

# EL CLIMA

JUL/AUG A PEACE CORPS ECUADOR PUBLICATION 1995



## CONVERSATIONAL WINNEBAGO

This edition of CW, we bring you our take on the tourist spots of Ecuador, for when all of those annoying relatives come visit. This is actually one we put together a few issues ago but never used. I was just too lazy to create a new one. Till next time.


### The Place

### The CW

Baños	↓	What exactly is the big attraction anyway, other than a decent Veggie restaurant?
Cuenca	↑	A charming place, but are those streets done yet?
Esmeraldas	↑	Easily the prettiest and most exotic province.
Galápagos	↔	Never been and never will. I won't add my steps to the fragile islands.
Montañita	↑	The best beach in Ecuador. Surfs up Dude!
Oriente	↔	Ecuador has one of best parts of Amazon jungle basin. Too bad Peru won't give most of it back.
Otavalo	↑	Touristy, but you can't beat the bargains or atmosphere.

—Juan Carlos Velasquez

¿ Quien es?



a free EL CLIMA subscription  
to the first 27 correct responses.

## CALENDAR

- August 9: Omnibus 74 arrives in Ecuador
- August 10: Ecuadorean Independence Day
- September 4: US Labor Day, holiday
- September 25-28: Agriculture, Animal Production, Natural Resources and Small Business Dev. Super-Conference, Chorlavi
- September 28-30: Omnibus 73 mini-Conference, Chorlavi



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Listen to these statements from a few successful Volunteers:

1. "I am showing the teachers in my school techniques on how to work with learning disabled children."
2. "I started an ecological club to teach kids about the environment and to give them something useful to do."
3. "I am giving charlas to women's clubs in the campo about nutrition and family planning."
4. "I helped the women in my community start a hat knitting co-op and even took a class in knitting with them."
5. "I built three water systems and 100 latrines."

All of these Volunteers are fulfilling the goals of their program and are considered successful. But which of these do you think least meets the Peace Corps goals of capacitating and empowerment? Which of these is not working themselves out of a job? Which of these do you think least defines "development" and not paternalism? If you answered number 5, then you can understand why, when a program had to be canceled by Peace Corps Ecuador, the Rural Infrastructure program was chosen. Then you agree that Director Jean Seigle and the Inter-America Region made the right choice. If you don't agree then most likely you are in the Water Program. As a Water Volunteer myself, I am in full

support of this decision.

It is the goal of development and, specifically Peace Corps, to empower impoverished populations, mainly through education. Education is empowerment. Those who are educated can empower themselves. Volunteers are told they should be working themselves out of a job. Volunteers are supposed to be transferring knowledge to Host Country Nationals, whether they are a counterpart, agency or a community. In this way, when the Volunteer leaves, HCN's can continue the work that the Volunteer started. Only in this way, will development ever work. It does no one any good for a Volunteer to start up a project, whether it be a nursery, a basketball league, or a water system if it is going to be abandoned or ended when the Volunteer leaves. What is the whole point if it is? Things may have improved in the community for two years but it is the same when they leave.

Most Volunteers are trained to educate those they work with to achieve a certain level of capacitation or a behavioral change. Water Volunteers are trained on how to survey, design, and construct water systems or latrines. No one can argue against the benefits of a Volunteer working to build a water system in a community that doesn't have one. What could be better? But what is really accomplished? Is there a behavioral change? I have seen countless systems which no longer function, some less than three years old. The person responsible for those systems I'm sure thought that, they too, were accomplishing development. Indeed, the success and failure of the Water Program has been measured by the number of systems built. But are we really succeeding? I know of a Volunteer who began a latrine

project in communities that had latrines that were unusable, only to find out those latrines were built by a previous Volunteer. What can be more discouraging?

**T**he nature of the engineer and indeed the Water Volunteer is to build something for the benefit of others, whether it is a bridge, a computer game, an airplane, or a water system. It is generally not to teach someone how to walk across a bridge, how to play a computer game, how to fly an airplane, or how to maintain or use a water system. That is someone else's job. Successful engineers, in the eyes of other engineers, are those who build bridges or water systems. And these are the type of individuals coveted by Peace Corps to take this talent and put it to use where it is needed, such as Ecuador. These engineers are sent to an assignment, trained in the local construction techniques, taught the local language, and are sent to work. The engineer then sets out to build as much as they can. The ideal Peace Corps scenario right? But what is wrong with this picture? Are Water Volunteers sent to train HCN's in how to construct, design, or maintain a water system, because there are no engineers here capable of doing it? Of course not. There are plenty of engineers here in Ecuador who are very capable. They may not all want to work in the campo, but they are here. There are probably more engineers here than either doctors or lawyers (unlike the States where there are 5 lawyers to every one engineer). Then what is the problem? Why are there so many communities here without water? Why are there so many systems here that don't work? And is Peace Corps really solving this problem? Water

Volunteers may help build hundreds of water systems in Loja, but they are generally not solving the problem.

Almost all of the engineers in the Water Program, including myself, are not teaching anyone about how to maintain or use a water system. Nor were they told that in training, nor by their program manager, Napoleon Cevallos. It may have been mentioned in passing,

"Almost all of the engineers are not teaching anyone about how to maintain or use a water system...that is not the real goal of the (water) program."

but that is not the real goal of the program. So why should they? Engineers just want to build and look at a new water system and know they were responsible. But where is the empowerment? Where is the transfer of knowledge? Where is the capacitation? Where is the development?

It is very difficult for me to take this stand since I am one of these Water Volunteers, I have designed several water systems being built by my Municipio and World Vision. I have not done any education myself. That is not what the Municipio wants or expects from me. I am a hyp-

ocrite right? How can I possibly have this stance and justify my presence here? I thought I could defend myself by stating that most of the systems I have designed have been for World Vision who have very active promoters working in the communities capacitating them by giving them a sense of responsibility. They ask the communities to help pay for the project, to do the majority of the work, and they train community members

about how to run a water board to maintain the system by collecting monthly fees, etc. They are really trying to do it right. But then I knew this was a cop-out on my part. I would still be here if I wasn't working with World Vision. World Vision and my Municipio probably would have done these systems one way or another if I wasn't here. Maybe they

would have even hired an Ecuadorean. No, I can't justify my presence here this way. Through almost two years here I have come to these conclusions. I haven't always felt this way. I have struggled with these issues and have come to the disturbing decision that I do not believe in the work that I am doing. This has been difficult to realize and I am almost ashamed to admit it to everyone here. But I can't hide from the truth.

I know though, that my time here has been well spent. I have learned much about Ecuador, Ecuadoreans, and myself. I have answered the question,

"You're not really American are you?" hundreds of times which has probably furthered the goals of Peace Corps more than any latrine I could have ever built. I have no regrets. And I know I can feel good about and applaud the decision to cancel the Rural Infrastructure program. I don't want to discourage anyone with these words, and you all may not agree anyway. Volunteers are doing good work here. Ecuadoreans are benefiting from our presence. We can make a difference and I challenge all Water Volunteers to not build another system and concentrate instead on the communities, educating them, teaching and learning at the same time. Let us not lose sight of why we are here. If anyone thinks it's to build a latrine, think again. •

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El Clima is a bimonthly magazine by and for the Peace Corps community of Ecuador and beyond. Opinions expressed are those of the author and are not necessarily the opinions of the El Clima staff, the Peace Corps, or the United States Government.

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**Sep/Oct issue - Aug. 23**  
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HALLMARK PRESENTS...

A  
(Sappy)  
Farewell Moment

Well, this is it. Time to pack up and move on. A few teary good-byes, lots of ganas to see my family and friends and enough great memories to last a lifetime (which is a good thing because it may be a while before I'm back in the selva). Definitely, no regrets. This experience has been more interesting and full of more surprises than I could have ever imagined. From losing my partner to the canoe driver to struggling with community members to make a library project happen to playing Nancy Drew of the jungle, it's been an adventure all the way. That's what the brochure promised, isn't it? I can't say that there weren't a few times that I might have liked to throw in the towel, but I'm sure glad I didn't. I feel very lucky that the reasons to stay always outnumbered the ones to leave.

While I've been thinking about COSing for a while, it's hard to believe that I'm really leaving it all behind. I've been bitten on the nalgas for the last time while occupying the great outdoors, I've taken my last shower standing on a pile of rocks and I've listened to my neighbors rapping in Quichua for the last time. Harder still to believe, is that I won't spend any more days in

Quito waiting for the machine, trying to squeeze just a few more Power Bars into my locker and making the rounds in the office. I'm gonna miss it, not enough to stay, but I'm gonna miss it.

As my departure becomes a reality and I board the plane, I'll carry my little red bucket as a victory torch (my latrine is more aesthetically pleasing than it is functional--where are all the Water Volunteers when I need them?) and think about what to tell the folks back home. It was almost never boring, almost always challenging and well, a really good time. I gave a little, grew a lot and made many good friends. Friends that will be a part of my life forever. I can honestly say that I got what I came looking for, plus some.

But before I get too carried away and make someone cry... I'll just say thanks to my Omnibus for two unforgettable years, thanks to Jean, Barry and all the Staff for your support on those tough days - I know you deal with plenty of them - and thanks to Juan Carlos and the El Clima staff. It was always nice to see you guys after a stint in the jungle and always equally as nice to get back to my site after pulling one of those all-weekenders. I'll think of you every time I punch a key. Happy editing and happier trails.

Kendall Ligon  
*El Clima Managing Editor*

## CHANGES:

"Ne'er look for the birds of this year in the nests of the last."  
Cervantes, Don Quixote



Peace Corps, as an institution, is dedicated to change and facilitating

change. Yet, when this organization is faced with change, I think that sometimes we forget to apply to ourselves the lessons or rules that we externalize. It seems easier to tell others to change than to accept the pain and regeneration of change ourselves. Peace Corps as a part of the U.S. Government will be undergoing some fairly dramatic changes in response to how the U.S. public and our Congress think about foreign aid. The changes will most likely be in terms of numbers of Volunteers and maybe geographic and sector impact. We must remain certain that they will not effect our fundamental mission or alter our three goals. If anything, our mutual commitment to the third goal must be steeled.

Changes in Peace Corps Ecuador. Elsewhere in El Clima you'll find an article by Barry which explains in detail that we will be phasing out the Rural Infrastructure Project (aka Water/Sanitation). The Trainees scheduled to arrive in August will not do so, and Napo will retire from Peace Corps in September. These actions will change our Peace Corps program here, and I ask for your support of the Volunteers and Napo, as we go through this process. I believe that taking

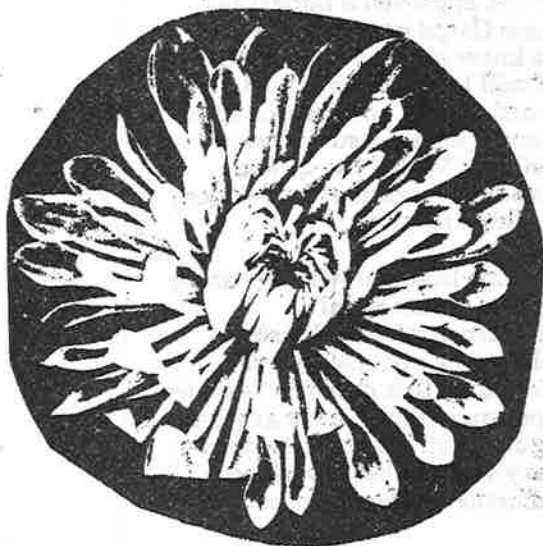


this mandatory action now, in response to decreased budget, will allow us to avoid even more abrupt or unplanned actions during the next fiscal year.

