



أصحاب المغرب

FRIENDS OF MOROCCO

June 1988

The Formation of Friends of Morocco

To celebrate the 200th anniversary of official friendship between Morocco and the United States, the U.S. Postal Service issued a colorful red and white commemorative stamp last year. This year, to celebrate more than twenty-five years of Peace Corps presence in Morocco, former Morocco Volunteers in the Washington area recently formed a Friends of Morocco group. FOM is our way of commemorating a quarter of a century of friendship between individuals of the two countries. We'd like to invite all former Morocco Peace Corps Volunteers to take this opportunity to join.

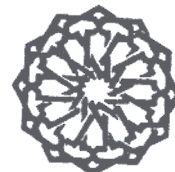
Why should we organize? Well, as RPCVs we have a unique perspective on Morocco, being neither phosphate share-holders nor Club Med card-holders. We are a diverse group of individuals linked by an abiding interest in the development, culture, history, and people of Morocco. At meetings held this winter to consider goals and plans, we noted the following principal purposes for organizing:

- 1) To re-unite RPCVs and keep them in touch with one another;
- 2) To keep members up-to-date on social, political, economic, and cultural developments in Morocco;
- 3) To organize activities consistent with the Peace Corps' "Third Goal," i.e. educating Americans about Morocco and about development;
- 4) To fund or otherwise support scholarships and development projects in Morocco.

We have compiled a database of about 1200 RPCV/Morocco names and addresses of varying reliability, and we hope to attract as many members. We've established contact with John ("Jacques") Van Der Water, an early-60s RPCV who has kept in touch with fellow pioneers from the early years of the Peace Corps in Morocco. (See his feature in this newsletter). Friends of Morocco will be open to anyone interested in Morocco and interested in our purposes, not just RPCVs.

Once you join, you will receive a quarterly newsletter featuring current and former volunteers, information on current events in Morocco, and updates on development projects currently underway there. In addition, we plan to include a substantive, annotated feature article on Moroccan history, politics, development, or culture in each issue. The newsletter will also be distributed to current Volunteers and staff in the bled, thus becoming a vital link between the experienced and the Experience. We encourage your participation and contributions.

We also plan to publish this year a nationwide directory of Volunteers who have served in Morocco since 1962. We need your help in updating and expanding our list: please send us any names and addresses you might have, be they from your little carnet noir, your training manual, or your Close of Service list. We may all have left the bled some time ago, but for most of us the connection is still strong. Through FOM, we can all continue the meaningful experiences we had in Morocco, as well as engage in some unabashed nostalgia. So, yallah, let's hear from you!



Morocco Update

Economic prospects appear to be brightening for Morocco. Its \$17 billion foreign debt was rescheduled in March 1987, and a combination of bumper harvests and an austere "economic adjustment" program have caused an upturn in economic indicators. The International Monetary Fund and Western creditors have been pressing Morocco to cut consumer price subsidies further but the government, recalling food riots in 1981 and 1984, has been reluctant to comply.

In July 1987, Morocco made the surprising move of applying for membership in the European Economic Community. Experts say that the Moroccan government knew full well that the application would be rejected, and that Morocco was actually trying to pressure the EEC, its largest trading partner, for concessions in the wake of Spain and Portugal's acceptance into the Community. The application is seen as an indicator of Morocco's growing Western orientation.

On the Arab front, last November Morocco became one of a number of moderate Arab states that have reestablished ties with Egypt, after having broken them to protest Egypt's signing of the Camp David Accords.

The Ministry of Education is facing tough choices on educational reform. Last summer, King Hassan announced that the baccalaureate exam would be replaced starting that September with a testing system similar to that of the United States, under which students will be given trimester exams throughout their final three years of high school. Since both teachers and students were unfamiliar with the new system, results for the first nationwide exam in December were unusually poor, and widespread demonstrations resulted.

In November, Moroccan novelist and poet Tahar Benjelloun was named the winner of France's Prix Goncourt, the francophone world's equivalent of the Nobel Prize for Literature. French President Francois Mitterand congratulated Benjelloun on his contribution to the "universality" of the French language. Benjelloun's L'Enfant du Sable has recently appeared in English as The Sand Child; his other works include: La Nuit Sacree and Moha le Fou. Moha le Sage.

The Moroccan Embassy reports that the Agadir City Council has unanimously adopted a project to twin with the city of Miami. A similar "sister city" relationship already exists between Casablanca and Chicago. This is an area in which FOM could potentially play an important role.

