

Allons-y! Back to Burkina with FBF!

Wood carving from Koudougou



The Tentative Leap

by Bob Osborne

Lots of interest has been shown in the return trip to Burkina, so tentative plans are coming together! The basic premise of the plan is to spend at least part of the time at the FESPACO 2001 film festival, which runs February 24 through March 3. So we're aiming for a 2-week period which will start about February 25, drop us in Ouaga in the middle of the fête, and have us return home about March 11.

Claire Sneed, daughter of board member John Sneed, has generously donated her services to iron out some of the details for us. Claire has traveled widely, organized international conferences, and most importantly, really wants to go.

We needed an agent with a great deal of experience in Africa, so we've selected June Spector of Boston. June knows West Africa well, and was in the Peace Corps herself.

Air Afrique is offering us the best deal so far. They will secure reservations for us at \$100-200 deposit, and won't require full payment until much later. They've offered us a fare of \$780, with a stopover in the likable city of Accra on the way for an extra \$120.

ITINERARY - VERY TENTATIVE

Day 1: Depart New York/JFK, arrive Accra.
Day 2-3: Accra. Visiting, touring, shopping.
Day 4: Accra to Ouaga. Hotel Independence.
Day 5-6-7-8: Ouaga. FESPACO, Embassies, ABASUS, explore, marché central, etc.
Day 9-10-11-12: Free time. Travel, visit, return to villages, etc.
Day 13-14: Reassemble in Ouaga. Late shopping, packing, make one last attempt to stay up late enough to go to a neighborhood night club, etc.
Day 15: Return to JFK.

COST - VERY PRELIMINARY

(but it should be in the ballpark)
RT Airfare: JFK-Accra-Ouaga-JFK.....\$900
Hotel: Accra, 3N Double Occ.....\$105-150
Hotel Independence: Ouaga, 5N.....\$175-250
Hotel: 6N, Pavillon Vert, Ran.....\$108-180
Food, meals @ \$20-40/day.....\$280-560
Transportation: local taxi, bus, car....\$150-300
Total per person.....\$1,718-2,340
(Important: does not include travel from home to New York, shots, visas, passports, entertainment, personal and individual stuff like arts-crafts-souvenirs-film-gifts.)

Now, what we need from you to reserve the airline seats and hotels is a **deposit of \$200 by June 30**. This counts toward your eventual total cost. It may not be totally refundable. If you have to cancel, we'll get back what we can. Make your check or money order out to: **FBF/Trip '01** and mail to: **Bob Osborne, 539 N Chipman Street, Owasso, MI 48867**. If you have questions, you can reach me at 517-723-6622. If you have an e-mail address, send that along too.

Later, say October or November, we will need \$1300-1600 each. *Allons-y!*

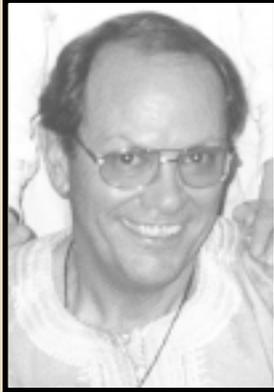
TRIP '01.....





Getting Together

by Bob Osborne



My focus lately has been primarily on the group return trip to Burkina coming up in February 2001. But there are a couple other upcoming events that I'd like to mention now, in the hopes that other Friends of Burkina can find the wherewithal to attend. The more FBFers there, the more

of a fun reunion it becomes.

NPCA Annual Meeting:

The National Peace Corps Association Annual General Meeting will be held in the scenic Pocono Mountains on the Delaware river near Shawnee, PA, August 11-13.

This year's event is being hosted by the Philadelphia Area Peace Corps Association, and will offer time for networking and sharing ideas, as well as time for social events and relaxation. There will be a reception Friday evening, the annual meeting on Saturday, and a breakfast on Sunday. Workshops will be going on throughout the weekend.

I especially encourage FBF members who live in the Pennsylvania area to try and make it there for a great summer weekend. Please contact me if you're interested in attending, and I'll provide you with more details.

Peace Corps 40th Anniversary:

Mark your calendar for a reunion on the Mall in Washington, DC on September 20-23, 2001. The 40th anniversary celebration of Peace Corps is beginning to take shape.

