



Friends OF COLOMBIA

NEWSLETTER OF THE COLOMBIA RETURNED PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEERS

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Friends of Colombia,

2016 marks the 55th Anniversary of the Peace Corps and to celebrate, NPCA is sponsoring a national conference—Peace Corps Beyond—at George Washington University in Washington, DC the weekend of **September 22–25, 2016**. You may register on their website at peacecorpsconnect.org and read about the interesting programs planned for that weekend. Special discounts are available until June 30.

The Embassy of Colombia has invited FOC members, friends and family to a reception at the home of Ambassador Pinzón the evening of **Thursday, September 22 from 6–8 pm**. You will be receiving an invitation via email from the Embassy, so please watch for it and RSVP if you plan to attend. Ambassador Juan Carlos Pinzón is very supportive of Peace Corps and is especially pleased to invite us to his home.

FOC is sponsoring one of the break-out sessions on **Friday, September 23, 4:15–5:15 pm** at the Marvin Center at GWU. The topic, Global Development Trends, will be

introduced by Stephen Radelet, Director of the Global Human Development Program at Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service and author of the recent book *The Great Surge: The Ascent of the Developing World*. Two additional experts representing different regions will respond to his thesis.

You may wish to gather after the session for dinner in one of the many ethnic restaurants in Washington DC. We will make a few suggestions and encourage you to make reservations ahead of time. There are major events in town that weekend.

We hope to have a good representation from the second generation Colombia RPCVs, known as Colombia II. It will be a good opportunity to reconnect with friends and share experiences. I hope to see you in DC September 22–25.

Sincerely yours,

Arleen Stewart Cheston
President, Friends of Colombia



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FROM THE *Field*

FEEDING SCHOOLCHILDREN: FROM THE 1960'S TO TODAY

A new community action project in Tubará, Atlántico was 53 years in the making—linking the dedicated work of Peace Corps Volunteers decades apart.

It started when PCV George Wilson (Colombia II) sought to help the people of the small village of San Luis De Corral to build a *comedor*, or mobile kitchen, to serve food to schoolchildren. Most rural schools did not have feeding programs unless they had access to a kitchen and a dining facility. San Luis De Corral, like its neighboring villages, did not have such facilities. *Comedores* were a reasonable solution, thought Wilson, especially because the Colombian Department of Education promised to supply food once the mobile kitchens were operative. But making the plan a reality faced serious obstacles: equipment, local government support and most of all—money. The community succeeded in erecting a simple structure for a kitchen and dining area by building their own bricks and transporting cement on burros. This structure serviced 80 children. Wilson ended his tour in 1964 without a mobile *comedor* that could serve many more. But he left behind the valuable idea.

Fifty years later, two new PCVs posted to Tubará heard about “Jorge Wilson” and his dining plan. The villagers wanted to know if

Jorge was well, where he lived, how many kids he had. The PCVs, Brianna and Cesar Castro, decided to contact Wilson, now living in Ogunquit, Maine. “We just wanted to be able to answer people’s questions,” said Brianna. But they also learned more about Wilson’s idea for a mobile *comedor*. Wilson told the Castros that he was an active member of Rotary International’s local club. He encouraged the Castros to pursue a relationship with the Orient Rotary Club in Barranquilla, which had experience with various Peace Corps projects.

“Rotary is always looking for international projects that show sustainability and since there were other volunteers in Tubará, this was a good project in Rotary eyes,” says Wilson. The Castros and Wilson decided to collaborate, each employing their best skills. The Castros conducted a needs assessment to include in a grant proposal to Rotary. Their assessment revealed that children sometimes weren’t attending school due to hunger. They also cited road access, a preschool center for young kids, a community first aid kit and many other needs. The school feeding program, they agreed, was most important.

(Below) Mobile kitchen workers serve food to school children. (Above right) Children wait to be served at the *comedor* financed by the Orient Rotary Club in Barranquilla.



Most rural schools did not have feeding programs unless they had access to a kitchen and a dining facility.

FROM THE FIELD (CONTINUED)

FEEDING SCHOOLCHILDREN (CONTINUED)



(Left) One of the schoolchildren the *comedor* serves.
(Above) Children wave goodbye after lunch.

Because the grant would require local buy-in, the Castros also contacted local government agencies, securing the support of the Tubará mayor and local health officials including nurses and others who could measure improvements in children's health such as weight increases.

