



# DIRECCIONES

Newsletter of the Arkansas-East Bolivia Partners of the Americas

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## Editor's Note

I suppose nearly every editor of late, and in every kind of publication, has weighed in on the recent tragedy involving the World Trade Center in New York and the Pentagon in Washington. There is very little left to be said or emotions to be expressed that have not already been so expressed. However, it does seem that such a horrible event serves, not only to draw us together as citizens of the U.S., but also might draw us closer to the community of the world. We are part of Partners of the Americas, which places a special emphasis on us in the western hemisphere. Perhaps September 11 will serve to draw us closer to our Bolivian colleagues and it's already happening. A group of us just returned from East Bolivia on September 19 (more of that later) - the tragedy occurred while we were in Trinidad - away from good lines of communication. Nevertheless, Bolivians there and later in Santa Cruz, came to us to express their personal grief and sympathy in that sorrowful time. That's when we realized that we truly are *compañeros* - partners and friends. May that spirit continue and grow.

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## Annual Meeting

To that end, let us as Arkansas Partners, draw together in that spirit of brotherhood and solidarity in that one time of the year when we can all get together and share our commonality here in our State. You have all received notice of the meeting to be held in Conway October 19-21. **Sue Heily** and her colleagues have worked very hard to make this a successful and interesting meeting. Please refer to the notices that you have received and be sure to send in your reservations. The deadline was October 8, but even if you are a little late, they will accommodate you.

Our Public Relations expert **Bill Millager** has been busy on behalf of the meeting. Here's a piece he sent out to various of the media recently. Thought you might like to see it:

"Non-profit groups in the Four-State area are set to showcase their development activities in Latin America at a day-long conference in Conway on October 20. President **Phil Serafini** of Arkansas Partners of the Americas says his group will host the sessions at the Agora Center. Purpose of the conference is to 1) exchange program information among the participating organizations, and 2) invite public interest and participation in the range of constructive activities underway.

"A notable trend this year is the growth of our area Hispanic groups in size, strength, and influence. Conference organizers see the trend as an opportunity to bring new energy to boosting United States support for international development efforts. Thus a feature of this year's conference is that Hispanic organizations have been invited to become fully involved in the program. Both LULAC and the Northwest Arkansas Hispanic Women's Organization are publicizing the event to their members and are promoting participation by the Hispanic community.

"Conference organizer **Sue Heily** says the list of conference topics will include volunteer activities in Latin America by such groups as Winrock, Kevin's Kids, and Habitat for Humanity. The Arkansas-East Bolivia Partners will present current project activities on ESL training, Farmer-to-Farmer, and "Hope for the Special," among others. The evening banquet will feature comments by Partners of the Americas National President **Malcolm Butler** and by **Robert Trevino**, State LULAC Director and liaison for **Governor Huckabee**. For questions or registration information, please call Sue Heily at 501-336-8359."

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## Reports

We have other trips and special reports for you to peruse in this section. The first of these is a follow-up report from **Beth Washburn** as a result of her Farmer to Farmer trip earlier this year. Her report is on the long-term goals in dairy production, processing and marketing and is as follows:

"What follows is my understanding of the Farmer to Farmer vision of a long-term plan that is scheduled to be completed within two to three years. **Miguel Cortez**

explained this program to me in April of 2001, and **Claude Gillette** and I have discussed it as well. The plan is multi-faceted and quite ambitious. Hopefully, this will clarify the plan for you in a general way and facilitate your understanding of the situation in Santa Cruz. For any erroneous information on my part, I apologize in advance.

## GOALS

1. Improve dairy production for the small producer through education in feed and cattle management in tropical climates.
2. Open a dairy cooperative within 2-3 years eliminating farmer dependence on markets set by private industry.
3. Develop new markets for dairy products and improve child nutrition.

