



# DIRECCIONES

Newsletter of the Arkansas-East Bolivia Partners of the Americas  
Bob Frans, Ed., 1366 W. Alzheimer Dr., Fayetteville AR 72704-6898  
Phone 479-575-3978 or 443-5403, Fax 479-575-3975, [rfrans@uark.edu](mailto:rfrans@uark.edu)  
[www.partners.net](http://www.partners.net) (national); [www.uark.edu/misc/partners](http://www.uark.edu/misc/partners) (Arkansas)

Fall 2003

---

## Outgoing President's Message

It is incredible that almost two years have passed since you elected me as your President

I look back on what has happened and see an increase in our membership, more cohesiveness in our state Partners, new areas of exchange which should lead to exciting exchanges in the future, new and eager Chairmen of Committees and wonderful new personalities on our Board.

I also see changes which will affect our future, perhaps for a brief time, possibly for an extended time. First is the loss of our Farmer to Farmer Program and secondly, the social and political climate of Bolivia.

We may have some control over the future of our FTF program as the USAID contract for South America was awarded to Winrock. I hope that they will work with us and help to continue that which has been started and invite us to initiate new programs. Let's keep in mind that before FTF was a part of the Arkansas/Eastern Bolivia Partners, we had a very successful Agriculture Committee.

Unfortunately, we have no control over the political situation in Bolivia. I've heard the 'old timers' speaking of impossible situations that Arkansas Partners could find themselves in during the 60's and 70's. One Partner being secreted out during the night to another country to catch a plane to yet another country to finally return home. Airports and Universities would close without warning. The Government would shut down after, once again, a new leader overthrew the existing leader. The value of currency could fluctuate by the hour. We had no faxes, no e-mail. Our phone calls were routed through La Paz and completed when you were 'next' on the list or possibly at the whim of the operator. It could take a day or more.

In spite of all of this we continued coming and going, secure in the knowledge that our Bolivian friends would keep us from harms way.

Bolivia's aspiring President of today brings more dangers. More concerns for our travelers. And, yet, I believe we can do our work as long as we continue to travel in peace and love. We've involved ourselves in the

political arena, perhaps not a good choice if the President is forced out of office or resigns.

I hope my concerns will have resolved themselves by the time this goes to print. I pray this is so.

For the immediate past, thank you for giving me the opportunity to serve as your President. Thank you for working with me in all areas. This thanks also extends to the Washington staff. There are many things left undone, there always will be as there is so much to be done. I treasure new Partner friendships that have come from traveling to Northwest Arkansas with some sort of regularity. I value my old and new Partner friends in Central Arkansas. Every Bolivian traveler is a new friend and a new memory. I cherish each and every Partner friendship and will keep these forever..

I extend my hands to Susan Heily, our incoming President. I know that everyone will support her, bearing in mind that being a successful President is not a one man job.

Sincerely,

**Thecia Taylor**  
President

---

## Incoming President's Message

There have been many Partners of the Americas ventures and projects in the past three years of which we all have been a small part from time to time, such as the display board, translating, transportation, 'asados', and information booths. I am grateful to Thecia for her leadership and enthusiasm during those years.

1900-2000 paved the way for my participation in Partners here in Arkansas and a philosophical and spiritual growth period for me. I won't bore you with all the details, but several truths for me became my own and directed and still direct me in all of my volunteer work. First, no matter how "solo" I am, I am not alone. Secondly, Partners taught me that what I can give is never as much as I get from giving. Finally, sharing enriches me by giving me satisfaction and joy.

It seems to me that there is in the 21<sup>st</sup> century a dire need for individual diplomacy, and Partners answers that uniquely. Let us continue to seize the challenges to

exchange and apply our warmth, fellowship, talents, time and gifts at every social event, meeting and communication throughout Arkansas and Bolivia.

Our group is a vital aspect of Arkansas. Together the possibilities for a positive future in the Western Hemisphere are limitless. Let us continue our part in the individual diplomacy adventure.

**Susan Heily**  
Vice President

---

## From the Editor

I promised myself that I would resist the temptation, in this issue, to editorialize unnecessarily. However, I'm sitting at my computer on the second anniversary of 9/11 and remembering. Remembering that morning two years ago when six of us from Arkansas got off an airplane in Trinidad, Bolivia and heard the horrifying news of what had happened back home in the U.S. Remembering too, the expressions of sympathy and outrage from our Bolivian friends, offers to help in whatever way possible, even to the giving of blood. The tragedy visited upon us and the hurt we have all felt does not go away easily, but the determination to go forward, knowing we have sympathetic friends all over the world, and for us, experiencing the strong bonds of friendship forged through Partners of the Americas, strengthens our resolve to continue to overcome this tragedy and to continue to forge even stronger bonds of friendship through this partnership. It's all up to us and our colleagues in East Bolivia. We can make of this partnership just what we want it to be. Sometimes, remembering helps. That's my little message of hope for the future of the Arkansas-East Bolivia partnership.

---

## Last Board Meeting

Our last Board meeting was held July 19, 2003 in Russellville. Our special guest was **Miguel Cortez**, President of the Santa Cruz chapter. Several committee reports were given as follows:

### Education

**Margaret Clark** reported on her discussions with Miguel concerning communications, general public education on health issues, and the role of education in domestic violence issues, especially regarding children. Miguel is interested in an education project regarding a drug prevention program for youth.

### Farmer to Farmer

**Don Dombek's** written report covered two aspects. The first was concern over the ending the present contract for the work as of September 30, 2003. At this writing, no final decision had been made. Don proposes to focus on two projects - animal production and sustainable urban food production systems. Secondly, Don's report covered

travel updates, including **Ron Morrow's** trip to East Bolivia, **Juan Antonio's** trip from Bolivia to Arkansas, and proposed trips to Bolivia by **John Goodwin** and **Jim Correll**.

### Health and Wellness

**Thecia Taylor** reported that efforts are underway to find a hand surgery doctor interested in traveling to Bolivia.

### Membership

**Ed Hawkins** reported on his efforts to develop a questionnaire to aid in increasing membership, adding to our pool of talent and financial resources for our programs of work. He and **Sue Heily** are planning to produce a video to assist in membership recruitment.

There were other topics covered at this meeting. A discussion regarding the possible hosting of the 2005 International Conference in Arkansas, with inputs from **Don Thurman**, was held. It was agreed to form a committee to explore further these possibilities. The committee named was **Margaret Clark**, Chair, **Le Ann Robertson**, **Bettie Lu Lancaster**, **Tom Green**, **Thecia Taylor**, and **Ed Hawkins**, with Don Thurman advising. The committee is to report at a later date. The International Meeting in Lexington was discussed, as well as the possibility of having the former President of Bolivia, **Ing. Jorge Quiroga R.** visiting the University of Arkansas for a major address.

(Note: news from the October Board meeting will be reported in the next issue of *Direcciones*)

---

## From the Bolivian Ambassador to the U.S.

On the occasion of the Bolivian independence day (August 6), the ambassador sent this message, primarily intended for the citizens of Bolivia living in the U.S.:

"In commemoration of the 178<sup>th</sup> independence anniversary of the Republic of Bolivia, I would like to congratulate all the Bolivian citizens living in the United States.

