



# DIRECCIONES

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

Winter 2001

follows:

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## Editors note

With several apologies to you the membership, we venture to begin this long-overdue issue of the newsletter. What can we say? It's been too long since the last one? Most certainly. Are there good reasons for this long delay? No. Then why the heck has it been so long since producing this issue? No good reasons come to mind, except, perhaps, procrastination! And that's hardly an excuse, or at best, only a very lame one! Without further ado, then, we'll proceed and will try to bring you up-to-date as to what's happening with the Arkansas-East Bolivia Partners of the Americas. We are alive, and it is to be hoped, well.

There have been several areas of activity that need to be noted at the outset. First, **President Phil Serafini** was unexpectedly called to Bolivia on a business trip early in January, a trip that he expects to keep him out of Arkansas for a couple of months. Consequently, the regular Board meeting had to be canceled (we didn't even have a Vice President to fill in - **Thecia Taylor** had a total hip replacement operation in January which took her out of commission for a while), so the Board will not meet until these Officers are back in place - probably in March.

Secondly, there has been quite a lot of movement from North to South and vice versa in the past several months and we will try to cover at least some of these in this current issue. In addition, we have had our Annual Meeting since the last issue of *Direcciones* to report on. There are also changes in the Washington office that need reporting - so, on with the news!

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## Annual meeting

The Annual Meeting was held October 14, 2000 in Fayetteville. It was somewhat streamlined this year, with an open Board meeting held in the morning at the Alzheimer Laboratory conference room, followed by a delightful "asado" in the evening at the Serafini home. A highlight of the Board meeting was a report on the mail election of Officers for the year 2001. They are as

PRESIDENT - **Phil Serafini**  
VICE PRESIDENT - **Thecia Taylor**  
REGIONAL VICE PRESIDENT, CENTRAL  
ARKANSAS - **Sue Heily**  
REGIONAL VICE PRESIDENT, NORTHWEST  
ARKANSAS - **Laurin Wheeler**  
SECRETARY - **Nadine Spears**  
TREASURER - **Charles Hines**  
DIRECTOR-AT-LARGE, 2001 - **Robert Reilly**  
DIRECTOR-AT-LARGE, 2001 - **Mark Robertson**  
DIRECTOR-AT-LARGE, 2002 - **Mary Anne Sennett**  
DIRECTOR-AT-LARGE, 2002 - **Peggy Turbyfill**

Considerable discussion was held on the health of the Partners organization, both locally and from the standpoint of the Washington office. The Executive Director noted that there were only 25 paying members this year, a marked decline from years past (see below for a call for dues for this year!). It was also noted that there was a change occurring in the leadership in the Washington office (also see below for the announcement of the new President). Concern was expressed over lack of communication with our colleagues in East Bolivia, and it was decided that a fact-finding mission should be undertaken if possible - more on that below. Many other issues of finance, in-country developments, and individual interests were added to this discussion.

Several committee reports were given. Under Farmer-to-Farmer, **Bill Millager** reported on a FtT meeting in Wisconsin and possible initiatives our chapter could undertake. He agreed further to assist in the work of Public Relations as needed. **Bob Spears** reported on he and Nadine's recent trip to both Guyana and Bolivia and underlined prior discussions on falling economic conditions in Bolivia, as well as their work with the dairy industry in Bolivia. Both **Sue Heily** and **Mary Anne Sennett** reported on their interests and plans for Special Education and Family Violence proposals for future months. **Margaret Clark** reported on the interests in East Bolivia concerning the teaching of English and books that were to be taken there with the special team scheduled to leave for Bolivia shortly. Some discussion was also held on the availability of funds in our treasury and their possible use to cover expenses for the special team traveling to Bolivia. It was agreed unanimously that funds

could be used for this purpose.

