2016 from his architectural firm, Jeffrey D. Shorn + Associates, through which he supported La Jolla’s historic preservation efforts in his client relationships.

After partnering in the early establishment of Jeffrey’s architectural practice, Chuck became Architectural Services Manager in Southern California’s Kaiser Permanente’s medical building program, finishing his career at University of California San Diego (UCSD) Facilities Design & Construction as a principal architect. After retiring in 2013, he began working with Lambda Archives of San Diego to help identify, preserve, and protect LGBTQ historic resources. Throughout the years, he has supported organizations such as Partners for Livable Places, Citizens Coordinate for Century 3, Mama’s Kitchen, and Auntie Helen’s.

After decades together, Chuck and Jeffrey were married in California in 2008. They can be reached at: Jeffrey: ochshorn@sbcglobal.net. Chuck: charleskaminski23@gmail.com.

Books, Books

Edited by Mary Marks (Kerman, 1964-66)

Guest edited by Joan Mickelson Gaughan (Rasht/Lahijan, 1964-66)



Majd, Hooman. *The Ministry of Guidance Invites You to NOT STAY*. Doubleday, 2013. 272 p. Reviewed by **Jennifer B-C Seaver** (Rasht, 1966-68).

Hooman Majd was born in Tehran, but with a father in the diplomatic corps he was educated in England and the United States. The author of two previous best-sellers, *The Ayatollah Begs to Differ* (2008) and *The Ayatollahs' Democracy* (2010), he has also contributed to *Time*, *The Financial Times*, and many other periodicals.

Majd returned to Iran after an absence of more than three decades, accompanying an NBC News crew covering the 2009 presidential election. Two years later, flying into Tehran with Karri, his American wife, and infant son Khash, he was briefly detained and later summoned to meet with interrogators. His cousin said, "Welcome to Iran. This isn't Switzerland."

Cousins and friends often invited the family to their parties. "What struck me, though," Majd writes, "was the irony that, being known as reformists and related to former president Khatami, they were under state surveillance and their comings and goings were closely monitored." By December 2011, with a possible conflict between Iran and the West on everyone's mind, Karri persuaded him that it was time to leave. Always proud of his heritage, but with a "nagging sense of belonging somewhere else," he agreed. He chose not to publish this book until he was back in New York.

If you have served in the Peace Corps or visited Iran, you'll find this a compelling—if somewhat complicated—memoir of in-depth, witty and insightful descriptions of life in a land replete with contradictions.

Marks, Mary Dana. *Walled In, Walled Out: A Young American Woman in Iran*. Published by Peace Corps Writers, 2017. 348 p. Reviewed by **John Krauskopf** (Ahwaz, Kermanshah, 1965-67, 1969).

The idealism of the Kennedy era lured young Mary Marks into the Peace Corps to serve for two years in conservative Kerman, Iran. This memoir traces her feelings and frustrations as she was forced to mature many of the ideas that have guided her life since.

During a low point at the end of her first year, Mary was so discouraged that she requested a transfer to another site. However, a cholera quarantine forced her to remain in Kerman for her second year where her increasing language skills gave her greater comfort in adjusting to Kermani culture.

The author cleverly tells great stories while documenting her emotional journey. One story titled "My Elephant Thinks of India" lays out the limited remedies for homesickness in an era before modern telecommunications. Another story about the cholera scare centered in Mary's own apartment is told with delightful wit.

Mary's experiences often centered around obtaining and preparing food. Since cooking was a main interest of her colleagues and other middle-class Iranian women, she joined a cooking class. Mary wrote down the ingredients of the first dish until it dawned on her that the chef was not presenting a recipe for one of the delicious Persian dishes she had come to enjoy. Instead, it was for Jello, from scratch, an exotic dessert for her Persian colleagues.

Among the more than twenty books about Iran written by returned Peace Corps volunteers, *Walled In, Walled Out* is not the first memoir, but it is one of the very few written by a woman. Mary's walls are symbols for both culture and the position of women. For the male PCVs in Iran, she provides insights which were blocked by those walls.

[This review has already been published online on Peace Corps Worldwide and on Amazon.com.]

If you have suggestions of books to review, or would like to review books for this column, please contact Mary Marks: mary@peacecorpsiran.org.

Nema-ye Nazdik (Close-Up)

Edited by Cameron Cross (University of Michigan, Ann Arbor)

A Film Review: *Close-Up*

By Sara Dagher

The director of *Close-Up*, Abbas Kiarostami—like Mohsen Makhmalbaf, the indirect, yet central focus of the film—heavily contributed to the Iranian New Wave of cinema wherein filmmakers use metaphorical and emblematic storytelling to address the political and social issues plaguing Iran since the 1960s. Featuring the people involved, acting as themselves, Kiarostami tells the real-life story of Hossein Sabzian, who temporarily takes on the “character” of film director, Mohsen Makhmalbaf. Sabzian succeeds in conning the Ahankhah family, in particular, the two sons whom he recruits to help him with pre-production for one of his supposed upcoming films. Eventually, Mr. Ahankhah concludes that he must be an imposter and contacts a journalist, Hossein Farazzmand, whose exposé leads to Sabzian’s arrest and a series of trials.



These trials offer Sabzian’s justification for impersonating Makhmalbaf. The story he describes is, at its heart, one of escapism. His longing to leave his own life and fully take on the life of another is a sentiment that was and still is familiar to many Iranians.