"All of you are part of Bolivia's cultural and community values that is the reference that keeps us together and represents Bolivia in this foreign land. We are a society whose roots are anchored with our geographic, cultural, and ethnic diversity, which is reflected in the different communities living in the United States.

"We would like to express our appreciation and gratitude to all the Bolivian organizations that from their individual interests and activities, whether they are folkloric, sports, professional, charity, etc., support Bolivia and keep the presence of the country alive. Moreover, we appreciate the solidarity you have shown to the Bolivian people who need it the most.

"Also, I would like to extend my gratitude, for their constant support, to the president and members of all the Bolivian commerce organizations based in New York, Washington, and Houston. Moreover, my

gratitude goes also to the Bolivian Press in Washington, which supports our country from their individual organizations.

"In the first months of my term we are committed to support the vindication of the Bolivian residents in the United States, principally in places where there are larger Bolivian communities, by improving the quality of consular services, implementing the consulate enrollment, and supporting the current constitutional reform that will allow our citizens to have dual citizenship.

"I hope we can work together for the benefit of your communities and principally for the benefit of our country, which requires the participation, solidarity, and support of every one of you."

**Jaime Aparicio Otero**  
Ambassador of Bolivia

We have also received information from the Bolivian Embassy in Washington that they have a new web page. Although much of it is in Spanish, there are several articles of general interest about Bolivia in English. Check it out at [www.bolivia-usa.org](http://www.bolivia-usa.org)

---

## Travels

**Fran Free** is one of our newest members of Partners and recently completed a trip to Bolivia, working in the area of urban vegetable production. This is her report:

### Santa Cruz, FTF,...and Worms?

My recent trip, thanks to the Farmer to Farmer program, found me among the incredibly accommodating and curious folks of Santa Cruz of the Sierra, Bolivia. My purpose for being there was to initiate the first step in a much larger, longer-term project of urban/family vegetable gardening. My goal: provide instruction for turning kitchen scraps and other organic wastes into the "original black gold," a.k.a. COMPOST!

The Arkansas-Eastern Bolivia Farmer to Farmer coordinator, **Don Dombek**, and I landed at quite an impressive vermicomposting project, already in full swing in Santa Cruz. **Ing. Ramiro Sanchez** of "Vallecito," the research institute associated with the Universidad Autonoma Gabriel Rene Moreno (UAGRM), heads the well-established "worm farm" with the help of his thesis students in the agronomy department. Their *Lumbricus rubellus* are so popular that they can't keep the local supermarkets' shelves stocked with their castings! A liquid version of the fertilizer is also sold to help fund their project. The worm castings are an extremely well-balanced source of N-P-K, as well as important micronutrients. Given the proper conditions, they can eat their own weight in food-wastes daily and double in population in only one month! The vermiculture set-up at Vallecito is among the best I've seen and I hope to work with them in the future to extend their technical

knowledge to other schools in the area.

Also knee-deep in worms is Colonial Piraí, another agriculture school in Sta. Cruz I had the chance to visit last month. Piraí was founded 30 years ago with 100 abandoned hectares, nine dedicated people, one lazy horse, and a vision of building a community with substance. The school accepts street kids and children from low-income urban families to live on the rural campus on the edge of Sta. Cruz, bordering the river for which it's named. There are 110 students between the ages of 16 and 24 working hands-on in the fields of agronomy, horticulture, and animal husbandry. At the end of the 3-year training, instead of staying in the city to find work, they return to their villages or are placed in various rural areas to provide outreach to campesinos. This helps address the lack of a Bolivian Agricultural Extension Service, such that is provided in the U.S. through land-grant universities. Piraí does not receive government funding and supports itself through a handful of private grants and selling commodities produced on the farm. Sadly enough though, each staff member is currently deciding between taking a mandatory pay cut or finding a better paying job elsewhere. Let's hope they're able to overcome adversary and continue with their good work.

Overall, it was a wonderful trip; there never existed a dull moment, as I'm sure to which a lot of you previous volunteers can attest. I got the opportunity to meet a lot of self-motivated and promising young people in agriculture and feel I made great contacts, with which I plan to continue working. Thank you, Partners, for your support and sponsorship.

*Fran is a recent graduate of the Environmental Soils and Water Science department at the U of A.*

**Drs. Paul McLeod**, Department of Entomology and **Jim Correll**, Department of Plant Pathology from the University of Arkansas recently traveled to Bolivia under the Farmer to Farmer program. This is their combined report:

Dates: 21 Sept – 2 Oct 2003.

1. What was the purpose and primary objective of your trip?

- A. Provide instruction in development and use of IPM programs for insects and diseases of vegetables.
- B. Analyze current cropping systems and provide suggestions for improvement.
- C. Determine areas of future cooperation.
- D. Establish links for future cooperation including graduate and undergraduate student exchange as well as technical personnel.
- E. Evaluate pesticide usage in various cropping systems.

What Institutions/organizations/groups were you primarily providing assistance to?

- A. Servicio Departmental Agroquimicos (SEDAG) – Minister of Agriculture
- B. Partners and Farmer to Farmer members and volunteers from Santa Cruz.
- C. Agricultural sciences faculty of Universidad Autonoma Gabriel Rene Moreno

- D. Senior administrators of Universidad Autonoma Gabriel Rene Moreno
- E. Asociacion Nacional de Productores de Oleaginosas (ANAPO)

What services/assistance did you provide?

- A. Provide instruction in development and use of IPM programs for insects and diseases of vegetables.

Several field meetings were held 25<sup>th</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> of September to discuss insect and disease problems on vegetables and their management. In addition, discussions of pests on soybean, peanut, corn, sorghum, and Stavia were discussed. Management strategies for insect pests and diseases of vegetables were discussed with **Mr. Telemaco (Walter) Orquera** Vias, Coordinator of the Tomato Project of MEDA, **Mr. Carlos Rivadeneira Michel**, El Vallecito, **Mr. Fernando Copa Bazan**, El Vallecito, and **Ramiro Sanchez**, Gabriel Rene Moreno University. Soybean and peanut pest problems were also discussed with **Mr. Ruben Calatayud** and **Mr. Marin Condori** (ANAPO).

- B. Analyze current cropping systems and provide suggestions for improvement.

Near Mairana the principal vegetable observed was tomato. Walter Orquera, Coordinator of the Tomato Project of MEDA, accompanied us to the field and assisted with the analysis of the field situation. The major insect pest was *Tuta absoluta* – what is called the tomato pinworm in the U.S. Digital photographs of the insect and associated damage were taken and used in the production of an extension bulletin. The bulletin includes identification, biology and management of the pest and was left on CD with Mr. Ramiro Sanchez. The bulletin is now in need of editing and translation. SEDAG personnel have agreed to print the bulletin. A second tomato field was observed near Comarapa. Plants had recently been transplanted and were heavily infested with whiteflies. The source of the infestation appeared to be from solanaceous weeds located adjacent to the field. It was suggested to the farmer that these weeds be removed several weeks prior to subsequent transplantings. Also changes in insecticide use were suggested. Digital photos were taken and another extension bulletin on whitefly management was prepared and left on CD.