"Since I am a long-time Rotarian, I was able to obtain the help of my club and ten other clubs to write the grant proposal," says Wilson. "Of course, we contacted the Orient Club in

Barranquilla and the members also agreed to work with us. In the end, together we raised \$34,000 to build a *comedor* that provides two feeding programs. It was inaugurated in April, 2016, and I was thrilled to be there, along with the Castros, for the launch. As promised, the Colombian Department of Education is supplying the food and school officials have already reported a 30 percent increase in school attendance. Two elementary schools are now feeding up to 175 children."

The next step in this 50-year journey is the participation of a new Peace Corps Volunteer in the area. A teacher in one of the schools, she will also oversee the operation of the feeding programs and help record improvements in the health of participating children. Now another small village outside Tubará is requesting a *comedor*, creating an opportunity for expansion of the program. The next step could be a needs assessment and another proposal to Rotary.

See Peace Corps Director Carrie Radelet's interview with the Castros at www.peacecorps.gov/media/forpress/press/2302/

F.O.C. TREASURER'S REPORT, 2013–2015

	2013	2014	2015
REVENUES			
Dues	\$4,670	\$5,985	\$10,054
Donations to FOC	5,010	5,695	9,968
Dues from NPCA		1,170	850
TOTAL REVENUE	\$9,680	\$12,850	\$20,872
EXPENDITURES			
Donations by FOC	\$19,405	\$10,000	\$9,000
Newsletters, other mailings	3,368	2,463	6,202
Website		4,384	450
USPS permits	120	124	128
D & O insurance	680	700	735
Other business expenses	1,114	298	1,048*
Reaffiliation of FOC with NPCA		400	400
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$24,687	\$18,369	\$17,963
On Hand (as of 12/31)	\$15,666	\$10,147	\$13,056

*Includes \$500 to Peace Corps for 50th anniversary celebration

The Colombian Department of Education is supplying the food and school officials have already reported a 30 percent increase in school attendance.

After PEACE CORPS

BRINGING THE WORLD HOME...TO JACKSONVILLE

All Peace Corps Volunteers are familiar with the organization's Third Goal—"to promote a better understanding of other peoples on the part of Americans." Because this year marks the 55th anniversary of the Peace Corps, many returned Peace Corps Volunteers have been inspired to actively support that goal. One of those RPCVs is Bernadette Miron, Colombia 13, a member of the First Coast Returned Peace Corps Volunteers group on the Jacksonville coast of Florida.

Miron had attended all of the Peace Corps Connect events hosted by the National Peace Corps Association during the past three years. She was particularly impressed by a presentation at the Nashville event: "I remembered a great presentation by Michael Burden of the Columbia, Missouri RPCV group," she says. "He described the success of their Third Goal International Film Festival. I thought it was an ideal way to 'bring the world home.' They are now in their tenth year of doing film festivals."

While recovering from a second knee replacement in the summer of 2014, Miron had more time to think about the idea of mounting a film festival in the Jacksonville area. She thought that organizing and producing the festival could rejuvenate the First Coast group's membership, especially by involving younger members. But most of all, she said, a festival could "push back against the times we live in where the 'other' is seen as the enemy. When we are encouraged to build walls between countries, keep the Muslims out, live in fear of the 'other', the Peace Corps Third Goal of bringing the world back to America seems especially important. We wanted the festival activities to display the humanity of the 'other.'"

Supported by her husband David Miron (also Colombia 13), she went to last June's Peace Corps Connect in Berkeley, CA and attended all six sessions related to film festivals. The First Coast festival was officially on! In November 2015 a 22-person First Coast committee organized a menu, selected films, chose a venue and raised funds. Their budget was over \$5,000 including a \$500 donation from NPCA. (They ended up making a profit.) NPCA's ongoing help



in disseminating information on the many RPCV- sponsored film festivals in the country was invaluable to their planning, said Miron.

They chose March 5, 2016 as the date, tying the Film Festival to Peace Corps Week, an annual commemoration of President Kennedy's establishment of the Peace Corps 55 years earlier. Local promotion was high: the mayor of Jacksonville announced a proclamation of support, the Florida Times-Union published four op-eds, there were six recruiting events, and Miron with a colleague participated in a local version of the Diane Rehm show.

