

## NPCA REPORT

By Patricia Wand, Representative for the Americas

Generally speaking, Returned Peace Corps Volunteers want to stay connected; whether it's to their Peace Corps site or to each other. With that knowledge in mind and using the latest web technology, the National Peace Corps Association (NPCA) opened a new web portal on January 20, 2009. Fittingly launched on Inauguration Day, [www.peacecorpsconnect.org](http://www.peacecorpsconnect.org) provides the platform for any technological communication RPCVs might want to pursue.

In the first two months of its life, PeaceCorpsConnect hosted over 64,000 unique visitors and nearly 25,000 interactions, ranging from member group registrations to "friend" connections to Twitter updates. If you haven't yet used PeaceCorpsConnect, spend a few minutes poking around the site and see for yourself what

RPCVs around the world are up to. Here are some highlights:

- 50th Anniversary Campaign – raising money to sponsor major (and minor) events in 2011 to celebrate 50 years of Peace Corps
- MorePeaceCorps – the ambitious initiative aimed at Congressional support for authorizing a bigger, bolder, better Peace Corps
- Global TeachNet e-newsletter – recently recognized by the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) for outstanding achievement in electronic publications.

Staff and Board have worked hard for NPCA to become financially solvent (which it is!) and are pushing forward on raising funds to support impressive initiatives. The largest grant yet is funding the technology to execute Africa Rural Connect Project.

## BOB ARIAS TO VOLUNTEER IN PANAMÁ

Bob Arias, FOC Regional Director/West, has accepted an offer from Peace Corps to go to Chitre, Panamá under a new program called Peace Corps Response (PCR). PCR invites former Volunteers to sign up for

three to six months, sometimes in a country that did not have volunteers previously. Bob's six-month-plus assignment is to work with six small business co-ops, giving classes on marketing, sales, product develop-

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor,

Part 1 of "Return to Dibulla" in the December newsletter was terrific, and brought back many memories of La Guajira.

I arrived in Riohacha Oct. 12, 1965. It was El Día de la Raza, and the men were drinking even more than usual. Our future FOC president, Arleen Stewart, met me at the dusty airport and got me settled into the luxurious Almirante Padilla hotel, where the daily use of kerosene kept the cockroaches at bay. Dan and Nana Ellison, who had taken your place in Dibulla, were staying for a night or two at Arleen's house. One of Arleen's Colombian friends, Friddy,

introduced Dan and me to Los Cocos, the wonderful shacks at the beach in Riohacha where you could always find a meal of fresh fish and plenty of ice-cold beer. It turned into a Peace Corps baptism by *cerveza*. By late afternoon Friddy was bragging that he and his buddies (which now included me) had consumed *siete canastas* (seven cases) of Aguila beer.

Over the next months I visited the Ellisons in Dibulla several times. I have memories of Dibulla's dignified campo bus driver, Wilson, who seemed to be in charge of the whole peninsula. I also recall the clear water and the tiny shellfish they harvested in Dibulla.

Within a year, I wound up being

MorePeaceCorps is supported by foundations; whereas the cooperative agreement with Peace Corps funds the mentor program for Peace Corps Volunteers in their close of service transition months.

NPCA reaches out and informs RPCVs in more traditional ways, too. The electronic newsletter sent on 19 March 2009 reached nearly 15,000 readers and the informative, photo-enriched WorldView quarterly magazine is sent directly to NPCA members via snail mail.

If you're interested in helping to maintain these activities, become an NPCA member. Dues of \$35/year support the infrastructure to stay connected, informed and engaged. Again, visit the website for details.

Please contact me at [patwand@mac.com](mailto:patwand@mac.com) if you have questions, suggestions or comments.

ment, and "common sense." Since Colombia's so near, he will also visit Barranquilla, where he was PC Rep., and Sevilla, his old site. Bob follows Henry Jibaja of Colombia I, who went to Venezuela with PCR.

volunteer leader for Magdalena and Guajira, which was a great adventure. The Ellisons relocated to Aracataca in the Banana Zone. At that time none of us had heard of its incredible native son, Gabriel García Marquez.

I made a return visit to La Guajira in 1979, shortly after that beautiful new highway from Santa Marta was opened. What an incredible change that was. No more 12-hour bone-jarring trips from Riohacha around the Sierra Nevada and through Valledupar. Alas, I haven't been back to the coast since. But someday....

Lee Paquette

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## FRIENDS OF COLOMBIA

### TREASURER'S REPORT, 2006-2007-2008

	2006	2007	2008
<b>REVENUES</b>			
Dues	6,294.08	16,915.00	8,490.00
Donations to FOC	1,711.56	2,945.00	7,042.00
Event income	560.00	7,450.00	4,380.00
Calvert Foundation notes	103.45	5,103.00	5,417.00
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>8,669.09</b>	<b>32,413.00</b>	<b>25,329.00</b>
<b>EXPENDITURES</b>			
Donations by FOC	10,600.00	13,940.00	21,610.00
Event expense	737.43	683.00	4,986.00
Wire transfer fees	50.00	25.00	_____
Newsletters	6,703.93	3,738.00	6,288.00
Website	574.99	257.00	_____
NPCA affiliation	90.00	100.00	100.00
USPS permits	320.00	259.00	180.00
D & O insurance			725.00
Other business expenses		113.00	977.00
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>19,076.35</b>	<b>19,115.00</b>	<b>34,866.00</b>
<b>Assets (as of 12/31)</b>			
Checking account	6,248.38	19,546.00	10,009.00
Calvert Foundation notes	10,205.45	5,417.00	
<b>Total assets</b>	<b>16,453.83</b>	<b>24,963.00</b>	<b>10,009.00</b>

Jim Kolb, Treasurer