



# DIRECCIONES

Newsletter of the Arkansas-East Bolivia Partners of the Americas  
Bob Frans, Ed., 276 Alzheimer Dr., Fayetteville AR 72704

April 20, 1997

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## President's message

Spring is in the air! I know this because I see the beautiful array of colors that the flowering trees, shrubs, and flowers are wearing - the yellow forsythia, lavender redbuds, pink and white dogwoods, and a full color-palette of tulips. However, all of this color belies the cold, cold temperatures that we have been feeling while we seek the warm hearths of our homes.

1997 is underway! A new year always brings with it new hopes and dreams. Then when spring arrives, we start thawing out our plans and actions and double our speed for implementing our goals.

Our partnership is in full gear, too. In March we had three charming women visitors from the South (*e d*: see Democratic Initiatives report for fuller details). **Jim** and **Jane Scroggs** hosted a delightful reception for them in their new home in Fayetteville. By the time you receive this newsletter this April, we will have another visitor from the Beni and Santa Cruz, **Dr. Desiree Mostajo**, who will be winding up her stay in the U.S. with us after having been in a Fellows VIII seminar in Kentucky. **Phil Serafini**, our Farmer-to-Farmer Chair, and **Preston LaFerney**, our Economy Chair, recently returned from a trip down to Santa Cruz and other parts of South America. Phil has arranged, recent trips for several others under the Farmer-to-Farmer program, including **Frank Farmer** and **Bill Schwab**. Frank has arranged for one of his students to visit Bolivia in the near

future to write a comparative paper on public health delivery systems there. We hope to see more of these kind of student exchange programs in the future. Our Fellow IX, **Jeff Allender**, attended a Fellows Seminar in Lima, Peru in the early part of this year.

Another plus for us is the increase in the Bolivian students at the University of Arkansas. We now have 12 full-time students. Three others are attending the Spring International School for Language, where they are learning English and hope to be able to matriculate as full-time students in the 1997 Fall semester. We owe a great debt of gratitude to **Max Frydman** and **Sonia Suarez** for the recruitment and linguistic/cultural preparation of most of the 12 students who are enrolled as full-time students. All of them have been able to be successful in their academic pursuits and even in finding work on campus. We are happy to report that, in addition to the above, there are three new students enrolled for the Spring semester at the University of Arkansas: **Miguel O'Connor**, **Luis Alejandro Ribera**, and **Pedro Ribero**. We also want to welcome **Gustavo Pereyra**, the father of the student **Gustavo Pereyra**, visiting his son in Fayetteville for a few days. The elder Pereyra is a soybean expert who came here in the Fall of 1995 under the Farmer-to-Farmer program.

We have to express our sincere thanks to those Officers and Board members who completed their terms of office, **Dan Gudahl** and **John Townsend** as Directors-at-

Large. A special note of appreciation to **George Vena** who as Treasurer kept us financially sound. We welcome the new Treasurer, **Paul Noland**, and the two new Directors-at-Large, **Cora Zabala-Holt** and **Robert Dzur**. We look forward to their contributions to the work that our partnership will develop and implement for the year.

The work awaits -- not just the Officers and Board members, but all of the members in our organization. We need you. We need your help. We need your input, your ideas, your dreams. We have challenges to meet. We are challenged to plan activities for fundraising to add to our coffers in these lean days when the federal government cuts the amount of money we can receive from it. (Remember, out of an approximate \$6 million budget at the national level, most of this comes from federal funds.) We have been challenged by President **Bill Reese** to find ways to contribute at least \$5.00 per member to the national Foundation. We are challenged to increase our membership roll, including corporate memberships. Each member should be actively recruiting at least one new member. The membership brochures are waiting to be used. We are challenged to tell the Partners of the Americas story. The **Reach Out** program is not committee-owned. Each one of us can tell the story to family, friends, colleagues, associates, etc. We are challenged to find persons who would serve as the chairs of the Health, Youth Development & Sports, and the Women in Developments Committees. We are challenged to build alliances, to

work with other non-governmental organizations. These are just a few of the ones that await us.

