



# DIRECCIONES

Newsletter of the Arkansas-East Bolivia Partners of the Americas

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## President's message

Have you been enjoying the "summertime pattern" of living? I hope it will rejuvenate you as it has me. The Arkansas Chapter of Partners has afforded me some novel boosts in spirit and energy. While taking a grueling but rewarding 9 am-9 pm 6 days a week graduate history course at the University of Arkansas at Monticello, I had the opportunity to meet one of our Southern most Partners couples **Mars** and **Alice McGuffey Miller**. They shared their tranquil front porch, a light supper and how much they believed in what Partners does, therefore, that is why their dues are always on time. Are you dues in?

Additionally, I got to attend one of the 2005 Partners International Convention Planning committee meetings at a Vietnamese Restaurant. I am told that each meeting is at a different place. The last one was at **Thecia Taylor's** house. It was my first time to experience such food. Not only was the food fascinating but watching **George Vena** guide the planning process and encourage the brainstorming to the next step was energizing. Each Partner attending had interesting ideas to share. Are you sharing your ideas with us? Do you have an interest in agriculture? Call me, please. Is your interest in writing and editing? We have a task for you: 501-336-8359.

Be active in Partners, come to the Annual Meeting on October 9<sup>th</sup>, attend the International Convention of Partners in Antigua, Guatemala in November, introduce your friends to Partners, and experience the re-energizing and tranquil times. It works - I promise.

**Sue Heily**

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## Work with Winrock

**Nona Fisher**, of Winrock International, has kindly consented to keep us abreast of ongoing work of two of our Partners, **Paul McLeod** and **Jim Correll**. Their work was begun under the auspices of Partners of the Americas. When that Farmer to Farmer support was lost to Partners, they continued their work with Winrock. This

is the summary of their work provided by Ms. Fisher:

### University of Arkansas Faculty Assist Vegetable Production in Bolivia

There is a strong market for fresh vegetables in Santa Cruz, and small Bolivian farmers can increase incomes by improving their vegetable production. In 2003, Drs. Paul McLeod and Jim Correll, faculty from the University of Arkansas, established a collaborative effort with Bolivia's Universidad Autonoma 'Gabriel Reno Moreno' faculty and governmental agencies, including the Department of Farming Services (SEDAG) in Santa Cruz, under the Farmer-to-Farmer Program implemented by Partners of the Americas. This collaboration is being continued under the new Farmer-to-Farmer Program implemented by Winrock International.

The objective of this partnership is to improve vegetable production through farmer visits, educational programs, and development of extension publications. Seminars on vegetable integrated pest management and pesticide safety have been provided to SEDAG staff and university students.

Numerous farm visits have been conducted and suggestions for improved management of insect and diseases of tomato and other vegetables have been made in the Los Negros area. During October 2001, four extension leaflets on tomato pinworm, whitefly, early blight and tomato spotted wilt virus management were developed. The insect leaflets have now been expanded, translated to Spanish, and will be published in 2004.

Drs. McLeod and Corell assisted the MEDA Tomato Project, which serves about 300 farmers. Each farm employs roughly 5 to 15 laborers. All of the farms are severely impacted by insects and diseases. Great opportunity exists for improving pest management, and thus vegetable yields and quality.

This partnership has also resulted in new educational opportunities for Bolivian students. One student will enter the University of Arkansas' summer intern program in June and start graduate school in August to work on a M.S. in plant pathology. Three other students are expected to enter the University of Arkansas during the next 18 months. After completing their graduate degrees, these students will have gained valuable new skills to contribute to Bolivia's agricultural development and food security.

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## Forthcoming meetings

There are a couple of meetings coming up that you need to be reminded of. The first, of course, is the International Convention to be held in Antigua, Guatemala, November 18 to 20, 2004. See the previous issue of the newsletter for more details. This is simply to say that it is not too late to register for and to plan to attend this meeting. Refer to [www.partners.net](http://www.partners.net) for registration forms. Please note also that there are limited scholarship funds available to support attendance at this meeting. These funds are primarily for new members, or those who have never attended an International Convention and who need financial assistance. Please contact your President, Executive Director, or **William Stedman** in the Washington Partners office for more details.

The second meeting is our own local Annual Meeting, which coincides with our final Board meeting each year. All members are invited and urged to attend. **Tom Green** has agreed to head up the planning for this meeting, which will open with a cocktail/mixer at the home of **Bob Frans** the Friday night before the Saturday meeting. Just to get the date on your calendar, mark down the weekend of October 9 in Fayetteville. Let's make it a good one!

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## Board meeting

The summer meeting of the Board of Directors was held on July 17, 2004 at the Italian Gardens Restaurant in Russellville. There was good attendance and lively discussions, especially so since we had a visitor from the Washington office: **Barbara Bloch**. She was able to bring to the group much-needed perspectives on a variety of topics of interest. In particular she discussed larger partnering efforts regarding IADN, American Fellows Program, and Partners Counts (these programs are discussed in more detail below under News from Washington). She also discussed the implications of the loss of the Farmer to Farmer program and the possibility of further cooperative efforts with Winrock International, who now has the program for South America. She noted that the Winrock effort will be more agricultural economics oriented than our previous production efforts. It was a far-ranging discussion over many topics affecting Partners and one that benefitted our Board meeting greatly.

Barbara was kept busy during this weekend. She was taken for visits to Winrock International, Heifer International and to the Peabody Hotel to help plan the 2005 Convention. In addition, she met with that planning committee on Friday night before the Board meeting, and was feted at a dinner Saturday night following the Board meeting, where she was further honored by receipt of the Arkansas Travelers certificate signed by Governor Huckabee. **Carol Corning** was in charge of these dinner arrangements at Lilly's Dim Sum and Then Some

restaurant in Little Rock.