The Returned Peace Corps Volunteers of Washington, DC are working with NPCA to plan a gala event. It's my hope that the occasion will also be an opportunity to put together a Burkina Faso reunion. If you've had the good fortune to attend any of the past anniversary reunions, you know what a wonderful experience it can be. It's still a long way off, but I wanted everybody to start planing ahead for a big reunion of Friends of Burkina!

NPCA Hospitality Network:

While I'm at it, I'd like to give a plug to the National Peace Corps Association Hospitality Network, where you can volunteer to host RPCVs and their families who might be passing through. We all remember traveling to other towns and villages as PCVs, and often we stayed with other volunteers. That kind of sharing helped instill the "connection" to which we repeatedly refer.

As you know, even old Vol alums like to seek out other Vol alums while traveling, for two main reasons: 1) We tend to be either cheap, or economic underachievers, and 2) We don't have to explain anything, or gloss over "gross" stuff, or apologize for actually liking the Third World.

So I think it would be pretty cool to occasionally have a traveling RPCV coming through (though I'm not expecting much through Owasso, MI), and I've signed up. I hope you'll consider signing up too. See the registration form on the next page. 



BACK TO BURKINA!

SEND YOUR \$200
DEPOSIT NOW TO:

BOB OSBORNE
539 N CHIPMAN STREET
OWASSO, MI 48867

MAKE PAYABLE TO:
FBF/TRIP '01

Networking Hospitality for RPCVs

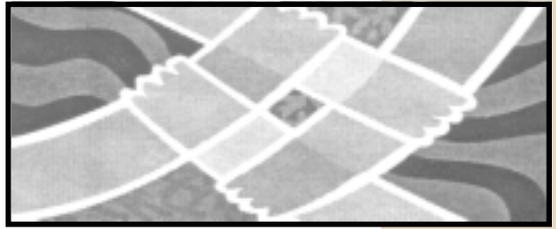
by Alan Burrus (Tonga Islands), HosNet coordinator

The NPCA HosNet Directory now lists nearly 400 RPCVs who are willing to offer a place to stay for travelling RPCVs and former staff. Peace Corps places copies of the directory in offices nationwide, and includes HosNet information in their *Close Of Service* manual and job flyer *Hotline*.

There are many neat things about HosNet. It's easy, it helps recently returned RPCVs readjust, it's affordable for those with families (60% of hosts say "kids OK"), it allows hosts to decide how often and when, and it's financially equitable to all involved.

Become a traveler and /or a host on the network! The basis for participation is mutual trust, respect and goodwill!

HOW IT WORKS: Travelers call or e-mail ahead and all arrangements are made between the two parties ... SIMPLE! Addresses are not listed in the directory, so all the necessary information is verified directly by you. And it's always OK for hosts to say "no", as in "space not available".



HosNet Directories are available at cost (there are no paid staff).

NPCA Members: \$7; non-members & overseas: \$12

Make Checks Payable to: NPCA

Send Host Info and/or Directory Orders to:

Alan Burrus, Coordinator, POB 1971, Santa Fe, NM 87504

For more info and questions: (505) 983-7342 burrusNMPC@aol.com



New Host Information Form (indicate your preferences)

Name: _____ PC Country: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State/Zip: _____

Phone: _____ fax: _____ e-mail: _____

Accommodations: mat on floor single/dbl bed/futon/couch other _____

Space for: 1 2 3 4 adults Space for: 0 1 2 3 4 children

Maxi. number of nights per stay: 1 2 3 4 other _____

Breakfast: none simple (Cheerios) moderate (waffles/eggs) extravagant!

Wheelchair Access? yes / no Pets OK? yes / no Smoking OK? no / yes

Best arrival time: _____ PM Best departure time: _____ AM

Reimbursement for: hot water, laundry, cleaning, breakfast, etc.

(per day, per person): \$0 \$2 \$5 \$10 \$15 other _____

NOTES: (Nearby attractions, universities, events, transport, and other info)

HOSNET...





