

# Fondo Q

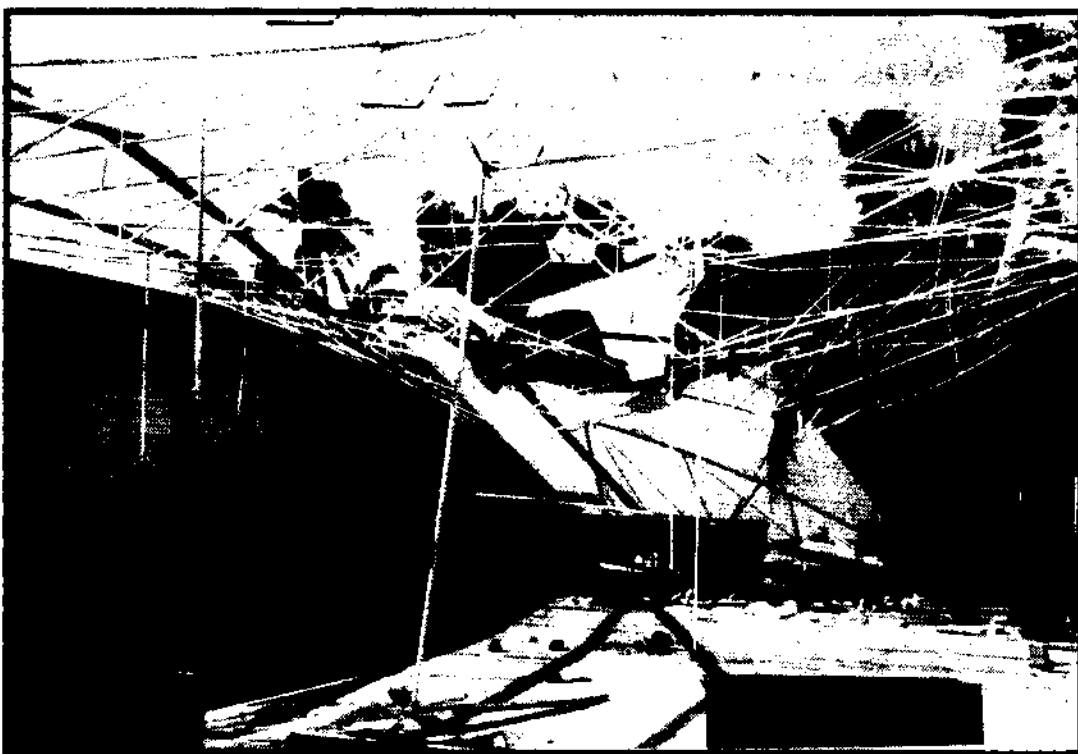
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May 15, 1999

## Hurricane Georges Wrecked Havoc School Reconstruction Begun

On September 22, 1998, Hurricane Georges wreaked havoc on the school district of Hato Mayor, Dominican Republic. Of 91 schools in the district, 22 were completely destroyed, 34 were severely damaged (mostly roofless, often with extensive wall damage as well); the majority of the balance suffered moderated damage.

The Peace Corps organized a reconstruction pilot program with three main goals: (1) repair the physical building so that the classes could recommence as soon as possible; (2) raise the self-esteem of the community involved by establishing the school as a symbol of normality, security, and hope in the midst of such widespread damage, and (3) strengthen the community involved by integrating the people in the actual



*This is but one example of hurricane damage to a school in Los Ranchos.*

reconstruction process.

