



DIRECCIONES

Newsletter of the Arkansas-East Bolivia Partners of the Americas

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President's message

Plan now to attend special evening Partners meetings!

If you missed any of the special Northwest Arkansas Partners meetings in the past 4 months, you've missed opportunities to learn more about Partners activities and plans; meet new Partners members and renew acquaintances with the ones you know; meet current Bolivian students and Bolivian U of A graduates living in the area; and meet graduating students and some of their parents. All of these activities bring us closer together, help us learn more about Bolivia, its culture and peoples, and further the aims of Partners of the Americas. Plan now to enjoy any and all of these meetings that you can fit into your schedule in the future.

The reason for holding these special evening meetings is to encourage more members to learn about and get more involved in our Partners' purposes and activities. Members of the board of directors meet four times a year and are very involved in on-going activities and projects; most members only get together at our annual meeting. Importantly, you learn of goings-on and what Partners and its members are doing through *Direcciones*, which you are reading now. But you can be even more involved, share ideas, and get more out of your membership by attending these warm and informative and friendly meetings. Northwest AR Regional Vice President Margaret Clark arranges the meetings. Executive Director Bob Frans lets you know of the place and date and time and special purpose of each of these meetings by e-mail.

First of this chapter year's special evening Partners meetings was held in December at Jeanine and

Steven Neuse's home in Fayetteville. It was planned as a recognition of Steve's leadership of Partners as president for the past two years and an introduction of this year's incoming president.

Steve reported on the International Partners Convention in Ouro Preto, Brazil and major decisions taken there. Rosario Keele reported on her partnership visits to Trinidad and Santa Cruz, and I reported on my discussions with chapter leaders in Santa Cruz. Rosario and I made partnership chapter visits following our participation in the international convention. We also heard reports of our current chapter activities and plans.

Second special evening meeting was held at the home of Eunice and Paul Noland in Fayetteville. Paul is chapter treasurer. After sharing ideas and getting better acquainted, we had a somewhat-formal and -thorough discussion of chapter plans and activities.

Third special evening meeting was held at the home of Danny and Mary Ann Spears in Farmington. Mary Ann is chair of the Women and Families Committee. Special guests at this event were Bolivian students attending the U of A, and UA Bolivian graduates living in the area.

Fourth special evening meeting was held at the home of Mary Alice and Phil Serafini in Fayetteville. This traditional event recognized this year's Bolivian graduates of the university, who told of their backgrounds, education achievements, and future plans. Parents of graduates who attended from Bolivia were recognized. It was another opportunity to learn more about Bolivian family life and culture, and widen our range of Bolivian-Arkansan friendships.

Want to get more information about Partners through e-mail?

One of our main current objectives is to do a better job of communicating with you about what your chapter is doing, as well as sharing information about our Santa Cruz and Trinidad, Bolivia partners.

This process involves a lot of correspondence between our board members, with Santa Cruz and Trinidad chapter leaders and members, with Partners, Inc., in Washington, DC, and other South and North Partners chapters. We share pertinent e-mails with each other as board members, of course. If you are interested in getting copies of such correspondence, for your information, just let me know at weswegle@sbcglobal.net.

News of Miguel Cortez, past president of Santa Cruz Partners

When I was in Santa Cruz for a partnership chapter visit last November, I overheard a conversation to the effect that our friend and past president of the Santa Cruz chapter, Miguel Cortez, was in the hospital. I tried unsuccessfully to get further information, during that intensely busy and politically unsettling time. Upon returning, I sent e-mails seeking further information. Finally and happily, I got an answer to one addressed to: Miguel Cortez Escalante <carayana@hotmail.com>. It was from Miguel's wife, Martha. Here is her response:

Dear Mr. Wayne:

I just read your e-mail. Mike is sick a year ago. He can't move himself. He has a backache and he is taking a treatment of "quimioterapia," (chemotherapy?) but the most important is he wants to live many years. Thanks for your e-mail, if you want to talk to him please call to: 72698449 or 3430301.