#### UPDATES:

President Clinton has nominated Mark Gearan as Peace Corps Director. Mark has a distinguished career in public service for one so young, 38. He worked with Governor Dukakis at the Massachusetts State House and has been serving President Clinton in a number of functions at the White House, including Director of Communications. The nomination, which requires Senate confirmation is currently awaiting Senate action. Until then, Acting Director Charles Baquet continues to serve in his leadership role.

Peace Corps Ecuador has continued its very busy pace recently. Dr. Miguel Artola designed and implemented a very successful Micronutrient Conference attended by a number of Health PCVs and Program Managers



from other InterAmerica countries. Francisco Garces conducted a week-long conference on Urban Forestry which is intended to produce some very practical green results in 8 Ecuadorian cities. Counterparts, PCVs and city leaders were in attendance.

**T**hanks to all the Volunteers who hosted the visit of our Desk Officer Janice Davis. We kept Janice moving...she visited Volunteers in Santo Domingo, El Empalme, Guayaquil, Riobamba, Puyo, and Tena. Janice says that she has returned to Washington with a great appreciation of the diversity of Ecuador and our program here, and of the challenge that it is for a Trainee to pack without knowing where they might be placed. She was very impressed with all the PCVs with whom she spoke. She said that she has never known a PCV with the confidence of Charlie Tamulonis, who did what no PCV had ever done, taking us on an unannounced inspection of 17 latrines in one of his communities. Great job Charlie. Again, my gratitude to Staff and Volunteers who made this a very productive visit.

By the time this is published, PC photographer Carolyn Watson will have been to Ecuador to photograph PCVs who reflect PC's diversity and work in certain sectors. She will travel to numerous sites to shoot PCVs with their counterparts, communities, beneficiaries. The photos will be part of PC's continual effort to recruit qualified and committed individuals as PC Trainees. My thanks to Jane Moore, Patricia Lopez, Cindy Chin, Ralph Coleman, Helen Geotina, Lela Stockwell, Julio de Jesus, Luz Rivera, Andres Amador, and Toya Simmons who

will all be photographed and do PC/Ecuador proud.

I'll be back in the States on vacation from August 9th until September 11th. On August 8th, Christopher and I will fly to Miami where I'll meet the new group of Trainees and spend the staging day with them. I'm looking forward to that. The program managers are putting together a slide show for me to present to the Trainees. Following that Christopher and I will be visiting family and friends in Florida, Massachusetts, Connecticut and



Washington DC. Barry will be the Acting Director and will be delegated authority to take action on any issue in my name.

Another COS conference approaches in July. Time moves both quickly and slowly for me here. As I reflect on my one year anniversary in Ecuador I am amazed by all that has happened in twelve short months. This has been an exceptional year full of professional satisfaction and personal growth. Thanks to you all, staff and Volunteers who have been a part of it. •

# PC Budget/ Program Cuts

By Barry Bem/PTO

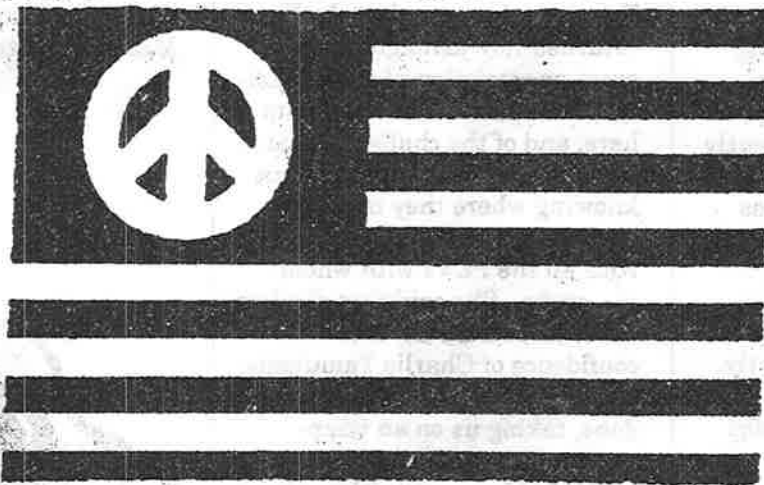
**M**any of you may have heard by now about budget cuts that are affecting Peace Corps/Ecuador. The Inter-America Region (PC/Washington) and we have had to make a very difficult decision to reduce the number of Volunteers in Ecuador and to eliminate an APCD position. We made the decision now to avoid an even more drastic and abrupt decision in fiscal year 1996, which begins on October 1, 1995.

The Rural Infrastructure project (water and sanitation) will be phased out and terminated in October 1996, when all current PCVs will have completed service. The Trainees scheduled to arrive in August of this year for this project will not come to Ecuador. And APCD Napoleón Cevallos will retire in early September 1995 after almost 23 years of service to Peace Corps.

This decision was based on programmatic and budgetary considerations. First, budget reductions required that the decision be made. If you have been reading news from the U.S., you know that the U.S. Congress is attempting to make major budget cuts in many government programs, especially those that have to do with foreign assistance. We have also been telling you for many months that

PC/Ecuador faced possible serious reductions in budget.

You may recall, as we mentioned in previous *el clima*'s, that we had to submit three different budgets for 1996: one maintaining current operations with current funds; a second one with a 5% reduction but no reduction in the number of Volunteers; and a third one with a 10% reduction including the cancellation of a program and a staff position. The third scenario has become necessary given the Agency's budget constraints.



The IA Region reviewed every budget in the region and, in consultation with us, made the decision described above. PC/Honduras is taking a similar reduction—terminating one project and retiring an APCD. It is highly probable that 3-4 additional PC countries in the IA region will make similar reductions during fiscal year 1996.

When several water/sanitation PCVs reach COS in October of this year, there will be seven PCVs left in this project and four PCVs in the Housing program, which is also under Napo's supervision. These eleven Volunteers will COS in October

1996, at which time there will be no further programming in Housing or Rural Infrastructure. We have scheduled a meeting on July 24th with all the Rural Infrastructure and Housing PCVs to discuss our decision and to elicit their ideas about how best to support them after Napo's retirement.

You may also recall that, in the strategy statement of our FY96 budget submission (published in *El Clima*), we talked about concentrating programming in fewer projects. Although we had not planned to have to make this decision so quickly, this reduction is in line with our hope to streamline programming and reduce the total number of Volunteers in country. The small group of Special Education Trainees who arrive in August will be the last for this program, which will end as scheduled in November 1997. This will further reduce the number of projects and Volunteers.

At this point, since Congress has not yet approved a budget for Peace Corps in general, we do not know exactly what our budget will look like for FY 96. We do not expect, however, to have to make another such drastic decision. We will keep you updated as information becomes available to us.

We hope that you will give extra support to the Rural Infrastructure and Housing Volunteers who are directly affected by this decision. And we hope you will join us in expressing our gratitude to Napo for so many years of hard work and dedication to Peace Corps. •



# Thoughts on Affirmative Action

By George B. Walker, Jr.,  
Guayaquil

With interest, I read the remarks of my contemporary in this Peace Corps journey, Mr. Kirk Leamons ("Rights...Who's Got the Rights"). I completed the article and immediately threw my hands in the air. I thought, "yet, again do I marvel at the cocky, one-sided opinion of a privileged white man." Ironically, Kirk and I were attending our six month conference and I said to him, "You know, I will have to write a response to your article." Let me state, for points of clarity that I have a definite respect for Kirk and highly value his opinion. I suppose my initial reaction was not so much toward him, per se, as to this whole school of "pseudo-progressive" thought that has suddenly become the sine qua non ("the essential thing") in contemporary intellectual conversation. After our exchange, which was cordial, I immediately set out to write this essay. In the process of the first draft and this current form, several ideas on this issue of affirmative action have been presented that have made my approach take a radical change from the form in which I had planned to respond.

Initially, my thinking was that I would simply use his (Leamons') writing to show the ludicrousness of an argument that does not make clear the benefits and positive results of affirmative action programs. There were holes in the writing the size of Chimborazo! "Yes", I thought, "I will simply make the article appear shallow

and sophomoric." I also concluded that I would avoid personal references to illuminate my points. After all, my feeling is usually that the most logical people understand that it is not necessary to expose ones personal agenda to make a point that clearly stands on its own. In other words, I don't have to be a slave to know that slavery is wrong. I have scrapped those ideas in lieu of simply stating an alternative to this whole reactionary back and forth that goes from one side to the other without any real listening, and sincere reasoning.

I believe in merit and the responsibility that people have to govern their own lives. In fact, I, proudly African American and Democrat, tend also to be rather conservative in many of my ways of thinking. I am addressing this issue of affirmative action not so much from the perspective of civil legality and fairness. I am asserting that we as a culture have become increasingly mean. So, again, that I may be abundantly clear, I am not talking merely of a shift to a "politically conservative" agenda. I am talking of the rank hatred that has caused us to adamantly be a people that chose to let those who have been discriminated against, for whatever "ism" you like, be further marginalized. Suddenly it seems okay to knock down the small pillars of support that still exist.

Kill affirmative action is just one of those new ways that we have begun to say this. Please note that I am deliberately using the first person plural to stress that these new ways of being are not just coming from one group of people. I have been amazed by the comments of friends, professional women and African Americans who have taken on this strident attitude that has become the vogue.

I have a book suggestion; David Levering Lewis' W.E.B. DeBois, Autobiography of a Race. I have read and enjoyed this absolutely fabulous Pulitzer Prize winning work from cover to cover and savored every moment of it. DuBois was the first African American to earn a Ph.D from Harvard University. Hardly twenty years after the signing of the Emancipation Proclamation and the Civil War, this man was examining the nuances of the psyches of the North American (US) people. Later, he helped to establish the Niagara Movement, which was an antecedent to the NAACP. And, perhaps most importantly, his work, "The Souls of Black Folks," made the insightful note that the most important issues of the twentieth century would be the color-line. How right he was! I could go on espousing the greatest of DuBois, but it would serve better to stop here and shift gears to the higher level that is so important in this book. Despite odds, I cannot fathom having to surmount, he did what most people, regardless of color cannot do today. His level of achievement is still a standard. So you say "George, this proves then that affirmative action programs are unnecessary." I submit further to you, my friends, that the greatest accomplishment of this genius was his understanding that opportunity is not available simply because one is talented. It comes because one is given a chance to prove him/herself. None of his accomplishments would have been realized had it not been for some people, with willing hearts, to make opportunities possible.