Traveling with Ambassador Kolker



We've had blasting rains two nights in a row in Ouaga, bringing drops, dust and debris through every roof crack and (closed) window. But the temperature is down into the 90s from the over-100 period of the past few weeks. The combination of good late rains last year and adequate

early ones now means most of the dams and *marigots* never dried up altogether, to the delight of villagers and their livestock.

I've kept pretty faithfully to my pledge to take at least one trip per week out of Ouagadougou.

- Before it got TOO hot in March, I visited **Arbinda**, where we dedicated a self-help school building and looked at the rock paintings, and **Djibo**. Veterans of the Djibo area will be pleased to know that the saintly Australians **Ken** and **Jocelyn Elliott** are still running the hospital originally equipped with US WWII-era military field hospital surplus. Even older veterans of the area may remember US anthropologist **Paul Riesman**, who lived 3 years in the 60s and 70s among the Fulani there. Fortuitously, my trip coincided with the return (after 20 years) of Paul's daughter **Amanda Riesman**. Amanda is looking for a way to house the papers and traditional music tapes of her father, who died in 1988. The chief has given her some land on the edge of Djibo, where she will try to build a small library, to highlight books and exhibitions relevant to the public as well as to scholars.

- I visited the already-green village of **Lokosso**, in the district of Loropeni, between Banfora and Gaoua. PCV **Elizabeth McGraw** was the motivating force behind construction of a maternity center for the village. The previous PCV (**Tamara**) used PC Partnership funds to establish a grinding mill in the same village. The wonderful result is that the association set up to manage the grinding mill contributed their profits to help pay for the feast which was held for the maternity clinic! Partnership — Self-Help — Lokosso Lives!

- Self-Help project ribbon-cuttings also took me to **Zourma**, 7 km from Zabre, in Boulgou, to **Bapla/Lokpodia**, just south of Diebouyou, and to **Zambo**, 14 km south of Dissin. PCV **Katherine Reid**, an artist, has decorated her mudbrick house on the clinic grounds in Zambo with splendid Burkinabe and Ghanaian symbols and images!

- It was Worm Week in **Pissila**, 30 km NE of Kaya in early May. More than 30 current Peace Corps health sector volunteers got together to systemically mark water sources where Guinea Worm is a danger, to pass out more than 4000 filters, and to teach good habits using murals, plays and demonstrations. PCV **Matt Kavanaugh** led the project, financed through a \$5,000 grant he obtained from UNICEF. When I learned that the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation is giving \$28 million to the fight to eradicate Guinea Worm, I couldn't help but wish Bill himself could have been there to see what 30 Americans could do for just \$5K!

- Other travels took me to **Gourcy**, where Africare is returning to Burkina with a 3-year food security project financed by USAID, and to **Dedougou**, where (in addition to visiting with the two PCVs teaching there) I accompanied the Justice Minister to the court and the prison. The government is trying to interest donors in helping update the justice department. (In Dedougou, modern court office equipment consisted of one manual typewriter and some carbon paper.)

- Burkina has been the unwelcome focus of press and diplomatic attention because of renewed fighting in Sierra Leone and Angola. A UN Security Council Sanctions Committee report accuses the government of breaking sanctions through the supply of petroleum products and other supplies to UNITA. We are continuing to urge the government to desist from any destabilizing activity and observe the letter and spirit of the UN sanctions.

- Peace Corps Director **Janice Wessel** sadly left Ouaga in March for Gabon, but her successor **Nelson Cronyn**, a former PCV in Niger, will bring his family to Ouaga in June to settle in as new PCD/BF. 50 new volunteers will be arriving soon.



NEW! MEDIUM SIZE
NOW AVAILABLE !

SURPRISE SOMEONE
WITH A GREAT GIFT!



SUPPORT FBF WITH A
SHIRT OR TOTE BAG!

ALL NET PROCEEDS GO
TO FBF PROJECTS!

PEACE CORPS

T-SHIRTS & TOTE BAGS

The short-sleeved shirts are 100% cotton, pre-shrunk beefy-T, natural muslin-colored fabric. The tote bags are also cotton, natural, roomy and hefty. Our famous design (above) is four-color: brown, black, rust and green. Note that a handy proximity map is found in the Baobab tree! T-shirt sizes are M, L, XL.