Several disease problems were identified at the field location including tomato spotted wilt virus (TSWV), bacterial spot (*Xanthomonas campestris*), early blight (*Alternaria solani* and *Alternaria alternata*), and powdery mildew (*Erysiphe chichoreacearum*). Incidence of TSWV was approximately 10%. Early blight and bacterial spot were causing some leaf necrosis and defoliation, and powdery mildew did not appear to be causing any significant damage. Bacterial wilt (*Ralstonia solanacearum*) was also observed in several fields. A general extension bulletin was prepared for TSWV and early blight/foliar blights.

Discussions were held with ANAPO personnel on insect pests and diseases of soybean. Soybean rust, apparently caused by the more aggressive species *Phakosora pachyrhizi*, was first observed in the seed production areas in July of 2003. ANAPO personnel apparently have been working with Brazilian scientists and have carefully documented the species using molecular markers and have reported the occurrence of this disease for the first time in Bolivia. Advanced breeding lines (F<sub>4</sub>-F<sub>6</sub>) have been developed from rust resistant germplasm obtained from Illinois and are being evaluated for disease resistance in the field.

Literature on production of field corn was left for distribution to personnel from PROMASOR.

- C. Determine areas of future cooperation.

Discussions were held with

- a. **Mr. Hugo Serrate, Mr. Ramiro Sanchez, Mr. Gary Villegas, Ms. Milenka Velasco, and Dr. Christopher Pruett** of Universidad Autonoma “Gabriel Rene Moreno”

- i. Student exchange (graduate and undergraduate levels)
- ii. English instruction
- iii. Future assistance with publication of extension literature

- b. SEDAG personnel

- i. Future assistance with extension literature

- D. Establish links for future cooperation including student exchange.

Discussions were held with

- a. Dr. Christopher Pruett and several staff of Universidad Autonoma “Gabriel Rene Moreno”

- i. Student exchange

1. Assistantships are sometimes available but requires student interested in a particular area, e.g. entomology, and with English skills
2. Explore graduate student opportunities with other visiting faculty from the University of Arkansas
3. Explore undergraduate summer internships for qualified students from Bolivia to spend three months at the U of A.

What were your observations and what do you feel you accomplished

We believe that Dr. Pruett Mr. Carlos Rivadeneira Michel have an outstanding knowledge of the insect and disease situation, respectively in the Santa Cruz

area and should be considered “the source” of information in the future. We hope that each of the organizations we consulted with will be aware of this information source. By establishing the linkage between Dr. Pruettt and Mr. Carlos Rivadeneira Michel and ourselves, we believe that future collaboration will be achieved. We hope that we will be able to assist them in further development and publication of extension literature on insects of vegetables. This visit was the first step in the process. It also was the initial step in development of student exchange.

Some newer information was provided to vegetable and corn producers. Use of this information should help in better management of insect pests, improvement of pesticide safety, and resistance management.

From the information that you have, did you notice or become aware of any changes that resulted from recommendations of previous FTF volunteers?

Several of the organizations mentioned previous visits by FTF volunteers and successes instigated by the volunteers. This includes improvements in seed production, forages, dairy and cotton.

What future volunteer assignments do you think are needed, and what are the next steps in moving the program forward.

A. We believe that the greatest potential for future success is in the area of extension bulletin development and publication. We have the ability of taking quality digital photos of insects and diseases and writing descriptions, biologies, and management strategies for these pests of vegetables and corn. An effort by an entomologist and pathologist could develop bulletins for one or two crops during a two week visit. Translation in Santa Cruz would be required and the document could be quickly printed and distributed to producers. Perhaps a bulletin on backyard vegetable insects and diseases could be developed between the University of Arkansas and Dr. Chris Pruettt and Mr. Carlos Rivadeneira Michel.

B. Sending post-graduate students from agricultural sciences of the Universidad Autonoma “Gabriel Rene Moreno” to the University of Arkansas should be developed further. The two requirements needed from Bolivia are 1. a strong student with a specific interest, e.g., entomology or plant pathology, and 2. good English skills. Efforts will be made to match students with appropriate faculty with support funds at the University of Arkansas.

Any recommendations/suggestions for future volunteers, or comments?

Remain flexible, be prepared to work hard, but take time to enjoy the wonderful country and friendly people.

Please provide some comments on how the trip affected you personally, or how you generally feel about the Farmer to Farmer program.

Together, Drs. McLeod and Correll have had extensive experience on international agricultural assignments. We would rank Bolivia as the most professionally and personally satisfying country we have had the opportunity

to work in. Without exception, the technical personnel, the vegetable producers, the organization staff and in particular, the FTF staff and their wives were highly interested in interacting with us and gaining as much knowledge as possible during the short visit. We believe, however, we have gained far more than we provided.

### **Jo Ann Kaminsky**

Profession/occupation and title -Artist / Art Therapist

7-25-03 to 8-27-03

#### Purpose and Activities:

The purpose was to work with Nur University students who are developing an art curriculum to use in their program for public high school students, supporting their development of the project, offering technical and dynamic support where possible.

> 1.. I began by visiting the workshop and sitting in on music, drama, visual arts and dance sessions in order to see the youth programs in action. The street theater project was introduced that would be presented at their youth arts festival on August 16th, and there were some beginning practice sessions. It was powerful to watch the growth of the student's self-confidence as they began to practice their parts.

> 2.. I visited the public schools where the youth were attending, to get a sense of their world and see what they were receiving in terms of art in their schools. I wanted to see their neighborhoods and know something about their environment.

> 3.. As we visited the high schools we invited the teachers from the public schools to come for a presentation. I led a three-hour activity and lecture at Nur on the value of art making for youth in terms of empowerment and learning on many levels. I gave information about the relationship of creative involvement for at risk youth and their ability to improve their scores in math and science as well as see themselves as a change agent in their own lives. I led the teachers in an art exercise where they were able to express and share their own successes in their classes and I presented ideas through a slide show of giant puppets and masks that I had created. This process was particularly relevant to this group because the projects could be made using inexpensive materials and can be done by students at any level of expertise, encouraging creativity through individual and group expression. The teachers were asked at the end of the session to draw something that they could take away with them to do in their classroom and many of them enthusiastically drew the giant puppets and theater props that they were shown. There were about fifteen in attendance.

> 4.. One of the teachers was inspired by the presentation of creative alternatives in the classroom, as well as my later presentation of my own work. She wanted advice about creating a classroom that would be conducive to more creative work. Along with Vicente, a Nur University student, I created a classroom design for her.

> 5.. I attended a 40 hour class in Moral Leadership Training offered by Nur University in order to understand the framework that the University students were using and be more able to help them develop a plan that would work for them. This was helpful in working on development of their curriculum as well as providing a structure in which I could work while demonstrating a group project, (the giant puppet project)

> 6.. I met with a small group of 6 to 8 Nur students for curriculum development. This involved examining art and art making as an educational, expressive and empowering tool for working with youth. This group met four times for a total of about 12 hours. The information was brought to the larger group (12) of facilitators and a three-hour workshop was conducted for further elaboration on the understanding of the rationale of the program.