It seems to me that this idea of opportunity is what we are talking about when the battle rages about affirmative action. Making the options available on the part of those who are empowered with a certain amount of privilege. I have understood how affirmative

action works in many ways long before the word ever came into being and the beneficiaries were not minorities, as we now define them. It came on the part of family members in a community looking out for the poorer family down the street that did not have food because dire situations occurred. Those who "had" helped those who did not. Of course, no one called it affirmative action when the majority of the recipients of jobs and opportunities for positions were occupied by white men. For the record, many of those who we consider successful captains of industry, letters, and the sciences, were not always from "white shoe" families. A great many of these men were poor. However, someone stepped out of clouds to see the potential that existed.

I hope you are still with me. I have deliberately set out to make a contrast that is highly ambiguous. I want to leave the holes open for the nay-sayers to respond that I have not made an argument for merit and "set-asides" as the current debate calls them. I have done this to show that what I believe we are reacting to is not a government program that guarantees that certain percentages of jobs will be occupied by women and minorities. Rather, we are resisting the fact that some of these people, when given the same opportunities to excel, have radically disproved all of the beliefs and stereotypes about destined failure.

**A**llow me to amplify. I would love to argue the case for women, but I do not feel my voice is the best one, so I will simply speak from the perspective of an African American male—the area I know best. In 1964, the Voting Rights Act was passed. Basically, discrimination based on race. That was only thirty years ago! Hardly a whole generation has cycled since that time. However,

in that time more black professionals have advanced in the realm of mainstream categories of employment. But what we have also seen is that sadly, even with Affirmative Action programs, very few African American men have reached the highest echelons of corporate and independent businesses. Why, if these set-asides are so damaging to white men, are there not more of us? Because what thirty years has proven is not that opportunities have not been made available. Rather,

*"...nor do I believe there ever will be a time when a completely objective system can be applied to any conditions of hiring or opportunities."*

the same hatred and intolerance that caused the act to be necessary in the first place has not been curbed.

Now the arguments and prejudices that exist come out in best selling books like The Bell Curve, which argue that the marginalized of society should stay there because they don't have the intelligence quotient to compete. Or it comes in the form of race-baiting not unlike the gimmicks of the current political debates that are happening throughout the United States. I see it when I am told that I am exceptional and would have succeeded regardless of race. "After all, you are a smart guy, George." Okay, I will accept that. But what must come along with that is the knowledge that had it not been for opportunities like set-asides,

I am not so sure that in the United States, even in 1995, I would have been able to prove that I equally deserve and merit the distinctions that have thus far been my honor to carry.

**A**s I become personal in this essay, I realize each day that which I do have access to opportunity and have had a charmed life in many ways, my blackness is very much a visible barrier to many of the faces I encounter on a day to day basis. In Ecuador, I am treated very well, usually. But what I have been keenly aware of is that were it not for my accent and style of dress, I would be barred from certain restaurants and clubs. The assumption being immediately made that I do not have the wherewithal economically to be in certain places. As I encounter North Americans, I notice a curious reception. I get the keen sense that they are not sure what to make of this black man who happens to be in Ecuador. How odd, indeed, to meet a college-educated Negro! Friends, I write not simply of that which I hear tell of. I write of that I know and personally deal with daily.

When it comes to programs like affirmative action, surely I can see the demerits. I recognize that there will be people who will look at me and say, he's here because of set-asides. I have to acknowledge that the flaws by ways of fairness are enormous. Intellectually, I realize that we should be judged by merit and that all people should be given an equal chance, regardless of the exterior or interior factors that have created our being! Mr. Leamons is exactly right; regardless, to I keep up with a developing world economy it is absolutely necessary that we pick the best people for any job. But what I submit to you is that thirty years have taught us that we as a society are not yet capable of doing that fairly. It is precisely in the

assumption that "the best qualified for any position" is a white male.

**S**o you don't like set-asides. Fine. But here's the kicker, there never has nor do I believe there ever will be a time when a completely objective system can be applied to any conditions of hiring or opportunities. Each of us, with our built-in prejudices, pick people that we find attractive. Is it their eyes, hair color, weight, or height? What does it say that usually people in greatest positions of power tend to be generally described as attractive? I like to look at eye-pleasing people. Superficially, I am drawn to a certain color and texture of skin. I would bet a nickel that given the opportunity to select a person for a position, all things being equal, the attractive guy or girl wins. It is my nature. Friends, the nature in all of us as North Americans has been shaped by racism and sexism, no matter how conscious or unconscious. It is through our media, our churches and synagogues, our communities that are segre-



gated by economic and political boundaries. Even when our inner environments do not condone prejudices, it is the amazing person in a bubble that is not mildly influenced by the family down the street that is not so kind.

For this reason, with all of the problems that exist in the programs as they now stand, it is impossible for me to conceive of where we would be without some guarantee that all people, even by law, will get a chance to excel. And the reality is simply this: Regardless of what set-aside or benefit program that is employed, if you are not qualified, you will not succeed. I can wish it not so, but it is true. There are incompetents in any race or sex. However, the overwhelming thought is that while white men are given the benefit of the doubt, people of color and women are not.

**F**inally, I think Justice Thurgood Marshall had it right when he spoke on Affirmative Action and its necessity. He argued that those who like to say it is senseless because we all have equal freedoms now, do not recognize that you can not start a race with one person two-hundred yards ahead, shout "GO!" and expect the other person to catch up without some leveling of the track. We have had thirty years of trying to level the track and we simply are not there yet. I submit to you to look honestly at real conditions in the hearts of your friends and neighbors, and yourselves without the self-righteousness that speaks so loudly now, and honestly say that all is equal? Until we can do that, because we teach our children differently by example and systematically through our whole catalogue of education, I do not think we can see a possible end to the need for policies like affirmative action. •

## Letters to the Editor...

### More on the Coast

I'm glad that we're starting to vocalize through El Clima the importance of the Coast and the incredible needs faced by rapidly-growing Coastal communities in Ecuador. After all, why should we waste our time in communities demonstrating negative population growth that will be gone in 5 years anyway? I really think that there's little hope for the future of rural papa farmers with 12 kids, a mud hut, and 2 hectares at 13,000 feet. Our efforts should follow the demographic trends; help the growing Coastal urban centers and educate as many as possible.

My experience in Machala has been very positive so far and I, too, feel that more PCVs on the Coast are warranted. I was surprised at the bitter undertones in Kelly Rahn's letter to the editor and felt that Juan Carlos Velasquez didn't deserve the bashing he got. Rivalry among colleagues can be productive if not carried too far, and an honest Coast-Sierra-Oriente dialogue may help to influence the placement of future PCVs. I'll be honest in saying that I have a Coastal bias, but that's why there needs to be input from Sierra and Oriente Volunteers.

Let's keep the issue alive in El Clima taking care not to create the same regional division among Volunteers as our Ecuadorean friends feel toward their fellow countrymen.

Jeff Colon, Machala •



# Section 101

Section 101

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The first part of the document discusses the general principles of the law. It covers the scope of the law and the jurisdiction of the court. The text is very faint and difficult to read.

The second part of the document discusses the specific facts of the case. It describes the events that led to the dispute and the actions taken by the parties involved.

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# Grassroots To Go

(or What I Would Say If I Were Juan Carlos For A Day)

by Jill DeTemple, Ungubí

It's an average afternoon in Ungubí, and if the clouds weren't so thick, the view out of my window would be, as always: grass, pasture, corn and wheat, for miles. Settled far below in the valley is the small town of San Miguel; closest source of food, telephone, municipal services. As always, looking at this scene reminds me of how beautiful even clouds can be, and of how alone I am.

Ungubí is deep campo; fourteen kilometers from pavement, buses, toilet paper or telephone; public transportation is limited to two trucks a week that depart from the church at 5 o'clock in the morning. There is no park, no colegio, no two houses close together and only one packed-dirt road; no shoes on the feet of the average family's eight kids. This is my site, and I have come to accept it for better and worse. Better, when I am in it and living like my neighbors on dirt floors; worse, when I venture out and visit my fellow Bolívar volunteers, all of whom live in cantón or provincial capitals.

Peace Corps prides itself on being a grassroots organization, and yet I am the only one in my province and one of the few Volunteers in Ecuador living anywhere near grass. Is Ecuador really so developed that those most in need live in larger towns and cities? I don't think so, and I don't see it in my community or in communities like mine. Because we are so remote, government agencies and non-governmental aid agencies rarely, if ever, come to provide their services. In a region that is 100% agricultural, MAG trucks drive in once every six months, enough for an *ingeniero*

to climb out, look around, and ask, "So y'all are still growing corn and wheat, huh? Okay!" and then turn around. Five percent of the children that make it through sixth grade go on to high school. Peace Corps, as a unique organization that emphasizes cultural exchange as well as technical assistance, can do a lot of good in places like these. Why aren't we?

Why did the majority of the new agriculture Volunteers, traditionally among the most rural, go to developed towns with well-established agricultural organizations? Why do most of the Volunteers from other programs go to towns that, if they were in the United States, would invariably have a McDonalds™ at the strip mall?

I'm not saying that the work Volunteers in larger sites do is

less valuable. Indeed, I'm sure they get more done. It's much more efficient to work extension in several small communities, coming home at the end of the day to a hot shower. And let's face it, there's not a lot of need in Ungubí for a youth development worker to run programming for the street kids.

But after a year in the field, complete development does not strike me as something that can be done in McNuggets™. Sure, gardening is part of what I do here. Telling girls they can play soccer if they want to and teaching women to read is the other. Volunteers in larger towns also do these things; it is the natural extension of being a part of a community. The problem with the current system is that we've got nine volunteers plus missionaries and other aid organizations



doing it in Riobamba. Very few are doing it in places like Ungubí.

Where Peace Corps was once one of the only sources of direct, full-time rural aid, we are now adding to the widening gap of finances and opportunity that exist between rural and urban peoples by assisting primarily in developed areas. We can give technical help in McDonalds™-style, one-shot, ready-to-order charlas; sterilized, easy and comfortable. But in doing so, we are not grass roots, but McGrassroots, a plastic substitute and incomplete diet for balanced growth.

Development is the process of facilitating change. As a development organization, the Peace Corps needs to recognize change and work with it. But if we are truly a grass-roots organization, this means looking not only to the bright green buds of efficiency and new problems on the PanAm, but at the deeper roots that go unseen, unchanged and forgotten. This is messy. It means program managers have to look further, for less-convenient sites. It means placing Volunteers deep in jungle, coast and mountain territories; not always with cement floors, buses or host agencies. It means deep thought into whether Volunteers really do need an urban setting to do their jobs. It also means telling trainees that Tumbaco is not necessarily the norm for all of Ecuador.

I acknowledge that Peace Corps cannot be everywhere, nor are we a cure-all for the many ills of Ecuador. Still, by focusing only on developed and convenient areas, we do not carry out our stated mission. We are not McDonalds™ looking to make a profit on convenience, but an aid organization looking to create opportunities for those who would not otherwise have them. We would do well to remember that not all of these people live on pavement. •

## Humor, Health and Happiness

by Nicole Dino, Juan Montalvo

There were these two potatoes, an Irish potato and an Idaho potato and they got married. Of course, they eventually had a baby, a little sweet potato. The little sweet potato grew up and was talking to her father potato. "You know Dad, I'm all grown up now and I want to get married." The father potato said, "Well, yes you are grown up, but getting married is serious business. Is there someone you have in mind to marry?" "Yes," she said, "I want to marry Tom Brokaw." "Tom Brokaw," father potato exclaimed, "You can't marry Tom Brokaw. He's just a commentator!"

