

El Clima

*New & Improved
"free range"*



Colin Powell Comes to Quito

Inside:

*Administrative Biznass,
Tech, News, Politics,
Humor, Commentary*

The secretary speaks out on the importance of democracy and El Clima in Latin America



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EL CLIMA

A Quarterly publication, Jun-Aug 2004



El Clima staff members from left to right::

Daniel De Deo
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El Clima

Editor's Note

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Months of mercilessly haranguing volunteers over email and in person to submit their articles. Stopping periodically on the street corner to take a fortuitous photo or jot down an anecdote in the notepad that's always in your back pocket. Carefully analyzing weather patterns and constellation charts to pick just the right work weekend. All culminating in three days in the office, 12 hours spent daily in the front of a computer. This is what it means to be a staffer for El Clima.

After I was cajoled and blackmailed, I mean, graciously offered the position of editor, I decided that I wanted to make a few changes in the dynamics of the magazine. I'm sure you'll all notice the addition of new sections and a greater variety of articles, encompassing more tech issues and volunteer submissions. But that doesn't mean that we've lost our old spunk! I think the magazine is now kind of a combination of The Economist and Mad Libs. The idea was to write a publication geared towards the general volunteer population, and we are certainly a diverse group if nothing else. I hope that between the pages of this publication there is something for everyone.

Included in the magazine there is an application to be on the El Clima staff. As Omnibus 88 COSEs, we will lose some very good staff writers. I'll be here one more time around because I'm extending a bit. Why? I'm a glutton for punishment I guess. But that's a different story all together. Creative, hardworking PCVs are invited to apply, and I know there are many of you out there. Please leave the applications in the El Clima inbox in the office. Afterward you will be called for an interview. A background check and drug test are mandatory. Those who make the cut will undergo Chinese water torture, which we figure will weed out the weak ones and leave us with three or four serious masochists, which is just what we are looking for.

Aside from staffers I'd like to appeal to all of you writers out there to submit technical and creative articles for next quarter's publication. The quality of the magazine depends on the number of high-caliber articles from the volunteer population.

In closing I'd like to inform everyone of a sad bit of news. Ruben Hernandez announced to El Clima and office staff today that he will be leaving Ecuador at the beginning of August. As per the request of the Peace Corps director, Ruben will assume the CD position in PC/Honduras, while the PC/H CD will replace Ruben here in Ecuador. The news was taken hard by all present. I write this message with a lump in my throat and a tear in my eye, as I consider Ruben not only one of the greatest assets a PC/E volunteer has, but also a good friend. He will be missed.

Tasty morsels in this issue:

- * Ruben rambles and Michael muses
- * A report on the state of volcanoes in Ecuador
- * Tying knots and tying the knot
- * Volunteer becomes a stone by the river
- * Get ready for the GRE
- * Tech Tech Tech
- * Sean Kulkarni takes on WID/GAD, I mean GAD

Office News

Ruben's Ramblings

Greetings from Quito! With this issue of El Clima we welcome a new editorial staff. I want to express my appreciation for the work they have done to date organizing and providing direction for the future of the publication. I also look forward to the product that they will have put together in a few days, it promises to be a good one!

Just before putting these thoughts together, I was looking over the backgrounds and aspiration statements of our next incoming group from Omnibus 92. Just like the rest of you, they are a very talented and committed group of individuals.

I hope that this information reminds you of the importance of the work that you are doing. It is a great opportunity to be able to apply your skills and previously acquired knowledge in an unstructured environment that results in the improvement in the life of the people you work with. It just doesn't get any better than this.

Talking about volunteer service, next month Omnibus 88 will be having its Close of Service Conference (COS). I want to publicly thank them for the work they have done here in Ecuador.

It is interesting to think about the changes facing not only the incoming Omnibus 92 trainees but also the veteran volunteers who will be departing over the next few months. Success in our careers, endeavors and projects is highly dependent on how we as individuals and organizations respond to the challenges that changing situations bring. A positive outlook makes a tremendous difference on the outcome of our activities. Well, enough philosophical thoughts, we have some information that needs to be dealt with.

CD Conference May 17-20, 2004 Miami, Florida

We had an excellent presentation by Donna Shalala, President of the University of Miami, on characteristics of the Millennium Generation. Although I am not sure that I buy into generalizations of this type, it was most worthwhile to hear about her experience in dealing with the generation now attending college because they will become our source of volunteers in the future.

While at the conference we also reviewed the Safety and Security performance of posts in the Inter America and Pacific region. As a region, we have the highest levels of assaults in Peace Corps and we need to proactively improve our performance in this area. We will need your leadership, cooperation and support in order to improve your safety while you serve as a volunteer in Ecuador.

More ramblings continued on next page...

A Note From Nellie About The New Bicycle Policy

This is to inform all of you about the last modification to the existing bicycle policy regarding the repair and maintenance of bicycles assigned to PCV's. The new disposition allows all COSing PCV's to pass their PC bicycle to a PCV close to their geographic area, instead of bringing the bike back to Quito, which was the former policy. The COSing PCV and the receiving PCV will be responsible for assuring that a newly signed property form is sent to the PC Office in Quito to Miguel Castro's attention. Miguel will be responsible for replacing the existing form with this new form, which will release the former PCV from further responsibility.

The new policy also decentralizes the repair and maintenance works done by the PC office in Quito workshops. From now on, the PCV that inherits a bicycle will receive, via the Living Allowance, \$50.00 to pay for any type of repair or maintenance the bicycle might need. This should be sufficient to cover the two years service. If not, please communicate with Miguel Castro. Susana Winter will deposit the \$50.00 upon notification by Miguel Castro of the receipt of the new property form.

For further reference on the use and request of bicycles, please refer to the last revision of the PC/Ecuador Volunteer Handbook (February 2004) pages 75 and 76.

If you need any further clarification or have questions about this, please feel free to contact me (nvillavicencio@ec.peacecorps.gov).



One other extremely important topic of discussion we dealt with was the proposed policies to manage the use of alcohol by staff at functions where volunteers are present. In my opinion, the issue of focus ought to be abuse of alcohol rather than whether or not a staff person has a beer with a volunteer at a social event. I would be interested in hearing your perspectives on this issue in anticipation of further discussions and review.

PC/ Ecuador Restructuring FY 2005

Hopefully the informal communication network has already provided most of you with information on our IPBS discussions of April 23. We have decided to move in the direction of integrating the work of several programs, reducing the number of program managers but increasing the total number of staff providing support to volunteers in the consolidated programs through the use of program assistants and volunteer coordinators in each of the integrated program areas.

As a result of this anticipated restructuring, we have a need for third year volunteer coordinators who will focus on technically supporting the work of our newly integrated Health and Youth (HEYOU) programs starting this coming October.

The restructuring information is included in our IPBS report submitted to the Region on May 28. This information has also been included for your use in the computers that are available at the PC office in Quito.

We will perform an evaluation of how this approach has worked 6 months later by gathering input from volunteers in these programs as to the level of technical and moral support that they have received relative to what it was prior to the restructuring. Should our evaluation in April 2005 prove to be positive, we would then proceed to integrate the work presently performed in the Natural Resources program into the scope of the Agricultural (Agro forestry) and Animal Production (Environmental Education & Habitat Enhancement) programs. We expect to complete this final step in July 2005, subsequent to the swearing in of Omnibus 93 trainees.

Although we have not received final regional approval on this proposal, we expect to receive it some time this month. We will soon be advertising for the first Program Assistant position. It is possible that we will try to use a former volunteer for the initial period of this position, but the intent is to develop local resources that can benefit from the experience and help us transition and strengthen the future organization of Peace Corps Ecuador.

Whew! A lot of things are going on. Please let me know if you have any questions or ideas on the proposed restructuring or any other item. One last reminder to Omnibus 91 volunteers the dateline for the submittal of proposals for the CD Development Fund \$50 grant is July 30, 2004.

Michael's Musings

Program and Training updates:

- 1) We have five Crisis Corps volunteers on six-month assignments working on HIV/AIDs and youth issues based in Quito. As you may know, PC/DC's Crisis Corps began as a response to natural disasters, but now includes HIV/AIDS and youth work. Dipak Kshatriya works with INNFA on youth policy (RPCV Ecuador), Gennifer Weaver works with CARE on HIV/AIDs policy (RPCV Honduras), Carol Badran works with INNFA on HIV/AIDs policy (RPCV Ecuador), Maureen Daniels works with the Girls Scouts on programming and organizational issues (RPCV Costa Rica), and Lynne Liseby works with Cooperación Hogar on youth and family issues (RPCV Paraguay). Thanks to these individuals for their continued service and to the local agencies for working with us to develop jobs for them.
- 2) PC/E is pursuing the establishment of a community-based and community-managed ecotourism network in communities where PCVs serve, with guidance from Conservation International's regional tourism specialist and the Directora of South American Explorers. APCDs have suggested several sites meeting some established criteria. An exploratory meeting is planned for July 12 at 1:30pm. An invitation will follow to 8-10 PCVs.
- 3) We are also pursuing collaboration with the local office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees regarding work with Colombian non-economic refugee children. A mini-workshop is planned for the last week of July for several PCVs in communities with this target population. An invitation will follow to 4-5 PCVs.

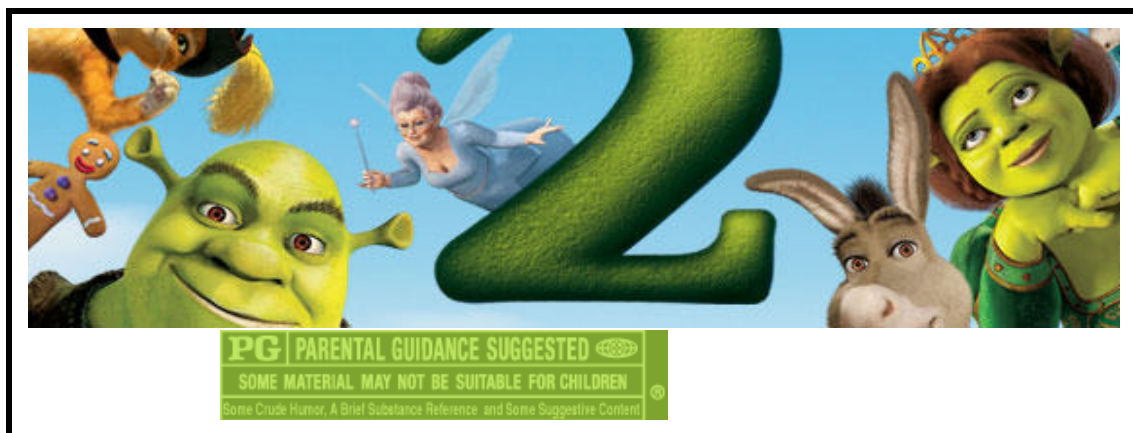
Highlights from Ruben and Michael:

- Office is seeking third-year extenders to be volunteer coordinators.
- Exploratory ecotourism meeting July 12th.
- UN High Commissioner for Refugees workshop planned for last weekend of July.
- Visit <http://www.projectsforpeace.org/> to see PCV income generation projects.
- CD Development Fund grants available for Omn. 91
- Request for seeds for a proposed green legumes seed bank.

Michael's Musings continued....

- 4) We are working to make the wildly successful PC/E Community Banks/Savings program sustainable. To that end, our APCDs have identified several local NGOs who are interested in this project and its methodology. PL-480 funds are available to fund local training workshops, if your community is interested in drafting a solicitud with you. The first local Community Banks/Savings workshop will take place in Zamora under the leadership of PCV Andres Villasenor. Please communicate with your regional coordinators if interested. Maria Eugenia Lopez has a copy of Andres' (and recent RPCV Jessica Venable's) community application. Promotional and instructional CDs in Spanish and English are available from Alex Tinajero, our IT Specialist. As you know, APCD Nelson Oleas manages this program.
- 5) We would like to create a seed bank for green manure legumes. If your site is a source of seed for vicia, carnavalia (jack bean), mucuna (velvet bean), sarandaja (dolico lab lab), chocho, inga, desmodium, etc, please let PCV Jonathan Haskett know.