> 7.. I met with several of the workshop leaders individually to see where things were going well and where they needed help. The prevalent problems seemed to be in engaging the youth at the beginning. I recommended beginning at a more basic level to create an atmosphere of safety for the students and offering aids such as masks for students just beginning theater exercises to provide inspiration and a sense of safety. My focus was on the way that the classes were taught and in getting the message across that each student could create and find their own creative voice. Technical assistance in terms of possible supplies for the visual arts section and literature was recommended for teaching a variety of media as well as teaching basic skills such as drawing and seeing.

> 8.. I felt that I should know something about the cultural background of the students involved so that I could help them learn and work from their own traditions. **Gabriela Eguino** arranged for me to tour the Museo de Folklorico to learn about the history of masks, costumes and giant puppets in the culture in and around Santa Cruz

> 9.. I visited with **Yolanda Cabrera** who had been responsible for much of the collection at the Museo de Folklorico and who has conducted folkloric dance classes. She was able to give valuable information about how many of the masks were used and expand on the historical significance of the masks, puppets and costumes in the museum as well as having more examples to show. This information was also shown to the workshop participants to educate them on their own cultural history and motivate them in creating their own art. I took photos that I presented in the mask and puppet workshop and discovered that Jimmy, the teacher of folkloric dance section of the student workshops, was well versed in the masks, customs and dances and was able to add more information to inspire development of masks and giant puppets.

> 10.. I gave a two- hour lecture to social work students at the University about art therapy in healing from domestic abuse. The students had been learning about domestic violence and the teacher, **Mary Martin**, had heard that I use art therapy to work with children in battered women's shelters. This is an unknown field in

Bolivia and she wanted her students to know more. There was an art activity and a question and answer period and the students appeared to be active and interested, asking many questions. She said that often they leave early because it is a three-hour class, but on this day most students remained for the entire period. The class size was about 40.

> 11.. I gave a two-hour talk about my own work, entitled "Art And Transformation" at a conference for art students and the general public. I showed slides of about 12 paintings and sculpture. I used myself as an example to talk about how one can use creativity to learn about themselves and express their own issues and life view as well as to actually make life changes.

> 12.. Along with Marcello -I worked with youth ages 7 to 16 to make hand puppets at the Cabildo de Ninez. The children were part of a program to empower youth toward community involvement and were from a variety of backgrounds. We met for three mornings totaling about 8 hours. At the end of the session the children knew how to create and manipulate a hand puppet and were planning to create a play as well as teach other children how to make their own puppets. One of the older students has his own youth group and has plans to make their own puppet shows. Marcello was also excited about the large puppets and made drawings of some of them so that they can create them for large festivals that they have. We have made plans to keep in touch via e-mail and I will send him more plans for large puppets. The class totaled about 10 children.

> 13.. Through the Partners I met a painter, **Charro Viendo**, who is giving free art lessons to disadvantaged children, at the Art Museum. I was invited to her home for dinner where I met other artists offering free art lessons to children in their rural community and I visited her studio and photographed examples of her students' work. I also attended one of her sessions with the children. When I arrived she said that they were drawing fruit and after they were going to eat it. She requested that I participate in the still life drawing exercise as an example to the children and I photographed each one with his art piece and spoke to them about the value of their doing art. She is preparing for an exhibition of her work as well as working with the children in the Casa de Cultura. There were about eight children present at the time and the youngest was seven. The oldest was fourteen.

> 14.. I met and worked with Nur University students to create a giant banner for their Arts Festival. We worked about 10 hours on the mural which gave the message walking together to change the world. About 12 students worked on the banner. In addition I gave feedback to various students about projects as part of the festival.

> 15.. I toured Bellas Artes, a private arts school, and met and consulted with **Isabel Jordan**, teacher of art, on request by **Aida McKinney** who is the director. Isabel was having difficulty in educating the parents of her students in the value of experimentation and practice in learning art, or viewing art making with an eye to the process instead of the product. She was invited to

participate in the teacher workshop as well as the puppetmaking workshop.

> 16.. I conducted a 20 hour workshop with 20 high school students, college students and teachers worked together to create three giant puppets and learned the process of leading group art making projects, using the giant puppet format. I worked with the students in total preparation for the workshops so that they may be able to teach the process.

#### Did you accomplish the purpose of your trip?

Yes we were able to come up with a written curriculum and rationale for the art workshops conducted by Nur students. The curriculum followed the curriculum development plan put forth by Nur University and was very explicit in spelling out the attributes that are aimed for in creating change in both the community and in the individual. We intentionally left open-ended the exact steps the teachers should take to accomplish the goals so that they may make them their own, and to encourage the creativity of the teachers as well. There were several ways that I encouraged the youth to learn more but I feel that a follow up visit would be very helpful in supporting their project

I wanted to introduce the idea that the process of teaching and doing art is a focus for change, not just the product. The leaders of the project stated that enthusiasm for the projects had increased dramatically.

The students successfully completed three puppets and have instructions to lead more workshops. The coordinator wrote to say that now they have more students who are excited about the projects and both students and teachers who want to learn how to create and teach giant puppet making. There was to be another festival in September where they planned to use their new resources.

In addition to the direct work with the youth I feel that much was accomplished in working with the art teachers in the public schools and many new ideas and directions were encouraged, but they also need more support, ideas and possibly fundraising ideas to be able to accomplish some goals that they have.

One hope was that teachers in the public schools would find some new reasons and ideas about how to encourage their students to be more creative and empowered in their art classes and many teachers reported that they had gotten new ideas. One teacher came to me after the presentation and asked for help in designing a classroom in which she could help the students to create.

#### Describe the results in measurable terms.

Bolivian time frames are different than in the US, so adding extra time is important. It was a challenge getting materials together although everything was available there. I was not familiar with the sources. My ability to speak Spanish did limit me somewhat although I improved and was able to conduct some sessions in Spanish. Total Spanish fluency would have been easier,

but the people worked hard to understand me and were very welcoming.

In addition to welcoming me with a reception and celebrating my visit with a farewell barbeque, I participated in the Partners of Americas meeting and shared some of my projects and concerns with them.

#### Please describe how the host Partners chapter was involved with your visit?

Partners provided room, board and transportation as well as arranging my schedule and introducing me to the arts community. Aida McKinney and Gabriela Eguino were especially helpful in creating a very rich cultural and creative experience for me. I was able to meet so many creative people as well as many in the community who are working on projects for their community in refreshing new ways. **Rosario Anaya** offered her home to me during my stay as well as her hospitality. I felt very welcomed by the community and have come home with many new ideas to do with my community and some connections in Bolivia that I believe will be productive to many.

With **Jorge Rodrigues**, the chairman of the art Department at Nur University, I visited the community class of ceramics taught by **Lorgio Vaca**, celebrated Santa Cruz muralist. We also attended the opening of the painting exhibit by **Fredy Escobar Vega**, Cuban artist.

Lorgio Vaca gave me a city tour of his works as well as a tour of his private studio and the adjoining studios where indigenous artists were creating their own work. During this visit I was able to show him one of our giant puppets that was in process and photos of others that I had made and he felt there were many uses for them in Santa Cruz. His wife is working with women in the outlying rural areas and was very enthusiastic about the possibility of my working with them, using this method.

