

¡Qué Pasa!

Spring, 1998 Vol. II

Published Periodically

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"Friends of the DR"—a New Group

Friends of the Dominican Republic Established

by Neil Ross

A new organization--"Friends of the Dominican Republic" (Friends)--was launched on February 24, 1998, by 12 former Peace Corps Volunteers and Staff who served in the Dominican Republic. The Friends group and Fondo Quisqueya will be mutually supportive organizations. In fact, several of Fondo's board members are founding members of Friends, but each organization will function independently.

The Friends Group voted unanimously to affiliate with the National Peace Corps Association (NPCA). This action will give the Friends access to the wide resources of the NPCA which has nearly 19,000 members nationwide. The NPCA will assist them with initial recruitment mailings to RPCV's listing the Dominican Re-

public as a country of service. A portion of the dues paid by NPCA members who served in the Dominican Republic will be channeled to Friends of the DR.

Members of the Board include:

Neil Ross, President, Kingston, RI

Jess Stone, Vice President, Jefferson City, MO

Steve Honore, Secretary, Houston, TX

John Evans, Treasurer, Alexandria, VA

Roger LaBucherie, Program Director, Pine Valley, CA

Randy Adams, Membership, Reston, VA

Marda Mayo, Communications Director, Great Falls, VA

Robert Godino, West Roxbury, MA

Pat Morgan, Reidsville, NC

Tom Semler, Pittsburgh, PA

John Shores, Washington, DC

Tim Sweeney, Long Beach, CA

The 12 board members met as a steering committee to form the organization to become a tax exempt corporation. Once incorporated, the members voted to apply for 501(c)(3) tax exempt status. Each board member was declared to be a member of Friends. Draft organization goals, mission statement, programs, and bylaws were discussed and are being developed further for consideration at the next Friends meeting.

For information about joining as a member of the Friends of the Dominican Republic, please contact Randy Adams, Membership Director, at 11231 Handlebar Road, Reston, VA 20191; Randy's home phone:

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Notes from the FQ Board

Fondo Q and "Friends"

At the September, 1997 Fondo Quisqueya (Fondo Q) Board of Directors meeting, RPCV Neil Ross (1962-1964) submitted a proposal concerning the establishment of a "Friends of the Dominican Republic" group which would be associated with the NPCA. The Fondo Q board considered the question of how Fondo Q might be related to the Friends group, and further information was required to make a decision. Thus, Fondo Q President Minor Anderson appointed a special "Steering Committee" to study the matter and to make a recommendation to the Board at its January 17, 1998 meeting.

The Steering Committee members were Neil Ross, Chair; Randy Adams, Lou Ferrand, Marda Mayo, and Bill Threlkeld.

At the Board meeting on January 17, 1998, several alternatives were presented to the Board and again discussed at great length. Both Fondo Q and Friends share a number of common motivations: an abiding interest in the Dominican Republic and its people; the desire to reunite occasionally with former DR PCV's and staff; the desire to return to the DR occasionally and maintain a stake in the country's development. However, ultimately the Board decided that the Fondo Board would not sup-



Meet the members of the Board. From left: Bill Threlkeld, Mary Catherine O'Donnell, BJ Warren, John Evans. Second row: Tom Gittins, Minor Anderson, Karen Clough, Marda Mayo, Carrie Meyer, Dennis Zaenger. Missing from the picture: Lou Ferrand, Kristin Fiske, Randy Adams.

port the organization of a Friends organization under the Fondo's 501(c)(3) tax exempt status or corporate umbrella. The program anticipated by the Friends is much broader than the Fondo's mission of giving grants for education and training to individuals in the DR. While the Board applauded the goals of Friends, it was felt that to take on the fiduciary responsibilities of a partner or subsidiary group would distract from the central mission of Fondo. Some felt that it might be more logical for Fondo to have been a subsidiary of a Friend's umbrella organization.

Therefore, the Fondo Q Board voted to remain independent of

Friends but maintain a mutually supportive relationship. Fondo Q will assist the new group in however it is able. Fondo Q does not plan to affiliate with the NPCA preferring to concentrate on our primary mission to give out scholarships to Dominicans in the Dominican Republic. **FQ**

Notes from Minor Anderson

It's February in Washington as I write this note. It's probably the worst month of the year here. Our visit to the DR was just a year ago. It had been 10 years since I had been there, although in my mind's eye, I had been there often. Many things

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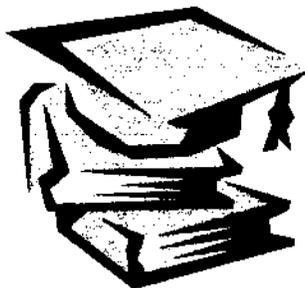
more from the Board

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changed -- the veneer--most things had not--the feel, the friendships, the lunacy.