The FOM newsletter would be very interested in any contributions to Morocco Update from its readership. We are particularly interested in the observations of current Volunteers and others in Morocco. We realize that Western press reports are not always accurate or very deep. We would welcome reports from the bled as well as any relevant articles that RPCVs spot in newspapers or magazines.

Letters to the Editor

The following letter is reprinted from the NCRPCV Voice.

Dear Editor,

Our son served in the area of Ayn Bni Mathar, Morocco from July 1984 until July 3, 1985 when he was killed in an automobile accident.

We felt like we were there with him, through his letters and slides.

They were working on starting a nursery and range management. We haven't heard or read anything on that area and we are very interested in finding out how the projects are going and if the Peace Corps is still in that area.

Our son's name is Raymond Kruger, if anyone knew him or has any information and would like to write us, we would appreciate it.

We also think the National Memorial (for PCVs who died in service) is a wonderful idea.

Sincerely,

Jim & Elly Kruger

1362 Lakeside Street
La Porte. In 46350

Editors Note: We have spoken to the Krugers and decided to set up a memorial fund in Ray's name to be used for development projects in Morocco. Please address contributions and suggestions for such a fund to:

Ray Kruger Memorial Fund
c/o Friends of Morocco
PO Box 217773
Washington, DC 20009



Friends of Morocco Newsletter

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Ash Khabarna?

Two Morocco RPCVs have been planning individual reunions for their stages. Charlie Tesar of Morocco II (62-64) and Larry Wydro of Morocco XII (68-70) are both hoping to get their stage-mates together in spring or summer in California, where they trained. Charlie can be reached at 512/473-6658, and Larry at 415/567-7224.



Mabrouks are in order for a number of '80s TEFL Volunteers. Thom Downes (82-85) is the new Education APCD in Yemen, and Mark Parkison (84-87) has just started the same position in Sri Lanka. Their wives, Nadia and Khadija, doubtless wonder what they're getting themselves into... Along the same lines, Kerry McCollum (81-84) became the new APCD for Education in Morocco shortly after the birth of her first daughter, Kinza.



Daniel Wagner (68-70), a professor at the University of Pennsylvania, and doctoral candidates Jenny Spratt (68-70) and Bev Seckinger (81-83) recently presented papers on literacy among Moroccan children at the Middle Eastern Studies Association conference. PCVs who had been involved in this on-going investigation of child literacy in El Ksiba and Marrakech made up a large part of the audience.



One-time industrial art Volunteer Dan Walsh (74-76) made the front page of The Wall Street Journal not long ago as the "Propaganda Poster King." He has amassed a collection of 10,000 political posters from 45 countries, which he sells to bookstores, catalog houses, and schools. His services are said to be much in demand on Washington's Embassy Row—talk about the toughest job...



The FOM Membership Committee is looking for a few good Morocco RPCVs to organize local FOM chapters. This is well underway in the DC area, and we have some people willing to take on this role in Chicago and Boston. Come on, let's hear from Los Angeles, Seattle, Epcot Center, and points in between. Give a call to Peter Laugham, 202/544-3962.



The "Ash Khabarna?" column is hungry for news and inquiries about RPCVs. We're interested in your musings, news of marriages, births, or successful secondary projects, and of course any gossip of general interest.

A Fall Reunion in Washington, DC

Friends of Morocco invites you to a gala All-RPCV/Morocco Reunion in Washington, DC, in the fall, bringing together Volunteers who served from 1962-1988, and anyone else with a special interest in Morocco. Plans are afoot for a day of conferences on Morocco and FOM, a sumptuous mechoui, a mini film festival, and much time for reminiscing and rediscovery. If you are interested in attending (or better yet in helping organize) this event, please mark the reunion blank on the membership form in the newsletter. Details will follow in the next issue, due to hit the newsstands in late July.

In the fall, Peace Corps is preparing a conference on "The Peace Corps in the Arab World," hopefully to be co-sponsored by the Smithsonian Institution. The most likely date is the last week in September—if you all are interested we could arrange our reunion in conjunction with it. Those wishing to find out more about the conference should call George Doumani at Peace Corps (NANEAP), 202/254-9862.