The program opened with a tasting of Eastern European, African, Asian, Middle Eastern and Latin American food followed by an Ethiopian dance performance. The film festival itself included documentaries: "A Towering Task" produced by Alana DeJoseph and "Posh Corps" by Alan Toth. Next was the main attraction—a screening of an award-winning film, DIFRET, produced by Mehret Mandefro, based on a true story of a young Ethiopian girl caught in a clash between cultural traditions and the country's advancement of equal rights. A Skype talk with Mandefro followed the film.

The program ended with a talk by Peace Corps Response Volunteer Rosemary Calhoon Takacs, who first served as a Volunteer in Paraguay from 1988 to 1990, then—25 years later—signed up to be a Response Volunteer in Guatemala.

They had a sold-out house of 150. Maybe there will be a 2nd Third Goal International Film Festival in 2017, says Miron.

"Did the festival make a difference?" asks Miron. "The important part is that we made a statement of our belief in friendship and peace in the world."

(Above) Movie poster for DIFRET, an award-winning film screened at the festival. (Above right) Rosemary Calhoon Takacs (from left) talked about her experiences as a Corps response volunteer in Guatemala. Bernadette Miron organized the festival and W. Scott McLucas underwrote the program.



“A festival could push back against the times we live in where the ‘other’ is seen as the enemy... We wanted the festival activities to display the humanity of the ‘other.’”

AFTER PEACE CORPS (CONTINUED)

FULLFILLING A DREAM FIVE YEARS IN THE MAKING

BY MICHAEL BAND, GROUP II-2

On a hot muggy June afternoon in 2011 I tore open my Peace Corps invitation letter and discovered I would be off to Colombia in four short months. After reading through the invitation package, I drove directly to Barnes & Noble to purchase the Lonely Planet Colombia guidebook. Over the following month I devoured every page of this book and went through two highlighters circling cities I wanted to visit, national parks I wanted to travel to, hostels I wanted to stay at, and making a *Top 10 Must Do While In Colombia List*. Atop the list was hiking to *La Ciudad Perdida*. "The Lost City".

However, on the second day of training, I sadly had to cross out *La Ciudad Perdida* as Peace Corps Colombia's Head of Security read out the names of "hot zones" we wide-eyed volunteers were not able to visit. One of the first places he listed was the hike I so badly wanted to complete. However, after my service in March 2014, I distinctly remember boarding the plane back to DC thinking I would be back some day and finally trek to *La Ciudad Perdida*!

How nice it was to be back in the hot, humid, sticky Cartagena air! Walking into the Cartagena airport felt like a dream. I was so accustomed to living and working in DC, it felt like my time living and working on the coast of Colombia took place a lifetime ago, not merely two years ago. This nostalgia filled my trip in February 2016 as I went back to visit the site I once called home, spoke with old colleagues, greeted former students, and visited my favorite restaurants. But this trip wasn't only filled with revisiting old memories; this time I was finally going to get to cross out the last remaining item on the *Top 10 List* I created in 2011.

Accompanied by an indigenous guide and a backpack full of bug spray, I finally got the

opportunity to hike to *La Ciudad Perdida* and, let me tell you, the experience was even better than I expected! My guide, Juancho, took the time throughout the four days to identify numerous creatures we saw in the jungle, to inform us of the medicinal uses for various plants, and to tell us about the origin story of *La Ciudad Perdida* and its rediscovery in 1972.

The four-day venture consisted of six, eight, seven and six-hour hikes up the side of steep mountains and down sharp declines. The mountain vistas, the snaking rivers, and the swimming holes we stopped at along the way were well worth the modest price of the tour. But on day three after climbing hundreds of stairs built around 800 CE, we made it to a clearing where the Lost City could be viewed in its entirety. Taken aback by the sheer beauty of this archaeological site, accompanied by the fact that there were less than 20 people exploring the Lost City, made this experience like nothing else I have ever done.

After the four-day hike, I returned to Santa Marta soaking in sweat, smelling worse than I ever have, barely able to life my legs, but with a giant smile on my face. This experience somehow managed to surpass my expectations after I had been building it up for over five years. If you ever find yourself back in Colombia and longing for adventure, I highly recommend cancelling your plans for four or five days and contacting the *Wiwa Tour Group* (<http://wiwatour.com/?lang=en>)!