Please do not forget to register to vote and/or request your absentee ballot. Maria Eugenia Cobo can assist with that. All the best!



PCMO News

News and updates....

1. Kelley and Sarah attended the IAP Continuing Medical Education Conference in Washington in late March. The bulk of the conference focused on clinical topics, with 2 days each of Dermatology and GYN updates. Additional topics included counseling, safety and security issues and OMS updates.
2. In the past, PCMOs made site visits to newly sworn in PCVs within the first several months of their service. Based on the input of PCVs and staff, we have now made the decision to make the PCMO site visit after volunteers have been in their sites for 6 months. In this way, new PCVs won't get visited by so many support people (APCD, Coordinator, PCMO) in their first month.
3. Medical Library....a reminder that we have a small library in the waiting room of the medical office with books on stress management, diversity issues, peer support issues, depression, etc. The library includes a number of relaxation and meditation tapes and even a "learn to knit book" (donated by Melissa Foster). Books and tapes can be signed out with Ruth.
4. Copies of the Gay/Lesbian/Bisexual RPCV newsletter are in the waiting room of the Medical Office for anyone that would like a copy.

A reminder from Suzanna Winter that Living Allowance surveys are due in the office by July 9th, send with attention to Alex Tinajero.

Health issues in Ecuador:

We would like to put a section in each El Clima, on health issues and problems that are “going around” in Ecuador or that you are seeing at your sites. The information we have is usually limited to what we might see in the Quito newspapers. Please keep us informed of health issues at your site and any questions you might have.

Bubonic Plague

An outbreak of bubonic plague was detected in the indigenous communities around Guamote, south of Riobamba. There were several deaths. From what we have heard the epidemic affected an isolated area and is now under control.

Plague is a bacterial infection which occurs primarily in wild rodents, such as rats and mice, but in the case of the Guamote, it was cuyes that were infected. Transmission to humans is via a flea vector which first bites an infected animal and then bites a human. Symptoms include a high fever with painful swollen lymph nodes. Prevention includes controlling rodent populations, using repellent, fumigating for fleas, and keeping the cuyes out of your house.

Dengue

PCVs in both the Coast and Oriente have reported to us that they are seeing a lot of dengue in their communities. We have recently had two cases of dengue in PCVs. If the dengue mosquito is around, usually the anopheles isn't far behind, so we can assume malaria is on the increase as well. Please be consistent with your malaria prophylaxis, sleep under your toldos and use your detan.

In case you have forgotten from Health Fair #1....Dengue, originally named “breakbone fever” is a viral illness transmitted by mosquitos. It causes a high fever with excruciating body aches and headache. Often there is a rash. There is no treatment and symptoms typically resolve within a week.

Back Pain

In a recent survey of some 47,000 CONSUMER REPORTS readers, back pain was the most common physical ailment. In Peace Corps, it ranks way up there as well, probably just behind diarrhea and gripe as one of the most common problems reported by Volunteers. The reasons are pretty obvious:

- * Buses and bumpy roads
- * Gardening
- * Bad mattresses
- * Lots of time in a hammock or reading in bed....

Back pain usually stems from a strain or minor tear of the muscles and ligaments which support the lower back. Sometimes a specific incident--for example, bending or twisting in an awkward manner or lifting a heavy object---causes the injury. In other cases, back pain results for seemingly no reason, probably a combination of small accumulative injuries along with stress and bad posture. Back pain can also result from arthritis of the spinal joints or herniation of a disc.

Xrays and MRIs are of little use in the diagnosis of back pain. They rarely identify the cause of the pain, often confuse the diagnosis and no matter what the etiology of the pain is, the treatment does not differ.

PCMO News continued...

The standard treatment for an acute bout of back pain is very straightforward:

1. Take an anti-inflammatory medication, such as aspirin or ibuprofen to reduce pain and inflammation. Continue it on a regular schedule for 5-10 days.
2. The knee to chest position will usually alleviate severe pain.
3. Apply a cold pack for the first day and then local heat.
4. If you stay in bed, do not do so for more than a day or two. Once the worst is over, start with stretching exercises plus gentle aerobic exercise like walking or swimming.

Fortunately, back pain usually gets better on it's own. In fact, with these simple self help steps, 60 % of people with back pain will be significantly better within a week and 90% within a month. Remember doctors and PCMOs can do very little to speed the process and the odds are that you will be better within 1-4 weeks. Even if you treat your back pain with self care, however, please notify your PCMOs, so we can document this problem in your health record. Once pain subsides, it is time to begin an exercise program to strengthen your back muscles. See PCMOs for a list of exercises.

Back Pain Prevention Do's and Don'ts:

DO

- * Keep in shape with regular exercise.
- * Invest in a good mattress....semiorthopedic is ideal.
- * Carry your backpack with the weight balanced on both shoulders rather than one.
- * Use proper body mechanics when lifting...this means using your legs instead of your spine muscles.
- * Watch your posture. Sit straight, don't slouch.
- * When on a long bus ride, roll up something to support your lower back. Get up and walk around every several hours.

DON'T

- * Spend a lot of time in a hammock and definitely don't sleep in one.
- * Read in bed...I know this does not sound realistic for a PCV, but reading in bed is bad for your back!! It is best to read in a good chair and if you do read in bed, use pillows and sit upright.
- * Sleep with your head on a lot of pillows
- * Carry things on your back for long distances.

VAC: A Big Mouth With Deepening Pockets

The primary purpose of the Volunteer Advisory Committee (VAC) is the delivery of PCV opinions and ideas to the Peace Corps Administration. This it does on a semi-regular basis, meeting usually two times each year in the PC Office in Quito. As a representative committee, the 10 regional delegates of VAC have to function as an objective voice for the most positive and negative PCV criticism of Admin policy and actions. As such, VAC can be likened to a big, occasionally irascible, mouth.



VAC in session (April 2004)

But VAC has an equally important purpose that oft goes unrecognized. This is the biennial granting of money –via the *VAC Volunteer Assistance Grant*– for PCV projects in need of a financial jumpstart. To do this, VAC employs a number of fundraising activities during the year. Grant money, in part, is generated through the sale of storage locker space, CD-ROM disks and tampons– all of which are available for purchase through Irene Merizalde in the PC Office...



VAC delegates Sam Brenner, Beth Blacklow and Christine Bixiones selling calendars at the April VAC picnic (2004).

GLBT Update:

GLBT is a support group for gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered volunteers. There are 10+ members on the committee and we get together periodically to discuss issues facing us here in Ecuador. The meetings are followed by a night out in Quito!

Our next meeting will be sometime in the beginning of August. Keep your eyes on your email for the exact date and more details.

Gay pride festivities, including a parade, are planned for the Quito area sometime at the end of June, most likely the weekend of the 26-27th.

If you have questions or would like more information about our group, please contact Liz (lizlehman@hotmail.com) or Bibi (bomboclat10@hotmail.com).

TRAINING UPDATE

Marilyn Murphy, APCD/Training

Omnibus 91 News

Congratulations to the 41 Volunteers in Omnibus 91 who swore-in on April 28th!

We hope all is well in your sites and look forward to seeing you again at the Re-Connect in September. Dates are:

- Optional Spanish/Kichwa classes: Sept. 27th–29th in the Peace Corps Office
- Re-Connect Conference: Sept. 29th – Oct. 1 – Location TBA

You will be receiving a Needs/Strengths Survey in July to help us better plan the conference, along with details on how to sign up for the optional language classes.

Plans for Omnibus 92 are Underway

We are expecting a group of 35 Trainees who will arrive the evening on July 7th. Our Technical Trainers will begin preparations on June 14th, so if you have any suggestions for them or would like to participate in training, please contact: Daniel Bryan or Kelly Whitener (PCV Co-Trainer) for Youth and Families and Dana Platin or Caitlin Gerdts (PCV Co-Trainer) for Rural Public Health.

Mark your calendar for KEY EVENTS, Omnibus 92:

- Community Contact Conferences by Region: August 15th - 16th
Trainees will arrive at conference sites on the 15th, and Counterparts will arrive on the 16th. They will travel together to sites on the 16th.
- Site Visit: August 16th – 22nd (Trainees return to Cayambe the 22nd)
- Swearing-In: September 22nd at 9:00 am

The most substantial source of VAC Grant funds, however, is the year-long vending of the *VAC Calendar*. This full-sized, wall calendar includes Spanish and English text of in-country information and important international holidays. Each month's spread exhibits a large color print (8x11) taken by Ecuador's PCVs of people and places encountered in their travels. Additional smaller photos are scattered throughout the calendar showing PCVs at work and play. Through heightened support, VAC Calendar sales reached a record high this year. The resultant proceeds proved critical in the VAC delegates' vote this

last March to raise the VAC Grant ceiling to \$100 per grant applicant –a 100% increase from last year.



VAC Delegate Jill Lammers

Please continue to support VAC, an important source of small project assistance, by encouraging friends and family in the States to purchase the 2004 VAC Calendar.

Questions, concerns or requests for the VAC Volunteer Assistance Grant application form should be directed to the VAC President, John Varrieur, at:

vac_ecuador@yahoo.com

Training News continued....

ATTENTION PCVs in Omnibus 88:

COS Conference: Don't forget to contact Paulina Espin (pepsin@ec.peacecorps.gov) no later than Monday, June 28th to confirm your attendance at the COS Conference in Canoa. Dates are July 21st – 24th, and the location is Hostería Canoa in Canoa, Manabí. Please return responses to the survey that was sent regarding the conference agenda, as well as indicate if you are a vegetarian or have other dietary restrictions when you confirm with Paulina. Please note that the conference starts with dinner at 7:00 pm on the 21st and that sessions are planned for most of the day on Thursday and Friday. The conference ends after breakfast on Saturday. If you would like assistance in writing or updating your resume, please bring your latest edition with you. There will be a COS dinner on Friday evening, so you are welcome to plan any special activities for your group during that time.

Want to know your Spanish language level before you leave Ecuador?

The Language Proficiency Interview (LPI) is an accredited test based in accordance with the ACTFL scale, and will be an accepted tool to use for schools or employees in order to indicate your language proficiency level. You will receive more details on the LPI at your COS conference. We will circulate a sign-up sheet at that time. If you do not have specific dates in mind at conference time, **please remember to schedule your LPI appointment at least 2 weeks in advance** with Silvia Valencia (svalencia@ec.peacecorps.gov) to assure staff availability.

SPANISH TIPS

Greetings from your Language Department....

Here are some tips so you can improve your Spanish:

- Remember, always **GRACIAS POR**, and never, ever **GRACIAS PARA**.
 - * *Le agradezco **por** haber venido*
 - * *Quiero agradecerles **por** su ayuda.*
 - * *Me gustaría darles las gracias **por** asistir a mi demostración.*
 - * *Estoy muy agradecido **por** el trabajo que han hecho.*

- The expression **DE REPENTE** has four meanings:
 - Just in case
 - From time to time
 - Suddenly
 - Maybe
 - * *¿De repente tienes un diccionario Español-Inglés? (Just in case)*
 - * *Nuestros supervisores vienen a visitarnos de repente. (From time to time)*
 - * *Estaba en el bus tranquila y de repente escuché un grito. (Suddenly)*
 - * *¿Quieres venir con nosotros? De repente me animo y voy con ustedes. (Maybe)*

DE REPENTE ESTOS TIPS LES PUEDEN AYUDAR EN SU ESPAÑOL

**No duden en contactarnos si tienen un comentario, una duda o simplemente para conversar.
¡Hasta la próxima vez!**

---Silvia Valencia
Language Coordinator

Peer Support News:

Peer Support Network members want to hear from you! Remember that anyone in PSN is available to you at any time to confidentially support you in any needs you may have, even if it's just a listening ear. We realize that many "current" members have COSed or will COS soon. Therefore, PSN is currently accepting applications from interested volunteers in Omnibuses 90 and 91. Applications are due the week of June 10th. Those who are selected to be PSN members will participate in a training session August 4-6. If you like to listen to others and want to help your fellow volunteers, please contact Alysia Ross, PSN coordinator, for information about PSN at rossal@earlham.edu.

