Garango Lycée has electricity!

by Marianne Bailey

Thanks to the FBF Projects Fund and generous donations from many of you, electricity has arrived at the Garango Lycée!

The officials in charge there are still waiting for a delivery of breaker boxes to complete the effort, but the lines and fixtures have not only reached the school, but every classroom in the school. This will allow much more productive use of the school’s facilities by the faculty, and will ease the tasks of learning for the high school students of the region. In addition, extra-curricular activities, tutoring, and adult ed classes in the evenings will be possible.

Also, the school can finally hook up some previously-donated computers, with Internet access a near-term goal. Do we have any prospective pen pals?

Marianne Bailey and Alex Bambara, project managers on the U.S. side, extend their deep gratitude for the generosity of the Friends of Burkina Faso and the hard work of the Projects Committee.

Below is a letter of appreciation which arrived directly from Garango. We all take pride in the accomplishment.

A l’intention des Amis du Burkina Faso:

C’est avec un grand plaisir que je vous adresse cette note en tant que parrain de tous ces enfants inscrits au Lycée départemental de Garango, pour vous exprimer de vive voix, toute la satisfaction de tout Garango, pour votre geste, combine “grand” qui est le don des 2000$ (US) que nous venons de recevoir pour l’électrification du Lycée.

Tout le corps professoral, les élèves, les parents d’élèves et particulièrement le parrain de cet établissement que je suis, vous garantissons d’avance, que ces fonds mis à la disposition du lycée, seront utilisés dans la plus grande transparence, afin que votre noble geste soit un beau cadeau de fin d’année pour tous ces élèves qui ne veulent que réussir. “En éclairant ce lycée grâce à vous, vous éclairez l’esprit de ces enfants vers un lendemain meilleur.”

Toute la population de Garango est sensible à ce geste et ne saurait combine de fois vous dire merci et encore merci à vous tous.

Le Parrain du Lycée, Alain Bambara
Our Mission
Friends of Burkina Faso, Inc.
a 501(c)(3) non-profit charitable organization
affiliated with the National Peace Corps Association

- Maintains a network of RPCVs and friends of Burkina Faso
- Provides funding and assistance to support projects in Burkina Faso
- Improves social interaction, communication and information exchange
- Educates others about the country and culture of Burkina Faso

Friends of Burkina Faso Contacts

Board of Directors

Bob Osborne, '67-'69, President
8300 Lagos Pl., Dulles, VA 20189
osbornera@state.gov

Holland McKenna, '71-'73, Treasurer
8001 Woodbury Drive, Silver Spring, MD 20910
Tel: 301-588-4207 (h & w)
hmckenna49@aol.com

Dick Dietz, '70-'72, Membership Chair
107 Augusta Drive, Statesville, NC 28625
Tel: 704-871-9714 (h) 704-872-4358 (w)
weedugs@aol.com

John Sneed, '67-'69, At-Large Board Member
6677 SW Landover Drive, Wilsonville, OR 97070
Tel: 503-570-9694 (h) 503-977-4398 (w)
Fax: 503-977-4858 jsneed@pcc.edu

Marianne Bailey, At-Large Board Member
213 E. Howell Avenue, Alexandria, VA 22301
Tel: 703-683-2231(h )
bambara@gatewayone.com

Newsletter

Denny FitzPatrick, '67-'68, Editor
PO Box 563, Grand Marais, MN 55604
Tel: 218-387-2802 (h) 218-387-9000 (w)
Fax: 218-387-9000 dfitz@boreal.org

Andrea Joseph-Adams, '79-'80, Asst Editor
6305 N Bell Street, Kansas City, MO 64151
Tel: 816-746-9465 (h) adamsfamily@kc.rr.com

Projects Committee

Tom Vollrath, '67-'70, Projects Committee Chair
4705 Duncan Drive, Annandale, VA 22003
Tel: 703-503-3438 (h) thomasv@ers.usda.gov

Anastasia Hopkinson, '67-'69, Projects Committee
1036 Harbor Drive, Annapolis, MD 21403
Tel: 410-268-7838 (h) ahopkinson@comcast.net

Molly Chambers, '99-'01, Projects Committee
1601 Argonne Place NW, # 226, Washington, DC 20009
Tel: 202-248-6254 (h) 202-690-1240 (w)
mollychambers@yahoo.com

