

#### Friends of Morocco Quarterly Newsletter October 2018



News from Morocco (compiled almost weekly by Mhamed El Kadi in Morocco)

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Celebration of the 55<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Peace Corps service to the Government and people of the Kingdom of Morocco, and the arrival of the 100<sup>th</sup> group of Volunteers.

Morocco is one of the most highly sought after countries for Peace Corps applicants. This year, 110 volunteers representing the diversity of the United States were selected among 900 applicants. The 100<sup>th</sup> group arrived in Morocco on September 11 and will spend the next 11 weeks in language, cultural, and technical training, before moving to their permanent sites assigned by the Moroccan Ministry of Youth and Sports. The Peace Corps volunteers will serve two years across six regions in Morocco.

Peace Corps Morocco collaborates with the Ministry of Youth and Sports and other partners to effectively transition youth into productive and civically engaged adults. Life skills are the foundational skills youth need to accomplish their academic goals, secure gainful employment, and be productive

citizens. Peace Corps Volunteers collaborate with local partners (directors of youth and women centers, association members, teachers, and youth leaders) to strengthen youth life skills through participation and leadership in classes, clubs, camps and mentoring. Volunteers also focus on building communicative English through tutoring, classes, clubs and camps. From DOS press release.

PC Morocco, the website created and maintained by current Peace Corps Morocco Volunteers only, has created a special section supporting the recognition of the 55 Years of Friendship and the 100th training staj. Included are interviews with current and former Peace Corps Morocco staff and RPCVs interested in sharing stories. See also related Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube accounts.



Peace Corps Morocco Annual Report 2017 is available for download

Many non-profit organizations get a financial boost in the U.S. at the end of calendar year as donors understand their tax situation. There are several non-profits active in Morocco, registered (501c3) in the U.S. and connected with Peace Corps that would welcome your donations. Examples of ways (in alpha order) for Morocco RPCVs to stay connected with good works in Morocco include:

CorpsAfrica sends college-educated Moroccans and other Africans to live in remote villages in their own countries for one year to facilitate small-scale, high-impact projects that are identified by local people, along the lines of the Peace Corps model. Founded by a Morocco RPCV, they now host Volunteers in Morocco, Malawi, Senegal and Rwanda. Meet the fabulous CorpsAfrica Volunteers and follow their adventures on the Volunteer blog,

Crafting Love and Hope is a nonprofit organization dedicated to improving the wellbeing of impoverished families by providing or connecting them with educational, social, and livelihood support. Crafting Love and Hope utilizes a holistic approach to raise families out of poverty and create new opportunities for success and healing by engaging both children and their parents. As a social enterprise, we strive to fund our services in a financially sustainable manner through the sale of traditional Moroccan artisanal products. GroundBreakers interview Saloua Lahlou: Founder of Crafting Love & Hope

High Atlas Foundation works to establish development projects in different parts of Morocco that local communities design and manage, and that are in partnership with government and nongovernment agencies. HAF uses a participatory development approach that includes beneficiaries as active partners in every step of the development process - from prioritizing development goals to project implementation and management to monitoring and evaluation.

Morocco Library Project develops English libraries in under-resourced communities of Morocco, in collaboration with local teachers and students. More than just a collection of materials, these libraries and the English clubs we partner with are a "space for good things to happen," including a blossoming love of literature and civic and environmental engagement. We also encourage young writers and partner on a platform headed by students for sharing their writing with others in Morocco and beyond.

<u>Project Soar</u> Project Soar works to empower adolescent girls, providing programs that help girls understand their value, voice, body, rights and path. Headquartered in Marrakech, Morocco; Serving girls in Morocco and throughout the developing world.

Tangier-American Legation Institute for Moroccan Studies (TALIM) is the only historic landmark of the United States located abroad and now operates as a museum and cultural center. Through its grants, conferences, research library, public visitor and social outreach programs, TALIM provides a bridge of communication and understanding between the U.S., Morocco, and countries around the world. Article: The American Legation in Tangier – A Legacy of US-Morocco Friendship by Jean AbiNader

One can also donate to the Peace Corps Partnership program Morocco Country

Fund. Contributions support sustainable, community-driven Peace Corps Partnership Program (PCPP)

projects in Morocco that are led by Peace Corps Volunteers. These projects focus on youth

development.

or to the one Morocco project currently soliciting

### Arts Camp: Think Creatively

MOROCCO | EMMA GLYNN, A VOLUNTEER FROM MASSACHUSETTS

At our four-day arts camp, we will encourage youth to think creatively and practice life skills and leadership through studio arts and crafts, music, and theater. The camp will run all day from Monday to Thursday and include a celebration for final performances, a gallery walk, and certificate presentation ...