Saludos,

Martha de Cortez

Santa Cruz Chapter President Dr. Jorge Ibarnegaray has been in touch with Miguel and sent us the following message:

"About our friend Miguel Cortez, I have talked with him and he feels better now. A year ago he had an operation on his back for some malignant tumors. He can't walk. So as you see he has a very serious problem. We are very sorry about it. I offer him all our help and the acknowledgment of all Partners."

At the April 19 meeting of your board of directors, it conferred **honorary membership** on Claude and Betty Gillette, long-time active members of our chapter. (See also the article below) The board directed me to so inform the Gillettes. Following are excerpts from my letter to them:

It is my great pleasure and privilege to inform you that you were unanimously voted as honorary

members of the Arkansas Chapter of Partners of the Americas at our last meeting of the board of directors. I sincerely congratulate you on behalf of our members.

This is a special honor, not one bestowed routinely. There are only five persons so listed on our honor roll. We look forward to seeing you and visiting with you at upcoming Partners occasions.

Other developments from the April 19 board meeting

Steven Neuse is working on a new AR Partners' membership recruitment brochure, based on one produced by the Montana/Patagonia POA

Bill Millager discussed progress on Partners blogging as a way of increasing communication and sharing of ideas and comments, as many organizations and prominent individuals are now doing. Problems with posting are being worked out. Board members agreed to think about participating and getting the communications activity going.

New agriculture committee chairman, Paul McLeod reported on plans to revitalize that program. Swegle reported that this is a priority of the Santa Cruz and Trinidad chapters. The International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT) in Colombia is offering the help and cooperation of its rice specialists, who already are working in both departamentos, including cooperation with Santa Cruz's CIAT scientists. Paul, who has produced several pocket-sized books on insect identification and treatment, said he would discuss possible areas of cooperation during his expected visit to Bolivia in September or October.

We hope to have a Teacher in Residence from Santa Cruz come September

Cindy Lenk was our representative to Santa Cruz as part of the Teacher in Residence project in 2007. It was an enriching and well-received experience all around. We are collaborating with our Santa Cruz Partners leaders in selecting a teacher that we can support to receive a reciprocal travel grant to come to Arkansas in the project when school starts next fall.

How Travel Grants are applied for and (hopefully) granted

I'd like to share some observations about the process of our applying for and getting travel grants from Partners, Inc. These are just observations—they are not complete nor do they cover the waterfront.

First, travel grants for Arkansas Partners to visit Santa Cruz or Trinidad come from funds allocated to Partners, Inc., from donors, such as the US Department of State. Partners has made certain promises and must comply with rules and regulations of donor organizations. These sometimes seem strict and unnecessary, but they exist nonetheless and we must comply.

Second, travel grants are related to specific projects or areas of current Partners, Inc. funding availability. Just because we have a great idea for sending or receiving a visitor to our counterpart Partners chapter doesn't mean that a travel grant will be available. So we have to watch for opportunities to match our ideas/travelers with projects or areas of current emphasis, such as the Education and Culture program. For example, agriculture is an area of interest in Santa Cruz and Trinidad—an interest we share. We have had a lot of Farmer to Farmer project grants in the past, but we don't have such a project now. Things change.

Third, selection of a person to receive a travel grant through Partners, Inc. to visit a partnership chapter includes agreement on the needs and qualifications and so on of the applicant by both chapters. The president or vice president of the sending chapter must approve the application. Likewise, the visiting chapter must provide an invitation to the applicant

Fourth, certain requirements--such as confirmation of home stay hosts and a detailed schedule of program activities that address the partnerships' and the traveler's objectives and activities—must be met. The proposed traveler must submit a form stating his/her objectives, activities, expected impact, resources, collaborations, and so on. (Our chapter requires that a traveler receiving a travel grant be a member of our POA chapter or firmly indicate intention to be actively involved with us.)

