

fall 2002

friends of morocco

اصدقاء المغرب

www.friendsofmorocco.org

Kicking off the Celebration of 40 years of Peace Corps in Morocco

By Tim Resch, FOM President

The Friends of Morocco 40th Anniversary Celebration tour had high expectations going in, and, due to the work of many people, exceeded those expectations. The tour by 18 members of FOM October 5-15, 2002 visited the coastal cities of Rabat, Casablanca, El Jadida, Safi and Essouira then went inland to Marrakech and back to Agadir on the coast and into the Souss Vally and the Anti-Atlas towns of Taroudant and Tafarout over 10 days by chartered bus. More than half of the participants extended their time in Morocco to visit friends, "family" and former sites. Those subsequent visits will be the subject of separate articles in this and the next FOM Newsletter.

Like the Moroccan-American Friendship tour in November of 2001, the touristic was combined with visits with serving volunteers, meetings with Peace Corps staff, a reunion with Moroccans connected with Peace Corps and the U.S., such as the Moroccan Chapter of the University of Minnesota Alumni Association. We visited a women's shelter and pediatric cancer ward in Casablanca, the American Language Center of Marrakech, schools for the deaf in Agadir and a large commercial orange-clementine farm in Taroudant.

Below are some of the highlights:

Arriving by car, train, plane and taxi, the group assembled at JFK airport to board an evening flight to Casablanca. We had three volunteers from Morocco

2 serving 1963 to 1965, two starting in 1968, three starting service in 1970, one from 1990 and another from 2000. Also on the tour were former residents of Morocco as well as family and friends of travelers. We were a diverse group reuniting and spouting fragments of Moroccan dialectical Arabic in the Royal Air Maroc section of JFK.

A portentous omen was an article on the group's visit in the October 5 issue of *Le Matin* handed out to passengers boarding the flight titled "*Une delegation de*



l'organisation americaine "Amis du Maroc" a Rabat. The article was based on a news release by the US Embassy and Peace Corps and had been picked up by Maghreb Arab Press (MAP).

During hotel check-in in Casa, we had a set of press interviews. Mike Smith (Casablanca 63-65) was interviewed by (and subsequently published by) the Arabic Language Newspaper "*Al Bidaoui*". Tim Resch did a short television interview and then he and Hassan met with 15 print journalists. Thanks here to Boubaker Mazoz, US Embassy Public Affairs Specialist in Casablanca.

After a visit to the Hassan II mosque on the waterfront, we went for lunch at the "*Association Solidarite Feminine*" women's shelter (www.lamarocaine.com/solidaritefeminine). The shelter's programs and challenges were explained to us. Afif Bennani, a noted Moroccan artist, had donated a painting to the Center for revenue generation, which was generously purchased by Linda Whittington. Linda had also presented to the Center collection of toiletries that she had collected in the States.

Onward to Rabat, for a tour of the Peace Corps office and then to the residence of the Peace Corps/Morocco Director, Barbara Durr for a reception. Attending were the volunteers of the Volunteer Advisory Committee; Peace Corps staff, past and present, including the four staff with over twenty years of service to

Peace Corps/Morocco Daouia Belmokadem, Abdou Laanaya, Najia Ben Bella and Abdesslam El Khomri (see page 16 for Peace Corps memories from Daouia, Abdou, Najia and Abdesslam) and the FOM liaison, Mhamed El Kadi; Embassy representatives, Steve Hanchey of the FOM 2001 tour and now resident in Morocco as the Director of the Casablanca English Learning Center, and Dr Fouzi Msfer Aloui, Director of the *Unité d'Hématologie Pédiatrique* at the *Hôpital d'Enfants de Rabat* to which FOM

(Continued on page 9)

Ash Khabarna?

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Editor's note: I sincerely apologize for any errors in the last installment of Ash Khabarna. Most of these entries are typed and not cut and pasted, so it was just simple human error. I also rely on the information sent to us by the National Peace Corps Association. Please check with them and make sure your contact information is accurate. If you don't want your personal information to appear in Ash Khabarna, please indicate this request on your membership renewal.

Jerome Bookin-Weiner—Rabat/Sale 71-73 is Executive Director of International Programs at Colorado State University. Contact Jerome at <jbbw@lamar.colostate.edu>.

Richard D. Bellamy—Errachidia/Goulmima 75-75 writes: "After the Peace Corps I taught ESL for four years in Boston and 3 years in San Francisco. I have been teaching middle and high school English and history in Cape Cod since 1986. I have written a young adult novel set in Morocco entitled Sahara Boy. It is published by first books. You can order it by going to www.1stbooks.com." Contact Richard at <hokahey@capecod.net>.

Philip Szmedra— Rabat 90-92 has been an economist with the USDA in Washington, DC, and was senior lecturer in the Department of Economics at the University of South Pacific in Suva, Fiji. Philip is currently an assistant professor of economics at Georgia Southwestern State University. Contact Philip at <pszmedra@canes.gsw.edu>.

Ellen Braswell received her M.S. in rehabilitation counseling from the University of North Carolina -Chapel Hill in 1992. She is currently a rehabilitation counselor at the Woodrow Wilson Rehabilitation

James C. Costa writes "I worked for Firestone Tire for 5 years in South

Africa, 3 years in Chile and 3 years in Mexico. We then went to Ontario, Canada where I was manager of a tire plant. Then to Carlisle, PA for 5 years, then 6 in in the Texas panhandle and now 7.5 years in Louisiana working for a Dutch Polymer company -DSM Elastomers. My wife is South African and our one daughter was born in Chile." Contact Jim at <jim.costa@dsm.com>.

Noreen Polk Kilby 84-86 writes "After nearly 11 years of love and friendship, Sean Kilby and I got married on September 8, 2002 in Baltimore. Our daughter, SarahAlice (2.5 years old), was an exuberant participant of the ceremony. She walked down the aisle with me and then joined us for the entire ceremony and added her own special sound effects when she discovered that stomping on the podium made a lot of noise and caused our guests to laugh. It was a wonderful, perfect ceremony and day. We will continue to live in Columbia MD until we find a house, most likely in Montgomery County MD." Contact Noreen at <noreenkilby@yahoo.com>.



Patrick T. Kintner - Beni Mellal 76-77 writes "I felt so guilty from drinking millions of cups of too sweet mint tea that I returned home and went straight to dental school. I hoped to return to Morocco one day to introduce Nutrasweet and other sweeteners, but it never happened. I live a peaceful life in the ancient city of Seattle, not far from the medina, with my wife, son and my African dog "Cleo". After returning to Seattle, I attended the University of Washington Dental School. On graduation I worked for the State Department of Corrections as a prison dentist as well as a consortium of low income public health clinics as a staff dentist and in-house philosopher. I did a tour of India as a volunteer dentist at Kasburba Hospital in Manipal before returning home to Settle into a life of unmitigated drudgery as father,

husband, neighbor and 9 to 5 dentist, but alas no longer captain of my destiny." Contact Patrick at <kintnerpat@hotmail.com>.

Amie Bishop—Afourer/Marrakech 83-85 works in international public health and lives in Seattle. Contact Amie at <abishop@path.org>.

Tom Grasso—Casablanca 92-93 is a book editor with Birkhauser Boston. Contact Tom at 617-628-4155.

Sandra Coppie Dieckhaus—Rabat 72-75 writes "I have been working with the WIC (Women Infants and Children) program for 22 years. We are the largest WIC program in St. Louis and we have a diverse population that includes Vietnamese, Sudanese, Moroccans, Bosnians, Spanish, Russians and other." Contact Sandra at 314-522-0238.

Kristy Larson—Essaouria 82-84 is a tour director in Morocco and importer of Moroccan handicrafts. Contact Kristy at <kristylarson@hotmail.com>.

Brenda Bryant Petta—Agadir 70-72 writes "Upon returning to the U.S., I resumed studies at SIU-Edwardsville (IL), and subsequently moved to Milwaukee to work for Community Corrections as a State Probation and Parole Agent. Later, we moved to Hudson, WI where I began an office for a county juvenile probation program before returning to Wisconsin state service and eventually working as a social worker in a minimum security correctional facility. Presently, I teach in a children's house setting St. Paul Public Schools in Saint Paul, MN. Contact Brenda at <tapetta1@msn.com>.

Brooke Pickering is a rug dealer specializing in Moroccan carpet and textiles. Contact Brooke at <BPruigs@aol.com>.

(Continued on page 3)

(Continued from page 2)

Sylvia Cabus—Rabat 00-02 is a program manager with Catholic Relief Services in Baltimore. Contact Sylvia at <crs_resp@mtds.com>

Salem and Tracey Boudine—Erfoud live in Brooklyn, NY where Salem is a handicrafts and fossil marble dealer. Contact Salem and Tracey at <salem@maisonsijilmassa.com or tracey@traceyboudine.com>.

Roberta Messalle is an independent writer and USA representative for Moroccan Travel Agency. Contact Roberta at <bmessalle@erols.com>.

Margaret Jean Smith—Settat 97-99 is retired and living in Ellensburg, WA. Contact Margaret at <mjhsmith@charter.net>.