Lorio Vaca was also able to give me a tour of Arte Campo, a local collective of artisans. The work of many pueblos were represented here and Senor Vaca was able to give me background information on the communities and the themes present there.

**Tito Churimoto** and **Herminio Pedrazco** provided and evening meal and tour of their studios. Senor Churimoto was preparing for an exhibition and brought our all of his current work to share with me. I felt that I was able to see many of the areas' stellar artists.

I visited the studio and home of woodworker **Juan Busilios**, where there were representatives of many of Bolivia's hardwoods. His work was very sensitive and he has created a very beautiful environment.

I was invited to lunch by the civic action committee of the Santa Cruz Campaneros, where I heard an informal report of their projects. They shared with me some of their ideas and issues regarding: the health care system and making health care more accessible, domestic violence issues and other issues working very closely in an educational capacity with the local police.

### And what kinds of follow-up activities are likely?

They were pleased at the amount of work accomplished and were making plans to carry out projects inspired by my residency. Skills have been shared for projects to follow. The youth at Cabildo de Ninez were planning handpuppet-making workshops and also were interested in larger puppets. The Nur students have another festival planned for September and intend to carry out projects inspired by my residency. They have written me to say that they have many new students and the teachers from the public schools have contacted them saying that they want to learn how to create large puppets.

In addition the youth at Nur have some guidelines to follow in terms of how to use art to work encourage and empower youth to grow, change and develop their own understanding of their values. They do have my support through e-mail as well as other artists and teachers who now are aware of their program in Bolivia.

### What are the expected or anticipated long-term benefits of your visit to the hosting chapter?

The long-term benefits are yet to be seen but the hope is that many sectors of the population will be learning more about art and creating. Art is a very powerful motivator for action. When a person is creating they have shifted to an acting position in life. It can be used to help a person understand himself and grow as in a therapeutic or personal growth setting. The act of doing art is also a way to practice decision-making skills and children who create art tend to do well in other subjects in school and feel more empowered and hopeful for their future.

The teachers who attended the workshops will have more resources with which to teach the youth and the youth will become less passive and more active in determining their own lives.

The Nur students received new ideas and support for their ongoing project and will develop skills for working with younger students in a more effective and powerful way. This will impact their lives directly in a sense of meaning, connectedness and accomplishment in their lives and it will impact the many youth with which they work. The high school youth who attend the art workshops conducted by the Nur youth will develop also a sense of self-worth and connectedness as well as higher learning skills which they practice while learning and practicing their art.

The youth at Cabildo De Ninez are leaning how to be active members in their community. The skills that they gathered will make them more able to reach out and make changes with other youth that they teach or create with. They have plans to use these skills in plays and learning circles.

It appears that it takes great strength and determination and hope to survive in a country that is struggling financially and socially as is Bolivia. I believe that the acts of doing and sharing are very powerful personal tools in making change both personally and communally. The results of teaching art will be seen for many years.

### **Wayne Swegle**

Wayne traveled to Santa Cruz recently, concentrating on the new justice project for Partners. Here is his report:

### Evaluating Public Perceptions of the Code of Criminal Procedures

I found many different reactions to Bolivia's relatively new Code of Criminal Procedures (CCP). My first impressions came from a meeting of a group committed to improving perceptions of and support for the reformed justice system—and, more important, to improve its functioning. That group is comprised of leaders of the Santa Cruz chapter of Partners of the Americas who are planning projects supporting the Cuidados Trabajando por la Justicia (CTPJ). In English, that's Citizens Working for Justice.

These volunteer leaders are competent, dedicated, and professional. Their enthusiasm and dedication was obvious during that meeting. Eight members conducted a lively, involved discussion of the group's current challenges and opportunities. Chairing the meeting was **Jose "Pepe" Pasten**, president of the Partners CTPJ subcommittee. Among other attendees was **Miguel Cortez**, then Partners president, and **Luis Fernandez**, communications specialist, who was translator, chauffeur, and host for my visit.

Pepe told me that he was invited to attend a special program at 7 p.m., after the meeting. The special program was arranged by some 200 soon-to-graduate police cadets that Pepe taught about dealing with citizens' security. Pepe invited me, Luis, and **Simon Quinonez**, a retired police officer, to join him as honored guests. When 7 p.m. arrived, the group discussion was so animated that that Pepe couldn't shut it off and we were late for the special program.

That evening set the pattern for the following days of learning more about the CCP, public perceptions of it, and problems that the CTPJ must address. Typically, what started out as a limited number of events, became packed with a wide variety of relevant contacts. Delightfully, these added-value contacts supplemented and enriched the information gleaned from scheduled meetings. The following examples illustrate the variety of helpful contacts arranged by Luis, Pepe, and Miguel.

Luis arranged dinners near the start and end of my stay with Gustavo, a man who has lived, studied, and worked in Texas, USA, and the UK; his wife, a homemaker and dentist; and his brother, who is a lawyer specializing in trade matters. They offered intelligent, informed observations on the justice system and the economy in general.

Luis also arranged lunches that were similarly productive. One was with a specialist in setting up electronic equipment and a university president. Another was with a dentist and a college professor, and so on.

An Ob-Gyn doctora, **Desiree Mostajo** and former president of the Beni Partners chapter and now a leader of Latin America Ob-Gyn doctors, practicing in Santa Cruz, arranged two special dinners for me. At one, I met her

brother, a large cattle rancher in the Beni, and a young nephew now living in Holland, who gave comparative perspectives on Bolivia's justice system. She also invited me to a dinner attended by three leading lawyers from La Paz and a woman journalist who formerly managed the justice section of that city's major newspaper. Understandably, their inputs were especially revealing and interesting.

**Susan Heily**, the incoming president of Partners in Arkansas, asked me to deliver a small gift to a Santa Cruz friend who facilitates talented Bolivian students' enrollment in leading universities abroad, primarily in the US, UK, and Spain. He carries a Bolivian passport to facilitate his operations and travel—and shared insightful observations about the justice system from his rich experience. Like many persons, he stressed the need for educating citizens and officials about the legal and law enforcement rules and regulations in the new CCP so that the country could take advantage of the opportunities it offers.

At a visit to a major police installation in the city, I was told of some of the problems the police encounter, many of them financial. (The most common complaint heard in Santa Cruz relates to a lack of money.) Police are underpaid, vehicles are not repaired, officers have to buy their own weapons or go without, radios and equipment that is taken for granted in the US are unaffordable. A highlight of that visit was seeing a group of police officers being taught by a civilian woman about the rights and wrongs of how they are supposed to deal with citizens.

Following a visit with media representatives in Montero, the owner of Radio Norte ranted for several minutes about the need for a new, bigger jail. Finally, I asked him if the city had a jail as big as he wants, would the justice system help in dealing with crime? He answered that it would. On that happy note, we shook hands and left the room together.