(Above left) After a 5:30 am wake-up call and a two-hour hike, we arrived at *La Ciudad Perdida*. (Right) On our trek back to Santa Marta, I got to ask a Kogi Mamo (shaman) questions about how tourism is affecting everyday life for the indigenous people in the Sierra Nevada mountains.

Ciudad Perdida (literally 'Lost City') was lost around the time of the Spanish conquest and only 'discovered' again in the 1970s. Deep in the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta mountains, it remains only accessible on foot by doing what is easily one of Colombia's most exciting and breathtaking hikes. Known by its indigenous name of Teyuna, it was built by the Tayrona people on the northern slopes of the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta. Today, it's one of the largest pre-Columbian towns discovered in the Americas—*The Lonely Planet*

Project UPDATES

WONDERING WHAT TO DO WITH ALL THE STUFF?

BY PATRICIA A. WAND, COLOMBIA VIII 1963–1965

Are you still wondering what to do with the boxes of letters, journals, reports, photos and clippings from your Peace Corps/Colombia days? If so, we have the perfect solution for your dilemma.

Friends of Colombia have established an archive at American University Library, Washington, DC. Your documents will join those of 120 other returned Peace Corps Volunteers and staff who served in Colombia 1961 – 1981 and since 2010.

Documents, including photos, you generated or acquired while serving as a Peace Corps Volunteer in Colombia form an historic record of a significant time in U.S. – Colombia relations. Please do not let those items deteriorate or disappear. They need to be preserved so that scholars of Latin America and of the Peace Corps can access them in the future. The Friends of Colombia Archive is already being used by researchers, writers, journalists and students.

We hope you will contact Susan McElrath, University Archivist, immediately and begin the simple steps of donating your materials. Original items, rather than photocopies, are preferred. Digital surrogates (i.e. scanned copies) may be acceptable; check first about optimal format and resolution.

But if you are not quite ready to part with the original memorabilia, please add a codicil or letter to your end-of-life wishes indicating that you want all documents and photos related to your Peace Corps service to be deposited in Friends of Colombia Archive at American University. A simple statement to that effect with your signature and date will suffice.

Folder titles already in Friends of Colombia Archive are available at: www.american.edu/library/archives/finding_aids/friends_of_colombia_fa.cfm.

For information about deposits or to schedule a time to see items in the Archive, contact:

Susan McElrath, University Archivist
archives@american.edu
Phone: 202-885-3256

American University Library,
4400 Massachusetts Ave., NW,
Washington, DC 20016-8046

(Left) Carrie Hessler Radelet, Peace Corps Director, visits the Peace Corps Community Archive at American University Library. (Above right) Patricia Wand, Friends of Colombia Board; Susan McElrath, American University Archivist; Carrie Hessler Radelet, Peace Corps Director. American University, January 13, 2015



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Documents acquired or generated while serving as a Peace Corps volunteer need to be preserved so that scholars of Latin America and of the Peace Corps can access them in the future.

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Books, BOOKS, BOOKS

THE GREAT SURGE: THE ASCENT OF THE DEVELOPING WORLD

BY STEVEN RADELET | A REVIEW BY JERRY NORRIS, COLOMBIA VI

The title of this book refers to that period of time in the two decades since 1990 when development assistance harvested the largest return on global improvements in the human condition, especially on poverty reduction, health and education. Two signal events of the 1960s propelled them into a contemporary perspective: the emergence of post-colonial Africa, parts of Asia and South America; and the after-effects of the Green Revolution.

A popular book of this era was written by the ecologist Paul Ehrlich: *The Population Bomb*, who “warned of mass starvation and overcrowding as population outran global resources”. In 1960, world population was 3.0 billion and he predicted food scarcity if a way wasn’t found to limit population growth rates. Prof. Ehrlich advocated that the “U.S. government adopt stringent population control measures, both domestically and for the Third World”. The government responded with billions of dollars to promote extensive family planning programs, urging the developing world to go forth and multiply a lot less.