Joan Peterson is a publisher/writer in Madison, WI. Joan is the author of "Eat Smart in Morocco" and is leading a culinary tour to Morocco (see page 5 of this newletter). Contact Joan at <joan@ginkgopress.com>.

George Gorayeb - Tetuan/Marrakesh 71-73 is on the national board of directors of the American Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee in Washington, DC and is actively involved in promoting renewed efforts at peace initiatives in the mideast. Contact George at <gearoge.gorayeb@hotmail.com>.

Doreen Robinson and Hakim Riad—Ouarzazate 92-94 live in Silver Spring, MD. Doreen is a senior conservation specialist with the World Wildlife Fund. Contact Doreen at <doreen.robinson@wwfus.org>.

Mark and Marie-Louise (Loulou) Kane—Fes 68-72 live in Des Moines, IA where Mark is a writer and editor-in-chief and Loulou is a curator and gallery director. Contact the Kanes at <markkane@worldnet.att.net>.

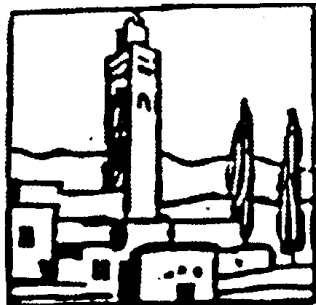
Jack and Carol McCreary—Marrakesh/Casablanca/Beni Mellal 68-72 have spent 35 years wandering around the Middle East and South America, first as English teachers. Then, Jack joined the Foreign Service (in culture and

information most of his career) and Carol moved out of teaching and into consulting. Contact the McCrearys at <jmccreary@myfirstlink.net>.

John Salamack—Rabat/Tangiers/Azrou/Meknes 71-75 is the executive director of Clothes Helping Kids, Inc. in Albuquerque, NM. Contact John at <cloth4kids@aol.com>.

Ann Brubaker—Casablanca/Marrakech 64-66 an administrator at the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art in Kansas City, MO. Contact Ann at <abrubaker@nelson-atkins.org>.

Steven Stanley—Beni Mellal 71-75 still teaches ESL (since 1979!) at California State University, Los Angeles. He hopes to (finally) publish his novel *Moroccan Roll* (the story of one year in the life of 4 PCVs living in the fictional town of Aïn El Qamar). Anyone interested in reading/proofreading this novel (especially anyone who served in Beni Mellal, the



inspiration for Aïn El Qamar) may contact Steven at <steviestan@yahoo.com>.

John M. Kopec—Kenitra 68-72 is a lecturer in ESL at Boston University. Contact John at <jkopec@bu.edu>.

Martha Dye and Driss Benmhend—Agadir 89-90 live in McLean, Va. Martha is an attorney and Driss is a scientist with the US EPA. Contact Martha and Driss at <mdye@omm.com>.

Rafi Labriny is the owner of the Casablanca restaurant in Alexandria, VA.

John Powanda—Tetuan is retired and lives in Harlingen, TX.

Peter Ohman—Midelt/Marrakech 82-84 is a social worker for the City of

Stockholm, Sweden working with drug addicts and the homeless. Peter recently celebrated the 20th anniversary of the 1982 TEFL stage with Peter Laugharn (Sefrou 82-84) at Peter's home in The Hague. Contact Peter at <peter.ohman@sot.stockholm.se>.

K.P. Moseley—Rabat 93-95 works in public affairs for the U.S. Department of State.

Aziz Abbassi is a faculty trainer at the Defense Language Institute in Monterey, CA. Contact Aziz at <abbassiaziz@hotmail.com>.

Kenneth Dethman—Taza 83-64 lives in Portland, OR and plans to build and operate a micro-brewery in Morocco. Contact Kenneth at <nboc97143@yahoo.com>.

S. Louise Hoare—Rabat 90-91 is retired and living in Santa Monica, CA.

Stacy McCoy—Lakhriouya 99-01 writes "I stayed in Morocco for 2 months after COS, interned at NEF in Ouarzazate. I'm now working for a lobbying (non-profit) organization in the D.C. area". Contact Stacy at <smccoy77@hotmail.com>.

Margaret Leenhouts and Berka Mou—Er-Rachidia 87-89 live in Rochester, NY where they are both teachers. Contact them at <berkmar@frontiernet.net>.

Frank Golino—Tangier 64-66 is an international affairs consultant with the U.S. Department of State. Contact Frank at <fgo1156726@aol.com>.

David Bruey—Taroudant 66-68 is the director of the International office at Marquette University. Contact David at <davidbruey@yahoo.com>.

Ellen Braswell—Temara/Safi 87-89 is a rehabilitation counselor at the Woodrow Wilson Rehabilitation Center. Contact Ellen at <livewell@intelos.net>.

Forever the Land of Contrasts: An RPCV Goes Back

By Judy Chapman (Marrakesh 63-65)

Coming from San Francisco, I picked up one daughter (30) at JFK and we flew to Madrid to join second daughter (20) who was doing the junior-year-abroad thing in Grenada. Since I was supposed to be the Morocco expert (PCV '63-'65) they twisted my arm to hop the ferry for a weeks' tour via train and bus. Having been told that ATMs were "everywhere", I didn't really worry about currency or really anything else. I had not been back and it sounded like great fun.

The Tangiers train station is miles out of town and we piled into the classic Mercedes taxi with others. We wanted to go to Marrakech, my old home, first my old home. Dirhams only for the tickets, no ATM. I was assured that the drink stand at the far end of the taxi area could change money. I instructed the girls to watch my stuff, and, sensing a heavy-duty mother mode, told them sternly not to talk with anyone. Quite proud of myself, and, with dirhams in hand, I shoved the money through the window for the tickets. I was short by a small amount. No, I couldn't have the money back, just go get more change. By now the train was waiting, I did get the money and tickets, and oh no, the girls were being befriended by the ominous dark suited gentleman that I had caught earlier out of the corner of my eye. We were invited to sit in his compartment, but we declined and as he boarded the train we continued down the platform for several cars. We found three seats together and were off.

About fifteen minutes later the gentleman opened our door to repeat his invitation. We said no thank you again. In another fifteen minutes he came back wanting a reason why we wouldn't sit with him. What, was he not good enough for us? We offered polite comments as I had visions of my girls being sold into slavery as he stormed off. A half-hour passed. Rather than accept our rejection, he would make sure that we were rejected. The compartment door crashed open and in a tirade of English, French and Arabic

he said that we were to immediately pay him \$100 each protection money so that his gang would not "vaporize" us in the Casablanca train station while we waited the three hours for the midnight train to Marrakech. The yelling went on and on with appropriate gestures and showmanship. He was making sure that the entire world knew that we were scum. The man across from me asked him to leave. There were more shouts and he left saying that he had to have the money right away. The man in our compartment cradled his head in his hands shaking it from side to side bemoaning the fact that his countrymen could be so rude and that it was no wonder tourists did not come and we indeed needed protection at this point. Much talk with the lady next



to me who had been trying to cover her young son's ears the entire time.

We made the group decision to bail at the next town, Aziza. Our compartment mate lived there and would make sure that we got to a restaurant to change money and wait for the next train to Casa. We hustled off nervously glancing at the one room station in a cow pasture and piled into a taxi with a bunch of others. Our friend wanted to take us to his brother's place in the medina. Fortunately we had packed lightly for the week and our bags were easy to carry. As we went through the old medina gate there was an instant flashback to my volunteer days over thirty-five years ago - the same smell, the same carts, donkeys, djellabahs, and comforting chaos. My daughters shot me a look as if now they knew I was completely nuts. We walked for what seemed to be ages through the tiniest of alleys, past whitewashed houses with blue doorways until we went up a staircase to an entrance that led to a living room that appeared to be a rug dealer complete with tourist junk! Three men magically popped out with tea, glasses

and big smiles. Our friend had disappeared and I had a sinking feeling as they started to roll out their rugs that his might be another entrapment. I had forgotten that in Morocco about anyone could be your "brother" if you knew his name and address. We excused ourselves after tea and a child led us out of the medina. It was now dark.

Our train friend was waiting and took us on to a restaurant. It had high ceilings, plastic covered tables, a glass case with random memorabilia and zero patrons. We thought we'd take our chances and said good bye to the train guy. The wooden chairs squeaked on the tile, the waiter's voice echoed as he told us the choices. We went with the chicken tajine. We waited and waited. I decided not to tell the girls what I guessed was the reason, but that was O.K. because we had hours to kill. It turned out to be delicious and we accomplished our money transactions and walked back to a café for tea and more waiting. Half of the town was inside cheering at a soccer match on TV. We sat outside and laughed about our adventures so far. My girls wanted to learn some Arabic phrases and after a few basics I said the best one to yell if someone was really bothering them was extremely insulting to their mother as well as Allah. I pronounced the phrase and had them say it quietly a few times. I assured them that it was better than 911 and only for genuine emergencies. I told them that I never had to use the phrase but that its power was amazing.