Tom Fox, '67-'69, Projects Committee
3435 34 PI NW, Washington, DC 20016
Tel: 202-666-6581 foxthomash@aol.com

Suzanne Plopper, '67-'69, Projects Committee
511 Hubble St., Davis CA 95616
smplopper@aol.com

Website

Jonathon Colman, '99-'00, Web Naaba
315 Catherine St., #4, Ann Arbor, MI 48104
Tel: 734-997-9518 (h)
burkinaboy@yahoo.com
www.friendsofburkinafaso.org

Merchandise

Dianne Ferguson, '67-'69, Kwasa Naaba
430 East Park Drive, Spartanburg, SC 29302
Tel: 864-585-0420 (h) sdfsferg@aol.com
President's Yiri by Bob Osborne, '67-'69

Four goals achieved, one more ahead

When I became President of FBF a few years ago, I had four main goals that I wanted to accomplish during my tenure:

◆ Obtain 501(c)(3) nonprofit status for the organization
◆ Restart the newsletter
◆ Broden the base of volunteer participation in actually operating FBF
◆ Move the group into a position of funding a significant level of social/economic projects

The first I simply did myself, and once done we retain that charitable status by merely following some legal rules.

The newsletter I also did myself, then had the good fortune to talk ex-colleague Denny FitzPatrick into becoming editor. The rest is history, and both Denny and the Burkina Connection have become bright stars among newsletters and editors of affiliate groups within the National Peace Corps Association. We have won at least one award each of the past three years.

The third goal of broadening our participation base started a bit more slowly, but took off after a number of us got together at the NPCA’s 1999 Annual Conference in St. Paul. At first it was a few new faces from among the "old hands" from the early Upper Volta days of the '60s and '70s. But then, with help from just-departed Country Director Nelson Cronyn, some newly-returned Burkina Faso RPCVs started to speak up and volunteer; Jonathan Colman, our website naaba, was an early one. Nelson also helped put us in touch with current PCVs, and we got a direct line into the ground floor of Peace Corps work in Burkina.

At about the same time, we started to hear from USAID alums, and such people as Marianne Bailey, our newest Board member, who was PC- Mali, but who had the good sense to actually marry a Burkinabé, Alexandre Bambara. That opened some new doors for us via his connections with the Burkina expat community in the Washington area as well as friends back in the home country.

Finally, during this same time frame, we had the honor of becoming friends with the outstanding U.S. Ambassador, Jimmy Kolker, who actively supported FBF, the Peace Corps and social and economic development projects. He, in turn, brought us into close contact with Mr. Bruno Zidouembe, the extraordinary Burkina Ambassador in Washington, who engaged us in an active and ongoing dialogue, and paved the way for a group of us who traveled to Burkina in 2001 to meet with many important government officials. Both of those ambassadors have moved on to new assignments, but we've not missed a beat in continuing the dialogue with their successors in Ouagadougou and Washington.

But the fourth goal, funding projects, proved much harder to accomplish. We had many fits and starts, but never

(Yiri – continued on next page)
Bob Osborne

...I want all of you to start thinking of getting even more involved...

Tom Vollrath became our first Projects Committee chairperson, and Tom did a yeoman's job of getting together his committee, who then launched a full-fledged fund-raising campaign, carefully selected two worthy projects, and actually pulled it all off.

Now, young girls in the Northwest area of Burkina are able to raise their own money to help pay their school expenses, and the lycée in Garango finds itself with electricity to allow night usage of the new facility by students and the community and ultimately get onto the Internet from two donated computers that can now be hooked up. Ah, success is sweet, and my heart simply swells at the thought of these projects, and the knowledge that the Committee is in the process of doing even more.

This brings me to my *fifth goal,* which is to set the stage for my replacement. As you read this, I am working with the FBF Board of Directors to arrange for new elections, and ultimately this will lead to the election of a new president. I have such limited internet time and capabilities here in Nigeria, and getting to Washington and to other conferences and meetings in the U.S. is prohibitively expensive and time-consuming. A round trip from Lagos to anywhere in the U.S. requires four days just for travel, not to mention the $1300 minimum price tag for the airline. We have too much going on to afford the luxury of an invisible president, and I care way too much for Friends of Burkina to allow anything to happen simply because of neglect. Besides, I've been at this long enough to be getting burn-out syndrome, and it's clearly time to pass the torch.