Again, these do not represent a complete list of factors that go into selection and vetting of travel grant applicants; rather they are indicative of the steps we must take in getting or supporting a travel grant. Now you know more than you did--maybe.

Wayne Swegle

News from a former student

At the suggestion of member **Kim Smith**, we have been in contact with former Bolivian student **Alex Jahn**. He has graciously provided us with an article on his recent activities since graduation from the University of Arkansas. Here it is:

One U. of Arkansas alumni's travels across the Western Hemisphere: Illinois to Bolivia

by Alex Jahn

I was born in Moline, Illinois in 1972 to an Illinois farmer and a Bolivian mother who came to the U.S. for college. My father had fallen in love with Bolivia when he visited the city of Cochabamba to marry my mother (the tradition being that the marriage ceremony happens in the bride's hometown). So when I was 3 years old we moved permanently to Bolivia where I was raised, except for a few extended visits to the U.S., until graduating from high school in Santa Cruz.

I had always enjoyed the outdoor experiences Bolivia has to offer, from hiking in the mountains of Cochabamba, to fishing in Bolivia's lowland rivers. Such exposure to tropical nature from an early age inevitably influenced my career choices down the road. I studied Fisheries and Wildlife Management at Lake Superior State University (Michigan), and then spent a year in Bolivia volunteering on research projects, including a survey of the birds of Carrasco National Park (Cochabamba) and a study on bird migration in the Botanical Gardens outside the city of Santa Cruz. Directed by Susan Davis, an expatriate biologist, this project involved capturing and placing numbered bands on the birds to study their movements and survival rates. Fascinated by the prospect of studying bird migration in South America, which was then and continues to be poorly understood, I applied to the University of Arkansas to conduct graduate studies with a focus on the topic of bird migration in South America.



I went to the University of Arkansas in the Fall of 1997 and began studying under the supervision of Kim Smith in the Department of Biological Sciences. Kim and I quickly agreed that my thesis project would be on documenting which bird species migrate through eastern Bolivia and exactly when they migrate. Because Bolivia lies at the center of the continent, it likely lies along the migratory routes of many bird species which breed in Argentina and Paraguay, then move north towards the Amazon Basin to spend the austral winter. Documenting these migratory routes is also a prerequisite to understanding other questions, such as what threats migrant birds face during migration in South America and how Avian Influenza could spread there if it arrived on the continent.

Along with researchers from the Museo de Historia Natural Noel Kempff Mercado in Santa Cruz, I spent three migration seasons studying the habitat use, abundance and migratory timing of birds in the Chaco, a vast desert-like grassland and woodland ecosystem on Bolivia's southeastern border with Paraguay. I graduated with an M.S. in Biology from the University of Arkansas in 2000. While at Arkansas I had also gained valuable experience with state-of-the-art analytical techniques through a Research Assistantship at the Center for Advanced Spatial Technologies (CAST). Kim had helped secure funding from The Nature Conservancy to produce one of the first digital maps of the ranges of threatened birds across South America. With the ability to overlay other maps, such as human population density, on the maps of these species' ranges, the product we developed at CAST became a powerful tool for conservationists and land managers to determine where to direct conservation efforts for these species.

After graduating from Arkansas, I spent another two seasons at the Chaco study site continuing my research on bird migration as a freelance biologist. I became increasingly interested in delving further in- to the details of how and why birds migrate in South America and decided to search for a doctoral program. One of the few ornithologists who had published theoretical research on migration within the Neotropics is Doug Levey at the University of Florida. Upon contacting him he stated that he was currently working on a project on the evolution of capsaicin in chili peppers (capsaicin is the chemical that makes peppers "hot"). Because the Chaco is

postulated as being the origin of the chili peppers he studies, he was interested in visiting Bolivia to collect chili peppers. We toured the Chaco together collecting peppers, eventually finding the species for which he was searching. Upon his return to Florida, Doug sent me an email with an invitation to conduct research on bird migration in his lab. I began attending the University of Florida in the Fall of 2002. We have since been studying bird migration in the Chiquitania region, in northern Santa Cruz Department. Using banding as well as radio-telemetry and genetics, we are slowly gaining a better handle on why and how birds migrate in eastern Bolivia and the continent. We work at Estancia y Estación Biológica Caparú, the property of Jaime Rozenman and Guillermo Weise, who are businessmen and ranchers who have taken a great interest in our research, even supporting it financially.