“Farmer to Farmer, as a part of the national and state partners, has worked with Bolivian dairy producers for much of the last decade to improve dairy production through the education of farmers in the areas of feed and animal management in tropical climates. These areas involve many health-related themes such as the elimination of brucellosis. They also address questions of breeding including artificial insemination techniques. The program has been quite successful with the medium and large producer. However, for myriad reasons, in reference to the small producer, the program has had very limited success. This is due to the culture associated with the small producer. There are cultural and linguistic barriers to be overcome. The small producer is by and large of heavily indigenous descent and may speak Aymara or Quechua. Even those who speak Spanish are not versed in the technical terminology used by those volunteers who have attempted to implement the above mentioned programs. One might imagine that there are class barriers and a certain regionalism that you will find prevalent in Bolivia that also complicate the situation. In addition, these are simple people who tend to cling stubbornly to the ways of their fathers. The mentality being, ‘It was good enough for my father...’

“Hence, one of the main goals of the program currently is to reach the small producer in ways that respect cultural differences as well as that address the language issue. **Xenon Flores** has written and distributed small booklets in an isolated effort to reach the small producer. He is also fluent in Quechua and has used this to his advantage in his efforts to reach the target group. Also, Mr. Flores has spearheaded efforts to present an annual Expo in Montero that targets all producers and not just the most affluent. I was able to visit the Expo and was quite impressed. However, as with much that you will find in Bolivia, this is the effort of one man. Lack of coordination of efforts can lead to confusion and wasted time and energy. Sometimes varying groups with the same overriding goal may differ in the particulars and cause confusion and damage. While any resulting confusion is unintended, the result is the same.

“I believe that it is Miguel’s vision to coordinate the efforts of the many to concentrate their effectiveness in reaching the small producer. Remember that efforts to

improve the production of the medium and small producer have met with success, and Miguel feels reasonably satisfied. It is with the small producer that efforts have been less than successful. Miguel has done exit surveys with the small producers at workshops to determine the degree to which they understood the material presented. He found that while the participants were polite and appreciative as a function of their innate courtesy, they really understood very little. Hence, the efforts to address these concerns.

“In the midst of the success that the Farmer to Farmer programs were finding with the medium and large producer, another monster has reared its ugly head in the form of the privatization of milk production. Formerly the processing of milk was in the hands of a cooperative of Federation, now it is in the hands of private business. I believe it is currently Nestle. This complicates the Bolivian situation because just as success was being achieved and dairy production up, the processing plant began to manipulate the supply. They are able to do this because essentially they have an international monopoly. If dairy farmers in Bolivia are unhappy with the prices being offered, the plant simply accepts more product in Peru, etc. Of course, the same tactic is used against the Peruvian dairy farmers. As a result, dairy farmers are producing more and better product than ever before and have no market to speak of. Due to this situation, many producers are throwing in the towel. The number of small producers has fallen from approximately 1400 to 800 in recent months, and the trend shows no signs of slowing down. These farmers sell off their stock, land, and equipment and move to urban areas. They are unequipped to find employment, quickly go through what funds they derive from the sale of their farms, and eventually become another nail in the economic coffin.

“In answer to their problem, Miguel presents his second goal: the opening of a cooperative dairy processing plant within the next few years. In order to provide even more of an economic boon to the dairy farmer and to improve child nutrition, Miguel also hopes to begin developing new markets for milk products in Bolivia. Currently, milk is used for little other than cheese production and milk for coffee. Much as various industry AD councils do in the U.S., Miguel hopes to reach and educate the public on the benefits of milk consumption.”

## **Waldrum and Clark’s trip**

**Joe Waldrum** and **Gail Clark** went to East Bolivia from July 3 to July 17, 2001, as part of a Farmer to Farmer trip. More specifically, they were there to investigate the possibility of helping to create an agricultural leadership development program for Santa Cruz. Joe is the state leader for the LEADAR program for Arkansas, and Gail was in the LeadAR 6 class and has developed a county-wide program in Lawrence County (Walnut Ridge) from her position as Staff Chair for the County Extension work. Many of you will remember that the LeadAR 8 class went to East Bolivia as their international experience during their two-year program. The following are excerpts from Joe’s report:

“We were providing assistance to several agricultural groups, universities and rural women’s groups. Our primary contact was **Miguel Cortez** with Universidad

Autonoma 'Gabriel Rene Moreno' who is also President of the Partners in Santa Cruz. We made presentations to ten agricultural and university groups about the LeadAR Program (an adult agricultural and rural leadership development program sponsored by the University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service in Arkansas) and suggested guidelines for establishing a similar program in Santa Cruz. Such a program would have to be developed by Bolivians for Bolivians to ensure commitment to the program and the support of the sponsoring organization. We visited three rural women's clubs who handmade textiles for an uncertain market in the Montero and Santa Cruz area. I estimate we had discussions with 60 to 70 women and five to ten men at these locations.

"We visited two rural indigenous communities near San Javier to discuss adult education, The Extension Service process and the value of training their own leaders. We also toured a Down's Syndrome School (FUSINDO) in Santa Cruz to determine medical needs. We partitioned medical supplies from containers that had already been shipped to Santa Cruz by a non-profit organization that was developed as a result of a visit of LeadAR Class 8 that visited Bolivia in 1999. These supplies were sorted by local physicians and ourselves. Our goal is to let the medical community in Santa Cruz determine the priorities for disbursement. Our primary contacts were **Dr. Desiree Mostajo** and **Dr. Carlos Paniagua**. We delivered part of these supplies to a small clinic in Buena Vista, a small rural community about 4 hours from Santa Cruz.

"We observed that all of the agricultural organizations and both universities (UAGRM and Nur University) agreed to the need for a leadership program. The concept of how such a program produces benefits is not easy to comprehend but the structure of our program was easy to describe. The need for such a program in Bolivia is obvious to us. I think the organizations wanted us to hand deliver such a program to them. If we do that, it will not last long. We invited representatives of Nur and UAGRM to a meeting of directors of these types of programs (International Association of Programs of Agricultural Leadership) in Indiana in October. There they could see the variety of these programs and make many good contacts with other ideas.

"We made suggestions to the rural women groups of how to find markets for their products and improve the quality of their textiles. We think they want us to provide them with a market. We cannot do this. They have the idea we will be their savior. We regret we cannot be the solution but only make suggestions for the solution. We were able to suggest possible funding sources for the indigenous communities through the UAGRM contact, Dr. Chavez. We recommended they locate individuals who had moved to the cities, were working for successful companies and had been reared near San Javier. These people would likely be good resources for extra funds. In Arkansas, having rural roots promotes support rural areas.

"Our greatest success may have been in beginning to remove some barriers for future shipments of medical supplies. If Rotary International can help pay for part of the shipping costs and if the customs official that is a neighbor of **Cynthia Pereyra** can get a waiver on the

taxes when the shipments arrive, I believe we can really begin to deliver some medical relief to some rural clinics. Overall, we planted some seeds in the areas mentioned. The Bolivians will have to supply the fertilizer and care. We will be a resource for them but they have to take the initiative (with encouragement) or the seeds will die.

"I had heard about the Farmer to Farmer program from previous volunteers and all I heard was good. I was very pleased to be able to participate. I will encourage others to volunteer if they see a real need in their area of expertise and want to give a hand to those in less fortunate circumstances. The trip to Santa Cruz was, for me, very satisfying. We met some wonderful, caring, big hearted Bolivians who are really trying to improve their country's situation. The hospitality was the best I have ever seen. Miguel Cortez is an extremely valuable resource for Partners in Bolivia. He is knowledgeable, caring and very kind to visitors. He was giving tests at school and still seeing to our visit, meals, travel, etc. He was marvelous. **Jorge Jadauza** was exceptional as well. He went out of his way to be the translator at many of our meetings and did a superb job."

**Gail Clark's** report is entitled: "Clark brings American leadership to Bolivia." This is in form of a newspaper article from her home town paper the *Times Dispatch* written by **Tiffany L. Verkler**, Staff Writer. The following is quoted verbatim from that article:

A country drenched in economic despair and dictatorial mindsets is seeking direction through Partners of the Americas and Lawrence County's own leadership icon, Gail Clark.