So, I want all of you to start thinking of getting even more involved, of nominating yourself or friends for board membership, projects committee, website, newsletter, and associated efforts. In the next *Burkina Connection,* you will find details of some of the changes that will have been made, some that will be proposed, a slate of board nominees from a Nominating Committee, and a ballot that will include a write-in section in case you're not satisfied with the proposed slate.

I am very excited about this, and I hope every one of you will also become excited. A word of caution, however, you will have to be up-to-date with your dues in order to run, hold office or vote. So check the date by your name on this *Connection,* and get your dues in if you're behind. I'm now a lame duck, and happily so, and I look forward to the new guys coming in.
More project work ahead

by Tom Vollrath, '67-'70, Projects Committee Chair

A hearty thank you and congratulations to all who have contributed their time and money to FBF projects initiatives! I am happy to report that so far we have received $15,867 specifically earmarked for project development. The Committee has kept operational costs to a bare minimum, having spent $385 to cover both the mailing of the fund-raising letter and the cost of fund transfers. After disbursing grants to support the primary school scholarship program for young girls in the Yatenga Province and the Garango Lycée electricity project, the total sum left in the Project’s kitty is $8,484. In this issue are letters of appreciation from both projects, outlining how they have made use of our support.

The Projects Committee is currently considering three additional proposals:

❖ A micro-enterprise cooperative involving the purchase of an hydraulic oil press for shea butter production and the development of a micro credit bank

❖ Publication of a practical guide that covers health education activities for intended use in the upper three grades of primary schools

❖ A summer camp designed to build self-esteem and to promote healthy lifestyles for girls from small villages who have just earned their BEPC

The committee has deliberated and found merit in all three proposals. Currently, we are seeking additional information before making final decisions.

The Committee is also in the process of finalizing a Projects Manual. This manual will describe our project selection criteria and provide guidance to prospective grantees about the information they should provide in submitting a proposal for funding. To spread the word effectively, we aim to have both English and French editions.

If you are interested in committing some of your time to the Projects Committee, please let us know. Of particular need are willing hands to assist with our next fund-raising campaign and/or to serve as project managers. While the job of a project manager is rather loosely defined at the moment, it is likely that the role of a project manager will be multi-fold. He (she) could work with grantees as a facilitator, helping them organize their thoughts and put together proposals that resonate and conform to FBF project guidelines. Conceivably, managers would also be responsible for monitoring projects and reporting back regarding their progress. Interested FBF members should contact Anastasia Hopkinson, ahopkinson@comcast.net, our communication coordinator. Please include information regarding the capacity in which you would like to serve. Be creative and let us know of any special skills (i.e., institutional knowledge, database management, language translation, etc.) that you would be willing to share and put to good use!

In closing, I’d like to express appreciation to Bob Winterbottom who, until recently, was a member of the Projects Committee. Bob has accepted a multi-year assignment working in eastern Senegal. I would like to thank Bob for all that he has done in getting the Committee started. Bob is a most gentle person whose service to Africa and friendship to us is an enduring treasure. We all wish him well on his new assignment.
Chers Friends of Burkina,

Nous avons le plaisir de vous faire un petit rapport sur le financement de «Friends of Burkina» pour l’appui à la scolarisation des filles.

Avec votre virrement, nous avons reçu 3,255,205 Fcfa. 5% de ce montant, soit 162,760 Fcfa ont été prélevés par NEEED pour servir de frais de fonctionnement (carburant, papier, journaux, reportage vidéo, photos, factures de téléphone etc.)

1,995,000 Fcfa ont servi à l’achat de 133 moutons au profit de 133 filles des départements de Tangaye et de Oula. Ce sont les écoles de Loubré (9), Kouba (20), Yalka (20), Oula (20), Sonh (10), Gosséré (40) et Sounkouissi (14). Ces filles sont donc assurées, à travers l’emboîture ovine, d’auto-financer l’achat de leurs fournitures scolaires pendant les cinq années à venir.

1,097,445 Cfa ont été utilisés pour l’achat de fournitures scolaires (uniformes, sacs, livres, cahiers, bics et autres matériels scolaires au profit des 133 filles bénéficiaires).