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## Travels

As a result of discussions noted above and at prior Board meetings, it was decided that a special team would travel to East Bolivia to ascertain level of activity and future cooperative projects that could be undertaken. Consequently, the following report was filed by **Bob Frans** as a result of that trip:

"This e-mail letter (sent to various members of the Washington office, as well as to Officers of the Arkansas chapter and to members of East Bolivia Partners groups) is to inform you of recent actions three of us took on a trip to East Bolivia. Vice President **Thecia Taylor**, Executive Director **Robert Frans**, and Democratic Initiatives Chair **Bettie Lu Lancaster**, all of the Arkansas-East Bolivia partnership, traveled to East Bolivia from October 17 to November 2, 2000. Our trip was multi-purpose: Bettie Lu traveled on a Partners grant to follow up on the North Carolina project, involving all of Bolivia, with the three ladies from East Bolivia that visited their respective partnerships and North Carolina, earlier this year. Her part of the trip was very successful, in that she was able to stimulate further interest in women's projects in the democratic process in Santa Cruz, Trinidad, and Cobija. We all feel that the strengthening of these women's groups in these three places will give considerable empowerment to the whole Partners effort in East Bolivia. I am sure there will be considerable follow-up as a result of her work during this period of time. Bettie Lu had suffered an injury just prior to our leaving, but she 'soldiered on' with the assistance of a wheelchair where needed and with a walker during the early part of the trip.

"Another very significant part of the trip was in our collective attempts to speak to as many Partner's groups as we could, especially in Santa Cruz and Trinidad. This was the reason Bob and Thecia were willing to pay their own way to make this trip. We were of the opinion that our personal contacts would be useful in re-kindling interest in Partners and in renewing efforts in projects that seemed to have become dormant over the last several months. We believe we succeeded, even beyond our expectations, in doing just that. **Dr. Rene Valdivia** is to be commended for his unflagging efforts to put together a meaningful schedule for us and to be sure we got to our various appointments on time. His work certainly made the trip both successful and enjoyable.

"Perhaps the highlight of the trip, at least for Thecia and Bob, was the successful establishment of a new Partnership group in the Pando at the city of Cobija! All three of us continue to be quite excited about this happening. I should mention that **Ing. Miguel Cortez**, Vice President of the Santa Cruz group and Director of the Farmer to Farmer effort in East Bolivia, accompanied us on the trip, acting not only as our friend, but most importantly as our interpreter! His contribution to that part of our trip was invaluable. Incidentally, Miguel

Cortez and his wife Marta, **Aida McKenney**, **Dr. Carlos Paniagua** - then President of the Partners in East Bolivia, and **Bob** and (his late wife) **Maria Teresa Frans**, were the organizers, along with **Dr. Desiree Mostajo**, of the group in the Beni in the city of Trinidad, back in 1994. For the record, the date of organization of the group in Cobija was October 25, 2000. All of us spoke of the work of Partners, particularly as it concerned East Bolivia. So now, we have East Bolivia nicely covered with three distinct groups in the Departments of Pando, Beni, and Santa Cruz. The organizing group in Cobija, as put together by **Carol Carlo**, was small but enthusiastic. (Names of the participants, along with addresses, telephone numbers and e-mail addresses were listed).

"From this group, they immediately held an election for Officers and Chairs as follows:

President and Chair, Democratic Initiatives -  
**Carol Carlo Duran**

Vice President - **Santiago Vaca Roca**

Tesorera - **Rosario Vaca Mejido**

Secretaria - **Maria del Carmen Amuruz Reboso**

Chair, Agropecuario - **Ronald Camargo Suzuki**

Chair, Women and Families - **Monica Antezana Guerrero**

Chair, Educacion - **Loma Salvatierra Chavez**

Chair, Salud - **Norma Negrete Calpineiro**

The last four designations seem to be their main areas of interest at the present time. Again, it was an enthusiastic group and they are ready to go to work. We took several pictures of this momentous occasion and have them available for use in a future edition of the Partners newsletter. I hope those of you in the international office in Washington will duly enroll these new members and this new Partnership group. We're proud of them!"

In addition to the above report on the special team trip, **Bettie Lu Lancaster** filed the following as a result of her work with the Women in Politics project:

"—My mission in Bolivia was to visit the three women who were here in April and find out what they are doing.

