



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 grace 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



UPDATE





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

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FRIENDS . . .



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**
- ◆ **Broaden 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



(Yiri – continued from previous page)



Bob Osborne

seemed to get over the hump of combining fund-raising and project management in an organized manner. But then came our seminal FBF Annual Meeting of 2001, in the aftermath of the tragedies of September 11, and large numbers of our alumni, plus former staff members such as **Tom**

Fox, Reg Petty and Eli Newberger, and former ambassadors such as **Don Easum**, came together and determined to have something bright rise from the darkness of that terrible period.

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.

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

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.



BOB'S YIRI



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.



Tom Vollrath

UPDATE . . .

Three stylized icons of shea nuts, each with a textured, oval shape and a central indentation, stacked vertically.

133 FBF lambs for education!

by Lacine Sawadogo, NEEED coordinator



Three of the 133 students funded

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 video, photos, factures de téléphone etc.)

1,995,000 Fcfa ont servi à l'achat de **133 moutons au profit de 133 filles** du CP1 de **7 écoles** primaires des département de **Tangaye** et de **Oula**. Ce sont les écoles de **Loubré (9), Kouba (20), Yalka (20), Oula (20), Sonh (10), Gosseré (40) et Sounkouissi (14)**. Ces filles sont donc assurées, à travers l'embouche 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 entreteu 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. Nous pensons qu'à travers les cérémonies nous pouvons mieux faire passer notre message et espérer atteindre nos objectifs.

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

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

UPDATE...



Félicitations

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 Alima de Salam
- 6- Sawadogo Zoénabou de Ali
- 7- Sawadogo Maimouna de Yacouba
- 8- Sawadogo Safoura de Issaka
- 9- Sawadogo Rakiéta 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 Saïdou et Bintou
- 7- Ouédraogo Ramata de Poko et Azeta
- 8- Ouédraogo Rissnata de Amadé et Fati
- 9- Ouédraogo Salmata de Moussa et Abibou
- 10- Sawadogo Bibata de Boukari et Bintou
- 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 Safiatou de Amidou et Bintou
- 16- Savadogo Sanata de Rasmané et Bibata
- 17- Ouédraogo Lizeta de Amidou et Ramata
- 18- Savadogo Zoénabou de Ousséni et Ramata
- 19- Ganamé Abibata de Kelssia 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 Fatimata de Amadé
- 11- Savadogo Bibata de Madi
- 12- Ouédraogo Azara de Sidiki
- 13- Porgo Ramata de Saaga
- 14- Savadogo Minata de Boukari
- 15- Savadogo Ramata de Amadé
- 16- Savadogo Zalissa de Issaka
- 17- Ouédraogo Kalizeta de Saïdou
- 18- Savadogo Aminata de Mahamadi
- 19- Ouédraogo Zalissa de Nomba
- 20- Ouédraogo Fatimata Bintou de Bobodo

C) Ecole de Sonh (CP1)

- 1- Savadogo Mariam de Hamidou
- 2- Savadogo Mariam de Tingassiguio
- 3- Savadogo Safiata de Saïdou
- 4- Ouédraogo Fatimata de Issoufou
- 5- Savadogo Safiata de Yassia
- 6- Savadogo Lizeta de Sommanegdo
- 7- Savadogo Balguissa de Oumarou
- 8- Ouédraogo W. Thérèse de Emile
- 9- Ouédraogo Balguissa de Salam
- 10- Savadogo Awa de Yemba Abdou

D) Ecole de Kouba (CP1)

- 1- Sawadogo Amsétou
- 2- Ouédraogo Aguiratou de Ousséni
- 3- Ouédraogo Azeta de Sibiri
- 4- Sawadogo Ami
- 5- Ouédraogo Sanata de Issouf
- 6- Sawadogo Alimata de Saïdou

- 7- Ouédraogo Kotim
- 8- Ouédraogo Awa de Moumouni
- 9- Yarbanga Houa de Idrissa
- 10- Sawadogo Assetou
- 11- Ouédraogo Aguiratou de Salif
- 12- Ouédraogo Awa de Issouf
- 13- Ouédraogo Maimouna
- 14- Sawadogo Sirétou
- 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- Sawadogo Ami de Rasmané

E) Ecole de Sounkouissi (CP1)

- 1- Savadogo Amsétou
- 2- Savadogo Oumou
- 3- Savadogo Balguissa de Saïdou
- 4- Savadogo Salmata
- 5- Savadogo Nassiratou
- 6- Savadogo Zara
- 7- Kindo Aguiratou
- 8- Kindo Balguissa
- 9- Kindo Nematta de Yacouba
- 10- Kindo Nematta de Amadé
- 11- Kindo Salmata
- 12- Savadogo Mariam
- 13- Kindo Kotim
- 14- Kindo Salmata de B.

