

CAMEL EXPRESS

THE CAMEL EXPRESS

PEACE CORPS NIGER

JANUARY, 1981

We started this editorial over omelettes in the restaurant La Liberté, and we intended to finish it there. We got lazy and polished off some beers instead. That was several days ago. Likewise, we started this issue of the CE in December and we planned to be done with it by the 25th. We got lazy and bolted town instead. This about sums up our attitude.

In fact, isn't this just the January blahs?
Blah. Blah. Blah. Blah.

But look at the size of this issue!
Blah. Blah. Blah. Blah.

Earl helped us type it. We miss him a lot.
Blah. Blah. Blah.

Now we are five. Alice flew to Tahiti, and Pam opened a new branch in Maine Soroa.
Blah. Blah. Blah. Blah. Blah.

Seventy thousand per month? Fifty-four word telegrams?
Blah. Blah. Blah. Blah. Blah. Blah.

Erratum: The last line of Karen's poem last issue should have read, "No one sane goes to Diffa."
Blah. Blah.

Are you travelling this summer, or do you want to work stage?
Blah. Blah. Blah. Blah.

Next issue early March. Help out.

Jim and Tom
Blah. Blah. Blah. Blah.

Madame Djibo has some new stagiaires now to take under her ample wing, ten in all. As you read the following biographical sketches, no doubt you'll agree that the reputation of Niger PCV's being fun-loving cynics will remain intact.

THYNE SIEBER; 27 year old registered nurse from Bloomington, Indiana. Also has a B.A. in biology, thus is a veritable wealth of names of obscure birds, which comes in handy in Scrabble bouts. Enjoys working with children, especially the ones she mows down with her bike on the way home from French class. A fun-loving person with passions for puns (Charmie, take note!) and country music. Born on November 10.

DOROTHY DEIANEY was brewed, not born. She is a fiercely loyal Vermonter of indeterminate vintage. Her birthday, however, is definitely on October 22. She is a registered nurse with past experience as a practicing psychologist. There are really two Dorotheas: one is an introspective, sensitive floutist. The other is an extroverted and fun-loving dancer (ask her to demonstrate the "Hairy Buffalo"), balladeer, and the source of an endless stream of jokes of questionable taste. Actually Dorothy defies description; you have to experience her to appreciate her fully. Her first words upon arriving in Niger were, "Well, Toto, I don't think we're in Kansas anymore."

BETTY VIAL R.N. Birthday, August 10. Excellent nurse with administrative capabilities. Mother of two and grandmother of two. Came to Niger to experience something different. She says so far Niger has been something very different. Favorite pastime: French class. Favorite saying: "Je ne sais pas." Can be a good time, requires two glasses of wine. Enjoys swimming, reading and crocheting. Wanted: personal français instructor.

SUSAN SHETTERLY was born on November 14th, 1955, during half-time of a football game between the University of Colorado and the University of Oklahoma. Susan's mother played linebacker for Colorado which explains her pugged nose and tenacious toughness. Fortunately, Susan's mother did not miss playing the rest of the game. Susan opted not to attend her mother's alma mater. She chose instead to attend North Carolina where she B.S.ed her way to a nursing degree which she received in 1978. After graduation, Susan worked at a hospital in Chapel Hill where she emptied bedpans. Although she did feel fulfilled, in 1980 Susan thought she would expand her horizons and join the Peace Corps. If anyone in Niger feels that they need help in emptying a bedpan, Susan is here to help.

FRANCIE POUCH is a 22-year-old from Hammond, Indiana, with a B.S. in Medical Technology. She specializes in stool and has had many opportunities for practice with the Stage group since arriving. A Scrabble player extraordinaire, she enjoys ice skating, cross country skiing, and building igloos as well. She plans to do a lot of reading while in Niger. Perhaps you saw her film debut in "Breaking Away", where she played a blur walking behind the top stars after a dramatic scene. Her birthday is on January 4, and is often forgotten in the aftermath of holiday celebration.

JEFF DAHLBERG rose from the ground on December 9, 1957, in San Francisco, California. His brown hair has been a major disappointment in his life ever since, as it is a major obstacle to overcome when one aspires to be a beach bum. The ultimate proof of his resultant isolation from the "hip" crowd is he does not surf. He turned instead to basketball where he was so valuably used to hack the other players. Jeff set a small college record of fouling out of every game he played in and never scoring a point. Jeff received a B.A. from Occidental (or is that Accidental) College. Thus far Jeff has really enjoyed his time in Niger. Jeff has decided to grow a beard which is turning out to be the biggest joke of the Stage House. He blames it all on the Aralen.

