

## Peace Corps, Proud History

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[Glendale/ParadeStore.com](http://Glendale/ParadeStore.com)  
192 Paris Avenue  
Northvale, NJ 07647

Phone:  
201-767-0233 800-653-5515  
Fax:  
201-767-3323 800-555-9269

General Inquiries:  
[customerservice@glendale.com](mailto:customerservice@glendale.com)

Order Inquiries:  
[orders@glendale.com](mailto:orders@glendale.com)

Billing Inquiries:  
[billing@glendale.com](mailto:billing@glendale.com)

Return Inquiries:  
[returns@glendale.com](mailto:returns@glendale.com)



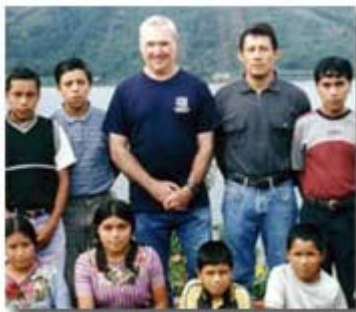
### Peace Corps, Proud History

Fifty years and counting ... Since 1961 more than 200,000 Americans have joined the Peace Corps, serving in 139 countries.

The Peace Corps traces its roots and mission to 1960, when then-Senator John F. Kennedy challenged students at the University of Michigan to serve their country in the cause of peace by living and working in developing countries. From that inspiration grew a federal government agency devoted to world peace and friendship.

Throughout its history, the Peace Corps has adapted and responded to the issues of the times. In an ever-changing world, Peace Corps Volunteers have met new challenges with innovation, creativity, determination, and compassion. From AIDS education to emerging technologies to environmental preservation to new market economies, Peace Corps Volunteers have helped people build better lives for themselves.

### The Peace Corps story of a retired military officer



Ernie Lenz's life has been one filled with service to his country. His 37-year career with the armed forces included everything from enlistment in the Army to working in the Medical Service Corps to leading a medical training team in El Salvador.

Today his job is very different as he works with Guatemalan schoolchildren, teaching them basic hygiene – like the proper way to brush their teeth – in areas susceptible to health problems.

How did this psychologist and Army colonel end up working with young children in a remote mountain town in a foreign land? It's simple, he says: he wanted to continue his service to others and wouldn't choose to be anywhere else.

Following his retirement from the armed forces in 1995, Colonel Ernie Lenz was looking forward to kicking back and enjoying life full time. Yet, throughout his various adventures as a retiree – from backpacking in Europe and New Zealand to crewing sailboats in the Gulf of Mexico to

obtaining an additional master's degree in public health – he recalls missing "the sense of public service I felt in the Army." He also had a strong desire to give something back after enjoying a rich and vibrant life.

In a lakeside town of about 50,000 inhabitants nestled in the Guatemalan highlands, his primary project is a preventative medicine program designed to have children practice healthy habits in school on a daily basis. By collaborating with parents, teachers, administrators, nongovernmental organizations and government officials, he hopes to get the two schools with which he works certified as "Healthy Schools" by his Peace Corps program. A school must meet several standards to achieve this designation, such as reaching the goal of 80 percent of the students regularly brushing their teeth after the school snack. He also trains teachers on new methods for teaching health.

Since joining the Peace Corps in 2003, Lenz has found it to be, "an honor and a privilege to represent our country to the world. For this older American, the Peace Corps offers the opportunity to cap one's life with service to others. It is truly a worthwhile experience. We get to know other cultures as a tourist never could."

Lenz believes that many other Americans, retired from military careers, could find volunteering with the Peace Corps to be a rewarding, enjoyable, and fulfilling way to spend their retirement. "By your service in the armed forces, you have answered the call of that distant inauguration address to 'ask not what your country can do for you. Ask what you can do for your country.' In the Peace Corps, you can keep on contributing," he said. "Whatever your job was in the military, you developed leadership and management skills that will greatly contribute to the success of any Peace Corps project. In addition, you have many other skills to bring to the world. There are a lot of people out there who need and will appreciate your skills."

### **A benefit we can all enjoy!**

Seventy percent of the world's cocoa comes from West Africa, but less than 1% of the world's chocolate is made there. Instead, farmers sell whole cocoa pods to the first of many middlemen who eventually export the cocoa beans to chocolate makers in Belgium and France. Tim McCollum and Brett Beach – introduced to Madagascar and each other while in the Peace Corps – founded Madécasse in 2008 to keep more economic benefit within the island nation. The company partners with 45 cocoa farmers in a cooperative and factory to move from bean to bar in one month and then onto shelves in Whole Foods and 500 retailers in the U.S., South Africa, the U.K., and soon Russia. There are seven different bars, from milk to 80% dark chocolate.

### **Doing good while doing well**

It's all about friendships and service and doing good while doing well. It's about understanding other people and cultures. Wendy Lazar, owner of Glendale and author of the Bugler, has lived

overseas and traveled extensively. Her [okay, my] all-time favorite quote by the omniscient Anonymous is the following: “Though we may travel the world over, we have not really budged a step until we take up residence in someone else’s point of view.” Living in other countries allows one to take giant steps!

### **Peace Corps Week**

Peace Corps Week is March 1 – 7, 2011. Let us celebrate the outstanding achievements of the Peace Corps’ past 50 years! The volunteers’ work in villages, towns, and cities around the globe represents a legacy of service that has become a significant part of America’s history and positive image abroad.

### **For more information ...**

The story about Ernie Lenz was taken from the Peace Corps website. For other stories and background: <http://www.peacecorps.gov/index.cfm?shell=about>

Peace Corps Timeline: 1961 – 2011: <http://www.peacecorps.gov/index.cfm?shell=about.fiftieth>

### **Follow that fire engine!**

This is such an intriguing story we have to bring it to your attention. A crew of British friends is hoping to achieve a Guinness World Record by circumnavigating the globe in a fire engine – a total of 26,000 miles across 5 continents through 28 countries in 9 months! As you read this, most of their American journey is over. They are scheduled to be in Tennessee today, March 1st, then on to Virginia, District of Columbia, and New York City. The incredible journey is dedicated to the memory of Garth Moore, a fire fighter in Dorset, England, who died of lung cancer in 2009. Moore had dedicated his life to fighting fires and saving the lives of others during his 33 years of service. His son, Steve Moore, is the expedition leader. The goal is to raise money and awareness for three British charities: Macmillan Cancer Support, The Fire Fighters Charity, and the Roy Castle Lung Cancer Foundation. All the money raised will go to those charities; shipping (across 11,000 miles of open water), fuel and living expenses will all be funded by crew members. For information on their route, the crew and much more, go to <http://www.followthatfireengine.com>. We hope fire fighters, in particular, across the U.S. reached out to these Brits and gave them a warm American welcome. Read on their blog about the experiences they had as they crossed the U.S. **Follow that fire engine!**

### **Products: the Good, the Bad and the We’re-so-sorry!**

#### **Good:**

\$20 coupon for merchandise placed online.

#### **Bad:**

#201VLXL [leggings](#) in large (with the easy-on hook and loop closure) will not be available till

June.

**We're-so-sorry:**

We got hit with a whopper of a price increase from the manufacturer of Military Police Belts. So high, in fact, that we cannot wait till the next catalog, as we usually do, to correct the prices. Starting immediately, the price of the 44" MP Belts has been changed from \$6.95 each to \$10.50 each; for 52", from \$8.25 to \$11.75.

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