I continue to reach back to my ties at Arkansas: In 2003 Kim, Doug Levey and I organized the first symposium on bird migration in South America, held in Chile, which brought together migration researchers from across the Americas.

I am currently on track to graduate with a Ph.D. in Interdisciplinary Ecology late this year and hope to move permanently to South America to work in conservation and academics. I hope to inspire local students there to attempt research on subjects such as bird migration which have been studied for decades in North America and Europe but for which we are barely beginning to scratch the surface in South America.

Newest Honorary Members

It is with a great sense of love and respect that we are able to announce an addition to our role of Honorary Members. At the recent meeting of the Board, it was unanimously voted to extend this honor to **Claude** and **Betty Gillette** of Hazen. Long-time members of Arkansas-East Bolivia Partners, they have been active in affairs of the chapter and faithful in attendance at various functions held over the years. In particular, Claude has been a part of the agricultural component of our partnership, traveling to East Bolivia on several occasions, involving himself in programs of brucellosis awareness, promoting methods of

detection and treatment of this persistent disease in cattle. For many years, Claude has been a respected veterinarian in Hazen.

Claude and Betty now join our most honored group of Arkansas Partners in this category, which includes **Berenice Kumpe, Hamp Roy, James Suen, Lavon Payne Yopez, and Helen Wilson.**

Congratulations, Claude and Betty! (One of the notable parts of this very great honor is the fact that you can now ignore our badgering you to pay your annual dues, although we note that you faithfully did that for 2008 - thanks!)

Youth Ambassadors visit Arkansas

Recently, Bolivian high school students visited Arkansas as a result of a Youth Ambassador program. **Margaret Clark** coordinated their visit and this is her report:

Three high school Bolivian Youth Ambassadors along with their Bolivian escort ended their visit to the United States on April 27 after homestays of 10 days in Arkansas where they were hosted by the Arkansas Chapter of the Arkansas-East Bolivia Partnership of the Partners of the Americas. The young students were **Jimena Salazar Soto** from Cochabamba, **Susana Torrico Colque** from Santa Cruz, and **Aldo Zarate Caceres** from Potosi. **Lhotse Quintanilla** from La Paz served as their escort.



Youth Ambassadors to Arkansas, Lhotse (escort), Aldo, Jimena and Susana

Margaret Clark, Northwest Arkansas Vice President of Arkansas Partners, coordinated their stay in Arkansas.

The Youth Ambassadors program is supported by the U.S. State Department. Its goals are to provide Latin American youth with opportunities to broaden their knowledge of US culture, society, and education; live with a US family; experience life in a US school environment and interact with US youth; and serve as Ambassadors of their home countries to demonstrate a positive image of Latin America with the Americans they meet. The program seeks to stimulate an exchange of information on the histories and cultures of the Western Hemisphere and to increase cooperation and mutual respect between nations. Therefore, visiting historic area, visiting US schools, observing volunteerism in action, and getting to know American families are priorities for them. In addition, the program is designed to increase their leadership skills while promoting Partners of the Americas activities in the US and Latin America.

During their stay in D. C. they met with Secretary of State **Condoleeza Rice**. She engaged them in a dialogue on important hemispheric issues such as immigration and economic development. Additionally, she gave them advice on pursuing their personal goals. They were able to visit several of the historic monuments and museums, to meet with officials from the State Department, the US Congress, Foreign Embassies and to attend one of the Baltimore Orioles' baseball games.