Safety and Security: Incidences

	YEAR 2000	YEAR 2001	YEAR 2002	YEAR 2003	YEAR 2004
Rape:	2	0	2	2	0
Other Sexual Assault:	1	0	2	1	0
Aggravated Assault	8	7	5	3	4
Simple Physical Assault:	1	4	0	0	0
Robbery:	5	3	7	9	4
Burglary:	11	8	3	10	2
Theft:	41	35	27	23	12
Vandalism:	1	1	0	1	0
TOTAL	70	58	46	49	22

Comments and Recommendations

1. Volunteers must put special emphasis in finishing all pending works in their residences to make them safer. Some burglary cases could be avoided if the security at the residence is upgraded.
2. 41% of incidents occurred in Quito, in restaurants, bus station, Trolley (3 incidents). There is a clear tendency of incidents when volunteers are out of their site, but especially when they are in Quito. Volunteers must take extra precautions while they are in Quito.
3. Concerning the 4 aggravated assaults: no volunteers were hurt. We named these incidents "aggravated assaults" because weapons were present.



Seeds Program

You can ask seeds for your School Garden. Please give to María Eugenia López (mlopez@ec.peacecorps.gov, tel. 2258-725 ext. 206) the following information:

- PCV Name
- Site
- Name of School
- Name of School Representative
- Number of students that will benefit
- Type of seeds requested and amount (Sierra, Costa, Transition)
- Goal(s) of your Project

These seeds are available in packets (aprox. 20-30 seeds in each one):

CABBAGE SPINACH CHINESE CABBAGE RADISH BROCCOLI GARDEN BEANS
 ONION LETTUCE BEET CARROT SQUASH TOMATO PEPPER
 WATERMELON MUSTARD CANTALOUPE CAULIFLOWER

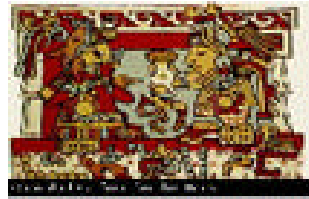
**And Now For Something
Completely Different...**

General News

Let Them Eat Cake and Drink Coffee!

— El Clima Reporting

Shhh! Don't tell Starbucks!

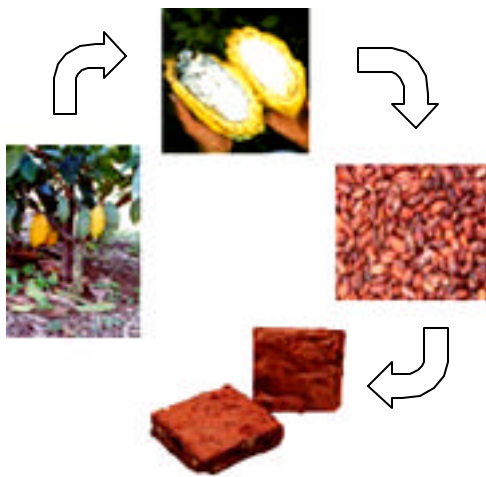


When I was in South Beach, Florida, last December I bought a tiny little chocolate from Starbucks for 55 cents because on the back was written "40% Ecuadorian chocolate." Wow, I thought, I could have actually helped harvest that chocolate. I wanted to buy 100 of those damn things so that my community could taste the fruits of their own labor. I was supposed to be impressed by the "Fair Trade" label, which technically means that the producers get 10% more than the average world prices for that raw material- in this case cacao. So instead of 40 cents a pound for slaving the jungle heat, they get a whopping 44. Does this justify selling a 20 cent chocolate to me for 55 cents? Corporations win again.

What if people could actually buy chocolate and coffee with a conscience rather than giving in and becoming "Fair Trade" label suckers. I found my answer this week by chancing on jungle chocolate in the Mariscal Sucre (yes, it was before dark and no, I did not patronize Habibi's or Tijuana's). It was being sold in a new store called Kallari, right next to Spiegel Glass. I got excited again. "Wow, I really could have helped harvest this cacao," I bragged.

"Impossible," proudly retorted the Kichwan man behind the counter, "*porque yo lo hice.*"

Could it be true? Was this not the purest fair trade I had ever seen? No middleman at all? And in the Mariscal no less! I was sure that somewhere behind the curtain was a rich gringo from South Carolina getting all the money (Magic Be....nice, sorry). But it was true. They were selling hot chocolate and brownies made from Napo cacao, necklaces made from Napo plants and seeds, spears made from Napo chonta, cards made from recycled Peace Corps paper thrown away in Napo, coffee made from Napo coffee beans, canoes made from Napo trees, etc. I was starting to think that I was actually in my site. But then why was I wearing a jacket, and where was my cat.....?



I was promptly told that I was not actually in the jungle, but that this business (unlike any others in the Mariscal) was actually part of a conservation development project started 7 years ago that never really seemed to fail or die out. "Kallari," the name of the Association of Kichwan farmers founded by the famous "giant" Judy Logback, is autonomous and includes over 20 Kichwan communities. It is a business that has successfully capacitated the Kichwan people of the Oriente to make money by sustainably harvesting their natural resources. It's two goals are community viability and natural resource conservation; it achieves these goals by selling products harvested sustainably with 100% of the profits going to the Kichwan people that run it.

There are many conservation NGO's in Ecuador, but few have been very successful at micro-enterprise and community building. Salinas de Bolívar and the Otavalo artisans are some that come to mind, but took many more years to become successful. I was very impressed by Kallari's quick growth, but my experience made me skeptical. I quickly wanted to know where the other angry farmers were that were not benefiting. I expected to see someone protesting, sending *mal ojo* to the workers, tossing a voodoo doll through the window, or casting a Shamanistic spell to make the cash register disappear. None of these things happened. The most disastrous thing that could have happened was an overdose of Cappuccino.

As it turns out, Kallari's success has been a collaborative effort by many volunteers over the years. I caught Judy in one of her rare moments of free time and bombarded her with questions and picked her brain. Her advice was straightforward and simple. Rather than falling into the trap of becoming a slave to your community like many volunteers, she advocates doing as much research as possible: "Ask as many people as possible, read books, talk to the community, family members, neighboring communities, NGO's, volunteers, etc..." Just when you thought that you had consulted enough people, write your grandfather and long lost Uncle Mort for advice also. For volunteers that do not feel like their work is reciprocated or appreciated, she recommends a system of roles and responsibilities. "Make sure that your project is what the community wants, and develop roles and responsibilities for them. If they can't do it, drop it."

I left convinced and hopeful for the world despite the P.C. budget cuts and the new SPA regulations. This could be the most positive thing since the introduction of broccoli to Ecuador, I thought. I definitely recommend checking the store out, as I hear that there will be a new soap product soon, wood from Cristobal Colón and a 10% discount for all Peace Corps volunteers (not to mention free advice). So finally you can have your cake and your conscience too.

A Question Of Motive

--El Clima Reporting



PCV Jason Jones, braving the storm and "rowing his boat ashore."

Locating funding for projects may be one of the more difficult tasks in the PCVs' 2-year stint of service. Countless PCV projects each year stumble and fail at this first important hurdle. So it is no wonder that when a volunteer hits the proverbial jackpot, they are met with mixed sentiment from their fellow PCVs, ranging from applause to envy. PCV Jason Jones (O87; Calpaqui, Imbabura) is a case in point.

One of the more fortunate breadwinners, Jones received this last April a whopping \$10,000 donation from a US-based sponsor to build a *casa communal* in his small-town



post, Calpaqui, Ecuador. Yet among hearty congratulations for his find, Jones also received a sobering dose of criticism.

Though Jones' project is a move to create a center for discourse and community functions in Calpaqui, the endeavor has another more contentious purpose; i.e., the very same building will also be used as a part-time Christian church. This point has been the focus of Jones' detractors.

"Propagating religion is not our goal here," says PCV Carey Aiossa, "and when we publicly support one religion at the time, we subtly denounce Peace Corps' impartiality." PCV Chad Weigand's argument is about possible repercussions. "I would be concerned with the effects on local culture if new churches are built."

But Jason doesn't believe he is supporting just one religion. "This structure will only be used once or twice a month by a visiting priest for church services and there will be no crosses on the property. [It will] also be used by non-Christians living in Calpaqui," he says, "for meeting together, discussing projects, fundraising and celebrating. That's the bottom-line. Without outside

aid, we'd still be dragging our feet." When asked for his opinion on the PCVs that are questioning his motives, Jones answered, "I think it's their motives that are questionable."

Still, it is hard to swallow Jones' seemingly secular rationale when the hefty donation's sponsor is a member in Jones' own Catholic congregation back home in the States. "Such a donation smacks of religious devotion, if you ask me," says PCV John Varrieur in neighboring Cotacachi. "Would Jason have scored so big if he asked for money to build just a community building? I don't think so. [PCVs] need to be concerned with the means as well as the end product."

"When we publicly support only one religion at the time, we subtly denounce Peace Corps' impartiality."

—PCV Carey Aiossa

But not everyone is against Jason Jones. When asked whether the incoming money would aid the greater Calpaqui community, PCV Ben Griffin answered positively. "The non-religious, as well as religious, interests will ultimately

benefit from this project," he says, "and *that* is our goal here --to help everyone in need. To me, the details are irrelevant."

But PCVs should also question themselves: why the fuss about religion at all? In Ecuador, sites vary widely in religious intensity and homogeneity. As a consequence, working on such "dual-purpose" projects might be occasionally necessary for some PCVs to be effective in their sites. Deliberately avoiding Christianity's influence in a 97% Christian country, on the other hand, is not only likely counterproductive, but it borders on bigotry as well. In other words, wouldn't it be better if PCVs leave some battles alone when struggling in the greater war against hunger and poverty?

Regardless of the ongoing dialogue, Jones resolutely marches on with a band of Calpaqui Christians in tow. "It will be built. And the whole community will benefit," he says, "And whoever's got beef with it can come talk to me."

At the least, to Jones' relief, there appears to be more people that have faith in the motives behind his project than those without.

Miss Universe Pride Defended Against Attacks (now you find her a man)

-- El Clima Reporting

On June 1st, the world tuned in as Miss Jennifer Hawkins, a 5-foot-11 blonde with blue eyes, was chosen from among 80 beauty queens in a two-hour pageant in Quito watched by television viewers around the world. The contestants stayed in Quito's Marriot hotel in the weeks prior to the election, carefully guarded by Ecuadorian military and police. Some groups marched several blocks from the Marriot, carrying signs denouncing the pageant and President Lucio Gutierrez, increasing pressure on him to step down. Indigenous women dressed in multilayered skirts and embroidered blouses wearing sashes with phony titles like "Miss War" and "Miss Missile." Carrying ears of corn, they shouted against the government for spending millions of dollars on the event instead of providing support for their crops.

The candidates defended themselves against the protest. Miss USA Shandi Finnessey labeled as unfair the criticism saying "With the chaos and trauma in the world right now, I think you need a very strong role model like Miss Universe to travel to countries and spread a message of peace." Miss Norway Kathrine Sorland agreed, adding: "I know people have criticized Miss Universe, Miss World and other beauty pageants, but we are a bunch of girls having fun, and this is a positive thing. I have no feelings of guilt, not at all." *continued on adjacent page...*

See Lederman Run

--El Clima Reporting

As if the daily grind of being a PCV in Ecuador were not enough, Myra Claire Lederman (O'90; Atuntaqui, Imbabura) has also been training herself of late to run a 100-mile race this June. Winding itself from through the Inca trail and around Mt. Ausangate, the endurance event lasts 14 days



(June 6th – June 19st), spanning the time El Clima is scheduled to print.

If one were to average the total distance over time, they would find that a daily jaunt of seven miles a day could finish the two week

race in casual form. But exercising the Golden Mean is far from this race's design. Each day has a set distance to complete, with some days proving far more formidable than others. The longest stretch in a single day will be a complete marathon run along the ancient Inca trail, clocking in at 27.5 miles. Only a handful of days pass between the next longest length of 22 miles, peaking at 20,905 feet (6,376 meters) . Fortunately, and perhaps to more than a few runners' relief, two days will be dedicated solely to the participants' rest.