Okay, maybe it's a little corny, but if it made you smile, you just released some feel-good hormones, boosted your immune system, and for a brief moment, forgot about yourself. I'm hoping it did all three for me because right now I'm sitting here with a wing-ding case of *gripe*. My sinuses are banging at the doors of my eyes and my nose won't unlock the door. I'm wondering, "How in the world did I get this?" You see, I'm one of those people who drive myself crazy trying to figure out why I get sick. Hasn't my body been shot full of enough anti-this and anti-that to ward off any unseen army of attackers? I take my vitamins for heaven's sake! Have I been thinking too many negative thoughts about people, places or events that rob me of the precious energy I need to stay healthy? Does it matter? Well, I think so, and so do a number of people.

There is a school of thought with scientific data to back it up that says what we think has a profound effect on our ability to stay healthy. I've heard it said, "You are what you think." Our perceptions are how we interpret the events outside of ourselves. How will we choose to interpret those events; negatively or positively? Case in point: A man went to the psychiatrist because he was depressed. "What's the trouble?" asked the doctor. "Well," the man said sadly, "two months ago, my cousin passed away and left me \$10,000. Last month, my uncle died and left me \$20,000." "\$30,000 in two months; that's a lot of money," replied the doctor. "Why are you so depressed?" "Well," the man said, "this month, nothing!"

The idea that thoughts and the mind have a direct effect on the health of the body is not a new idea. You've heard the expression, "Mind over matter." I remember reading the section in Reader's Digest entitled, "Laughter is the Best Medicine," at least 35 years ago. Modern medicine became actively interested in this idea a number of years ago when a man named Norman Cousins wrote a book called, *Anatomy of an Illness*. He described how he literally laughed away a deadly crippling form of arthritis. Scientists took the idea further with modern technology, proving that thought processes actually can release brain hormones that effect the immune system. Norman Cousins just knew that he felt better when he laughed and eventually was completely cured.

The principle is the same with what happens to athletes during sustained exercise. The body releases hormones called endorphins, which are morphine-like chemicals that deaden pain and give the athlete a euphoric feeling. Smiling, laughing and positive thinking do exactly the same thing. Was Norman Cousins an exception? Think about the last time you laughed your ass off,



almost (or did) pee in your pants and cried at the same time. Didn't you feel better? It was brain chemistry sending out endorphin-like hormones boosting your immune system.

**H**umor takes us away, a mini-vacation or time-out, even if just for a minute, from the daily grind or a tense moment. Humor is as individual as people are. What I think is funny, you may not; especially after reading these jokes! It's the thought that counts and that's precisely the point. We sometimes, or often, need that minute-out to distance ourselves from a troubling situation, a difficult person or our own thoughts. Forgetting for that moment and concentrating on something funny or pleasant, allows our brain time enough to do its chemical magic. Humor and laughter, and subsequently feeling good or happy, not only keep us healthy but can also keep us young or at least "young at heart."

There is a story about an 80-

year-old man who went to the doctor for a health check-up. When the testing was completed, the doctor reviewed the tests, telling the man everything was fine. "You're in great shape," the doctor explained, "EKG, BP, lab tests, pulmonary lung testing, your weight, everything. You're as good as a healthy man 20 to 30 years younger. I'm really curious how you stay so healthy. Let me ask you this, how old was your father when he died?" "Who said my father died? He's 101 and in great shape," the man replied.



It was over. But the way the townsfolk called it, neither man was a clear winner.

"Well then, how old was your grandfather when he died?," asked the doctor. "Who said my grandfather died," exclaimed the man. "He's 120 and he's getting married!" "Hmmm," mused the doctor, "Why would a 120-year-old want to get married?" "Who said he wants to get married!?" replied the man.

Finally, humor and laughter break down the walls of separateness or misunderstanding. In other words, they help people come together and find common ground. When we experience warmth, caring, love and others' senses-of-humor, our brain sends out those feel-good, immune-supporting chemicals. We also might realize that in many ways we are alike, no matter what differences there are. That connection can't be stressed enough. Finding that connection could be tricky.

A man and his wife were sitting on the bed arguing. After a while, the wife said to him, "You're impossible." The husband turned to his wife and

said, very sweetly, "No dear, no I'm not. I'm next to impossible."

So here I am, and I think I feel better already. I've laughed at these jokes before and perhaps they've helped me again. I'm also out of jokes that can be printed. Maybe I'm experiencing a joke deficit. I need more jokes because I

don't want another cold. Have any good ones you can send me? Please do, at Correo General, Mira, Carchi. We could even have our own PC Ecuador joke book. Hey, did you hear the one about . . . ?\*

# What it is to RETURN

by Ann Burfeind, Patocochoa

**O**ver half of you say, "Yeah, return. It's not happening to me yet. Who cares?" Well, I wag the proverbial finger in your direction and say, "Just wait!"

When I consider what it will be like to return to the United States, I'm taking into stock my experiences with the people of rural Ecuador. I wonder how the experiences will affect my daily life in the U.S. The lessons I have learned here concerning the living of a healthy life will accompany me on that big jet airliner. These lessons of simplicity and sufficiency that have been mine, will be with me as I return to interact in our society of consumption and specialization. What this return will be like I'm not sure, but I'm sure that a responsible and simple life is possible in the U.S. Maybe the only way will be to join that Iowan gang with the slow-moving-vehicle signs on the back of the black buggies—We'll see.

In Ecuador, I've learned the beauty of simplicity, the possibility and feasibility of living a simple life. In other words, putting life and its experiences before goods and purchases—**MONEY**—(all bow here and begin to worship). When I return, I will not be a good consumer. Alan Greenspan will not be pleased. He will be in the large pack of folks, including my family, arms akimbo, furrowed brow, staring at me as I disembark from the big jet from Miami. "Here she comes," they'll

say. "She's the one that dares to look behind the curtain of the Money Oz." Horrors.

**T**he rural Ecuadoreans have been, for me, a wake-up call. I can, if I want, live a productive, responsible and healthy life without a large salary and big debts. These two go hand in hand, you know. The more we have, the more we want. The higher one's salary, the less money one has.

I am a true believer that one should do what one wishes or feels is the most important. . . as long as no one gets hurt. Therefore, go ahead office worker, drink your coffee, wear your pretty clothes, comb your hair and make your contribution to whatever it is you're doing. I'd be surprised to hear that you are aware what that contribution is; what exactly it is that you are supposedly accomplishing but, go ahead. (I heard tell that office workers without windows—imagine this—have colored lights over the doorway. These lights tell them if it is sunny, rainy, snowy, windy, or whatever, outside. Good grief, I shudder to think of this life.)

What is it exactly that the majority of us do in the States? Are we able to track the consequences or results of this activity? We strive to specialize ourselves; being the expert in a specific field. We therefore give over power and knowledge in every other facet of our lives.

Think of how we live as Peace Corps Volunteers. We all receive the same amount of cash, more or less. On this, we live well. We don't go without the basic necessities (this is obviously a relative term). For me, it is an ideal situation. Money is nearly a non-issue. It exists as an element of life, not as a ruling factor. Money exists, like air, to be breathed in when needed and likewise exhaled. If we lived in such a manner in the U.S., would it make our lives

hopeless, left without goals? Most likely, because this accumulation and subsequent worship of money is nearly our only goal.

I hear the bell of unrealistic ideas banging in the background. The unrealistic alarm has been tripped by my unrealistic ideas. Clank and honk all you want, I will state and attempt to live them into realism.

The opposition to the national religion is met with startling fear by the faithful. I guess, put into perspective, it is clear why the "toe the line" mentality is needed. Those willing to live without "things" are willing to exit the mainstream and this always has threatened the majority. Throughout known history, an idea not easily understood by the majority or "powers that be" was seen as a threat to the collective (i.e., the earth is flat and the sun rotates around it). Smell the smoke of the heretic's fire.

**S**o, those not wishing to live in the burbs with two cars, mortgage, car payments, or student loans are the lazy, the idle, the welfare leaches. Amazing how we need to categorize people in order to understand them.

For me, I wish to live a life free of debt worry, full of work, owing nothing but to myself, my family, the land and animals, to respect myself, others and the environment.

To return, is to learn to live a new life in the United States; to live a life amongst the riches of the U.S. with the wisdom of the rural Ecuadoreans that were and are my teachers. •



## Donde Jugarán Los Chanchos

by Steve McLaughlin,  
Cayambe

**I** sat by the vomit-stained window in the death seat with a raging case of subjunctivitis while the bus driver hung it out over every hairpin turn. To my left, the Toachi River crashed away a thousand feet below, swollen and brown with debris from the recent floods. It looked more like a river of boiling mud than water, as the driver winged us out over the sphincter-puckering abyss for yet another good, long look. He'd be passing on the left, spinning the wheel madly with one hand and gesturing obscenely out the window with the other.

Devo was blasting, "Girl-U-Want," on the stereo and it was all getting just a bit surreal. To quote our esteemed technical trainer Wayne "Dancing Fool" Worthley, "It can get better. . . or not." Our animal production group was returning from the sweaty coast and five weeks of tropical tech training. In time-honored Peace Corps tradition, I've decided to write about the trials and tribulations of our month in greater metropolitan San Miguel de los Colorados; population: 37 people, 4 pigs and 743 roosters.

The mid-coastal tropics are gelid with heat and humidity. An indestructible black mildew has spawned there, that lives on and in everything, including the con-

crete. Nothing is safe, and the prevailing impression as you arrive in Santo Domingo is of crumbling, gritty decay. Yet this city of more than 100,000, is a damp jungle boomtown, alive and electric and very, very capitalist.

Colorado Indians, in bright red achote-stained bowl haircuts, walk the streets in Western clothes amid the neon bustle. As you leave town, a billboard overlooks a statue of the virgin Mary. It advertises Fray Leon, "the Friars Wine," with three bathing



beauties in bikinis *como hilo dental*. The women smile at each other knowingly, with boxes of wine in hand, while below, the virgin demurely averts her eyes. Everything changed as we rode on top of the open red jitney buses to tiny San Miguel. The billboards advertising such necessities as, "Quaker State—*Inteligente*," disappeared and we left the domed, "International" cock-fighting arena behind. The jungle encroached and the little homesteads appeared to be carved out of living greenery by *machete* alone. In one yard, I saw a little albino boy, *sin pantalones*, practicing karate kicks on the hard-packed dirt while lop-eared brahma cattle blinked mildly at the show. Brahmas are the hump-backed, heat tolerant *Bos Indicus* cattle revered by Hindus. After a few vaccination rodeos and one corral reduced to splinters, we all got pretty reverent too.

