



DIRECCIONES

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

April 17, 1999

President's Message

Greetings to all Partners who have survived winter, spring storms and the last 3 months!! I am assuming that includes us all. Here we are with more than a third of 1999 past and Arkansas Partners is alive and well, not doubt to get better, of course. **Phil Serafini** took his nearly 40 members of the Arkansas LeadAR group of folks to Bolivia in March - certainly an enthusiastic circle of people if I ever saw any. In Little Rock, at **Thecia Taylor's** house, we sent these folks off with a rousing party. We look forward to hearing their stories - or at least those they care to share - upon their return. I spoke with **Aida McKenney** recently, just as the LeadAR's had left Bolivia, and she endorsed the enthusiasm.

The new President of the Sant Cruz Partners, the dentist, **Dr. Rene Valdivia**, is full of enthusiasm for our organization and wants to get to know us. He has confirmed that he can come to Arkansas for our Joint Board Meeting in July - set now for July 23 and 24. Word is still waiting regarding **Willy Tanaka** from Beni who also has been invited to come.

Which brings me to another matter which I wish to share with you: our Board meeting on April 24. That is when we will deal with such matters as 1) reviewing our By-Laws and Operating Procedures Manual, 1) with planning for the July meeting which will be so important to the future of our Partnership, and 3) getting started NOW on our Annual Meeting in October. Any of you who have questions, suggestions, "pet beefs" or other matters that relate to the By-Laws or to our future or for our Annual Meeting, please share them with any Board member before our April meeting. We need any input we can get. For the July meeting with our Bolivian Board members, we will deal with every conceivable topic that can make our Partnership stronger. That includes communication, planning, nitty-gritty things as well as vision and dreams. Don't forget all Board meetings are open to any member. The dates and places up to now are April 24 in Russellville, July 23/24 in Conway, and October 22 in Little Rock.

As far as immediate news is concerned, The Arkansas travelers who are due to go South are **Mary Anne Sennett** who plans to visit starting in mid-April and **Sue Heily** who plans the second phase of her 3-part project in Special

Education training during the month of June. Mary Anne's interest is in women's issues such as domestic violence, teen pregnancy and mid-wifery. Both of these projects seem full of promise and are exciting for our future. We look forward to their adventures and to the development of their projects.

The Bolivian tenor **Ricardo Estrada**, who holds the position of Fulbright Scholar-in-Residence at UCA during this Spring, 1999 semester, is spreading his talents and energies far and wide across the state and even outside it.

Some of you Partners have met him at social events and also have had the pleasure of hearing him sing. He has lectured on Bolivia and other related topics for the UCA departments of Spanish, Political Science, Sociology, Journalism and Geography. He, along with Venezuelan soprano **Noemi Lugo**, gave back-to-back concerts in February followed by a lecture demonstration for our Honors College on the Spanish Zarzuela (musical theater).

Currently he is directing a program of opera and song excerpts with singers from Fayetteville, Jonesboro and Conway and also a program of Zarzuela music with the UCA Opera Workshop and Orchestra. The Bolivian cello student who came with Ricardo in January continues to learn English very fast and to play much music. He is gifted and has already played several concerts, with one in Little Rock on April 12. His brother Sergio is a violinist who also wants to join this young man whose name is **Alejandro Villegas**. Let us hope that the two will make beautiful music here in Arkansas for several years.

For all Partners, the important thing now is for each of us to continue looking for new members. Keep your eyes and ears open.

Kay Kraeft

News from Washington

There are several items from the Washington office that we have received since the last issue of *Direcciones* that you may be interested in. The more pertinent ones follow.

Relief Fund for the Colombia Earthquake

Partners has set up as special fund to help the people of

western Colombia recover from the January 25 earthquake. More than 1,000 people were killed and much property was destroyed. President Norm Brown said: "The greatest need now is for cash donations for local purchases of food, medical supplies, equipment and materials to shelter families displaced by the earthquake. Unfortunately, we're not in a position to accept or transport clothing or food donations." Individuals or organizations wishing to make a contribution should write checks payable to Partners of the Americas and mail to: Partners, Colombia Earthquake Relief Fund, 1424 K Street NW #700, Washington DC 20005.