An American organization called Andes Adventures is organizing the event. Its substantial \$2800 race fee* includes a flight from Miami to Cuzco, as well as reservations in "nice hotels" for each night along the route. "It's more like vacation," says Lederman, "the [runners] are probably young, wealthy men." But Lederman, an attractive and confident *soltera*, is not going for the social scene.

A veteran of eight triathlons, four 10k runs and a marathon, Lederman is known for searching out unusual tests of determination and endurance. Illustrating this point, Lederman joined five other Omnibus 90ers the morning after their swearing-in (last October) to compete in the Chanchinator contest, an endurance event popular for its sheer stupidity. Lederman and the other newbie-PCVs doggedly stuffed three oversized Magic Bean pancakes



PCV Claire Lederman

down their reluctant maws to satisfy the contest's sole requirement. Tellingly, one of the aspiring participants prematurely vomited out about a pound of dough that morning, thus falling a few bites shy of success. Lederman, in contrast, traipsed through the event with tranquil determination and finished with relative ease.

But is there a method behind all this madness of challenge seeking? Why, for example, has Lederman decided to test herself so intensely? "It's just fun," was the only explanation your correspondent could wrangle from the friendly but taciturn PCV. Well, too true. Fun it actually may be for an unusual subset of people. But more importantly, can our fearless PCV make it to the end of the upcoming 100-mile race? Get a hold of Lederman after she returns to Ecuador, or seek out the next issue of El Clima, to find out.

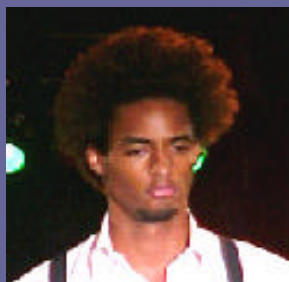
** Lederman received an undisclosed but considerable discount off this price.*

Just In Passing...

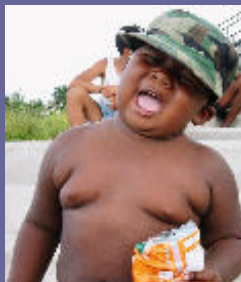
Hordes of rural and city folk descended upon the central square of Cotacachi on Good Friday joining the rest of Ecuador in enjoying large crowds and colorful parades.



The protesters should take some comfort in the fact that this event was limited to only women. The Mr. Universe pageant has been unusually quiet, and El Clima has taken upon itself to find the beauty surfer, Miss Australia, a g'day mate. We have narrowed it down to 4 contestants; and, unlike the Miss Universe pageant, El Clima is spending about 1.5 cents per photocopy, so it should not provoke too much protest. Take your pick, as these four studs are hurting for some recognition.



Mr. High Fashion 2003



Mr. Chubs 2004



Mr. Manhunt Pakistan 2002



Mr. International 2003

Recent News In Ecuador

Oct 30, 2003 (Economist)

Ecuador is the world's most biodiverse country in relation to its area, but has SA's fastest rates of deforestation. 370,000 acres of primary forest are felled each year by official estimates, though unofficial estimates put it at twice that high. Half of Ecuador's forests have been lost in the last three decades, mainly to illegal logging. It is guessed that 70% of all timber sold in the country is illegally felled.



One Angry Tree Speaks Out

So four years ago, a body called Green Surveillance was set up to delegate control of logging to the private sector and civic groups. The first stage involved setting up, comprising five non-governmental organizations, the police, the army and the ministry itself. This angered some loggers, but the real problems started when the government hired Société Générale de Surveillance (SGS), a Swiss company, to administer logging licenses in return for a tax on legal sales of wood. SGS has been the target of violent protests: staff have been attacked, offices ransacked and computers stolen. Despite repeated requests, the government has provided no protection, nor has anyone been arrested. The loggers also staged protests and unleashed a wave of lawsuits. Eventually, The Constitutional Tribunal Court ruled against an attempt to outsource policing of illegal logging. Said to be a move influenced by the timber interests and their cronies in Congress, the timber companies ostensibly are in support of policing but seem to be dealing in the back room.

Environmentalists say that timber industries are actually gaining from the illegal trade, buying from crooked middlemen and cutting without permits themselves.



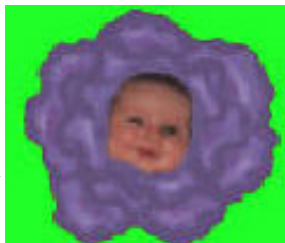
Last month Transparency International awarded Ecuador with the second most corrupt country in SA, second to Bolivia. Especially notorious is the political corruption of Ecuador's judiciary.

January 4th, 2004 (BBC News)

The FARC leader Ricardo Palmera was captured in Ecuador and sent home for sentencing. There was a \$820,000 reward on his head prior to his capture. A coalition between Columbia, Ecuador and US led to his arrest. He was caught in a South Quito clinic while being treated for leishmaniasis, a disease common in Columbia's jungles. He faces thirty years in prison. In the past decade alone, more than 35,000 people are believed to have been killed in the fighting between the FARC and the Colombian government.

February 13th, 2004 (ABC News)

Exposure to pesticide use among workers in the flower industries of Ecuador (from where 65 percent of the flowers sold in the United States are imported), Columbia, Costa Rica, the United States (California) can cause of nausea, skin eruptions, headache, dizziness, Severe birth defects at the rose plantations....



Severe birth defects at the rose plantations.... affect the womb of pregnant women and cause fainting. This exposure can be intensified in enclosed greenhouses, where fogging fumigation is common. Lately, growing pressure from consumers and some advocacy groups, especially in Europe, has brought about substantial reform within the flower industry. In 1998, Germany instituted the Flower Label Program, which sets guidelines for environmental and worker protection. Similar "green label" programs have been founded in the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. There is no comparable

program in the United States.

February 19th 2004 (Economist)

The indigenous population in Ecuador has been very active over the years. They are 4.8 million and 38% of Ecuador's population according to 2000 census data. In January of 2000 they helped force the resignation of President Jamil Mahuad and in 2002, helped to elect Lucio Gutiérrez, one of the dissident army colonels. Indian leaders blame the government (it denies it) for a recent attempt on the life of Leonidas Iza, the president of the Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador (CONAIE). Now they feel betrayed by Gutiérrez for accepting a loan from the IMF and being friendly to the United States.



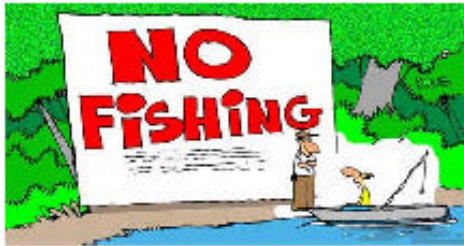
CONAIE helped to set up a mainly indigenous political party called Pachakutik. It currently holds 19 out of 215 municipalities, five provincial governorships (out of 22) and ten of the 100 seats in Congress. The demands of these types of indigenous movements in South America are multifaceted. They include poverty, inequality in schooling, discrimination, and globalization's role in exposing people to outside resources and organizations.

Indigenous movements are also considered dangerous because some leaders are militants and rise to power by underhanded means. Also, many are anti-capitalist, generally opposed to privatization, IMF and multinational firms (oil, gas and mining projects) thus placing a brake on economic growth. Some suggest there is a deep dislike for global capitalism (referred to as "entrepreneurship" in the Economist), and "Mr. Iza of CONAIE argues that collectivism is a central part of indigenous culture, and has allowed its survival against the odds."

March 4th, 2004 (Economist)

Angry fisherman held 30 scientists hostage last week demanding the right to use semi-industrial techniques in the

protected waters around the archipelago of the Galapagos Islands. They also threatened to unleash goats and other terrors on the islands. Ecuador government gave in and set up a fishermen friendly panel to investigate concerns.



"What sign?"

This move undermines the Galapagos's status as a marine reserve whose decisions about its management have been made by a committee on which conservation bodies, tourist firms, gov't ministries and fisherman are represented. This status was given in 1998 to give the islands' 18,000 residents a say, while striking a balance between conservation and development. On March 3rd, the environment minister resigned over the government's handling of the fishing row. Hitherto, the Galapagos has been one of Latin America's better-preserved nature reserves. To remain so, it needs some insulation from national politics.

April 7th, 2004 (BBC News)

Inmates in Ecuador's crowded jails take hundreds of hostages while guards go on strike. They are demanding better conditions and shorter sentences. Among the hostages were TV news teams from

Ecuador's Channel 4 and Channel 10 being held at the women's prison in Quito; at a women's pris on in Guayaquil, 275km (170 miles) southwest of Quito, inmates are reported to have taken two police officers hostage and tied them up close to a gas canister, which they have threatened to blow up if their demands are not met.

A similar situation occurred in February when more than 300 people were held hostage at an Ecuadorian prison. At the time, the government ended the strike by promising to build three new prisons, to ease overcrowding, and to release some 1,000 people being held without sentence.



But Mercedes Torres, a leader of the protest at the women's jail in Quito, said the government had made little effort to fulfill their promises. Ecuador's 33 prisons were built to house 6,000 prisoners, but actually hold 12,600. Prisoners are suffering from incarceration without trial and extended sentences.

April 22nd 2004 (Economist)

Despite Ecuador's GDP growth of 2.7%

last year, the scandals and political isolation of Lucio Gutierrez could bring him down. The price of oil is up, exports are up, and Ecuadorians abroad are sending a lot of money home. However, Ecuador remains one of the poorest countries in the region, with over half its population living below the poverty line; the government has neglected the structural reforms required to make dollarization work and to maintain the support of the IMF (its loan deal expired last week).



Also, Mr Gutiérrez support is precarious; he is dependent on the center-right Social Christian Party (PSC), a notoriously fickle and self-serving bunch. He still stands accused of receiving—and lying about—campaign donations from a Mexican political party. Even if he survives the ongoing investigation, his fair-weather allies will not want to look like his patsies in advance of the local elections due in October. Under Ecuadorian law, the president's Patriotic Society Party must win more than 5% of the votes to remain on the electoral register. He had failed to reach that target in the last congressional poll.

— *Staff writers Daniel Lapidus and Alysia Ross*

UPCOMING BIRTHDAYS

Crum, Amanda	6/01	Chinchester, Ouida	6/29	Pastega, Gina	7/29	Book, Nicole	8/31
Watling, Sarah	6/02	Dean, Carl	6/29	Gallegos, Marie	8/05	Windel, Katherine	8/31
Carol Badran	6/08	Potochnick, Stephanie	7/02	Giles, Garred	8/07		
Sherrill, Lee	6/13	Brenner, Samantha	7/06	Nuzzo, Perla	8/12		
Arispe Sergio	6/15	Brown, Calla	7/07	Scheinkman, Adam	8/20		
Olson, Mark	6/15	Cruz, Carolyn	7/08	Gorsline, Marjorie	8/23		
Smith, David	6/20	Weaver, Gennifer	7/14	Al-Ebrahim Bibi	8/25		
Bell, Jason	6/21	Coombs, Matthew	7/19	Tebbetts, Claire	8/25		
Kakde, Ela	6/22	Sower, Lonnie	7/23	Master, Deborah	8/25		
Alex Elizabeth	6/27	Chen, Samuel	7/28	Smith, Matthew	8/28		



US State Dept Volcanologist Christina Neal works with the US Geological Survey at the Alaska Volcano Observatory in Anchorage, Alaska. El Clima caught up to her during her brief sabbatical in Ecuador and asked her to educate and advise our PCVs on the state of the active landscape beneath them... Learn and enjoy!

Living and Working in the Shadow of Ecuador's Active Volcanoes



Tina Neal on the rim of Quilotoa Volcano, as taken in early May. Neal acted as a Science Fellow in Quito in May and June to work on volcano and earthquake hazard issues for the Embassy.