JUDE ANDREASEN, Staten Island, New York. B.S. in biology; 1/2 M.S. in environmental science. Ex-lab tech, truck driver, hitch-hiker, leathercrafter, malcontent. Hobbies: trying to bike to school without hitting a person, camel, taxi or mobylette, and racing Niki George for 1 km. in the Sahel pool. Hoping to age gracefully in Niger with a distinguished future in the Rat and Bug Patrol.

DALE DOWNES (a.k.a. Jeff), 23-year-old native of Detroit, Michigan. Generally a normal guy but occasionally has illusions of grandeur about 12 supposed girlfriends back home. B.S. in English and political science from Eastern Michigan University - a great base of useful knowledge for working in agriculture in Niger. For a full two months after hearing he was going to Wiamey he thought they meant Miami. He's found the beach but he's still looking for the ocean.

CATHY SYLVESTER, born October 16, 1957, on the Peanut Farm in Georgia during the South Georgia Watermelon Seed Spitting Contest. Fluent in Southern Drawl and six words of French. Cathy received her B.S. in geography, thinking Niger north of the Mason-Dixon. Cathy's main ambition is to get Dale Downes lost in the Sahara.

ANN McPHAIL, stillborn 2/17/58 at Northville State Psychiatric Hospital. She was released 11/10/80 when the Peace Corps signed her up. They were looking for a few good people but could not find any. Ann received a B.A. degree in international relations through an extension course offered by Michigan State University. Ann enjoys calling people by their wrong name and drooling all over herself. Ann is a real fun person whom all PCV's are encouraged to meet.

Dear Mr. Carruth,

I have the honor of soliciting your benifience upon the occasion of a request for a new affectation. I have found Tahoua to be a most unrewarding post as I have been unable to immerse myself in the African culture.

Before my arrival in Tahoua I had heard two interesting items about the place: that it is the capital of Niger and that the Peace Corps community was totally unntegrated in the Nigerien culture. However, I was not aware of the magnitude of the problem until meeting my colleagues in Tahoua.

I shall deal with the latter complaint first. There are nine PCV's in Tahoua. With apologies to Charles Dickens, I would alter a phrase of Murd Stone's and proclaim that of all the PCV's in the world, I believe them to be the very worst. I shall present to you the following evidence - make of it what you will.

First, there's Steve, the UNCC volunteer who, now that he finally has a job, insists on speaking English on that job, whether he's understood or not, which of course he isn't. "I can't yell at them as good in French," he says. Moreover, he never wears boubous or even Tuareg clothes. Rather he continues to cling to the Lacoste shirts he brought from the States and smokes Virginia cigarettes at every possible opportunity. "This one's my last one," says he at least once a day.

Then there's Amy, whose doors are always open to mendicant PCV's and PC Staff, to whom she and her cohort, Linda, serve scrumptious anasara meals. Never will a biteful of tuwo pass through one's lips in their lair, which resembles a medieval fortress and is guarded by two ferocious hounds.

As for Charmie; upon being greeted at the gate of her concession-turned-plantation by her impressive array of live-in servants who raise her crops, Charmie, being a congenial sort, will undoubtedly invite you in for French tea and Boursin, flown in from Niamey, no less. No wonder she oft repeats: "But I don't wanna go home."

Tom and Debbie I rarely see, and then only when they're frolicking in the backyard pool of a certain local Austrian.

If anything positive can be said of the old crew, it is that they are très Africaine compared to the new crop - among whom I count myself, of course.

Suzanne - a seemingly innocuous angel who is into another culture all right, but Lord only knows whose. She teaches Yoga to young école primaire students, perhaps attempting to make herself the leader of a Nigerien Brahmin Samaria. "I'm trying to raise the karma of Tahoua," she says, standing on her head.

Dusty, who fancies himself one of the Germans of Tahoua, shuns pimented rice and sauce for yogurt pancakes and crepe suzettes. Leisure activities - holding ping pong championships in his rec room (NO JOKE!) and listening to American football games on the Armed Forces Radio Network. As for his local language abilities: "What does 'dogo' mean?" he's been heard to ask.

Then there's David, omigod. A sanctimonious, self-right main mark of distinction.

Brooks Brothers' khaki pleated pants in the mail. Furthermore, he has been seen jogging with Linda at the Stade, boldly displaying his naked knees in a most insensitive manner. "Things ran more efficiently at Columbia and Country Day School," he says.