Generally covered with vampire bat bites and supporting grape-sized subcutaneous grubs, these evil tempered *bravos* are nothing like their placid black and white cousins in the Sierra, the Holsteins (*Bos Taurus*). The jungle cowboys lasso them at a dead run from thirty feet away then hope like hell there's a sturdy tree nearby. They have to tie off the rope before the slack runs out or get jerked out of their boots and thrown airborne, not counting bounces, by a cow who's not even pissed off yet, just warming up. You just haven't lived 'til you've jabbed a crazed 2000-lb. Brahma bull in the *nalgas* with a dull needle of hoof-in-mouth vaccine. It's even more fun in a driving rain over slick greasy mud. (I mean, damn J.C., I haven't felt so pampered since my last case of amoebic dysentery.)

San Miguel itself is so small that there weren't enough eligible families to house us all individually. The ones who qualified made up for what they lacked in plumbing with hospitality and good food. Just ask Greg "You gonna eat that?" Zueber sometime about his innovative through-the-slats *baño visita* technique. We think he finally got all the splinters out.

I was paired with another veterinarian, Dr. David "Birdman of Tumbaco" Lauer and right from the start there was trouble. Mama E. just couldn't tell us apart. This is of course understandable, Dr. Dave being a tall, muscular, lantern-jawed brute with a steely glint in his eye and me being a short furry gringoid with the build of an underfed chimp and the haircut of an escaped mental patient. Sometimes my coke-bottle-thick glasses glint, so that probably explains the resemblance. Mama E. solved this conundrum in her own inimitable manner; I was Davide-Esteban for the whole of my stay.

Behind our house was a big acacia tree with all but the horizontal branches cut off to make a

giant roost for the forty or so chickens in the yard. Dave and I made fowl birdwatching jokes as we watched the goofy birds limbo their way up the bamboo pole to the roost at sunset. At the same moment, we stopped laughing and turned to one another with the same horrible thought, "Oh Lord, No... Roosters!"

There were eight of the scrawny b—tards and every morning they would *cantar* for us. That is, if any civilized person can call a serenade at 3 a.m., "morning." We seldom got more than five hours of sleep a night. The man of the house, Señor V., had pneumonia and sometimes he would accompany the rooster chorus with a solo of his own, a concerto, if you will. He'd heave his considerable bulk halfway out the kitchen window and gargle up some really impressive amounts of phlegm. For a treat, we often got this auditory spectacle during breakfast, too. I've never seen anyone turn completely green before, but Dave came close.

He was sick himself for a while with a severe throat infection. He'd stumble about the house with a high fever and glazed eyeballs mumbling in a hoarse laryngitic whisper, "I've never been so profoundly disgusted in all of my life." Since my Spanish



was marginally better than his, I provided the family with daily updates on Dr. Dave's condition, saying he had a bad *gripe*. After two weeks, they began to get very concerned for the poor man's health. I found out later that to them, "bad *gripe*" meant "constipated."



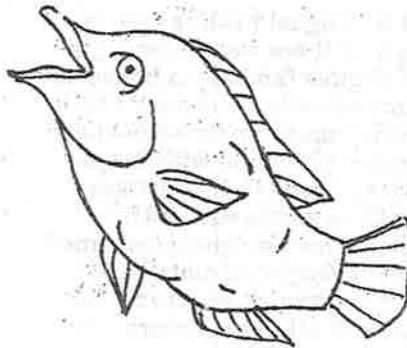
It also wasn't until weeks later that I accidentally discovered the secret to distracting the chickens. I was sitting on the cracked, butt-pinching toilet seat, watching a crimson-toed emerald tree frog circumnavigate the *baño*. After the appropriate interval, I flushed. Suddenly, I heard the pitter patter of little *patas* and a lot of very enthusiastic clucking. I stood there mystified, hitching up my pants and looked out the back door. (Our *baño* didn't have a window; it had a door--if you know what I mean, and I think you do...) The toilet, it turned out, just drained into a little ditch behind the house. There was a bunch of happy chickens back there, wading around in an odious brown and yellow creek, pecking at the goodies floating by. I thought of all that fine-flavored *campo* chicken and all those farm fresh eggs I'd enjoyed at Mama E.'s. It was just too much. I knew, right then, I had to write this one down for posterity. Dave found me there, giggling and wheezing and pointing inarticulately out the door. After I told him, he just shook his head in dumb wonder and shuffled off, honking his nose and muttering "Asqueroso, I've never been so profoundly disgusted in all of my..."

The food was, in fact, pretty good at our house. I mean sure, we ate a lot of permutations of fried green bananas and enough lard-fried eggs to give Dr. Pritikin the gibbering fits; but, you get a real taste for good lard after awhile. And truth be known, that chicken tasted pretty damn good.

One night, we had fish soup for dinner. Mama E. was dissecting the head and noisily sucking every last molecule of flesh off the cartilaginous thing. It looked suspiciously like carp, an alleged delicacy in Japan. I bit into something tubular and pasty, covered with veins and tasting vaguely fishy. For one panicked moment, I thought she'd slipped up and put a big ol' piece of constipated carp colon in my soup. Tasty!

The whole family was just beaming at me--all smiles--as I munched this "mystery meat." Dave got four of the damned things in his bowl. (Mom always did like him best). Between the two of us over-educated, egg-head veterinarians, we deduced that they might be... testicles. I was pretty sure I didn't want to know why a mud-sucking fish needed five testicles. We were told they were actually *huevos* and it was particularly lucky to buy a pregnant fish--all that free protein, you know. All you could eat in fact, since half of one was all I could eat. Lucky Dave!

There was another kind of protein that often came with dinner: half crispy, mostly dead bugs, careening down nightly from the lights over the dinner table. The bugs of the coast are definitely something to behold. There were moths the size of bats and bats



the size of... well, really big moths. In San Miguel, a person could see the proverbial "two-chicken bug". That is, it took two chickens to eat one of those suckers. At least, if they weren't already occupied eating something... umm... else.

You knew you were in the tropics because suddenly you stopped wearing underwear and cold showers seemed like a good idea. One night, I was in my room with an audience of bug-eyed kids watching the *gringo* fold his clothes. I felt a tickle on the back of my knee and suddenly the tickle was touring the inside of my shorts. As I pranced around, shrieking and clutching my privates, a giant insect ran

back down my leg. The kids were stupefied with glee. This was even better than laundry! It gave a whole new meaning to the word **cockroach**, which is what it was, and I decided then and there that underwear was probably a good idea.

Which reminds me, there's nothing like the sight of an insolent cockroach the size of a vienna sausage sucking on your toothbrush to make a man think twice about dental hygiene.

And then there were the **SPIDERS!** Great hairy fast mothers, like small tarantulas with attitudes. Just in case you were wondering, a limp 1/2-ounce soapbag is not the weapon of choice for big, super-agile spider elimination. I watched Dr. Dave, large animal vet and afraid of nothing (not even piddly half-pound spiders), do battle with said soapbag. Somewhere between the piston-like whacking and the high-pitched womanish screams (mine), the critter materialized on his burly forearms, fangs dripping. He looked at the slobbering beastie and said in a deadpan voice, "Why don't yuh knock 'im off, Esteban?" Between hyperventilations, I told him, "Sure, no problem... Just as soon as I change into some clean underwear..."

To make a long story short, there was one very flat wet smear where a spider used to be, in San Miguel that night, and we both started wearing heavy boots to bed and spraying on RAID for deodorant.

After five weeks, in the coastal jungle, we learned how to deworm, vaccinate and generally manhandle anything on four feet, to the ground with a minimum of fuss and a maximum of lassos. (Just ask Amy "Dances with Sheep" Feingold).

We can take a pig down to pork chops with a hammer and a hunting knife. (Don't ask!) And we can flee a frothing, savage, hump-backed bull with the best of them. Also, we've learned all

the words to every song written by MANA. For some reason, U2 and George Clinton Funkadelic were not the musical choices of discriminating Spanish instructors locked in a van full of *gringos*. Wayne "Me Vale" Worthy had only one tape of... guess what group?

**W**e enjoyed the considerable hospitality of the coast and learned to like mashed yucca. We can tolerate Ace of Base and even dance a little *salsa* (well, maybe *merengue*). We sweated and swore and became friends. Though I make light of it, I learned a lot and was glad to see what tropical farming is like.

As I step out tonight and breathe in the high cold mountain air of the northern Sierra, sunset has backlit the clouds in golden-yellow and indigo. The *páramo* foothills of snow covered Mt. Cayambe are in deep shadow. Here in my site, where spiders have the decency to remain small, I think back on San Miguel de los Colorados and there's just one thing on my mind: Anyone know where I can buy a good pregnant carp?

Duroc Doctor (Look it up you tree-huggers!)•



# Openness to change:

## The First Step in Global Awareness

by Marie Skertic, Guaranda

**I**n May I had the opportunity to visit my family and friends in North America for the first time in my 27 months here in Ecuador. As I am extending service and hope to live and work here for a bit more, I thought it would be a good idea to touch base with my former life.

It was good to see everyone after so long, although it was difficult to deal with the humidity, high temperatures and fast pace of life. Just going into department stores, I experienced sensory over-stimulation and almost got physically ill. Being able to drive my car, take a bath and go to the library was very nice.

Having the opportunity to catch up on the recent developments in the lives of my family and friends, I was very pleasantly surprised at the depth and interest of their questions about Ecuador. I had expected "polite" questions with a superficial base but found myself answering questions for hours. The questions thrown at me concerned all aspects of our life here: education, socialization, medicine, friendships, work possibilities, daily life, cultural differences; among others.

There was much interest in my photographs of the people and places of Ecuador (all 1,300 of

them!) as well as my experiences, friends, and how I've changed. The interest in Ecuador was limitless and each answer seemed to spawn two or three more questions. This made me feel very good, as my experiences here were being appreciated and

others were learning about people and places they would not have the opportunity to visit and know personally.

At the invitation of a good friend, I went to speak with his fourth grade class on Long Island, NY. He has a class of 21 students, six of whom are of Latin descent; one student's family is from Quito, another's from Perú, and two each from Mexico and Puerto Rico.

It was really a pleasure to have the opportunity to interact with interested, motivated students, who fired question after question at me. Their energy was limitless and the one-and-a-half hours we had was not enough to convey all I wanted to tell them.

**E**xplaining the geographical location of Ecuador led into a discussion of latitude and longitude; how degrees on a map are different from degrees on a thermometer; how, since Ecuador has high elevation, the weather is much cooler than one would expect from a country on the equator; that the time of day is exactly the same as that in North America although Ecuador is far away.

The fourth graders found the money of Ecuador to be absolutely fascinating and bombarded me with questions about what all the symbols and people depicted and letters meant, only some of which I know. They

found it impossible to understand how people can live without a washing machine, a car, an oven, or a refrigerator. The students cheered when told students in Ecuador have five hours of school a day, but were taken a bit aback at the amount of homework that is the custom here.

I also had the opportunity to visit the Museum of Natural History in New York City. Friends of mine work in the Education Department and invited me there to meet their co-workers and to talk about my Peace Corps experiences. One of their members, Emily, left in late May to serve in Peace Corps in one of the Republics of the former Soviet Union. I had the chance to talk to her for a few minutes and give her some practical tips for the journey ahead.