The plan was a three way effort between the Peace Corps, the school district, and the local community and parent-teacher organizations (SPMAEs). Financing was obtained through *Fondo Quisqueya* and private donations with costs averaging

RD\$20/30,000 per school. The plan also called for repaired/rebuilt latrines; the establishment of school flower and vegetable gardens, and reforestation of the school area. Phase I of the plan consisted of five rural schools. These have been largely

*(Continued on page 4)*

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*Ed Note: The FQ Board of Directors apologizes for any omissions in the above lists of contributors. We appreciate every contribution.*

### Who are You? Solve the Mystery

FQ received a \$20 cash contribution with no name or address BUT with the following message: P.S. Been trying to get a hold of Roger LaBucherie to see if he has any more copies of his book, "Imagenes de Santo Domingo." Please print address or phone in newsletter—no telephone listing for him in Pine Valley, CA. FQ would like to thank the individual, so let us hear from you.

## Notes from the FQ Board

The *FQ* Board met on Saturday, April 10, 1999. Present were Minor Anderson, Karen Clough, Lou Ferrand, Tom Gittins, Carrie Meyer, Bill Threlkeld, and Anne Ternes.

Lou Ferrand reported that we have \$4,959.48 in our U.S. Account and \$2,200 in the DR which includes the \$1,500 that was sent down on February 28. The endowment funds in the Vanguard account were at a level of \$14,302.36.

Interest from our endowment funds could be used toward current projects. The principal could also be used, but only if special action was taken and the board members agreed.

Our contribution stimulated a number of other donations towards school rebuilding including a grant from the Spanish.

After our initial \$10,000 donation we promised another \$4,000 toward reconstruction activities due to Hurricane Georges. At this writing, we have spent down our scholarship funds and we welcome contributions. For inspiration, read the update on the beauty school ladies

*FQ* has always maintained the privacy of individuals and mailing lists. We do not give or



*FQ* President Minor Anderson presents a \$10,000 check for hurricane relief efforts to Diane Partl, PC Deputy Director, DR, on October 27, 1998.

sell our mailing lists to anyone. However, we are going to make an exception to this policy and share our lists with *Friends of the Dominican Republic (FDR)* since their mission is similar to ours. If you do not want your name included, please mark the box on the coupon located on the back page.



## FQ Annual Meeting

Come one, come all to our annual meeting scheduled for Saturday, June 19th in Tom Gittins' backyard in Falls Church, VA. Do consider a long weekend or a vacation for that matter in the beautiful Washington, DC metropolitan area. Flyers will be sent to locals but out of towners are especially welcome. The business meeting starts at 4:00 p.m. with supper to follow.

## Hurricane Update

by Mike Benson et al

This is a quick update to let *FQ* know the results of the initial \$10,000 you gave to get the school rebuilding project off the ground. After we committed to helping, Domingo Valerio, Associate Director, Education Sector, was able to get several Dominican groups interested in helping, and they gave an additional RD\$96,000. These donations came from people who wanted to help but didn't have a quick way to get things done. There were even private school children who collected money and gave it.

The school district director and PCVs Mary Bosy and Tim Gardner, identified the target schools. Now, a Spanish group has come up with 1.2 million pesos to help finish the 30 schools in the Hato Mayor-El Sibó area.

## Wreaking Havoc, cont'd

*(Continued from page 1)*

completed. To date, 1,249 students are back in classrooms in reconstructed, newly roofed, newly painted schools. The three rural schools comprising Phase II, and involving 3,302 students, were expected to begin classes by January 11, 1999.

Diligent follow-up for the long-term success of the program is a golden opportunity for the integration of school

and community, as well as a perfect opening for PCV's in several sectors to work as a team. Current plans are being formulated:

**Reforestation:** With the assistance of the District Supervisor for Community Affairs, officials of the local forestry office have agreed to supply saplings of indigenous trees and give lectures on their planting and care. The individual school communities will be invited to the lectures and plantings will be in both the school yards and communities. Future involvement of Environmental Education PCV's will enhance this program.