Lost Volunteers

There are still hundreds of Morocco RPCVs and staff out there for whom we have names but no addresses. We plan to publish a short "wanted" list of these lost souls in each issue of the newsletter:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Years</u>	<u>Last seen in</u>
Paula M. Benjelloun	72-75	Ohio
Thomas W. Cassell	67-69	Washington, DC
Holly Guinan	80-83	Alexandria, Egypt
Tanya George	1970s	PC/Morocco Desk
Susan Gorski	79-81	Hawaii
Peter Jencks	81-83	Errachidia
Joseph MacDonald	63-67	Seattle, WA
Sandy Milburn	79-81	Minneapolis, MN
John Paulas	68-71	Nouakchott
Mary Ann Seume	65-67	Richmond, VA
Cindy Siegrist	82-84	Ouarzazate

Of course what would be most helpful to our search would be if you would dig through your address books, files, and memories, and send us any RPCV or staff addresses you know, along with any news.

A History of the Peace Corps in Morocco

(NB: This impressionistic—you might even say archaeological—account of the history of Peace Corps/Morocco was pieced together from a variety of sometimes contradictory sources. No doubt many of you will be able to fill in the missing links, initiatives, and rationales: we invite your comments. We'd like to make this history column a regular feature, spotlighting a different time period or program each time. Peace Corps records are spotty at best, but with our combined experiences we should be able to come up with the definitive history of PC/Morocco.)

Twenty-five years ago, the Moroccan government decided to accept the offer of the new "Corps de la Paix" to send volunteers. Rabat requested nearly a hundred of them, sight unseen: 30 surveyors, 15 mechanics, 10 agricultural extension agents, and a slew of teachers, coaches, and health care workers. What the government actually received in February 1963, was "Morocco I"*: 53 surveyors, English teachers, and irrigation foremen. The technicians worked south of the Atlas Mountains, while the TEFLers replaced French teachers in various schools.

As Bogie says at the airport in Casablanca, it was "the start of a beautiful friendship"—a continuing, productive relationship between the Peace Corps and Morocco. More than 1500 Volunteers have served since those first 53, in a host of programs such as rural health education, music and math teaching, agriculture, vocational education, renewable energy, range management, and endangered species.

By the end of 1966 there were more than a hundred Volunteers in country, half of whom were lab technicians, one third were English teachers, and about one-fifth were female PCVs working in women's centers. In line with the expansion of Volunteer placements that brought an all-time high of 15,000 PCVs worldwide in 1967, one Peace Corps/Morocco plan of this era called for an increase to about 300 Volunteers in Morocco by 1971. This expansion was planned to take place almost entirely within the rural development sector, through the massive injection of agricultural extension agents and foresters; TEFL was to be replaced with a vocational education program, and the lab tech program slated to be entirely phased out.

In any event, the rural development program was the largest for a time in the early '70s. But, the TEFL program was never eliminated, since the recruitment, train-

* Peace Corps/Morocco dropped the Roman numeral numbering of trainings sometime during the '70s; stages, like stock market crashes, are now referred to by the years in which they took place.



ing, and placement of English teachers was relatively simple, and the Ministry of Education expressed a continued interest in PCVs. By the late '70s and early '80s, TEFL made up the lion's share of PCV placements, with often more than two-thirds of the Volunteers involved in the purveying of gerunds.

Demographics have caught up with the TEFL program in the last few years. As more and more Moroccans have become qualified to teach high school English, the Peace Corps has decided that it will gradually phase out of its long participation in Morocco's high schools, with the last handful of TEFL trainees scheduled for the summer of 1991. There are currently around forty TEFL PCVs working at universities or in special programs for technical English. Just under half of the current 150 or so PCVs are involved in non-TEFL programs, including social services, rural water supply and sanitation, and wildlife management.

The need for volunteers with specialized skills is sure to increase as Peace Corps/Morocco moves away from the high schools. The challenge facing Peace Corps now is to supply such relatively scarce individuals, either through their new "Variable Length Volunteer" initiative (in which professionals and technicians can become Volunteers for less than the normal two years), through "early recruiting" programs that combine college training and Peace Corps service, or through enhanced skills-training programs.

FOM Steering Committee

Interim Officers of the Executive Steering Committee:

Peter Laugharn, Co-chairperson	202/544-3962
Melanie Wilhelm, Co-chairperson	202/462-7930
Lori Kurtz, Secretary	202/234-7237
Timothy Resch, Treasurer	202/660-9292
Nancy Galvin	617/868-0616

Help for an old friend

An old friend of PC/Morocco vols and staff is planning a visit to the States this summer and could really use a motorized wheelchair for the time he is here. He will be based in New York for the visit. Anyone able to donate the use of a wheelchair, or who has information or advice on how to get hold of one should contact Susan Farrall (82-84) at 212/304-3526.