To order your shirt or tote, please complete the form below and send with a check to:

FBF, C/O BOB OSBORNE, 539 NORTH CHIPMAN, OWOSSO, MI, 48867

 Please make checks payable to: FRIENDS OF BURKINA FASO

NAME: _____ PHONE: _____

ADDRESS: _____ ZIP: _____

(NOTE: IN L & XL SIZES, PLEASE SPECIFY WITH ___ OR WITHOUT ___ "PEACE CORPS" ON SHIRT)

HOW MANY:	T-SHIRTS:	M	_____		
	T-SHIRTS:	L	_____	PRICE PER SHIRT:	\$16
	T-SHIRTS:	XL	_____	PRICE PER TOTE:	\$20
	TOTE BAGS:		_____	(PRICES INCLUDE SHIPPING)	

FUND-RAISER BOOK STILL AVAILABLE!

The wonderful Burkina-inspired book by Michael Patton (RPCV '67-'69):
Grand Canyon Celebration: A Father-Son Journey of Discovery

SEND YOUR CHECK FOR \$19 (INCLUDES SHIPPING) TO MICHAEL AT
3228 46TH AVENUE SOUTH, MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55406.
FOR EVERY COPY SOLD, FBF WILL GET \$5.

FUND-RAISERS...



A Well-Digger Revisits *by Michael Lavoie, '75-'77*



Michael's extended family at the US Embassy. Left to right: Micheline (Simeon's wife), Katie, Ambassador Kolker, Simeon, Noelie, Christophe (Noelie's husband), Michael.

Once a well-digger in Burkina ('75-'77), I made a return visit this March with my 16-year-old daughter, Katie. It turned out to be a challenging, sometimes gut-wrenching, but totally joyous return.

I had regularly corresponded over the

many years with the growing children of my village's host family. Now I had planned a reunion with them in Ouagadougou, followed by a visit with them to the village of **Namtenga**, about halfway between **Boulsa** and **Tougouri** in the northeast.

The children of my host family, along with their families, met us at the Ouaga airport and accompanied us to the Nazemse Hotel. I mention 3 of their names whose presence was particularly significant: **Simeon** (the eldest son, who was to be our principal guide and guardian); **Noelie** (who long ago was my favorite in the village); and **Christiane** (the youngest, born just about at the time of my departure).

At the Nazemse, we shared the magic and excitement of seeing each other again. I related my memory of a Mossi proverb that expressed the idea that people should not forget those who had enriched our lives, and that I did not forget the many lessons learned from them.

The next morning, an early walk brought the first shock of Ouaga when we were confronted with the brisk and pestering pursuit of begging children, clothed in rags and covered in dirt. As enduring and as familiar as it is there, it is still most disturbing and stirs many unanswered questions.

Simeon gave us a tour of the Ouaga hospital where he worked as a medical assistant/administrator in the emergency ward. This workplace visit brought the second shock of the morning. Even when I was here before, I did not see such things. People dying on dirt floors, a pool of blood, broken limbs from *mobylette* accidents, separate areas for AIDS

patients, the blind, malaria sufferers, and the mentally insane. It seemed as if many of these people were at misery's last stop before death.

We set out for Namtenga, crammed into a small non-airconditioned Toyota. And then when we turned onto the dirt road toward Boulsa we became engulfed in "*la poussiere*", the almost suffocating red laterite dust. At Boulsa, we dusted off, drank cool *Fanta*, and saluted various members of Noelie's husband's family.

Near sunset, as we approached Namtenga from the west over high ground, the village market was in the last minutes of dispersal. We stopped the car just a few yards from where my hut once stood. Countless handshakes and even a few embraces followed. I am sure more was said and done but the depth of my emotions have blurred the detail of my recollection.

We washed and then settled in to greet what seemed like more than a hundred visitors. Many were just youngsters in '77, but from them came the greatest emotions as they reminded me of the soccer games, the frisbee throwing, and the swing set I had made. These events

were precious childhood memories for them.