Clark, accompanied by Dr. Joe Waldrum, traveled to Santa Cruz, Bolivia, July 2-17, as a result of her involvement in leadership classes throughout recent years. The trip was sponsored by Arkansas-East Bolivia Partners of the Americas, the Farmer to Farmer program, and U.S. Agency for International Development.

"Because of my involvement in rural leadership development, they thought I had some expertise to go to Bolivia," Clark said.

Her "expertise" dates back to 1993 when she participated in Class VI of LeadAR and fashioned a version of the program for Lawrence County as her community service project.

In 1999, Dr. Waldrum took LeadAR Class VIII to Bolivia for their international trip. The consensus was that Bolivia needed something to unite the people and in doing so, fortify the economy. Their decision was to promote leadership programs in the country through follow-up trips and continued support.

"When we talk about leadership, we think of going out and accomplishing something," Clark explained. "Until three years ago, leadership to them was a dictator.

"They haven't been a democracy long enough to know what leadership is. They're starving for the skills to make improvements in their communities."

The fall of dictatorship came with a cessation of cocaine traffic, leaving a useless economy that can't compete with mass producers of rice, corn and yucca, Bolivia's three main crops.

Clark's concerns encompassed home-based businesses and giving women more clout in society.

"They are trying to involve women more and give them a voice," she said. "Before, women were second class citizens and hadn't been given opportunity. Now, women are allowed to say or of what they need."

In addition to the time Clark spent meeting with agricultural and educational groups, she also visited markets where the women displayed their crafts.

"They live where there's no running water and no electricity," she said. "They're trying to make money and they're so eager to know how to improve so they can make better lives for their families."

Clark explained that the goods these women hope to market are often unfinished and produced in such small quantities that a buyer couldn't hope to purchase en masse or duplicate. Each item created is often a different color or size.

"They had no knowledge of the color wheel and what should go together - they used what they could get their hands on," she said. "And some sweaters had cuffs so small they wouldn't go over your hands."

"I told them what they needed to do to make a more profitable craft - from stitches to tucking ends to concentrating on two or three items that they could make in quantity."

Youth leadership was also a concern because of a lack of motivation and self-esteem. The University of Nur has established a program to meet the needs of these youth.

"One man told us, 'I don't know if there is help because we need so much. The young need help; they need to know they have a future,'" Clark said.

The sixteen rural communities have succeeded in establishing a training school that instructs children to a fourth grade level.

An oppressive government still weighs heavily on the country. Clark related a story of an English teacher who carried something into her home and left her purse lying in the passenger seat of her car.

In the few moments she was gone, the purse, which contained her driver's license, was stolen. Now, it will cost \$150 for her to get it replaced - an amount she cannot afford although both she and her husband are professionals.

In a country where natives from the highlands beg in the streets and thatch roof adobe houses allow poisonous snakes to dwell with the family, proper nutrition is also an issue. Sickness often results from spoiled water supplies and poor food preparation.

Nutrition programs, in conjunction with the University Autonoma Gabriel Rene Moreno, seek to increase milk consumption.

"They only get about one quart of milk each day," Clark said. "Right now, they only use milk for cheese."

"Some of them are lactose intolerant and don't drink it for that reason, but they drink a lot of sugary drinks, like Kool-Aid, and Coke because it's so cheap."

Though milk is expensive, the partnership hopes to increase the number of milk products, such as ice cream and yogurt.

Likewise, the primary vegetables used are carrots, lettuce, tomatoes, and onion. Other vegetables, such as sweet potatoes, cauliflower, broccoli and spinach, are grown but not often used. Soybean products are also being explored. Clark said that people need to learn

about soybeans as a meat substitute, like tofu.

During their stay, Clark explained they often ate five times each day, though rural families weren't always so fortunate. Mornings began with breakfast and were followed by brunch around 11 a.m., a noontime siesta, lunch at 2 p.m. or later, tea at 5 p.m. and supper as late as 9:30 or 10 at night.