Speaking with Fernando, an Ecuadorean friend now living in New York, I was able to see how Ecuadoreans view my culture, as well as how I view theirs. We had so many things in common and were able to see both the good and the disturbing aspect of both cultures. He really appreciated my openness to his culture and I appreciated the fact that his English is excellent, after less than three years of living in North America. Speaking with Fernando actually made us both homesick for Ecuador.



Speaking with numerous people in such a short amount of time was exhausting, but also highly rewarding, for it reinforced my belief that this world of ours is getting smaller and smaller every day. We must be able to understand and interact with people of other cultures in order to be more well-informed and also to have a more realistic and well-rounded knowledge of our planet.

After hearing time and time again, "Marie, we've heard so much about you! How is life in the Peace Corps?," as well as showing my photographs and explaining life here, I can more fully understand the third goal of the Peace Corps; i.e., to bring knowledge of life overseas to those who might never have the chance to experience it firsthand.

Knowledge is a powerful thing. It is important that we relate our experiences here, both now and after our service. Others are interested and we can help motivate them to learn about another culture as well as the global reality if we but share a little of ourselves with them.

We can be positive motivators for change and I think we need to be conscious of this and make the most of every opportunity to discuss our life-changing experiences overseas with others. •

## **Special Education/Youth Development Program Successes**

by **Nellie Villavicencio Ledesma, APCD Special Education and Youth Development**

It is with a great deal of pleasure that I share the following information, because it clearly reflects the dedicated work and strong commitment the Special Education and Youth Development Volunteers have showed during this past Fiscal Year '94.

As it is requested by our Peace Corps Office in Washington, each project Director within each country has to submit a yearly Project Status Report (PSR) which turns out to be an evaluation of the activities carried out through a complete fiscal year. We have been doing this year after year, but I am certain El Clima is a good way to let people from other projects know about our achievements and milestones.

### ***What has been done in the Special Education field?***

- Fifty teachers of MR (mentally retarded), LD (learning disabled) and deaf students from 20 Special Education settings have received some form of direct technical assistance, including model teaching, elaboration and use of didactic materials, curriculum design/modification, elaboration of IEPs (individual educational plans), lesson planning, scheduling, etc.
- Two hundred teachers of MR, LD and deaf students have attended seminars and workshops on Sign Language,



Behavior Modification, Gentle Teaching, Elaboration of IEPs, Communication Systems, Profound MR, etc.

- Three, 35-hour courses on Augmentative and Alternative Communication (Boards) have been presented to at least 82 teachers and language therapists working with non-verbal students.
- Deaf students have attended a sexual education course.
- Individual Behavior Modification Plans have been elaborated by three MR teachers.
- One Sign Language Curriculum Guide was written, to be used by teachers.
- One Functional Reading Curriculum guide was written to be implemented with MR students.
- One Teaching Manual for Cerebral Palsy was written to be used in the training of teachers working with CP students. A PCV was requested by the National Department of Teacher Training to collaborate on the elaboration a Teachers Guide Curriculum on Mental Retardation, Deaf Education and Cerebral Palsy. This Curriculum will be presented to Ecuadorean special education teachers through seminars and presentations.



- Twenty professionals and parents formed a group interested in Augmentative and Alternative Communication Systems.

- Sixty-five members of adult deaf associations (Santo Domingo, Guayaquil, Loja, Cuenca) attended courses and seminars on Sign Language, team building, leadership, organizational skills, basic accounting and budgeting.

- Five fund-raising projects including community dances, folklore group presentations, T-shirt sales, etc. have been organized.

- One Sports and Cultural Festival was organized by the Cuenca Deaf Association with the presence of members from other associations. At least 40 participated.

- Two, three-week Sign Language courses were given to university students; 20 participated.

- Fifty-seven parents attended seminars on Sign Language, Home Discipline, Home Activities, and Children with CP.

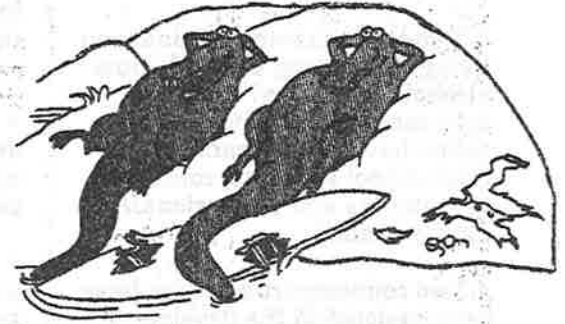
- Twenty-seven parents received some form of technical information and assistance which included home visits, meetings and individual conversations.

- Three challenged students participated in Special Olympic events.

- One presentation was given to 80 university students on Augmentative and Alternative Communication.

- PCV Susan Fishman presented a paper on her work in Ecuador at an International Conference on Communication Systems.

- An accounting system was established at an educational center to manage money from a small business project.



- One general meeting of National Cerebral Palsy Institutes representatives has been organized, aimed at the unification of CP organization as well as, teachers and language and speech professionals.

- One compilation of lectures and presentations, given by Special Education Volunteers, was created in book form.

- Two MR adults participated in job coaching to work in their community.

- One workshop for adolescents with MR and Cerebral Palsy has received work contracts from the community.

- Job descriptions were written for a director and teachers in one new, non-profit, special school.

### *What has been done in the Youth Development field?*

- 185 at-risk children have participated in self-esteem, behavior modification, non-formal education activities, living skills, material construction, as well as, recreational and art activities meetings.

- 185 at-risk children have improved their living skills as shown by better communication with their parents and peers, return to schools and other vocational centers, improvement of academic performance and improvement of self-esteem.

- One Night Basketball League has been formed. Five hundred at-risk youth from 10 low-

income neighborhoods participated.

- Two-to-eight week seminars on living skills, drug use and abuse, alcohol, non-formal education activities, and vocational orientation have been organized. High school students, community members and professionals have attended.

- Two counterpart agencies have been assisted in the development of internal organizational systems, including planning, designing, implementing, evaluating, accounting of funds, and follow-up.

- Three ludotecas (educational resource rooms) have been organized and set-up

- Two libraries and resource rooms have been reorganized and expanded.

- One weekly radio program with a youth format has been designed and broadcast as part of a preventive community campaign.

- Seventy-five parents have participated in technical training including; behavior modification, prevention of child violence, alcohol use and abuse, hygiene and participation in a family project.

- One Family Project has been implemented within a host agency. This included personnel training, design and use of a form to conduct home visits to at-risk-youth families, design and implementation of family activities, evaluation of visits and follow-up activities.

- Thirty at-risk-youth families have been visited to conduct needs surveys and have been involved within the agency educational programs.

- One industrial and two domestic sewing machines were bought to equip a Battered Women's Shelter Sewing Workshop with a \$1,497 PCPP grant.

- Assistance in implementing a preventive health project for incarcerated women was given through a \$100 WID grant used to buy medicines.

- One playground was designed and constructed in a marginal neighborhood with the participation of the community members.

- Thirty-two school students were organized and trained in a school choir.

- An AIDS curriculum has been designed to be used by high school teachers within their classrooms.

- One school director and 25 agency volunteers have been trained in Living Skills curriculum, non-formal education and how to conduct home visits.

- Eighteen adolescents have been trained to be Youth Promoters to work with at-risk populations from low-income communities.

- Six community campaigns that included health fairs, recreational trips, ecological activities, volunteer recruitment and fund-raising events have been organized.

As I mentioned at the beginning, it would have been impossible to accumulate such a large list of accomplishments without the enthusiastic and committed work of the Volunteers working in both of these fields. I should also like to mention the support and willingness to collaborate and work demonstrated by the host country agencies.

I would like to thank all former and current Special Education and Youth Development Volunteers for a job well done. Keep on going !!!!!•



## NEWS FROM SAN LUIS

by Timothy M. Callaghan,  
Training Director

Greetings from Tumbaco. The Training Center is busy preparing for the arrival of the new group, Omnibus 74, which will arrive on August 9th.

### *Upcoming Training Activities:*

The Close Of Service conference for Omnibus 70 will be held on July 25th and 26th. The group will stay at Hotel Chorlavi, located near Ibarra. Transportation to the conference will be provided at 3 p.m. on July 24th from the Quito office. If there are any questions regarding the conference please feel free to call the training center.

**August 9th:** Omnibus 74 arrives. The technical programs are Special Education (9 PCTs), Youth Development (7 PCTs), and Rural Public Health (24 PCTs). The group will be staying at Hotel Quito until they move in with their Host Families on August 12th.

RPCV Lisa Cameron will be doing the training for Health and RPCV Susan Fishman will be training the Special Education PCTs.

As always, if the training center can provide you with any assistance, please do not hesitate to contact us.

That's all for now. Stay well!•



by Steve McLaughlin  
(Cayambe) and Erica  
Periman (Oyachi)

**H**ello! We would like to introduce ourselves, your new PCV veterinarians. Dr. Steve McLaughlin has a few years of experience in mixed animal practice (anything and everything) and a great interest in teaching.

Dr. Erica Periman graduated from vet school a year ago and has experience and great interest in wildlife and zoo medicine, as well as llamas and others. Steve and Erica can be reached via Correo General, Cayambe.

We would like to make *Veterinarians' Corner*, a regular addition to *El Clima*. If you have any veterinary-related questions, please send them to Steve/Erica at Correo General, Cayambe and we will either send you a written response or publish the question and answer in the next *El Clima* (kind of a *Dear Abby* - vet type of thing). Our first article is by Erica.

#### VACCINATING AND DEWORMING YOUR DOG

As most of you know, it is very important to vaccinate and deworm your dog, no matter where you are in the world. If

you get a puppy, make sure it has stayed with its mother for the first eight- to-ten-weeks-of-life. (This is for healthy physical and emotional development.) Feed it a good puppy diet (*Pro Plan Growth Formula* is fantastic) for at least the first six months of life. And, very importantly, vaccinate and deworm it.

Types of vaccines:

1. **DA2PP - Distemper-Adenovirus Type 2-Panleukopenia-Parvovirus.**
2. **Rabies** - in Spanish, *rabia*. When you buy the DA2PP you should purchase two vials, one with a dry substance in it that says **DA2PP** (written out as above) on it, and another with liquid in it which should say "Leptospira Bacterin" or "Dilvent" on it. These need to be kept cool, (the agricola shop will usually put ice in the bag) until they are mixed and given to your dog. You need to buy a needle and syringe, too.

To prepare and give the **DA2PP** to your dog:

1. Draw up the liquid from the one vial by sticking the needle in, turning the vial upside down and drawing out the liquid into the syringe (The volume should be one cc or one ml; they are both the same quantity).
2. Then put the liquid into the other vial by sticking the needle in and injecting the liquid.
3. Shake the bottle a bit to mix the two (it should take about 30 seconds).
4. Draw up the mixture into the syringe, via the needle.
5. While having someone else hold your dog, pick up the loose skin on the back of the neck.
6. Poke the needle through the skin. You should feel a small pop as the needle goes through the skin.
7. You should now be in the sub-cutaneous tissue. Pull back on the plunger of the syringe; if no blood is seen and you feel negative pressure, you may inject the vaccine. (Note: If when you do pull back on the plunger, you see blood, don't

panic; just remove the needle from the skin and start over.)  
8. Remove the needle, rub the spot a bit and you're done!