"**Carol Carlo**. I took her \$4000 from POA for her project. She sent me a beautifully organized proposal, which I sent to **Mary Beth Hastings**, and with much revision and with Mary Beth's advice, it was funded. She will bring the 63 women who are municipal council members from all of Pando to Cobija for training, so they can be more effective officials. She, her fellow council member **Charo (Rosario Vaca Mejido)** (Treasurer of the new POA-Pando) and others in Cobija will do the training. Then, later, 13 women holding higher political offices will go to Cobija for training. They will bring in two experts from Nur University for that session. (Having visited Nur, I met people who would be excellent - particularly one young man from the University of Wisconsin who specializes in political development).

"We were very impressed with Carol's competence and efficiency. And she appears to have the backing of the entire power structure of Cobija. The mayor, Rector of

the University, etc., etc., and they have all joined Partners.

"In Trinidad, **Maria Luz (Yuja Gomez)** has worked with **Mary Anne Sennett** from Arkansas to propose a domestic violence project. This was determined to be a high priority problem in Bolivia when the nine women met in La Paz after their U.S. visit. Mary Anne will go to Trinidad in November to work with a group of women activists who met with us. Mary Anne will do 'pre-planning with them' getting them going on a project while they are still eager. Then the proposal calls for her to return for planning with an Hispanic outreach worker from our shelter. Then they will have a symposium with talks on the medical (**Desiree Mostajo**, M.D. from Santa Cruz, originally from Trinidad), economic, legal, judicial, social, cultural, etc. problems resulting from domestic violence. All these experts will be Bolivians. The next step will be to raise money for a shelter for victims. Meanwhile, Maria Luz will be working with a priest for a small shelter in a Catholic church.

"Maria Luz has also designated two nurses who have submitted a travel grant application to come to Arkansas in November to learn methods and materials for teaching sex education to pre-adolescents and methods of teaching family planning. I have made some preliminary calls to try to locate places for them to train.

"**Gabriela (Equjino Anaya)**. I got to watch her in action. While I was in Santa Cruz, she had taken a group of teenagers out to a camping retreat for 3 days, and I visited them one afternoon. She works with this group in a public school one day a week, then, using her own money, she takes them on periodic retreats. Her goal is to turn their thinking from themselves to the good of the group, and to give them leadership training, then they work with young people in their schools and neighborhoods. Gabriela finally got her proposal down on paper and handed it to me as I got on the plane. It would be basically more of the same with some POA financing. Nur has excellent resources for this type of project.

"We also met with a group of people who are organizing youth leaders in neighborhoods, with backing from Nur.

"I also seem to have stirred up some interest in more projects for women in politics."

### **Nurses from Trinidad**

Because the special team was "on the ground" in Bolivia, they were encouraged to look for potential visitors to Arkansas, and found them! While in Trinidad working with Maria Luz, they became acquainted with two nurses working at a local hospital and with special interests in families. Both were involved with many of the visits of the team and expressed an interest in Partners. Consequently, they were encouraged to make application for a trip to Arkansas and did so while the team was in Trinidad. Their applications were signed on the spot by **Roxana Ribera**, representing the Trinidad group, and by Vice President **Thecia Taylor**, representing the Arkansas partnership and faxed immediately to Washington, where they received ready approval. Consequently, the two of them, **Vivian Rodal** and **Wilma Alcaron** by name, traveled to Arkansas for a two-week visit beginning

November 28. They came first to Fayetteville where they were hosted by **Bettie Lu Lancaster** and **Bob Frans** with a strong assist from **Thecia Taylor**. The second week of their stay was in Little Rock where they were hosted in Thecia's home. The purpose of their visit was to learn more about reproductive health and to become acquainted with family planning activities in the U.S. as well as how to deal with domestic violence. To this end, they met with various agencies, primarily in Northwest Arkansas, to accomplish their goals. Among those assisting with their program were **Heather Daniel**, former member of the Fayetteville City Council, she helped in translation, **Carol Swope**, founder of the in-school health clinic in Lincoln, **Teresa Elder**, the Director of Arkansas Midwife School and Services, with **Lynn Rogers** assisting with translation, **Roberto Mere**, Hispanic outreach worker at the shelter for victims of domestic violence, **Perla Talebi**, **Dr. E. Ward** of Planned Parenthood, **Greg Graham** from St. Mary's Hospital, **Margaret Clark**, Chair of Education for Partners, **Amilcar Medina** who assisted in translation, **Stephen and Janine Neuse**, and **Sister Ynetta** with St. Edwards Catholic Church in Little Rock.

