

ACTION

February 5, 1981

update...

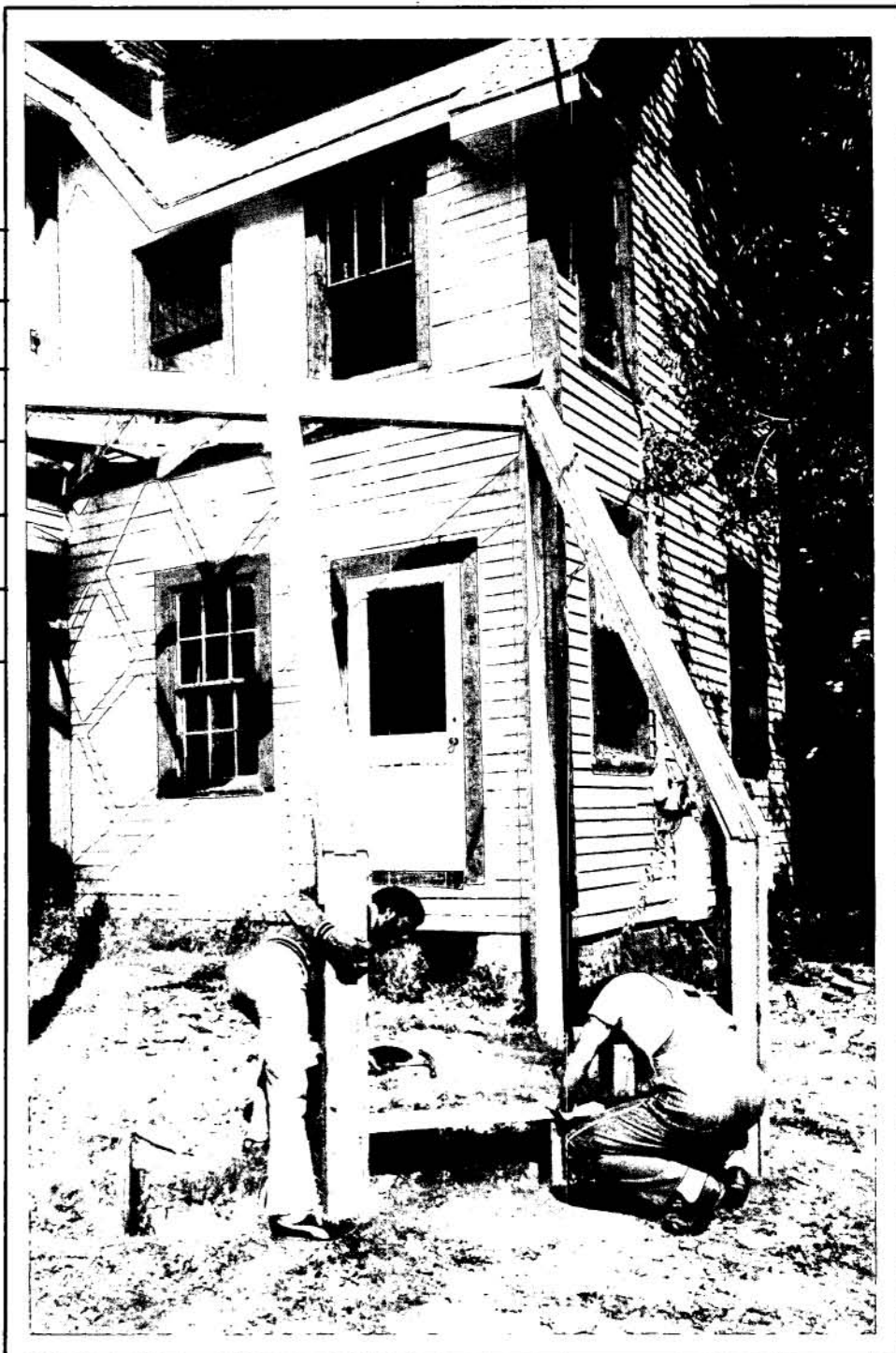
ACTION

Grant Funds

Solar Energy

Project

Knoxville, Tenn. -
*Community youth construct
frame for solar greenhouse at the
Fourth and Gill Neighborhood
Association.*