I spent some time with a former counterpart whom I had not seen since 1967. He was somewhat stooped; his kids had families of their own; he now spends most of his time tending his treasured orchids. His sense of humor and laugh had not changed. Carlos could always look at the absurd and sometimes outrageous in the DR and see some humorous aspect to it. This quality served him well over the years as the country went through turmoil and change. But, I was reminded that what I had learned from Carlos had served me well over the years also.

This of course, was just one of the very small ways that the experience in the DR 30+ years ago had changed and influenced me. My connection with Fondo Quisqueya is one of the ways I reconnect with those years and those lessons, while giving back at the same time. *FQ*



Treasurer's Report

Lou Ferrand

Fondo Q reports the following assets:

\$14,503 in Crestar Bank Account.

\$6,447 in the Vanguard S&P Fund. This is Fondo Q's Endowment Fund. Note that 10% of all contributions go into Fondo Q's endowment fund.

The Board also voted to transfer \$4,000 from the Crestar Account bringing the total for this account to \$10,000.

\$1,800 in a separate account for the Andy Hernandez fund.

In addition, the Board authorized \$1,500 to the account in the DR to Mike Benson for scholarship distribution. *FQ*

Andres Hernandez Prize (ASH) Fund Report

The ASH Prize was established to stimulate leadership at all levels of Dominican Society and to recognize leaders who succeed in promoting the public good. The ASH Fund Committee envisions bestowing the Prize on February 27 (Independence Day) to get maximum visibility.

During the meetings in Santo Domingo in February 1997, total pledges made to this fund amounted to \$1,800.00. To date only \$800 of the total pledged in Santo Domingo has been received. Others, however, made individual donations which raised the total to \$1,800.00. It

would be grand to make that total \$2,800, a figure which would include all of the 1997 pledges. Contributors to the fund, as of this writing, include Jerry Dupuy, Jess Stone, Sally and Max Sharp, Seth Karpinski, Carolyn Karpinski, Robert Tafelski, BJ Warren, Mary Catherine O'Donnell, and Jesse Franco. *FQ*

Administrative Update

The Board has been remiss in not acknowledging contributions in a timely manner, or not acknowledging them at all. We are in the process of designing and printing acknowledgments suitable for IRS tax deductions. *FQ*

Attention Volunteers!
1975-1977
RPCV Jim (Diego) Dillon
and others are interested in
an early July, 1998 reunion-
return to Santo Domingo.
Please contact Diego at 7867
Halderman Road, West
Alexandria, Ohio 45381 for
plans or address updates. But
first, Diego would very
much like to find the follow-
ing missing souls: Al Ba-
con, Carlton Cox, Dan
Cox, Jean Cyr, Steve
Metke, Bob Morris, Keith
Pnazek, Steve Powlen,
Bennet Stein, and Ned
Strong.

*Where our Contributions Go
A School Garden Project*

by

PCV Heather Fosburgh, Community Agriculture, Loma de Cabrera, Dajabon

On August 12, 1997, Papito, my counterpart--a natural and environmental science/*tecnico* for the Ministry of Education in Loma de Cabrera--and I roped chairs into a large Daihsu truck so the 25 participants of the Organic Gardening course could ride somewhat comfortably on the 1 1/2 hour trek up to *el centro* CREAR, Rio Limpio. Departure was set for 9:00 a.m., and I was shooting for 9:30 a.m. Papito told everyone to show up at 8:00 a.m. Surprisingly, we gathered a majority of the teachers and school directors

by 9:00 a.m., and we picked a few on the way. Papito assured me that the few missing people would eventually show up.

When we arrived in Rio Limpio, waiting for us was Ramonita from Manual Bueno. Ramonita had a previous engagement and missed the truck. So, in order not to be late, (dressed in skirt and sandals) she had her husband take her up to Rio Limpio on his motorcycle. I immediately liked Ramonita, and

she proceeded to be one of our most enthusiastic participants. During the rain that hit both days in the afternoon, Ramonita kept working. She just put a plastic bag on her head to keep dry. (Note: In August, Ramonita was

activity, which went very well, that could be done with school children at a small scale level. Later on it rained, so a presentation on biological agriculture was moved up.

After dinner the *charla* given by a Health PCV, Kathy Duryee, was a big success. While at first the teachers claimed to know everything she was talking about, they later got very interested in the details. At the end she gave out a recipe for using the greens of different plants.