In addition to the two nurses we had other visitors at the end of 2000. **Miguel Cortez** and **Elizabeth Flores** came to consult with **Chuck West** on forages and animal nutrition matters. As part of their visit Chuck took them on a brief tour of the state which included a visit to the Research and Extension Center in Hope AR to see some of the research work with animals firsthand. Chuck worked extensively with Miguel on constructing workshops for use in Santa Cruz. During their visit and at the conclusion of the nurses visit, a Partner's reception was held for all four at the home of **Thecia Taylor** in Little Rock. **George Vena** presented them with the official Arkansas Traveler's Award commemorating their visit to our state.

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## **News from Washington**

### **We have a new President!**

**Malcolm Butler** has become President and CEO of Partners of the Americas. He brings a rich and varied background to Partners. After completing undergraduate work at Rice University and graduate work at Oxford, he joined the U.S. Foreign Service. His State Department diplomatic work took him first to overseas assignments in Mexico and Iran,. Returning to Washington D.C., he moved to the Office of Management and Budget in the Executive Office of the President, where he reviewed international economic programs, and to the staff of the National Security Council in the White house.

He then shifted to the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), where he held many of the Agency's most senior career positions. He served as Mission Director in four countries - Bolivia, Peru, Lebanon, and the Philippines - at critical moments in their

relationships with the United States. In Washington he directed the USAID Bureaus for Intergovernmental and International Affairs, Latin America and the Caribbean, and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. He also served as the Agency's Executive Secretary.

After leaving USAID, Butler spent a year as Program Director of the North Carolina Outward Bound School, on whose Board of Advisors he had long served. He then founded an international economic consulting practice, which provided services in business development, Washington representation, facilitation of overseas acquisitions, and troubleshooting on behalf of corporate boards. Butler was also President of Pax World Service, an affiliate of Mercy Corps and the Pax World Fund family of socially responsible mutual funds.

A native Texan, he now lives in McLean, Virginia, with his wife, Letitia, a U.S. foreign service officer, and their two sons, Martin, 8, and Tony, 7.

### **New Directors and Officers for POA**

The election was held last fall and the ballots counted on December 6, 2000. The new Board members for POA are as follows:

CHAIR - **Donald I. Wagner** (Ohio, U.S.)

VICE CHAIR - **Maria do Socorro Silva de Aragão** (Paraíba, Brazil)

SECRETARY - **Blanca Laguna de Vera** (La Paz, Bolivia)

TREASURER - **Ronald Padgett** (Kentucky, U.S.)  
U.S. DIRECTOR POSITIONS

**Doris Crocker** (New Jersey)

**Bill Fuller** (Indiana)

CARIBBEAN DIRECTOR POSITION

**Beverly Drayton** (Trinidad and Tobago)

CENTRAL AMERICA DIRECTOR POSITION

**Ramiro Crawford** (Costa Rica)

BRAZIL DIRECTOR POSITION

**Vera Lia Fortini de Cavalheiro** (Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil)

### **New Directory**

The new directory of chapter officers for all partnerships has been distributed, dated January 17, 2001. This will be the last hard copy in general distribution. Hereafter, you are encouraged to look up the Directory on the Partners website ([www.partners.net](http://www.partners.net)). We are told the Directory will be updated each month, so this should make it even more valuable as a source of information. If you don't have access to the internet, you can contact either Phil or Bob for information.

### **Education and Culture Grant for 2001**

In a memo dated February 6, 2001, **President Butler** announced that the U.S. Department of State has awarded \$356,000 to Partners of the Americas for its Education and Culture program for the year 2001. As he says: "This will enable us to provide about 100 travel exchanges and 15 to 20 small assistance projects of up to \$2,000." He emphasizes that grants will be awarded on a first come first served basis but will be monitored until July 1 to avoid some chapters monopolizing the

money. The program "—seeks to emphasize exchanges and projects involving professionals which promote understanding and cooperation, strengthen awareness and sensitivity to diversity, increase citizen participation in community affairs, establish and improve linkages between institutions, especially educational ones, professionalize educators with attention to environmental education, and improve understanding of the benefits arising from international economic interdependence and how to resolve problems arising therefrom. Travelers and projects should relate to priorities established in the joint Partnership goal statements."

