

Friends of the Dominican Republic

CYBERNEWS

FDR's Monthly E-Newsletter  
Issue #37 - November / December 2006

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People keep hitting reply and asking how to send FDR dues and Donations, so I am moving the information from the bottom to the top.

This is the end of the year and you are wondering where to send all of your donation money. Consider the impact you can have by donating to our Funds. Donations are juice that keeps the FDR Program Development Fund and the Community Challenge fund operating to support Volunteer projects.

Keep your Membership up to date: FDR dues are still only \$15 per year!

Please mail donations and dues to FDR Treasurer, John Evans,  
4512 Park Road, Alexandria, VA 22312. You can pay dues with a credit card using our Pay Pal link on the web site.

FDR is an affiliate of the National Peace Corps Association (NPCA). NPCA dues are still only \$35 per year! Add that to your check for FDR membership and send to either FDR or to NPCA Membership, 1900 L Street NW, Suite 205, Washington, DC 20036 (be sure to designate FDR as your affiliate group). You may also join or renew both FDR and NPCA online at [www.peacecorpsconnect.org/renew](http://www.peacecorpsconnect.org/renew) or [www.fotdr.org](http://www.fotdr.org) .

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Visit us online at [www.fotdr.org](http://www.fotdr.org)

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FDR PRESIDENT'S CORNER

The new web site is now on-line. All of the Reunion documents and many new items are there. Check it out at [www.fotdr.org](http://www.fotdr.org)

Everyone in our database with an email address received their User Name & Password in an email from the web site. When you go to the web site you should click Log In. Some people have clicked Register, which will simply create a duplicate entry with no authorization. You must allow cookies to be set before you Log In.

The site is not clear on this point. Without cookies you are sent to another Log In page but can accomplish nothing.

This is the official call for nominations for the FDR Board of Directors.

This is the official notice of the FDR General Meeting at the Reunion, Friday February 9 at 11:15 am as a part of the presentation and discussion of the activities and functions of FDR.

If the Reunion tours and vacation ideas on our web site do not fulfill your ideas on how to do the visit properly, check out this article:

<http://travel2.nytimes.com/2006/10/29/travel/29dominican.html>

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Three COMMUNITY CHALLENGE FUND Projects Finish Up

Three Community Challenge Fund projects critical to the health of 69 Dominican families were completed in recent months in three regions of the country.

A unique latrine project in El Aguacate near Nagua in the Northeast replaced ineffective pit latrines with 46 enclosed/sealed latrines to deal with a severe high water table condition caused by the location of the community in the middle of a rice field. Existing pit latrines were constantly filled with water and leaching into the canals and backyards of residences. The PCV introduced a system which included making pressed bricks of local soil and cement to create mortared brick latrine chambers, preventing water intrusion as well as leakage. Each latrine included two separate chambers and seats which are rotated annually while the other was decommissioned. With treatment, this system allows the waste to dry in one chamber while the other is chamber is used.

The dry chamber is then opened and emptied after one year of drying and can be safely recycled as fertilizer. This rotational system solved a long-standing health problem of the community at a cost of only \$43 of CCF funds per latrine.

A second latrine project in the very poor barrio of La Cienaga, near Barahona in the Southeast replaced shared latrines that had been poorly constructed and overused to the point they were useless.

The unsanitary conditions were a major source of bacterial illnesses particularly impacting the community's children. The hilly terrain and rocky soil conditions of the community posed significant problems in construction. Brigades of benefiting families overcame these obstacles to complete construction of 11 new pit latrines.

The concrete floor construction project in Pashutico, located high in the northwest mountainous area along the Haitian border near Restauracion, resulted in significant improvement to the quality of life of the participating families. The sanitation project not only improved health standards for 12 families in the 14 household community of subsistence farmers, but it led most of the families to take the additional step to improve their lives: As the community brigades began to see the impact the new floors were having on the first homes they worked on, they were impressed by the change and stimulated to improve their dilapidated homes. Most families tore down their existing walls and roofs, using salvageable wood and zinc and adding new wood and zinc to construct their homes anew before they resumed installing the floors. The impact on the community was amazing! And at a total CCF investment of only \$110 per house!

#### 2006-07 COMMUNITY CHALLENGE FUND-RAISING UNDERWAY

Continue Challenge Fund projects like those described above and take advantage of the Epler family pledge to match every dollar raised with another dollar up to \$100,000. The 06-07 December-February fund-raising period is in full swing with initial results rewarding. We have just passed the half-way point toward our goal. In December, letters were sent to all known addresses of RPCVs and staff describing the Challenge Fund and its projects and with a request to consider a pledge and a donation to continue support of CCF projects and make the program self-sustaining. If you haven't already, please consider a donation. If you need more information or did not receive information by mail, contact [johnepler@comcast.net](mailto:johnepler@comcast.net) or visit the website at [www.fotdr.org](http://www.fotdr.org).

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A Special invitation to the 45th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION OF PEACE CORPS IN THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC FEBRUARY 8-11, 2007, SANTO DOMINGO

Ya'll Come!

February 9-10, 2007 we'll celebrate 45 years of continuous Peace Corps service in the Dominican Republic. We'll go to the Palace to meet President Lionel Fernandez, have two receptions, one poolside at the Hotel Melia and the other at the Embassy, and have a Noche Dominicana to celebrate the people and culture of this beautiful country. The new Director of the Peace Corps, Ron Techetter will join us, along with a long list of luminaries and friends. But the heart of the celebration will be the formal and informal gatherings between DR returned and current PCVs and their project partners.

Lot's has changed in the DR and much remains the same. The customs and culture are still pretty well intact but the music has changed. Cell phones are everywhere, as are the courtesy and

openness of the Dominican people. Many of the people that you may have known are still around, perhaps a bit older than you remember. Ain't we all!