Ecuador's spectacular landscape is a consequence of its position at the intersection of two of Earth's *tectonic plates*. Here, the Nazca plate beneath the waters of the Pacific Ocean is slowly colliding with, compressing, and diving eastward beneath the South American continent, giving rise to tremendous mountain building, large earthquakes, and frequent volcanic activity. As the Nazca plate descends into the earth, physical and chemical changes occur at a depth of about 100 km (62 miles) and molten material or *magma* is formed, collecting into pockets. Magma contains dissolved gasses, is less dense than the rocks around it and so it slowly ascends towards the Earth's surface. Finally, where it pierces the surface in explosive eruptions or quiet effusion of lava flows, volcanoes are born. This explains the belt of South American volcanoes that coincides with the crest of the Andes and largely parallels the coastline.

This collision of plates and associated earthquakes, mountain building, and volcanism has been active for many tens of millions of years and so the record of volcanism in Ecuador goes well back into geologic time. Volcanologists in Ecuador have identified at least 61 separate volcanic centers in the country, 31 of which have been active with eruptions in the last 15,000 years. Thus according to local scientists, this represents the potential set of volcanoes most likely to be active in the future, even though only 8 of these volcanoes have been active in historic time dating back to 1532. Eruptions since 1998 have amply demonstrated some of the effects of relatively small explosive episodes on communities and ecosystems, but it is important to know that these recent eruptions are only a taste of the impacts of larger and even more dangerous eruptions that are also possible. In fact, catastrophic eruptions, like their brutal cousins catastrophic earthquakes, have been significant modifiers of this history of entire communities and cultures in Ecuador and other parts of the world.

The 31 potentially active volcanoes in the country are studied and monitored by a group of scientists from the *Instituto Geofísico* (IG) at the *Escuela Politécnica Nacional* in Quito. By law, this is the only official agency with the authority and responsibility to monitor, interpret, and communicate the potential hazards at Ecuador's volcanoes. Currently, the IG maintains seismic instruments (earthquake sensors) on 11 of the 31 potentially active volcanoes. Due to financial limitations, only 4 volcanoes (Guagua Pichincha, Cotopaxi, Tungurahua, and soon, Cayambe) have true networks of *seismometers* that surround the volcano and allow accurate detection and location of the small earthquakes that can signal developing unrest at a volcano as magma begins to rise to the surface. In addition, IG scientists periodically measure sulphur dioxide gas emissions, spring water chemistry, and ground deformation of selected hazardous volcanoes. At Cotopaxi and Tungurahua, they also operate mudflow detection devices in valleys around the volcano. The IG operates around the clock, 365 days a year, receiving information from seismometers and watching for signs of unrest. They issue daily statements of the status of erupting volcanoes, weekly or monthly comments on other volcanoes of interest, and other hazard communications by email and on the internet at: <http://www.igepon.edu.ec/>. The IG has also published a number of hazard maps of individual volcanoes that show in detail the areas at risk from certain volcanic phenomena. With their small staff, they can only do a limited amount of community outreach; however, they can be contacted for presentations and discussions with the public and officials who are concerned about a nearby potentially active volcano.



*Volcan Pichincha
(Quito, Ecuador)*

In terms of volcano hazards, Ecuador and indeed all of Latin America, represents one of the most dangerous regions on the planet. In fact, according to the Smithsonian Institution, Spanish is spoken around more active volcanoes than all other languages on Earth. The recent eruptions in Ecuador have demonstrated some of the many phenomena associated with volcanic eruptions that can injure or kill and damage communities, infrastructure, and ecosystems. Let's look at them quickly...



A primary concern in Ecuador due to the number of snow- and ice-capped volcanoes and the abundance of rain are *lahars* (mudflows). These occur when volcanic debris melts or mixes with snow, ice, or water and produces a deadly slurry of ash, rocks, debris, and water that can race down valleys at speeds of more than 40 kph (25mph) and devastate everything in their paths. Even a small eruption can produce these mudflows and so any community located in a river valley or floodplain downstream from a volcano should be aware of this hazard.

Latin America, represents one of the most dangerous regions on the planet... Spanish is spoken around more active volcanoes than all other languages on Earth.

Explosive eruptions and sudden volcanic landslides can also produce hurricanes of hot ash, rocks, and gasses known as *pyroclastic flows* that move at high velocities away from the vent. In human history, these have been some of the most deadly of volcanic phenomena, most notably accounting for the ruins of Pompeii near Vesuvius Volcano in Italy (79 C.E.). The community of Banos at the foot of Tungurahua Volcano is at risk from a pyroclastic flow that could reach the city in minutes, possibly with little warning. *Ash fall* from an eruption cloud can also be dangerous during large eruptions when roof carrying capacity can be exceeded; however for the most part, ash fall is a nuisance and not a deadly hazard. *Ash clouds* above volcanoes can reach many tens of thousand of feet in the atmosphere and travel for thousands of kilometers, where they pose a grave hazard to aircraft that may accidentally encounter the ash. *Lava flows* occur during many eruptions and can have dangerous associated phenomena, however usually they move slowly enough to allow time for evacuation. *Volcanic gas* can be of concern near a volcano or, possibly, in deep volcanic lakes where carbon dioxide can accumulate and prompt sudden releases of this potentially deadly gas; it is not known if Ecuador's volcanic lakes Cuicocha and Quilotoa are prone to such carbon dioxide hazards.

Cotopaxi is the volcano of most concern today in Ecuador. This beautiful, symmetrical, glacier-clad stratocone began to exhibit signs of unrest in the fall of 2001 as IG scientists detected earthquakes at increasingly shallow levels below the volcano. Soon after, anomalous melting of snow and ice and the summit indicated an increase in heat flux out of the crater that marks the active vent of the volcano. The IG also detected subtle changes in the volcano's shape, all signs that an eruption could be coming. More than two years later, the volcano has quieted down somewhat and there is no indication of an imminent eruption; however that could change at any time. Few people live in the high risk zone for pyroclastic surges and flows from a sudden explosive eruption of Cotopaxi, but more than 100,000 people live in the major river valleys draining the volcano to the north and south. These areas could be affected by mudflows produced by an eruption that melts some of the snow and ice cap sending voluminous debris flows towards populated areas. The IG maintains special monitoring equipment to detect these debris flows, however warning time could be very short, less than 30-40 minutes for some of the closest affected communities. Potential lahar inundation maps have been prepared and distributed to towns and officials in order to prepare evacuation plans and to educate the at-risk population. We cannot know for certain if Cotopaxi will erupt soon or will return to dormancy for many years to come. For this reason, constant vigilance in monitoring by volcanologists is necessary to provide as much warning time as possible.

Ecuadorians can live and work safely with volcanoes but a number of actions at the individual, community, and national level are required to make this possible. First, knowledgeable scientists must study the history of volcanoes and have means to monitor their activity and provide warning of possible or actual eruptions. The potential hazards at each volcano must be evaluated, mapped, and this information communicated to officials and residents in clear, simple language so that emergency planning can occur *before* an eruption threatens. Critical infrastructure and major population centers should not be built in the high hazard zones around volcanoes whenever possible. Finally, individuals, families, and communities can be prepared for volcanic eruptions and many other natural and human-caused disasters by being informed, understanding warning systems and escape routes, maintaining an adequate supply of emergency provisions such as food and water, and by pressuring local and federal governments to take effective action before disaster strikes.

Volcanic eruptions are but one of many natural hazards that this geologically active country faces each day. Earthquakes are also a tremendous concern to all of Ecuador's major population centers and everyone should be aware of steps they can take to ensure the safety of their families and communities. For more information on earthquakes, landslides, flooding, and other natural hazard issues, please contact the IG or your local Civil Defense representative. There are some helpful popular publications on many of these phenomena that have been produced by Civil Defense in cooperation with the IG. While disaster preparedness can always be seen as a 'second order' priority in impoverished communities that lack basic services, I would urge you to consider how promoting livelihoods and activities that support personal and family safety can be constructively integrated into your critical programs. The potential payoff is prevention or mitigation of devastating losses in the face of a natural disaster.



A Weekend in the Life of Mendoza's Dengue

—El Clima Reporting



Omnibus 91er Sean Mendoza awaiting his blood and urinalysis results in the PC Office (May 2004).

Every PCV likes catching a good disease every now and then. In fact, for many of the PCVs in the more cushioned posts, such as in the cleaner cities and newer suburban communities of Ecuador, exotic sicknesses are what remind them that they may in fact actually be roughing it.

For this reason, one often finds the veteran PCV talking casually –and perhaps even fondly– about the time they had worms, amoebas or a brief onslaught of skin fungi.

But all PCVs draw a mental line as to what they would really not want to catch. And certainly malaria, brainworm and dengue are on the other side of this line.

So it was much to PCV Sean Mendoza's dismay when, only two weeks after moving to his coastal site, the nurses announced that he had one of the undesirables. They'd be damned if he didn't have dengue. We caught up with Mendoza in Quito, while he was awaiting the results from the necessary urinalysis and blood tests.

Like malaria, dengue is caused by a virus spread by mosquitoes. The symptoms can include: sudden fever with chills, severe body aches, headache and sore throat; the infected person feels very ill, weak and miserable. Mendoza claimed it was the initial blitzkrieg of fever and body aches that made him call the nurses on the first night's appearance of the symptoms.

"The pain is the worst part," Mendoza said. "Your eyes hurt real bad –intensely, as if you have a terrible migraine–

and you can't stand light or sound. Then there is pain in your joints and all over your body... it really hurts... it's a steady sensation that is sometimes interrupted by sudden surges of burning pain –like when you hit your finger with a hammer– appearing in random areas of your body."

Mendoza had been visiting a coastal town not far from his Esmeraldas site that first day –a Thursday. Over the phone, the PCMOs told him to stay put for the evening and that if the symptoms persisted then he would be referred to a clinic in the area. Mendoza thus spent a painful and sleepless night in a local hostel. The next morning he visited a medic for diagnostic tests, but the excruciating Friday that followed and another sleepless night convinced him to forsake waiting further for test results. He jumped on the first available Saturday bus to Quito.

It wasn't until Monday that Mendoza was seen by the PCMOs. By then he had already had the characteristic "break fever," where all

dengue symptoms subside for one or two days before they begin again with renewed vigor. "Now it's back and it's kickin' and it's doin' well," said a tired, occasionally wincing Mendoza. By that time, he was on his fourth day of no sleep.

There is no cure to dengue. One has to painfully wait out the passage of the virus, a trial that can take several days. For Mendoza, this particular crucible is nearing its end, and he will soon return to what will be his site for the next two years. On the bright side, he is not as likely to catch dengue as others who have not yet had the disease. Few are those with tales of a double dose of the sickness –though the symptoms are supposed to be much worse the second time around.

But for the rest of the PCVs in the dengue-spattered coastlands, all they can do is hope for the best of the diseases, while crossing their fingers against one of the worst.



Skeletons in the Closet: Who is the real Miss Ecuador?

Some of you may not be aware of the fact that Miss Ecuador is Nurse Kelly's niece. El Clima took advantage of this special relationship to gain further insight into Maria Susana's life:

El Clima: How did María Susana become Miss Ecuador? Was she a Miss Something prior to her current title?

Kelly: No, she didn't have any particular title. I think she just registered, tried out, and won.

When did your niece's modeling career begin?

She started modeling at the age of 17 or 18 within Ecuador and then after graduating from college in Art and Design, she modeled in Italy.

What are her professional aspirations after being Miss Ecuador?

Well first she has to be Miss Ecuador for a year. Then I assume she'll go back to modeling and her art. She paints very large portraits of women in a modern style.

Favorite Miss Ecuador memory:

As a child we thought she wasn't the prettiest little thing. She had very large features that didn't match her face. She had to grow into her face. You know she has a big mouth and a big smile that she just had to grow into.

Do you or your family suspect corruption in the Miss Universe selection?

No, but we were disappointed that she didn't make the top five. We didn't think she was going to win.

Miss Ecuador '04



Friend *and* FoE...

RPCV Josh Busby and Ben Bellows write about the RPCV group "Friends of Ecuador" and what it represents to our volunteers now and after their service.