**School Vegetable Gardens:** Gardens are currently being planted with seeds provided by the Peace Corps. As plantings



*Residents of the community are rebuilding the school in Batey Altogracia.*

mature, lectures by the district supervisor in charge of the area will be arranged at the school. The community involved will be invited and lectures will include instructions on long and short term plantings and establishment of seed beds as well as the possibility of using the garden as a school fund-raiser. Again, the future involvement of an Environmental Education PCV would enhance the program. **Niño a Niño:** This program establishes a socio-cultural and economic interchange between private schools in Santo Domingo and rural schools in Hato Mayor. While the material needs for poor rural schools here are critical, a socio-cultural interchange is considered equally advantageous. To date, the private schools in Santo

Domingo have been approached and expressed an enthusiastic desire to participate in the program. Two of the schools are currently arranging transportation to bring their students to schools in the Pilot Program. The visit will include donations of school supplies as well as a one-on-one socio-cultural exchange. It is the hope of Peace Corps that the program will be expanded to include more schools and will continue through correspondence between students for their mutual benefit. The possibilities of integrating the program into the Resource Center project are obvious. Peace Corps would like to express its deepest gratitude to *Fondo Quisqueya, Maritima*

*(Continued on page 5)*

## Hurricane, cont'd

(Continued from page 4)

Dominicana, Colegio Babeque, Colegio Santo Domingo, and Colegio Lux Mundi for their donations and support in this project. Also, to the communities of Cañada del Agua, Morquecho, Magua, El Cercado, Altigracia, Las Espinas, LaPlaza, Rancho #1, and the school district of Hato Mayor for their hard work in the rapid completion of the reconstruction of their schools. **FQ**

The Crisis Corps is a new program within the Peace Corps that allows PCV's who are

## The Crisis Corps

from [peacecorps.gov/crisiscorps](http://peacecorps.gov/crisiscorps)

completing their tours and returned Volunteers to provide short-term assistance to countries that have experienced natural disasters or humanitarian crises. Through their Peace Corps experience, Volunteers have acquired the language, technical and cross cultural skills to make an effective contribution in a challenging environment.

Crisis Corps Volunteers re-enroll in the Peace Corps for short-term assignments. Assignments are up to six months long; typically a three-month commitment is required. Crisis Corps projects are identified through consultations with these departments and host country governments. Crisis Corps initiatives are only

(Continued on page 7)

## The Dream Lives On

by

Natalie Woodward, Peace Corps Director, DR



Natalie Woodward, Dir.,  
Peace Corps, Dom. Rep.

About two weeks ago, I went to the barrio of Sabana Perdida on the north-west rim of Santo Domingo.

I went there because one of the new volunteers, a business volunteer named Alexander Skucek, found out he was to be received in his community with a great deal of fanfare. A banner had been made for him, a hall reserved, and signs were placed all over town.

They even retained the services of a security guard for the event. Alex was recuperating from a major case of the flu, and was really nervous to hear that he would be the keynote at this big event.

He approached me, asking if I would give him some tips on what he might say. When I looked into his eyes (this is one really big fellow), I could see the fear he was not admitting. I knew I really needed to go to the meeting as well, and made the trip that evening.

It more than lived up to being perhaps the biggest welcome ever afforded a PCV, at least in the DR. During both my speech, and later Alex's, we both mentioned the fact that Peace Corps

(Continued on page 10)

## Update on "Mechy's" Progress

by

Siobhan M. Foley, PCV

*Ed. Note: In April, 1998, PCV Siobhan M. Foley requested financial assistance from FQ for a resident of Sabaneta, Santiago Rodriguez. Foley had heard of FQ at a Thanksgiving PCV conference. Foley requested RD\$4,000 which was subsequently approved. The following is an update by Foley.*

Sabaneta, Santiago Rodriguez, is a small quiet town in the northwest region of the Domini-

can Republic. Through my work in the Resource Center located in the local library, I came to know Mercedes (Mechy). She is a quiet, beautiful, humble woman of 27 years in age. Mechy is unmarried but she has one young son, Dario, aged 5.