"We think we have southern hospitality," she said. "Their homes are always open, with no invitation. They're always so glad to see you, and they offer you something to eat."

And in Bolivia, a clean plate wasn't always good.

"If you ate everything on your plate before everyone else finished, the hostess would take the plate and refill it with large amounts," Clark said. "I tried to pace myself."

Other activities during her stay included witnessing the renewal of the contract between Partners of the Americas and the University Autonoma Gabriel Rene Moreno, disbursing donated medical supplies and visiting a school for children with Down's syndrome.

"It was a humbling experience," Clark said of her work. "The people in the communities worked so well together, it broke your heart."

"We just need to be so grateful for what we have. These people exist on a little bit of nothing, and the partnership is working so hard trying to make a difference."

### All about Martha

And here's a story that will warm your heart even further. It's entitled: **CORAZON A CORAZON TOURS BOLIVIA**, written by our own **Martha Shackford**, and appears in *Mimijournal 2001*, a publication of the Suzuki Association of the Americas, Inc. Martha, as many of you will remember, was a member of our partnership but moved to the Washington DC area. But her story is self-explanatory and is reprinted here, again verbatim:

In 1987, Martha Shackford began the first Suzuki program in Bolivia in Santa Cruz at the Instituto de Bellas Artes under the direction of **Aida McKenney**, funded by the Arkansas Chapter of Partners of the Americas. **Magali Pinto**, one of six very young students to begin their teacher training with Martha in 1987, went on to continue her training with Martha as well as with **Ronda Cole**. Now Magali is director of her own school in Santa Cruz with 35 well-trained violin students of her own.

Corazon a Corazon (Heart to Heart) is a non-profit corporation founded in Spring 1999 for the initial purpose of bringing the young violinists of the Cole/Shackford studio in concert to the people of Bolivia. The group consists of children of all races, ethnic backgrounds, and religions, from the Washington DC area. To raise money for their trip, the young musicians performed over 25 impromptu concerts at Washington DC Metro stops during rush hours and held a gala fundraiser concert at the Hall of the Americas. Due to these efforts and the generosity of many supporters, the group was able to travel to Bolivia in August, 2000, and performed six concerts in three cities - Santa Cruz, Cochabamba, and La Paz. Concerts were co-sponsored by local charities in each city, and raised \$14,000 for medicine, eyeglasses

and clothing for the needy children of Bolivia.

### **Santa Cruz**

When the plane landed in Santa Cruz, I felt that I had come home. For 13 years I had dreamed of taking my students to Bolivia, and on August 21, 2000, that dream came true. Walking into Magali's school, seeing American and Bolivian students playing the Bach Double violin concerto together, with their parents lining the walls, listening, was so fulfilling as to seem unreal. What a joy to have the Corazón students living in the homes of the Bolivian students, getting a true Bolivian experience! That evening a banquet for all the violinists was hosted by Davosan, a charity devoted to raising money for medicine for sick children.

The third morning in Bolivia marked our big concert day. How moving it was to come into the orphanage for our first concert for an audience of children, many of whom stood the entire hour and a half without complaining. We were treated to beautiful singing by the children of the orphanage choir, and discovered that two of the Bolivian Suzuki students who attend Magali's school live in the orphanage. Afterwards the children showed us their houses, where treats were waiting for us.

Thanks to the hard work and organization of Davosan (directed by Señora **Dora Luz**) in cooperation with Magali Pinto and her school, the concert that night drew an audience of 1100 people and raised \$11,000. The Corazón children knew then it had been more than worth it to travel so many miles to bring their music to others.

After we returned home, we received an email from a grandmother of one of the Suzuki students in Santa Cruz. She said that she was so moved by the concert, she cried all the way home. She said, "If these young musicians can come all this way to help our children, we Bolivians can do more for our own!"