Still, from the 1960s onward, world population inexorably increased to 7.3 billion, confusing demographers. As fertility decreased, so too did mortality rates. It seemed counter-intuitive that world population should have increased at such an accelerated pace at the same time that safe and effective contraceptive methods were increasingly available and free of charge to most developing countries. Prof. Radelet documents some of the factors that made this possible: “One of the simplest and most potent was the introduction of oral rehydration therapy (ORT), designed to stop childhood death from dehydration and diarrhea. This disease killed 5 million children every year just two decades ago. Today that number is down to 760,000”. ORT is a simple salt, sugar and water oral solution that can be mixed in kitchens of poor rural families. It is as effective as the intravenous therapy that formally had to be administered in a hospital setting.

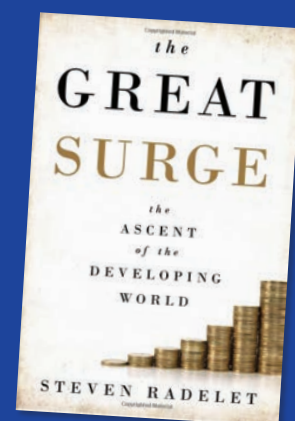
Another factor is mass immunization programs for children. Prof. Radelet has found “in the early 1970s, only 5 percent of the world’s children were immunized against the six major diseases. Today,

that rate has increased to more than 80 percent, and vaccines have saved millions of lives”.

Increases in life expectancy rates and healthier lives were due to major advances in basic nutrition and reductions in hunger. Perhaps the most significant event that increased global population was the advent of the Green Revolution in the 1960s, rendering moot Prof. Ehrlich’s dire warnings about food scarcity. For instance, India was a net importer of grain products in the late 1960s. Through application of Green Revolution principles (introduction of new seeds, adaptation of fertilizer technologies, etc.), in less than a decade, India became a net exporter of grain products. It proved that once a nation could feed itself, it could also grow economically. India is now the 11th largest economy in the world. It feels confident enough to have recently informed donors what type of aid it will accept and what type it no longer needs, thank you. It is part of BRIC (Brazil, Russia, India, China) which now offers international development aid.

Prof. Radelet depicts a greatly changed world from the 1960s to the present. When the Peace Corps began in 1961, there was only a handful of non-governmental organizations working abroad, such as Oxfam International, CARE, Catholic Relief, and the Rockefeller Foundation. Today, there are thousands of such organizations. JFK’s Administration established the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), which subsequently became the first donor agency to sponsor ORT. It was an active partner in advancing concepts of the Green Revolution via the World Bank, and immunization programs through GAVI (Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization).

The Great Surge is a distinctive contribution to development literature—which far too often has been one-sided in presenting the ‘wonders of development assistance’. It is refreshing to have an author with substantive development experience address both sides of this coin and objectively present the case that while some interventions didn’t quite work as planned, many more did and millions of people became the beneficiaries of *The Great Surge*.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Steve Radelet, Professor of Practice and Director of the Global Human Development Program at Georgetown University, will lead a panel discussion on progress made in socioeconomic development over the past 20 years at the 55th anniversary celebration of the Peace Corps. For more information: www.peacecorpsconnect.org.

IN MEMORIAM

STEPHEN MICHAEL (MIKE) MURRAY GROUP I (UNEROS)

BY ENRIQUE MORALES

Today, February 29, 2016, we attended Mike Murray's Mass at the Cathedral Basilica of St Louis. It was a well attended solemn Mass; many of St Louis' dignitaries were present. Our Mike was a well known, very much liked member of this community. Mike's wife Barbara, his sister and brothers were of course present and we offered our condolences and prayers on behalf of all the Unero Brotherhood. From the opening hymn through the Biblical readings, to the song of farewell, all selections were very well-presented, by the clergy and attendants.

At the close of the service, one of Mike's best friends offered a eulogy of his life and asked for a moment of silent prayer. Then he proceeded to list Mike's love of life and his country, his involvement in the environment, his finding of the local movement of Forest Park Forever (he was a local fund-raiser and supporter of St Louis' largest park), and the many other endeavors Mike was involved in. Then his friend asked all those in attendance to stand and be recognized—his wife Barbara, his family, his Peace Corps comrades, his fellow bikers, runners, and many friends. We all stood and acknowledged our love and admiration for Mike.

At the end of the service, a bagpiper from Mike's Hibernian Irish Society led the procession to the rear of the cathedral. Outside the church stood two rows of Mike's fellow bikers holding up bicycle wheels in salute to Mike's involvement in biking. It was all very impressive and very moving to honor a well deserving member of this vast community. And the bagpiper kept playing until the casket was placed in the hearse by the pallbearers. Armida and I were overwhelmed and very honored to be part of such a beautiful farewell to our fellow Peace Corpsman.