The next

morning at breakfast, people were still talking about it.

After breakfast on the second day, the group finished the remaining transplanting project and then moved on to preparing the land for gardens. The participants took turns working on one piece of land to prepare it for planting. During this time the topics of companion planting and rotating crops were discussed in detail. Lunch was also

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Participants preparing and mixing soil types to make a small seedling box. Ramonita is keeping her head dry during the rain.

chosen as a counterpart for a married PCV couple just assigned to Manual Bueno).

Topics covered in the 3 days were varied. On the first day, the participants toured the area and had lunch. Afterwards, the work started with the preparation of soil to grow seedlings; how to plant and transplant the seedlings, and then care for them. All of the learning was hands on. There was a small

Gardens, cont'd

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a learning experience because the cooks at CREAR prepared several different types of vegetables that are not usually used in the Dominican diet, along with preparing a recipe given the night before on using the greens from various plants.

They spent the rest of the afternoon learning about composting. Several different methods were illustrated which was helpful considering the locations the schools represented were quite varied. What a campo school could do, a pueblo school could not do in terms of composting. That night, the director of CREAR gave a presentation on using Green Manures and organic fertilizer. They spent the last morning making and applying natural insecticides. Three different "recipes" were given out, and each group was in

charge of making their own insecticide.

While I have participated in a number of Peace Corps sponsored training programs with both Dominicans and Americans, this was my first experience with just Dominicans. I enjoyed watching their enthusiasm. While the school garden project focuses primarily on primary schools, some schools are still lacking space and/or water to have gardens. Since the resources are available, some high schools are doing the program. Both El Pino and Manuel Bueno had a representative from the high schools.

There was a closing ceremony on the last day (August 14, 1997). Several people had been invited beforehand to demonstrate the motivation of the schools and the school garden program. We also hoped that maybe these people would assist us in the future if they knew what we were doing. The regional Director of the Dajabon-

Monte Cristi region came, along with another director of the natural sciences program. The Director of the Loma de Cabrera School District came the first day as well as to the ceremony. From the community the Director of the AIRAC Cooperative and the President of the Lions Club attended. We handed out certificates, and guests gave closing comments. The teachers were very excited to have their participation recognized.

The conference went very well. The teachers loved *el Centro* CREAR, and many had not been to Rio Limpio in years. The conference was the first of its kind. The participants had fun and learned a lot. The Regional Office was very pleased with the initiative taken by both the teachers and Peace Corps. It also showed the importance of the continuation of the "Huertos Escolares" program.

I also learned a lot from this conference. It was interesting to

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Ten Years of Diverse Training Grants by Carrie Meyer

In the 10 years since its founding, Fondo Q has provided 55 scholarships for training in everything from accounting to barber school. The first scholarship was given in November, 1988 to a man from the *campos* of La Vega for a short course in accounting. The most recent scholarship was awarded in February, 1998 to a man from San Jose de Ocoa for barber school. In be-

tween there have been awards for a wide variety of vocational goals.

Funding has been granted both for individual scholarships and also for group training and workshops. Funds have been used to cover costs of room and board, transportation, tuition, books, and entrance fees.

Some of the more popular vocational training scholarships

have been in the areas of nursing and construction. Recipients have also been trained for careers as hair dressers, executive secretaries, agronomists, *chofers*, and motorcycle mechanics. Others have enhanced their skills with computer courses. Several scholarships have been given for artistic fields including graphic arts, fashion design, music, drafting, and silk screening. Fondo even supported training in bartending

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Changing the Lives of Promising Dominicans
A Proposal for FQ Funds (Funds Requested: RD \$9,400)
Submitted by Leslie Dominguez, PCV

Project Summary Gloria Mariñez and Fatima Riviera are two dynamic motivated young women who have very few opportunities available to them due to finances and location. They both love working as local beauticians and have often approached me for help with their business idea. They need the financial assistance outlined below for vocational training with the ultimate goal of opening a salon business within these mountain communities. These two women have made quite a strong impression on me and I firmly believe that your assistance would be put to great use helping these women fulfill a dream to expand their horizons and eventually to have their own community business.

Young women living in small campos in the Dominican Republic have very few options available to them. Their future

vocational or continued education is a virtual financial impossibility, and those families who can afford the education send their sons.

Gloria is a dynamic, independent 19 year old. She is an enthusiastic leader in our community, always trying to organize fun activities, telling stories and making people laugh. She was an active participant in Peace Corps' recent conference for International Women's Day where she participated in a series of motivational and educational workshops and spent a day learning about working as an administrative assistant. Although her education was limited by our community's school of four grades, she voluntarily completed an evening literacy class offered by ADESJO in the community.