### **Cochabamba**

Flying from tropical Santa Cruz into the temperate climate of the Andes foothills surrounding Cochabamba was like arriving in a fairy tale. The weather was perfect and from the airport balcony we were greeted with waves and cheers by the local Lions Club and schoolchildren. We had a whirlwind stay in this city, but were nevertheless made to feel quite loved. After settling into the hotel, we did some sightseeing, had lunch, and prepared for our afternoon concert.

The ancient concert hall dating back to Colonial times lent a special flavor to our music. The matinee was full of public school children of all ages, which in Bolivia means very poor children. Every seat was full and many were standing in the aisles and hallways. Looking out into the crowd, we were greeted with smiles from eager faces - an audience that made all our musicians want to contribute their best! The politeness and refined behavior of the children listening was quite rewarding. It was especially surprising since Cochabamba does not have a Suzuki program and these school children have not had much exposure to concerts.

Besides offering beautiful music to the people of Cochabamba, our goal was to inspire others to begin a Suzuki program there. At the afternoon concert there were four university students from the Jamie Laredo

School who were very eager to learn how to become Suzuki teachers. They had come to the matinee because there was no charge, and they had an important orchestra rehearsal that evening which kept them from being able to attend our evening concert. I talked with them at length after the matinee, trading email addresses and ideas about organizing a Suzuki program in Cochabamba and discussing possibilities for them to receive Suzuki teacher training. When the evening concert was over, we were all met back stage for autographs and more questions about teacher training. It seems the orchestra rehearsal was canceled in favor of the Corazón a Corazón concert! I am now corresponding with the concertmaster of the orchestra concerning Suzuki teacher training for him. Thus, another dream may come true!

When we returned home, we received an email from an elderly man (the President of the Cochabamba Lions Club). He had promised to see us off at the airport and had discovered the next day that he was needed to deliver eyeglasses to children in the country. He had gotten up very early, spent several hours delivering the glasses, and driven back three hours to meet our plane which left for La Paz mid afternoon. He didn't make it in time to shake our hands, but he was on the airport balcony waving us off as we walked across the tarmac to our plane. Though we didn't know it, he was among those helping to cheer us off. Our concert had raised a few thousand dollars for children's eyeglasses.

### **La Paz**

La Paz has the world's highest airport - 14,000 feet! If you've never flown to an altitude that high, believe us it is hard work just to breathe! Though we had warned one another to move slowly, the inevitable happened and several of us had to utilize the oxygen tank service. Luckily, our beautiful hotel was in the lowest part of the city several thousand feet lower than the airport.

Our concert was for elementary school children who attend public school. Imagine our surprise when we arrived to find the piano unusable, thus inspiring spur of the moment violin intros, interludes, and harmonies. All of this was prepared outside in the courtyard as parents saw that children drank plenty of water to treat potential altitude sickness and Corazón a Corazón sweatshirts were shed in favor of t-shirts.

The concert was a wonderful experience despite the piano crisis, as was demonstrated by the long and enthusiastic photo session afterwards. It seemed every child wanted their photograph taken with the group. However, they had to wait until the newspaper and TV reporters were finished. Meanwhile there was a reception for the performers in the courtyard.

The audience included the concert master of the Bolivian National Symphony, his son (principal violist) and the wife of the mayor of Altiplano City, also a musician. They had come to the children's concert since our evening concert conflicted with the opening of the opera for which the symphony was playing. I was fortunate to meet with them following the concert, and discovered that they were in the process of developing an instrumental program for the children of the Altiplano. We discussed the Suzuki philosophy and the advantages

of beginning with a Suzuki program, as well as how teachers might obtain Suzuki teacher training. The ramifications of having a Suzuki Program anywhere in the capital where most fiscal decisions are made, having all endorsement from the higher level of society in La Paz could have a great effect on music and education for the whole country.