F) Ecole de Oula (CP1)

- 1- Guiro Nafissatou
- 2- Ouédraogo Amsetou
- 3- Savadogo Kassiratou
- 4- Ouédraogo Zalissa
- 5- Savadogo Rassidatou
- 6- Savadogo Alimatou
- 7- Savadogo Maminata
- 8- Ouédraogo Balguissa
- 9- Savadogo Nassiratou
- 10- Savadogo Rasmata de Bobo
- 11- Savadogo Sanata
- 12- Guiro Salimata
- 13- Guiro Balguissa
- 14- Sana Rasmata
- 15- Savadogo Rasmata de Amnatou
- 16- Ouédraogo Balguissa Rosalie
- 17- Koèba Mariam
- 18- Savadogo Ramata de Zoenabo
- 19- Savadogo Mariam
- 20- Savadogo Mariam

G) Ecole de Yalka (CP1)

- 1- Ouédraogo Risnata
- 2- Zonon kalizeta
- 3- Ouédraogo Aguiratou de Salam
- 4- Ouédraogo Zalissa
- 5- Ouédraogo Bibata
- 6- Zalle Mariam
- 7- Zonon Aminata
- 8- Zonon Nafissatou
- 9- Zonon Oumou Koulçoum
- 10- Ouédraogo Balguissa
- 11- Ouédraogo Bintou
- 12- Ouédraogo Noëlie Fatoumata
- 13- Ouédraogo Aguiratou de Bourèma
- 14- Ouédraogo Aminata de Raogo
- 15- Belem Safiatou
- 16- Belem Fatimata
- 17- Ouédraogo Awa
- 18- Ouédraogo Fatimata
- 19- Ouédraogo Mariam
- 20- Zonon Awa

CONGRATS...



Seeking Work-Study-Tour info

by Molly Chambers, '99-'01, and Pat Maxwell, '99-'01

Do you know of any opportunities for *Burkinabé* to apply for Academic or Professional Development in the U.S.?



Molly Chambers and Pat Maxwell

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.



INFO



Soup's on!

by David Marcham, '83-'85

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*.



David Marcham

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



Bon appetit !

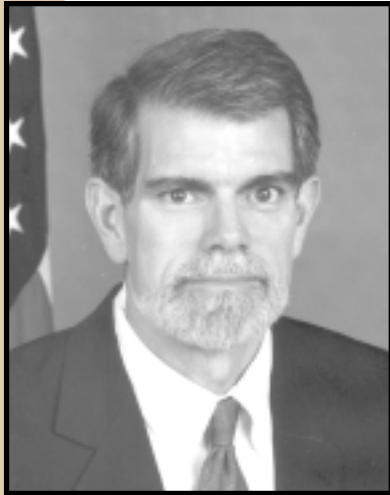
Cut the meat into bite-size chunks. Boil it with 1/2 teaspoon of salt and half the onions in a cup of water for about 10 minutes. Meanwhile, in a large, heavy pot, warm the palm oil over low heat for about 7 minutes. While it heats, grind or crush separately the egusi seeds, peppers and crayfish, and 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.

RECIPES...



Ambassador Holmes in place



Tony Holmes

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).

"... as a whole the Burkina economy has weathered the crisis quite well..."

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 infla-


tion, 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 Cote 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.

U.S. EMBASSY





Nelson says Farewell



Nelson Cronyn

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

" . . . country director for the program here was a dream come true . . . "

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



The Ouaga portion of the National AIDS Awareness Ride (co-sponsored by the Ministry of Health, Peace Corps, PROMACO/PSI, and an anonymous donor). Photo by Kara Potter, PCV in Dori.




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 

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"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.

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PROJECTS

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