

Partners of the Americas

Indiana, USA - Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil

March 2009

In This Issue

[Events Calendar](#)
[Brazilian Film at the IMA](#)
[Feijoada Party!](#)
[2009 Youth Ambassadors](#)
[Voice from the Past](#)
[Rio Grade do Sul News - The Land of Twins](#)
[Business Delegation to RS](#)

Quick Links

[- Indiana Partners](#)
[- Rio Grande Do Sul Partners](#)
[- Int'l Partners of Americas](#)
[- About Brazil](#)



Mark Your Calendar!

March 28
IMA Movie [Black Orpheus](#)
 Indianapolis Museum of Art
 Time: 1-4pm

April 20
Indiana POA Board Meeting
 TBA
 Time: 5-7pm

Partners Exchanges 2009

Jan 12-Mar 6	Youth Ambassadors
Feb 8-Mar 2	RS Teacher in Residence
Feb 16-22	Coaching Coaches Exchange in Indiana
April	Coaching Coaches - Americans to Brazil
April 5-10	Forum da Liberdade in Porto Alegre (IN Bus. Partners attend)

Report from the President Dear Jhani,

Changing Places--- Improving Lives



Last year as I sat down to write the President's Report, in rainy, dreary March, the challenges of governing our all-volunteer organization of 40 + years seemed weighty. It seemed Indiana Partners struggled just to keep long-existing programs running; and Partners at the International level was splintered and had been without a president for almost a year, and facing financial uncertainty.

What a difference a year can make! This year, with a strategic plan to guide and strengthen us and the financial and leadership uncertainties at Partners International on the mend under a new president, we were ready to hit the ground running. The Executive team squeezed in a December meeting to finalize the 2009 Members Events, Programs, and Exchanges and began more detailed budget scrutiny to be ready to support new programs emerging on the horizon. We are moving in a new direction.

At the Annual Meeting last October, new Partners International President Steve Vetter demonstrated experience he brings from the World Bank and the Eureka Foundation, talked about ideas he has been collecting and considering for the course of Partners in the next decade. He challenged us to think about innovative ways to cultivate leadership and skills that help citizen volunteers forge new pathways to solve their own problems. Partners can make unusual connections, bridge traditional socio-economic divides.

By Changing Places -- Improving Lives Across the Hemisphere

How can we re-invent the collaborative style that has been the Partners trademark for over 40 years? to meet the needs of today's global community of the Americas? What is our NEW Direction? We want to engage all members in this discussion during the year and, especially, at the Annual meeting. For more on our new direction, coming

June 1-15	Cultural Arts exploratory trip to RS in May
June 12-July 11	IN Youth Ambassadors to Brazil *
August	IN and RS Youth Ag Exchange*
October - Nov	RS Adult Project Visitors; IN Adult Project Visitors - TBD

*Subject to further confirmation

improvements and program priorities, see Below..

See the sidebar to the left for our 2009 Exchange Visitors. Become a host and have the experience of a lifetime!

Black Orpheus Film and Mask-Making Workshop



On Saturday, March 28 the Indianapolis Museum of Art and Partners of the Americas, Indiana presented "Black Orpheus," Marcel Camus' reinterpretation of the famous Greek drama Orpheus. The film follows Orpheus, a streetcar conductor and Carnival dancer, in his fight for love as he struggles against the crowds of Carnival, Mira, his betrothed, and even Death to be with his true love, Eurydice. The film won a Palm d'Or at the 1959 Cannes Film Festival and an Oscar for best foreign language film. As a bonus, POA offered a free Carnival mask-making workshop at noon for adults and children at IMA's nearby Red Art Lab.

Feijoada - SOLD OUT Success!

More than 90 Partners members and guests crowded into the Fishers Community Center for the fourth annual Brazilian Feijoada party sponsored by Indiana Partners of the Americas on Sunday, March 1. Members came from Muncie, Anderson, Terre Haute, and Lafayette areas to the Indianapolis event to sample the hearty traditional Brazilian meal, visit with friends, update on Partners programs and visitors, and see a presentation by the teen Youth Ambassadors finishing their 2-month stay in Hoosier homes.

Carolyn Requis Smith, Indianapolis Deputy Mayor for International Affairs, welcomed the crowd to Indianapolis and expressed the Mayor's support and encouragement for Indiana Partners' role in building strong relations through our special state relationship with Brazil. Special treats were added to the traditional black bean, pork and rice meal by Cultural Outreach chair, Rosane Zelmanovitz and her committee, to give it a more authentic Brazilian touch: a taste of the Brazilian drink, "caipirinha," and the most delicious typically gaucho dessert made with red wine, "sagu".