There we have it - the Terrible Ten. As for being the capital of Niger, I'd sure as hell like to know where they're hiding them. They're a pretty damn wholesome bunch who like to enjoy themselves in pretty normal ways, if you ask me. Being thrown together in Anasaraville was none of their first choices, but I guess they're adapting as best they know how.

Well, I started this letter requesting a transfer, but now that I think of leaving all these characters, I think I've changed my mind. Tahoua is in Niger, isn't it? And it is in Africa? And I DO enjoy meeting people of all countries and colors, and any experience we have is what we make it, right? So I'll close by rescinding my request and just wishing you a Happy New Year and the best of luck in making your experience in Niger a POSITIVE one!

Sincerely,

A Tahoualese Existentialist

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December 23, 1980

Zinder

Dear Bill,

Well, it isn't beginning to look a lot like Christmas, but the spirit is surely here; the family that shares my concession must think I'm crazy because for the past several evenings Christmas carols have been pouring out of the house till all hours. General consensus of opinion is that our in-service training has been a success: I guess hard work and merry-making are amiable enough companions.

You asked for a synopsis of our forum on the role of the volunteer - I really wish you'd been here to hear what people had to say - so I'll try to recount as faithfully as possible what transpired.

We began by discussing what Kennedy proposed: the three goals of Peace Corps, being 1) to give young Americans the chance to experience another culture and way of looking at the world, 2) that these Americans return to the States and share what they've experienced and learned, and 3) to provide technical assistance to developing countries. We mentioned that the emphasis has shifted from administration to administration, but that our concern for the moment would be how WE looked at our roles, as an individual, as a volunteer, as a member of the community, and as an American. I think you'll be pleased with our conclusions.

Since we named our discussion "What We're Doing Here", it seemed only fitting that we begin by discussing what we thought we'd be doing here. Et voilà.

Prior expectations

We thought we'd be: teaching
traveling
promoting world peace
living in huts
learning new languages

making ourselves marketable
 alone in a village
 immediately accepted
 ultimately challenged
 gaining self-direction
 in the minority / majority

and, everyone was quick to agree, we thought we'd be loved. So the next step seemed to be to take a look at what the Nigeriens think we're doing here. Here are our impressions:

Nigeriens' expectations

Our supervisors think we're: a source of materials
 here for a cross-cultural experience
 a source of skilled labor

Our colleagues think we're: making a lot of money
 here for a cross-cultural experience
 unable to get a job elsewhere
 a source of aid
 educated (some said uneducated)

Our neighbors think we're: crazy!
 helpful
 unexplainable presences here
 strange, but they accept us anyway

We listed all these expectations and impressions on the board so that as we continued our discussion we could glance at them and note the obvious discrepancies between expectations and re-a-li-ty! The next task - what a taskmistress I am - was to take a look at ourselves: how the community looks at us, how we look at each other, and, finally, how we look at ourselves - how we perceive our role(s).

How the community looks at us

Our communities are composed of a host of people that look at us, and what we do, in different ways. I asked the Inspector of Secondary Education here in Zinder about his impressions of Peace Corps Volunteers, and was delighted, though not a little surprised, at what he had to say. He's worked with volunteers for years, as a fellow teacher, as a Director, and now as Inspector. He said he'd never ceased to be impressed by the fact that we come here not for money, but for what he called "amour". He said that people who work for money only work to the limits that their salaries dictate, but that there didn't seem to be any limits to how much we'd work - or at least to how hard we'd try. He said Peace Corps Volunteers really manage to integrate their lives with those of their communities, and that they were respected because of this.

Well, after such a reaffirming interview, I asked the planton here at the office what he thought of PCV's. His French is non-existent, and my Hausa isn't exactly the FSI 4+ variety, but we managed. He didn't really know what a volunteer was, so I just asked him what he thought of Americans. He said that they spoke Hausa, ate his food, attended his ceremonies, dressed their hair, etc. I asked him what all that meant to him, and he responded, with a beautiful smile that seemed to remain on his face for a long time afterward, "It means you like us."