Forthcoming NGO: Eastman Johnson is Morocco RPCV '14-'16 (Tameslouht) and Master's International student with the University of Cincinnati '12-'18 and has recently finished his thesis on addressing pollution such as garbage and olive oil wastewater with creative solutions. From this he has recently established an NGO, Resilient Communities, that will help with community planning and local environmental-related data gathering in Morocco. To help officially launch this, he was recently awarded a Fulbright research grant and language enhancement award to study Fus7a for six months and begin the initial data gathering of solid waste data in the El Haouz province for the following nine months beginning in September 2018. The goal is to gather the data to support our own community projects to strengthen sustainability with proper infrastructure and community building resources for local associations and individuals to have access to initiate further change through workshops, training, and projects.

The My Peace Corps Story Podcast aims to tell some of the many diverse and rich stories of volunteers, in their own words. This podcast will create an oral history of the varied experiences had by generations of Americans when they devoted two or more years of their life to national service abroad.

Ramadan with Meryl Streep – Olivia DiNucci, Morocco 2013-17 October 16, 2018

Peace Corps Volunteers come away from their service with amazing stories, like the time when Olivia

DiNucci broke her fast for Ramadan with Meryl Streep and later met Michelle Obama. Yet, the things that mean the most to volunteers aren't usually the stories of adventure or meeting the First Lady. Rather, they are the friendships we make with the citizens of the countries with serve in and the friendship we forge when sharing food and drink. While these are the harder stories to tell, they are the ones that leave the biggest impact. [...]

### **Greg Emerson, Morocco 2003, Peru 2003-2005** December 26, 2017

Greg Emerson began his Peace Corps journey in Morocco but was evacuated from the country before swearing in, when the US invaded Iraq. Months later, he flew to Peru, where he would spend two years working high in the Andes mountains. [...]

10 Things I Wish I Knew Before I Joined the Peace Corps (Morocco): Close of Service Conference and my Last 4 Months in Morocco August 7, 2018 by Jesse Altman (Morocco 2016-18)

The Peace Corps Morocco Gender and Development (GAD) Committee is excited to announce the launch of Our Hands, a nine-week long media campaign coming this November.

Each week during the campaign, GAD social channels will feature one aspect of Moroccan women's labor from different regions across the country, including crafts and art, household work, and cooking. As it is often difficult to portray Moroccan women in photography and film due to cultural norms, our audience will have the opportunity to engage with representation of Moroccan women and their invaluable contributions to society through imagery of their hands.

The Our Hands media campaign gives Peace Corps Volunteers and their communities the opportunity to spotlight the work of the skilled and hardworking women in Morocco, as well as learn about the diversity of women's experiences in different regions across the country. The GAD Committee can't wait to share the powerful stories that the hands of Moroccan women tell.

- Follow Our Hands on the GAD Instagram: @ gadmorocco
- Post your own pictures and content and use the hashtags #ourhands2018 #GADmorocco
- Follow the GAD website here for a weekly roundup of all the photos and stories



# Blogs, Vlogs and Podcasts

Blogs are a good way for volunteers, RPCVs and others to work on Peace Corps Goal 3: To help promote a better understanding of other peoples on the part of Americans. Check out blogs from serving volunteers. Archival blogs by RPCVs can be found on the Friends of Morocco Personal Home Pages-FOM members and by others at Blogs, ListServes and News Groups. Friends of Morocco would like to do a compilation of blogs as we know the above are not exhaustive. If you would like to volunteer contact tim@friendsofmorocco.org.



# Peace Corps Volunteer Archives

The Peace Corps offers an experience like no other. Since its founding in 1961, over 220,000 Peace Corps Volunteers have provided service in 140 different countries, meeting new challenges head-on with innovation, determination and understanding. Volunteers and staff involved in a wide range of activities have seen sights and created memories that are as priceless to the Peace Corps community as a whole as they are to the individuals who created them.