Friends of Ecuador is the revitalized Returned Peace Corps Volunteer organization linking PCVs, other North Americans, and Ecuadorians into a non-profit e-community at www.FriendsofEcuador.org. The IRS recently recognized us as an official 501c3 non-profit.

We are setting the site up so as to:

- Provide current headlines related to Ecuador
- Link RPCVs and Peace Corps Trainees at Staging
- Provide readjustment tips and employment information to returning PCVs
- Link donations to community projects in Ecuador
- Provide a connection to US markets for Ecuadorian fair trade products
- Strengthen ties between Ecuadorian communities in the US and US citizens who have lived and worked in Ecuador
- Connect technically proficient short term volunteers to community projects in Ecuador
- Create a forum for the volunteer community to reconnect with each other
- Develop an historical archive of the PCV experience in Ecuador
- Advance the Peace Corps' third goal, "To strengthen Americans' understanding of the world and its peoples - to bring the world back home."

We're still in the building phase developing the database and on-line transactions for donations and purchases. We hope to do our big launch in the coming weeks. We have e-mail addresses for about 500 RPCV's and have 135 paid-in-full members through the National Peace Corps Association. As you probably know, there are over 5,000 PCVs who have worked in Ecuador, so we have plenty of work ahead of us. We look forward to increasing our membership to include currently serving volunteers and their friends and family.

Once we figure how to set up the appropriate mechanism, we will be able to make parts of the site accessible to PCVs to add content. We're still working out the kinks, but we have included a GAD page on our site. We will have on-line discussion tools so you can connect with volunteers from previous generations of GAD for instance, and even have an on-line alumni network.

In the near future, we will have on-line grant applications where community projects seeking small funds will be able to apply. Once the projects are vetted, members will be able to electronically donate tax-deductible donations for projects of their choosing. We're also going to begin selling the Buen Provecho cookbooks in the States and some artesanías from the website.

The membership database will have email search capabilities for registered members, meaning your privacy is protected while you allow other members to contact you, if you permit your email to be shared among the members.

What does all this mean for you PCVs working now in the field?

For PCVs in Ecuador, this site will have several new services. It means you will have a way to figure out which PCV's were living in or around your site 15 years ago and maybe learn something new about your site. You'll have immediate access to useful news and headlines on Ecuador. Even though you're in country, it can be hard at times to gather news. The Friends of Ecuador site will have headlines gathered from the internet and posted under the "Ecuador News" section.

Ecuador News will also be a way for your friends and family to have a better feel for what's going on in Ecuador while you are there. They will be better able to understand your experience if they are kept abreast of the political and economic ups and downs, the occasional volcanic rumblings, the periodic strikes, the seasonal fiestas, and the like.

There will also be on-line discussion forums. For example, if you have a question about beekeeping you could post the question and then get a response from a knowledgeable RPCV in a matter of days.

In the future, our search function will ultimately allow you to do pretty sophisticated searches. You could even find out which volunteers work in which provinces. As a member, you will be able to search by province and find their exact names and e-mail addresses.

Our network allows you to reach a wide audience of like-minded individuals. One of our first steps has been to promote the annual GAD rifa. We posted GAD's email, a description of the scholarship and links to the Projects for Peace site. Our non-profit status means that we can give tax-deductions to US members who make donations for projects like GAD scholarships. As the membership increases, we will be able to increase exposure of important projects to obtain more effective results.

How do I sign up?

We will have on-line membership functioning shortly, but the easiest way for you to join is to send us your email address at foe@friendsofecuador.org. In your e-mail, tell us your first name, last name and your COS date. We will then create a user name and temporary password to get you started.

Conclusions

We're very excited by the possibilities; let's endeavor to establish as cooperative a relationship as possible. We look forward to figuring out a way for us to work together with GAD, PC-E, El Clima, VAC, PCVs and Ecuadorian citizens. You can feel assured that folks in the US are rooting for your success in your respective communities.

Josh Busby '97-'99, FoE President
Ben Bellows '97-'00, FoE Vice-President
foe@friendsofecuador.org

Bush Over Troubled Water

-- Sean G. Kulkarni (O'88)



Americans crossed Bill Clinton's bridge to the 21st century with a heady sense of optimism. "Irrational exuberance," as it turned out. The rapid shocks of recession, September 11, the war on terror, and corporate accounting scandals washed away the 90s mirage of sustainable peace and ever-expanding prosperity. Only months later, the global unity America cultivated after 9/11 collapsed as we embarked on a massive

and dangerous democracy building project in the heart of the Middle East. At home, economic output and productivity have lurched forward, yet mostly because jobs continue to be cut back or sent abroad.

On the campaign trail, President Bush paints a flattering Norman Rockwell portrait of America: noble in purpose and character, struggling to cope yet driving forward, resolute and unshakable in pursuit of our dreams and aspirations. But it is a fact that uncertainty and anxiety abound in every household of every economic class. The current campaign offers Americans the opportunity to dig deep and assess the profound changes of the past few years. Voters in November will either affirm their support of George Bush's leadership in response to the challenges we have faced, or elect to change course under the banner of a new J.F.K.

It's the Economy, Stupid

The president's platform is an ideological reflection of his conservative, business background and his messianic vision of America's world role. His program to create jobs has been to cut taxes, cut them again, and keep cutting them. Allowing Americans to retain more of their paychecks, so the logic goes, will boost consumer spending in a consumer-driven economy. Dividend and capital gains tax relief are used to fatten business profit margins, enabling companies to expand and hire more workers. Whether individuals and companies will utilize their savings from tax to open up and expand businesses is highly questionable, which is why Bush's critics believe the tax cuts are merely gifts to his wealthy donors and corporate buddies.

Other aspects of his jobs creation program can be spotted more easily as gimmick corporate giveaways: shielding companies from burdensome mass tort and class action lawsuits; drilling to increase the domestic supply of energy; cutting back on environmental regulations and workplace safety requirements. The president wants a cap on damages awarded in malpractice lawsuits, broadly claiming this would taper the skyrocketing cost of health insurance and allow small businesses to sponsor coverage for more employees. Each element of Bush's "Economic Security Agenda" is touted as a needy cost-saver for corporate America, which when implemented will enable businesses to hire more workers. Lower taxes and less red tape may help stimulate growth in the long run, but these policies offer neither compassion nor recourse for the nearly 3m Americans put out of work since 2001.

Senator Kerry embraces the president's middle class tax relief,

but he is piping mad about tax cuts for people like himself in the wealthiest 1%. Kerry's "Real Deal to Change America" promises 10m jobs in his first term alone. If this election is about adapting to change and establishing a vision for America's future, John Kerry's problem is that he wants to re-create the past. He has proposed a cocktail of corporate tax benefits to lure outsourced manufacturing and service sector jobs back home. Instead of enhancing America's edge in the global economy, his plan puts U.S. businesses at a competitive disadvantage with foreign producers. It is a hard reality of globalization that companies will hire abroad when the value demands it. Kerry's program to lure back outsourced jobs plays up well in the key mid-Western swing states hit hardest by the recession. Fair enough for election year politics. But if he is at all serious about sustainable economic growth and jobs expansion, he would do better to highlight the more pragmatic side of his platform: increasing relief for Americans who lose their jobs, training workers in the profitable high-tech fields of the future, and ensuring better math and science instruction in our schools.

Permanent tax cuts and Bush's myriad corporate giveaways are insufficient to create jobs. His overall economic policy, though, is rightly geared toward making American businesses more competitive, thus fostering the ideal conditions for growth. Job gains and losses over the next four years will depend far more on the turns of the global economic cycle than the actions, or inactions, of either candidate. Four more years of Bush will likely herald a wider expansion of tax cuts, a continued shift of government-sponsored health care to the private sector, and a continued effort to roll back "command-and-control" environmental regulations in favor of pro-market regulatory systems like "cap-and-trade." Should unemployment, environmental degradation, the cost of health care, and terrorism all continue to rise, President Bush will not concede that his policies might be the wrong ones, but rather he will insist that they have not gone far enough. To compensate for the galactic budget deficit generated by his "Cut Tax, and Spend" philosophy, Americans should prepare themselves for extensive cuts in federal programs such as education, homeland security, Medicare and Medicaid, environmental protection, and pay for military families. Finally, the centerpiece of a second Bush term will likely be a fulfillment of the GOP's dearest aspiration: movement towards the privatization of Social Security.

John Kerry will reverse at least some of Bush's tax cuts, prompting puerile cries from Republican legislators that he is raising taxes. That is nonsense. Repealing tax cuts for at least the wealthiest 1% is a necessary measure to restore fiscal responsibility in Washington. Doing so would help the Senator achieve his aim to halve the federal deficit in four years. He cannot, however, cut the deficit without scaling back his plan to prime the government pump on Medicare, expand prescription drug coverage, and purchase health coverage for 40m uninsured Americans.

Kerry has toyed numerous times with the idea of a 50¢ gasoline tax. It would be painful, highly unpopular, and be

fought tooth and nail in a Republican Congress. It would also be a good idea. America's gas-guzzling addiction is a significant threat to our economic and environmental security and it destroys our credibility in the Middle East. Americans must elect a president who is serious about launching a concerted effort to invest in and develop clean, renewable energy sources.

Create jobs. Expand health coverage while cutting costs. Reduce the deficit while preserving essential programs. Revolutionize America's energy policy while avoiding economic shocks. The domestic agenda is indeed daunting, and driving it forward will keep the current or next president's hands full. Unfortunately, the challenges awaiting him in foreign policy are even taller, graver, and more intractable.

America & The World

National security and foreign policy will be showcased in this election for the first time in two decades, joining customary bread and butter topics like jobs and health care. The president is understandably committed to paying any price in order to avoid a second major terrorist attack on the homeland. His Patriot Act infringes on civil liberties at home, while his willingness — some say eagerness — to exercise American firepower without the wider sanction of the international community angers key allies and foreign audiences. Bush's War on Terror is not just a narrow military strategy to dismantle terrorist networks and prevent future attacks through pre-emption. It is a broad effort to destroy the ideological breeding grounds of terror and plant the seeds of liberty and democracy deep in the heart of the Middle East. The sacrifice to America in blood, time, and treasure of this daring, noble effort continues to accumulate, while the gains to U.S. security may take years or decades, if ever, to manifest. Apart from war and the efforts of our legal and intelligence community to prevent WMD from falling into the hands of terrorists and rogue states, Bush has proposed bold changes in the way America does business with the developing world. His \$15b AIDS initiative and Millennium Challenge Account are welcome efforts to increase foreign aid and improve it by creating higher standards for accountability and transparency in its provision. Finally, Bush's efforts to secure regional, bilateral, and multilateral trade partnerships on 6 continents are a boon to U.S. commercial interests and developing world economies. Critics have branded the president a hypocrite for preaching America's commitment to free trade while heaping subsidies on America's farm and steel workers. Though justified, critics calling for fairer U.S. trade in steel and agriculture are far more likely to get their wish during a second Bush term than under John Kerry, who still takes the occasional swipe at NAFTA and depends for political support on the farming and manufacturing communities.

Senator Kerry believes George Bush has "pursued the most reckless foreign policy in modern American history." Though he voted for the war in Iraq and takes credit for holding Saddam accountable, he criticizes the President as too keen on waging pre-emptive war. War should always remain a statesman's last resort, but the implication that threats posed by terrorists or uncooperative rogues must ripen to fruition before America takes action is a silly and counter-productive one. Kerry lambastes the reconstruction efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan, but his alternative course offers far more rhetoric than substance. If elected he vows to restore damaged alliances, re-engage the United Nations, and internationalize the coalition in Iraq. However, Bush has already

procured the U.N.'s blessing for an international security force. It turns out most countries just aren't interested in sending money or troops to Iraq, regardless of who occupies the White House. The world might welcome Kerry's diplomatic effort to help us "rejoin the community of nations." In practice, such international hand-holding will do little to solve any of America's key foreign policy challenges: capturing Osama and destroying the remnants of Al Qaeda and its brethren networks, halting the proliferation of WMD among rogue states and terrorists, stabilizing Iraq, generating momentum toward a final peace in Jerusalem, and defusing the nuclear crisis on the Korean peninsula. For all the talk about George Bush's cowboy unilateralism, this administration has achieved substantial gains on all of those very difficult tasks in partnership with the U.N. and allies in Europe and Asia.