Simeon reminded me of one well in the nearby village of **Ouagamse**. They still refer to the well as "*Michel's Bulga*." My hardened well-digger eyes teared for a moment as I reflected on the well-digging trade. At least some of the work still lives on but, water or not today, the memory of the hard work by all endures. Well-diggers will remember the days when only centimeters of progress could be made, when villagers would go miles to sweep together sand and gravel for the concrete mix, and when, occasionally, after all the digging, water could not be found or when, once found, it too quickly dried up. Remembering such days calls up within me a singular pride of profession to pronounce in one's soul: "*Nous sommes puisatiers!*" or,

[continued on next page]



Katie with her school tennis shirt and Simeon with matching hat.

WELLS....

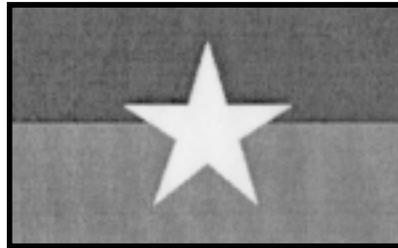


Headline Stories in Burkina News

UN Officials Visit Refugees On Hunger Strike In Burkina

Panafrican News Agency (June 14, 2000)

UNDP representative in Burkina Faso, Christian Lemaire, Tuesday paid a visit to about 30 refugees currently on hunger strike at the premises of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees in Ouagadougou.



Burkina Faso Endorses Two Mobile Telephone Firms

Panafrican News Agency (May 26, 2000)

Burkina Faso's communication minister, Theodore Kilimite Hien, Thursday issued a licence authorising the operations of "Telecel-Faso" mobile cellular phone company, the local partner of "Telecel International".

Burkinabes Bid Cardinal Zoungana Final Farewell

Panafrican News Agency (June 11, 2000)

Cardinal Paul Zoungana, 80, first bishop of the Ouagadougou archdiocese, died Sunday at the Saint-Camille medical centre in Ouagadougou. He was laid to rest on Saturday after a funeral ceremony attended by President Blaise Compaore in Ouagadougou.

Opposition Rejects Planned Elections

Panafrican News Agency (June 2, 2000)

The chair of the opposition Party for Democracy and Progress, renowned historian Joseph Ki-Zerbo, has urged the government to resolve differences before holding elections.

Government Denies Supplying Arms to Sierra Leone Rebels

Panafrican News Agency (May 19, 2000)

Burkina Faso has denied accusations that it is among arms suppliers to the rebel Revolutionary United Front embroiled in an armed rebellion against the Sierra Leonean government.

WFP To Help 15,000 Burkinabe Forced To Flee Cote D'Ivoire

Panafrican News Agency (April 5, 2000)

The UN World Food Programme has approved a 1,555,000-US-dollar emergency operation to feed some 15,000 Burkinabe forced to flee Cote d'Ivoire in November after a land tenure dispute with local people.

in Moré: "*Tond ya bulga tumdemba!*"

During the night, however, my euphoria was transformed into gut-wrenching fear and desperation. Katie first complained of awful chills and then delirious fever followed, her body temperature easily reached 103 degrees. Consolation, tylenol and wet towels did nothing.

It's a long story, but back at the U.S. Embassy infirmary, samples revealed thankfully that the culprit was not malaria or meningitis but instead an infection that caused leukocytes. A powerful antibiotic was provided, and Katie was on her way back.

We also met a few current volunteers who worked in health and education. Two in

particular, **Connie** and **Rachel**, showed an enthusiasm and commitment to their work that I am confident will one day yield for them the same kinds of memories with which my service was blessed.

There were tears as we left, but courage must prevail, and good will come from it all. Noelle's telephone center project in Boulsa will now proceed. Perhaps good will come from Simeon's chance meeting with Rachel. I had spoken of promise and power in the village, and some good can come from that. Finally, these days showed Katie a big part of her dad's life and the values we cherish and, perhaps, something good will come from that as well.



IN THE NEWS...





A.B.A.S.U.S. Building Friendships

by SANFO Alexandre, Secrétaire Général

**DEVISE DE
L'ASSOCIATION:
"L'amitié au service du
développement"**

L'Association Burkinabe d'Amitié et de Solidarité avec les Etats Unis d'Amérique (ABASUS) est une association de jeunes créée le 02 février 1991.