Their hosts in northwest Arkansas were **Danny and Mary Ann Spears** for Jimena and Susana; **Steven and Jeanine Neuse** for Aldo, **Paul and Eunice Noland** were the host for the escort Lhotse. **Bob and Nadine Spears** served as hosts for **Cara George** from the nations Partners' office in D.C.

A major part of their visit involved attending local high schools with their "host sister" (Jimena and Susana went to Lincoln High School with **Haley Spears** as their "host classmate" and Aldo went to Fayetteville High School and attended classes with students selected by Mrs. Lietske who teaches AP Spanish classes). This was the second year that Bolivian YA students were at both of these high schools.

In Fayetteville, Margaret Clark arranged their meeting with Mayor **Dan Coody** who gave them keys to the city of Fayetteville, and with Chancellor **John White** who told them the story of the Wizard of Oz as he encouraged them to use their brains to get knowledge, have courage to pursue their dreams, and to have a heart and be concerned about the welfare of others. (At the end of their visit they said they remembered the story and would

never forget it.) They visited Fayetteville Square during the Farmers' Market and also heard **Hank Kaminsky** (a member of the Arkansas Partners) tell them how he made the Peace Fountain. He also showed them his bust of Senator Fulbright and his manhole cover. They were taken by Danny Spears, up to the Roaring River Park in Cassville, MO where **Rosario Keele**, an Arkansas Partner, took them fishing in addition to a visit to the school where she works. Each one caught his limit of four fish. These were brought back to their host families and were cooked for a meal later. Spears also included a stopover in Eureka Springs, AR and a few games of bowling. Margaret Clark arranged for them to have tours of the University of Arkansas campus, the Blair Library, the Clinton House Museum, the Ozark Botanical Gardens, and the Jones Center for Families in Springdale, AR where they also went ice skating. This was a big challenge for the students and for Cara George who came down from the national Partners office in D.C. to conduct a debriefing session with them prior to their departure. They were escorted down Dickson Street to "Springfest" & the Dickson Street Music Festival by Pamela Phillipsborn, President of the International Bolivian Organization (IBO) at the University of Arkansas, along with a few other IBO members.

Their Arkansas visit included a two day trip to Little Rock, hosted by Arkansas Partner, **Thecia Taylor**, a former president of the Arkansas Partners, who arranged for them to meet with Governor Mike Beebe at the Capitol. The Governor gave them Arkansas Travelers certificates; Taylor also arranged visits to the Clinton Presidential Library where they saw the White House Miniature Exhibit, the Heifer International Headquarters, and the Arkansas State Historic Museum. They attended the Disney High School Ice Musical and went to a picnic in the Dickey-Stephens Park plus attended the Arkansas Travelers baseball game.

Their visit in Arkansas ended with a barbeque party at the home of Danny and Mary Ann Spears. The YA's presented a program that covered the impact of their visit in Arkansas. Bolivian music was played, gifts were exchanged (Each visitor received a bluebird of happiness from Terra Studios), animated conversations, music and laughter filled the air before the YA's were wished "Buen Viaje."

Kudos to Spears

The following article was excerpted from one printed in the *Northwest Arkansas Times*, May 5, 2008:

"Benton County native Jerry Rakes and Washington County dairy farmer **Bob Spears** were named Graduates of Distinction by the Department of Animal Science in the Dale Bumpers College of Agricultural, Food and Life Sciences at the University of Arkansas during an awards banquet April 16.

"Spears graduated from Mountainburg High School and from the UA with a bachelor's degree in animal science in 1962. During his college career he was a member of the Livestock Judging team, was on the dean's list for two years and was a member of Alpha Zeta ;honorary Fraternity.