WILLIAM LEON SMITH COLOMBIA 12

BY ROGER SOLES

Bill was born on June 26, 1939, the second youngest of seven siblings. He grew up in in western Maryland and as a youth was well known for his accomplished skills in gardening, rabbit raising, and growing and selling fruits and vegetables. He graduated from Allegany High School in Cumberland, Maryland, in 1956 and he received a degree in business administration from the University of Maryland in 1968. Bill joined the Marine Corps in 1957 and served in the Navy Reserves as a petty officer until 1995.

In 1963 he joined the Peace Corps. Bill was trained as an Agricultural Extensionist and credit union promoter at the University of Nebraska. He arrived in Colombia on the day of President Kennedy's funeral, November 25, 1963, as member of the 12th group of Peace Corps Volunteers in Colombia. He served in the village of Marsella, Caldas in the Integrated Program of Applied Nutrition, (PINA).

Bill's career spanned several organizations. He worked for many years as a loan processor for the Navy Federal Credit Union in Vienna, Virginia. As a self-described "people person," he also particularly enjoyed being a part-time sales associate for Woodward and Lothrop for 27 years until they closed their doors in 1996. He continued to work part time in sales at Macy's for many years thereafter. Bill especially loved crabbing in the summertime in the Solomon Island and at the Pax River Naval base with family and friends.

While a Peace Corps Volunteer he met Ines Casteneda of the city of Santa Rosa de Cabal, Caldas. In 1965, they were married in Cumberland, Maryland. They had three daughters—Shelby Evans, Lynn and Cynthia and two grandsons, Kennedy and Riley Evans. He is also survived by a brother, Roland Smith of Rawlings, Maryland, and two sisters, Ronelda Davis of LaVale, Maryland and Treva Michaels of Cumberland, Maryland.

ROBERT BERNERO COLOMBIA VIII

BY PAUL SOMOGYI, COLOMBIA 22

Robert Bernero, affectionately known as Bob by all who knew him, passed away on March 8, 2016. He was a civil engineer and consultant who specialized in infrastructure projects, both domestically and internationally. Over his 50-year professional career, he was a Peace Corps Volunteer, and after his service in Colombia, he worked with the U. S. Forest Service, the World Bank and the U.S. Agency for International Development. Bob also had extensive consultancies with private groups, such as Booz Allen Hamilton and Tetra Tech. These took him on assignments to Angola, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Mozambique, Malawi, Ecuador, Panama, Dominican Republic, Peru, Guatemala, India, Indonesia, the Philippines, Pakistan, Russia and Tanzania. Whenever possible, Bob wanted these cultural experiences to be shared with his family and he managed to have them accompany him often, even later in life, including his grandchildren. When not working abroad, Bob served as a volunteer with the Census Bureau, the GALA Hispanic Theatre, and the Montgomery County Board of Elections.

When his sons spoke at Bob's memorial service, the sense of family loss was palpable and reminiscent too of a passage in a book called 'Boys in the Boat': *they thanked him for his goodness, his grace, his honor, his simple civility, and for all the things he had taught them.*

Donations may be made in his honor to the American Heart Association (<https://donatenow.heart.org>); Friends of Colombia, P. O. Box 15292, Chevy Chase, MD 20825; or the Peace Corps (<https://donate.peacecorps.gov/donate/projects-funds/>)



(Above) At his funeral, Mike's fellow bikers honor him and his support for cycling. He was a three-time Masters National Road Race Champion and Regional Director for the U.S. Cycling Federation.



Membership FORM

FRIENDS OF COLOMBIA MEMBERSHIP FORM

Please complete one form for each member.

Date _____

Name _____

Name in Peace Corps _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____ Fax _____

Dates of Peace Corps Service _____ Group # _____

Site (include city, village, department) _____

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES

☐ New ☐ Renewal

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(payable over a two-year period)

☐ Donation to FOC for projects in Colombia \$ _____

☐ Donation specifically for *Paso a Paso* \$ _____

TOTAL ENCLOSED: \$ _____

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PO Box 15292
Chevy Chase, MD 20825

NOTE: FOC is a registered 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization.
Consult your tax accountant regarding personal tax deductions.