We watched the bustle of the late evening traffic, the comings and goings, the general scene that had very few women. A beggar wanted tea; we turned him away. He returned a while later and the waiter shooed him off. After the fourth try the waiter spoke harshly to the beggar who then with perfect pronunciation bellowed my famous phrase! The waiter dropped his tray, went into the café and in two seconds came tearing out brandishing a real baseball bat and

(Continued on page 5)



RPCV Morocco web sites and list serves

In addition to the Friends of Morocco web site, a number of other web sites and list serves are being developed for subsets of the Friends of Morocco community. Below is an attempt to list some of the major (and more vibrant) ones. Omissions can be sent to <tresch@att.net>. Other year of service, stage groups or geographic area groups might be appropriate. Friends of Morocco can assist with the initial invitation list.

➤ **Culinary Tour to Morocco:** May 6–May 20, 2003 Join us in getting to the heart of Moroccan culture through an exploration of her exquisite cuisine. Discover the secrets of Moroccan dishes by watching renowned chefs as well as home cooks prepare classic creation such as stew-like *tagines*; hearty, well-spiced soups; vegetable salads in flavorful olive oil dressings; savory and sweet pastry delights; and signature dishes such as *bestila*, which is made with almost translucent pastry sheets, and the classic Berber couscous. Vist bustling markets to learn about the herbs, spcies and condiments prevalent in Moroccan cookery. See the major tourist sights, yet still have time to shop and relax along the way. The tour will be lead by Joan Peterson, author of *Eat Smart in Morocco*. For more information, contact Joan at <joanp@ginkgopress.com> or Patricia Williams of Burkhalter Travel at <pwilliams@burkhaltertravel.com>.

(Continued from page 4)

took off like lightening after the beggar down the street. The other waiters and most of the café patrons all followed in hot pursuit to stop a massacre of the poor beggar. If I had been a Hollywood producer it couldn't have been better! We roared with laughter.

We taxied back to the station and hoisted ourselves onto the 11.30PM train in total blackness. This train only had third class cars that were jammed full. Some cars were jumping in a party spirit of loud music and other cars seemed a quiet jumble of sleeping bodies. In the last car we found three slivers of space on different benches. At least we were in the same car. Things were calm until two stops later when two huge Berber women squeezed through the end door with large blanket wrapped bundles and what appeared to be truck tires and objects around their waists hidden under their clothes. The shapes were really strange. They immediately started yelling at the four men in the corner reserved for war veterans and

elderly and created a ferocious commotion. They were determined and succeeded in kicking the men out! They proceeded to pack their bundles into the entire area and positioned themselves on top of it all. They seemed very pleased with themselves and chattered gaily.

I found the nerve to ask my neighbor what this was all about and he explained that they were smuggling contraband purchased from ships to sell at the Casablanca market. If they were caught at the next stop by the douane, who did not always board the night train, they would loose their loot and go to jail.

It became deathly quiet as we slowed for the stop. The lights went out and we waited a very long time in breathless suspense. We heard the voices as they walked by saying that our car must be sleeping. I thought about what it must have been like for Anne Frank. I was sweating bullets for these characters and did not want to witness their wrath if they were caught, (I'd already had a scary preview). The train

squeaked, then lerched forward, and gradually picked up speed to a steady clickety clack. Suddenly a piercing blast of warbling youyous came from the two women. It was loud enough for fifty of them! The whole car broke into laughter. The lights came on, they started reorganizing their wares, took off the extra layers, waved various items, shouted prices and, bango, they were in business!

We arrived in Casablanca with our ears ringing, grubby and tired. The train station did not seem to have any threatening types prowling around, no ominous gangs, yet I sat alert waiting the hours for the very early morning train to Marrakech. I assured the girls that everything was fine and became the mom-pillow while they caught some winks. I still half expected some disaster; we were easy to spot. The floor mopper made us move and we found a marvelous café and had super fresh croissants. It was finally getting light and time to board. Yay, compartments with seats together!

(Continued on page 19)

Female Moroccan political leaders observe US elections

Five senior Moroccan female political leaders participated in "Woman as Political Leaders: U.S. Elections and Political Campaigns" an International Visitor Program arranged by Meridian International Center under State Department auspices for women political activists and leaders from the Arab world. The participants included both appointed and elected government officials, aspiring candidates for political office, activists for women's rights, civil society leaders and journalists from 17 Arab countries.

The Moroccan participants were: *Dr Nadia Bernoussi*, Professor of Constitutional Law and Institutions, National School of Administration in Rabat and founder of "The Moroccan Association of Political Science"; *Houria Cherif Haouat*, Director of the Center of Training Resources for Trainers and Teachers and Member of the Party of the Unified Socialist Left (PGSU) a new coalition of political parties for which she was leading the list of candidates for the September 27, 2002 elections; *Latifa Maroufi*, Senior Administrator of the National Popular Union and President of ALMASSAR (Moroccan League to Reinforce Women's Participation in Political Actions (www.massar-maroc.org/index.asp); *Aicha Al Makrini*, lawyer and member of Socialist and Progressist Party; and *Zahra Rachiq*, Principal Administrator Popular Movement (MP) Party and President, Women's Action Association.

The visitors observed and discussed aspects of elections and campaigns, including electoral politics at the grassroots level, the organization of political campaigns, successful methods of recruiting and utilizing volunteers to staff campaigns, devising and implementing effective public relations strategies, and establishing links among the participants themselves and between them and American women political leaders and others interested in promoting participatory democracy in the Middle

East. The visitors discussed U.S. politics and policies one year after September 11, 2002. Reflecting the International Visitor Program's fundamental commitment to promoting a fully mutual exchange of ideas and views, the visitors were invited to speak to various audiences about women's roles in government and politics in Arab countries and how they are changing.

The program began with a stay of a little more than a week in Washington. At that time, the visitors were introduced to the U.S. political system and the federal structure of the American government. There were visits with key governmental institutions, executive and legislative. This part of the program included a two-day elections workshop, conducted by



Moroccan leaders at a Friends of Morocco reception in Washington

the International Republican Institute and National Democratic Institute, to provide insights into the various elements of planning and implementing electoral campaigns. There was also a meeting to discuss the role that Arab-Americans play in the political process.

At the mid-point of the program, the participants divided into sub-groups of equal size to visit five communities where they observed political campaigns at the grassroots level for state, local, and U.S. congressional offices. They had close contact with party campaign officials, newspaper editors, and candidates as they explored the process by which Americans elect their representatives. These "split" visits also included hospitality and other activities that served not only to provide recreation but also to offer a glimpse into aspects of America's diverse culture and society.

The final phase of the program brought the whole group together again in Washington to observe the elections. The same specialists who presented an opening overview of the campaign process met with the visitors again to help them synthesize the varied observations and insights which brought back to Washington. Also, on election eve, the visitors offered their evaluation of the program, a critique that will assist in the planning of similar future programs.

On Election Day, the members of the group went in small sub-groups to various polling places throughout the Greater Washington area to observe voting procedures. The full group gathered at Meridian International Center later to observe the election results on large-screen television. On hand were an academic or other specialist in elections to help the visitors understand the significance of reported developments. It will end with the group's attendance at dinner with Secretary of State Colin Powell, celebrating the *iftar*, or breaking of the Ramadan daylight fast, with other invited Muslims.

Friends of Morocco president, Tim Resch, hosted a reception for the visitors including representatives from the Embassy of Morocco to the US, FOM leadership; the mayor of Riverdale, MD, Michael Herman; press from the Voice of America and the Washington Times, and leaders of the Moroccan-American community in the Washington, DC area.



Membership Renewal/Application

PLEASE NOTE: Prior to filling out this application, consider making a few copies to pass on to others. While many of our members are former Peace Corps Morocco volunteers, membership is open to anyone interested in the people, culture and development of Morocco.

DIRECTORY INFORMATION

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Home phone: _____ Fax: _____ Email: _____

Current occupation: _____

Employer/school: _____

Experience in Morocco: (RPCVs and PC staffers list Peace Corps jobs. Academics: list field and research topics. Moroccans: list profession or field of study)

Years in Morocco: _____ to _____ Site/hometown: _____

I give permission to FOM to print the above information in the FOM newsletter: _____ Yes _____ No

Areas of interest: Check potential FOM activities in which you would be interested:

_____ newsletter	_____ local FOM chapter	_____ speakers' bureau
_____ trips to Morocco	_____ recruiting PCVs	_____ putting RPCVs/Moroccans in touch
_____ hospitality	_____ reunion/gatherings	_____ career/readjustment services
_____ fund raising	_____ development education	_____ FOM officer position
Other _____		

We need your support for the *Friends of Morocco Newsletter* and other FOM activities. Membership categories appear below. Joint membership includes membership in FOM and the National Peace Corps Association (NPCA). NPCA members also receive the award-winning magazine *World View*, and the newsletter 3/1/61. NPCA and FOM dues and contributions are tax-deductible.

JOINT MEMBERSHIP IN FRIENDS OF MOROCCO AND NATIONAL PEACE CORPS ASSOCIATION

Individual _____ \$50.00
 Multiple (two people, one address) _____ \$65.00

MEMBERSHIP IN FRIENDS OF MOROCCO ONLY

Individual _____ \$15.00
 Multiple (two people, one address) _____ \$20.00

Overseas NPCA members — please add \$20 for postage _____ \$20.00

Additional contribution to Friends of Morocco (tax-deductible) \$ _____ (shukron!)

TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED (make check payable to *Friends of Morocco*) \$ _____

Fall 02

(Continued from page 1)

made a donation of its profits from the NPCA 40th Anniversary Bazaar. Appreciation here to Barbara Durr, Lisa Mirande-Lind and Mhamed El Kadi for these arrangements and the Peace Corps contacts throughout the trip.

FOM was presented with a banner "Celebrating 40 years of Peace Corps in Morocco" prepared by the *Dar Chabeb* (Youth Center) kids, with the help of PCV Cynthia Kerr in Ait Ourir, El Haouz –close to Marrakech to carry on our bus and for the celebration over the next year.

The next morning in Casablanca we started our day with a visit to the *Service d'Héματο-oncologie Pédiatrique de l'Hôpital 20 Août 1953 of Casablanca* where we made another cash donation. Brenda Byrant Petta brought three suitcases of toys gathered from her school which were presented to the children there and in Rabat. Drs. Mhamed Harif and S. Benchekroun received the group and provided a brief welcome and introduction, describing the activities of the ward. The Director of the Hospital expressed his appreciation via a telephone conference call.

Most heart-wrenching was discussion of triage among the children, most families not having health insurance and generally unable to handle the high cost of interventions, let alone experimental, unproven procedures. There was, however, a success wall with photographs of children where their cancer was in remission. For some children, it was simply a question of easing the pain on the road to death. In Rabat, there was a rest house for a parent, but in Casablanca, families also needed to find their own housing as they coped with the illness of their children. At the closing ceremony, after having visited the cancer ward, along with the donation of Friends of Morocco from the sale proceeds at the NPCA 40th Anniversary Bazaar, four participants passed the hat and more than doubled the FOM donation.

Our next stop was Safi, famed for its

pottery. Thirty years ago, the pottery centers of Safi, Sale and Fes each had their own distinctive style and the municipal style did not vary much. Like the early Model T, one could get any color you wanted as long as it was black. Today, however, the craft and tourist industry have fostered greater diversity and development of new styles and products.

In Essouira, we had breakfast with health volunteer, Anna Magarita Cebollero, based in Akermour. By adding wood products to the pottery and rugs already purchased started filling up the bus. By the end of the trip most nooks and crannies of the bus were filled with new possessions and people were shopping for bags to carry back their goods.

In Marrakech, in addition to the Menara, the Koutoubia Minaret, the Saadian Tombs, the Medina, Souks, the Majorelle Museum and the exhilarating Jamaa El Fna Square both during the night and the day, we visited with Michael Abdurrahman Fitzgerald of the American Language Center of Marrakesh. It was opening night of the fall quarter and therefore we had the pleasure of watching students arriving for the 17 classes to be taught that evening. Hormones were heavy in the air. FOM list serve manager, Dave Keiser (Safi 98-00) is now a teacher at the Center, and, after class, he joined part of the group for drinks at our hotel. On our last night in Marrakesh we went to the Moroccan cultural extravaganza, *Chez Ali*, where Hassan's connections got us terrific seats for both the meal and the entertainment.

In Agadir, we were joined by Marilee McClintock who entered Peace Corps as a small business development volunteer after a 30 plus year career in urban planning, local government, real estate development, logistics and international business. She became so enamored of Morocco and Moroccans that she is making her permanent home in Agadir. Nick Petit, Small Business Development volunteer joined us for a dinner, and Tim Resch and Mary Garrison met with a dozen mid-term environmental volunteers

coincidentally in Agadir for their in-service training.

A trip to Tafrouit allowed the group to meet with education volunteer Victoria Fletcher, who gave us a tour of the town and shared a slice of her life with us. For many of us, it was a nice reminder of the joys of connecting with a community and the affection that a community can give to a stranger. The subsequent morning in Tiznit allowed the group to purchase significant volumes of silver and other crafts.

We took a one-day trip to Taroudant for a tour of El Boura farms, a large commercial, irrigated orange-clementine farm managed by University of Minnesota alumnus Abdellah Radouani. The operation also includes a modern tissue culture lab and an environment-controlled glass greenhouse for mini-tuber production of disease-free seed potatoes (first of its kind in Morocco, reducing country's dependence on imported seed), and a breeding stable for Arabian horses. It was also an occasion for a gathering of the University of Minnesota Alumni Chapter of Morocco. It was clear from discussions that Moroccans who have studied in the US have retained similar affection for and connections with the US as have Americans who have lived in Morocco. A terrific Moroccan feast of *mechoui* and couscous was served.

We rushed back to Agadir that day for a meeting the Mohammed Gharrabi, Wali de la region Souss Massa Draa (subsequently covered in the 10/15/02 edition of *Le Matin*) to describe our journey, the impact of Morocco on our lives and Peace Corps service in his region. The meeting had been arranged with assistance of the Moroccan Ambassador to the US, Aziz Mekouar.

While part of the tour group returned to the US at the end of the communal portion, most participants continued their time in Morocco for a couple of more days. S. Louise Hoare (Rabat 90-91) and at 80 the oldest participant, continued on to Rabat and Fes to visit with friends; Linda and Tara Whittington

(Continued on page 10)

(Continued from page 9)

dallied in Casablanca with an adopted family; Jabeen Bhatti, the Washington Times reporter accompanying the group, went on to see the desert and to meet with female legislative leaders; Dan Cahill (Kenitra 68-70) and John Kopec (Kenitra 68-72) journeyed to Kenitra to visit the school where they taught and where their student was now the Director; Bob Zambrano and Mike Smith traveled to Tangier to meet with fellow volunteer Richard Netherlin (Ouezzane 63-68) and now Director of the Tangier American Language Center and to Tetouan to his

former school. Polly Scoville (63-65) visited with friends in Rabat, Tangier and Fes and participated, along with Hassan Samrhouni, in the swearing-in of the 2002 class of volunteers.

Travel arrangements were made by Casablanca Travel and Tours. Owner and FOM member Hassan Samrhouni accompanied the group and was instrumental in dealing with glitches such as delayed luggage, press interviews for the group and contacts for the Washington Times reporter traveling with us, and coordinating

special needs and subsequent travel for participants continuing onward travel in Morocco after the main group trip.



Tour Northern Morocco with Friends of Morocco October 5 to 15, 2003

Building on the successes of the 2001 and 2002 Friends of Morocco tours combining visits to serving Peace Corps volunteers, development activities and general tourism, Friends of Morocco is searching for interest in a tour of northern Morocco. The tour would arrive Casablanca and depart to Tangier via Lixus. In Tangier, visits would include the Tangier American Legation to hear about Medina restoration and visit to the Museum of Moroccan Arts in the Dar El Makhzen. Is there interest in the Forbes Museum? We would then go one to Tetouan with possible visit to deaf school, then to Chefchaouen, Ketama, where we would look at kif substitution activities, Targuist and to Al Houceima to examine the tourist industry transformation. Travel would then be via Taounate to Fes, where we visit the

English Language Training Center and view riads under rehabilitation. A trip to Ifrane and Azrou would include a visit to the English language, Al Akhawayn University. From there we would visit Meknes, the ruins of Volubius and the city of Moulay Idriss. Tour would then continue to Rabat to meet with Peace Corps staff and exit out of Casablanca visiting the Hassan II Mosque and lunch at a women's shelter.

We will probably offer also an opportunity for an airline only - make your own land travel itinerary and arrangements - option that will depart the same date taking advantage of the group discount. Return travel date flexible according to Royal Air Maroc schedules. More than half the participants in 2002 extended their time in Morocco to visit personal sites of

interest. The Mountain tour is planned for October 5-15, 2003, just before the start of Ramadan and including the Columbus Day Monday holiday. It will cost about \$1300 air and land package from New York on Royal Air Maroc. First 25 persons for rented coach, guide, two meals per day, 4 and 5 star hotels. Air only at a reduced price will also be available with fixed October 5 departure and optional return dates. Travel services would be by Casablanca Travel and Tours, which has served us very well the last two years. The trip is still in the conceptualization stage. A volunteer general coordinator would be nice to have. Actual activities and itinerary are open for nominations.

Expressions of interest to should be sent to <tresch@att.net>.

The Morocco – Modern Connection: Berber Carpets and Twentieth Century Design

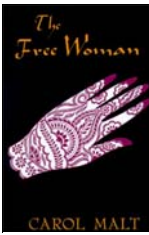
Brooke Pickering with an introduction by W. Russell Pickering

Saturday, January 18th, 2003

The Textile Museum, Washington DC
2320 "S" Street NW
Washington DC 20016
(202) 667-0441

Tribal weaving meets western architecture and design. An introduction to the major types of Moroccan knotted pile carpets and how twentieth designers incorporated them into the modernist aesthetic. Interiors by Le Corbusier, Alvar Alto, Frank Lloyd Wright, and Charles and Ray Eames will be discussed. Guests and members are encouraged to bring material from their collections.