In an effort to preserve the uniquely fascinating history and tradition of the Peace Corps, various universities and libraries have established archives of items donated to them by Returned Peace Corps Volunteers. Most archives collect letters, reports, photos, publications and personal correspondence and one, the Museum of the Peace Corps Experience, accepts three-dimensional artifacts.

Information regarding several Peace Corps archives is detailed below along with links to discover how Returned Peace Corps Volunteers and friends of the Peace Corps community alike can donate items, photos, and memories to aid in protecting the history and promoting the work of the Peace Corps,

American University – Peace Corps Community Archives Peace Corps Digital Library JFK Presidential Library – The Peace Corps Collection Museum of the Peace Corps Experience Peace Corps Oral History Project **Preservation Resources** 

Peace Corps Morocco Desk in Washington, D.C. is looking for examples by November 9 of **how** RPCVs have used Darija or knowledge of other languages (Amazigh, French or Spanish) learned in Morocco after service. Anyone who found a job later that made use of those language skills? Or anyone who has a suggestion for how to continue language learning after service? As one large group of PCVs is looking at the end of their service this November/December, we are looking to share opportunities and stories of how other RPCVs have used their knowledge of Morocco and especially Moroccan Arabic. Really just trying to put feelers out for these volunteers to begin to do their own research and understand what types of opportunities are out there by providing some concrete examples of successful ways people have used their PC Morocco language in life. Appreciate any info you can share, and anyone with a good story/example can reach out to me at Morocco@peacecorps.gov.



# n Memoriam:

Lesta Chandler, age 62, died at home on July 23 after a 17 year battle with cancer. She was born in Louisville, KY, but spent most of her growing up years in Clintonville. She was a graduate of Whetstone High School and the Ohio State University, from which she graduated with a BA in Art History and an MA in Labor and Human Resources. She was admitted to Phi Beta Kappa. She was particularly sensitive to

people born in more difficult circumstances than she and strived to help them. She was a Peace Corps volunteer in Morocco from 1984-1986 Range management in Beni Mallal and Skouria. Over the years she also volunteered in the Big Sisters, as a Teacher's Assistant for kindergarten classes in Cincinnati Public Schools, and for the Cincinnati Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired. She worked with the Office of Labor-Management Standards of the U.S. Department of Labor for more than 25 years, starting as an investigator and holding various management positions, including district director of the Cincinnati District Office. Although she was a highly respected government manager, she considered motherhood the highlight of her life After her retirement in 2013, she moved back to Columbus, residing in Riverlea. She was an inveterate worker of crosswords and Sudoku, an outstanding baker of chocolate chip cookies (among other things), an avid gardener, and loved to play dumb practical jokes on loved ones. In lieu of flowers, the family suggests that donations may be made to Doctors Without Borders, 40 Rector Street, 16th floor, New York, NY 10006 or doctorswithoutborders.org.

Dana Kephart passed away 3/1/18 after a year-long battle with cancer. Kephart was originally from Grand Junction, Colorado, an area with a long history of Navajo, Hopi and other First Nations presence. His youth was steeped in his family's interest in these traditions, beginning a lifelong passion for culture and history that led him to close personal and working relationships with Aboriginal people. Following his university studies in 1969, Kephart spent two years working with a group of young architects in Morocco (Rabat & Marrakesh 1969-1971). He immersed himself in the country's culture and created various housing projects inspired by their materials and practices. With his French wife, he decided to move to Montreal in the early 1970s, finding work at PGL Architectes.

Stefon Shorts Teacher at Prince George's County Public Schools Silver Spring, Maryland. Morocco RPCV 1989-1990. He died August 1, 2018 after a three year battle with colon cancer.