At the time I met Mechy she was trying to support herself by cleaning the library. The job didn't pay very much and the father of her child doesn't offer

(Continued on page 6)

## Update on the Belleza Students

by

Leslie Dominguez, PCV



Here's the first set of photos of Nana and Joa in their Belleza course. They all practice on each other which is why their hair isn't perfect (They're embarrassed by the photos). So, I'm going to try to take some of them now working in the campo. They are having a fabulous time in the course and learning a lot. We've overspent on supplies. They know (and decided) that we're over budget and they'll need to come up with the difference. But can you send us the check for the remaining RDS3,740 now? Thanks.

*On the left, Joa giving a manicure. The right picture shows Nana softening the feet of a client in preparation for a pedicure..*

## Mechy's progress, cont'd

*(Continued from page 5)*

any support for his upbringing. Mechy and Dario live in a crowded house with her mother, grandparents, aunt and one or two cousins. The family relies on what an aunt sends from the United States and the small income earned by Mechy's mother who types papers for University students.

Recently, Mechy has seen a sharp decline in her grandparents' health which has awakened her to the fact that they won't be around forever. She has also seen how hard her

mother works to earn money for the food they all eat. Consequently, she started to give serious thought to her and her son's future. Mechy began voicing her concerns to friends in the community. These same people have urged her to go back to school, earn her high school diploma and learn a skill.

Mechy heard about a computer course that is offered by the university in the local high school. A friend who works for the local "imprenta" encouraged her to enroll and has assured her some work in the shop when she gradu-

ates from her course. The job in the print shop might not be a steady source of income, but she feels it will provide a stepping stone. Ultimately, Mechy wants to enroll in the town's secretarial school which will help her acquire a much more stable position.

Since the time I first wrote to your organization, many things have changed, and Mechy has enrolled in the course. Her computer teacher says she works hard and is doing well. Unfortunately, she has lost her cleaning

*(Continued on page 7)*

## Mechy's Progress cont'd



*Mechy and her son, Dario. The family relies on what a relative sends from the U.S.*

*(Continued from page 6)*

job in the library, unmistakably for political reasons. The strain of living in a crowded house and not helping out financially seems to have empowered Mechy. Just this past week she borrowed money, came to the capital, and marched into the office of her son's father. She demanded that he contribute something so she can live in a home of her own. Apparently, he is complying and she has found a very humble house near a good friend. She is continuing with her studies and beginning to make plans for the future. *Fondo Quisqueya* has given Mechy that crucial first step up; her vista has widened, and her possibilities extended. Thank you.

s/ Soibhan Foley,  
PCV 97-01. *FQ*

## FQ scholarships at work

by

Kathleen Miller, PCV Jayaco, Bonaó

*Ed. Note: PCV Kathleen Miller of Jayaco, Bonaó proposed a training course, which was subsequently approved for Maria Altagracia Cruz, age 29.*

Maria is a very self-motivated and energetic member of Jayaco. She is the mother of three young children, yet still manages to find the time to participate in community events and organizations such as the Junta de Desarrollo and the Comité de Mujeres. She is also a devoted student, having graduated from the liceo at a young age with aspirations to one day attend the university. She is

currently studying English and French independently.

Maria is interested in participating in the Curso Técnico de Computadora (Windows 97) in order to find a good paying job in the town of Bonaó that will allow her to save money and finance her further education at the university. She chose this particular course aware that in today's job market it is important to have knowledge of computer systems. Along with the experience gained from a typing course she completed, Maria hopes to be better equipped to find employment. I strongly recommend Maria as a candidate for Fondo Quisqueya. She is a highly motivated young woman with a desire to learn and I feel she can benefit from this opportunity.

Thank you for your consideration and we look forward to hearing from you.

s/ Kathleen Miller

**Breakdown of costs:**

**Course: RD\$2,000**

**Transportation: RD\$1,500**

## Crisis Corps, cont'd

*(Continued from page 5)*

undertaken when the safety and security of Volunteers has been reasonably assured.

