El Bochinche
Peace Corps Panama Friends

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Issue: 9 Quarter 1/Feb. 2009

Dear Stephen,

Its 2009, the economy is in shambles, the market is quite bearish, and the world doesn't know which way its spinning. On the bright side, PCPF brings you the First Quarter 2009 El Bochinche for your reading. 2009 is going to be a great year for PCPF! We continue to expand our network. Remember to befriend us on our Facebook page! The Bud Keith Memorial Fund is connecting us to Panama by helping blind students receive their education. With your donations and the sales of the volunteer calendars, we continue to support volunteer projects - from aqueducts to latrines to tourism.

Keep in Touch! Let us know how we are doing, if there is anything you would like to read about, ideas for PCPF, any bochinche of your own, etc. It is because of you that PCPF continues to grow and offer more connections to Panama.

Take a 5 min break to forget about the economy and enjoy the El Bochinche.

Jamie Thornberry
PCPF President

2009 PC Panama Calendars

Peace Corps Panama Friends sold 260 calendars this year - **a new record!**

We will send $3,120 ($12 per calendar) to the VAC in Panama.

Emily Harrington, VAC Treasurer wrote us on January 16th:

Dear Peace Corps Panama Friends,

"Thank you so much for all of your support. The Volunteer Advisory Council (VAC) will be meeting soon to discuss increasing the amount of grants that we hand out each trimester due to the success of this year's calendar. We would not have been able to do it without you!

We are continually grateful for all of your help. Thank you!"

PCPF Supported Projects: Super Small Project Assistance (SSPA)

By Hugh Smith

Thanks to your purchase of Voluntary Action Council's (VAC) calendars, 10 super small grants ($60 or less) were awarded from the proceeds of the sale to finance projects submitted by Peace Corps Volunteers. Financial assistance of $48.00 was provided to each Volunteer to support the following projects:

1. **Kathryn Young** in Bocas: transporte to take farmers from her site to Jesus' farm in Cocle'.
2. **CoCo Robinson** in Cocle': teaching materials and supplies for summer youth classes.
3. **Bhoj Rai** in Chiriqui: a fish tank project.
4. Elena Pahl in Colon: transporte to attend an accounting charla in Parara Paru, Colon.
5. **Meghan Worley** in Azuero: transporte to bring another PCV's woman group to her site to learn how to knit to start a small business project.
6. **Cassie Burdyshaw** in Veraguas: to make copies of environmental DVDs to share with youth groups around the country.
7. **Shawn Abeita** in Veraguas: to print t-shirts for his environmental group.
8. **Deborah Rockoff** in Colon: office improvements for the tourism group's office.
9. **Teri Milstein** in Veraguas: tourism project in La Yeguada.
10. **Andrew Luquin** in Veraguas: purchase of a monitor for his cooperative's office computer.

Congratulations to the above-mentioned recipients of the VAC's grants for SSPA!

PCPF Special Projects: Bud Fund Update

By Jerry Lutes

During the school year that ended in December, PCPF contributed toward the educational expenses of two blind Panamanian students, Yaneth Sanchez and Alejandro Martinez. Patronato Luz del Ciego, which administers the program, reports that Alejandro graduated from his high school and was ranked second in his class.

With our help, he expects to start college in March. His expenses and Yaneth's will be paid out of PCPF's Bud Keith Memorial fund, established to honor former PCPF President Bud Keith. Currently, the fund holds, about $5,000, enough to fund both students for a few years. If we can raise an additional $1,000 over the next few

months, we will be able to agree to Patronato Luz del Ciego's request to fund a third student.

Learn more about the program and donate now.

Make a Donation

PCPF

Words of Wisdom from La Vaina!

By Jerry Lutes

"In the end, as always, it was I who had learned from my community. They demonstrated how each one of these fail-safe steps can - fail."

"Be careful with drunken chiva drivers."

"'Semper Gumby,' means Ever Flexible. Use it when you've hiked an hour and a half to a charla but Panama just won Olympic gold so it is a national holiday and your partner agency didn't come (nor call)."

READ LA VAINA EVERY DAY!

Non-Profit Spotlight

By Steve Spangler

A Tree Grows in Panama

The New York Times wrote about Planting Empowerment, the company started by four Panama RPCVs Chris Meyer, Andrew Parrucci, Andrew Wulf, and Damion Croston.

Planting Empowerment, the Times wrote, "pays indigenous people for the use of their land and provides employment and a share of profits."

See New York Times article, A Tree Grows in Panama.

Learn more about Planting Empowerment at: www.plantingempowerment.com

Photo - Left to right: Andrew Wulf, Liriano Opua (Planting Empowerment foreman), Andrew Parrucci, Chris Meyer.

Panamá News

Move to Panama?

People are moving to Panama — even those without Peace Corps Panama connections.

And they're creating websites about their experiences:

- www.thepanamareport.com is produced by 26-year-old Matt Landau who lives in Casco Viejo. He focuses on living, real estate, and investment in Panama. How many of Matt's 60 Things to Do in Panama Before You Die have you done?

- www.retirementwave.com is by Bob Adams, 63 years old, who has retired in Panama City. He focuses on retirement, real estate and investment in Panama. Bob gives Ten Reasons to Retire in Panama.

The National Peace Corps Association now has two websites:

1. Peace Corps Connect
2. Connected Peace Corps

Events and Fundraising

By Jamie Holland

On behalf of the Directiva, I want to thank you all for your recent tax-deductible donations totaling over $2500 to Peace Corps Panama Friends (PCPF).

Depending on your request, the donations will be split across the initiatives that our organization sponsors. A portion of the donations will be used to fund PCPF's activities, primarily support for Peace Corps Partnership projects in Panama. Another part of your donations will go to the Bud Keith Memorial Fund.

This year in response to the unprecedented flooding, some of you asked that your contribution go directly to support projects in the areas hardest hit by this disaster. PCPF has donated those funds to the Panama Fund.

We appreciate and count on your generosity. PCPF welcomes donations at any time of the year. If you would like to donate please visit our website: http://www.panamapcv.net/ and click on the PayPal link.

You also may mail your contribution to:
Peace Corps Panama Friends

3858 N. Tazewell Street
Arlington, VA 22207-4533

DC Social Event

Save the Date: Thursday, March 19th-6pm-until
Goodbye to Winter PCPF Social

The PCPF Directiva will be hosting a Happy Hour to welcome Spring to the Washington, DC area. Please join us as we say goodbye to snow and hello to a more Panama-like climate. Watch your inboxes for the evite.

Classifieds

Jobs

- **Hotline**
  The Peace Corps on-line bulletin of employment and educational opportunities for returned Peace Corps Volunteers.

- **RPCV Network**
  The listserv for RPCVs interested in discussing and posting career related information.

Tú Opinión

Feedback and Articles Ideas for El Bochinche

- Write an opinion piece or article for El Bochinche.
- Promote a non-profit you work for or support to PCPF members.
- Share an update about yourself with Peace Corps Panama alumni.
- Publish photos on www.panamapcv.net or link to an on-line photo album.

Email tú opinión to: **editorelbo@gmail.com.**

Thanks for reading El Bochinche.

Sincerely,

Sarah Schmidt
Peace Corps Panama Friends

This email was sent by editorelbo@gmail.com.
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