The rabies vaccine is much easier. It still needs to be kept cold, but there is only one vial of liquid so you only need to follow steps 4. - 8. above.

Vaccination schedule for puppies:

1. Vaccinate with **DA2PP** every three-to-four weeks between eight and 16-weeks-of-age (e.g., eight-, 12- and 16-weeks-of-age or ten-, 13- and 16-weeks-of-age, etc.), then annually after that.
2. Vaccinate for rabies when you get the dog, a year after that, then once every three years.

Remember never to vaccinate a sick or injured dog. Wait until it is relatively healthy!

#### DEWORMING

This is much easier than vaccinating. A good product to use is **Pyrantel Pamoate**. It doesn't kill all the worms, but it gets most of the bad ones. It comes in oral preparation and it tells you on the label exactly how much to give, based on your dog's weight. It comes in a syringe (without a needle), and you open your dog's mouth, stick the syringe as far into the back of the mouth as you can, and inject the dewormer. Then, hold the mouth shut for a few seconds so the dog will swallow instead of spitting it out. See...simple! Well, maybe not, especially if your dog tries to spit it out.

You should deworm as soon as you get the dog, one month after that, then every three-to-four months, as needed (e.g., if the dog is skinny or has diarrhea or eats a lot, but still loses weight). You can, and sometimes should, start as early as four-weeks-old, when the dog is still nursing.

Well, hope this helps!  
Remember to send us your questions. •



# The L o w d o w n o n Llamas



by Tracy McCracken,  
Riobamba

**WANTED:** Campo communities with páramo to spare, to provide homes for a few furry, fuzzy and friendly llamas.

Some of you out there have probably heard of me by now; I'm Tracy--the llama volunteer. I am working in Riobamba for INEFAN on a camelid reintroduction program. I have been getting a lot of questions about my work and llamas in general, so thought I'd write an article to inform everyone about the current situation of these animals in Ecuador.

First of all, you may ask, What are camelids? They are the South American cousins of the African and Asian camels. There are four species that exist here in South America: the llama, the alpaca, the vicuña and the guanaco. The former two are domesticatable animals, the latter, wild species.

The llama, the largest of this group, is a very useful animal, used for wool, meat and labor. They come in a variety of colors and patterns and produce about one to two kilos of wool annually. The wool has many long guard hairs in it and is found only along the back of the animal; the neck and legs do not have wool. The meat is considered a delicacy by the Chimborazo campesinos, although I have not yet had the opportunity to try it. Llamas are very docile, intelligent and easily-tamed animals. An adult animal can pack up to a quintal of weight on its back. Llamas are by far the most versatile of the camelid species. There are about 8,000 of these animals currently in Ecuador, primarily in the provinces of Bolívar, Chimborazo and Tunguaragua.

The alpaca is a smaller more delicate animal than the llama and has wool covering the entire body, including neck and legs. For this reason they are raised primarily for wool production. Alpacas are usually solid in color and produce up to five kilos of very fine high-quality wool. The few alpacas in this country exist primarily on large haciendas.

Llamas and alpacas are able to inter-breed producing an animal called a huarizo. A large proportion of the "llamas" in this country are actually one of these crossbreeds. Huarizos combine the characteristics of both animals; harder than an alpaca, but producing a higher quantity and better quality wool than a llama. These animals are fertile and able to breed with alpacas, llamas or another huarizo.

Vicuñas are the smallest of the camelids and are currently an endangered species throughout the South American Andes. They have a very fine coat of hair, which is the softest and most valuable of the camelid's fibers. Vicuñas were extinct in Ecuador, but in 1988, the Ecuadorian govern-

ment brought 200 animals up from Peru and Chile and released them in the Chimborazo reserve. The population has doubled since then and occasionally wild vicuñas can be seen along the road to the Chimborazo refugio. Fifty more alpacas were brought up from Bolivia last year and are in captive management near Los Altares, Tunguaragua.

Guanacos are a similar, but larger wild species and are native to the South of the continent; they are not found in Ecuador.

My project, PROYECTO VICUÑA Y FOMENTO DE LOS CAMELIDOS NATIVOS DE LOS ANDES, is trying to promote the use of these species here in Ecuador. Before the Spanish conquest, the llamas and alpacas were the principle domestic species throughout the Andes. During the conquest, large numbers of these animals were slaughtered and sheep and cattle were introduced. This reduced the numbers of these animals throughout the Andes. The populations of llamas and alpacas have recovered in the countries of Peru and Bolivia, where camelids contribute significantly to the agricultural economy, but here in Ecuador the people have not yet returned to utilizing these animals. •



# Fundacion Promesa

submitted by Miguel Artoia,  
APCD Health

**A**qui encontrará información de la organización, "Fundación Promesa." Esta organización puede dar ayuda, asistencia y coordinación, si tenga interés en comenzando un *botiquine* en su comunidad.

## PROMESA: SU ORIGEN Y OBJETIVOS

Fundación PROMESA se constituye, como organización privada, sin fines de lucro y duración indefinida, por el acuerdo del Ministerio de Salud Pública N.º 7636 del 29 de agosto de 1990. Es el órgano administrativo de desarrollo social de la industria farmacéutica y el vínculo con los sectores marginales y otras organizaciones cercanas a la problemática social. Ha podido desarrollar sus actividades gracias a recursos provenientes de los laboratorios afiliados en ASOPROFAR y, en los primeros años, a un fondo de los programas de cooperación y asistencia técnica de la Agencia de los Estados Unidos para el Desarrollo Internacional, A.I.D.

## MISION:

Promover y realizar obras de apoyo social en beneficio de la comunidad pobre y marginada del Ecuador, especialmente en el campo de la salud, de la educación, de la cultura, de la ciencia y del bienestar social en general. Fundacion Promesa es la responsable de llevar adelante el compromiso social de la Industria farmacéutica.

## OBJECTIVOS:

- Apoyar y complementar las acciones del Estado y de organi-

zaciones privadas en el área de la salud.

- Contribuir a disminuir la automedicación y los riesgos de la medicación incompleta.
- Buscar la participación de instituciones afines que ejecutan labores de acción social.
- Formentar el desarrollo de un modelo educativo para el cuidado de la salud, con la participación de las áreas de influencia de los botiquines Promesa.
- Optimizar la utilización del material educativo en salud producido por diferentes Organizaciones: Estatales, Internacionales y No Gubernamentales.

## PRINCIPALES LINEAS DE ACCION:

- Abastecimiento de medicamentos de calidad garantizada y a precio rebajado a ONG's e Instituciones sociales que ofrecen servicios de salud a grupos sociales de ingresos reducidos.
- Asistencia técnica en el área farmacéutica y capacitación a expendedores y administradores de los botiquines.
- Animación socio-cultural como práctica educativa.
- Investigación aplicada.
- Comunicación y difusión.



## This Peace Corps Experience

by Marie Skertic, Guaranda

**A**s I prepare to leave Peace Corps service, I have been reflecting more than usual on what the last 33 months of my life have meant to me, how I have changed, and some thoughts I might offer to the new Volunteers.

Living in another country is a mind- and heart-expanding experience. One is constantly being stretched and pulled in every possible way, be it physically, emotionally, psychologically or spiritually. Each day, each moment, brings new experiences, new possibilities, new challenges.

I would like to suggest ways in which new Volunteers can make their time here more meaningful.

First, be aware of every experience and event that happens to you; live it and live it fully; analyze it; appreciate it; learn from it. If it was good, savor the memories; if it wasn't, analyze it and think of how you could do things differently next time, how you could have reacted in a more appropriate way, or try to learn the lessons the experience brought with it.

Second, be patient. Yes, this is very hard and I am certainly no authority on patience; it's a character flaw I've been working on for years, with some success. Give your work, your interpersonal relationships and your ideas time to grow. Yes, the younger we are, the more impatient we tend to be, I think. It's only when you're a bit older (out of your 20's, lets say) that you can see that one or two years is

absolutely nothing in the scheme of things. Try not to be too impatient for change. If you can't stand wasting time, do as I do and always have a book to read, paper to write on, or other activities with you so that you can be productive while waiting. It also helps to have a back-up plan, in case the office is closed when you get there, or the person isn't in, etc. For instance, I might say to myself, "Okay, I'll go to the bank; but if the line is too long, I'll go to the market; but then I'll need to take extra money to get food and I can stop and see the *alcalde* on the way; if the *alcalde* is not in, I'll go visit some of the mothers of our kids." It helps me tremendously to have a list of three or four things I can do at any one time, as it's difficult to plan things here. This helps me to feel more in control of my time as well as, to be more productive. Making a list of what you need to get done also helps as activities have a way of mushrooming. Delegate to others things you can delegate, keep in mind the mid-day closings and all the *días de feria* and keep a work journal if you can. You'd be amazed at how many changes can be seen if we write them down.

**T**hird, learn to appreciate everything that you're exposed to here and make the most of every opportunity. Go to the dances, to peoples houses for dinner; talk to them about life in North America; answer the incessant questions. Do everything you can possibly do during your short stay in Ecuador. Visit as many different cities as you can, talk to the people and learn about the many differences in culture, see how the families interact and how they handle difficulties, see the differences in your relationships with them at the beginning and at the end of your service. See the changes in yourself and be grateful for everything; every spoonful of food you put in your mouth, the water that's running today, the electricity that hasn't been cut off now for a week, the little child who drew you a pic-

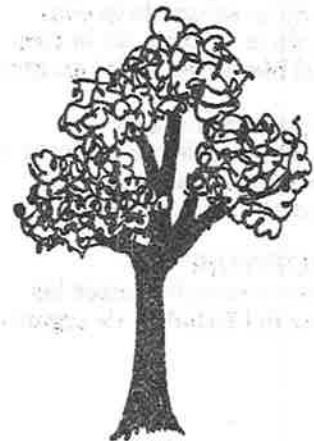
ture and gave it to you with grubby hands. Try to live in the moment as much as possible.

**F**ourth, when you're having a hard time of things and nothing is working right, and people aren't appreciating you, and when you're sick to death of waiting for 90 minutes for a meeting to start, and when you haven't gotten mail for a month and you know it's because the post office screwed up (again), and when you get robbed while on the bus, STOP. Take some time out to sort things through and to compare the positive and negative aspects of your experience here. And if, after reflecting on things, there are more negative than positive things, or if you're really unhappy, LEAVE. I've seen too many PCVs just stay because they didn't want to admit they'd "failed," when the Peace Corps just wasn't the right thing for them at this stage of their lives. Perhaps later down the road it would be. It's better to just leave than it is to live here being miserable and making the lives of others more difficult by constant bitching.