The Altiplano (the high plain) is the area of Bolivia which surrounds La Paz and includes Lake Titicaca and parts of Peru. It has a culture all its own, and its population has grown so much that it has been declared a separate city with its own government. The people are very poor in this region. The Lions Club of La Paz has as a central project clothing the poor children of the Altiplano. Since the area is so high it is very cold and the sun's rays are extremely intense. The children stand beside the main roads, wearing only t-shirts (or nothing). The members of the lions Club raise money, buy and gather clothing, and go to the children themselves and dress them. The money raised by our concert was devoted to clothing these children.

The final concert of the tour was held in La Paz at the American School, which has a large auditorium with wonderful acoustics. Playing at those heights is indeed a challenge, and I sat in the front row wondering if I should catch the soloists or their violins first! Fortunately the children did not pass out, and managed to play quite well. Even 14-year old Michelle Goldman, our fantastic castanet player and Spanish dancer, made it through her dances smiling like a true professional. However it was certainly a good thing the audience was not privy to what was going on backstage!

### **Corazón a Corazón goes two different directions**

The next morning before the sun was up, our group headed for Lake Titicaca on two different buses. Our performing tour was over, but not our Latin American experience. We were about to learn a lot about the Incas, half of us for one more day, and the other half for another week as we make our way to Peru, Cusco, and Machu Picchu. We traveled by bus, boat, train, and plane. We visited islands, ruins, and the ancient city of Cusco. We went shopping and biking and we played card game after card game in transit, in hotels, in restaurants. Many events stick out as amazing memories, but one in particular cannot go without being shared.

### **Much more than a train ride!**

It was the tenth hour of our train ride to Cusco, Peru, and we were stopping for the fourth time! It was getting dark and the ride had been uncomfortably rough. Looking out the window, we noticed many children greeting us. People in the train were handing pens and pencils to the Peruvian children, since they had nothing to write with in school. Our American children brought out backpacks, suitcases, and purses. In 5 minutes there wasn't a writing utensil to be found inside the train! The gift giving had established a relationship of sorts between the two groups of children, a relationship of the haves and have-nots. The train waited, and we watched each other expectantly, so happy to connect.

I always have a tune in my head and began singing "I've been workin' on the railroad," soon joined by the Corazón

children. They began a musical exchange in Spanish and English, lasting for the better part of an hour. Many of the travelers on the train came back to our car to watch, listen, and share this special moment between American and Peruvian children. When the train started to roll again through the Andes toward the Inca city of Cusco, the Peruvian children ran as far as they could with us, and we parted as friends. Our shared music had filled our hearts, making a lifetime memory.

### **An ongoing relationship with Bolivian children**

An invitation was extended during the tour to the Suzuki students of Santa Cruz to come to the USA to attend the June 2001 Suzuki Institute. Plans are now taking shape for this to happen and 14 children, 5 parents, and 2 teachers are on the list to come to Washington DC in June. Corazón a Corazón has scheduled a benefit concert to help pay for the institute tuition for these children and will host them, providing transportation, food, housing, and sightseeing in our nation's capital. We are very excited about this exchange. Teachers Magali Pinto and Eliza Zegarra will receive teacher training and the opportunity to see their own students taught by master teachers. Translation from Spanish to English is being arranged to maximize the benefits for the Bolivians.

(Editor's note: As noted above, this whole program involving Suzuki and Bolivia started right here in Arkansas with Martha becoming a member of Partners. Magali Pinto also came to Arkansas on a Partners exchange and received her first Suzuki training in Fayetteville. The Editor does believe that Martha went just a bit overboard on the horrors of the altitude in the city of La Paz!)

### **Finally, a trip about six of us**

From September 3 until September 19, six Partners from Arkansas undertook a trip, at their own expense, to East Bolivia for the purpose of reviewing ongoing activities with East Bolivia colleagues, to make joint work plans for the next 12 to 18 months, and to complete plans for re-chartering, mandated by the Washington office. Those making the trip included **Thecia Taylor, Laurin and Libby Wheeler, Bill and Gwen Millager, and Bob Frans**. It was a light-hearted group that gathered at the Northwest Arkansas Regional Airport for departure, but a considerably chastened group arriving home late the evening of the 19<sup>th</sup>, having, in the words of Bill Millager, "watched in stunned silence the Trade Center attack on CNN from their guest hostel headquarters." This occurred shortly after a side trip to Trinidad. But more of that part of the trip later.

