

The Camel Express

Newsletter of the Friends of Niger
December 2000

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Peace Corps Bike-a-Thon is Huge Success 20,000 Villagers Reached with HIV/AIDS Message



- photo compliments of Jim Bullington -

- extracted from a report by Jim Bullington, PC Country Director, Niger -

The PC/Niger HIV/AIDS bike-a-thon November 11-18 was a huge success, exceeding even Peace Corps/Niger's high expectations. Some 20,000 people in 64 rural villages along Niger's principal highway heard

the HIV/AIDS prevention message, many of them for the first time. Government and partner agencies were pleased with the results.

The HIV/AIDS bike-a-thon was conceived, organized and led by three PC Niger Volunteers - Carrie Allen, Elisa Bosque-Oliva, and Laura Stevens. The PC/Niger staff provided advice, encouragement and logistic support; but it was very much the Volunteers' show from start to finish.

Two groups of Volunteers set out on November 11 to ride along the principal east-west highway through the most populous area of Niger. One group of 17 Hausa speakers rode west from Konni through Hausa villages, and another group of 19 Zarma speakers road east from Tillabery through Zarma villages. The two groups met in Dosso on November 18. Each leg of the tour was approximately 300 km.

Both groups were accompanied by skilled male and female "animateurs" provided by CARE, who presented the HIV/AIDS message. PC Volunteers provided back-up and participated in the presentations as a sort of Greek chorus, showing pictures and demonstrating condom use as well as delivering part of the message in Hausa or Zarma. They also passed out a supply of condoms (donated by Lux Development) to each village.

At the end of the bike-a-thon, November 18 in Dosso, the Volunteers organized a dinner attended by local and national Nigerien officials and partner agency representatives as well as US Ambassador Owens-Kirkpatrick and PC Niger Director Bullington.

FON hopes to play a more active support role in any future HIV/AIDS bike-a-thon.

Introducing - Friends of Niger T-Shirts You're gonna love this T-Shirt!!

Based on a design originally created by our neighbors at Friends of Burkina Faso, FON had produced its first shirts in plenty of time to meet holiday gift giving needs. The short-sleeved shirts are 100% cotton, pre-shrunk beefy-T, natural muslin-colored fabric. The design (above) is four color: brown, black and the orange and green of the flag of Niger. You'll notice a nifty proximity map of Niger within the map of Africa which appears in the branches of the baobab tree. The shirts are available in Medium, Large and Extra Large sizes and sell for \$18 each, shipping included. Use the **FON Membership & Order Form** or send a check made out to Friends of Niger (indicating the number of shirts by size), along with your name and address to: **Shirts. c/o Friends of Niger, P.O. Box 33164, Washington, D.C., 20033-0164.**

You're Gonna Love This T-Shirt		
Available in 3 Sizes		Makes a Great Gift!!
- M, L, XL		It'll Look Good on You as Well!!

*... and the International Calendar 2001
from RPCVs of Wisconsin-Madison*

And this Calendar as well!!

Since 1987 the RPCVs of Wisconsin-Madison have been producing and distributing one of the finest quality calendars on the market - the **International Calendar**. This year the calendar is available through **Friends of Niger**. The calendar is open size, 12 1/4" x 18 3/4", features 13 color photos along with information from past and present Peace Corps service countries, and is printed with soy-based ink on recycled paper. Each day of the year is annotated with holiday and event information; each month includes information on lunar and celestial events; and each photo is complimented by material related to the country portrayed. A photo of the Maradi Grand Marché graces the month of September courtesy of Tori Paide (Niger RPCV '94-'96). The calendars are priced at \$12 each, shipping included. Use the **FON Membership & Order Form** on page 9 or send a check made out to Friends of Niger, along with your name and address to: **Calendars, c/o Friends of Niger, P.O. Box 33164, Washington, D.C., 20033-0164.**



