

The Camel Express



Newsletter of the Friends of Niger
June 2001

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Celebration of Niger 2001: See You This August in DC

- The June Update -

As previously announced, **Friends of Niger** is sponsoring **Celebration Niger 2001** on the weekend of August 3-5 in Washington, D.C. The event, a combination reunion/exhibition, kicks off on the afternoon of Friday, August 3 - Niger's Independence Day and is being held in DC in recognition of Peace Corps' 40th anniversary activities.

Celebration 2001 will be an opportunity to make new friends, reacquaint with old friends, reconnect with Niger and celebrate the relationship between Niger and its friends - old and new. **As such, all weekend events will be open to all friends of Niger - FON member or not - as well as their families and friends.**

If you are planning to attend Celebration 2001, please let us know. We'll understand if your plans change - but we need to build an estimate of numbers for a variety of purposes. Thanks!!

Re: Housing: Some people have offered to host out-of-town attendees. If you can accommodate one or more persons for the weekend - please let us know. If you are hoping to board with someone - please send us a query. We'll try to put potential hosts and guests in contact. Please try to be specific regarding what you need or what you are offering. Thanks!! **Also see the article below concerning the FON group rate.**

For this or other purposes related to Celebration 2001, **contact Jim Schneider by phone at 819-827-4870 or via e-mail at lorenz3@magi.com.**

Friends of Niger Secures Group Rate Accommodation for Celebration of Niger 2001

**** Reserve Your Room by July 3 ****

Friends of Niger has been able to secure a Group Rate at the Holiday Inn Central in Washington, DC for the weekend of **FON's Celebration of Niger 2001**.

The hotel is located at 1501 Rhode Island, NW (15th & Rhode Island) which places it near the White House, Peace Corps, Dupont Circle, etc. The Holiday Inn Central will be the location for the **FON Exhibit** as well as for many of the other activities related to the weekend.

The **Friends of Niger** Group Rate is \$109 per night, single or double occupancy.

Reservations can be made by calling 1-800-248-0016. Mention that you want the **Friends of Niger Group Rate** for check in on Friday, August 3 and departure on Sunday, August 5.. You may, of course, book a longer stay but the FON Group Rate only holds for the weekend. They'll want a deposit (which can be made by credit card) but cancellations may be made without penalty up to 6 PM on the intended arrival date.

IMPORTANT: The FON Group Rate is effective for reservations made no later than **July 3, 2001** - after which time rooms may still be available but will be subject to room and rate availability. Additional information regarding the hotel can be found at their web site - <http://www.inn-dc.com>. The hotel can also be reached via e-mail at holiday@inn-dc.com. Use the 800 number above for reservations.

Celebration of Niger 2001 activities will begin with the opening of the **FON Exhibit Hall** on the afternoon of Friday, August 3 - at Holiday Inn Central. Additional information regarding the weekend's activities will be available soon at the FON website - <http://www.friendsofniger.org>.

While you are making your reservations and/or other plans for attending the big weekend, please let us know that you will be in attendance. The best way to do that is to drop me a line at lorenz3@magi.com.

See you soon.

Jim Schneider
President
Friends of Niger

Latest Update on Celebration of Niger 2001 - 22 June

Over the next six weeks, this slot on the FON homepage will be used to report on the latest developments related to **Celebration of Niger 2001**. Check back often because there will be a lot more to come.

Dates - August 3-5, 2001
Location - Washington, DC
FON Exhibit - Holiday Inn Central

1501 Rhode Island Avenue, NW

Opening Event - **First Contact/Registration** beginning mid-afternoon on Friday, August 3 in the Council Room at the Holiday Inn Central. This event is being designed as an opportunity for people to find each other, check out the latest schedule developments for the weekend and take a first look at the **FON Exhibit Hall**.

Exhibits - **FON Archives** - a collection of photos, clippings, audio and videotapes donated by people who have lived and worked in Niger over the last 40 years.

The Patrick Thomas Exhibit - this exhibit includes Patrick Thomas' unique collection of recycled tools from Niger, calabashes of all kinds, Nigerienne textiles - as well as the exquisite Nigerienne photos of Didier Delattre and Blum.

The Mohamed Ahmed Jewelry Exhibit and Kiosk - Once located in Niamey, Mohamed now represents various artisans still located at the Musee in Niger's capital. Come practice your Hausa, Tamachek, Zarma or French.

And, more to come...

The Audio-Video Center - One of the fun features of the **FON Exhibit Hall** will be the availability of videotape playback and slide projector equipment for use by FON's members and friends. In other words, bring along your photos, slides and audio/video tapes. We'll help you set up a show for your friends or gladly add you to the audiovideo schedule of events.

Featured Videos - In addition to showings from the **FON Archives** collection, **FON** has been able to secure a number of Niger and Mali shows from the National Geographic Society - including the Sereno pieces, a 1980's film on the Woodabe, and several others.

Readings - Several authors - Nigerienne and those who have published on Niger - will be holding readings and be available for book signing over the course of the weekend: including Diatta Haoua, author of *Shadow of Africa* and founder of Microcredit Africa, and Paul Stoller, author of *Jaguar: A Story of Africans in America*. **And more to come.**

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