

The Camel Express



Newsletter of the Friends of Niger

August/September 2019

Please note our NEW mailing address: Friends of Niger PO Box 452 Haverford, PA 19041

In this issue:

1. Organizational fine-tuning – what new bylaws mean for you
2. TCP Global- an RPCV fostered microloan model
3. Women's group merchandises goat cheese
4. Rotary action in Niger and with NPCA
 - Wisilli School project
 - Hepatitis screening program
 - Partnership with NPCA
5. Cultural spotlight – Sahel Sounds and les filles de Illighadad
6. News –
 - *Twelve dead in Boko Haram Niger attack*
 - *The Sahel in flames*
 - *What Happened When the EU Moved Its Fight to Stop Migration to Niger*
 - *Passing of Jerry Koloms*

LAST WORD - A used car in WisconsinIn'shala

From the Editor

Dear readers,

*Greetings as we prepare for winter in the US and in Niger they are harvesting millet and preparing for the dry season. Here in southern Oregon the white oak acorns (*Quercus alba*) are huge and abundant and we are taking note as legend has it this means a hard winter.*

Please continue to share information of interest to readers and consider getting more active with the Friends of Niger. Help is needed updating our website and in future Newsletters we will be asking for volunteers to get more involved in other initiatives and activities that we discussed at our Board Retreat. What are your interests and concerns? We love to hear from you!

Amy Wilson, dit Amibula

1) Organizational fine-tuning – what revised Bylaws mean for members

The topic of bylaws is often met with a groan, but they help keep an organization on track. The board has recently adopted revised bylaws to better guide and describe our current organization. Revisions have saved the good stuff and added some helpful guides. Here are the highlights that may be of interest to members.

- Major activities of FON:
 - Connecting and engaging people who have connections to Niger
 - Supporting and promoting development activities in Niger, primarily in the fields of healthcare, nutrition, and education.
 - Advocating and educating for the benefit of Niger & Nigeriens
- Membership:
 - Anyone who supports our mission and submits an application can be considered a member (no annual dues for **General** membership),

- **Voting** members are those who have donated at least \$20 in the 12 months preceding any vote.
- Board is expanded and elections are clarified:
 - Minimum of 7 and maximum of 13 Board members; CONUSA and Niger diaspora shall be represented on the board
 - Nominations will be sought from membership, with annual elections to be held electronically
- Committees, involvement and engagement:
 - Committees open to members and others who may contribute to the committee purpose
 - Standing Committees may include Finance, Projects and Nominating; Ad hoc and special committees to be formed as needed

See the details at <http://www.friendsofniger.org/about/friends-of-niger-bylaws/> and please give us feedback on any and all ideas for improvement.

2) TCP Global - an RPCV fostered microloan model

In August the Board heard from Helene Dudley who works with TCP Global to assist microloan projects in communities in Colombia and more than 5 countries in Africa. Initially called The Colombia Project, as of, 2014 it transitioned to TCP Global, a pro bono consulting service to assist small non-profits to implement micro-loan programs based on its successful model.

TCP Global partners with any effective grassroots organization but is particularly interested in working through PCVs and RPCVs who want to serve their Peace Corps service communities. Two Niger RPCVs have partnered with TCP Global to further effective efforts in Niger.

The ideal organization to implement Colombia Project micro-loans is one that is committed to serving an underserved/marginalized community where there are few resources and where there is an existing informal economy - a community largely beyond the reach of many services as well as regulations, where the people are too often on their own.

Learn more and contact them: <http://www.colombiaproject.org/>

Here's a short video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PeOM0tFOaEU&t=> and a WorldView Magazine article about Niger RPCV Virginia Emmons and TCP Global: [https://issuu.com/peacecorpsconnect/docs/worldview-spring19_v32_no1_pg\(32-34](https://issuu.com/peacecorpsconnect/docs/worldview-spring19_v32_no1_pg(32-34)

3) Women's group merchandises goat cheese

FON is working with Urgence Réhabilitation de la Zone Pastoral (OURZP) to improve economic opportunities for women in the area of Tchintabaraden through goat cheese production. Sixty women in two *groupements des femmes* are involved in this project which follows previous projects for goat husbandry, development and training of *les groupements* and well construction. This stage of support has helped with materials for the production, protection and preservation of cheese, and transportation to markets. This FON-funded project targets the most vulnerable women who are developing skills for *auto-gestion* while they are generating income and learning new skills.