Le Bureau Exécutif est composé de: Président **SERE Adama**, Secrétaire Général **SANFO Alexandre**, Secrétaire aux Relations Extérieures **KIENTEGA Prosper**, Secrétaire à l'Organisation **OUOBA Victorien**, Secrétaire à l'Information **THIOMBIANO Pascal**, Secrétaire aux Activités Sportives et Culturelles **SANOU Serge**, Secrétaire aux Activités Socio-Culturelles **SAWADOGO Adama**, Trésorier **TRAORE Bintou**.

L'ABASUS se fixe pour objectif essentiel le renforcement et l'élargissement des relations entre le Burkina Faso et les Etats Unis d'Amérique par le biais de l'amitié et la solidarité dans les domaines social, économique et sportif.

L'ABASUS s'est fixé les objectifs immédiats suivants :

- Élargir le champ d'Amitié et de solidarité en permettant: à chaque membre de l'ABASUS d'avoir au moins un ami Américain; et à l'ABASUS de collaborer avec des entités Américaines par le canal du jumelage et des échanges.
- Promouvoir les cultures Américaines et Burkinabé et contribuer à un meilleur brassage culturel par l'organisation d'activités cinématographiques, musicales, sportives et théâtrales;
- Faciliter une meilleure communication entre Burkinabé et Américains grâce à la création de clubs d'anglais.
- Amener les Américains et les Burkinabé à mieux connaître les deux pays par l'organisation de conférences, de ciné-débats, de sorties touristiques et des voyages découvertes.
- Contribuer dans la mesure du possible à

**NOTRE VISION:
Un transfert de
connaissances et de
savoir faire entre les
deux peuples Américain
et Burkinabé.**

la lutte contre les fléaux qui minent nos sociétés (désertification, maladies, délinquance, drogue, analphabétisme, etc.)

- Participer activement au programme d'activités du Centre Culturel Américain.
- Susciter un intérêt professionnel et scolaire en son sein par des conférences, ciné-débats, séminaires de formation, concours primés, etc.

ACTIVITÉS:

A ce jour, l'ABASUS a essentiellement organisé des ciné-galas, des conférences-débats sur des thèmes divers allant de l'économie à la politique en passant par les droits humains.

Depuis quelques années maintenant, elle organise à la période des vacances scolaires des sorties découvertes sur les pays de la sous région Ouest Africaine (Ghana, Togo, Bénin essentiellement).

Il faut souligner que L'Association envisage la construction de son siège qui sera le lieu de déroulement de ses activités et sa réalisation permettra de rendre effectif

la création des clubs d'Anglais.

PERSPECTIVES:

L'Association compte axer ses efforts dans les domaines suivants: l'environnement, la santé, et la promotion de la culture de la démocratie.

En résumé, l'ABASUS voudrait servir de pont entre l'Amérique et le Burkina Faso et pourquoi pas de l'Afrique (Nous ambitionnons favoriser la création d'associations similaires dans la sous region) afin de permettre à nos populations de s'inspirer du model de développement Américain dans ce qu'il a de positif et de profitable pour nous. Notre souhait serait aussi de permettre au peuple Américain de connaître positivement l'Afrique en général et le Burkina Faso en particulier et ainsi faire connaître notre culture.



Pagne (from *Reflections in the Dust*)

by Cathy Seeley, Peace Corps Volunteer

I cannot imagine why western civilization has overlooked the incredible *pagne* for lo these many centuries. As for myself, I never heard of a *pagne* before coming to Africa, and now I am quite certain I will always have at least one or two close at hand.

The *pagne* ("pah-n'ya") is a simple rectangle of fabric approximately one meter by two meters. A *pagne* is made from lightweight cotton fabric and the patterns of the fabric are endless. The designs here are usually very busy, consisting of anything from animals to purses to flowers to shoes to telephones to saints to the national phone or electric company to the FESPACO film



festival to vivid depictions of people suffering from guinea worm. You can also find just nice geometric patterns (although these mostly come from other countries).

It turns out that the *pagne* is also a unit of measure, so that if you buy fabric here, for the most part it is flat-folded and the vendor asks you if you want one, two or three *pagnes* of fabric. The cost is usually equivalent to between two and three dollars per *pagne*. When you buy your *pagne*, it's a good idea to have a tailor stitch up the two ends so they don't ravel. At our *marché* here in Ouahigouya, tailors are everywhere, and there is always a tailor within sight of wherever you buy fabric. This sewing task costs a little less than 10 cents.