Another feature of the Board meeting was a discussion of a travel guide being developed by Vice President **Steven Neuse**. This travel guide is being prepared to assist travelers to Bolivia - particularly those first-time visitors. It will contain information concerning the country money exchange, topography and much more useful information. It will be available at our local website and hopefully, in booklet form for the traveler to carry with him/her. The guide is nearly completed.

It was announced by Treasurer **Wayne Swegle** that our re-application for 501 (3) (c) status from IRS had been completed successfully. For those interested, our Federal I.D. number - 71-0562044 - remains the same as it has been for several years. In effect, nothing has changed - we continue to operate under the tax-exempt status first granted by the Department of the Treasury back in 1984.

Tentative dates have been established for 2005 Board meetings. They are:

January 15 - Russellville

April 16 - Russellville

July 16 - Russellville

October 15 - Annual Meeting in Little Rock - possibly to be combined with the International Convention in November, 2005 - more later

For those interested (or obligated) you may want to mark these down on your calendar.

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## News from Washington

There are several items of interest that we all need to be aware of and we'll start with one that affects us all.

### Partners Counts

This is a new program that will require the active participation of each volunteer member of the Partners of the Americas. Briefly, as volunteers we will be able, under this new program, to more accurately account for what we do as Partners, particularly the time we spend on Partner activity.

For this to work, we need everyone's participation. That means, we need everyone to go to their website, access [www.partners.net](http://www.partners.net) and then click on Partners Counts. This will, ultimately, take you to My Volunteer Page, which you should fill out. You will need to create your own username and password to do this. After you have filled out the contact information, you hit the "Save My Contact Information" button at the bottom - your information will be entered under the Arkansas-East Bolivia Partners organization. You can then get the Volunteer's Timesheet and enter your own hours. Right now, we are asked to provide information for the year 2004 - don't be too concerned about accuracy - your best estimate will be sufficient.

For those not having e-mail or access to the web, you will be sent a paper copy of the My Volunteer Page to fill out and to be returned to the Executive Director (for now, he's the Administrator of the program for Arkansas-East

Bolivia). He will then enter your information into the database.

It may sound complicated, but it really isn't. It just makes the job of keeping better records easier, because you are the one filling out your own information. In working with the program the last couple of days we found that already a few members have signed in - apparently as a result of the announcement of the program at the recent Board meeting, so YOU can do it too! Please do.

### **InterAmerican Democracy Network (IADN)**

Partners of the Americas is one of the founding members (in 1995) of this network. It is – “a growing coalition of over 100 civil society organizations in Latin America. Members work together to engage and educate citizens to strengthen democracies. Partnerships have played a vital role from the earliest stages of the Network.” IADN works to strengthen democracies in Latin America by:

1. Promoting an active and engaged citizenry
2. Developing the capacities of civil society organizations; and
3. Promoting collaboration among those civil society organizations

Our Chair for Democratic Initiatives, **Bettie Lu Lancaster** has been looking into this organization and how we might be further involved. While promoting strong democracies is at the forefront of this organization's goals, they stand to benefit from their member societies goals and objectives. Our Expertise in such things as Agriculture, Culture, Education, Health, Women and Families, and Sports should assist in the effort of building strong Democracies. We will be hearing more of this organization in the future. For now, if you want to learn more, log on to: [citizenparticipation@partners.net](mailto:citizenparticipation@partners.net).

### **American Fellows Program**

Still another fairly new program is this one, established for Partners in March of 2003, with a grant from the U.S. Department of State. “This program sponsors exchanges of outstanding civil servants to promote mutual understanding and excellence within governments of the hemisphere, including Canada. Through the Fellows, the nations of the Americas will exchange invaluable expertise through hands-on work in their area of interest ultimately benefitting the individual and the participating countries.” The fellowships will last between three and eight months, and will focus on:

1. Good governance, rule of law, transparency, and combating corruption
2. Combating crime/border security
3. Free Trade Area of the Americas
4. Disaster preparedness and vulnerability mitigation
5. Environmental preservation and natural resource management
6. National health system

Participants are meant to be mid- to senior-level federal, state, or municipal officials who have demonstrated outstanding performance and have language proficiency

in the host country. You may find out more about this program through **Cecilia Otero** director of the program at [cotero@partners.net](mailto:cotero@partners.net).

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## **Membership status**

In the last issue of *Direcciones* a list of paid up members was published. As a result of that, a few more members sent in their membership dues for 2004. Shortly, a letter will go out to those who have not paid dues for the past three years. This will be to inform them that, regretfully, we will be dropping their names from our membership rolls.

And if YOU have not paid your 2004 dues, there's no time like the present - why don't you do it now?

Thanks.

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## **New members**

There are a couple of new members to report. They are:

**Caroline Kinsey**, 1015 Rock St., Little Rock AR 72202, 501-374-1372, [caroline.kinsey@comcast.net](mailto:caroline.kinsey@comcast.net). Caroline is a horn player and has applied for a travel grant to Santa Cruz under the Culture program.

**J.E. Springborn**, 2457 Sherwood Ln., Fayetteville AR 72703, 479-521-1321

Welcome! We trust you will find Partners membership a worthwhile and exciting endeavor.

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## **Final notes**

Well that seems to be it for these “dog days” of summer. Your Editor has been languishing around, waiting for more exciting news to report in this issue - such news has been sparse. Hopefully, the fall issue will be more invigorating and upbeat - send us those tidbits that you might have to report!

REMEMBER:

*Partners Counts*

Annual Meeting in October

International Convention in November