A special challenge! We are challenged to find families that would be willing to host young high school students who want to be here to study English and learn about American culture during their vacation periods. (Insurance costs for health and liability will be paid by the parents of these students). We need to find American students who would like to go down to Bolivia for a stay during their vacations. The Bolivian students that are studying here at the University of Arkansas have indicated that any such American students could stay in their homes while they visited Bolivia. If you are interested in this special challenge, please contact me.

By the end of the 1997 year, let us look back and be surprised at the challenges we have tackled and the achievements we have made (see also the following item).

**Margaret Clark**

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## AMIGOS

As Partners, we are members of the InterAction Network, and have been contacted by Amigos de las Americas (AMIGOS) to solicit recommendations about contacts for re-initiating the AMIGOS program in Bolivia. AMIGOS is a private not-for-profit, voluntary organization that sends young people to 7 countries in Latin America, where they carry out public health services in collaboration with local agencies. Volunteers, 16 to 18 years of age, typically live with local families and work in groups of 2 or 3 to collaborate on programs such as community sanitation, human immunization, dental hygiene, education, and environmental education.

It has operated continuously since 1965 and has placed over 17,500 volunteers in 15 Latin American countries. It has extended its programs to include peer education

on adolescent health issues and strengthen its ties with local youth groups. It hopes to continue its move toward youth-to-youth communication and focus on adolescent health issues (both awareness and prevention). It is seeking to build relationships with non-governmental organizations involved in health and environmental agencies interested in collaboration with AMIGOS.

If you know of students who would be interested in this program, please contact **Margaret Clark**.

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## Reports from the Regions

NW Arkansas In late February the Arkansas Chapter of Partners was host for three visitors from Bolivia, who are a part of our Civic Participation Project. For a full account of their activities, please see the Democratic Initiative report. Bolivian students continue to arrive to take part in our scholarship program. **Muriel Ric** is here to attend the language program at Spring International. In addition, **Patricia** and **Fernando Mercado** have arrived from La Paz so that Fernando can also attend Spring International prior to his enrollment in the University to pursue a master's in Electrical Engineering. On the same note, our happiest arrival is a baby girl, named Natalia, born to **Marcello** and **Maria Silberstein** in March. She can now grow up to be a member of Partners - North and South! Congratulations Marcello and Maria!

Central Arkansas with a :

### Special on Kay

Dr. **Kay Kraeft** has, of January 1997, returned to her position as Professor of Music at the University of Central Arkansas, Department of Music, after completing the work of two grants - one national and one international.

During the summer of 1996 she was one of only 12 chosen nationwide to attend the National Endowment for the Humanities

Summer Seminar in Latin American Music at the University of Texas at Austin. Under the direction of one of the world-renowned experts on the topic, Dr. **Gerard Behague**, she carried out the classwork which surveyed the vast topic of Music in Latin America and its cross-relation with Anglo music in the North American continent and which dealt in depth with some aspects.

Each of the 12 participants presented individual papers during the 7 weeks as well as carried out research on topics of personal interest. For Dr. Kraeft, that consisted of extended investigation into the Art Songs of Latin American composers. Her future plans along that line include further research among the extensive holdings at the Latin American Music Center at Indiana University, as well as in Latin America itself.

The international grant was the prestigious award of a Fulbright Scholar Teaching Fellowship for the Fall semester in Bolivia in the high Andes mountains of South America. As a professor of voice at the Bolivian National Conservatory of Music in the capital of La Paz, Dr. Kraeft taught 16 voice students each week and acted as a curriculum consultant to the Conservatory Director for the work of redesigning the music curriculum for the Bolivian project of complete educational reform. As part of that work, Dr. Kraeft designed a 3-year pilot project in Music Education for the elementary level which will involve the cooperative efforts of a joint task force of American and Bolivian music educators.

For her other work in the Fulbright residency, the soprano presented a concert of American Art Songs in three Bolivian cities - La Paz, Sucre and Tarija - sponsored by the United States Information Service unit of the United States Embassy. She has been invited to return to 2 other cities - Santa Cruz and Cochabamba - for similar concerts during the coming year. Further projects carried out included adjudicating a high school choral competition, participation on the U.S. Embassy screening panel for

the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts Fellowship program, and participation as a singer and as a keyboard accompanist for two performances of a large Christmas carol program with the Philharmonic Society of La Paz.