4) Rotary action in Niger

Rotary is an international service organization active in Niger. In addition it connects other communities in the world to Niger. How many of you are associated with Rotary? Even if you are not a member, take note that Rotary in your community may be interested in connecting with you to support international service projects. For example, The Columbia Project got a big boost early on through a Rotary Grant.

Here are some Nigerien examples of Rotary activity.

→ Rotary Club of Battle Ground Washington helps Wisilli School (Amy Wilson)

Last year the *Resortissants de Wisilli* (a group of people from Wisilli who now live in Niamey and other larger cities) was providing desks for students in the CEG in their hometown, upriver from Niamey on a seasonal island northwest of Tillaberi. Morou Boureima, now retired from ORTN has enthusiasm for community service and has been active in this group of 'resortissants' villagers who want to help out folks still living in the village. I met Mourou while dropping off Nelson Cronyn at the airport in 1990 after a pre-service training and we have been friends ever since.

The opportunity to support this effort was embraced by the Battle Ground Rotary Club when I brought it to their attention. My fellow Rotarians had heard of Niger (I'm a hard core Third Goal kinda gal), and they loved the people-to-people connection. Morou was able to go directly to the school principal and teachers to learn what they needed and facilitate purchase, fabrication and delivery. He also captured lots of images that were shared with the Rotarians who voted unanimously with their pocketbooks to send over \$4,229 for the purchase of 69 desks and 263 textbooks. The *Resortissants* also worked with the Parent Teacher Association to make sure the parents were emphasizing the importance of school.



Please check out our short video about the project
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BzY_xF7J00A&t=22s

→ Nigerien Rotarians tackle Hepatitis

Rotarians in Niger supported a campaign against hepatitis in Niamey and Zinder by providing funding and volunteers. The Rotarians were accompanied by Rotaract* members (*very popular in developing countries they represent an encouraging display of altruism in the next generation-- they are 18-30 year olds who form their own volunteer-based clubs under the umbrella of Rotary).

Story and photos [HERE](#)

Soucieux d'améliorer les conditions de vie des populations locales, les Rotary Clubs du Niger veulent s'investir dans la lutte contre les hépatites B et C, en commençant par une campagne de dépistage gratuit, dans le cadre du programme « Zéro Hépatite » du groupe rotarien. Le Rotary vient ainsi renforcer les actions menées par la Coordination de lutte contre le VIH/Sida et l'Hépatite sous l'égide de la Fondation Guri Vie Meilleure de la Première Dame du Niger. Dans ce cadre, les Rotary Clubs du Niger, veulent assurer correctement leur part du combat avec l'Initiative « Zéro Hépatite », en soutenant le dépistage des hépatites B et C à Niamey et à Zinder dans un 1er temps, sous le leadership du Ministère de la Santé Publique. L'objectif, à terme, est de Contribuer, comme pour la Poliomyélite, à l'éradication des hépatites B et C au Niger. Cette action, qui débute à Niamey au CSI Dar Es Salam et à Zinder au SCI Stade, est le point de départ d'un processus d'éradication des Hépatites B et C.