A particularly insightful call on my agenda, was with **Dr. Alain Nunez**, instructor of judges, Consejo de la Judicatura. He teaches judges about the new justice system, writes articles about how it works for El Deber (major Santa Cruz daily newspaper), and holds news conferences with area journalists, who lack knowledge of how the system is supposed to work. He cited two oft-mentioned problems:

- Police are not following the same rules/guidelines.
- Penal judges don't think the same way; some try to follow the new laws, some are still guided by the old legal system. New judges, not yet set in their ways, need training to understand the central meaning of the laws, helping bring consistency in applying them.

He said he understood that Partners in Santa Cruz may be near to signing a convention supporting the new system. "We don't want paper, we want action," he said.

Judge Nunez is an important gatekeeper in educating judges and citizens about the new laws. He spoke highly of the US judicial system. For what it's worth, I recommend that he might travel to the US to gain additional first-hand knowledge of our system.

These are representative of wide-ranging, informal contacts I had with citizens of Santa Cruz. These contacts gave me unstructured opportunities to evaluate public perceptions of the CCP. The following section discusses "Challenges in More Effectively Implementing the CCP," which indicates the breadth of the problems facing the system.

### Challenges in More Effectively Implementing the CCP

In interviews with many citizens, including lawyers, business owners, workers, plant managers, media people, police officials, judges, and homemakers, several recurring themes or complaints came in response to questions about Bolivia's relatively new code of criminal procedure (CCP). The common thread is that people don't trust the judicial system or the police. Some oft-repeated complaints and observations:

- The justice system is impaired by an institutionalized system of "corruption," as it was frequently described. A majority of citizens interviewed, including many lawyers, expressed the view that the system is unfair—that well-to-do people can make criminal and civil charges go away by paying off officials.
- Many people believe that the new code favors criminals; that some of those charged with crimes are let off because the requirements for successful prosecution are too stringent and that police and observers don't adequately report facts required by the courts. One unintended consequence is a surge in hiring of private guards by businesses and individuals.
- There are repeated complaints about the police. Young men and women now being trained seem dedicated and eager. But the force is ill-equipped and officers are poorly paid. At one police station, many damaged police vehicles sit unused because funds are not available to repair them. Net: Too many serious criminals and other lawbreakers know the police have limited ability to deal with them.
- The judicial process is slowed in many cases because judges lack adequate equipment. In one typical case, eight judges must share one computer, there is no camera or audio equipment for use in courtrooms, and there is not enough furniture.
- Contributing to the lack of trust in the justice system and the police is the fact that some older judges and police are used to the old ways, are hesitant to change, and don't want to adapt to the new system. Conflict and inconsistencies within the system—between old and new—is a key problem.

Beyond these common themes and complaints are other deeply held beliefs about what's wrong with the system. Some examples:

- A trio of leading lawyers from La Paz blamed the media. One said that office-holders regularly send money to media owners/managers in their districts. If unfavorable news about an office-holder is printed/broadcast in a media outlet, the money flow stops. These lawyers said they were sure that this dampened critical reporting of crimes and official misdeeds. Another complaint about the media: Sensational reporting and showing too much “blood and gore” make criminal acts seem less unusual.
- Another lawyer expressed his fear of racial bias in the new citizen judges system. He was afraid, for example, that if a rich (an often-used word) company was on trial, a majority of indios on a jury panel might rule against the company as a sort of payback. Other lawyers shook their heads in agreement.
- The massive changeovers of officials that accompanies major shifts in political party control contributes to a lack of continuity. One oft-cited example is a case that had three different outcomes in three succeeding administrations.

### A Project to Help Solve CCP Problems

Obviously, there are problems with the CCP and the justice system that are beyond the purview of the Partners of the Americas. But, the Santa Cruz Partners subcommittee working on the Cuidados Trabajando por la Justicia (CTPJ) project has developed and, subject to funding, is ready to implement a comprehensive, integrated communication strategy to teach citizen judges how to serve in trials and to increase public understanding of and support for the code of criminal procedures.

A key to the training strategy is using audiovisual communication to improve the citizen judges' understanding of their role, of the law, and of their responsibilities. It explains main elements of the new statutes and how they are applied.

Many people can't or won't take time to learn about the role of citizen judges, comprehend their importance, and know how they are to perform their duties if chosen. Learning more about the system will increase their willingness to serve. Again, it's also important in building the public's confidence and faith in the code and the system.

### Implementing the communication strategy.

The Santa Cruz Partners CTPJ group proposes to produce a series of brief, but informative, (1- to 5-minute) video tapes for use in mass media--radio, TV, press, monitoring, and short multimedia presentations. It proposes to use the tapes for mass teaching in the neighborhoods and small towns. Preparation of training materials is carried out by members of the project staff, comprising lawyers, psychologists, communications experts, and teachers.

For citizen judges, the video tapes will be used to intensively train them once they have been chosen and

before they assume their roles as members of a judging panel. Following are highlights of subjects and activities to be covered.

- The penal code, with basic elements of rights, law, and justice are explained.
- They are taught the general outlines of penal procedure and which aspects the citizen judges will use to issue their verdict.
- They are taught what powers citizen judges have.
- They learn the general technical terms they need to understand.
- The tapes will explain how to weigh testimony.
- Formalities of the procedure in filing a complaint after a crime is committed and how to substantiate the investigation of a criminal act are covered.
- The citizen judges are taught that they have the same rights as the technical judges so they will be able to act in a self-assured and adequate manner.

### Using focus groups to diagnose problems and solutions

. A basic step in attacking the problem of the hesitation of people to serve as citizen judges is quantifying the depth and seriousness of the problems, and defining approaches to resolving them. The Santa Cruz Partners CTPJ group is conducting a series of focus groups; eight in Santa Cruz, six in Beni, and six in Pando.

The Partners CTPJ subcommittee member heading this work is experienced in conducting focus groups. In a meeting reviewing important points in holding successful focus groups, several points were emphasized. Participants in the groups represent a cross-section of the population by age, gender, occupation, ethnicity, and similar factors. The search is for information to guide future activities, not develop group conclusions. The challenge is to learn from participants, not instill preconceived notions in them. Also, the moderator ensures that all members of the group contribute to the discussion and avoids letting one participant's opinions dominate. And so on.

### Extending use of the training materials.

The Santa Cruz Partners CTPJ group proposes to extend the use of the training materials by showing them in the neighborhoods and in smaller towns.

They will accomplish this task by acquiring and equipping a self-contained mobile unit that they can use in reaching and addressing large and small groups of people in different settings. The mobile unit will have multi-disciplinary educational uses beyond, but related to, the citizen judges/justice program. It can be used to carry messages about family violence, medicine and health, sexual health and reproduction, security, democracy, ecology, agriculture, and arts and culture. Similar mobile units have been used successfully by other volunteer, NGO, and commercial groups for education.

The vehicle will be a previously owned extended panel truck or van, with capacity to hold equipment and the people needed for the training. It will house an internal

power unit, modern audio communication equipment, projection screens for use in a variety of settings, projection units, different cameras for different uses, microphones, pedestals, monitors, radio transmitters and receivers, and color television. Also included will be equipment for providing music and other means of attracting and holding audiences. Total cost is estimated at a modest \$US 22,000

#### Installing information centers in cities

Supporting and complementing the above initiatives, the Santa Cruz Partners CTPJ group plans to set up well-planned, inviting information centers in appropriate city locations where well-trained advisors will answer questions about the CCP and the legal system in general. The Partners group will train knowledgeable and willing law students to answer questions in the centers.