While Sabzian’s conning of the Ahankhah family seems to be the tale of an unethical man playing with the lives of a family, Kiarostami’s use of intimate close-ups forces the viewer to gain a deeper understanding of the motives of Sabzian’s actions. Overall, *Close-Up* is about a man who simply wants to become immersed in a life that he views as more lively and interesting than his own, and Kiarostami’s success at humanizing Sabzian grounds the story, making it more relatable to the modern Iranian, and human, experience.

In Memoriam

By Genna Stead Wangsness (Shiraz, Tehran, 1965-1971)



John C. Etheridge died on March 8, 2017, in Solara Hospital in McAllen, Texas, at the age of 71. A native of Texas, he taught at Pharr-San Juan-Alamo Independent School District in Pharr, Texas, until he retired in 2008. A member of Iran 20 that trained at EIL in Brattleboro, Vermont, and in Hamadan, Iran, John was a TEFL volunteer in Naein from 1968-69. Prior to teaching in Pharr, John worked in Philadelphia as a counselor, in Arnold, Missouri, and on a Navajo reservation. He taught summer courses in Northern Asia and Micronesia for ten years. John is survived by his wife Karen Joy Etheridge of Pharr, Texas, three sisters, six brothers and other family members.

Peace Corps Iran Group 16 50th Reunion – August 5-6, 2017

Details for Group 16’s summer 2017 reunion have changed. The new date is Saturday-Sunday, August 5-6. The weekend event will include walking the Experiment in International Living (EIL) campus, Persian dinner, BBQ, and lots of sharing of photos and memories. Anyone from the 1967-69 era, as well as other years, is encouraged to attend. Come and enjoy the great Western Massachusetts scenery!

The center of action and gatherings will be 22 Abbott Street, Greenfield, MA 01301, which is twenty miles south of Brattleboro, VT. Greenfield has Airbnbs and a Hampton Inn. Airports nearest to Greenfield are: Hartford, CT (BDL / KBDL) Bradley (56 miles) and Boston, MA (BOS / KBOS) Boston Logan (96 miles).

For reunion information, contact: Marilyn Hickerson Erickson

22 Abbott Street, Greenfield, MA 01301

marilynerickson46@gmail.com 201-270-7994 cell

PCIA Conference and Reunion Mail-In Registration Form

September 29 is the deadline for registration. After that date, please add a \$15 a late registration fee. Full refund of registration payment will be honored until September 29 with partial refunds after that date.

Peace Corps Iran Association Conference and Reunion

Preserving the Legacy and Advocating the Future

October 29 - November 1, 2017

Loews Annapolis Hotel
126 West Street
Annapolis, MD 2140

Highlights

Be sure to check out the PCIA website for the most current information about the conference program www.peacecorpsiran.org.

Here is a partial list of session topics, speakers and activities.

- Tours to Thomas Point Shoal Lighthouse, Annapolis.
- Evening registration and reception in cooperation with the Iranian-American Cultural Society of Maryland.
- Ambassador John Limbert, Trita Parsi, National Iranian American Council and Barbara Slavin, Atlantic Council.
- Poetry, Performance and Visual Arts in Present Day Iran.
- Telling your stories workshop with Meleia Egger, U.S. Peace Corps.
- Peace Corps literature on Iran: meet the authors, book signings.
- Monday evening—Storytelling “slam” of stories created during the workshop.
- Panel: Perspectives from 1979.
- International partnerships and Exchange Programs with Tom Ricks, Peter Deekle and others.
- Preserving your history: Archivists’ tips.
- Constructive advocacy.
- Community engagement to expand understanding.
- Wednesday morning tour of U.S. Naval Academy.

Accommodations:

- Loews Annapolis Hotel is offering a group rate of \$150 per night for a limited number of rooms on a first come, first served basis. The group rate is valid for three days before and three days following the conference/reunion.
- Deadline for the group rate is Friday, September 29th.
- Call Loews at 1-800-235-6397 and specify “Peace Corps Iran” to get the group rate.

Contact Information (One form for each registrant)

Last Name _____

First Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State ____ Zip _____

Phone/Home _____ Cell _____

Email _____

I need special accommodations. Please describe on back.

Returned Peace Corps Volunteer? If yes, please describe on back.

Registration Details

(Please use one form for each registrant.)

FULL CONFERENCE – \$150..... Amount _____

PARTIAL CONFERENCE:

Sunday, October 29, reception ONLY – \$25..... _____

Monday, October 30, ONLY – \$75 _____

Tuesday, October 31, ONLY – \$75 _____

OPTIONAL EVENTS:

Sunday, October 29 Lighthouse tour – \$50..... _____

November 1, Naval Academy Tour – \$10 _____

DONATE TO THE CONFERENCE SCHOLARSHIP FUND:

Tax deductible donation to the scholarship fund _____

Late Registration Fee after September 29 (\$15) _____

TOTAL AMOUNT SUBMITTED _____

Check made out to PCIA is enclosed with registration form.

Please mail completed form and
a check made out to “PCIA.”

Douglas Schermer, Treasurer
1040 Dakota Ave.
Wayland, IA 52654

For up-to-the-minute information about the
conference, please go to
www.peacecorpsiran.org

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