And after the celebration, there are the beaches of Bahia de Las Aguilas in the South the all-inclusives in the East, Cabarete and Puerto Plata in the North, whales visiting Samana, mountain air in Jarabacoa, and the 27 Waterfalls of the Rio Damajagua at Imbert.

Ya'll come! It won't be the same without you!

Romeo Massey  
Peace Corps Director, DR

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#### NEWS FROM AVENIDA BOLIVAR

VISIT YOUR SITE - If you interested in visiting your old site while in the Dominican Republic after the Anniversary Celebration Feb. 8-10, please send the years you served, and the information of where your project site was (site name, municipio, province) and the name of your project partner to Jennifer Bires [jbires@gmail.com](mailto:jbires@gmail.com). If there is another volunteer in the area we will try to put you in contact with them. Making the contact now instead of waiting until the Reunion improves the probability of coordinating with a current Volunteer.

#### DOMINICAN REPUBLIC PEACE CORPS PREPARES FOR 45TH ANNIVERSARY

Peace Corps DR Staff and Volunteers are heavily involved in planning of the February 45 anniversary conference. Check out the Program at [www.fotdr.org](http://www.fotdr.org). You will be amazed at what is in store! There should be ample opportunity for conference attendees to visit with current volunteers and learn first-hand about current Peace Corps efforts in the Dominican Republic.

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#### HAPPENINGS IN, AND ABOUT, THE DR --

Kate Wallace, Former PCV, Recognized By US Ambassador

Vice President of Sociedad Ornitológica de la Hispaniola, recognized by United States Government for work with Dominican communities and Institutions. The award was presented at the National Theater on July 3, 2006. The event was hosted by US Ambassador Hans Hertell and His wife.

Feb, 21-24/07 International Agriculture Fair  
Santo Domingo's Hotel Dominican Fiesta will host "Agroalimentaria 2007" from 21-24 February. The event brings together agricultural products like: fruits, vegetables, tobacco and beverages from 200 local companies and 100 international. The wide array of products will be on sale for visitors to enjoy.

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PC-DR RELATED NEWS  
45 YEARS OF HISTORY BEING MADE

Starting in 1962 when the first Peace Corps Volunteers arrived, each of us made history in the DR. Whether big and small, changes resulted in Dominicans, organizations, villages, and certainly in us.

Now we want your experiences, photos and stories to build a Peace Corps in the Dominican Republic History. Your help is needed now.

Here's what you can contribute:

1. Stories of experiences, events, feelings, happenings, projects, training, and more. Write down and share your favorite DR stories.
2. Photos you or others took of people, places and activities
3. PCV newsletters, newspaper articles, progress and end of service reports
4. PCV newsletters
5. Anything else you feel could be in our collective history.

How to help: To share your ideas and to find out how to submit history items, contact history chairman Neil Ross [history@fotdr.org](mailto:history@fotdr.org), 401-782-2116, or Current PC Volunteer Leader Brian Quistorff [bquistorff@gmail.com](mailto:bquistorff@gmail.com)

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NEWS FROM THE NATIONAL PEACE CORPS ASSOCIATION

Consider a special year-end gift to NPCA With your help, we had a very successful year in 2006 connecting, informing and engaging the Peace Corps community:

" We connected thousands of individuals who shared their Peace Corps experience and values in a series of Open Houses celebrating the 45th Anniversary, through the activities of 138 affiliates, and via an increasingly robust online community.

" We informed more than 25,000 individuals about the latest developments in the Peace Corps community through our award-winning quarterly magazine, WorldView, and our monthly e-newsletter, which more than doubled its subscription rate to nearly 15,000.

" We engaged more than 4,000 members of our community in support of an independent and vibrant Peace Corps on Advocacy Day and on human development issues throughout the year. Many of you supported our unprecedented legislative victory by keeping Peace Corps and military recruitment separate. As we look towards the 50th Anniversary in 2011, which will culminate in a celebration on the National Mall in Washington, DC, we are developing plans for global activities and a museum/memorial that will capture our collective experiences in ways that will make your service and that of 182,000 other Americans a national resource.

At this holiday time, please consider a special year-end gift to NPCA. Please visit our website, [www.peacecorpsconnect.org](http://www.peacecorpsconnect.org), and click on "support".

Sincerely, Kevin F. F. Quigley, President, NPCA

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JOBS AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT - check the new web site.

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FONDO QUISQUEYA

FDR collaborates closely with our sister organization, Fondo Quisqueya. Like FDR, Fondo Q is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation. Fondo Q raises money to provide scholarships for low income Dominicans at all levels below university, including vocational and non-traditional education. Fondo Q welcomes your support for these efforts. For complete Information about Fondo Quisqueya, go to their website: [www.fondooq.org](http://www.fondooq.org). Contributions are tax deductible and may be sent to Fondo Quisqueya, P.O. Box 6628, Falls Church, VA 22040-6628

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CONTACT US!

Have a news piece, announcement, or suggestion for the Cyber News? Send it along to the FDR Cyber News editor at [CyberNews@fotdr.org](mailto:CyberNews@fotdr.org) .

Changes in postal or e-mail addresses? You can update your record on the web site. If you do not have a web User Name and Password, contact the Membership Director - Janice Jorgensen: [MembershipDirector@fotdr.org](mailto:MembershipDirector@fotdr.org).

To Unsubscribe: If you do NOT want to receive future editions of the FDR Cyber News, please send a request to Janice Jorgensen ([MembershipDirector@fotdr.org](mailto:MembershipDirector@fotdr.org)) to be removed from the email list.