Commenting on the impact of these experiences, Dr. Kraeft remarked: "the enormity of the NEH and Fulbright experiences is just now beginning to dawn on me. Following through with even a fraction of the ideas, projects and keeping up with the extensive network of colleagues will keep me occupied for at least one lifetime. And now as the in-going President of the Arkansas Partners of the Americas with Eastern Bolivia, I will have further opportunity to help Americans, especially Arkansans, expand their horizons to include the wonderful people of the spectacular country of Bolivia. Several other projects are also in the incubation stages which cannot be named as yet, but which we hope will bear fruit in the coming years. As these materialize, we will be sure to keep the public informed."

### **And from Sue**

The following, written by **Fred Petrucelli**, is taken from the January 27, 1997 issue of the *Log Cabin Democrat* in Conway:

"The educational fabric of La Paz, Bolivia, was strengthened recently by the presence of **Sue Heily**.

"The St. Joseph High School Spanish teacher was in the midst of Bolivian educators, bringing them the competence they sought for teaching English as a second language. For two weeks, the Conway teacher shared her teaching expertise which is linked to unencumbered ways to teach the language.

"This was Ms. Heily's second excursion into South America, the first being in Santa Cruz where she established a sterling reputation as a teacher, and where she was able to connect easily with students and professors. Her recent sojourn could well be linked to the work she did during her initial venture into the country she believes.

"About a year and a half ago, I won a National Teachers Scholarship from the Dodge Foundation to do research in Spanish teaching," she said. "I'm also a member of Partners of the Americas with ties to Eastern Bolivia, and in that role I also spoke with many instructors, did interviews and made friends.' Partners is a private, non-profit organization dedicated to the economic growth and social enterprise between people of both continents.

"The activity was to bring surprises and dividends when late last year she received a telephone call from the director of Profesores Asociados Institute inviting her to La Paz for a seminar on current methodology for the teaching of a second language. The institute is a private school offering tutoring in English, science and mathematics.

"It became evident to Ms. Heily the instituted had heard of her work during her earlier visit in the country.

"She hesitated about accepting the La Paz invitation. 'There were too many things going on in my life at the time and, anyway, I had promised to visit my goddaughter in Escondido, Calif. I explained my concerns to the headmaster and he urged me to bring my goddaughter along. We could not refuse, especially since he would pay all our expenses except the air fare.'

"When Ms. Heily arrived, she found herself among professional people anxious to know how to teach English. 'But I was muddled when I met with them. I'm a pretty organized person and I didn't know how to respond to their troubles until I asked many questions.'

"Ms. Heily's expertise saved the day. She explained her teaching employed the total physical approach, bypassing translations and eschewing the word-to-word process used in the conventional way of learning a vocabulary - that is, writing words on the chalkboard and having students memorize them.

"For example, if I hold up this apple before my Spanish students and, regardless of their national origin, they will know what it is and

they can make the connection in their minds when it is described in Spanish.'

"Troubling the educators, too, was their assessment of the mystique of American education. 'They felt that everything in America is bigger and better and, therefore, Americans have the latest information and textbooks and catalogs. They were fearful that their kids wouldn't make it without the accessories available to American school kids.

"My point to them was to work with what they had, what they were familiar with. For example, I told them that by the time kids get to my fourth-grade class they will have learned a little ditty they heard in physical exercise classes: 'Head, shoulders, knees and toes, knees and toes.' So when they hear the same song on my tape recorder in Spanish they know what they're learning.'

"In Bolivia, Ms. Heily had enjoyable moments traveling in the countryside, visiting a 1591 Jesuit mission in San Xavier, and spending some time at Lake Titicaca, the highest navigable lake in the world.

"Her associations in Bolivia have not been without moments of travail, yet they have produced friendships that endure in the person of a young Bolivian girl who is now attending St. Joseph High School and living with the teacher whom she met in her home town.

"Ms. Heily's first trip to Bolivia brought her face to face with a general strike which kept her inactive for a while. 'The people I was staying with introduced me to a relative who invited me to visit his Hotel Balneario in the mountains. In order to get there we were required to cross seven tributaries of the Amazon River. It was in the jungle, but populated by a few tourists.'