Book Reviews and Other New Books Set In or About Morocco



The Free Woman by Carol Malt, ETHOS Publishing, 2002

(reviewed by Judith Proctor)

The Free Woman is based on the folk legend of a 'Pirate Queen' who saved the city of Tetouan in the 16th century. The author spend four years researching and writing this historical novel -- finding that the heroine, daughter of the Emir of Chaouen, was named Hura . . . literally the free woman.

From her hasty marriage to the founder of Tetouan, to her leadership when he becomes ill, her desperate attempts to defend the city, imprisonment by the Portuguese, eventual marriage to the Sultan of Fes, the story is fast paced and riveting - - all 304 pages of it. All the more so because it is based on truth. To assist the reader, a map of Morocco and a glossary are included.

This is a well-written book, filled with information about the history and customs of the Berbers and Arabs of Morocco.. . one visits the cities, villages and souks of Tetouan, Fes, Rabat/Sale. It's been the choice of several book clubs here in Florida, and I think members of FOM will find it fascinating. Even those who know little about the rich, colorful history of Morocco will find this book captures and holds their attention.

It can be ordered from the publisher at ethospub@worldnet.att.net or national bookstores.

(Judith Proctor is the owner of the J. Proctor Gallery in Seaside, FL)



Younger Than That Now: A Peace Corps Volunteer Remembers Morocco by Michael Moran, Full Court Press, 1994

(reviewed by Bob Drake)

"I was the one volunteer," Michael Moran states in

Younger Than That Now, "that the Peace Corps knew least about." In search of the most authentic Peace Corps experience possible, Moran

began his quest by choosing the remote spiritual center of Boujad, Morocco, for his two-year sojourn as a teacher of English-as-Foreign Language. Moran's benign commencement in Boujad was replete with episodes familiar to all surviving MRPCVs: the competitive sport of international alms-giving, the daily exercise of street-urchin dodging, the natural simplicity of Moroccan plumbing, the nearly religious salvation of discovering rock 'n' roll on the radio and the humbling humor of the national pet-amoebae experience. Finally, the western world will come to understand that there is much more to the traditional Peace Corps experience than simply pitching a tent and digging a well.

After succumbing to the realities of The Eastern Way, Moran turned to the task-at-hand by absorbing himself in the duties of a teacher. It seemed that the mechanics of the profession would be sufficiently satisfying until Moran completed his first school year. On summer project in Northern Ireland, his path is crossed by one certain nubile, red-headed, alabaster-skinned Scottish woman who inserts a large wooden ladle into Michael's latent primal pot and stirs with all the gusto of a gigantic grinning Gertrude. Unable to avoid a clash with destiny, the two of them generate a pleasing procreative performance in the shadow of the Atlas Mountains. Fires blazing, they seduce each other until all of the firewood in Boujad is consumed. The embers lay sparkling in the moonlit streets.

Relationships such as this merit the immortalization they attain for the benefit of the lasting reflections they cast upon the pool of life. Through the re-examination of the images, a curious reader will find lessons to be taken for their own life. What is life without the memory of a well-learned lesson?

Place this book upon your nightstand or hide it under your cushion of the couch. Pick it up when you want to reflect on your personal experience. Enjoy it one chapter at a time, in private places during the time you reserve for yourself. As sure as the sun rises in the east, this book will all-too-soon be finished. It will be "like kissing a mirror

good-bye."

(Bob Drake was a Peace Corps volunteer in Morocco 83-85)



Morocco: The Collected Traveler: An Inspired Anthology and Travel Resource by Barrie Kerper, Crown Publishing Group, December 2001

This book features distinguished writers, such as Paul Bowles, Barbara Grizzuti Harrison, Michael Mewshaw, Peter Theroux, Florence Fabricant, Nancy R. Newhouse, Jeffrey Tayler, Nancy Harmon Jenkins, Christopher Petkanas, Patricia Storace, Suzy Gershman, Michael Kimmelman, Dorothy Kalins, Naomi Barry, and Peggy Knickerbocker, who share seductive insights into Morocco's legendary cuisine, restaurants, and hospitality; the Imperial Cities of Fez, Marrakech, Meknes, and Rabat; the treasures of Tangier; the cosmopolitan atmosphere of Casablanca; and the less-traveled routes through mountains, valleys, and the Sahara. (description from Barnes and Noble website)



Orphans of Islam: Family, Abandonment and Secret Adoption in Morocco by Jamila Bargach, Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, October 2001

Bargach, who did her fieldwork in her native

Morocco (for a doctorate in cultural anthropology at Rice University in Houston; she now teaches social sciences at the National School of Architecture in Morocco), attempts to situate the widespread practice of child abandonment and customs of adoption within the mores of Moroccan society. Her work is complex and multi-layered, tempering the stories of women and children gained from numerous interviews with current theoretical approaches to ethnography.

(review from booknews.com)

Morocco at the Movies - #2 "Morocco"

By Dan Cahill (Kenitra 68-70)

Jaded rich men in white-tie, paired with flamboyant dames in sequined evening gowns, cheering for a decadent cabaret chanteuse who herself is garbed in a tuxedo. Such is the ambiance of an elegant *boite de nuit* which is also populated by wildly gesticulating Arabs in turbans... Morocco? Maybe not your Morocco or my Morocco, but it's the Morocco of "Morocco", Josef Von Sternberg's 1930 pipe-dream of a land so exotic that it robs you of reason.

Von Sternberg's previous film was "The Blue Angel", which rocketed Marlene Dietrich in shockingly gartered stockings to world attention. Her Lola-Lola so enraptured Emil Jannings's bourgeois professor Rath, that his only end could be total humiliation. Now it's her turn to be humiliated by an undeserving Cary Cooper, playing a Foreign Legionnaire who can't muster a modicum of emotion. She begins the story as a woman-who's-seen-it-all on a steamer bound for fog-bound Mogador (aka Essaouira, but don't waste any time looking for landmarks in this California-bound production). At the railing, she's approached by French smoothie Adolphe Menjou, perfectly cast as the man-your-mother-always-warned-you-about. She spurns him quickly enough, but in 1930 no one ever took that for anything but encouragement. A three-way intrigue ensues, ensuring the audience that overwrought unhappiness lurks on the horizon.

"Morocco" was Dietrich's American debut and the first of six films directed by Von Sternberg at Paramount. Sadly, after these 30's near-masterpieces, neither of their careers ever seemed so incandescent. But this film helped create Dietrich as an icon of modern sexuality: independent, willful, aggressive, and ultimately vulnerable. She uses her legs and her langour to lay the basic foundation of a character who



changes by opening herself to a passion so consuming that it changes her life.

Gary Cooper just doesn't seem up to the task of playing a fully rounded French Legionnaire, but then there isn't a lot in the script to suggest that the character has much depth. From the perspective of 2002, he comes across as immature and pathetically fearful of women. Like most Peter Pans, he is happy to pluck ripe fruits from the tree of sensuality, but he can't see the need to cultivate a flower that simply needs a little love. This

makes it all the harder to take the over-the-dunes ending very seriously, despite the brilliant staging and Dietrich's total immersion in her passion. She conveys so much ultra-cool on-screen heat that she doesn't need a smoldering sax solo to tell us she's sexy. It's probably no coincidence that the Hays Code, Hollywood's first censorship guidelines, also came into effect in 1930, although it would not be strictly enforced until four years later.

And in a metaphoric way, this leads us back to how "Morocco" invokes the real Morocco. Crass as this commercial fantasy is, there is a parallel depth of passion that most of us feel about the place to this day. To those of us who lived there, and are still reading about it at this very moment, Morocco has cast its spell on us beyond rescue. We respond to images of Moorish archways, veiled background women, swirling plumes of cigarette smoke, and shadowy shuttered windows much like everyone else. The link between danger and romance, risk and intoxication, triggers a primal response: take us back! No matter how hokey the pretense, how phoney the extras in dark makeup, we yearn once again to lay it all on the line in the most seductive environment on Earth.

DVD Note: Alas, there is no DVD version, and none scheduled soon. Console yourself with "The Blue Angel", reported to be beautifully restored, and rent "Morocco" on VHS.

The New Moroccan Ambassador to the U.S.— Aziz Mekouar

Ambassador Aziz Mekouar is the newly-appointed Ambassador for Morocco in the USA 2002. The Ambassador Aziz was born in Fes, Morocco in 1950. Married with one child, he holds a degree from the Higher School of Commerce (HEC), Paris, and speaks Arabic, English, French, Italian, Portuguese and Spanish.

Since September 1999, Mr.

Mekouar has been Ambassador of Morocco to Italy, Malta and Albania and Permanent Representative to FAO. Since November 1999, he was also Chairman of the FAO Finance Committee.

Before his appointment in Rome, Mr. Mekouar was Ambassador of Morocco to Portugal from 1993 to 1999, and Ambassador to Angola from 1986 to 1993. Previously he held positions at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and

Cooperation of Morocco.

Mr. Mekouar is the author of several theses and studies, including: studies and analyses on the situation in Angola, 30 Years of Italian Domestic Policy, 30 Years of Italian Foreign Policy, studies on the Asia-dollar and prospective impact on the development of South-East Asia and a thesis on the fisheries sector in Argentina.