Solar Greenhouses Constructed at Three Sites

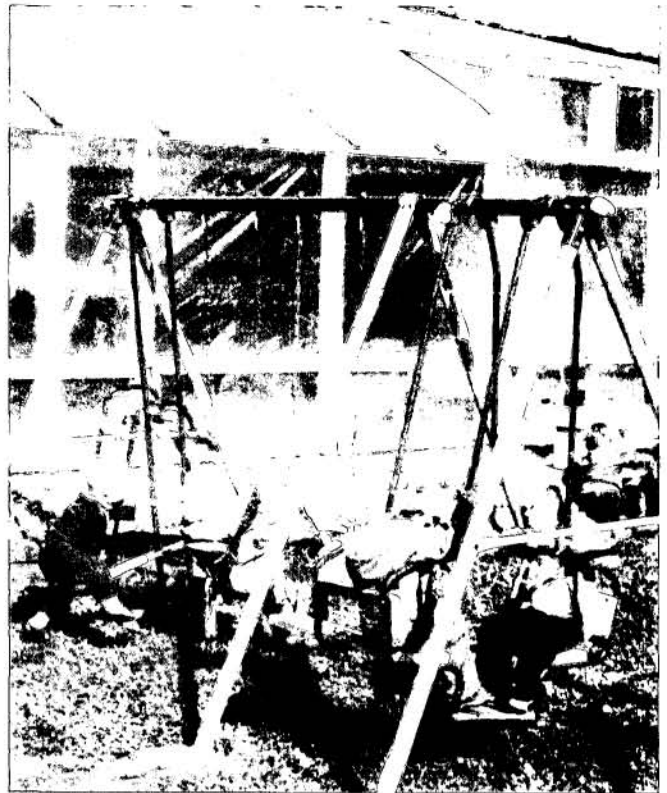
Pre-schoolers play outside solar greenhouse at the Clarefield, Tenn., Day Care Center.

The high cost of energy is a major problem facing all Americans, and meeting that problem is a major priority at ACTION. For over two years, the agency has been working to assure equitable access to energy for low-income and elderly persons, to promote effective energy utilization and conservation, and to develop innovative forms of energy production using appropriate technology.

The agency's Office of Policy and Planning (OPP) made a major initiative in September 1979, when it awarded a year-long \$41,000 grant to the East Tennessee Community Design Center (known as CDC), an organization in Knoxville, Tenn., which provides advocacy, technical design and administrative assistance to low-income persons. The grant provided for the construction of solar greenhouses on public buildings in three low-income communities. The grant was renewed in September to last through Nov. 30, 1981.

The project is an offspring of a solar greenhouse program begun in May 1978, when two VISTA volunteers assigned to CDC designed and built a solar greenhouse at the center to demonstrate its capability to heat the building. "That greenhouse made such a dramatic and positive change in our comfort that we applied for and received an ACTION grant to construct new greenhouses," says CDC staffer Frank Sparkman, adding that many community members brought their plants to the CDC greenhouse where they are "thriving."

"In addition to providing food and heat at the involved sites, the new project will also encourage the rural poor and other individuals to help solve their own problems of energy and food," says OPP grant manager David Gurr, adding that the ACTION grant provided for the purchase of construction materials, while CDC arranged for the



training of volunteer crews to build the greenhouses. Volunteers include architects, VISTAs, university students and other community members.

Greenhouses were constructed at the following locations:

Senior Citizens Center, Newport, Tenn. - Eight volunteers, including senior citizens from the center and local high school students collaborated to build a greenhouse, working under the supervision of two retired carpenters.

"The greenhouse structure is unique in that it is attached to the second floor of a building, the base of which serves as part of the thermal storage system," Sparkman says. "The base is filled with gravel, and the outside is painted a dark color to increase heat absorption. Heat is stored in the base and is radiated to the greenhouse to help moderate temperatures as it cools down at night."

The greenhouse is being used for heating and will also be used for planting beginning this spring, according to Sparkman. Senior citizens from the center are managing the greenhouse, which will be enlarged later this year.

Fourth and Gill Neighborhood Association, Knoxville, Tenn. - The greenhouse is attached to an old wooden frame house which serves as the association's headquarters. Fourteen of the com-

munity's Young Adult Conservation Corps members have been involved in planning and constructing the greenhouse and will manage it upon its completion later this year.

Day Care Center, Clarefield, Tenn. - A crew of eight women carpenter apprentices, working under the supervision of a local construction foreman, built the greenhouse frame, with other community members providing the remaining work. The greenhouse has been in operation for the past several months and has made possible the extension of an already existing gardening program at the day care center. A locally recruited VISTA volunteer with a horticulture background is managing the greenhouse.

