



American Association for the Development of Bangou

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Culture and Progress in Bangou

Welcome AADB Supporter!

Welcome to the first AADB newsletter. Since coming back from Bangou, Cameroon, where I spent 2 years as a US Peace Corps Volunteer, I have been trying to get my own personal life in order, but I will never forget about my experience in Bangou and why I felt compelled to start AADB, which gives **100 percent** of donations toward development and cultural projects in Bangou. In the last year, I have moved from Texas to Washington, D.C., where many Returned Peace Corps Volunteers (RPCVs) end up after service.

Since my return, I have continued to work towards establishing AADB as a credible Non Governmental Organization (NGO) by working with Anthony Rodriguez and other members of AADB to establish a Web presence, recruit new members and donations and establish our goals and mission—all with the goal of helping Bangou become the best small village in Cameroon. The Bangou that we envision is a place where everyone has an opportunity to thrive, be part of the amazing culture and tradi-

tion, can get a decent education and has freedoms and liberties which we enjoy in the US. Additionally, we will create an opportunity for

and of the US. Just as importantly, we encourage and support the rich culture and traditions of Bangou so they are not forgotten.



From Bangangte, Cameroon during my in country training for Peace Corps.

All donations go 100 percent to development and cultural projects in Bangou and I, as well as the co-founders, Anthony Rodriguez and Martin Feukep, pledge to make sure all of the money is well spent and will donate our own time and money to make sure AADB accomplishes its mission of making Bangou the best small village in Cameroon!

Thank you so much for your continued support and I hope you enjoy this newsletter.

Please send us feedback and suggestions to help us accomplish AADB's goal. If you would like to donate, please visit our Web site at www.americansforbangou.org or send a check.

Thank you, Merci and Melapsa;

Angel Velarde

President

AADB



Angela Calmes, Josefina Jurado de Castillo, Memo Rodriguez, Susy Perez.

Thank you so much for helping Bangou become the best small village in Cameroon!

Remember that you can now donate and even become a member for our 2011 projects!

In this Newsletter

- Overview of the last year
- Budget
- Projects for 2010
- Membership and donations

AADB Goals:

1. The Development of Bangou

AADB will advance the development of Bangou by: 1. supporting agricultural, health and education development projects, 2. Support the Bangou chefferie to conserve the its culture and traditions and 3. Support existing development groups currently in Bangou.

2. Building the American-Bangou relationship

AADB will build the relationship by: 1. Searching for and uniting all Bangou's in the US, 2. helping American and Bangou organizations work together, 3. support resources that promote the Bangou culture and 4. Help Bangou's learn English and American's learn Bangou.



2010 AADB Members and Donations

AADB would like to welcome all members and people who have donated to AADB for the 2010 budget. We have as our goal for 2010 to build a potable water well in the neighborhood of Tchi-tchi in Bangou, sponsor the 20 best students at the Bangou-ville high school with the Anthony Rodriguez scholarship and give to various cultural events including the Zheu dance going on in November 2010. Thanks to our members we will be able to accomplish all of these goals for 2010. The 2010 AADB members

are: Angel Velarde, Anthony Rodriguez, Johanna Velarde, Matt McGrath, Thryn Albin and Justin Franks. Most of these people donated at least 200 dollars or are providing services to meet AADB's goal such as Web hosting and design. If you are a member and have not yet received an AADB tshirt, please email me at velarde-AADB@gmail.com

Additionally, the following people have generously donated to AADB: Brad Risinger, Gil Rose, Roberta Foxmable, Chris Oller, Jo Velarde,





From the top: Mr. Batchin-gou, generator for the chefferie, Bangou-ville computer lab.

“Anyone who doesn't take truth seriously in small matters cannot be trusted in large ones either.”

Albert Einstein



Vice President Anthony Rodriguez in the middle with his parents.

2010 AADB Budget

The 2010 budget is \$2,840.70 thanks to your generous donations! Below is a breakdown of the donations:

All of the money is going to be used towards cultural and development projects.

For 2011, we hope to raise \$4,000 to continue to help make Bangou the best village in Cameroon.

2010 AADB Budget

Online Donations	\$162.96
Memberships	\$800
Other Donations	\$1,877.74
Total	\$2,840.70

2010 Projects

We have three main projects scheduled for 2010:

1. The 2010 Anthony Rodriguez Scholarship: Since 2008, AADB has paid at least part of the school fees for the 20 students with the best grades at the Bangou-ville high school. For 2010 we look forward to continuing the scholarship and increasing the amount awarded to each student. Additionally, we give them school supplies and other gifts during the end of year

ceremony as well as a certificate to recognize their accomplishment.

2. Tchi-tchi potable water well: a water well was started in the neighborhood of Tchi-tchi, which is part of Bangou, a few years ago and was never completed. AADB will take over the project and complete the well to provide the tchi-tchi neighborhood of Bangou with potable water.
3. Zheu dance: Once a traditional

Bamileke Chief and can show he has made significant contributions to the village, he puts on a dance which displays the power and history of its culture. After more than 30 years as Chief, Tayo II Marcel will put on his Zheu and AADB will be there to encourage the people of Bangou to learn more about their tradition and culture.

Director's bio

My name is Anthony Rodriguez and I am the PROUD Vice President of AADB. Angel and I have known each other since college and I can say his whole family is now a big part of mine. Angel has been in my life as a friend, classmate, co-worker, roommate, and through all our experiences and the acceptance into his family, I feel like I can call him brother. I was overjoyed when Angel came to me with his idea of helping the community of Bangou by starting an NGO and not only be part of it, but be Vice President.