"The guide provided by the owner of the hotel, Jorge Vincenti, was his daughter Andrea. She and Ms. Heily became fast friends in the days that followed as they toured the countryside.

"Months later I received a fax from Andrea inquiring about attending St. Joe. It was an opportunity for me to repay the

Vincenti's for their hospitality and I agreed to be her guide in Conway.'

"Andrea had graduated from high school and wanted to take courses in English and soak up some American culture. 'I couldn't think of a family I would like to repay more. She's bright and enjoying her visit and the school.'"

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## Democratic Initiatives

Intense and exhilarating describe the recent visit of three East Bolivian to Arkansas. **Maria Luz Yuja Gomez**, from Trinidad, the Beni, **Mercedes Ortiz de Gasser** and **Maria Cristina Guachalla de Carazas** from Santa Cruz were sent to Arkansas by Partners' USAID funded Citizen Participation project. From February 24 to March 3 they observed ways we encourage citizen participation and educate voters.

The women flew to Little Rock from the Dominican Republic, where they had participated in a League of Women Voters Conference "Strengthening Democracy in the Americas," along with 150 women leaders from all over Latin America. Met at the airport by **Fernando Murillo** and **Bettie Lu Lancaster**, they enjoyed the gracious hospitality of **Thecia Taylor**.

A very full day was spent at the State Capitol, where the Bolivian women were briefed by several public interest lobbyists, including directors of Common Cause, the Arkansas Public Policy Panel and the League of Women Voters. After lunch with State Representative **Sue Madison**, they visited both houses of the legislature, posed for photo opportunities, and received a gracious welcome in the State Senate after a short speech about Partners activities by Senator **David Malone**. The day ended with a dinner fiesta with Central Arkansas Partners.

After traveling to Fayetteville, a stimulating morning was spent discussing Bolivian politics with **Jeff Ryan's** Latin American Political Science class. They were

impressed by the depth and complexity of discussion at a League of Women Voters meeting, were charmed by their interview with former U.S. Senator **David Pryor**, and very impressed by the amount of information given the public as they toured the community access and government television channels.

Another opportunity was given Arkansans to learn about Bolivia when the three women presented a panel on the role of women and non-governmental organizations in Bolivia at the University of Arkansas' Women's Conference. This panel was videotaped for viewing on CAT.

Fun was also on the agenda: a reception hosted by **Jane** and **Jim Scroggs** at their wonderful new home, shopping and dinner with **Judy Luna**, and sightseeing in Eureka Springs with **Steven Neuse**.

Little would have been gained from the visit without the masterful interpreting of **Barbara Jarvis**, who made a special trip to Little Rock, **Carlos Moreno**, who took a day off from his studies, **Lillian Bern** at the Women's Conference and **Dema de La Fuente**.

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## From the national office

The following, written by **Mayra Buvinic** and **Michael Paolisso**, entitled: *Linking Poor Women's Reproductive and Productive Needs: Save the Children's Projects in Bolivia* comes to us from the national office. We are sorry we cannot give attribution to the journal in which it appeared, although it is called: "Taking Women into Account: Lessons Learned from NGO Project Experiences." We thought you would be interested in at least this excerpt from that report:

"In the early '90s, Save the Children and its Bolivia-based staff (SC/B) launched two interventions in Inquisive province of Bolivia targeting women. They began by addressing women's reproductive health needs through a project called Warmi (the Aymara word for

woman), started in 1990, and followed in 1992 with the Woman-Child Impact Program (WCI), which broadened the focus of Warmi to cover women's educational and credit needs.

"SC/B's experience with these two projects provides constructive examples and lessons learned, and suggests mechanisms that non-governmental organizations (NGOs) like Save the Children can use to maximize the effectiveness of interventions supporting women's productive and reproductive roles.

"Save the Children's work with rural women in Bolivia shows the close links between women's reproductive and productive needs; the urgency of addressing these needs; and the feasibility of doing so with modest investments and potentially high immediate payoffs in terms of increasing women's and children's well-being.