New Baby!

We have been told by **Bettie Lu Lancaster** that **Polly Donaldson** of our Washington office, is in the process of ~~adopting a baby from China, and that she is on maternity leave until May 1 to accomplish this.~~ The process involves a trip to China to make all the necessary arrangements. Congratulations, Polly!

Partnership Development

The following news release came out in March and should be of interest to all Partners:

Partners of the Americas, the largest volunteer organization working to promote social and economic development in the Western Hemisphere, has established a Partnership Development Fund to ensure the growth of the organization into the new millennium.

The fund will support the 120 local chapters of Partners of the Americas in the United States, Latin America and the Caribbean and strengthen the North-South partnerships that are the foundation of the organization. For example, Kansas is linked with Paraguay, New Jersey with Haiti, and Missouri with the state of Para, Brazil (and Arkansas with East Bolivia).

"This fund will strengthen our local chapters' ability to carry out essential programs in agriculture, health, job training, women's rights and natural resource protection," said Partners President and CEO **Norman A. Brown**. "It will build upon our 35-year history of mobilizing community volunteers throughout the hemisphere to participate in the social and economic decisions that affect their lives."

Brown announced an initial \$100,000 fund-raising challenge for the Partnership Development Fund. Once established, the Fund will help local chapters to recruit and retain members, raise funds, plan and implement programs, strengthen boards of directors, and manage communications and public outreach.

"This kind of institutional strengthening is the foundation for everything else we do," said Brown. "The healthy partnerships we build today with the help of this Fund will have a positive impact on local communities in the Americas for generations to come."

Founded in 1964 as the "people-to-people" component of President **John F. Kennedy's** Alliance for Progress, Partners of the Americas has grown to 60 partnerships. "**Bill Parsons** of Little Rock, a Peace Corps volunteer in Santa Cruz from 1964-1966, was recruited to act as Secretary of the Bolivian Partners. In that capacity, he

linking 45 states and the District of Columbia with 31 countries in Latin America and the Caribbean. Thousands of professionals throughout the hemisphere work as Partner volunteers on projects ranging from preserving Guatemala's tropical rainforest to educating young people about AIDS prevention.

Individuals or organizations wishing to make a contribution should write checks payable to the Partners of the Americas Foundation and mail to: Partnership Development Fund, Partners of the Americas, 1424 K Street #700, Washington, DC 20005.

A History of the Early Years

Leah Wilkinson graciously provided us with a brief history of the early years of our Partnership. This was a result of an informal conversation with some of the early partners at a luncheon at the Hilton Hotel back in 1985. Since we are committed to creating a comprehensive history of our organization, we thought you would be interested in this account:

"A luncheon at the Hilton Hotel in Little Rock in 1985 provided the opportunity for several of the early leaders of the Arkansas Partners of the Americas to recount the beginnings of the organization. **Steve Stephens**, a well-known community leader and businessman, recalled the man who started it all. **Jim Boren**, who was with the State Department in the 1960's, conceptualized a partnership between the United States and Latin countries. Boren presented his idea to then-**President Kennedy**, who not only approved, but asked him to implement what became the Alliance for Progress, forerunner of the Partners of the Americas. Boren had become friends with Steve, who was working at the time at **Sen. McClellan's** office in Washington. When Steve decided to return to Arkansas in 1968, Boren encouraged him to get involved with the Arkansas-E. Bolivia Partners, an organization struggling to survive.