Each project component is being scientifically monitored to determine the heating capability of the greenhouses. "We feel the greenhouses are most worthwhile and cost-effective," Sparkman says, "and we expect the data to corroborate our feeling."

He continues: "Our experience with the greenhouses has been most favorable and has encouraged us to consider appropriate technology projects on a broader scale." CDC is planning to establish an appropriate technology resource center which will provide information and assistance to community groups involved in such activities as retrofitting buildings to make them more energy self-sufficient. "These demonstrations hopefully will be the first steps in creating a more energy conscious public in this area," Sparkman says.

Dr. King Honored at Special Concert



ACTION/Peace Corps employees had an opportunity to hear a concert by the Morgan State University (N.C.) chorus in honor of the late Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. on the anniversary of his birthday, January 15. The chorus (shown in photo) performed a variety of songs associated with Dr. King's life and ideas, including "Lift Up Your Voice and Sing" (The national anthem of the NAACP) and "I Have a Dream." Some 200 people from in and out of the agency attended the concert, which was sponsored by Peace Corps.

Introducing the chorus, Peace Corps Acting Director William Sykes (Peace Corps deputy director at the time) said, "We are all familiar with the significance of Dr. King's acts and deeds and his fight for civil rights and justice. Our young artists today, are true instruments of peace and love - ideals in which Rev. King so deeply believed."

The internationally-acclaimed chorus has performed and recorded in various cities throughout the United States, Europe and the Soviet Union.

Peace Corps 20th Anniversary Events to Begin Nationwide

In October 1960, presidential candidate John F. Kennedy challenged students at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor to "contribute a part of your life to this country." Four-and-a-half months later – on March 1, 1961, Kennedy, as president, signed an executive order creating the Peace Corps. Since that time, nearly 80,000 men and women have served as Peace Corps volunteers in developing countries throughout the world.

A special dedication ceremony on October 14, 1980, exactly 20 years after Kennedy's challenge, marked the beginning of a year-long observance of Peace Corps' 20th anniversary. Former Secretary of State Edmund S. Muskie, former Peace Corps Directors Sargent Shriver and Richard F. Celeste and former ACTION Director Sam Brown appeared on the steps of the University of Michigan's student union – the same spot where Kennedy had spoken. They addressed a variety of guests that included members of Congress and 124 former Peace Corps volunteers.

In continued observance of the Peace Corps 20th anniversary, the agency is holding a variety of events nationwide, from late February through June 1981. "Throughout this anniversary year, we hope to build upon and enhance the third goal of Peace Corps – to educate the citizens of this country about the Third World," says William Reese,

Peace Corps 20th anniversary coordinator. "A long-term effect of these activities will be increased recruitment, as people become aware that the Peace Corps is alive and well."

Fifteen major cities will participate in anniversary activities. Recruiters and former volunteers from those cities will meet with the press, appear on radio and TV shows and at PC fairs, and address a variety of seminars and community organizations.

"We hope to use a network of former volunteers as the magnet and catalyst for many of the 20th anniversary events," Reese says. "Through these activities, we hope to build better contacts with universities, civic groups and community organizations, planting recruiting seeds that will sprout in two or three years."

The agency will also provide support upon request to Peace Corps-related activities sponsored by other organizations, as in Indiana, for example, where the University of Notre Dame is holding a two-day Peace Corps symposium.

Anniversary events will culminate with an RPCV conference, scheduled for June 19th and 20th in Washington, D.C. The conference will be jointly sponsored by Peace Corps, Howard University, the National Council of Returned Peace Corps Volunteers and the Peace Corps Institute.

Washington, D.C., 1961 - The first group of Peace Corps volunteers prior to departing for Ghana.



Acting Directors Pledge Continuity

At the request of President Ronald Regan, Dana B. Rodgers, Jr. has been designated acting director of ACTION. William G. Sykes is serving as acting director of the Peace Corps.

Until the president appoints permanent directors for the agencies, Rodgers and Sykes will "provide continuity," says Rodgers. "This transition period is not a time for drifting. We have a continuing responsibility to support the programs and the volunteers and the people they serve."

"I agree," says Sykes, "our primary focus must continue to be on our mission and how to carry that out."

Rodgers, 44, a career employee of ACTION, and until now, deputy assistant director for Policy and Planning, emphasizes that "business does go on, and as civil servants and public administrators, we have a duty and an obligation to carry out this agency's mission as outlined by the president and the Congress."