Ce sont donc 133 filles qui, cette année 2002/2003 grâce à l’appui de «Friends of Burkina» découvrent le chemin de l’école.

L’engouement et l’enthousiasme suscités par votre appui est réel dans les villages et cela mérite d’être maintenu et entretenu afin que d’avantage de petites filles aient elles aussi la chance d’aller à l’école les années à venir.

A Kouba par exemple, dès l’annonce de notre appui pour les filles de cette école, 28 inscriptions de filles ont été faites en moins de 24 heures. Seules 20 premières inscrites ont reçu l’appui de NEEED cette année.

Pourquoi une cérémonie de remise de fournitures chaque année? La cérémonie permet de rassembler plusieurs personnes, jeunes et vieux et hommes et femmes, et profiter de l’occasion pour la sensibilisation sur la nécessité de scolariser les filles.

Par ailleurs 187 autres filles du département de Tangaye ont reçu leurs fournitures scolaires grâce à leurs parrains allemands et autrichiens.

Nous vous avons expédié une cassette-video, un journal, les reçus d’achat de fournitures scolaires des 133 filles, les listes établies par les directeurs d’école ainsi que les photos par école des filles bénéficiaires.

Nous espérons que notre courrier vous parviendra dans les meilleurs délais.

Amicalement, Lacine Sawadogo
The student beneficiaries of FBF donations

A) Ecole de Loubré
1- Sawadogo Minata de Adama
2- Sawadogo Aguiratou de Amadé
3- Sawadogo Fanta de Rasmané
4- Sawadogo Awa de Ousséni
5- Sawadogo Aïma de Salam
6- Sawadogo Zoénabou de Ali
7- Sawadogo Maimouna de Yacouba
8- Sawadogo Safouara de Issaka
9- Sawadogo Rakiëta de Daouda

B) Ecole de Gosséré
a) CP1
1- Ganamé Mariam de Daouda et Limata
2- Ganamé Mariam de Karim et Awa
3- Ouédraogo Aminata de Boukaré et Abibou
4- Ouédraogo Amssétou de Amidou et Awa
5- Ouédraogo Amssétou de Moussa et Safiata
6- Ouédraogo Azeta de Sibiri et Fatimata
7- Ouédraogo Ramata de Poko et Azeta
8- Ouédraogo Rissnata de Ousséni et Fati
9- Savadogo Ramata de Salifou
10- Savadogo Bibata de Boukari et Binto
11- Savadogo Kotim de Moumini et Kalizeta
12- Savadogo Mariam de Boureima et Fatimata
13- Savadogo Mariam de Amadé et Awa
14- Savadogo Mariam de Rasmané et Minata
15- Savadogo Safiata de Amidou et Binto
16- Savadogo Sanata de Rasmané et Bibata
17- Ouedraogo Lizeta de Amidou et Ramata
18- Savadogo Zoéna of Ousséni et Ramata
19- Ganamé Abibata de Kelissia et Abibou
20- Ouédraogo Bintou de Saïdou et Minata

b) CP1
1- Ouédraogo Minata de Yacouba
2- Ouédraogo Risnata de Adama Boré
3- Ouédraogo Risnata de Pawindé
4- Savadogo Ramata de Salifou
5- Ganamé Bibata de Idrissa
6- Savadogo Mamouna de Passingbém
7- Savadogo Kadigueta de Salam
8- Savadogo Mariétou de Saïdou
9- Ganamé Zoenabou de Amadé
10- Savadogo Bibata de Soumaïla
11- Savadogo Mariam de Amadé
12- Savadogo Mariam de Saïdou
13- Savadogo Mariam de Ousséni
14- Savadogo Mariam de Rasmané
15- Savadogo Mati de Abidjan
16- Savadogo Mati de Yacouba
17- Ouédraogo Zalissa de Saïdou
18- Savadogo Mariam de Mahamadi
19- Ouédraogo Zalissa de Nomba
20- Ouédraogo Fatimata Binto de Bobodo