Cover
Photo
-2001



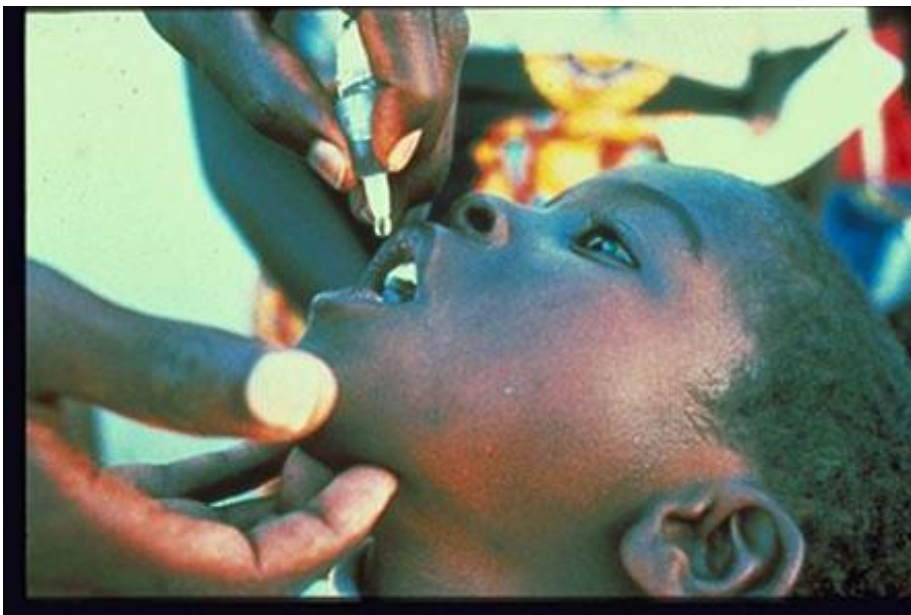
International Calendar

Tori Paide Photo

September 2001 Grand Marché

- Maradi

**Appeal & Campaign Updates
FON/UNICEF Polio Appeal
Nets Generous Response**



With a few donations still arriving, responses to the Friends of Niger appeal for financial contributions to Niger's National Immunization Days campaign to eradicate polio have topped the \$3000 mark. This makes the polio (NID) appeal the most successful of FON's several appeals during the year 2000.

While the polio campaign is officially over - for the year 2000 - and final results from Niger are still incomplete, any NID or polio contributions that arrive in the future will be set aside and specifically earmarked for future immunization activities in Niger - whether UNICEF or other. For more details regarding the campaign, see past

articles from the October 2000 edition of **The Camel Express**, available via the newsletter's archives at the FON website - <http://www.friendsofniger.org>.

Chewable Vitamin Campaign Continues to Receive Support

Friends of Niger continues to receive donations for the purchase of children's chewable multivitamins. As before, these donations are used for the periodic bulk purchase of vitamins as part of the FON/Boston University project which began last year. The vitamins are then carried to Niger and passed along to BU's Resident Director in Niamey - Sue Rosenfeld. Sue, in turn, makes sure that the vitamins are forwarded to the National Hospital in Niamey and to the SIM Hospital at Galmi, near Madaoua.

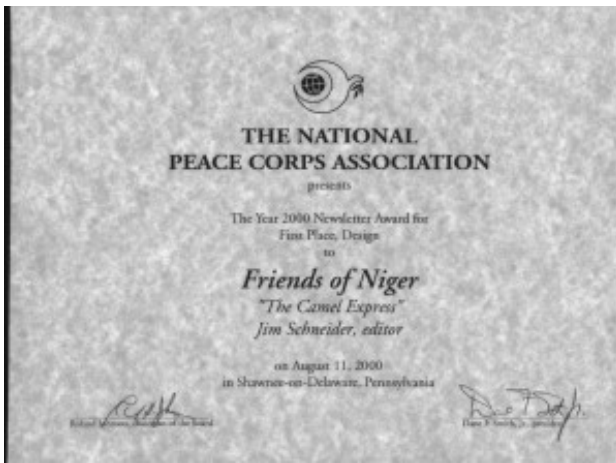
Financial contributions should be made payable to **Friends of Niger** and sent to:

Vitamins c/o Friends of Niger
P.O. Box 33164
Washington, D.C. 20033-0164

Individuals and groups also continue to take initiatives of their own - to either raise money for the project or to collect bottles of vitamins. Recently, Jen Burt Davis - ACPD/NRM - carried two boxes of vitamins to Niamey on her return from the States. The boxes contained nearly ten thousand vitamins collected by Our Saviour Lutheran Church Youth Group from Lafayette, Indiana. This is the same group of young people who, working with Laurel Branstrator, collected \$250 for the project earlier this year.

FON will continue to liaise between people going to Niger and anyone or any group wanting to make a contribution to the campaign. *Remember - it all counts.*

The Camel Express Takes First and Second at NPCA



Newsletter Awards Ceremony

When Friends of Niger President Jim Schneider attended the Awards Dinner at the National Peace Corps Association (NPCA) Annual General Meeting in August he was looking forward to a pleasant evening and received a pleasant surprise as well.

The Camel Express, newsletter of the Friends of Niger and edited by Schneider, was recognized by NPCA with the first place award for Newsletter Design. FON also tied the Friends of Burkina Faso (FBF) for the second place award for Editorial Content. FBF President Bob Osborne and FBF newsletter editor Denny Fitzpatrick were also in attendance at the meetings which took

place at Shawnee-on-the-Delaware, Pennsylvania.

FON Reunion 2001: A Celebration of Niger

Target Dates Tentatively Set for Niger's Independence Day Weekend in August

The **Friends of Niger Reunion 2001** has now been given a thematic designation and is being called *A Celebration of Niger*. This name is intended to reinforce the hope of FON's Board of Directors that next year's event involve Niger's Embassy as well as the Nigerien community in Washington, D. C. - the site of the reunion.

On a recent trip to D. C., FON President Jim Schneider met with Mr. Joseph Diatta, Niger's Ambassador to the United States. Mr. Diatta expressed support for the reunion and has agreed to work closely with FON on the organization of the event.

FON's Board has tentatively scheduled *A Celebration of Niger* for the weekend of August 3-5, 2001. August 3 is Niger's Independence Day and a national holiday in Niger itself.

Tentative plans call for social gatherings on the nights of August 4 and August 5; exhibits and displays which highlight Niger, its culture, and the activities of FON - archives, multi-media shows, etc.; films from Niger; Peace Corps and NPCA material; readings by authors of books on Niger and by RPCV Niger authors; as well as events related to the nation's capitol - such as a memorial service at the John F. Kennedy grave site. Additional information regarding alternative accommodation and other details will be released via the FON web site - <http://www.friendsofniger.org> - and the next issue of *The Camel Express*.

The theme of the reunion, according to Schneider is "a celebration of Niger and its people as well as of our time in Niger and our experiences while we were there. We are hoping that people who care about Niger - and who fondly remember each other and the time that they spent in Niger - will bring their families, their photos, their scrapbooks and help make the weekend a very special occasion."

Happenings!!

The Camel doesn't make a habit of reporting on matters of this nature - mostly because John Soloninka, FON Recording Secretary and NigerNet administrator, does such a thorough job via NigerNet. But these just came in

and the Camel decided to make an exception.

* Congratulations to Julie Burke, RPCV Niger and staff of UNICEF Niger and Boubacar Ide, Peace Corps Niger Admin staff, on their recent marriage. Boubacar is the son of Ide Oumarou, former OAU President and author of several books, including 'Le Gros Plan.'

* Congratulations also to Jen Burt Davis, APCD/NRM (natural resource mgt) and John Davis, US Embassy Niger, on the birth of their son, Zachary Gibson.

* And congratulations to Ayou & Elise Moumouni Abdoulayou on the recent birth of twin daughters. Ayou will be remembered as BU Niger Resident Assistant for some five years.