"This duty is facilitated because of the high-quality, professional staff we have at ACTION," says Rodgers, "Men and women who have done their jobs well for many years and will continue to do so for the next four years and beyond." Key members of ACTION's transition team are Willard Hoing, deputy director of OAVP who has been named acting associate director for Domestic Operations, and Robert Currie who will continue as the agency's executive officer.

"It is easy," says Sykes, "during a time like this to get involved in who's coming, who's going, new appointments and the like, but I know that Peace Corps' staff will work with me in keeping clear what it is we do—support the work of our volunteers."

A former president of the Maryland State Board of Education, Sykes, 44, has served as deputy director of the Peace Corps for the last two years. A 1956 sociology graduate of Hampton Institute in Hampton, Va., and the recipient of a master's degree in social work from Howard University in Washington, D.C., Sykes' career in social work and public administration spans 22 years. Immediately prior to his Peace Corps appointment, he was deputy secretary of the Maryland Department of Human Resources for 4 1/2 years.



Robert Currie, Dana Rodgers, William Sykes.

"To me," explains Sykes, "The Peace Corps' people-to-people approach represents the best of what America has to offer the people of the developing world. I want to achieve a smooth transition so that we continue to recruit, train and place Peace Corps volunteers effectively."

Rodgers, a 1961 graduate of the University of Rochester in New York where he studied history and political science, volunteered for the Peace Corps upon graduation and served in the Philippines.

"During the two years I was in the Philippines, I never thought about Washington (headquarters) once," says Rodgers. "I suspect that's still true of most volunteers, and I think that's the way it should be. We all have our jobs to do, and ours is to support the volunteers—VISTAs, older American volunteers and others—and to structure an environment where those volunteers can carry out their service."

"It is important for everyone—volunteers and headquarters and field staff—to understand that there is continuity, that experienced people are in charge and that there is forward movement," says Rodgers. "Personally, I would hope to spend however long I'm in this position, preparing to welcome and brief the new appointees and while doing that, helping ACTION run this agency in the most effective and efficient way possible."

Sykes sees his responsibility similarly... "business as appropriate to the goals of the Peace Corps until such time as new guidance is received. Although there may be different approaches to our mission," he says, "there is no approach that doesn't recognize the importance of maintaining a clear perspective on Third World development."

Peace Corps Employees Receive Awards For Exceptional Service



Peace Corps held an incentive awards ceremony last month to honor employees in the agency who demonstrated exceptional service. Former Peace Corps Director Richard F. Celeste presented employees with Special Achievement, Meritorious Salary Increase and Outstanding Performance Awards.

With Celeste (front row, left to right) are award recipients Paul Magid, Harriet Lancaster, Doris Leckie, Christine Powers, Susan Hewes, Joan Ambre, Dora Globe, Priscilla Brown, John Guerre and Laura Monaco. In the back row, left to right are Susan Baity, Barbara Johnson, Elton King, Jr., George Miller, Robert Blair and Ronald Bachand.

Also receiving awards, but not in the photo were Carol Adoum, Margot Aronson, Karen Harrison, William LaForge, Ada Jo Mann, Daniel Edwards, James McCaffery and William Flaherty.

The Peace Corps Incentive Awards Program is part of a government-wide effort to strengthen government operations by stimulating creative thinking, encouraging individual initiative and competitiveness, and fostering group cooperation and accomplishment, according to award recipient Guerre, who also administers the awards program.

"The program's intent is not only to give recognition to those employees who have earned these awards, but to serve as an incentive to other employees," Guerre says.

In presenting the awards, Celeste congratulated the recipients and noted their "commitment and enthusiasm that sustains this enterprise we call Peace Corps."

Agency Installs Telephone for the Hearing Impaired

Two telephone conversations were taking place, but not a word was being spoken. Impossible? Not with the TTY telephone for deaf and hearing impaired persons, which was recently installed at ACTION/Peace Corps.

A demonstration last month at agency headquarters ushered in a new service that, for the first time, allows deaf or hearing-impaired people to communicate directly with agency offices. It marked further commitment to the 1981 United Nations International Year of Disabled Persons (IYDP) and its theme of "full participation."

At one TTY, former ACTION Director Sam Brown silently read the transmitted words of Amy Cullen as they came across his small monitoring screen. Cullen, who is deaf, serves as educational coordinator at the Southeastern Pennsylvania Legal Services for the Deaf in Philadelphia. Brown typed over the TTY:

"How many legal cases have you handled in Philadelphia?"