Friends of Morocco

Box 21773
Washington, DC 20009



PLEASE NOTE: Before filling out this form yourself, consider xercoing a few copies to pass on or send to your fellow returned Volunteers whom we might have missed in our quest for the perfect mailing list.

Name _____
Current Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Phone #s Home () _____ Work () _____

Dates of Service _____ Program _____
Site(s) _____

Current Occupation _____
Employer/ School _____

Are you a member of any other RPCV group? (National Council of RPCVs, regional group, etc.) If so, please list.

Areas of Interest: Please check those potential FOM activities which you would be most interested in.

- | | | |
|------------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| Newsletter | Reunions | Development Ed. |
| Trips to Morocco | Speakers Bureau | Locating RPCVs |
| Hospitality | Local RPCV Group | Recruitment |
| Fundraising | Readjustment Svcs | Other (List) |

Would you be interested in attending a reunion in Washington, DC this coming fall? If so, please check month preferred:
Sept. _____ Oct. _____ Nov. _____

Would you consent to our passing your name on to the National Council of RPCVs, so that they can update their data on all RPCVs, If so, please check the YES blank. Please be aware that this does not obligate you to join the NCRPCV. YES _____ NO _____

Member ship dues are \$15 per year. All members will receive FOM's quarterly newsletter, and our nationwide directory of RPCVs who served in Morocco. Make checks payable to "Friends of Morocco" Additional donations to help the cause are gratefully accepted.

Amount enclosed

- 1) Briefly, what have you done since the Peace Corps?

- 2) What projects or programs, in Morocco or in the United States, would you like to see Friends of Morocco get involved in?

- 3) What sorts of news and features would you like from the Friends of Morocco newsletter?

- 4) List any RPCVs or staff you would like to get back in touch with. Any information you can remember would be helpful, including their training date, dates of service, sites, and the last address you have for them.

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4-

The information collected on this form will be used by FOM and will be made available only to those organizations whose purposes are consistent with the aims of FOM. It will not be sold or traded for commercial purposes.

A Modest Project Proposal

How many times, at a wedding or usbu', or just a visit to friends, sitting with a glass of mint tea in your hand or being cajoled into one more mouthful of couscous, did you marvel at the hospitality of the Moroccan people? Being invited to spend the night with the family of someone you met on a bus, and being treated like a long-lost relative by people who hadn't the slightest idea that the language you were trying to speak to them was supposed to be Arabic... Such hospitality is very difficult to repay; while we were volunteers we often lacked the means, and when we return to the States most of us encounter Moroccans only rarely.

Aywa, it makes sense then that one of the FOM project ideas that Morocco RPCVs have expressed the most interest in is putting together a hospitality network for Moroccans here in the United States. Anything from hosting visitors for a dinner or a weekend, to going on weekly outings with Moroccans studying at the local university, to arranging for Moroccans to speak to your local church or civic group.

The first step is for you, the RPCVs, to express your interest in being involved in the hospitality network by marking the hospitality blank on the membership form. No matter where you live in the States, chances are there are a good number of international students, visitors, and residents nearby.

Next we will contact organizations that can help us locate Moroccans nationwide. The Moroccan Embassy could provide us with a list of students. The United States Information Agency and USAID bring thousands of international visitors to the States every year, and would probably be interested in us as hosts for their North African participants. The National Council of International Visitors (NCIV), with more than one hundred local CIVs around the country, is another organization which could help us get in contact with visitors from the Bled. The list goes on, and perhaps many of you have experience with other groups that could help us set up this network.

When the grapevine tells us of a Moroccan living in or travelling to a particular community, we will call any FOM members there who might be interested in providing hospitality. We promise not to spring any visitors on anyone unannounced, not to give out your addresses or telephone numbers to visitors or the above organizations without checking with you first.

If you are interested in returning some of the hospitality we all were shown in Morocco, please check the hospitality blank on the membership form. If you'd like to help us get the network organized, please contact Noreen Polk, 703/525-4688, or write her c/o FOM.

Harka-Home and FOM Join Forces

Contrary to popular belief, this is not the first newsletter attempting to update RPCVs from Morocco and put them in touch with each other. For ten years now John Van Der Water, a.k.a Jacques, of the third group of Morocco Volunteers has been single-handedly putting out his own newsletter called Harka-Home, funded by donations from grateful RPCVs. Jacques recently agreed to combine efforts with FOM, and sent a letter explaining the origins of his newsletter. Excerpts follow:

"I have always been bothered by the fact that many of our most important friends of the past seem to drop off the face of the earth. One of the most important things that I've ever done in my life was to serve in the Peace Corps in Morocco, and the people I served with were some of the most remarkable people I've ever met. I decided to try and ebb the tide of droppers-of... It's required a lot of detective work on my part, but as the past editor of Morocco's early Peace Corps newsletter, The Harka, I was probably in the best position to attempt this since I had the lists of everyone's home addresses as they departed those fabled shores of yore.