Dreamweaver Travel Announces Saharan Odyssey

- Trip Planned for February/March 2001 -

Dudley Parlinson of Dreamweaver Travel has passed along the word that there are still several spots open for Dreamweaver's Saharan Odyssey, scheduled for the period February 18 - March 2, 2001.

The trip will combine time spent in both the Air Massif and the Tenere. Most of the trip will be by Land Cruiser, but several days will be spent in the desert on camel.

Highlights:

Camel Trekking; Desert watching; Nomadic Tuareg and Fulani villages; Exploration by Toyota Land Cruisers and Camels of Air Mountains and Tenere Desert; Comfortable Mountain and Desert Camping; Ancient Petroglyphs; beautiful scenery, wonderful people, family homestays(optional). A portion of every trip fee is donated to community development projects in the areas visited. These projects are designed and run by local community leaders.

Departure Date:

February ?, 2001

Cost: \$2500

Excludes airfare to and from Niamey, passport and visa, immunizations, and miscellaneous expenses. Included are lodging, 3 meals per day, Park, museum, and craft center entrance fees, all in-country transportation, community contributions, and all gratuities. We provide all necessary camping equipment, although you may want to bring your own sleeping bag.

For the full itinerary and other details, contact Dreamweaver Travel through any of the following:

DreamWeaver Travel
1185 River Drive
River Falls, WI 54022
Tel: 715-425-1037
Fax: 715-426-0829

email: dudley@dreamweavertravel.net

web: www.dreamweavertravel.net

Crisis Corps Openings in Africa - Work with PC HIV/AIDS Initiative -

As part of its HIV/AIDS initiative, Peace Corps is sending RPCVs to Africa via Crisis Corps. The effort includes a range of volunteer assignments including the development of AIDS curriculum and activities related to capacity-building within local HIV/AIDS NGOs.

The Crisis Corps is looking for RPCVs who have completed two years of PC service, who have some HIV/AIDS experience, who have at least one year of experience in sub-Saharan Africa and who preferably would be available for a six-month assignment.

Additional information about this and other Crisis Corps programs is available on-line at - <http://www.peacecorps.gov/crisiscorps>. Crisis Corps can also be reached by the following means:

Peace Corps - Crisis Corps
1111 20th Street NW, 7th Floor
Washington, D.C. 20526
crisiscorps@peacecorps.gov

1-800-424-8580 ext 2250 - or - 2020-692-2250
Fax: 202-692-2251

World Wise School - Download Resources for Teachers -

In an effort to enhance the value of their materials and to meet the growing needs of teachers, Peace Corps' World Wise School program has upgraded its materials with the goal of providing high-quality content and an integrated curriculum.

The new resources, readily accessed and/or downloaded via <http://www.peacecorps.gov/wws/>, include the following:

- * **Culture Matters** - downloadable primary resource tool. Originally developed by the Peace Corps as a self-guided workbook for volunteers in order to assist them in crossing cultures, exercises are available along with an accompanying trainer's guide.
- * **CyberVolunteer** - allows teachers to sign up for monthly e-mail messages from PCVs in service around the world. An organized schedule details the names and locations of each Volunteer and is sent in advance, allowing teachers to integrate information into the lesson planning process.
- * **Water in Africa** - an online learning module which integrates technology with national standards in social sciences, language, arts, geography, health and science. The module is based on resources gathered from 90 PCVs in 25 African countries. 24 standards-based learning units are designed to reflect the connection between water and all aspects of life on the continent.

2002 Trip to Niger Sparks Interest & Ideas

- 40 Years of Peace Corps in Niger -

The last issue of *The Camel Express* carried a brief announcement of FON's plan to sponsor a trip back to Niger in the year 2002 - for many reasons, including the commemoration of the 40th anniversary of Peace Corps presence in Niger.

That brief announcement has stimulated considerable response from people interested in participating in such a trip - in some cases along with members of their family: spouses, parents, children. The amount of interest expressed at such an early date, means that the trip is now a likelihood.