C) Ecole de Sonh (CP1)
1- Savadogo Mariam de Hamidou
2- Savadogo Mariam de Tingassiguio
3- Savadogo Sibata de Sibiri
4- Ouédraogo Sibata de Issoufou
5- Savadogo Sibata de Yacouba
6- Savadogo Lizeta de Sommanegdo
7- Savadogo Balguissa de Oumarou
8- Ouédraogo W. Thérèse de Yacouba
9- Ouédraogo Balguissa de Salam
10- Savadogo Awa de Yacouba
11- Savadogo Awa de Bobo
12- Savadogo Awa de Yacouba
13- Savadogo Awa de Ousséni
14- Savadogo Awa de Togoland
15- Savadogo Awa de Issouf
16- Savadogo Awa de Bobo
17- Savadogo Awa de Yacouba
18- Savadogo Awa de Ousséni
19- Savadogo Awa de Togoland
20- Savadogo Awa de Issouf

D) Ecole de Kouba (CP1)
1- Savadogo Amsétou
2- Ouédraogo Aguiratou de Ousséni
3- Ouédraogo Azeta de Sibiri
4- Savadogo Ami
5- Ouédraogo Sibata de Issouf
6- Savadogo Alimatou de Saïdou
7- Ouédraogo Kotim de Saïdou
8- Ouédraogo Awa de Moumouni
9- Yarbangia Houa de Yacouba
10- Sawadogo Assetou
11- Ouédraogo Aguiratou de Salif
12- Ouédraogo Awa de Issouf
13- Ouédraogo Maimouna
14- Sawadogo Sibata de Saïdou
15- Ouédraogo Bibata de Soumaïla
16- Ouédraogo Salimata de Oumarou
17- Belem Mariam
18- Ouédraogo Azeta de Arouna (Ouéd. Abdou)
19- Ouédraogo Salimata de Saïdou
20- Savadogo Ami de Rasmané

E) Ecole de Sounkouissi (CP1)
1- Savadogo Amisétou
2- Savadogo Oumou
3- Savadogo Balguissa de Saïdou
4- Savadogo Salimata
5- Savadogo Nissiratou
6- Savadogo Zara
7- Kingo Aguiratou
8- Kingo Balguissa
9- Kingo Nemata de Yacouba
10- Kingo Nemata de Saïdou
11- Kingo Sibata de Saïdou
12- Savadogo Mariam
13- Kingo Kotim
14- Kingo Sibata de B.

F) Ecole de Oula (CP1)
1- Guiro Nafissatou
2- Ouédraogo Amsetou
3- Savadogo Kassiratou
4- Ouédraogo Balguissa
5- Savadogo Rassidatou
6- Savadogo Alimatou
7- Savadogo Maminata
8- Ouédraogo Balguissa
9- Savadogo Nissiratou
10- Savadogo Rassadou de Bobo
11- Savadogo Sanata
12- Guiro Salimata
13- Guiro Balguissa
14- Sana Rassadou
15- Savadogo Rassadou de Amidou
16- Ouédraogo Balguissa Rosalie
17- Koëba Mariam
18- Savadogo Ramata de Zoéna
19- Savadogo Mariam
20- Savadogo Mariam

G) Ecole de Yalca (CP1)
1- Ouedraogo Risnata
2- Zonon Kalizeta
3- Ouedraogo Aguiratou de Salam
4- Ouedraogo Zalissa
5- Ouedraogo Bibata
6- Zal Maiman
7- Zonon Alimatou
8- Zonon Nafissatou
9- Zonon Oumou Kouçoum
10- Ouédraogo Balguissa
11- Ouédraogo Bintou
12- Ouedraogo Noëlie Fatoumata
13- Ouedraogo Aguiratou de Bouréma
14- Ouedraogo Aminata de Raogo
15- Belem Safiatou
16- Belem Fatimata
17- Ouedraogo Awa
18- Ouedraogo Fatimata
19- Ouedraogo Mariam
20- Zonon Awa
You met some great people in Burkina Faso who could really take advantage of the educational or professional training offered in the USA. But connecting the visiting student with the right program is daunting. Here’s a possible solution.

Friends of Burkina Faso is gathering information about opportunities for Burkinabé to work, study or visit the United States for academic or professional development purposes. If you know of such opportunities in your town, through your employer or profession, please share what you know with us.

Our goal is to inform Burkinabé about educational and training opportunities offered by American organizations. Such programs typically offer foreigners the opportunity to join a work, study or guided tour program, to intern with a governmental or private organization, or to study at an educational institution.

Please let us know the name of the offering organization, the type of program offered, contact information and any further details.