"More than half (65 percent in 1989) of the population in Bolivia, and almost all of the population of Bolivia's rural areas, are poor. This poverty affects and is reflected in women's situation, which is one of the worst in the region. Bolivia has some of the lowest regional scores in key measures of women's well-being: life expectancy at birth is the lowest recorded number for women in Latin America and the Caribbean, and this average life expectancy figure can hide differences of up to fifteen years between better-off women in urban areas and poor rural women. Bolivia has the highest maternal mortality rate in the region, a rate that rose from 480 to 600 deaths per 100,000 live births between 1980 and 1990. Half of maternal deaths occur during delivery and, of these deaths, half are due to hemorrhaging. It is, therefore, not surprising that of all the countries in the region, Bolivia had the lowest percentage of births assisted by a trained attendant: only 55 percent in 1985.

"The situation of inadequate maternal health care is made more difficult by the presence of high fertility rates. In 1990, Bolivia's total fertility rate stood at 4.6, almost double the regional

average, with the rural rate of 6.4. This high fertility rate is in part a response to the fact that Bolivia has the second highest child mortality rate in the region, which makes it difficult for couples to plan for family size and spacing. In 1990, female child mortality rate was 7.8 and male rate was 8.7, both per 1000 births. Also driving the high fertility rates is low usage and availability of family planning services. Although reported to be rising, as of 1989 only 30 percent of women of child-bearing age used any contraception and only 12 percent used modern methods. Among rural women these figures stood at 19 percent and 5 percent, respectively.

"In terms of educational preparation, illiteracy is declining in Bolivia, although it remains high compared to other Latin American countries and continues to be a major problem for rural women. In 1992 half of all women aged 15 and older in rural areas were illiterate, more than twice the rate recorded for rural men and more than three times that of urban women. In 1992, half of all women aged 15 and older had first level schooling or less and 23.7 percent had no schooling at all. In rural areas these figures were 73.7 percent and 40 percent, respectively. Only 10 percent of men in the country and 18 percent in rural areas had no schooling. With little schooling, few women participate in the formal economy but large numbers of them participate in agriculture and the informal sector, in work that goes mostly unrecorded in official labor force statistics.

"Through a process known as 'autodiagnosis,' --- the Warmi and Woman-Child Impact programs were right on target when they defined the most pressing needs to address. Based on the region's stark statistics, Warmi targeted rural women's survival and reproductive needs and WCI made women's literacy and credit their focus. This accurate definition of needs is an obvious but basic element for project success, and it is one that SC/B accomplished well. Moreover, --- the diagnosis women made of their own needs

accurately reflected the reality of their situation. This correspondence between expressed and real needs is critical for project effectiveness." (Editor's note: this full report is on file in his office for those wishing more detail)

Still another report from the national office deals with Pro Mujer, a non-profit voluntary organization supporting programs which empower women to raise themselves and their families out of poverty. Pro Mujer developed its integrated training and micro-credit program in Bolivia, where its national program enables more than 12,000 women to participate in more than 200 communal banks, granting them loans ranging from \$50 to \$600. Pro Mujer was established to address women's primary needs with initial training programs focused on parenting skills, health and family planning. The organization was fully incorporated in Washington D.C. and now, 24 communal banks have been established and 500 women receive monthly training. The program has now been extended to other Latin American countries, and in 1996, with a 1.5 M grant, has provided training and credit to 55,000 women over a three-year period. If you are interested in helping with financial contributions, you may make contact the organization at: Pro Mujer, c/o Michael Fieldman & Partners, 34 Hudson Street, 13th floor, New York NY 10014.

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## News from our Board

The Board of Directors last met on January 25, 1997 at Russellville. The following are just a few excerpts from that meeting that may be of general interest to the membership:

### The International Meeting

**Thecia Taylor** and **Margaret Clark** represented Arkansas at this meeting last November in Boston. In addition, **Roxana Rivero**, from our sister chapter in the Beni was able to attend thanks to the special

scholarship funds provided by the national office.

President **Bill Reese** has asked every partnership to consider contributing at least \$5.00 to Partners foundation. The challenge will be up to us. We were reminded also that re-chartering is always to be considered as we make plans for the future. Expanding the role of the U.S. in world affairs would certainly include the work of NGO's such as Partners. **Phil Serafini** has agreed to serve as point person for us to push for the advocacy for foreign assistance.

We are reminded that the next international convention will be this coming November in Buenos Aires, Argentina. It is not too early to start making your plans for what will surely be a stimulating and interesting time in that beautiful city. Further details will be provided in the months to come.