"After graduating, Spears first worked as a livestock buyer for Swift & Co. In Kansas City, MO. In 1968 he became a partner in a 25-cow dairy farm in Washington County. The milking herd was expanded to 400 mature Holstein cows with modern facilities near Farmington. It was the highest producing herd in Arkansas 12 times during a 20-year span and was the highest classified herd in the state.

"Cattle and embryos from Spears' farm have been exported in Mexico, Honduras, several countries in Europe, and Japan. The milking herd, which at one point was the largest in Arkansas, was sold in 2001, and the primary enterprise began raising about 1,300 dairy heifers annually on 2,000 acres of land.

"Spears has been invited to judge animals at state fairs in Missouri, Mississippi and Oklahoma and at shows in several other states. He is a life member of the Dairy Shrine Club. He served on the corporate board of Associated Milk Producers Inc. And was named Outstanding Young Cooperator by the association in 1975-76. He has also provided leadership for the Arkansas and American Holstein Associations, Arkansas Dairy Federation and the Farmington Board of Education.

"Spears and his wife, Nadine, made three trips to Bolivia as volunteers with Partners of the Americas. The Spears have hosted educational events for the UA, 4-H, Future Farmers of America and the Farmington Chamber of Commerce."

In addition to the fine accomplishments cited from the newspaper article above, the Spears have been very active in the NW Arkansas chapter of the Arkansas-East Bolivia Partners of the Americas. They, along with son Danny and daughter-in-law Mary Ann, have hosted representatives of the Youth Ambassador program for the past two years. In addition, Nadine has served the Board of the Arkansas Partners both as Secretary and Director. We're proud to have all the Spears as members of our partnership. Congratulations!

A note from our friend Jorge

Wayne Swegle sent us this:

Here's a note from Dr. Jorge Ibarnegaray about the situation in Santa Cruz

I told our friend and president of our partnership chapter in Santa Cruz, Jorge Ibarnegaray of our concern for our Partners there and suggested he might send us some news of what's going on. I got this e-mail response from Jorge dated May 16:

Dear Wayne, and Partners,

We understand your concern about the political situation in Bolivia. I can tell you that yesterday was a historic day for Santa Cruz. The Prefectura del Departamento, (the Prefecture of the State) has changed its name. It now is called Gobierno Departamental (Department of Government). And the Prefecto is a Gobernador. Also there is a legislative congress. For today three new laws have been approved here in Santa Cruz. As you can see, there are great changes. Of course, the national government in La Paz does not approve all of this.

Next month, the departamentos (states) of Beni, Tarija, and Pando, will have referenda for the autonomy. The government does not recognize it. And Sucre is going to elect the prefecto by elections soon. In Sucre, none of the ministers of the government can put their feet on earth; they are not accepted.

Regards to all of you,
Jorge Ybarnegaray

A News Flash!

Direcciones is not noted for reporting news, but we couldn't resist this one. Your editor was quietly finishing his coffee this morning (June 3) when he received a call from President **Wayne Swegle**. Seems that he and Director-at Large **Sandra Hambrick** came to Northwest Arkansas and were married at beautiful James at the Mill restaurant! Now we call that a real news item, most worthy of reporting in these pages of the newsletter. Not only that, but the ceremony was performed by the Chair of our Women and Families committee, JP **Mary Ann Spears**. Makes it a real Partners happening - heartiest congratulations Wayne and Sandy! (Incidentally, Mary Ann also married a granddaughter of your editor a few weeks ago up at a cabin on Beaver Lake. She also happens to be Assistant Principal of Lincoln High School, where another of your editor's granddaughters teaches)

Scholarship Award

We're a little late in reporting this but we did want to let you know that the 2008 awardee of the Maria Teresa Frans Scholarship is **Regina Justiniano Foianini de Bordes**. Regina is the daughter of **Hermes** and **Gina Justiniano**. Hermes, as many will remember is the past president of the Partners in Santa Cruz. Regina will be a graduate student this fall, joining her brother David, already a student. Her mother and sister Leila were also students at the University.