A little about myself: I currently live in Fort Worth, Texas where I serve as a reservist for the United States Army as a respiratory therapist at the 94th Combat Support Hospital Unit in Seagoville, Texas. I also go to school full time to further my education in the medical field. Helping people is my passion and I want to do so on many different levels. As a strong leader in the medical profession, I will be able to make trips to Bangou to help with medical services and teach the community the importance of first aid and

safety. I am very proud of the projects AADB has delivered thus far; The computer lab, school supplies, generator, water well, Angel's business classes, the Anthony Rodriguez Scholarship with many others and many more to come. I am proud of what AADB has become and look forward to how AADB will grow.

AADB was started 2 years ago, with an idea and a strong desire to help. Angel came to me with challenges the Bangou community faces which he had seen first-hand. The impact we made with just a few hundred dollars we raised was tremendous!! AADB was born that day and has grown ever since. We share the same ideal: that 100 percent of donations go strictly toward the goals and projects of AADB to enhance the culture and environment of Bangou. I believe this sets us apart from many organizations that have fees or percentages taken from the donations. Very little goes a very long way in Bangou, so any donation is much appreciated. Clean water, light, and education are just a few things we have

been able to provide things that most Americans take for granted. AADB strives on heart, desire and motivation and I love that I am a part of it.

I want to thank all the volunteers and members that contribute their time and money to help with the culture projects and development of Bangou. This organization would not be possible without all of your generosity and desire to make a difference. I look forward to meeting each and every one of you in the near future to personally thank you for all the hard work. I am always available to members and friends of AADB so feel free to email me anytime; I will be happy to hear your thoughts and comments on our progress.

Anthony Rodriguez
Vice President

AADB



Going on 27

I had a blog during my time in Bangou which talks about my experience with the Peace Corps and in Bangou. I still occasionally post about AADB and things still happening in Bangou. Below is an excerpt from a recent post. To check out the blog go to goingon27.wordpress.com

These people became my people, Bangou became my village, and my friends there are still my friends now that I am in the US.

I want to help the village, help Bangou be the best possible village in Cameroon and even West Africa. I see Bangou being able to keep its tradition and



culture, the history of the hundreds of thousands if not millions of people who have been Bangou, alive in a way that Africans understand and our people have long forgotten. The wisdom of the earth, where we came from and where we will one day depart to, is in a real way still alive in Bangou. The feeling that we are not above, or over the earth,

but part of it and that our history and ancestors live on to teach us lessons and help protect their people and land is being practiced in Bangou.

This is the main thing I want to save, this hard to describe, mystic quality which we in the Western world, surrounded by buildings and things we have created, and noise from everywhere, have lost.

Goingon27.wordpress.com

Americansforbangou.org



During the 2009 Bangou Cultural Festival

Past projects

Most of you know about the scholarship and the computer lab we helped build but another good project AADB was able to sponsor was business classes I taught while still in Bangou. AADB sponsored for the women to be part of the classes and a dozen entrepreneurs were part of the training. Since that time, I've heard that a group from that class has organized into a group and started a business! I can't wait to go back and visit Bangou to see how they ended up.

My Peace Corps replacement, Kareen has been doing an amazing job building from what 3 other previous volunteers have started, and continued

building the Bangou-American relationship and helping in its economic development. She has especially been able to help with women outreach with her counter-part, Yvette Djiyou, and health concerns with Dr. Jacques of the clinic called "La Life". We wish her continued good fortune and we stand ready to help if possible.

AADB's largest project to date, the computer lab which was in support of the Association Solidarite France-Bangou, was a success at the time of its opening when it was able to provide cheap internet to the people of Bangou-ville. Since that time however, costs and training issues have hampered the

project from being sustainable. The costs were not being covered by the sale of internet access alone and they need a better way to pay for the center. It has been determined that what they need is a photocopier to make the center function sustainably.

The Anthony Rodriguez Scholarship has continued to encourage students to stay in school and motivate them to excel so that they will be one of the twenty top students receiving the honor every year.

For more on past projects go to: <http://goingon27.wordpress.com/category/cameroon/>

"What makes this amazing is that all of this is possible with donations from Americans showing their love and generosity to people whom they have never even met. "

Membership and tshirts

A lot of friends and family of AADB donated in 2009 and the beginning of 2010 to reach our 2010 budget of more than \$2,800. The full amount will go towards cultural and development projects in Bangou.

If you are a member of AADB and have not yet received an AADB t-shirt please email me at VelardeAADB@gmail.com and let me know what address to send it to. There is a list of all members in the first page of this newsletter.

In terms of our budget, how we establish it is that all donations from April the previous year until March of the current year go towards the current year. So for the 2010 budget, all donations made from April 2009 to March 2010 have gone towards the 2010

budget.

We are taking donations for the 2011 budget now. If you can help us please do. We hope to be able to raise at least \$4,000 for the 2011 budget. Again, 100 percent of the money raised will go to Bangou.

We are also currently working on our application for a 503 c. Even though we are done with most of it, it takes a long time not just for the paperwork, but



approval and everything else.

I hope you have enjoyed the newsletter and we hope to hear from you with ideas and suggestions for improving the life of the people of Bangou.

To donate, send a check made out to AADB to the following address:

AADB
208 Adonis Circle
Mckinney, TX 75070

Or donate online at:
Americansforbangou.org



A student receiving the Anthony Rodriguez Scholarship