### President's report

President **Margaret Clark** mentioned several items that had come to her attention. Fellows member **Jeff Allender** and a colleague made a "background" tape of interviews on Latin American-U.S. relations as part of the coverage of President Clinton's election.

A Foundation Grant for \$750.00, written by Clark, has been received to help purchase a computer plus software for setting up an e-mail system in Santa Cruz. More money is needed to complete this project and our Board voted to add \$250.00 to the above. **Laurin Wheeler** agreed to be responsible in looking for a suitable machine.

Clark met with **Hank Graden**, President of the North Carolina chapter, **Marie Grambling**, a new NAPA Board member from that chapter, **Roxana Rivero** from the Beni, and **Anabella Bruch** our representative from NAPA. They explored ways in which the three Bolivian Partnerships (La Paz, Cochabamba, and Santa Cruz) could do cooperative work. Follow-up meetings are planned.

## Farmer to Farmer

Phil Serafini's committee has been quite active, particularly in getting experts from the North to travel to Santa Cruz. Among those participating, or to participate in the future, and their specialities (where known) are: **Don Johnson**, an entomologist, consulting in cotton, **Phil Serafini** and **Preston LaFerney** (see above), **Jean Sullivan**, a water engineering expert to assist the Okinawa colony's groundwater system, **Pedro Mendoza** to assist in fish production, **Derrick Oosterhuis**, Working with cotton production and physiology (trip to be paid for by the Cotton Grower's Association), **Tom Dierks** and **Tom Evrard**, working with the calibration of airplane spraying equipment, and **Navam Hettiarachchy**, a food scientist working with peptide extracts and fortification of wheat flour with minor elements.

## Economy

Phil submitted a report for **Preston LaFerney** who was not able to be present. Included was a letter from the Commerce Committee indicating a continued interest in export-import merchandise between Arkansas and Santa Cruz. They are collecting information about products and services from local companies in Santa Cruz. Anyone from our partnership interested in this project should contact Preston.

## Culture

**Kay Kraeft** asked to Board to approve expenditure of \$500.00 as a start-up for a Bolivian Music Education project involving all three Bolivian partnerships. It was approved.

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## New members

We have three new members to report since the last reporting of them. They are:

**Patricia McLendon**, 1419 No. Woolsey Dr., Fayetteville AR

72703

**James Van Patten**, 434 Hawthorn St., Fayetteville AR 72701

**Maura Lozano-Yancy**, 5 Prospect Trail, North Little Rock AR 72118.

Please help welcome these folks to you respective group meetings. Also, we all need to be on the lookout for new, prospective members!

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## Annual dues

We ask that you please take care of your annual dues to Arkansas-East Bolivia Partners. Many of you have already paid and we thank you. If our records indicate that you have not, your copy of *Direcciones* will have a dues statement as the last page. Simply send in this page, with your check, to the Executive Director, Bob Frans. Thanks for your attention to this matter.

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## Montserrat family relief fund

The volcano on Montserrat continues to threaten lives and property. For the past 18 months the volcano has caused a major disruption in the lives of the citizens of the island. Hundreds of people are still in shelters. Thousands have left the island seeking employment. The capital of Plymouth remains evacuated.

Housing is very limited and the Montserrat Partners have set up a Montserrat Family Relief Fund in an effort to try to raise money for the housing of families who have lost their homes. The help of other Partners has been requested.

The Arkansas Partners are contributing \$25 from the Board. We will be sent a narrated video in English of the eruption and impact of the recent volcanic activity. The video is about 20 minutes long and features some spectacular images of giant pyroclastic flows reaching

the Caribbean Sea and creating giant clouds of ash and superheated water. This video will be made available to science teachers in public schools and any other interested parties. If you are interested in making a personal contribution to the fund, please contact **Margaret Clark**.

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## Other volunteerism possibilities

Two books are on the recommended reading list sent to us by President **Bill Reese**: 1) People Power: Service, Advocacy, Empowerment by **Brian O'Connell** and 2) Citizens - Strengthening Global Civil Society. They offer insights on volunteerism in general, the U.S. third world sector, and an overview of voluntary movements around the world. Contact the national office (NAPA) for more information.