Youth Ambassadors featured a photo montage they created on Brazil and Rio Grande do Sul during the dinner. Each of the six Youth Ambassadors gave enthusiastic and heartfelt appreciation to their host families, described cultural lessons of their visit - sometimes comical - and performed an impressive demonstration of Gaucho culture and dance. Truly a highlight!

Kudos to Partner Board member, Kathy Kaiser, and her committee for such a successful event. Committee members were: Anthony Roberts, Raquel Ward, Janet Fisher, and Jane Gehlhausen.

Mark your calendar for the next 2010 Feijoada - Sunday, February 20!

2009 Youth Ambassadors Find Snow and Service



The six Youth Ambassadors, ages 15-18, who traveled to Indiana for the 8-week homestay program this year got their greatest wish in full measure almost immediately after arrival in Indiana ---a record snow.

Thanks to the great 2009 Youth Ambassadors and host families:

- Emilia Cabreira of Porto Alegre - the Susan and Cyrus Sharifi family of Terre Haute
- Joao Aguiar of Porto Alegre - the Christina and Phillip Coelho family of Muncie
- Artur Chini of Soledad - the Chris and Geraldine Airress family of Muncie
- Lisley Ortiz of Soledad - the Christina and Kevin Blanch family of Yorktown
- Gabriela Quevedo of Soledad - the Danny and Angela Zook family of Muncie
- Ariel Polycarpo of Porto Alegre - the Judy and Mark Tucker family of Indianapolis

The 2009 YA program was the most successful ever. Thanks to coordination by Youth Ambassador Exchange Program Chair Leslie Barratt and Pam Nicholas, a volunteer service Saturday was arranged in Muncie for the YA to join the Kiwanis in making over 100 pillows for ill Riley Children's Hospital patients. YA teens were very pleased with the experience and all said they wished to continue volunteer service upon returning to Brazil .

In addition to the traditional reunion and visit to Indianapolis on the Feijoada weekend, where they were "best in class in ice skating!!" The 2009 Youth Ambassadors had a wonderful spring-like visit to Chicago with Jhani Laupus and the Mark Tucker family on Saturday, February 7, that included the Art Institute, Millenium Park, the John Hancock Tower, Water Tower Place shopping, fabulous 3D flower-power fireworks on the Chicago River at the Wrigley Building, and delicious Chicago-style Pizza.

See Youth Ambassador blogs for more thoughts, photos and experiences at any of their blogs:

- [Emilia Cabreira](#)
- [Ariel Polycarpo](#)
- [Lisley Ortiz](#)
- [Joao Aguiar](#)
- [Gabriela Quevedo](#)

Photos: Youth Ambassadors pose for their first big snow! and Youth Ambassadors volunteer for Beyond I Can in Muncie .

Voice from the Past - Helen Braun



January, 19th 2009.

My name is Helen Braun, I am a 26-year old journalist. I am living in Moscow during this year. On the day of my birthday (January 19th) I received an email from my Dad, Don Ester. It has been like this since 1999 - the year that I met my family.

Yes: in the last ten years, I am a very special and happy person, with two very special families.

In 1999, I went to Indiana as a member of the Partners of America. I was 15 years old, and I really wanted to learn about something new. The purpose was: living with an American family, going to an American school, and doing some volunteer work. There is nothing better to really learn about another culture. So, five more teenagers and I went on that adventure.

I remember the first night that I spent at the Ester's family: I asked myself if I could afford that - I was very young and it was the first time I spent so long away from home. But, the Ester's became not just a host, but also a real family to me. Don, Carol, Nick, Erin and Katie knew exactly what to do: Don took me to the youth choir and to Ball State University - and there I learned about culture. Mom Carol helped me with the volunteer work: I was going to a nursery in a Kindergarten. There, I learned how children can make us more simple and happy. Erin - the sister who was close to my age - was my friend and we could discover together that even in Brazil , or in the United States , teenagers have the same fears, the same questions, and the same friendship.

Katie - the youngest - taught me how to be patient, and how brothers and sisters act the same way all over the world. With Nicole - the oldest - I discover how sweet and fun someone can be.

I also got a new brother: Jacob Nicholas . He hosted my brother Bruno Braun (some years later) and, after that, we hosted him in Brazil . He is a very special person who changed my Brazilian's family life - because everybody loved him. And, of course, we changed his life teaching him the real soccer game and made him one of our soccer team fans.

This experience totally changed my life. I could see another world: bigger, more interesting, and a world that needs someone to "discover" it. I've got many friends, I changed my way of seeing things. And it really helped me to know what I wanted: to be a journalist.