"Prior to Steve's arrival on the scene, a small group of men in the Little Rock area met informally to establish contact with Santa Cruz. The first Chairman of the Committee, as the leader was then called, was **Russell Matson** of Little Rock. The travelers on the first organizing trip to Santa Cruz in 1965 included Matson, **Don Mehlberger** (later Mayor of Little Rock), **Jim Binder** (a plumbing contractor), **Chris Finkbeiner** (of the Finkbeiner Meat Co.), and possibly one other unidentified person. Some of the individuals involved in the Santa Cruz Partners at that time were **Dr. José Gutiérrez**, Chairman, **Dr. Terrazas**, **Dr. Suárez**, **Dr. Fito Weisse**, and **Orlando Mercado**, Director of a language school.

organized the Arkansas' maiden visit to their new counterparts in Latin America. At that time, very few Bolivians spoke English, so Bill served not only as a tour

guide but as an interpreter, taking the exchange group on field trips in the country and around the city. The personal contact was good, but these first visitors felt overwhelmed by the needs they saw, and the expectations that the Bolivians had for hardware and equipment.

“Steve remembered the year 1968, when he made his first trip to Santa Cruz and met Dr. José Gutiérrez. For the next eight years, Steve served as Chairman in Arkansas, and also traveled frequently as a member of the Partners International Committee of Seven. Steve began to build, he said, from ‘ground zero’ because there was little activity or formal organization. Steve decided to try ‘an exchange of mind power’ and started recruiting doctors to participate in Partners. Obviously, doctors from the South could benefit from our facilities and learn about our medical treatments. The doctors from the North, in turn, could learn about unique jungle diseases. In the beginning, Steve recalled, it had been four or five who would just ‘network,’ but when they started exchanging people, especially in the medical profession, then they really started to function as a viable organization. Then they really had ‘something they could sink their teeth into.’ This started to happen about the time dentist **Dr. Don Taylor** was recruited.

“Two somewhat unusual medical projects stand out in Steve’s memory for different reasons. The first was actually carried out in Cochabamba in response to a request for aid during a polio epidemic. A short wave radio operator with the national Partners contacted Steve to see if our medical center could supply some Salk vaccine. Not only did the Partners provide the vaccine, but they persuaded **Dr. Roger Bost**, head of medical services in the state, and another doctor to go to Bolivia to help in the campaign. An child’s iron lung was also donated. The two doctors were treated like heroes by the scores of Bolivians lined up to take polio shots. In fact, they were named honorary professors of the University of Cochabamba.

“Another project demonstrated the enthusiasm and good intentions of the Arkansas Partners, but later served as a reminder of the logistical problem that shipping desperately needed equipment can become. Steve and his wife visited the Children’s Hospital in Santa Cruz, and like so many visitors, were touched by the conditions they found there. In particular, they noticed three premature babies in one isolette. The doctors confirmed that the weakest one would have to be removed. Upon their return, the Partners joined forces with the Jaycees to publicize the drive to send more isolettes to Bolivia. The equipment was stored at a bank, and eventually some of it had to be sold to underwrite the shipping costs. There was also public criticism for not doing something similar for the people of Arkansas.

“The project that generated substantial good will was a student exchange in conjunction with Youth for Understanding. Some fifty students from Bolivia attended school on scholarships at Saint Mary’s and Catholic High in Little Rock as well as at Mountain Home. The daughter of **Rubén Terrazas** of the Partners stayed with Steve’s family for a year. The other students were hosted by local families. Some from Arkansas also went to Santa Cruz.

“Bill recalled that the very first project actually completed was an exchange of children’s art. Later other artists visited Arkansas, including **Lorgio Vaca**, **Chelo Callau** and **Tito Curamoto**. A five-man musical group, Los Guapai de

Porongo, came up from their village outside Santa Cruz.

“Another highlight of Steve’s chairmanship was the recruitment of **Roy Kumpe**, an internationally recognized advocate for the blind. Serving at that time on the President’s Committee on the handicapped, Roy came to the attention of **Alan Rubin**, Partners’ President in Washington. Roy and Stephens both knew each other by reputation in the Little Rock community. He came in at a time, according to Steve, ‘when we needed good, fresh, innovative leadership and he provided that.’