Moroccans Vote in Elections Billed Fairest Ever

By Gilles Trequesser

RABAT, Sept 27 (Reuters) - Moroccans voted on Friday in a general election the government promised would be the fairest ever and which should greatly increase the number of women in parliament.

The vote is the first since King Mohammed came to the throne in 1999 and is generally seen as a litmus test of the young monarch's cautious moves towards greater democracy.

In a break from tradition in this Muslim nation of 30 million, women-only national lists will ensure that at least 30 women become members of parliament, up from only two at present.

With an unprecedented media campaign on radio, television and the Internet, the government of socialist Prime Minister Abderrahmane el Youssoufi has spared no effort to convince Moroccans they should cast their ballot to foster democracy.

"Moroccans felt cheated in all past electoral contests," Youssoufi, 78, told Reuters on the eve of the polls. "Our aim is to organise real elections, untarnished ones."

POSSIBLE LOW TURNOUT

Turnout in the last parliamentary elections in 1997 was a low 58 percent amid allegations of vote-buying and fraud.

But voter apathy after a dull and short 12-day electoral campaign and disillusionment about a political class seen as corrupt and aloof did not guarantee a higher turnout this time.

"I didn't even register, what's in it for me, what change?" said 21-year-old Mohamed Khamri as he sold contraband cigarettes in the narrow alleyways of the Rabat medina.

Western-style parliamentary democracy is not entrenched in Morocco where the general perception is that real power lies in the hands of the king and a small group of close advisers.

The monarch appoints the prime minister but also traditionally key ministers, such as for defence, foreign affairs and justice, together with top

civil servants.

But Youssoufi argued the government did govern and parliament did legislate. "It's a two-headed executive power, like in France...even if the king makes some appointments," he said.

King Mohammed, 39, has earned a reputation of a reform-minded, modern monarch with some bold moves that shook the tightly controlled apparatus inherited from his father King Hassan, whose autocratic rule lasted for 38 years.

He has let prominent exiled political opponents return home, eased censorship and allowed inquiries into past human rights abuses, including the torture and disappearance of hundreds of political opponents in the 1960s and 1970s.

SLOW PACE OF CHANGE

Diplomats said Morocco was changing, but at its own pace.

"Forget Western constitutional monarchies like Spain, comparisons don't apply," an Arab diplomat said.

"However, what's happening with these elections is unprecedented in the Arab world," he added.

With unemployment officially at 12 percent – 20 percent says the opposition – illiteracy at 61 percent of the electorate and more than five million living under the poverty line, or with the equivalent of \$1 a day, Morocco does not lack challenges.

Some 14 million voters are registered to elect 325 members of the lower house of parliament for a five-year term. Some 5,873 candidates are representing a record 26 parties.

Results are not expected until early on Saturday.

Political analysts say a single parliamentary majority is unlikely to emerge because of the high number of parties and the fragmentation of power on the crowded political scene.

While Youssoufi's Socialist Union of Popular Forces (USFP), which leads a seven-party government coalition, was expected to do reasonably well – it held 57 seats in the outgoing chamber – all eyes were on the Islamists.

With the country's most radical

Islamist group refusing to take part, only its ideological ally the moderate Islamist Justice and Development Party (PJD) is contesting the polls.

With 224 candidates in 56 of the 91 constituencies, the PJD hoped to at least double its 14 seats.

As part of its anti-fraud measures, the government has purchased 55,000 bottles of indelible ink for fingerprints to spot someone attempting to vote twice.

To help illiterate voters, all parties have adopted logos on ballot papers.

The USFP chose a purple rose, others a car, a horse or a key. For the Alliance of Liberties it is a clock while the Popular Movement opted for an ornamental dagger.



News From Morocco

Morocco Unveils New Coalition

(from the BBC World Service)

King Mohammed of Morocco has announced the line-up of the new coalition government, but there are no posts for the Islamic party that trebled its vote in September elections.

The 31-strong cabinet under Prime Minister Driss Jettou maintains a similar balance to previous governments, with the Socialist Union of Forces for Progress sharing power with the nationalist Istiqlal Party.

The Islamic party, Justice and Development, has no cabinet posts, despite winning 42 seats to become the third-largest party in parliament.

Three key ministers from the last government keep their posts.

Mohamed Benaissa remains Minister for Foreign Affairs; Fatallah Oualalou continues as Finance Minister and Mohamed El-Yazghi retains the post responsible for territorial development.

Narrow victory

The most significant change is the replacement of Justice Minister Omar Azziman with another Socialist, lawyer Mohamed Bouzoubaa.

In the election of 27 September, the Socialist Union narrowly won the largest number of seats - 50 compared to the 48 secured by Istiqlal.

Mr Jettou, 57, was named prime minister in October, replacing the Socialist Abderrahmane Youssoufi.

The prime minister, a successful businessman known for his negotiating skills, has been given a mandate for rapid economic and social change by the reform-minded king.

King Mohammed said he hoped Mr Jettou's team would show "economic efficiency based on democratic legitimacy" and told the new ministers to "answer the economic and social expectations of the citizens".

For the first time, a junior minister has been put in charge of teaching and fighting illiteracy in a country where nearly half the population of 30 million cannot read and write.

Urban unemployment tops 20% and one Moroccan in five lives on less than \$1 a day.

Morocco prison fire kills at least 49 inmates

11/01/2002

RABAT, Morocco (AP) - A fire erupted early Friday at an overcrowded prison, killing 49 inmates and seriously injuring at least eight other people, authorities said.

The fire started about 1:30 a.m. at the Sidi Moussa jail in coastal El Jadida, about 110 miles south of the capital city Rabat, the official MAP news agency said. About 40 inmates were injured, some from smoke inhalation, in what was believed to be the worst fire ever at a Moroccan prison. The injured were taken to the regional Mohammed V Hospital or to a burn unit in Casablanca, about 56 miles away, the news agency said.

Deputy Interior Minister Fouad Ali Al Himma told The Associated Press that the cause of the fire was not immediately known and that an investigation was under way. An earlier report said the cause was electrical nature.

The Atlantic Coast prison was built in 1994 for 1,000 prisoners but holds more than 1,300.

Moroccan King Mohammed VI expressed condolences to the families of the victims.

Outgoing Prime Minister Abderrahmane Youssoufi and other Moroccan Cabinet ministers were traveling to the site to lead an inquiry into the fire and organize assistance for the families of the victims.

The fire was limited to one prison building, but smoke filled adjoining blocks, causing an unspecified number of inmates to die of asphyxiation, reports said. Others were killed while trying frantically to escape the fire.

P. Diddy's Royal Appointment

Fri 1 Nov 2002 09:50

The King of Morocco is to host a birthday party for hip-hop entrepreneur, Sean 'P Diddy' Combs, according to reports.

King Mohammed VI is said to footing the bill for the \$1 million five-day event, due to be held in Marrakech next month.

According to the New York Post, Combs - who celebrates his 33rd birthday on November 4 - plans to

charter jumbo jets to fly guests to the Moroccan city from Paris and New York.

Details surrounding the exclusive event are still thin on the ground, with a spokesperson for Diddy telling the newspaper, "I can't say anything about it - I have to respect the King's wishes".

Morocco's date production forecasted to rise by two percent

Oct 29, 2002 (Al-Bawaba via COMTEX)

Moroccan date producers are forecasting a two percent harvest growth this season amounting to 33,000 tons of the fruit, reported the Ministry of Agriculture.

The majority of production is expected from the southern regions of the North African state.

A good date palm can produce 300 to 600 pounds of dates per year, and will produce for 100 years or more.

Moroccan date consumption stands at three kilos per inhabitant nationwide and at 15 kilos per inhabitant in the areas of production. - (menareport.com)

National Mutual Aid, Britain's Save the Children Fund Sign Partnership Convention

11/1/2002

Morocco's "National Mutual Aid," and the British "Save the Children Fund" signed in Rabat Wednesday a partnership convention.

The fund will donate equipment and raw material to orthopedic workshops of training centers for handicapped children in Casablanca and Khemissat (Rabat province).

The two bodies agreed to enhance their cooperation to provide the necessary help for handicapped children.



Our Man in Morocco

The following is the latest dispatch from Kimeo Carr, a current PCV in Morocco

October 26, 2002

As of October 23, I will have been a Peace Corps Volunteer for one year. I am now officially a second year volunteer commencing my final year in the corps. For the past three weeks, I have been busy helping administration with the new volunteers who arrived in Morocco on August 15, 2002. I am glad to report that all 49 sworn in on October 24, 2002. It was a wonderful event. I do have to say that upon hearing the words of the oath, repeated, did bring a tear or two. To me, it actually had more meaning the second time around hearing them take the oath.

Let's talk numbers. From the original 82 volunteers that arrived with me in Morocco last year on August 15, 2001, there are only 47 of us left in country. In my sector, Small Business Development (SBD), of the original 14, there are only eight left. This past weekend, more than half of my fellow SBDers, four to be exact, were in Fez to welcome the new volunteers into the fold. Thinking about last year, it was kind of surreal, many of us did not imagine that we would make it through the year. Then again, that's life in the Peace Corps.