The *pagne's* main purpose is a wrap-around garment. Usually, it is a long skirt. You wrap it around your waist, always starting by placing one end near the right side (not the left, lest you risk ridicule!) with a little bit sticking out at the waist on the right so the underneath part doesn't droop below the wrapped part. Then you kind of tuck it or wrap it or tie it at the left side of your waist. Many women, as well as young girls, are quite adept at tucking it in such a way that it

drapes elegantly from a sort of non-tied bow-knot kind of thing. (My *pagnes* never quite get that lovely drape.)

The *pagne* can also be a full body wrap, especially when coming and going to and from the shower (inside or outside) or when hanging around the house or yard, especially when it's really hot. The *pagne* is wrapped the same way as for a skirt, but it covers the chest and down to the knees.

But the *pagne's* versatility doesn't end there. It is also used as a sheet, a light blanket, a towel, and a ground cloth for eating or sleeping. It's

the best type of clothing if you have to go to the bathroom by the side of the road, and if there are two of you, one can hold up an extra piece as a little shield to protect you from view.

At my house, I have different sized *pagnes* for tablecloths, bulletin board covers, cloth napkins, curtains, and dust covers for the telephone and computer. I like matching the theme of the fabric to its purpose, so I have fabric with a telephone motif for the telephone, and silverware fabric for kitchen uses. I am searching for bicycle fabric for a bike outfit, and I am still negotiating with a vendor to come down on his price for computer fabric.

But my very favorite use of the *pagne* is a baby-carrier. Mom wraps the fabric around the baby and puts the baby behind her back, with two knots tied in front. The baby's head sticks out in back to look to one side or the other, but the front view is the cutest. When you look at a mother carrying a baby, you will always notice the two little bottoms of tiny feet, on either side of mom's waist, sticking out of the *pagne*. The image of these little feet sticking out is one of my favorite forever images of life in Burkina. 

IMAGES...





Stamp Commemorates PC

Head to your local post office to get the new U.S. postal stamp that commemorates the Peace Corps. It's one of a series of 15 different stamps designed to portray the 1960's, and part of a larger series entitled *Celebrate the Century*.



Ambassador Zidouemba Honored

Burkina Faso Ambassador **Bruno Zidouemba** was this year's honored guest at annual Peace Corps Partnership Reception hosted by the Returned Peace Corps Volunteers of the Washington area on May 18 in Shriver Hall at Peace Corps headquarters, Washington, DC. Proceeds from the reception are donated to selected volunteer projects in the Peace Corps Partnership Program.

A highlight of the reception was the presentation by students from Deal Junior High School and H.D. Cooke Elementary School, as they read their award-winning essays to Ambassador Zidouemba. The essays described what they learned from a letter exchange with two Burkina Faso students. Former Peace Corps Volunteer **Rachel Venezian**, who served in Burkina Faso ('97-'99), discussed her work with students in Burkina and her role in the letter writing program.

— Barbara Lamos, Vice President, RPCV/W, Partnership Committee Chair



What's Happening in Ouaga

The U.S. Embassy scheduled the 17th Annual Softball Fanatics' Weekend Tournament (SOFANWET) again this year for Memorial Day weekend. Ambassador Jimmy Kolker hosted a spaghetti dinner at his residence, the International School hosted the Sundowner Event, and a banquet was held at the American Recreation Center. As in previous years, this is an event enjoyed by all the teams: the Burkina Bats, Faso Fastballs, Sahel's Angels, two Peace Corps teams, and visiting softballers from Ghana and Niger.

The American Language Center has moved. June 2 marks the grand opening ceremony of the American Language Center at 1406 Avenue Bassawarga, across from Chateau d'Eau de Kamsonghin. This is the former Peace Corps Office.

The Embassy is starting to plan for the annual 4th of July celebrations. A family cookout will be held at the Rec Center on Sunday, July 2 for all Americans in Burkina. The official National Day reception at the ambassador's residence is on the Fourth.