The volunteers present then recounted some of their own experiences in their communities, and everything seemed to boil down to the example I think I mentioned to you before: the volunteer who leaves for work at ten minutes to eight because he knows that it only takes ten minutes to

get to work, and that punctuality is next to cleanliness and godliness according to our well-ingrained Protestant / Catholic / Jewish work ethic, isn't going to have time to greet the 47 people he'll no doubt encounter on the way, and in his haste to get to school on time, he'll bewilder a lot of people by not stopping to greet them and ask about the sleep of their house, the health of their blood, etc. I asked what all those "ina kwana"s and "fofo"s meant anyway, since no real information ever seemed to be exchanged, and someone said, "It doesn't mean anything, not anything that could really be translated into words. It's just a way of acknowledging one another's presence." That recognition of another's presence is what linguists call "phatic communion", and we all agreed that it was an integral part of living here in Niger. Someone else said that sometimes people just came to sit in her house for a while, not saying anything, and that at first she just stopped what she was doing and sat with them. Then she decided that it didn't really matter if she got on with whatever work was at hand, that people were content to share the same space with her for a part of their day. Yup, everyone said, that's important too. Yet another volunteer said that the way his community looked at him changed because, well; HE changed. At first he just went to work, came home and hid in his house. As his fears of the "unknown" diminished, as he grew to learn about the culture, he went out to the people, and they met him more than halfway. Most people said that they always felt different, but that in living with their respective communities, these differences came to be accepted - a lot of people even said that their communities liked the fact that they were different.

How we look at each other

I think I'd better remember that brevity is the soul of a lot of things besides wit, and that unless I want to turn out several volumes, I'd better try to stick to the heart of the matter. We primarily discussed the mythical volunteer that has at one time or another existed in all of our towns before our arrival - the perfect Hausa speaker, the guy who went to live in a hut with the villageois, the teacher that supported seventeen students and gave review sessions on grammar during sieste, etc. Whether or not these people really existed remains beside the point; we know we're destined to become legends too. What we decided was that it was important to be one's self. City volunteers meet different demands and challenges than bush volunteers, but each has something to contribute, and each can have a rich, fulfilling experience here if he pays attention to his particular corner of the map.

How we look at ourselves

Everybody seems to look at himself a little differently as a result of having lived here. We looked at our list of prior expectations, and readily agreed that we'd had to modify those expectations considerably based on the reality of living in Niger. Someone said that they'd thought so much about what Niger was going to do for them that they were surprised at how much their work obsessed them, and how little time there seemed to be for self-improvement, gaining direction, etc. And everyone said that they thought they were getting a lot more than they were giving.

Where does that leave us? We learn about ourselves as individuals, we don't really relinquish too much of our American-ness, but we do try to learn enough about our communities to live happily and productively. When all is said and done, we concluded, we've got to be ourselves. Dear Mary Pat, boon companion to forum organizers everywhere, gave us a lovely parting shot. She reminded me of a...

his seat on the plane, rich with the experience of a year in Niger, and the guy in the seat next to him smiled and said, "Peace Corps?"

Shi ke nan, as we say here. Hope it gives you some food for thought. Meanwhile, I hope your Christmas was merry and that the new year brings you all the good things. Sannu!

Yours,

Nina Lorch

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Dear Sirs,

It has been brought to the attention of my friends and associates that my good name is being and has been being (notice the extremely proper use of the passive voice) sullied. They thought it better, however, in view of my rigorously time and energy consuming schedule, not to disturb me with the aforementioned naughty rumors.

Such slander could not be long hidden, for things of great magnitude can not be held down (as I well know)! So it was that the females in my immediate proximity began demonstrating the most odd and otherwise aggressive behavior - behavior so startling that I found it necessary to question closely a very intimate colleague: my mother.

"Horsefeathers!" she snorted, "If you're as good as they say you are, why don't I have any grandchildren?" Then it all came out.

It seems that an aspect of my private life has been brought (more than once) under public scrutiny. How was I to know that, upon having my services secured in late October, I would become slave to a passion for my employers - two young fillies just to my taste: one lean and long-legged, the other bawdy and buxom. Oh the heartbreak! To be asked to cover the driving desire that controls one's life; I could not! (At least, most of the time I couldn't; there were one or two times that I managed to restrain myself. But did they notice? No! Did they appreciate the effort I made? Oh no, not them!) Was it my fault that, in the heat (and height) of my passion, I overlooked the little things? That, when I was held captive in the chains of love, they wanted to go for a walk? Did they ever want to go for a ride when I was ready? No!

I was forced to leave their employ, horsewhipped, a veritable scapegoat.

How cruel the world can be to those who refuse to conform! Perform on command, that is what the world demands.

Thank God my new patron is a woman who understands me. Catherine appreciates me for what I really am; she has shown me so many new and different paths to fulfillment; it's like coming into a new world. Speaking of the world, it may go _____ itself -

just don't come to me for help!

Formerly, Doki the Wonder Horse,
but Catherine calls me "The Great"!