Our newsletter goes out to about 150 active names on our lists (of people) who served in the first six groups of PCVs. Our members are spread out all over the world, and it's been wonderful to have a loose sort of network in place, to help plan reunions, both big and small."

Jacques plans to go this summer to the 25th anniversary of the first training at Cal-Poly in San Luis Obispo, and hopes to see many of his newsletter subscribers.



بسلامة !

Word from the Bled

The chairperson of FOM's Development Projects Committee, Judy Ziboukh, has been in touch with APCD Kerry McCollum in Rabat and the 150 volunteers currently serving Morocco as well as the staff are awaiting this, the first addition of the Friends of Morocco newsletter. Kerry assures us there is no lack of ideas and suggestions from the Volunteer community for project funding and she offers her help, as well as that of her fellow-APCDs. We'll be sure to include the feedback of current volunteers in our next newsletter. In particular, we'd like to facilitate information exchange between RPCVs and PCVs—so for all of you out there currently serving, if you have job-related questions or frustrations, write to FOM and we'll try and see if we can't connect you with someone who's seen it all before.



Who's Who in Morocco

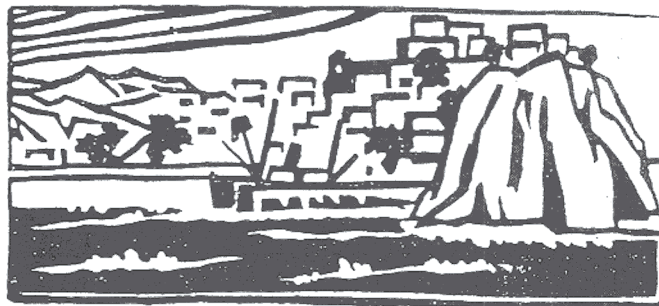
U.S. Ambassador to Morocco	Thomas A. Nassif
Moroccan Ambassador to U.S.	M'hamed Bargach

Peace Corps/Rabat

Country Director	David Fredrick
APCD/Agriculture	(currently vacant)
APCD/Education	Kerry McCollum
APCD/Social Services	Ahmed Morabet

Peace Corps/Washington

Morocco Desk Officer	Karen Blyth
Morocco Desk Assistant	Pamela Dimeo
NANEAP Director	John Keaton
Director, USAID/Rabat	Charles W. Johnson
AID Morocco Desk Officer	Marx Sterne
AIMS, President (American Institute for Maghrib Studies)	I. William Zartman
TALM, Director (Tangier American Legation Museum)	Robert Shea
CEMAT, President (Center for Maghribi Studies at Tunis)	Jeanne Feffers Mrad



Ambassador Hosts TALM Benefit

On Wednesday, May 25th M'hamed Bargach, Moroccan Ambassador to the U.S., hosted a fundraiser for the Tangier American Legation Museum (TALM), an organization formed to support and promote the use of the old American Legation in Tangier. In his comments after the ambassador spoke, Dr. I.W. Zartman, President of AIMS (American Institute for Maghrib Studies), mentioned the formation of FOM, and three of our representatives were on hand to answer questions, mingle with the luminaries, and partake of a sumptuous feast of the best Moroccan food this side of the Atlas. The Legation has served as training site for Peace Corps Trainees, and most recently Volunteers have assisted Dr. Shea in its upkeep and promotion as part of their summer projects. Those interested in joining TALM, or in finding out what's happening at the Legation now can write Dr. Shea, the Resident Director, at: 8 zangat America, Medina, Tangier, American Embassy-T, APO NY 09284.

May Day Kickoff for Friends of Morocco

Friends of Morocco held its first event, a fundraiser jointly sponsored with Returned Peace Corps Volunteers of Washington, on the afternoon of Sunday, May 1. The Iron Gate Inn provided Lebanese food and a sunny patio. About eighty-five ex-vols and friends attended, and FOM raised over \$200 in memberships.

Computer/Help?

FOM is looking for someone with computer experience to help out with our database and desktop publishing needs. We're also on the lookout for a computer donation. If anyone would like a) to help out a worthy cause, or b) to get a needed tax write-off, please contact Melanie Wilhelm at 202/462-7930.