"Eight hundred in four years," read the answer from VISTA volunteer Leigh Redmon, a lawyer who is hearing-impaired and works with VISTA Cullen. Brown then typed, "How many of the 800 cases involved deaf people?"

"All," came the reply.

At another TTY nearby, former Peace Corps Director Richard Celeste typed on the compact keyboard that carried his words to Ely Savanick, director of Gallaudet College's International Center on Deafness in Washington, D.C., and a key planner of a unique Peace Corps program in which eight hearing-impaired volunteers are working in an education program for the deaf in the Philippines.

Celeste was discussing Savanick's upcoming site

visits to the Philippines projects. His message appeared on screen as he typed it - "hope we can discover how this program can serve as a model for others like it around the world."

While Brown and Celeste "talked" on the two newly installed units, dozens of surrounding agency staffers stretched their necks or crouched to get a better look at the special telephones. The two directors had assembled their executive and senior staffs, including regional directors to demonstrate the simple techniques for using TTY phones.

Introducing the demonstration of the TTY, Brown said, "It is a simple and straightforward device, and we are happy to be one of the first and few federal agencies to have machines that make it possible for deaf and hearing-impaired Americans to call in."

John Maddix, chairman of the IYDP Committee at ACTION, added, the disabled are a major constituency of our agency, and installing the TTY enables us to further our objective of effective outreach to another segment of the disabled population, specifically the deaf and hearing-impaired."

The TTY was scheduled to be fully operational at ACTION by February 1, 1981 with machines installed in the Office of Voluntary Citizen Participation and the Office of Recruitment and Communications. Hearing-impaired persons wishing information on ACTION/Peace Corps volunteer programs may place collect calls through their local TTY telephone operator or the nationwide, toll-free TTY operator at 800-855-1155 and ask to be connected to either ACTION/PC TTY NUMBER: 202-254-5657, or 202-254-5851.



personnel

PC ACTING DIRECTOR FOR DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION

Perdita Huston has been named Peace Corps acting associate director for Development Education. She comes to this position after having served as director of the NANEAP region, since joining ACTION in January 1979. While serving as NANEAP director, Huston was one of 37 U.S. delegates to the World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women 1980 (See July 29, 1980 issue of Update).

Huston has an extensive background in journalism and international development, particularly as it relates to Third World issues. She is the author of two books on Third World issues, Message from the Village and Third World Women Speak Out.

A 1958 graduate of the Ecole Supérieure de Journalism in Paris, Huston was a medical and social worker in Algeria in 1960 and 1961. In 1961 she became an assistant to the Paris bureau chief of Life Magazine, and for the next three years, was a free lance reporter for international magazines and newspapers, and later a reporter for Life. From 1969-71 she was director of corporate public affairs for Time Inc. in Paris.

Huston developed and directed national programs for the American Revolution Bicentennial Administration in Washington, D.C. from 1971-76

Before joining ACTION she was a consultant to a number of international organizations, including the U.S. Agency for International Development, the U.N. Center for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs and others.

ACTING DIRECTOR NANEAP REGION

Carol Wzorek is the new acting director of Peace Corps' NANEAP region. She replaces Perdita Huston who has assumed the position of acting PC associate director for Development Education. Wzorek has served as deputy director of the NANEAP region since February 1980. She has been with Peace Corps since 1968, first as a volunteer in Thailand through 1971. Later, as a PC administrative staffer she worked in various capacities including PC trainer in Hawaii for volunteers headed for Thailand, desk officer for Thailand, area director for the NANEAP region, project director for PC programs in Botswana and later in Nepal, and PC deputy director in Thailand.

Wzorek received her BA in psychology in 1968 from Ohio State University in Columbus, and an MA in that field in 1975 from Temple University in Philadelphia.

Black History Month

ACTION/Peace Corps kicked-off Black History Month with a show of woodblock prints by artist Wayland House. House, a former Peace Corps volunteer, exhibited his works at ACTION/PC headquarters from February 2-6. The prints depict scenes from Sierra Leone, where House served from 1975 to 1977.

In addition to the display at headquarters, House's works will simultaneously appear in a one-man show commemorating Black History Month at the Sioux City Art Center in Sioux City, Iowa. The exhibit entitled "Impressions of West Africa," will appear from February 5 to March 5.

Editor's note: Other activities commemorating Black History Month will appear in future issues of ACTION Update.