There were volunteers from other sectors in Fez helping this past weekend. Many of them were from my Pre-Service Training (PST) of last year. Upon seeing each other we all become excited because this was the first time that many of us had seen each other

since we all sworn in last year.

It was nice to see that some of the suggestions that we made from last year, were incorporated into this year's PST. During the Final Commitment speech that the Country Director gave, some small changes brought things to a focus and got people on the right track. The current volunteer community believes that this group has benefited from a complete community based training program that will help them complete their service. Barring any unforeseen activity in the political arena, we should all be able complete our service.

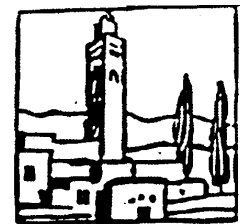
As Ramadan looms around the corner, I am prepared to endure another period of fasting. I am kind of looking forward to it, but would like to get away at the same time too. At least this time I am going into Ramadan prepared. Personally, I feel well. I am beginning to get back into the groove of working on my projects and teaching English at the vocational school. Now that I have finished a grant for one cooperative, I am now working on two grants: one to purchase computers, yes, I finally found an organization that can help, and one to purchase materials and equipment for the button making cooperative.

My Arabic is still a work in progress. I now have another tutor who uses French to teach me Arabic. It has help to increase my fluency in French as well as teach me new words in Moroccan Arabic. His English is great so we can communicate easier when I do not understand. I still find it difficult to understand people who speak very fast

but find that I do get the gist of the conversation and can respond. Sometimes I find it easier to say something in Arabic than in French, and sometimes I find that when I speak French, the Arabic slips in... weird. Oh well, albeit a tad cheeky, my original goals for the Peace Corps were to lose weight and learn a new language.

My original goals have since expanded to my just being the best Peace Corps Volunteer that I can be... I have come to the conclusion that you get out of your service the same effort that you put into it. Depending upon what sector of service you volunteer in, your experience will not be totally the same as the next volunteer or the previous volunteer. Your service will depend entirely upon your attitude, what you bring to the table, so to speak. Granted we have the occasional rocks thrown, the petty theft during some of our host stays, the constant verbal harassment of female volunteers, stomach maladies with occasional diarrhea and the all too common 'staring' while walking in the street. We still manage to endure and continue. I guess that this is all a part of being a Peace Corps volunteer.

Kimeo



A Message from Omar the Shawarma Man

Hello,

I am a former PCV in Morocco (96-98) and currently back in Morocco as a Fulbright student researcher. The other day I was in Rabat at the Shawarma place around the corner from the PC office and Omar, the Sudanese owner, gave me this letter. It seems to me the best way to get the

word out there is to publish it in the FOM Newsletter.

Here is what he said:

A Letter from Omar to all Peace Corps Volunteers

Where ever you are in the world, hallo from Omar, the owner of the Chaorma place in Rabat Morocco.

Omar Alimam
Restaurant le Broodjest
78 Ave. Allal Ben Abdallah
Rabat, Morocco
Tel: 037-70-53-70
Cell: 061-10-19-02

Thanks,
Laura Burnham

Veteran Peace Corps Morocco Staffers Remember

Four Peace Corps Morocco staff members were honored for their long service to the Peace Corps at the 40+1 NPCA conference in June. The following are their stories:

Daouia Belmokadem

Hello Friends of Morocco,

As I got your email from Lisa, the first thing that came to my mind is how I entered to Peace Corps Office. In 1971 at the end of Moroccan Academic year and by the end of Peace Corps fiscal year, my cousin told me that an American from Peace Corps visited her school in Casablanca looking for girls to do the secretary studies, and encouraged me to apply. Both my cousin and I took the test in Casablanca administered by PCV, at that time, Carolyn Spicer at one of the hotels in Casablanca and we finally passed and got accepted.

Taking the test wasn't an issue for us, we simply consider it just like all the other school subject quizzes we often take at school, but after passing the test things took a serious turning for



Daouia and PCV Carolyn Spicer circa 1972.

my cousin and I. The issue was double sided, first is convincing our parents to work at an early age, and second was to move to Rabat and live by ourselves!!

Coming from a middle class rural

family where no girl works outside her home, and living in a conservative patriarchal society in the 70s where moving to the capital, being economic independent, and living by oneself for a girl is a big challenge!! Besides, moving from a country-side-like small town to the modern exciting capital was something to worry about for our families. We told Carolyn about it, and as a PCV who is understands the Moroccan culture, she promised to help us

One day, Carolyn went to our little town "Berrechid", which is near Casablanca, to meet our parents and try to convince them. It was a courageous step, and something I will never forget. It was proud of PCV Carolyn to take it seriously and dare to tackle quite a 'taboo' issue with our families. Convincing a conservative family in a setting is no simple process. It takes more than a simple talking, so Carolyn was smart and told my father that my cousin and I will have six months training in Rabat and that we will stay in the PC Director's residence. Guess who was the Country Director at that time! Mr. Richard Holbrook. Our families felt reassured that their girls will be taken care of and in good hands. In addition, we might be working with an organization that works for the benefits of the country and Volunteers who devote their time and energy for the development of Morocco. It's for a good cause, after all. In fact, convincing our families was the hardest test we passed, and we became the pioneer-girls in our families who made it to work in the capital.

My cousin and I moved to Rabat and stayed with Mr. Holbrooke's family, and two other girls from Casablanca stayed with Carolyn. The Holbrookes had 2 boy children, David and Anthony. They were cute and we got used to them. A couple months later Richard Holbrooke had to leave PC before the end of the training, so we continued to stay with his successor Mr. Richard Reid. We spent a great time with the two Country Directors' families and experienced memorable cross-cultural exchanges. Now when we see Richard Holbrooke on

UN missions on TV, we often bring up the old good memories with my family.

In the secretary training we were a group of seven girl-candidates, and our trainers were the Education APCD and PCV Carolyn Spicer. During the training, we visited the Embassy, the Ambassador's Office, and few offices organizations. We took our courses in an apartment in Rabat, where we were preparing our food and inviting PC staff from time to time. At the end of the training, we had an exam and five of us passed. I, and another candidate from Rabat, Fatiha Zerqali, had the



Daouia (far left) at her daughter's birthday

chance to stay and work with Peace Corps in Rabat. Another girl was placed at First National City Bank in Casablanca and two at the American Consulate in Casablanca.

Since then I stayed with Peace Corps, a few years later I met Ahmed and got married, and I have 3 daughters (Fatine, the oldest, 24 who is studying medicine; the second Asmae is 22 and is studying to be an engineer; the third is Ibtissame 17, she will take her baccalaureate exam this year and God know what she will do). Fatine got married in the summer 2000 and has got a four months & half old boy Houssam. I am now a grandmother!!!!

This is a short story of how I joined Peace Corps, and how a PCV decision to talk to my family, and convince them has changed the course of my life. I often think what my life would have

(Continued on page 17)



Abdou and APCD Lisa Lind at the PC Morocco staff Christmas party - 2001

been without that secretary training; but one thing is sure, is that my family would never have let me work and live in Rabat by myself in the 70s.

Abdou Lanaaya:

When I joined Peace Corps, I was a young kid! and now I am at the verge of retirement with gray hair, but I have no regrets. I have started working with Peace Corps since 1971, just a decade after JFK had the brightest idea of starting PC and sending Americans overseas to serve in developing countries.

At that time Richard Holbrook was the Country Director in Morocco. Richard was a very active manager. He impressed me, as a young Moroccan at that time, with his enthusiasm, open-mindedness. I am not surprised many years later to see him heading UN missions. My job was to handle too many little tasks, which involved office mail, purchasing and driving. Peace Corps had almost 80 volunteers: TEFL, Agriculture, Volunteers working for the ministry of youth and other volunteers working for the women foyer teaching and helping women in the small villages how to sew and generate small income. It was small program at the time.

When I started working with PC, my job consisted of handling quite few tasks: office mail, purchase and driving. I had no idea what PC is all about, and it took me sometime to figure out what Volunteers do and how beneficial their work is to Morocco. In the 70s development work means little to me as all frontiers were open, there was the

wave/fashion of hippies, and Morocco was also quite fresh from Independence. Though there is a gap between the developed and developing countries it wasn't that wide.

The PST for the new trainees used to take place in the US. Six months later, after I joined, PC decided to do the PST in Tangiers in the old American Legation Museum.

At that time I used to play Basket ball with one of Rabat teams, *Moghreb R'batti*. I still remember one Saturday I traveled with the team to Tangiers to play against the local team. That was my first visit to Tangier, and our team manager took us to old medina. Half way through the medina, I heard someone calling my name behind us, my fellows "who's that tourist calling you?". At first, I didn't recognize him, and as he comes closer, I realized he's PCV and PST trainer John Paulas. He started talking to me in good Moroccan Arabic and told me about the PST, and invited me to the old American



Country Director Richard Reed, Daouia (middle) and Abdou (far right)

Legation. My basketball fellows were amazed by his language skills and cultural understanding.