Anou is a community of artisans working together to establish equal access to the free market! Anou is a national service cooperative in Morocco. This past summer the Anou Cooperative surpassed \$1 million USD in sales. This is an incredible milestone for our artisan-led community. This is the result of the hard work of hundreds of artisans and Anou's artisan leaders. RPCV Dan Driscoll (Environment and Small Business Ait Bouguemez Valley 2008-2010) is the Anou Founder. Blog



# 19 Months after US Ambassador Left Morocco, new Nominee in Hearings

President Donald Trump on November 21, 2017, nominated David T. Fischer of Troy, Michigan, the CEO of Suburban Collection, the largest car dealership in Michigan, to serve as the next ambassador to Morocco. Although Fischer has no known connections to Morocco, he gave \$250,000 to Trump's inauguration committee and has donated heavily to Republican candidates for many years. In 2016, he donated to numerous Republican campaigns, in particular to those of **Donald Trump**, Senator John McCain of Arizona, Rep. Paul Ryan of Wisconsin, soon-to-be Indiana Senator Todd Young, Marco Rubio and Jeb Bush. If confirmed by the Senate, Fischer would succeed <u>Dwight L. Bush, Sr.</u>, a major Democratic Party donor, who served in Rabat from 2014 to 2017.

The nomination came nine months after Ambassador to Morocco Dwight Bush left. Even after Fischer was nominated, it took the US Senate Foreign Affairs Committee almost 10 months to hold a hearing (C- Span) on the nominee to hear his potential strategy, if confirmed, as ambassador in Rabat. The foreign relations committee has not yet approved Fischer's nomination, and requested additional documentation from the nominee regarding a lawsuit against his business. If the senate committee votes to approve the ambassador, Fischer's nomination will be subject to a vote by all members of the US Senate.

Fischer's answers during the hearing confirmed the healthy relations between both countries as he made a pitch to Morocco for consolidating the "vital" bilateral ties between the two countries. He offered welcoming remarks on Morocco-US bonds in an opening statement at a hearing before the US Senate Foreign Affairs Committee on Thursday, August 23.

Fischer has a business vision as he holds the position of CEO of Suburban Collection, the largest car dealership in Michigan with 48 franchised stores. The Suburban Collection is the largest privately-held automotive group in Michigan. It encompasses 36 brands at over 52 locations throughout Michigan, as well as throughout the Midwest and Southern California. Additionally, the automotive group operates state-of-the-art collision centers, accessories distribution centers, fleet management and retrofitting services throughout the U.S. and Canada.

Drawn from AllGov and Morocco World News

Sarah-Ann Lynch (PCV Morocco, TEFL, Taroudant 1984 – 1986) of Maryland, nominated to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States to Guyana.

According to a White House press release, "Since 2015, she has been senior deputy assistant administrator and acting assistant administrator of USAID's Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC). Previously, Ms. Lynch was the USAID Mission Director in Iraq from 2013 to 2014, the director of USAID's Office of Iraq and Arabian Peninsula Affairs from 2011 to 2013, and director of the Office of Program and Project Development for USAID Afghanistan from 2008 to 2009. In addition to serving as director in USAID/LAC's Office of Strategy and Program Planning and the Office of South American Affairs, she also served overseas in Peru and Bangladesh. Ms. Lynch earned a B.A. from Mount Holyoke College, an M.A.L.D. degree from the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University, and an M.S. from the National War College. She speaks Arabic, French, and Spanish"



Worldview magazine Fall 2018 issue includes two Morocco-related articles.

Bold Weavers: Captivated by Morocco's strong women and delicate designs by Susan Shafer Davis (Sidi Kacem Zaouia 67-69). Text is excerpted from her new clothbound trade paperback, Artisans of Morocco; Their Stories and Their Lives, with photographs by Joe Coca, and published by Thrums Books and available on Amazon at http://amzn.to/2FrbMNe. To learn more about purchasing Moroccan rugs directly from the artisans go to MarrakeshExpress.org or TheAnou.com.

On camels & cobblestones: Next Step Travel goes to Morocco by Angene Wilson reporting on the Fall 2017 NPCA NST to Morocco.