Fatima, age 18, known to the community as Nana, is an active, enthusiastic community member.

Nana is the youngest and probably the most active member of the local women's organization, *La Nueva Esperanza*, organizing activities and coordinating events with the groups in the neighboring communities. And, she also volunteers her time, two weeks a month, to our clinic's secretarial work, collecting fees and recording patient information. Nana studied in the pueblo until eighth grade and really wants to use her skills and motivation to move her life forward.

Ultimate Project Goal: To open a traveling beauty salon with services provided by Gloria and Nana to the four mountain communities within the vicinity of Los Martinez.

Nana and Gloria want to take a course in *belleza* for a year to be able eventually to open a small salon business. The courses are offered in Bani and meet weekly for a year. Transportation costs need to be included, or the course remains a financial impossibility. Also, funding needs to be provided for both girls because neither of them has parental permission to travel or study alone.

Fees for one participant:
TOTAL: RD\$ 4,700

Ed. Note: Fees were enumerated by individual but we ran out of space. This grant has been approved. FQ

Training Grants, Cont'd

(Continued from page 5)

and waiting tables. (*Ed. Note:* one of our art scholarship recipients designed our red FQ T-shirt).

Workshops have been popular for agriculturists, teachers, and others. Groups of farmers have been trained in skills such as goat and rabbit raising, bee keeping, sustainable agriculture, pesticide safety, and the grafting

of fruit trees. Groups of teachers have also been trained in geography and mapping, and most recently in school gardening as described elsewhere in this newsletter. Another teacher received training to teach English. Other groups have received workshops in environmental education and sewing and clothing construction. *A Bien hecho* to our contributors. **FQ**

From the Editor

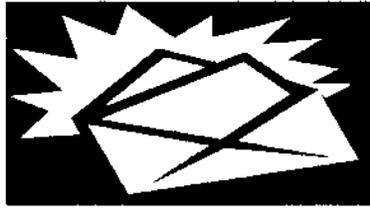
About this publication: We publish "whenever." Our circulation is approximately 1,200 and is basically FQ's only overhead. For this printing, each newsletter will cost about \$.75 including postage.

The Editorial Staff welcomes articles, comments, letters, etc. Contributing writers included Carrie Meyer, Minor Anderson and Neil Ross. Carrie also helped greatly with editing and rewrites. Dick Clough took care of the proofing.

Send your submissions to
Karen Hahn Clough
P.O.Box 6628,
Falls Church, VA 22040-6628
or

E-Mail: khclough@aol.com
Fax: 301-424-0332
Tel: 301-424-5851

Letters



A note from Loren Mann Baez:

Dear "Fondo":

Maybe I was inspired to send a donation by the most recent newsletter [Summer, 1997]. I really enjoyed the newsletter, especially the articles by Carrie Meyer and Mary Catherine O'Donnell. They brought back a lot of memories of Peace Corps in the D.R. (even though I have been back many times since I was a volunteer in '81-'83. I wish I could have made the trip in February with you. I would have liked to see people I knew when I was there and haven't seen in

years as well as gotten to meet people connected with the DR now. Keep up the good work. Sincerely, *FQ*

Annual Meeting and Picnic
Fondo Quisqueya
Sunday, May 17, 1998



Everyone is cordially invited to attend FQ's annual business meeting/picnic on

Sunday, May 17, 1998 at the home of Tom and Sue Gittins, Falls Church, VA.

Out-of-towners may wish to plan a visit to the Washington Metropolitan area during a truly magnificent time of year. However, with El Nino, we may have snow. Drop a note to FQ if you are considering a trip and perhaps we can help you out with some details. *FQ*

"Friends" cont'd

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703-620-6535; fax: 703-620-4690; EMAIL:
AdamsRMK@aol.com.

Neil Ross can be contacted at 138 White Horn Dr., Kingston, RI, 02881; home phone: 401-7899-8402; fax: 401-782-2116; EMAIL neilross@aol.com.

Visit the Friends Web Page at, geocities.com/rainforest/4237.

Gardens, cont'd

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interact with the teachers in an environment different than the classroom or district meetings. This conference fell right before "Dia de Restauracion" and a lot of Dominican history was discussed in our free time. This activity has opened the doors for increased motivation to work on the "Huertos Escolares" program with the incoming PCV. It was a nice closure on my service. *FQ*

It's Not Too Late Buy a T-Shirt

Purchase a T-Shirt for \$20.00 and contribute toward another grant/scholarship for a well deserving Dominican. Fill out the coupon on the back page and you'll be all set.