We will compile this information and publish our finding in future Connections. We will also seek ways to provide the list directly to our friends and readers in Burkina Faso who may know qualified Burkinabé who are interested in coming to the U.S. for a brief or extended visit.

There are many programs we would like to learn about. This endeavor will take time to build and become useful. We’ll patiently put together the information; and disseminate when what we have seems useful. We’re not in any rush, and may wait for less stressful times to publish our data. But we’d like to begin collecting data now to amass a meaningful body of knowledge about programs. So, share with us what you know about programs that may be suitable for our friends in Burkina Faso.

Friends of Burkina Faso will facilitate this information sharing effort but has no plans to solicit or provide funding or pay for any costs incurred by participants. We will act simply as a conduit of information.
Here's a bon plat originating from Nigeria. This recipe was first tried after a long-standing joke between myself and a Zimbabwean friend got out of hand. To wit, he kept egging me on to make a pot of Nigerian three-stone soup.

This immediately reminded me of the common fireplaces many women in Africa use that consist of three rocks and a marmite (casserole pot). I will not bore you with the details of this running joke, but let me just say this soup surprised my friend and all the other African friends who sampled it.

Next door I had a Nigerian friend whose wife donated some “bitter leaf” and she encouraged me in the preparation. Good luck on finding some of the more obscure ingredients! Try this bonne recette – It is worth all the work!

Yours in joyful African eating and cooking – Frère David.

**EGUSI SOUP**

Serves 4-6

1 1/2 lbs. meat, poultry or fish
1 tsp. salt
1/2 cup onions, sliced
1 cup palm oil
1 cup egusi seeds
2-3 chili peppers or 1-2 tsp. cayenne pepper
1/2 cup dried crayfish or shrimp
1 bunch of fresh leafy greens, or 1 small package frozen greens
1 1/2 cups tomato paste, or 2 small cans tomato paste
2-3 cups fresh or frozen okra

Cut the meat into bite-size chunks. Boil it with 1/2 teaspoon of salt and half the onions in a cup of water for about 10 minutes. Meanwhile, in a large, heavy pot, warm the palm oil over low heat for about 7 minutes. While it heats, grind or crush separately the egusi seeds, peppers and crayfish, and tear the greens into small pieces. Remove oil from the heat and quickly stir in the remaining onions and the tomato paste. With a slotted spoon, remove meat from its pot and pour the cooking water into a measuring cup. Add enough water to make 1 cup – and after the oil has cooled enough not to spatter you – pour the water carefully into the pot. Return to medium heat. One after the other, 2-3 minutes apart, add the egusi, greens, pepper, okra, crayfish and remaining salt. Cook another 8-10 minutes after all the ingredients have been added, or until the meat is done to your liking.

Variations and notes: Egusi seed from the egusi melon may be difficult to locate. If you can't find egusi seed, substitute 1/4 cup of either tapioca flour or quick-cooking tapioca. Before adding it to the soup pot, whisk it into a smooth paste by mixing it with a bit of the hot broth. If you're lucky, you'll find an international market that has ground egusi seed, dried crayfish and dried "bitter leaf". My African neighbor may have provided palm oil but I think I used peanut oil in my first attempt at this dish. Chewy beef is standard for this soup. The French crayfish known as langouste, or rock lobster, is normally used, too. Serve over tô or stiff porridge. It is also fantastique over rice.
As I write this, my first column in the FBF newsletter, I have been in Ouagadougou slightly over two months. I’m still very much learning my way around and trying to get used to doing all my business in French, but I wanted to share with you a sense of how much the crisis in neighboring Côte d’Ivoire since September has dominated both my work here and also the life of this nation.

The crisis in Côte d’Ivoire has once again turned up the heat on Burkina Faso in an international political sense, as accusations of its involvement in the crisis – both in sponsoring the rebels originally and in supplying them since September – sweep the region. Domestically, there have been some rumblings against the Compaore government, but for most Burkinabé the rumor and intrigue are secondary to the more immediate humanitarian concerns for the 3 million Burkinabé living and working in Côte d’Ivoire. Burkinabé and other populations were targeted in the immediate aftermath of the attempted coup and many have chosen to flee Côte d’Ivoire in favor of a “homeland” that some have never even visited.