John Kerry offers no new strategies for winning the War on Terror, securing the broader peace, or spreading reform across the Middle East. Instead, he only seeks to broaden, deepen, or expand those efforts initiated by the Bush administration. He may speak in friendlier, more eloquent language to the rest of the world, but a John Kerry foreign policy will stray very little from George Bush's. The exception has been Kerry's pledge to confront Saudi Arabia and wean America off the two million barrels of oil we consume each day from the Middle East. He deserves credit for his recognition of this problem and his larger criticism of the administration's energy policies. That said, platitudes about facing down Riyadh and rehabilitating America from its oil addiction are easy to make on the campaign trail and infinitely harder to do when charged with the responsibilities of governing.

A House United, A House Divided

Historians will judge the presidency of George W. Bush on his response to September 11 and his Iraq project more so than on any single domestic issue. Indeed, national security is his strongest suit in this election. Nonetheless, the president knows all too well his father's lesson about the dangers of trumping up Iraq while the economy flounders at home. America proved itself a 50-50 nation in 2000. Despite the tragedies, wars, and challenges that have shaken us to the core and brought our nation together, it is amazing, and in many ways a testament to our democracy, to see the electorate only more angry, partisan, and split between red and blue in 2004.



*Contributed by Sean G. Kulkarni
Omnibus 88 – Rural Public Health
Education: B.S. Foreign Service (2002) from
Georgetown University's School of Foreign
Service*

Spruce up your vocab to score with the ladies or the GRE...

Say What?

- | | |
|---------------------|---|
| 1. Acarpous | A. Not easily exhaustible, tirelessness |
| 2. Fetter | B. Obsequious flatterer |
| 3. Finesse | C. Effete, no longer fertile, worn out |
| 4. Indefatigability | D. Rich and deep, plump and round |
| 5. Palatial | E. Magnificent |
| 6. Preponderance | F. To shackle, put in chains |
| 7. Rotund | G. Fresh and green |
| 8. Toady | H. Delicate way of dealing with a situation |
| 9. Verdant | I. Greatness in number, strength, weight |
| 10. Visceral | J. Of the internal organs of the body |



Woo the best of them...

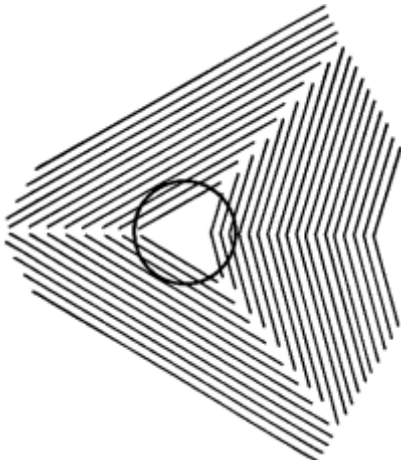
Anagrams

Movies with One Word Titles

- | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. UMASDAE
----- | 7. IITNTCA
----- |
| 2. AABTMN
----- | 8. ORFAG
----- |
| 3. EITWNSS
----- | 9. OONTLAP
----- |
| 4. AOHLENWEL
----- | 10. ANDREEILLEV
----- |
| 5. COAHCIGI
----- | 11. FDOOEGSLLA
----- |
| 6. MAOLNGIA
----- | 12. SUBGY
----- |



Your Ecu neighbor, José Stalin seeks your help in building pig pens. Due to an interesting supply of materials and in order to ensure no mal ojo, you have some limitations in the design of the pens. How can you build pig pens so you can put nine pigs in four pens such that each pen has an odd number of pigs?



Is this circle perfectly round?

Answer Key:
 Say What? Answers: 1. C 2. F 3. H 4. A 5. E 6. I 7. D 8. B 9. G 10. J
 Anagrams Answers: 1. Amadeus 2. Batman 3. Witness 4. Halloween 5. Chicago 6. Magnolia 7. Titanic 8. Fargo 9. Platoon 10. Deliverance 11. Goodellas 12. Buggy
 Pigs: Build three pens and put three pigs in each. Then build a fourth pen around the other three.
 Circle: Yes, the lines in the background distort the circle so it appears squashed.



Democracy via Peace Corps: *Ya Mismo*

Staff Writer -- Dan Lapidus

In case somebody noticed, the SPA categories have radically changed. In the beginning of 2004, it was possible to write SPA grants pertinent to the 5 PC/Ecuador programs. But USAID/Ecuador thought that these categories were ill-conceived, and has recently decided to add more “noble” categories. We now have the special opportunity to write for SPA grants in the categories of Democracy (funds available: \$20,000), Economic Opportunities/Poverty Reduction (funds available: \$10,000), and last and apparently least, Biodiversity Conservation (funds available: \$5,000). The latter two are similar to the old groupings and are somewhat self-explanatory, so I will not reiterate them here. It is however helpful to clarify the description that USAID/Ecuador office in Washington offers for the newest, most expensive category of “Democracy.”

As officially explained, “Democracy” projects must achieve one of these three “Intermediate Results”:

Justice: To achieve this result, volunteers are suggested to promote specialized training and technical assistance to implement the new Criminal Procedures Code. Implement criminal procedures? Aren’t judges the only ones who can do that? Should we write SPA grants to incite jail breaks for prisoners incarcerated without trial? They are also asking for volunteers to support NGO’s (like INNFA) or civil organizations (like women’s groups) to create anti-corruption programs. I could not find a book on how to achieve this result in the Peace Corps library. A more feasible suggestion was that volunteers provide technical assistance on public accountability, transparency and effectiveness in local decision making. I guess we should forcefully suggest to our community members not to be so secretive about the money they get... I’m sure they would be happy to show us the town finances.

Local Governance: This section deals with strengthening private and public defense and disseminating the Criminal Procedures Code to citizens. I have not read this new Code. Should we make xerox copies of it and start giving charlas about it our communities? Or maybe we can train those Brigadas Pre-militares of colegio kids how to defend themselves better against attack by Colombian rebel forces. We could have tech visits to teach teenagers martial arts and use firearms. Although these might be esoteric subjects for many volunteers, the next part enumerated in this section is more commonplace yet still impractical for a SPA grant. It calls for the support of legal reforms for indigenous, women, and vulnerable groups. In

Ecuador, this is badly needed. But what might our grant requests look like... I imagine budgets geared toward fighting economic discrimination by hiring lawyers to fight for rent controls in the cities, or buying charla materials to convince school directors about having a more diverse student body. Fighting for legal reforms about discrimination sounds a lot like fighting the system. Maybe Zack de Roca would have been a great PCV. But I think he would be considered political.

Civil Society Strengthening: Ahhh. Finally we have one broad enough to fudge. Here we are asked to provide technical assistance to local organizations, schools, and/or governments on how they can compromise/ effectively negotiate with other institutions to form “strategic alliances that will work toward common goals”. One volunteer used this category to build a youth house in her community. Most of the youth in her site were heavy drinkers and had little of productive value to do in the community. The youth house was justified as “civil society strengthening” by its ability to give cohesion to the youth and allow them to form a community group with a voice that may be able to form a strategic alliance in local processes and promote the new “Code.” The house is to have ping-pong tables, a large screen T.V., educational videos, etc. Before, this project was under the “Youth and Families” category, but it needed to be changed to fit “Democracy.” Well, it’s a good thing they did that, we wouldn’t want those youth to be confused about the role of their youth house in becoming a center for civil negotiation. With any luck, the house will be the site for a town’s voting caucus in a few years....

I am impressed by this categorie’s promotion of seeking real change rather than just putting bandages on wounds. However, aside from the third sub-category, the application of these results at the grassroots level seems highly impractical. In fact, all of the simplest yet most integral components of democracy are noticeably absent; nothing is mentioned about promoting free speech and press. The 1st Amendment is the most basic and possibly the most critical element of the democratic process and one of the most easily understood.

Granted, volunteers deal with corruption and legal discrimination on daily basis. They often struggle with ways to deal with these problems and would like to know how to change them. But in order to teach these themes, training would need to be overhauled; instead of learning how to cook Bolas de Verde soup with our families, we would have to be taught how to audit our village officials. Fun!

Current and Recently Completed SPA and PCPP Grants

PCV	Type of Grant	Site of PCV	Project Type	Dollars
Twete, Diane	PCPP	Pueblo Nuevo, Carchi	Organic Products Small Business	1,154
Larson, Kristen	PCPP	El Cercado, Imbabura	Latrinization Project	5,000
Jones, Jason	PCPP	Calpaquí, Imbabura	Construction of a Community Center	10,000
Aiossa, Carey	SPA	Cuicocha, Imbabura	Implementation of a Children’s Resource Center	1,562
Hoyt, Pelah	SPA	Saraguro, Loja	Implementation of a Tourist Information Center	1,367
Evanson, Amber	SPA	Sn. Fran. de la Rinconada, Imbabura	Community Sausage Production	3,000
Lapidus, Daniel	SPA	Pano, Napo	Latrinization Project	3,000
Jaimez, Kimberly	SPA	Chone, Manabí	Community Park for Vargas Pazzos Neighborhood	1,855
Gerdt, Caitlin	SPA	Namarín, Loja	Support Network for Battered Women	974
Wilson, Samantha	SPA	El Ebano, Esmeraldas	Implementation of a School Library & Resource Center	3,000
Pfaffenback, Anne	SPA	San Vicente, Manabí	Implementation of a Resource Center	2,662
Campbell, Karla	SPA	Ibarra, Imbabura	Youth House	10,000
Whitner, Kelly	SPA	Quininde, Esmeraldas	Joven a Joven Workshops	800
Hickey, James	SPA	Tena, Napo	Joven a Joven Workshops	800

Tech Pages

Sustainable Agriculture: A Pest's Life

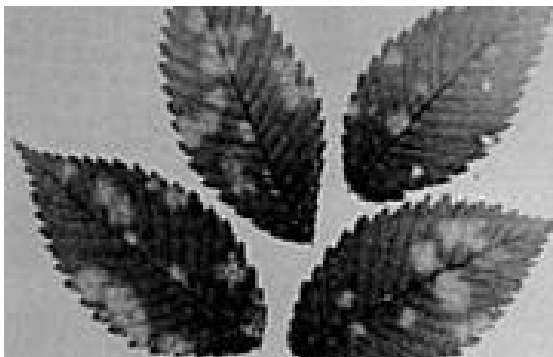
--John Varrieur (Agriculture, O'89)

This article on sustainable pest control has been written in two parts, with the second to be published in the next issue of *El Clima*. The first half, below, will teach you how to successfully identify the several main types of plant pests that show up in your garden from time to time. The second part will discuss the various options at hand for environmentally responsible and pest-specific control measures. All material below has been taken from undergraduate-level lectures that I gave as a TA while earning my M.S. in horticulture at Virginia Tech (Blacksburg, VA).

Part First:

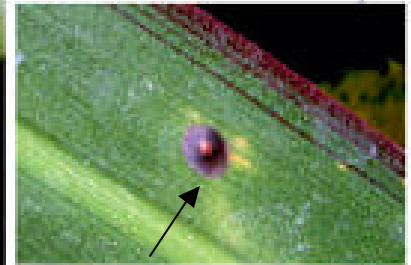
Environmentally sound pest control begins with correctly identifying the specific type of pest infecting your plants. Their speed of movement, the nature of their life cycle and their feeding habits are just some of the variables that affect the way you successfully counter a pest's appearance in your houseplants or garden. Knowing your enemies well will also save you time and money. Upon the arrival of some pests you can get away with doing nothing at all, incurring only inconsequential damage to your crops. On the appearance of other pest types, however, you might only have 24 hours to act before a major infestation spreads to your entire crop. In light of these facts, the more your treatment (or purposeful lack thereof) is catered to a specific pest type, the less collateral damage you will inflict on other living creatures.