For more details query the Peace Corps WEB site:

[peacecorps.gov/crisis\\_corps](http://peacecorps.gov/crisis_corps).



Each copy of this FondoQ issue costs about \$.60. Your contributions are so appreciated.

# Crisis Corps Experience

by  
Mrs. Jess Stone

*Ed. Note: Mrs. Jess Stone contributed this information. At the time we received this note, Jess was due home in April.*



*Jess Stone was one of the first volunteers in the Dominican Republic.*

Jess Stone, one of the first DR volunteers, recently served as a Crisis Corps Volunteer in the town of Tamayo, an agricultural town of about 15,000 located about 30 km north and a little west of Barahona.

During Hurricane Georges in 1998, this area was under 6 feet of water, and 3 feet of silt remained after the flood waters receded. Most of the silt has been removed by now, but there is major work yet to be done.

A consortium of agencies are working together to perform home repair on damaged homes: Crisis Corps of the Peace Corps, Habitat for Humanity, the Catholic church, Fundasur (an NGO developmental agency to

promote the SW part of the DR), USAID and the US Forest Service (which is funding shipment of high quality lumber from the US to the DR).

## **Requirements for participation in Crisis Corps in the DR.**

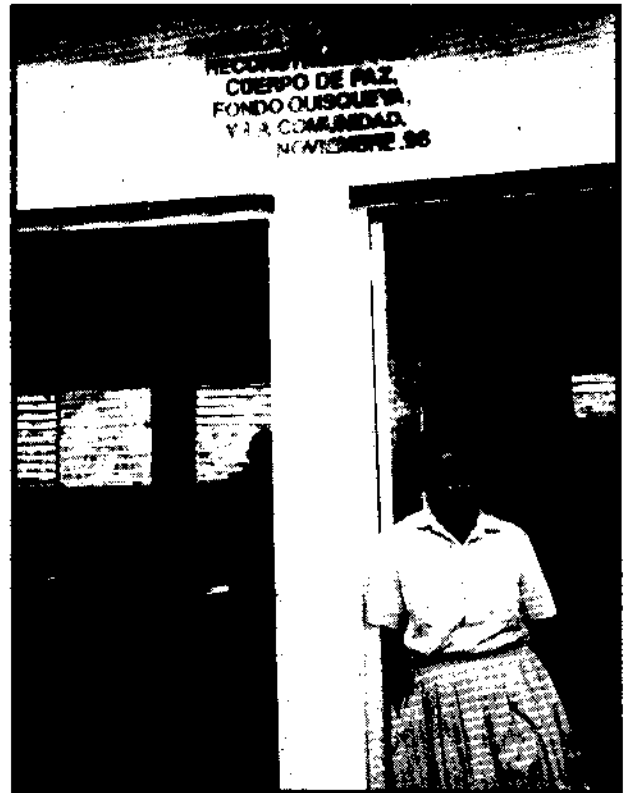
The candidate must be a RPCV and must be fluent in Spanish.

The Habitat for Humanity office, where the volunteer will be based, needs someone who can set up a bookkeeping system and organize work flow. The person must have strong community development and communications skills. Someone experienced in construction management would

be ideal. However, a business administration or small business expert would also have the necessary skills. The head carpenter, Catalino, is very skilled so the ability to make hard decisions and back them up will be important as Catalino completes inspection of the remaining four barrios. Residents will have to be informed should they not qualify for assistance, i.e. damage is deemed irreparable, damage is not significant enough, or there are obvious other resources available.

**Do you qualify?** If so, contact the Director of

the Crisis Corps of Peace Corps, Joan Timoney, at 1-800-424-8580 ext 2255. The need is immediate. Applicants will have to complete extensive paperwork, provide references, have physical and dental exams and needed immunizations.



*Escuela El Cercado. Notice FQ's name over the door. The project was completed in November, 1998.*