When the trip first went onto the FON drawingboard, it was assumed that most everyone interested in the trip would be primarily attracted to the idea of returning to the community in which they served. While this is, indeed, true for many - others have expressed interest in two other kinds of activity or itinerary.

Some - especially those who served in the earlier years and who lived in the larger urban areas like Niamey - have expressed an interest in visiting locations that they were never able to get to before, like Agadez - for example. Others have expressed an interest in being involved in some manner of 'work project.'

Because of these and other inputs the Board will now be 'exploring' a wider range of potential activities. Both the timing of the trip, the content of the trip itinerary, and trip options are still open to input from anyone who might be interested. The current plan is to take the process to a second phase - involving research on more specific details regarding timing, content and cost - this coming winter.

Meanwhile, early and very tentative discussions have begun with Peace Corps Niger.

Please continue to send input, comments or questions to **Jim Schneider**. Jim is most easily reached at either his e-mail address - lorenz3@magi.com - or by telephone - **819-827-4870**. He can also be reached by surface mail at the FON address (see page 2).

FRIENDS OF NIGER

2001 MEMBERSHIP & ORDER FORM

Name(s)

Address

City/State _____ Phone (h) _____

Zip _____ Phone (w) _____

E- Mail Address

Connection to Niger (RPCV, etc.)

Dates in Niger _____ Location in Niger _____

Program or Involvement in Niger

Membership Dues & Contributions Help Fund FON Activities, including The Camel Express

Please Check Appropriate Boxes

- Enclosed is \$20 for an Individual Membership in FON
 - \$45 to cover Individual Membership in both FON & NPCA
 - Enclosed is \$35 for a Family Membership (2 Members at One Address)
 - \$67.50 to cover Family Membership in both FON & NPCA
 - I am a New RPCV, entitled to a 1-Year Free Membership
 - Please send me a Copy of FON's Bylaws (Members Only)
 - In Addition to my Membership, I have enclosed a Contribution of _____
 - Instead of Joining FON at this time, I have enclosed a Contribution of _____
 - Please send _____ Friends of Niger T-Shirts at \$18 each (Shipping Included) _____
- T-Shirt Sizes: M _____ L _____ XL _____
- Please send _____ Year 2001 Internation Calendars at \$12 each (Shipping Included) _____

TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED _____

Make Check or Money Order Payable to **Friends of Niger** and mail to:

P. O. Box 33164, Washington, D. C. 20033-0164

(Please Enclose Membership Form)

FON Participaction Menu

Indicate your interest with a check mark. Or add something new at the bottom. Tell us how to reach you on the **Friends of Niger 2001 Membership & Order Form** (see above).

- × ___ Will help set up local FON group
- × ___ Would participate in local FON group
- × ___ Reunion 2001 in Washington, D.C.
- × ___ Trip back to Niger in 2002
- × ___ Will be local FON contact person
- × ___ Will help with BU/FON Vitamin Campaign

Other _____

Credits and Other Information

This edition of **The Camel Express** was prepared, produced and distributed via hardcopy, e-mail and website posting with the contributions Sue Bracken, Irma Poots Sarata, Judd Lyon, Jim Bullington, Jane Bonin, Sue

Rosenfeld, Jai Evans, Don Bracken, Julia Burke, Carrie Regan, Penni St. Hilaire, Tori Paide, Meghan Maguire, Andrew Younger, Chris Fabian, Gabriella Maertens, John Soloninka, Larry Koff and our friends from Friends of Burkina Faso and from RPCVs of Madison, Wisconsin Please send address changes and corrections, as well as any queries to **The Camel Express** at any of the addresses below.

The Camel Express is the periodical newsletter of **Friends of Niger (FON)**.

FON can be contacted via the post at P.O. Box 33164, Washington, D.C., 20033-0164;
by e-mail at lorenz3@magi.com; and you will find FON on the web at the following Internet
address
www.friendsofniger.org.

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