That was the first time in my life I heard of a place called legation. When we were visiting the building, we came across a Moroccan who will then be a PST cross-culture and language instructor for many years, Mohamed Najmi. Mr Najmi has written many Arabic Moroccan dialectal manuals for Peace Corps to be used for Trainings for the coming trainees. Mr. Najmi

became very popular in the PC community as a walking resource in *Djellaba*.

Years later my English proficiency improved, as I took evening classes, and I started learning about my work and PC, and got promoted "*shwiya b'shwiya*". I am at present the General Services Officer and Cashier.

What I appreciate most in Peace Corps is the opportunities I had to visit volunteers' sites and see the valuable work they do with their counterparts and communities. In the 70s and early 80s some Volunteers got immersed in the local cultural to the point that fell in love with of Moroccan traditional music like *Hmadcha*, *Darquoua* and *Jilala*. Some volunteers were absorbed by this type of Music.

Many Peace Corps volunteers have given and spent much of their time and energy their energy helping the population in the rural villages in digging wells, repairing water pumps for villages, building latrines, and getting special funds for tree planting. Some volunteers have helped in creating small cooperatives in various small projects

Thousands of Peace Corps Volunteers have served the Kingdom in various programs. This organization has a great impact on Moroccans. I hope it extend its services to the Saharan provinces once the conflict is settled, I am pretty sure there will be a lot to do there *In Shaa Allah!*.

Najia Ben Bella

Starting work with Peace Corps back in 1981 was a pure coincidence, but staying with the organization for over 20 years is not a coincidence.

I am Najia Ben Bella, Executive Assistant and SPA Coordinator - I first heard about Peace Corps when I was working at the Catholic Relief Services. One of my colleagues advised me to apply for a Program Assistant position

(Continued on page 18)

(Continued from page 17)

in Peace Corps. Knowing very little about PC, I applied with very little interest. I was surprised and at the same time happy to be selected for the interview and then to join. "Wow what a new adventure for the single young girl I was".

I had quite few questions about Peace Corps when I first started, but the one that I was truly curious about was how American Volunteers who came from a developed country, with abundant supplies, freedom and access to luxurious items get to adapt to life in

been a tradition that would be Volunteers deliver a brief speech in Moroccan Arabic, Tamazight, and Tashlheit at the swearing ceremonies. I can always read signs of amazement and wonder on the faces of officials, and guests who attend the ceremonies. What often amazes us is their capacity to adapt to the Moroccan life style and culture. I feel thrilled to see volunteers in Jellaba, and in Moroccan attire.

In Peace Corps I discovered development work at the grass root

Peace Corps/Morocco is a champion to me, it survived a couple most trying times in its history. During the Gulf War we had to evacuate the Volunteers out of country. I will never forget those moments. Some Volunteers were unwilling to leave, they felt secure in their communities, told us stories on how their neighbors came to check on them, to make sure they were safe and ensure them that they were at home. Most Volunteers felt a shame to leave their communities abruptly without a farewell to their friends, neighbors, counterparts and the people they lived with for a good period of time. The Volunteers were in tears at the airport. But it was no surprise, when Peace Corps decided to come back after the Gulf War, to see most Volunteers who left the country reenter it again.

Another difficult moment, not only to Peace Corps/Morocco, but to the whole world community, was September 11th. I admire the Volunteers courage to choose to stay in Morocco, away from their families, and loved ones, and remain faithful to their oath when their country was targeted. Right after the event, we started getting e-mails of sympathy from RPCVs in US, and the tragedy didn't change what they think of Morocco, and its people. They went to schools, and meet with communities in their towns, and States to explain to them that not all Muslims are fundamentalists, and not all Arabs are terrorists. RPCVs showed them pictures of the weddings, and other ceremonies they attend with their host families in Morocco, and told them stories of the hospitality of the people in their sites.

In Peace Corps/Morocco I have seen courage overcome fear and dedication win over prejudice. It's a champion of hope.



L to R: EMA Regional Director Judy Van Rest, PC Morocco Director Barbara Durr, PC Director Gaddi Vazquez and Najia Ben Bella—2002

rural Morocco where even my fellow citizens find hard to live in. Though life conditions have now somehow improved in some rural areas since I first joined PC: like access to food supplies, electricity, and health centers, I still pull my hat off to all PCVs who choose to live and serve in remote rural areas.

PC has left a good impact in Morocco. The Volunteers served in almost all provinces, and the organization is well known in a good number of communities. We are often amazed with the Volunteers ability to learn our native languages, speak Berber with a good fluency that I myself can't do. It has

level, dedication of staff and Volunteers, but also fun. I worked under the supervision of five Country Directors (Baudouin de Marcken, David Fredrick, Darcy Neill, Ellen Paquette, and I am at present with Barbara Durr) who offered good example of guidance, dynamism, devotion, and willingness to make a change.

What I cherish most is the friendship of the Directors I work with. I got to know their families, shared their good stories and enjoyable moments, and also went through some tough times at work.



Strengthening Legal Literacy of Moroccan Women

The International Human Rights Law Group's 288-page legal literacy training manual for Moroccan women (in Arabic) has been posted to <<http://www.hrlawgroup.org>>.

Making Human Rights Real: A Legal Literacy Program for Women in Morocco, developed in partnership with 14 Moroccan women's rights

organizations and development associations, contains 35 two-hour session plans, organized into nine thematic modules on specific concerns such as women's human rights in the family and the rights to freedom from violence and participation in public life. The manual, and an English summary of its content, can be accessed by clicking on the following link: http://www.hrlawgroup.org/country_programs/morocco/legal_literacy_manual.asp

Please contact Kate McCann at <KateMc@hrlawgroup.org> for more information



Top Ten Signs That You've Adapted to PCV Life in Morocco

(from the September 2002 *Peaceworks* - the newsletter of Peace Corps Morocco)

1. Your body has acclimated to allow you to wear your winter clothes all year round.
2. You get sick from keeping the windows rolled down, but insist that meeka sandals are perfectly acceptable footwear in the winter.
3. You feel hurt and unloved when no one harasses you on the street anymore.
4. Soliciting dirt cheap child labor to fetch your water or to do things for you is an act of goodwill and good the economy, too.
5. Souk is the greatest social even in your life and is a great source of excitement in your week.
6. You find yourself flirting with the Nescafe girls handing out free samples so that you can have two.
7. You now keep picture of the King in your home.
8. For Christmas, you give bow-tied "seeroots" for taxi windows as presents.
9. You are no longer invited over for meals at your host family and they have recently become mysteriously and coincidentally absent from home whenever you drop by.
10. You now wave to the pooping man outside your front door and wish him good health.

(Continued from page 5)

We arrived late morning and in the haze of no sleep I decided that we deserved a really nice hotel. I phoned the ritziest place that I could think of and reserved two rooms. The little taxi pulled up and the costumed doormen bowed as they opened the majestic doors for my daughters who entered with exaggerated elegance. After we settled in luxurious rooms overlooking the gardens I said that they should remember Morocco is a land of contrasts. That was the explanation for almost anything years ago and it still worked. This was only day one of a whole week, I wasn't sure that I wanted to be the tour guide any more. How many contrasts were ahead? Would it get crazier? The answer was yes, but that would take too long to explain. We made it back safely to Spain and believe it or not we all said that we'd do it all again!

Thank You!

Merci!

شكرًا

Many thanks to the people listed below who contributed to Friends of Morocco above and beyond their membership fees:

Aziz Abbassi
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Jerome Bookin-Weiner
Steve Clarke

Are you still an FOM member?

Membership in Friends of Morocco brings you, in addition to all issues of our newsletter, special mailings announcing the annual meeting, reunions, seminars, and special Moroccan arts and craft showings. Membership also brings you the satisfaction of contributing to the goals and aims of Friends of Morocco. At least once a year we do a system-wide mailing to keep our address database accurate and to give people the opportunity to join us. The mailing label below indicates when your membership expires

If you have not paid your membership dues of \$15.00 (individual) annually to the Friends of Morocco, please consider doing that now. We appreciate any additional contributions and recognize special contributors in the Friends of Morocco newsletter.

Contribute to the FOM newsletter

FOM members are encouraged to submit original contributions for the newsletters. The articles written by Dan Cahill and Monica Sudakov are two great examples. Please send any contributions by email (I can't guarantee a typo-free contribution if I have to re-type it) to Kate Trayte, FOM newsletter editor at <trayte@drexel.edu> or <k8tr8@yahoo.com>. Any type of contribution is appreciated: photos, book reviews, recipes, fiction or non-fiction, but please make it Morocco or Peace Corps-related.



اصدقاء المغرب

Friends of Morocco Newsletter is published quarterly by the Friends of Morocco and is circulated to its members and other interested parties. The organization was formed in 1988 to reunite PCVs who have served in Morocco, to inform members about current events and conditions in Morocco, to promote a better understanding of Morocco and Moroccans on the part of Americans, and to fund or otherwise support development activities in Morocco. Membership is \$15 annually. FOM is governed by a nine-member national advisory board. Mailing address: Friends of Morocco, P.O. Box 2579, Washington, DC 20013-2579. For further information, contact president Tim Resch at 703-660-9292 or by email <tresch@worldnet.att.net>.

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