— Karen Waltz-Davis, U.S. Ambassador's Secretary



So How's Your French and Moré?

bonjour	nê yibéogo	chef/roi	naaba	c'est beau	ya neéré
bonsoir	nê zabre	marché	raaga	c'est quoi?	ya wana?
oui	n'yê	enfant	biiga	je t'aime	mam nonga
non	ayo	voiture	zirga/mobil	c'est bien	ya soma
beaucoup	wusgo	well	bulga	c'est vrai	ya sida
peu	bilfu	la poule	nuara	25	nu
l'eau	koom	le boeuf	naafu	50	piiga
merci	barka	l'arbre	tiiga	75	pii la nu
pluie	saaga	le champ	puugo	100	pissi
le soleil	windiga	c'est cher	ya toogo	200	pissi naase

Letters and News from Members...

(Editor's Note: FBF wants to hear from you. Please note that sometimes we need to edit your contributions for clarity and length.)

Stan Alpern's Book Published

My husband, **Stanley B. Alpern**, headed the Centre Culturel Américain (USIS) in Ouagadougou in 1970-73. His daughter **Jamie** married one of my Peace Corps colleagues there, **Phil Lovdal**.

Some readers might be interested to know that since retiring from the U.S. Information agency in 1977, Stan has devoted his life to the precolonial history of West Africa. He has written a number of magazine articles, and has published his first book: *Amazons of Black Sparta: The Women Warriors of Dahomey*. The book is about the female soldiers who were the elite troops of the Kingdom of Dahomey in the 18th and 19th centuries. They are the only thoroughly documented amazon fighting corps in world history.

Stan worked closely with the Peace Corps in his Ouaga years, under Ambassadors **Bill Schaufele** and **Don Easum**, and any PCV who was there at the time would probably remember him.

Frances Burckard Alpern,
Villefranche-sur-Mer, France

Hooking Up

Every now and again I see names of fellow volunteers to whom I would like to send an e-mail. Is there anyway to hook up with former volunteers? (Editor's Note: Contact Dick Dietz, our membership naba, at weedugs@aol.com)

Gary P. Gardner, RPCV, '73-'75

World Bank Fights AIDS

I visited Burkina as part of a World Bank mission to strengthen the Burkinabé fight against AIDS. The Peace Corps has some exciting programs underway that are making an impact. I also visited villages, church groups, truck stops and dolotières where the World Bank's money is being used to support efforts to prevent the spread of HIV. Substantial information is being communicated.

By extraordinary coincidence, one



member of the World Bank staff is **Abdou Drabo**, our "ancien professeur" from Peace Corps Upper Volta 1, who taught us French, along with Burkina culture and history.

Hope to see the FBF group at the time of your FESPACO visit!

Mead Over, RPCV, '67-'69

Funding Needed

The *Burkina Connection* is a big hit here in the Ouahigouya Peace Corps reading library!!

I am looking for support for a wonderful project developed by a colleague here and a group of Burkinabé professionals. It supports about 200 young girls going to school in the little villages around Ouahigouya. It adds to family contributions and helps pay school costs for the first two years in primary school, then buys a lamb for each girl to raise (with the help of her mother), becoming self-sustaining for each girl after 2 years. (Editor's Note: If you wish to help fund Cathy's project, contact her at cathyseeley@hotmail.com)

Again, thanks for staying in touch and for the support. I hope I get to meet some of you one day.

Warmly (really!)

Cathy Seeley, PCV, Ouahigouya

Pen Pals Anyone?

Do you know any college friends who would like to correspond with members of ABASUS? Also, if you know of a school that would like a friendship with a Burkina school, I'd be glad to give them the address of my village's school. (Editor's Note: Any potential pen pals can contact Prosper at pkientega@hotmail.com)

KIENTEGA Prosper,
ABASUS, Ouagadougou

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Burkina Connection



OUR MISSION:

Friends of Burkina Faso, Inc., a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, was established to:

- Maintain a network of returned Peace Corps Volunteers and friends of Burkina Faso
- Provide funding and assistance to support projects in Burkina Faso
- Improve social interaction, communication and information exchange
- Educate others about the country and culture of Burkina Faso

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 (we'll send you the newsletter)

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