“Roy had met Santa Cruz Chairman, Dr. José Gutiérrez, in 1974 on his first visit to Santa Cruz and then again when José came up to Arkansas. In 1976 when Roy became Chairman, **Jim Cooney** (of the Washington office) requested that he go down to Santa Cruz with the idea of reactivating their Committee. Unfortunately, Roy was not able to get together with José until the end of his visit. He expressed everyone’s appreciation for the Chairman’s years of service (1965-1976), but recognized his many other responsibilities. José – doctor, rancher, banker, entrepreneur – agreed that it was time to elect a successor. **Dr. Arturo Cuellar** was elected Chairman, and **Walter Callaú** was recruited as Secretary. The latter was a young man that struck Roy as someone who could fill the position as Secretary as capably as Bill Parsons had done in years before.

“The growth and development of the Partners organization coincided with the growth and development of Santa Cruz itself. Russell Matson came back from the organizing trip with descriptions of a city in which the streets were not paved. During that first visit, there was no potable water, no sewer system, and only electricity from about six p.m. to eight p.m. Bill said that even the Plaza was not paved, with disastrous results in the rain! The town had changed little in 400 years due to its inaccessibility. Only in the 1950’s was there a migration movement and a paved highway to Cochabamba. Bill recalled that by the mid-1960’s, the airport was enough of a novelty that people were still coming out to look when a plane landed, and they used to chase the lizards away from the ticket counter.

“Dramatic changes were due to oil, transportation, and telephones. Previously, communication between cities in Bolivia was by ham radio. By 1976, when Roy visited, there was a Holiday Inn, as well as planes, trucks, a paving program, and many other innovations. Roy and the others emphasized the importance of the city planners who were brought in to develop a master plan in 1974. This is the now familiar design of the hub and spokes. Despite all the of the changes, the Cruceños sought to preserve their heritage by refurbishing the façade of the Cathedral to its original natural brick.”

From the last Board meeting

The Arkansas-East Bolivia Board met on January 23, 1999. These are some of the major items from that

meeting:

Some general items

The Manual of Operating Procedures was discussed. Because of its age and changing committee interests it was felt best to consider some major modifications. Consequently, the President appointed a committee to review the document and to report back at the April meeting.

Bettie Lu Lancaster reported on Reach Out, having attended a meeting in Baton Rouge. She shared work in progress on Farmer to Farmer, creating community awareness of Partners, particularly in rural areas. She also shared ideas on membership, with recommendations to be presented at the April meeting. She also discussed new brochures being prepared, both on Farmer to Farmer and on travel.

Our web site was discussed by **Phil Serafini**, noting that with **Bob Dzur's** new work in Bolivia, he is unable to maintain the site. Several ideas were advanced for maintaining the site. For those of you interested, the web site may be found at: <http://www.uark.edu/misc/partners>. It's worth a visit!

There is still considerable interest in having a joint meeting with our counterparts from Santa Cruz. **President Kay Kraeft** mentioned that funds were still being sought for such a meeting to be held, presumably during the July 24 regular meeting date, but she had not received approval as yet.

Central Arkansas report

Because of some internal problems at UA Monticello, no further action has been taken towards establishment of a Partners group in that region. There is still interest in forming a group around the Russellville area.

Northwest Arkansas report

It was noted that a reception was held in Fayetteville for **Jorge Delatoire**, Honorary Counsel General for Bolivia, and who is located in Houston. He will be approached to ask him to share information regarding Partners with the Bolivian Ambassador in Washington.

Agriculture

Phil stated that **Mark Robertson** did not go to Bolivia due to a lack of housing. Apparently the zoo manager there was not prepared for his trip. Phil noted that the Fulbright Symposium on the Fayetteville campus is focusing on the Southern Cone. In that symposium, student **Carlos Moreno** will represent Bolivia. **Carlos Rey**, head of Farmer to Farmer from Uruguay, will be on the panel from that country. Phil also announced that **Janie Hipp**, from the Center for Agricultural Law at the UA Fayetteville campus, will be lecturing at UPSA and Catholic University in La Paz. Phil also suggested the possibility of offering a group trip to Bolivia for the New Year. The idea is being explored.