→ Partnership agreement with Rotary and NPCA

Check out more information about Rotary and NPCA:

- Agreement announcement: <https://www.partneringforpeace.org/cpages/home1>
- Article by partnership participant: [HERE](#)
- A match made in heaven: <https://www.peacecorpsconnect.org/articles/peace-corps-and-rotary-a-match-made-in-heaven>
- Connect with a club in your area with the Rotary Club finder: <https://my.rotary.org/en/search/club-finder>



5) Cultural spotlight

Les Filles de Illighadad are in the US touring now – New York, Connecticut, Virginia, Maryland, Pennsylvania -- More info [HERE](#)

Thanks to Sahel Sounds - a project focused on culture in the West African Sahel. Founded by Christopher Kirkley in 2009 to share field recordings, today it is a record label, artist collective, film production house, and arts organization. The artists that they represent have input and control over artistic endeavors AND profits are shared 50/50. “We’re committed to using culture as a means of communication, helping our artists build careers, and listening to good music.” <https://sahelsounds.com/>



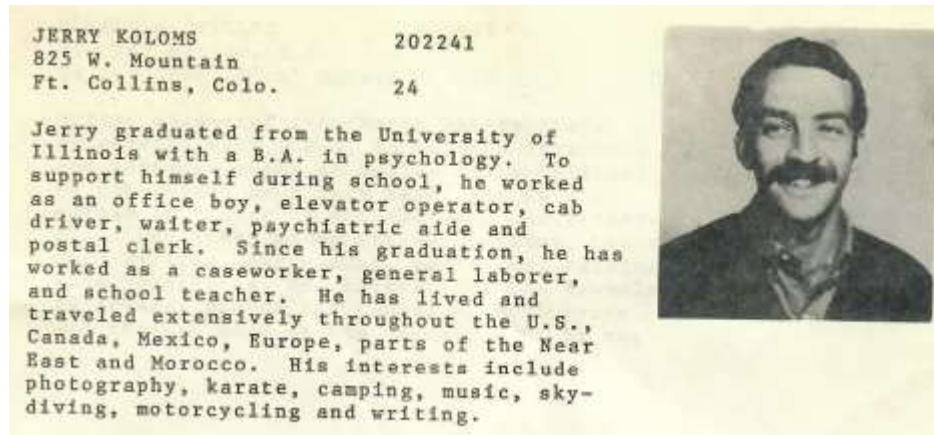
6) News

- **Twelve dead in Boko Haram Niger attack** A night raid blamed on Boko Haram has left a dozen villagers dead in southeast Niger on the frontier with Nigeria, [Aug 24, 2019] [READ MORE](#)
- **The Sahel in flames** [May 31, 2019]. On the southern edge of the Sahara another jihadist insurgency has been spreading like wildfire, with far less international attention. The civilian toll in numbers:
 - Civilian fatalities rose 7,000 percent in Burkina Faso, 500 percent in Niger, and 300 percent in Mali compared to the previous year
 - 440,000 people displaced by conflict, a five-fold increase over the previous year
 - 1.8 million people face food insecurity
 - 5.1 million people require humanitarian assistance
 - 157 men, women, and children killed in March in one attack in MaliRead more [HERE](#)

- **What Happened When the EU Moved Its Fight to Stop Migration to Niger**
Overnight, an EU-backed law criminalized the main source of income in the city of Agadez. It didn't stop migration, but it wrecked the economy. [JULY 5, 2019] Read more at - <https://www.thenation.com/article/niger-agadez-migration/>
Submitted by Pamela White

- Irwin Jerome "Jerry" Koloms, Niger RPCV who worked in the UNCC program, 1967-69 died at age 75 in his sleep this month in Forestville, CA. He was loved and will be missed by all who knew him. :

*Submitted by Larry Koff
and Joel Neuberg*



LAST WORD

Volunteers Lara Sutherlin and Grant Sovern were used-car shopping in Wisconsin and fate stepped in when they found a Subaru with these plates:



YOUR DONATIONS FUEL THIS WORK

You may make a donation at any time. To donate now, you can either go to www.friendsofniger.org to use PayPal, or write a check payable to Friends of Niger and mail to: Friends of Niger PO Box 452 Haverford, PA 19041. Thank you very much.

For more about Friends of Niger:

- Our website (new webmaster needed): <http://www.friendsofniger.org/>
- Join & follow us at: <https://www.facebook.com/FriendsOfNiger/>
- Contact President John Baird, president@friendsofniger.org

"There is no way to peace; peace is the way."

"please reply to this email to unsubscribe"