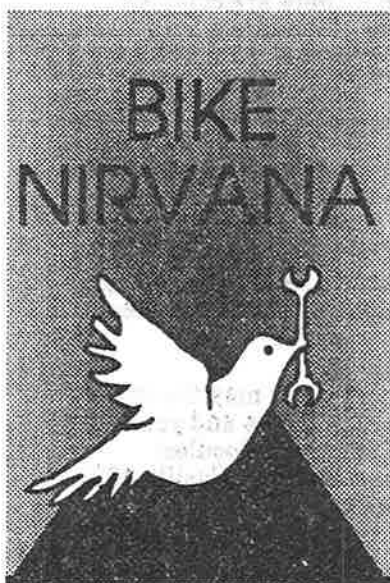
Fifth, be aware that changes within ourselves are every bit as important (and I would say even more important) than the economic or social reality we're weaned on in North America. Our work ethic says that if we aren't being "productive," we're useless; if we aren't accomplishing tangible things, we're not doing anything important; if we're not earning a lot of money, then what we're devoting ourselves to just doesn't matter. That's Bullsh—! Becoming better people; being more patient, more understanding of the reality that foreigners everywhere have to deal with; learning another language; seeing the world through the eyes of others, remembering that 80% of the world lives as we do now—these are the things that will last and which are of the most important in the long run. There will always be time to get that high-powered job; have a personal sec-

retary, monetary things; re-enter the depersonalized rat race. And when we're back in the fast-paced life, we will most definitely yearn for some of the *tranquillidad* we had in Ecuador and we will yearn, too, at least for awhile, for a simpler, more meaningful lifestyle.

**A**nd lastly, remember that our most basic long-lasting contribution to Ecuador will be the friendships and relationships we form with the people. For the vast majority of us, unfortunately, our work will cease the day we get on that plane. But our small contributions will be remembered forever. They'll say: "do you remember so-and-so? We went to the beach with him and had a great time." "She was the girl who always played with the children." "He didn't like to drink much, but he really helped us with our water system." "She was a really good cook and often gave us food from her country to taste." "He played fútbol on our team and was with us when we won the championship." I've heard all this and more said about PCVs after they left service. Be happy. Be positive. Make the most of everything. Use PC Ecuador staff for support. Learn all you can about Ecuador. Study Spanish. Expose yourself to new challenges daily. And, be grateful for the little things in life. Remember, if all else fails, that this is two years of your life; whereas, for the nationals, this is how the rest of their lives will be. Be grateful for the chance to be here; to learn and to grow. And never, ever take it for granted. •







by Andrés Amador, Cuenca

**O**mighty pen, grant me voice! O paper, give me foundation! O ink, breathe life into my words! My construct; my Frankenstein-ian creation; sparks and crackles; life forces humming and charging. The platform is lowered slowly, link by link. . . and it comes into view! Behold the bicycle!

I bow to thee; your mirrored rims, your oiled chain, your supple brake levers. Grant me movement, freedom, escape! Whip the air through my hair, bring tears to my eyes. May my calves burn deliciously and the wind be forever at my back!

And the commandment from on high? "Care for me and thou and thoust replacements shall know my pleasure! Neglect me and the scourges of rust, cracks and creaks shall be yours!"

Yeah, yeah, yeah, okay. Let's get down to business O demigod. Let's talk bikes, monsignor. Here I find myself in Cuenca, holding a butt-load of bike tools and the title of "maintenance stud extraordinaire"—and no bike to call my own. I'm given the usual rap: "We'll need to wait at least three months to determine if you really need a bike." Well my initial response was going to be: "I just might

have to take a few months to determine if I really can perform bike maintenance here." I mean, I've got to check out the community, get integrated, blah blah blah. But, in an effort to placate the forces that be (i.e. to kiss ass) and to hasten the arrival of a two-wheeled steed, I accepted the tools and then thought a teeny little bike column thrown in to boot might not hurt any.

Cynicism aside, biking is a passion of mine and I'm really quite interested in passing along useful information to those who care to receive it. Credentials? Instead of a roller, my folks placed me on a banana-seated tricycle with tassels on the grips, and I've been in the saddle ever since. There hasn't been a time in my life that I haven't been pumping furiously at the pedals of a bike—even in Alaska at 25 below. (Okay I stopped at 26 below!) Throw in a few bike trips and I've had just about everything that can happen, happen to me and my bikes—from broken spoke to broken collarbone. And most repairs I've done myself, usually after much agony and frustration. I don't claim to know it all, but from what could be relayed in a column, I know enough.

In my columns I'll be going under the assumption that only the most rudimentary tools are obtainable, so I'll keep necessary equipment to the bare minimum.

Whatever I reference are tools that every bike user should have, therefore you ought to go and buy it if it's not already in your arsenal. (Remember, for small bike purchases, P.C. pays.)

## So, on to today's talk: POWER TRAIN

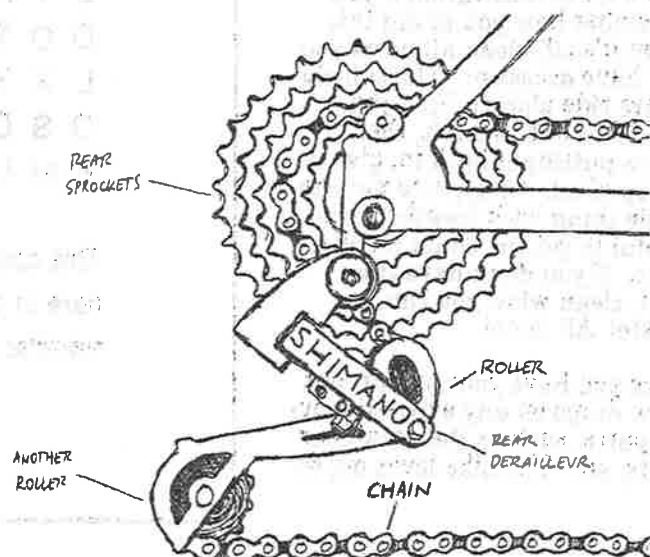
**T**here's nothing like hearing the soft clicking of the chain as you pedal, the soothing symphony as the gears change, the untarnished patter of wheels on concrete. Whew! But there's nothing that rattles my bones like the ca-chunk, ca-chunk of a straining crank, nothing that saddens my heart like the creaking cries of metal grinding on unlubed metal, nothing that tugs at my soul like a rusted chain made to labor like an arthritic forced to do needle-point. I wish I had a gun to put the poor beast of burden out of its misery (and a yardstick to give the owner a good rap across the head!).

### Materials:

- lightweight oil (not cooking oil!)
- rags
- old toothbrush
- pan of diesel fuel

Time needed: about one hour

We'll start with the chain. Put the chain down to its smallest cogs, both front and back, and then gently wind the chain off the front cogs so that the whole thing is loose. Dip your toothbrush in the diesel (one that you have no desire ever to use in your mouth again) and start scrubbing at that chain, top and bottom. Work it in there, twisting the chain up and down, loosening it up. Scrub, dude! Once



the whole chain has been done, wipe it all down with a rag. Don't use water! Now let it sit to dry. Go get a nice cold one and relax for a bit. (Actually, chain cleaning should be combined with sprocket and derailleur cleaning—see below—so drink that cold one and then move along.) When the chain's dry, get your oil and put a drop or so on each link. Do the whole chain and then go back over it, working it in. When you're done the chain should easily flex. If any of the links are stuck and can't be unkinked, unless you know how to replace links, you've pretty much gotta get a new chain and promise the rust forces that be, to always care for the new chain and never leave the bike out in the rain again. While that chain is drying, take your toothbrush and scrub all along the sprocket (those pointy things that grab the chain). Get all that gook and gunk outta there. If it's really built up, get a butter knife and scrape it out. Good, isn't that better now?

But hold on, it's not over yet. Go to the rear derailleur, the part that hangs down from the rear sprocket. You'll notice two teeny cog- looking things called rollers (see diagram). If you have the right-sized Allen wrench key or wrench (it could be either), undo the bolts holding those rollers in place. Wait a sec though, make sure you know how it looked and how the chain went through. The diagram will help, but it'll save a lot of frustration if you remember how you undid this. When it's off, clean all parts you now have access to. Those little rollers ride along a little pin. Take that out, clean it, then before putting it back in, give it a drop of oil. Okay, now put the whole thing back together, being careful to get the chain fed just right. If you don't have the tools, clean what you can. Presto! All done!

Since you have your oil out, put a few drops on any exposed moving parts, such as the derailleur joints, etc. The bike loves oil, so

don't be afraid, but just do me a favor and keep it off the brakes, okay?

Now you're done! The gods have been placated for now. Enjoy your momentary victory in the eternal war with entropy and take the bike for a spin. There now, doesn't that sound 100% better?

**A**t this point, I'd like to ask for audience participation. Got a problem? (With your bike that is...boyfriend problems are next door.) Write me, and I'll send a personal, signed response (from my staff of

15) and if there are common requests, I'll address it in future columns. Also, I'd like this column to be a forum for bike stories, if possible. Been to a cool place? Got any advice? Wanna share your experience? Then please write to me. And lastly, during training I wrote a little bike repair booklet that I'd be happy to send to ya, just give me a night on the town when I'm in your area.

Until next time, may the roads be free of potholes and your eyes be free of gnats. Toodles! (Address: Amador, Casilla 4926, Cuenca).•

## BUSCA PALABRAS

Los nombres de las provincias

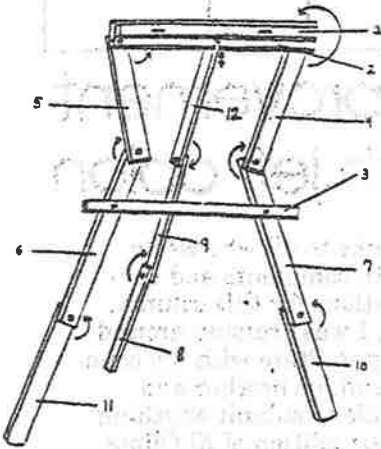
P I H G S O I R S O L O I A C  
 I X Y U A Z A O A N P Z C A N  
 C A A Z U I Y N A P A R E A  
 H P U Y A R M P T I U H N C R  
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 P O O H M S B R G Z B J C O A  
 O C M O A Z U O O O A N L U B  
 R O M A Z G R C L R I T C D M  
 A A E P N O A I U H A A S O I  
 Z T A U L A V N C M R N R A E  
 O O T E X A B I A C B O A L P  
 L X Y Z R E P I H C N I H C M  
 O S C O T T D I O A Y J O L S  
 B M U C U S A D L A R E M S E

This could be used with World Wise school group, here in country with local kids, or for you.

submitted by Mike Meshak, Azogues

# Portable Rotafolio

by: Dwight Wilder, La Mana



If your work involves "charlando" in faraway, campo communities, you are probably aware of the lack of didactic "equipos". For this reason, I built a light-weight, portable, tripod for holding cartulinas.

### Materials needed:

- 8 ft. X 17 cm X 2 cm planking board
- 2 in. X 1/4 in. bolts with washers and butterfly nuts.
- small nail

### Tips and Suggestions:

1. Wood: Used a balsa board which has "wings" on both sides (for planking). You may have difficulty finding such a board in your site. Any strong but light-weight wood will work fine.
2. The board can be cut into strips and all holes can be drilled at any local carpentry shop.
3. When making cuts on soft wood, a very fine-bladed saw (hack-saw) works best to make accurate cuts.

Good luck! Hopefully, you can improve on my design, and, as always, HAPPY CHARLAING!•