Politically, Burkina Faso’s reaction to the crisis has been low key, with few government statements and occasional sabre-rattling when particularly egregious examples of abuses against Burkinabé have come to light. The government did organize a voluntary repatriation program, called Operation Ba-Yiri (Motherland), which so far has returned approximately 5,800 Burkinabé from Côte d’Ivoire. The opposition for the most part has also been subdued, early on signing a letter calling on the French government to organize an international conference and only recently forming an Assembly of Burkinabé Opposition to more formally communicate their positions (and unofficially begin the 2005 presidential campaign).

Despite the worst initial fears, as a whole the Burkina economy has weathered the crisis quite well, at least so far. The damage in 2003 could be more severe, however, in the form of higher inflation, reduced economic growth rates, and a much higher budget deficit. The GOBF has aggressively courted the IFIs and bilateral donors to increase their aid, particularly budget support. However, a recent World Bank mission found that the government had simply not provided enough detail in quantifying and forecasting the nature of its financial and economic troubles and donor commitments so far have been quite limited.

While the economy remains relatively healthy on the macro level, many Burkinabé businesses are still feeling a pinch and have laid off workers or
closed down completely. The closed border between Côte d’Ivoire and Burkina has meant higher costs for transport, along with the need to develop both alternative routes to the sea and alternative markets that can absorb the exports formerly destined for Côte d’Ivoire. The development of these markets is a good thing for businesses in the long term, however, as is the increasing use of new shipping routes through Ghana, Togo, and Benin.

Even as Burkinabé merchants and others try to weather this crisis and develop other regional relationships, however, Burkina Faso and Côte d’Ivoire remain inextricably linked and cannot afford to easily give up on each other. Negotiations are presently under-way in Paris to try to find a durable solution to that country’s political problems. If they succeed, 2003 should be a good year here. However, if they do not or should the ceasefire end and renewed hostilities occur causing a major movement of Burkinabé back home, then the economic impact here would be quite severe. The United States government is busy working with the governments of the ECOWAS states and France to assure that this will not happen.

Ambassador J. Anthony Holmes

Tony Holmes was confirmed by the Senate as the U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Burkina Faso on October 2, 2002.

He was Director of the Africa Bureau’s economic policy office from 1999 to 2002, where he worked on a wide array of economic and global issues, including helping the USG and Africa come to grips with the devastating HIV/AIDS pandemic, implementing the African Growth and Opportunity Act, tailoring our assistance efforts to take advantage of changing circumstances in both Washington and in Africa, and working on Africa debt policy.

He has spent almost half of his career on African issues, also serving as the economic/commercial section chief in Harare (1991-95) and in the economic section in Nairobi (1984-88).

Mr. Holmes has spent the other half of his career as an economic and occasionally commercial officer in Egypt (1980-82), Syria (82-84), and he headed the economic sections in Singapore (88-91) and Sweden (96-99), and was the Deputy Director of the Office of Sanctions Policy in the Bureau of Economic and Business Affairs (1995-96).

Mr. Holmes has a B.A. in Comparative Religion and an M.A. in Economic Geography from the University of Georgia, as well as a M.B.A. in International Management from The Thunderbird School. He is married and has two sons.
Dear Friends – I have officially handed over the position to my replacement, Julie Donahue, so this will be my last correspondence with you as country director. Having spent a couple of weeks with Julie, I am confident that her skills, experience, and great attitude will be very good for this program.

Fifteen years ago my wife Judith (girlfriend at the time) and I rode across Burkina Faso as part of a twelve month bicycle-powered COS trip that included a good part of West Africa, Turkey, and Europe. Traveling by bicycle through developing countries (as opposed to developed places like southern California where most folks are zipping around in cars with the windows rolled up and a/c on despite the gorgeous weather) puts one in very close contact with people, and our experiences with Burkinabé were among the most positive on our trip. Well before the end of our three-week stay in Burkina, we decided that we would have to come back someday to spend more time getting to know this country. (As an aside, our first contact in Ouagadougou on that trip in late 1988 was Kerry Sly, introduced to us by fellow Pabré volunteer Peter Brostrom. Anyone know how/where to contact Sly?)