Because the major pest types are so different from each other, it's quite easy to learn the basic information necessary for accurate identification of plant pest types in your site. Identifying pests at the species level is usually unnecessary since control measures work at the type level. We'll now look at the more common, and therefore more harmful, types of pests. These are the insects, mollusks, fungi, bacteria and viruses. Keep in mind that I will provide just enough information for you to use in the successful identification of the *type* of pest. I will also try to spice up the style occasionally in an effort to keep you reading. The following text is therefore generally easy to understand and occasionally very non-technical in nature.



Powdery mildew on the undersides of tree leaves.

Family of mealybugs on plant stem



Scale insect and localized damage

...*Insect Pests*... fall under two main types, defined by the way they eat. The first set is referred to as the “chewing” insects, because they’re equipped with mandibles for chewing. The second type includes the “piercing” or “sucking” insects, thus named because they have minuscule straws for mouths, with which they drink up your plants’ juices as if they were delicious green milkshakes.

If you are the least bit observant when it comes to the goings-on in your garden, any **chewing insect** present should stick out for you. For one, they’re relatively big and noticeable, typically spanning from a tenth of an inch to a couple inches in length. Secondly, their munching on your plants is somewhat hard to miss, as they leave fairly obvious holes spattered throughout plan leaves. The most notable members of this pest group are the caterpillars and beetles. These voracious eaters can sometimes devastate entire crops in a growing season if left unchecked.

The only good news concerning the chewing bugs is that they reproduce relatively slowly. Beetle and butterfly eggs, for example, take from one to a few weeks to hatch. This means that neither of those two pest families will suddenly appear in the thousands over night.

The **piercing/sucking insects** are much more contemptible than their larger counterparts, the chewers. This is partly because sucking insects are micro-sized and camouflaged, which makes them vexingly hard to spot. This quasi-invisibility is enhanced by the fact that these insects don’t move much, since they rather just debauch at the bar and drink plant phloem all day long. For those two reasons, hordes of them can arrive and fester in your garden for days before you realize that you and your herbaceous friends are under attack. The major symptoms of such an attack are wilted and yellowing plants, drained of their vital sugary life force (phloem).

Even more sinister than the sucking insects’ size and camo uflage is their life cycle. These prodigious little vampires are generally known for being *baby factories*, with certain species able to churn out a few hundred offspring in a night. Multiply that number by

just 20 unwanted visitors on the underside of a tomato leaf in your garden this coming Tuesday evening at sunset, and you'll come up with around 6000 bouncy and destructive baby beasts early Wednesday morning. But to make matters worse, some sucking insect-babies pop out of Mom already physiologically ready to settle down and have a family of their own (see the "Aphids" box below).

Because of their rather ubiquitous presence around the garden, the aphids are the most well-known species in the sucking insect category, but they are accompanied by the whiteflies, leafminers, mealybugs and scales. To tell any of these insects apart from the larger chewing types, only observe their size, lack of movement and manner of feeding. Also try to familiarize yourself with the sucking insect images on these pages .

... *Mollusks* ... is the name for the family of animals that includes the **slugs and snails**. At first glance, slugs and snails are unlikely candidates for being on the Most Dastardly Pests list: they're slow moving; they're easy to squoosh; and they don't appear by the thousands overnight. The first of two main advantages going for them is their secretive omnipresence (they're hiding all over the place). And two, they destroy gardens via night-bombing raids; i.e., slugs and snails hide in moist hiding spots during the day; then at night they rise up to clear entire plants away before morning. Especially targeted are young plantlets and seedlings, which stand not a chance to the chomping maw of a hungry garden mollusk. Because



the general volunteer populace can already easily identify these foul gelatinous beasts, we can skip right on to the next pest type. Just remember that snails and slugs usually do their damage at night, and are often the culprits for mysteriously disappearing plantlets in your garden. Information like this is what you need to remember when you're brainstorming plant problems and their sources.

... *Fungi* ... or, more specifically, **fungal pests**, are mysterious organisms that would bore us all to death if I tried to describe them in an educated manner. But they represent a terrible foe to a number of important crops in Ecuador and so they need to be taken seriously. These pests include powdery mildew, black sooty mold, leaf blights and root and crown rot. Brief descriptions of the first two pests mentioned will enable the lay-PCV to recognize the majority of fungal pests when they are encountered in the garden.

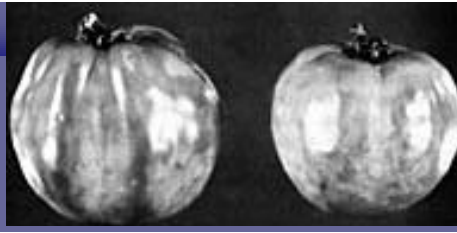
Powdery mildew and black sooty mold are two of the most common fungal pathogens. These fungi appear most often on the infected plant's leaves (top and bottom), manifesting as a white dust in the case of powdery mildew and as a thin velvety black layer in the case of sooty mold. Both fungi disperse by wind-carried spores and both excel in humid conditions. Besides preying on the plant's nutrients, the spread of powdery mildew and sooty mold reduces photosynthetic capacity by blocking the sun from fully reaching the leaves. Moreover, spores are spread easily from plant to plant, so when a fungal infection is noted you should act quickly to determine your next action. If you act quickly enough, merely eradicating a few plants is sometimes an effective method of control (but this type of information will be in my follow-up article in the next *El Clima*).



The Aphid:

An Evolutionary Wonder Or Nature's Cruel Blunder?

In temperate climates, "the first generation of aphids that emerges in the spring consists exclusively of ravenous females. They feed en masse and almost immediately *give birth* to more ravenous females, all without the benefit of male companionship. As conditions become too crowded from rampant reproduction a winged generation is produced, which flies off to other plants to begin the process all over again." –from "Bugs, Slugs and Other Thugs" by R.M. Hart



Virus symptoms on a tomato fruit.. Similar to virus-caused leaf symptoms: there is mosaic discoloring and bumpy ridges on the fruit surface.

...*Bacteria and Viruses*... are being lumped in the same category here for brevity's sake. Though they are vastly different organisms, they actually share many similarities between them. For one, they are both microscopic in size and are difficult to eradicate from your garden once infected. With these organisms, all sorts of stuff can spread them from plant to plant. Pruning shears can carry these pests from one plant to the next because they directly introduce infected plant tissue and its pathogen to the inside of another plant. Water running along the soil surface can spread some species of bacteria, while some sucking insects, like aphids, have been known to carry viruses from plant to plant. For this reason, the speed of your identification can save or lose a crop from being totally invaded.

Like with humans, bacteria and viruses actually attack the inside of the plant. Disease symptoms are different depending on whether the infection is systemic or localized to only certain plant organs. With bacteria, a systemic infection causes general plant yellowing, whereas a localized infection might cause localized rotting of plant tissue or little dark oily-looking spots with yellow halos on leaf surfaces. These symptoms are quite different from viral infection. Just to name a few viral symptoms: mottled colors appearing on the leaves; erratic warping of the leaf surface (so an initially flat leaf becomes more like a rolling hill with smaller mounds on it); and small dark lesions on stems, fruit and leaves.

Concluding Notes:

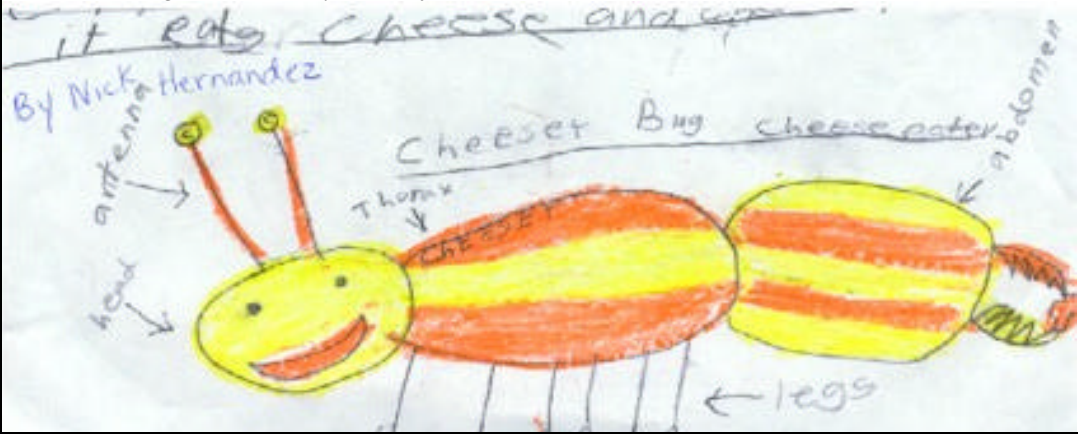
I mentioned at the beginning of this piece that control measures will effectively counter pests at the type-level, and learning species is thus usually unnecessary. Though I will talk about this issue in more detail in the second part of the article, I must tell you now that I somewhat lied about that. With the insects and mollusks, this is a decent assumption to follow, but the fungi, bacteria and viruses sometimes demand a specific remedy pertaining to plant and pathogen at the genus or species level. But regardless of this fact, you are now definitely informed enough to carry out the necessary initial identification yourself, and thereafter taking your observations to an agricultural store for determining the final diagnosis. But be mindful of these agricultural "experts," as they are usually motivated by an utmost desire to sell you something. The remedy sold by these vendors is often a chemical pesticide, when much cheaper and less environmentally harmful measures can be used to deal with plant pests. I recommend that you read my next article to learn the proper time for chemical application and the proper time to implement the safer alternatives.

Feel free to contact me for additional information:

*John Varrieur
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Hot Off The Internet....

"Cheese Eater Insect" - by NICK H.
Miss Crowell's 3rd grade class
Freemont Magnet Elementary, Bakersfield, CA.



Length – 40 feet long

Weight – 40 pounds

Food – cheese

Design Explanation – He lives in Cheeseyland and eats cheese and cheese plants.

Gee Willikers!

We're gonna tie us some knots!

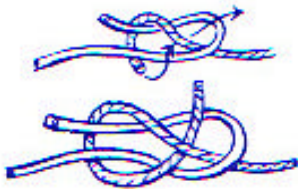
Courtesy of yours truly... the El Clima staff

Dude. What could be more technical than a knot? What could be more practical? Indeed, being able to tie the right knot correctly is vital in many outdoor activities. Knot tying is easy; however you cannot master it unless you are willing to practice. Only then will you gain speed and achieve the uniformity that is needed. Use care and patience in forming your knots as they are being tightened. The time to practice is at home before you need to use the knot. You only need to master a few knots to meet most of your needs. We've included four below that cover a wide variety of uses. Learn them well. Use them wisely.



End Loop

Tied as shown.
Used when an end loop is needed.



Sheet Bend

Tied by forming a bend in the rope and bringing other rope end up through, then around the bend and back under itself. This is the basic knot for joining two ends and works well for joining ropes of unequal size.



Fisherman's Bend

Tied as illustrated. Used to tie a line to a bucket or for lifting heavy objects. Holds well and is easy to untie.



French Bowline

See illustration for tying instructions. This knot forms a double loop with the proportions of the two loops being adjustable. Used especially as a "Boatswain's Chair" in rescue work.



The Hostal Plaza Bolivar is a favorite place among the Peace Corps volunteers located in the northern provinces. The hostel offers cheap and simple rooms amidst a family-type atmosphere.

You'll find that it is an excellent base location to strike out on day trips to the neighboring cities, Otavalo and Ibarra, as well as the popular hiking destinations, Lake Cuicocha and volcanoes Cotacachi and Imbabura.

- ◊ Room cost: \$7.00 (with Peace Corps discount: \$6.00)
- ◊ Free information and maps available for city trips and other destinations.
- ◊ Common room with television and VHS.
- ◊ Locked storage area available

Address: Bolivar 12-26 y 10 de Agosto

Telephone: 06 2915 755

E-mail: marcelmun@yahoo.es

Cotacachi, Ecuador

...Want more?

Stay tuned for more knot instructionals in the next El Clima!