#### Capacity to implement the integrated strategy.

This ambitious series of projects, implies and requires the involvement of a wide range of Partners professionals. Leaders of the Santa Cruz Partners CTPJ group have shown their commitment by carefully planning and developing the proposed projects in detail. Arkansas Partners are supportive in lending expertise in important aspects and exchanging professionals in needed areas. Examples of cooperation: An Arkansas communicator experienced in managing major education and media projects recently went to Santa Cruz to consult with leaders there. The professional who will head production of the videotapes is coming to Arkansas in November 2003 to meet with experts in production and marketing/outreach of educational initiatives. Because of his intense commitment and leadership, a visit to Arkansas by Jose Pasten might bring great benefits to the projects.

---

## Elections

### Arkansas

The Arkansas-East Bolivia elections were held and the results announced by President **Thecia Taylor** at the October 25 Board meeting. The results are as follows:

PRESIDENT - **Susan Heily**  
VICE PRESIDENT - **Steven Neuse**  
REGIONAL VP CENTRAL AR - **Carol Corning**  
REGIONAL VP NORTHWEST AR - **Margaret**

### Clark

SECRETARY - **Louise Montgomery**  
TREASURER - **Wayne Swegle**  
DIRECTOR-AT-LARGE - **Diane Worthen**  
DIRECTOR-AT-LARGE - **Ed Hawkins**

In addition, the President has appointed two new committee chairs - **Fran Free** for Women and Families,

and **Kristine Hall** for Health and Wellness.

President Taylor also noted those retiring from the Board and thanked them for their service. They included **Carolyn Hester**, who was the Regional Vice President for Central Arkansas; **Nadine Spears**, Secretary; **Phil Serafini**, Past President; and **Laurin Wheeler**, Director-at-Large.

### Santa Cruz

The Santa Cruz group in Bolivia held elections recently and we have these results:

PRESIDENT - **Hermes Justiniano**  
VICE PRESIDENT - **Jorge Ibarnegaray**  
SECRETARY - **Harold Isevich**  
TREASURER - **Elvira Chavez**  
INTERINSTITUTIONAL COORDINATOR -

### Juan Antonio Pereira

BOARD MEMBER - **Carolina Schneider**

Our new Officers in Arkansas take office January 1, 2004, but as far as we know, the new Officers in Santa Cruz took office immediately upon their election on September 30.

---

## A Passing

**James Tillotson Whitehead** died in Fayetteville on August 15 of this year. Jim was a Professor of English, a poet and a writer. Most notably he was one of the founders of the creative writing program at the University of Arkansas, where he taught for 35 years. Jim was one of several U of A professors recruited by **Myron Brody** to represent the University to our Partners in Santa Cruz. This group included **John Duval**, **Gaston Fernandez**, **John Harrison**, and **Allen Herman**. Jim was instrumental in searching out Bolivian authors in an attempt to create an anthology of their works. In a tribute to Jim, John Duval quoted from one of his poems "Sestina in Celebration of the Voice of Johnny Cash" as follows:

"Most of the time I'm an especial fan of the in between

That never does approve despair.

It halfway laughs and says to carry on –

But not too much."

---

## Washington News

There has been considerable reorganization in the Washington office. We can't cover it all in detail here, but if you have questions don't forget the web site [www.partners.net](http://www.partners.net) for more information. Briefly, they have organized Regional Teams, including both north and south chapters and personnel. There are five regional teams with their leaders as follows:

Brazil/US - **Dennis Shaw** [dshaw@partners.net](mailto:dshaw@partners.net)

Caribbean/US - **Barbara Block** [bbloch@partners.net](mailto:bbloch@partners.net)

Central America/US - **William Stedman**  
[wstedman@partners.net](mailto:wstedman@partners.net)

Mexico/US - **Matt Clausen** [mclausen@partners.net](mailto:mclausen@partners.net)

South America/US **Claudia Calderon**  
[ccalderon@partners.net](mailto:ccalderon@partners.net)

If you have issues or concerns and do not know who else to address, you are encouraged to contact your regional team leader. For us, of course, that would be Claudia Calderon.

Other names of interest are Program Staff. They include:

Agriculture	<b>Peggy Carlson</b>
Citizen Participation	<b>Cynthia Smith</b>
Education and Culture	<b>William Stedman</b>
International Fellowships	<b>Cecilia Otero</b>
Sports	<b>Anne Paroulek</b>
Women and Families	<b>Mary Beth Hastings</b>

There are other people involved in each of these areas, but these are the leaders. It may be of interest to some of you, and as pointed out in President Taylor's letter above, we no longer have a Farmer to Farmer component in our Agriculture program. The FTF program was put out for bids this year and we lost South America to Winrock International, although we maintained the Caribbean area. Hopefully, we will be able to add more about the future of FTF and our work in agriculture in the next issue.

---

## Non-Profit Status

President Taylor has asked that we all be aware of the fact that Arkansas-East Bolivia Partners of the Americas is a non-profit organization, operating under the 501(c)(3) Internal Revenue Services code. We have a non-profit number we use for mailings and other matters. It is:

71-0562044

At present, all mailings under our non-profit status can be made only from the U.S. Postal Service, Fayetteville.

---

## A Profile

**Bill Millager** has kindly provided us with another profile on a former Bolivian student at the University of Arkansas. It took some doing on his part since the subject student is no longer on campus, but currently resides in New Zealand! Ah – the wonders of e-mail! Anyway, here's her story:

### Profile of Vivian Careaga

Vivian is studying on a semester abroad at the University of Canterbury in Christ Church, New Zealand, and expects to be back in Fayetteville in January. Interviewing for this first trans-continental profile was done solely via the Internet. "As for my return to Fayetteville, I will be up there again on Jan. 12, 2004 :)"



### Family Background

I am the oldest of three sisters; and eight women live in my house... (and no, we don't consider ourselves feminists, he-he-he-he :) They are my \*amazing\* mother (who is also an industrial engineer and graduated from the U of A), my two sisters (who I couldn't live without), my two nanas (maids that have been working for us since I was born . . . over two decades ago!!) and one of their daughters. :)

My mother is half German, half Czech, but was born in Bolivia. My father is 100% Bolivian. Honestly, my family is the most important thing in my life, I would be nothing if I didn't have the support of "my 7 women" :)

### Early Education

I went to the American Cooperative School in La Paz, Bolivia from Pre-k to grade 12. That's where I learned my English.

### How I Happened to Attend UofA

Oh boy!! Several reasons, but the main ones are:

1. My mother is an alumna and I went with her to Arkansas in 1996 to the international alumni meeting and fell in love

with Fayetteville.

2. I have family there (actually, not "real" family, but they have become as close as real family over the years... they are my mother's "host parents" from when she attended U of A.
3. Bolivian scholarship!
4. Great engineering program.
5. Needless to say, it was just meant to be :)

Experiences at UofA - studies, life in Fayetteville, extracurricular, awards...