When I arrived in Indiana , I didn't know if I would be a doctor, or a ballerina. After that experience, I understood that I really want to know people - as a doctor - and to conduct the life in a beautiful way - as a ballerina. Being a Youth Ambassador showed me the way to happiness. After my journalism coursework, I started studying Anthropology, too. And now, I am spending this year working as a journalist in Russia . But I am pretty sure that these choices - this trip - started before: the courage, the curiosity to be always learning something new was given to me ten years ago.

And, still, the experience that I had in Indiana is giving me its benefits. I have a new family, I've got new challenges. The only thing that really bothers me is that I miss my American family and friends a lot. But, I am always keeping them with me.

Partners Business-Government Delegation to RS Economic Conference

IN Partners President, Jhani Laopus, leaves April 1 for a Partnership Development visit with Rio Grande do Sul Partners. The visit kicks off with a Business-Government Mission, April 1-8, to the highly-regarded Forum da Liberdade (Freedom Forum) in Porto Alegre and meetings with government officials regarding Partners activities, a potential visit by Indianapolis Mayor Greg Ballard, and an invitation for a sister state visit to Indiana by RS Governor Yeda Crusius as well as exploration of business opportunities. The Forum is currently chaired by an RS Partner whose wife, Leticia Sá, was a Youth Ambassador to Indiana in the 1990s. Jhani Laopus will stay until April 18 to see Partners programs in multiple cities, work on updating the biannual Partnership plan and strategic planning, and restarting programming in the Youth Ag. Exchange and implementation of new programs in Sports and Cultural Leaders of the Arts.

Business-Government Delegation members are:

- Jhani Laupus, IN Partners President and Principal, JLL & Associates Environmental Solutions
- Rosane Zelmanovitz, IN Partner Board Member and Chair of Cultural Outreach
- Philip Horner, CEO, Horner APG, LLC
- Jerry Karwowski, IN Partners Board Member and President, Prudential Securities - Indianapolis
- Jim Ammeen, IN Partners Board Member and Indpls Attorney in Finance, Real Estate and Intl Law

RGS Newsy Notes



Rio Grande do Sul is known for many things inside and outside of Brazil : Churrasco, supermodel Gisele Bundchen, fine Brazilian wines and, of course, twins. Well, perhaps they aren't as well known for twins but the unusually high instance of twin births, and among them births of identical twins, in the small town of Candido Godoi in north western Rio Grande do Sul has certainly caught the attention of some researchers and reporters.

Geneticists and researchers have been trying for years to figure out why so many twins are born in this small town of German immigrants but so far have been unable to solve the mystery. Theories range from "something in the water," to excessive inbreeding, to the presence of notorious Nazi scientist Josef Mengele after his escape to Brazil from Germany following World War II. For the full story on the mystery of "The Land of Twins," check out this New York Times [article](#).

Photo: Twins from Candido Godoi pose for a journalist (courtesy of the New York Times)

Report from the President Continued

More big improvements are coming in 2009 in Membership Services, Public Relations, and Cultural Outreach:

- 1) New chair for Cultural Outreach/ A new Event: Rosane Zelmanovitz has put a Farropilha Day Celebration during our Annual meeting on Saturday, September 19 on the 2009 calendar. Mark your Calendar to be part of this special Rio Grande do Sul holiday, celebrated only by the Gauchos and demonstrating unique aspects of the Gaucho character. It will be fun and interactive;
- 2) A new IN Partners website: Membership (Rick Bein) and Public Relations (Jim Nulty) have teamed up with a new friend of Indiana Partners and former Brazilian resident, Peter Fisher to create the new website. Watch for the announcement and be one of the first to try it for online membership and event registration through PayPal.
- 3) Public Relations is also preparing to launch a travelling display on IN Partners to take our message to key public and university libraries around the state to get out the word about Partners.

Keep tuned for more details on Farropilha Day and all the 2009 membership events and Partners programs.

New Program Priorities for 2009 are being developed by the Executive Team:

- 1) Improved Existing Programs will continue--Youth Ambassadors, Youth Ag Exchange, Teacher-in-Residence, Viva Vila, Adopt Hope.
- 2) New Programs under development--Youth Development Sports ("Coaching Coaches"), Cultural Leaders in the Arts, Cooking up Ideas, Business-government Missions
- 3) Establishing Strong Support: Governance and Resource Development.

Coaching Coaches, Phase I: " Hoosier 'Hysteria' Helping Brazilian Youth"

Coming Next Time