Rehabilitation

Mary Alice Serafini reported that they were exploring the avenues as to how to create a medical library. Some

progress has been made through the electronic media which may ease costs in shipping books to Bolivia. This might allow Bolivians to engage in an internet search for needed information. **Stephen Perry** has already worked with the medical community there in use of the internet for such purposes.

New Members

We are always grateful when we are able to welcome new members into this organization. Please help welcome:

Barry and Colleen Brown
646 Robin Hood Ct.
Springdale AR 72764

Michael Freeman
2327 Gooseberry Ln.
Fayetteville AR 72704

Ed and Andrea Hawkins
1740 Meadow Bridge Dr.
Greenwood AR 72936

Charles Stegman
324 Grad. Ed., U of A
Fayetteville AR 72701

People are always the lifeblood of any organization, and ours is no exception. We're glad you've joined. Please let any of us know how we can help assimilate you into what we do.

DUES!!!

Yes, we continue to "bug" you to pay your dues. Why? Simply, because we cannot exist without the relatively small amount of money we receive from you in the way of dues. We do not have a large budget, but we do have expenditures, and while these are not great, and while we do get occasional monies from grants, the greater part of our income comes from your annual dues. So, please take a moment to take care of this most important little item for your Partners organization. As before, if your issue this time of *Direcciones* contains a dues statement at the end, it indicates that our records show that you have not paid for 1999. We'll look forward to hearing from you!

Help for Bolivian Students

In the last issue of this newsletter we announced the beginning of a new foundation in Santa Cruz to assist needy Bolivian students who wished to attend the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville. In recent communications with **Marialy Justiniano** in Santa Cruz we understand that all the proper legal work has been done there and that the foundation is up and running. Additionally, we have been able to establish an account in the University of Arkansas Foundation to receive monies to help this endeavor. We have named this account in parallel to the foundation name in Santa Cruz: **Fundacion Maria Teresa Villanueva de Frans** and it has been given the number 2-1268. You may either send contributions directly to the Development Office, 325 Administration, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville AR 72701, or to **Bob Frans**, Executive Director, 276 Alzheimer Drive, Fayetteville AR 72703. All monies collected, either here or in Santa Cruz will be disbursed only at the direction of the Board of Directors of this foundation in Santa Cruz.

Results of our Survey

You may remember that we sent out a survey form with the last issue of *Direcciones* to determine interest and where we should be going. The following is a summary of that effort as provided by **Mary Anne Sennett**:

In the December issue of *Direcciones*, we published a membership survey. The purpose of the survey was to get feedback from both active and inactive members regarding the work and effectiveness of Arkansas Partners. As importantly, we wanted to have the benefit of our fellow Partners' ideas toward revitalizing the organization.

Unfortunately, the ratio of mail-outs to responses was extremely low. Perhaps it was a busy time of year. Perhaps many of those continuing to receive *Direcciones* remain interested in Partners' work, but do not always take time to read the newsletter. In retrospect, it might have been better to have mailed the survey out under its own cover. Be that as it may, the total of ten responses out of 85 mailed was disappointing, particularly in light of: 1) five of the responses were Board members, steadfast in their support of Partners; and, 2) not even the more active members responded to the survey. I am including the results here, and will present them in fuller form as well at the April Board meeting.

While there may be little to go on in terms of "number responding," a couple of things stand out in terms of ideas to follow up with discussion:

"It has encouraged them to take a look at the

A. THE NEED FOR A NEW ORGANIZATIONAL MODEL.

~~B. THE POSSIBILITY OF GREATER EFFECTIVENESS THROUGH CONCENTRATION ON A LIMITED NUMBER OF TARGETED AREAS OF WORK.~~

C. THE NEED TO BUILD ON THIS INITIAL EFFORT BY RESPONDING TO THE "INACTIVE" MEMBERS WHO RETURNED THE FORM OFFERING THEIR CARS, HOMES OR EXPERTISE.

Summary of survey responses:

Three of the respondents were "inactive": **Olivette Dettor**, **Sofia Ogard**, and **Steve Hopper**, and we doubly appreciate hearing from them. The remaining respondents were Board members, with two exceptions. Also, one form was returned unsigned.