For further information, contact your President or board member.

### **International Convention**

The International Convention will be in Orlando, Florida, November 14-18, 2001, at the Hotel Royal Plaza. The theme is Youth and Families. There will be more details available in the coming months, or you can visit the Partners website for more details.

### **Annual Report, Partners of the Americas, 1999**

Here's one we overlooked in past issues, and it's on page 9 of the above named report and entitled: "Hope for the Special." We quote, as follows:

"The 'Hope for the Special' project began when a member of the Arkansas-Eastern Bolivia Partners met with twelve mothers who were staffing the Special Education School in Trinidad, Bolivia and heard that their biggest dream was to have in-service training on methods and techniques for teaching children with disabilities. For two years the Arkansas Partners worked to meet that need. U.S. special education specialist **Susan Heily** conducted ten 2-day Special Education seminars in Santa Cruz, Trinidad and Cochabamba. These training sessions were attended by more than 350 parents, teachers and professionals representing 50 institutions and addressed the need and type of early intervention and methods of implementing effective health practices and self esteem activities for children with Downs. Ms. Heily and a colleague who traveled under private sponsorship provided donated materials and school supplies. Three important public institutions - PREEFA in Sant Cruz, the Trinidad Special School, and Avanca in Cochabamba - were presented with teaching supplies, educational materials and equipment, plus funds to purchase a refrigerator to store medicines and food. The expected long-term benefits include additional regional and national seminars by Bolivian special education leaders as public schools begin to incorporate special education into regular school programs in Bolivia."

Once again – Congratulations, Sue!"

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## New members

It's been a while since we welcomed new members, but we do have some! They are:

Jeannine and Rafael Acosta  
20997 Dawn Hill Rd.  
Gentry AR 72734  
501-736-2664

Janet and Jim Bachmann/Lukens  
5149 S. Shaeffer Rd.  
Fayetteville AR 72701  
501-443-9388

Rose Mary Jackson  
110 Green Valley Circle  
Searcy AR 72143  
501-279-3803

Gerald Klingaman  
1645 Applebury Dr.  
Fayetteville AR 72701  
H-501-582-0362, O-501-575-2603

Raeann Refeld  
P.O. Box 15  
Almyra AR 72003  
870-992-8001

Barry Williams  
510 Beech St #2B  
Helena AR 72342  
H-870-817-0103, O-870-338-6651

Welcome folks! We're glad to have you. We hope you will find your Partners experience rewarding. Let us know if we can be of help to you.

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## Time for dues!

Yes, it is that time again! Ordinarily, we would have started our dues drive last fall, but your Editor, apparently, was too lazy to get out an issue of *Direcciones*, so now is the time. A few of you are paid for 2001 but the majority of us are not. So — if you receive a dues statement attached to this newsletter it means my records indicate that you are not paid for 2001. As usual, we will appreciate your early attention to paying your dues. You'd be surprised at how important these dues are - they help keep us in business! Some of you may want to consider a Sustaining Membership - it's a bargain at only \$100!! Thanks.

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## Last thoughts

Look at all this space that's left on this page! What a shame to waste it. But it's a good indication that all of you can help by providing snippets of information that others might be interested in. Do it - your Editor promises to keep it on file until the next issue comes out.

Here's one, for example: **Bettie Lu Lancaster** urges that we collect together any English literature we would like to share with our friends in Bolivia, such as paperback novels. We will send them down with a future traveler to Bolivia to be used by the Centro Boliviano Americano in Santa Cruz. Undoubtedly there are similar organizations in Trinidad and Tobago that could use such material. It's easy to put such stuff in an old suitcase and check it with your luggage if you are going to Bolivia. After all, your Editor was "horn-swoggled" into carrying a whole suitcase of teaching materials there last fall, so it can be done.

See how easy that was? I'll bet some of you have other little bits of information that would be useful in this newsletter. Won't you share it? And I'll continue my offer from the last issue - if any of you would like this job, just let me know - I'm ready to talk!