The **National Peace Corps Association (NPCA)** <u>Next Step Travel</u> program with two trips to Morocco in 2017 and four in 2018 intends to continue into 2019. Exact dates in April and costs are not yet established. Click here to express interest

Next Step Travel's Inaugural Trip to Morocco a Smashing Success! by Tim Resch (Ouezzane and Rabat 70-74)

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Diverse Things to Do Along the Exotic "Road to Morocco by Mike Anderson



#### Other resources for travel to Morocco

Imperial Cities & Sahara Tour, Merry & David Fredrick's 2019 Tour, 13 days & nights in Morocco, April 28 - May 12, 2019. Includes air Washington DC Dulles to Casablanca and return. Cost/person based on double occupancy: \$3,390 by check. \$3,522 by credit card. Single supplement: \$535. Contact <a href="mailto:mdfredrickworld@gmail.com">mdfredrickworld@gmail.com</a> for itinerary and other information. Taking up to 25 persons, now half-booked. PM for brochure, questions. NB. David with Merry was Peace Corps Morocco Director 1986 to 1990.

Journey Beyond Travel, a Moroccan travel agency founded by Morocco RPCV Thomas Hollowell, has an excellent blog resource including Morocco Safety: Is Morocco a Safe Country to Travel?

The Friends of Morocco web site has two travel resource pages: <u>Travel Services for Morocco</u> and Links for Travel in Morocco



#### Marrakech Noir

Calling your attention to this new commissioned anthology of 15 crime/detective short stories written originally in Arabic, French and Dutch and translated into English. Translation credits at the end of each story. it is described and available: from the publisher

at  $\frac{\text{http://www.akashicbooks.com/catalog/marrakech-noir-morocco/}}{\text{for $11.96 and from Amazon at }} \frac{\text{http://www.amazon.com/Marrakech-Noir-Akashic-Yassin-Adnan/dp/1617754730}}{\text{for $15.95}}$ 

#### From Publishers Weekly

Marrakech Noir Edited by Yassin Adnan. Akashic, \$15.95 trade paper (256p) ISBN 978-1-61775-473-9

As Adnan points out in his introduction to this relatively upbeat Akashic noir anthology, Moroccans regard Marrakech as "The Joyful City." Its "days are bright and its nights are well-lit." As a result, most of the volume's 15 tales tend to be fanciful, as shown by Fatiha Morchid's clever "The Secret in Fingertips," in which a young woman, whose magical touch at massage earns her the nickname Scheherazade, uses her fingertips to great effect. At the darker end of the scale is Halima Zine El Abidine's moving "Mama Aicha," about a mother's efforts on the part of her rebellious son, a victim of police oppression. "What is the good humor for which the people of Marrakech are known if not a proud mask concealing the bitterness of their days and the misery of their lives?" the title character asks. Also notable is Hanane Derkaoui's "A Way to Mecca," in which the decision of two destitute thieves, Ali and Ibrahim, to con or

rob Hmad, who claims to be a waiter, leads to tragedy. Armchair travelers will relish this collective look at Marrakech through the eyes of those who know its people and culture well. (Aug.) Reviewed on: 06/25/2018 Release date: 08/01/2018



### Tangier to Casablanca

Film and music by Philip Baites | University of Tennessee at Knoxville | IES Abroad Rabat, Academic Year 2017-2018

This original song and film encapsulates my 9-month study abroad with IES Abroad Rabat in Morocco. Featuring a train ride, Chefchaouen (the 'Blue City'), Rabat, the Sahara Desert, cameos by two sweet neighbor girls, my Arabic professor, and my precious host mother, Doha, as the central character, 'Tangier to Casablanca' is a story of pain, joy, longing, and journeys intertwining. Two months after I arrived in Morocco, my host mother received news that her father unexpectedly passed away in Canada. Ultimately, this tragedy led to a bond to be formed between us, while also teaching me a valuable lesson. We are all on a journey. And it's not the places or sites seen that have the lasting impact on us. It's the people.

Vote for This Film by November 5th at 12 p.m. noon (CDT)



### Peace Corps Connect 2019

MARK YOUR CALENDAR! Peace Corps Connect 2019 will be held in Austin, Texas, June 20-22, 2019. Check out this video by the Heart of Texas Peace Corps Association (HOTPCA), the host affiliate group for the event.

Do you know a phenomenal leader in a country where Peace Corps Volunteers have served — a leader whose life was influenced by the Peace Corps? If so, now is the time to recognize their work by nominating this leader for the 2019 Harris Wofford Global Citizen award.