Three of the respondents ("active" and "inactive") offered services to help do research toward applying for grants to support projects in Bolivia, and/or help write proposals for doing so. Eight of the respondents offered their homes to host a Bolivian visitor on a participant grant. Three offered transportation for the same. Five have said they would be willing to host Partners' receptions.

LeadAR goes to Bolivia

Friends with the University of Arkansas, Division of Agriculture, Cooperative Extension Service, **Joe Waldrum**, **Dot Temple**, and **Mary Freeman Hightower** provided us with this news release:

Bolivia Trip Opens Eyes, Opportunities for LeadAR Class Members

LITTLE ROCK – An international study trip to Bolivia opened some eyes and opportunities for members of Class 8 of LeadAR, the leadership development program of the Cooperative Extension Service, University of Arkansas.

The class left Arkansas March 16 and returned March 31, exhausted and glad to be back home. The class members visited agricultural, cultural and commercial centers. Their free time was limited to two days overall.

"We want to expose the class members to another culture, another economy, another agriculture, another medical system and so forth," says **Joe Waldrum**, LeadAR coordinator. The trip is "to remind them that the rest of the world is not like the United States, particularly an economically poor country like Bolivia."

The trip overseas has prompted class members to take a closer look inside themselves and their hometowns.

opportunities in their own areas to help their communities

in ways that perhaps they hadn't thought of," he says. "It also helps them look for ways to promote cultural exchanges and better communications between our country and other countries."

Allisen Penn, an associate district director for the Cooperative Extension Service, says the trip offered opportunities for Arkansans to share their expertise and business.

"We made some business and education connections there," she says. "We've got a class member who's interested in helping to get some agriculture technology down there, so they can be more productive and conserve resources. Their hospitals are in need of basic supplies. Some of us are looking into this.

"We visited with a lady who makes her own pottery beads. She's a master of what she does. She's interested in coming to the U.S. and teaching and learning," Penn says.

Of the trip, she says, "I certainly won't look at anything we have here the same way."

We understand the group centered their visit around the city of Santa Cruz, but also visited other surrounding areas including the city of Sucre. Informally, we've heard from others that were on the trip, and their enthusiasm comes across clearly in their conversations. We're glad Partners, both here in Arkansas and in Santa Cruz, were able to assist this LeadAR group in having a successful trip. We believe the trip has been of great benefit to the State of Arkansas, to East Bolivia, and to our Partners organization as well. We look forward to working with our new "Bolivian friends" for years to come. We anticipate that several of them will be joining us in formal membership.

Don't forget our Web Page!

Take another look at our web page, found at <http://www.uark.edu/misc/partners>. You may recall that the site was constructed by our former vice president **Rob Dzur**, now residing in La Paz, Bolivia. When he first arrived in Bolivia earlier this year, he was unable to access the proper server at the University of Arkansas to maintain the site. However, in a recent communication, he says that can now do this and volunteers to up-date the site. Your editor will be forwarding the most recent issues of *Direcciones* to add to the web page. We also hope to establish links with the Washington office (whose home page is www.partners.net) as well as Utah (partnered with La Paz), and we already have a link with North Carolina (partnered with Cochabamba). There are probably several other areas that need updating as well. If you have suggestions, you may send them to your editor (address on the masthead) or you may communicate directly with Rob in Bolivia at rdzur@yahoo.com. We hope you will look at the site if you have computer capability - there's a world of information already there, including several sites with specific information about Bolivia. Let's work with Rob and make this excellent web site an even better and more useful one!

Don't forget the Board meeting!

Once more - the Board meets in Russellville at the Tech campus cafeteria, on Saturday, April 24, 1999, at 10:00 am. All Board members and committee chairs are urged to be there. At this important meeting we will be updating the By-Laws, and we'll be making plans for the future of Arkansas-East Bolivia Partners. It's a good time to get re-energized as we move forward. Find some potential new members and bring them to Russellville!