Being named country director for the program here was a dream come true because it combined my strong desire to return to Burkina with my love of the Peace Corps. The past two and one-half years have included professional challenges that I'd never imagined and hope not to confront again (e.g., going without an administrative officer for long periods of time, and having to sack a crooked cashier), but overall it has been a fantastic experience. The volunteers and staff here are among the best I've worked with, and this is a wonderful place to serve in the Peace Corps. We have excellent relations with the government, community-level support of volunteers is relatively strong, the safety and security issues that plague other countries are minimal, and, though still very poor, Burkina Faso has shown steady progress in aggregate socio-economic indicators over the past 20+ years. Most of our volunteers live in the type of housing volunteers have lived in for the past 40 years in the Sahel, yet none are very far from regular transport to larger towns where one can find a telephone, cyber-café, cold beer, and a place to go dancing.

The relationship I have had with...
FBF as an organization, and with many of you as individuals, has significantly enriched my experience here. Whether learning about Voltaic masks from the Roys, or about volunteer assignments in the ’60s and ’70s from Denny and Bob et al, my interactions with you have always left me with a greater understanding of, and appreciation for, Burkina Faso and the Peace Corps. Your engagement with the Peace Corps program here, and your active interest in this country, are greatly appreciated. Keep up the good work!

I am slated to re-open the Peace Corps program in Chad, one of several new country entries planned for Peace Corps in this fiscal year. Chad, for any of you that are familiar with the country, will present some serious challenges to both Peace Corps staff and volunteers, and will be quite a different experience from relatively calm, stable, tolerant Burkina Faso. I am looking forward to the challenge, but my family and I will certainly miss Burkina.

Wish me luck, and I look forward to staying in touch with you – my email for the time being is <jaman@cenatrin.bf>.

Sincerely, Nelson Cronyn
Wear your pride, educate your community, and help finance FBF projects in Burkina all at the same time! T-shirts are short-sleeved, 100% cotton, pre-shrunk beefy-T, natural muslin-colored fabric. Our famous design is four-color: brown, black, rust and green. A handy proximity map is found in the Baobab tree! T-shirt sizes are M, L, XL. In L & XL only, specify if you want the words "Peace Corps" under the design.

FBF T-Shirt Order Form
Please complete and return this form to:
DIANNE FERGUSSON
430 EAST PARK DRIVE
SPARTANBURG SC 29302

Name ______________________________________  Phone __________________
Address __________________________________________  Zip _______________

(NOTE – For shirts in L & XL sizes, please specify if you want the words "Peace Corps " under the design)

HOW MANY: T-SHIRTS: M ___  PRICE PER SHIRT: $16
T-SHIRTS: L ___  POSTAGE: $3 Domestic
T-SHIRTS: XL ___

Make all checks payable to FBF. Thanks for your support.
Friends of Burkina Faso
Contribution Form

Please complete and return this form to:
FBF PROJECTS COMMITTEE
C/O MOLLY CHAMBERS
1601 ARGONNE PLACE NW APT 226
WASHINGTON DC 20009

Date ________________________
Name _______________________________________________________
Street Address ________________________________________________
City _______________________________ State_______ Zip __________
Phone Number ________________________________________________
Email Address ________________________________________________
Relationship to Burkina Faso _____________________________________
Current occupation _____________________________________________

My project contribution is enclosed. I am offering $ ________________

☐ My gift may be used wherever the Projects Committee feels it is most needed.
☐ I want my gift to support the __________________________ project.

In addition, I would like to include
☐ $15 for annual FBF membership and newsletter subscription.
☐ $35 to join the National Peace Corps Association (NCPA).

Other comments, suggestions or ideas? ____________________________

Friends-of-Burkina-Faso membership is open to all. If you, or someone you know, would like to become an official member of our nonprofit charitable organization, let us know by completing this contribution form. Members receive the quarterly Burkina Connection newsletter.

Look for your membership expiration date after your name on the mailing label.
(If there isn’t one, your $15 membership is due.)

Note: the Friends of Burkina Faso is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Contributions are tax-deductible.

Make all checks payable to FBF. Thanks for your support.
"PRISE DE CONTACT" – Friends of Burkina Faso members Bob Winterbottom, Holland McKenna, Molly Chambers and Marianne Bailey shared goodwill with Burkina Ambassador Tertius Zongo and First Secretary Babou Bama at the Burkina Embassy in Washington, D.C.

Photo by Anastasia Hopkinson.