

# The Camel Express

NEWSLETTER OF THE FRIENDS OF NIGER

Volume 14 - SPECIAL EDITION

July 1999



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## Reunion '99 August Up-Date

With about ten days to go, there is one major addition/change to the schedule for **FON Reunion '99**. The **FON Supper/Social** scheduled for 7 PM, Saturday August 14 will be a **Burger, Brat & Beer Fest (BBB&F)** chez Niger RPCV **Jim Martin**. Jim was with the first PC group in Niger - arriving there in 1962 and spending his time as a teacher in Zinder and Maradi.

The **BBB&F** will be taking place at [1768 Lincoln Avenue in St. Paul](#) - about one mile from the St. Thomas campus in St. Paul. A nominal price will be charged at the door. Looks like the perfect event for an August evening in Minnesota.

All other events are as outlined below. In the case of some of the events, additional information may not be available until we arrive in St. Paul. Members of the FON Board will be available at the conference site - including **Jim Schneider, Gabriella Maertens, John Soloninka** and **Larry Koff**. Notices will be posted at the Koch Commons, the location for NPCA Registration and information exchange at St. Thomas College.

Thanks for the help received from **Angela Kieffer** and **Ron Dube** re: the previous request for help securing music and flags from Niger. **Bring photos, videotapes, slides, audiotapes, etc.**

FON Board President **Jim Schneider** will be staying at the Student Apartment Residence, arriving Thursday, August 12.

For further info, contact **Jim Schneider** - [lorenz3@magi.com](mailto:lorenz3@magi.com) - or **Gabriella Maertens** - [gmaertens@earthlink.net](mailto:gmaertens@earthlink.net). Any further update will appear at the **FON website** - <http://www.friendsofniger.org>.

## See You in St. Paul!!!

## Reunion '99

This special summer edition of **The Camel Express** has been produced specifically to provide a bit of information to those of you who are planning - or might still plan - to attend the combination **FON Reunion '99** and **NPCA National Conference**.

First - some clarity regarding the two events. Every two years, the National Peace Corps Association (NPCA) holds a National Conference. In 1999 the conference is being held on the [University of St. Thomas campus in St. Paul, Minnesota](#) from Thursday, August 12 to Sunday, August 15. So - the Board of FON thought it would make sense to sponsor a FON reunion to coincide with the NPCA conference. Many of you had asked for a reunion-type gathering and the Board felt that we might benefit from the arrangements being made by NPCA. That is how **Reunion '99** came to be set for the period Friday, August 13 - Sunday, August 15.

This up-date will not contain a lot of information regarding the NPCA conference because all those of you who are NPCA members have received a pile of info directly from NPCA. And, to clarify - while we hope that many of you have decided to register and attend the conference - the conference is separate, though parallel, to the reunion and participation in the reunion events does not require that you be a conference attendant. For those of you who are members of FON, but not NPCA, and those of you who are members of neither see **Some NPCA Events** below for info on conference events that you may be able to tap into.

## FON Reunion Events

**Friday, August 13 - 4:30 PM - Reunion Registration and First Contact.** This will be the first opportunity for those of us who arrive on Friday to find each other, meet each other and spend some time together. For this purpose, NPCA has set aside a room for FON at the conference site. To find us (as rooms have yet to be assigned) go to the NPCA registration area at Koch Commons on the St. Paul campus of the University of St. Thomas. The people at the NPCA desk will know where we can be found. We have arranged for a slide projector and screen as well as a videotape playback unit and monitor - in the expectation that some of you will bring video material that you'd like to share. Someone has already volunteered to bring a selection of music from Niger. If you want to be sure to hear your favorite tunes - bring them along. Tables will be available for displaying photo albums or whatever else you might want to share. Coffee and juice should be available nearby. At some point there will be an informal exchange - not a meeting, but an opportunity to welcome each other. The room is available to 6 PM. Drop by at anytime.

**Friday, August 13 - 7 PM - FON Supper & Social.** [Blue Nile Restaurant & Lounge, 2027 E. Franklin Avenue, Minneapolis, Minnesota.](#) Arrangements have been made for a communal African-style vegetarian meal at about \$6 per person. Meat and other side dishes can be ordered individually. The restaurant is run by an Ethiopian family and has an excellent, long-standing local reputation. The eating area is non-smoking. The attached lounge and bar features live African music and will provide a great venue for social activities after supper - dancing, talking, singing, etc.

**Saturday, August 14 - 11 AM - Brunch.** The locations for most of the Saturday FON events have yet to be confirmed. Additional info will be available later this month at our website (see below) and at the events on Friday, August 13 referred to above as well as on the bulletin board at the Koch Commons NPCA registration area.

**Saturday, August 14 - 3 PM - FON Gathering/Exchange.** Sheraton Midway Hotel, 400 N. Hamline Avenue, St. Paul, Minnesota. The hotel is situated less than 3 miles from the conference site. FON will have a hospitality room available for people to gather and make contact - in much the same fashion as the 4:30 PM session on Friday.

**Saturday, August 14 - 7 PM - FON Supper & Social.** Location to be announced. Emphasis will be on "social."

**Sunday, August 15.** Wide open.

## Some NPCA Events

The events below are part of the NPCA National Conference but to which you will all have access.

**International Bazaar and Career Fair.** These run from 9 am to 6 pm on both the Friday and the Saturday. The Bazaar will feature products sold by many of the RPCV groups as well as by NPCA, etc. The Career Fair will feature recruiting booths from some 40 international employers and graduate schools. Bring along your resumes. Information on location will be available as per the above.

**Film Festival.** Runs from noon to 6 pm on Friday, 10 am to 6 pm on Saturday. Films under consideration come from the Brazilian rain forest, the classrooms of Morocco, pre-Soviet Georgia, Africa and the forest home of Irian Jaya.

**Walk-Run for Peace - Sunday, August 15 - 7 AM.** 5 kilometers (about 2 1/4 miles).

**Peace Site Dedication - Sunday, August 15 - 8:30 AM.** University of St. Thomas campus.

## **Future Updates, Input from You Folks, On-Going Contacts**

Check out this website on a regular basis for additional info related to the reunion - bookmark us at <http://www.friendsofniger.org>. While at the site, click on the [Bulletin Board](#) located on the bottom left-hand column and leave messages or ask questions related to the reunion, who is going, etc. Take a look now and respond to my message, or leave a message for someone else. Additional information regarding the NPCA conference is available at the NPCA website - <http://www.rpcv.org>.

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Does anyone have or know where we could get one or more Niger flags?

**SEE YOU IN ST. PAUL!!!**