### **Tomorrow's Leaders Scholarship Program**

The U.S. Department of State's Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI) and AMIDEAST are pleased to announce this year's recruitment for the Tomorrow's Leaders Scholarship Program. The Tomorrow's Leaders Scholarship Program is a MEPI initiative for capable and highly motivated high school seniors in the Middle East and North Africa who are from underserved backgrounds. The program will provide four-year university scholarships and internship opportunities at select institutions of higher learning in the Middle East to students who have the potential to become leaders. The application and deadline is November 15th, 2018



# Alexandria, VA Festival to Show Moroccan Gnawa Music, Caftans, Cuisine

Morocco's transcendental Gnawa music will find an echo at a 2019 festival in Alexandria, Virginia, which will showcase Morocco's cultural heritage. Sponsored by the Moroccan American Network with the support of Audio Visual Actions, Inc, the Moroccan exhibit will be on display March 30-31, 2019. The festival will be held in Old Town Alexandria, just minutes across the Potomac river from Washington, D.C. The festival will show many features of Moroccan culture, from food, arts and crafts, to music,

particularly the spiritual Gnaoua genre of music, combining ritual poetry and dance.

# The Sam Farr and Nick Castle Peace Corps Reform Act of 2018 signed into law

Passed unanimously by the Senate and House of Representatives, this law is designed to provide a number of improvements to Peace Corps operations, including mandating strengthened criteria in the hiring of overseas medical personnel, reauthorization and new provisions to further address agency actions to support volunteers victimized by sexual assault or other forms of violence, and further transparency to assist individuals in making informed decisions about their preferences for Peace Corps service. Follow this link for more details about this new law, contained in a post following Senate passage of the legislation on September 24th.

# Friends of Morocco and the National Peace Corps Association are now dues-free

One can join NPCA and Friends of Morocco at the NPCA membership page. Membership in the NPCA is complimentary for everyone in the Peace Corps community – serving Peace Corps Volunteers, Returned Peace Corps Volunteers, current Peace Corps staff, former Peace Corps staff, host country nationals and anyone who shares Peace Corps ideals, so long as we have accurate service and contact information for you. If you are a part of the Peace Corps family, then membership in the National Peace Corps Association is important for you! Alternatively, one can fill out the Friends of Morocco Membership Application and email it to timresch@gmail.com. Contributions welcome.

The National Peace Corps Association (NPCA) is connecting and championing Returned Peace Corps Volunteers and the Peace Corps community. It provides service and education opportunities that build on the Peace Corps experience, and is also the longest-standing advocate for an independent and robust Peace Corps. The National Peace Corps Association is a nonprofit organization encompassing a network of over 50,000 individuals and more than 180 affiliate groups. The NPCA and its member groups produce global education programs and advocacy campaigns, and provide community, national and international services. Friends of Morocco and the High Atlas Foundation (Morocco) are affiliate groups of NPCA.

Become a Mission Partner by contributing \$50 or more and you'll automatically receive a one-year subscription to WorldView. Your contribution to NPCA's Community Fund supports our core programs. You'll be helping to increase our community's development impact, provide transition assistance to recent RPCVs and advocate for a bigger and better Peace Corps. You can also get WorldView on a subscription-only basis for \$35 per year. WorldView archival issues can be viewed free online.

Friends of Morocco (FOM), active since 1988, is an organization of Americans, mostly returned Peace Corps volunteers (RPCVs), with experience in Morocco, Moroccan-Americans and Moroccans in America united with an interest in promoting educational, cultural, charitable, social, literary and scientific exchange between Morocco and the United States of America.

#### FOM seeks to:

unite Americans with experience in Morocco, Moroccan-Americans and Moroccans in America; improve the awareness of Americans regarding the culture, needs and achievements of Moroccan

### peoples;

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keep members and others current on events in Morocco;



organize and implement development education and outreach activities;



support projects of the U.S. Peace Corps and private charitable organizations in Morocco;



fund and support scholarship on Morocco and Moroccans.

This **message** is **sent BCC** to Friends of Morocco members for whom we have email addresses. BCC to prevent well-intentioned (or malicious) SPAM. Feel free to forward onward to your friends who might appreciate knowing about these events and who may not be on our email list. Have them contact us at <a href="mailto:tim@friendsofmorocco.org">tim@friendsofmorocco.org</a> if they would also like these periodic updates. Advise if you would NOT like to receive these infrequent email alerts.

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