In Santa Cruz the group worked with several people, principally among them new President **Miguel Cortez**. Also, in his capacity as Director of the Farmer to Farmer program, planning was done in that area, and included consultation with **Zenon Flores**. In addition the group met with the Medical Committee, which included **Carlos Paniagua, Desiree Mostajo, Rene Suarez, Jorge Ibarnegaray, Carlos Dabdoub** and others. In addition several of the group toured the Japanese hospital, of which Dabdoub is Executive Director. Meetings were also held with their Education Committee, including **Barbara Lascano, Maria Cella Ibarnegaray, and Marioly Mansilla**. One evening the group met at the home of **Aida McKenney**, Chair of Culture and others to go over not only work in her area, but also the entire re-chartering process. The group also toured the private university UPSA, where they met Vice Rector **Lauren Muller de Pacheco**, Architecture Dean **Victor Hugo Limpas**, and Director of Graduate Studies **Jorge Estenssoro**. The first full weekend there, the Wheelers took a side trip to Tarija to visit a Peace Corps volunteer friend of theirs and Frans went to La Paz to visit his late wife's family.

It was during the next week that the group traveled out to Trinidad and first learned of the destruction of the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. Recovering from that as best they could, they proceeded to hold meetings with **Roxana Rivero**, President of the Trinidad group, her sister **Maria Teresa** (who had been in Arkansas earlier this year), with the nurses **Wilma Alarcon** and **Vivian Rodal** (who were in Arkansas late last year), and with **Willie Tanaka**, who had also been in Arkansas earlier. The group also met with **Victor Hugo Callau**, Executive Director of "La Libertad" radio station, and several were interviewed on air by him. Arrangements are also being made for Victor Hugo to travel to Arkansas soon so that he can gain additional experience in the use of public service broadcasting in order to better address social problems. Time in Trinidad was all too short and the group proceeded to leave for Cobija to meet with the new Partner's group there. Unfortunately, the plane developed mechanical problems so the group (more than a little nervous by this time) elected to return to Santa Cruz via an all-night "bed-bus."

Once there, the group wound up their visit with more conferences, the three ladies even getting involved in a 5-kilometer "caminata" or race (walk!) for the cure for children fighting cancer. They professed that they all finished the course, although the men were not actually there to witness that fact! The last night in Santa Cruz the East Bolivia Partners hosted a meeting for the group and many old friendships were renewed and several new ones made.



Left to right: Bob Frans, Libby Wheeler, Gwen Millager, Bill Millager, Thecia Taylor, and Laurin Wheeler in front of UPSA.

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## Board Meeting

Since the last issue of *Direcciones* The Arkansas Board met in Russellville on August 11, 2001. The meeting was well-attended and much of the time was taken up with final planning for the Annual Meeting. Also reports were heard from **Joe Waldrum** concerning his trip to Bolivia (see above) and from **Ed Hawkins**, who attended a Farmer to Farmer meeting in Washington. Nominations for next year's officers and board members were presented by **Kay Kraeft**. After the mail ballot, the successful slate will be presented at the Annual Meeting. Joe reported that, during his trip to Bolivia, the medical supplies had arrived and he and Gail assisted in their distribution. The Board approved the travel request for **Victor Hugo Callau** to travel to Arkansas.

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## New members

The following are new members who have joined since the last issue of the newsletter. Please welcome:

**Joe Waldrum**, 90 St. Thomas Ct., Little Rock AR 72211, H-501-224-2787, O-501-671-2076

**Kristin Walker**, 640 Rathburn Road E. #20, Mississauga Ontario LAZK6 Canada, H-905-275-2899

**Regina Walker**, 212 Fink St., Mena AR 71953, H-501-394-1289

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## DON'T FORGET!!

**The Annual Meeting is October 19 and 20 and the Board Meeting is October 21 – all in Conway**