Amazing!!! Although the first semester was very hard... (I had to get used to the fact that the sun set at 5:30 p.m.... I hate that!! I also had to get used to the snow... I had never seen snow actually fall before and I had never been so far away from home for such a long time) I love what I am experiencing at the U of A so far!!

Undoubtedly, I know these will be some of the best years of my life. Studies are doing fine, it's getting more and more interesting the "higher" and deeper I go into my degree.

Extracurricular activities are cool, too. I belong to several organizations, but I am most active in the

1. International Culture Team (ICT)
2. Big Brothers Big Sisters (BBBS)
3. Society of Women in Engineering (SWE)
4. Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers (SHPE)
5. Golden Key (theoretically when I get back to the states, as it is a junior and senior society)

I don't remember what awards I have received so far... but I have a few. I know of the

1. Arkansas Traveler Award (ICT)
  2. Engineering Dean's List
  3. Bradley Scholarship
  4. AAUW Scholarship
  5. Butler Scholarship to study abroad
- These may not all be the exact names... but it's a pretty good idea.

How I learned about Canterbury and how I decided to attend.....

My best friend intended on studying abroad in New Zealand and talked about it a lot. I became very interested in what she had to say and started to do some research as well... And what do you know, I fell in love with the idea of being able to go to "uni" (that's how kiwis say university here) in a place that was located in between sea and mountains!! :)

How is academic life different? (between UA and Canterbury)

New Zealand Culture, Politics, National/local Characteristics

Kiwis are very introverted at first, but once you get to know them, they are the most amazing and friendliest people on earth!!! it's a very family-oriented society and it is obvious kiwis love nature. There are many artists here (it's hard not to be inspired!!) and it's a fantastic

environment! Wonderful landscapes and simply.... an amazinggggggg country!!

Here is a photo of my flatmates: very international! (I'm



the one in the middle!)

Further Educational Plans

Definitely getting a masters degree, either in Business Administration or Engineering Management.

Plans for future, e.g. career, travel, family .....

Before coming to NZ, I thought I had some idea... but being here has made me change my plans completely!! Right now, I am not 100% sure, but I know that after uni I want to travel some, work a little, get my masters... get settled (hopefully back in Bolivia) and eventually start a family. :)

Reactions to World Travel

I have been traveling since I was in my mother's womb (literally)... It is something as necessary as air... not just for me, but for everyone!! It opens up your mind so much... it's amazing!!

I have been (not necessarily in this order) to Bolivia, Chile, Argentina, Brazil, Peru, Venezuela, Costa Rica, Mexico, USA, several Caribbean islands, Spain, England, France, Czech Republic, Germany, Italy, Austria, several Pacific islands, New Zealand... and pretty soon I am off to Australia. :)

Where did your motto, "Go salsa dancing and eat sushi often" come from?

It's catchy.

Where is your favorite sushi place?

Ah yes!! This is actually my quote :) and it's the two things I like to do best! My favorite place to eat sushi is in a restaurant called "New Tokyo" in La Paz, Bolivia because I used to go there with my family and best friend all the time :) Plus, they have the best sushi for the best price (in the whole world!)

Thoughts on Bolivia....

The quote "There is no place like home" didn't really mean much until I left Bolivia.... that's when I realized... that really, there is no place like Bolivia. People often ask me about Bolivia... and before I respond I warn them that "Once they get me started talking about my country... I won't shut up" :) I love it!!! The fact that you can go from a

city that is over 3600m (12000ft) above sea level (i.e. La Paz) to a city that is almost at sea level (Santa Cruz) in a matter of an hour by airplane.... is simply fascinating! in addition, the constant sunshine, friendliness of people and rich culture make it a remarkable country. I love the fact that Bolivia has such a rich and unique culture as the indigenous one has blended quite a lot with the white [European?] culture. Unfortunately, however, Bolivia is contaminated with corrupt politicians, polluted with ignorance and inundated with poverty. It's such a contrast to see such a rich land with such a great amount of poor people on it... :( I feel a sense of patriotism and want to go back home once I have my degree. I feel that at home, I can really make a difference :)

#### Philosophy of life.....

Live each day as it comes. as simple as it sounds, quite often this quote is ignored and humans overwhelm themselves with the future and forget about today.... (me included) so I constantly repeat this phrase to make sure that I am living each day as if it were the first and last. :)

Links Between New Zealand and Bolivia - e.g., are there organizations comparable to Partners of the Americas?

No, but I came with the Study Abroad Butler Program that I found with the help of the study abroad office at the U of A. I know however, that some of my latin friends that are here, are here on a full scholarship that is provided from a New Zealand organization to latin people... but I don't know much more.

#### Hobbies:

Photography, photography, photography  
Dancing, dancing, dancing  
Cooking, although I just started learning... but I love it :)

#### Do you have a favorite recipe yet?

Definitely *pastel de carne* (family secret); *humintas*; *saltenas*; *buenuelos*!!

O man... now I am hungry!!

#### Do you know the Serafinis and their asados?

Yes I know them and I love going to their place to eat!! It's almost like going home :)

---

## **Board meetings for 2004**

Incoming President Sue Heily has announced that the Board meetings for 2004 will be:

January 17

April 17

July 17

October 16

and most likely will be held on the campus of Arkansas Tech in Russellville. Of course, the latter date of October 16 is for the Annual Meeting as well. There will be more details on that as the year progresses.

---

## **Dues are due!**

Please find attached a dues statement for 2004 - yes, it is once again time for dues! I realize that some of you have already paid for the coming year - if so, please ignore the statement. If you haven't paid, please fill out the form and return with your check to the address at the bottom. Thanks for your attention to this important matter. (Our policy on membership is that you are maintained on our list if you have paid at least once in the last three years - beyond that, names are dropped. Of course, we encourage regular payment each year! If you have questions about your membership status, call or e-mail the Executive Director).

---

## **Tribute to our friend**

Finally, a word about the death of our friend and Partners Board of Directors colleague, Laurin Wheeler. Many of you know, by now, that Laurin died early Sunday morning, November 9, 2003. He had been ill for some time, but like all deaths, we never expected his to happen just when it did. Laurin was one of those guys you immediately bond with - friendly, full of all kinds of interesting information, lively in the breadth of his interests, a true internationalist, a forester by training, and, much more, a botanist of the highest order. You've probably never heard of the penstemons, or the Penstemon Society, but he was intrigued by this group of plants and interacted regularly with others of like interest, both in this country and abroad.

He and his wife Libby reveled in plants and adorned their home, both inside and out, with lovely examples of the plant kingdom. A poignant memory of Laurin and Libby concerns that small group from our partnership who were in Bolivia 9/11 (see Editor's introductory remarks above). We shared that tragic news in each of our own ways, but Laurin's was the calming voice and influence that allowed us to plumb the deeper perspectives of the times. Laurin was active in Partners, serving as Regional Vice President, Vice President, and finally, as our President. He was just finishing a term of office on the Board of Directors at the time of his death. He was also a member of a small group of "older" Partners who met regularly for breakfast every Wednesday, both to eat and to swap tall stories and other lies, at Pete's Place in Fayetteville. He will be greatly missed.