MAYHEM ON HUITS

-by Joel Sanction Mayer

Niamey (Special to the Camel Express) Well fans, it was the same old story of conflicting rules and styles, fueled by an advanced state of inebriation which highlighted the recent Judy Freeman Petite Flag Western Invitational Huits Tournament held from November 8th to 9th in the shadow of Dosso's historic Hotel Djerma. Fortunately, good humor prevailed, in marked contrast to last spring's shameful brawl in the Boisson Fraiche Grand Ballroom, Zinder. (By the way, we still have no word from Monty since he marched off bravely to the regional quarterfinals in N'Djamena.) Due to our vivacious hostess's unbiased arbitration (whenever anyone raised his voice in anger, she quickly pacified him with an ice-cold Petite Flag and a gentle pat on the head) all disputes were settled amicably. Doyondoutchi and Zinder Exiles had the heaviest representation, the former led by Lillian "The Lip" Lee and tough Tom Daley, the latter by this author and his faithful sidekick, Idi. Birni N'Gaouré was a late entry, in the person of Coach Roger Shands.

As the matches were played with Western Rules, need I say that the Zinder exiles were placed immediately on the defensive. It's hard to describe these bizarre rules objectively, especially when one has been charged with 14 cards plus a two-card sanction for not knowing what the hell was going on (a third of the G.D. deck!), but here goes. As Jolly Roger chucklingly explained to me as I was counting out my sixteen cards, a 2 neutralizes and passes on the chargement of a previously played 2. In this case, when I smugly slammed down the 2-Pic and Idi followed with a Joker, Lillian would normally (or so I thought) take four and Tom two. But Lillian played the 2-Coeur, so now Tom would have to take eight (four plus two for the 2-Pic and two for the 2-Coeur) and Roger would take one. But now Tom played the 2-Trefle, so Roger would have to take eleven (six for the 2-Pic, three for the 2-Coeur, and two for the 2-Trefle) and I would take one. But now Roger played the 2-Carreaux, so I had to eat fourteen (six for the 2-Pic, three for the 2-Coeur, three for the 2-Trefle, and two for the 2-Carreaux), and Idi took one. Fortunately, Flag cushioned the blow.

That is plainly the worst, but not the only one of the so-called Dosso rules. (If you ever try playing that way, make sure you're really drunk, otherwise you're bound to get seriously depressed and paranoid!) A minor but annoying rule they have is that when the dealer turns over an 8, he gets to call the suit. According to Habou's Standard Rules of Huits (Bricker House, Zinder, 1979), p. 23, of course the 8 is buried in the deck and the first player gets carte blanche.

In the discussion following the matches, other rules differences were discussed and analyzed over some more cold Flags. Under Habou's Standard Rules, the fourth Ace cannot be a question, since there is no possible answer. But in Dosso all Aces are questions (Can't they count?). On the question of chargements, it was pointed out that Maradi rules are even more complicated, although less unjust. For example, if North plays 2-Trefle and West follows with the 2-Coeur, South takes four and East takes two. However, if East played the 2-Pic, North would take six (1 for 2-Trefle, one for 2-Coeur,

Dear Volunteers,

I have recently finished reviewing the frequency of parasitic infections among volunteers during the last six months. We have documented 21 cases of amoebas and 17 of giardia (58% of cases were women, 42% of cases were men). Realistically, this represents only a portion of the volunteers with these illnesses since frequently PCVs with diarrhea do not get a stool exam performed. These rates are alarmingly high! I've attempted to rationalize this problem away--after all, I thought, I came to Niger to see different types of infections. I never expected, however, to find such an obliging group of volunteers. With this frequency of infection many of you must be making amoebas and giardia a steady part of your diet!

Thus far all the amoebic infections have remained in the intestine--we have not confirmed any instances of migration to the liver or elsewhere, of course, the roulette wheel is still spinning.

In desperation I hope that it's a lack of information and not indifference that has resulted in this high rate of infection. To briefly review, then, both giardia and amoebas can be acquired by:

- 1: drinking contaminated water
- 2: eating contaminated food
- 3: flies contaminating water or food.
- 4: oral contact with unclean fingers
5. contaminated ice

How do you tell if what you're eating or drinking is contaminated? In Niger you should assume water is contaminated. I believe infected volunteers now represent each arrondissement. Emphasis should also be placed on the hazard of salads since these are usually washed in water.

The good news is that each one of you are able to "uncontaminate" numbers 1-5 by:

1. treating your water by boiling or iodination
2. avoiding restaurant salads and iodinating your own at home
3. being selective of your vendors, reward those with high hygiene standards with your business
4. frequently washing your hands
5. eating cooked food which is served hot.

If these recommendations are implemented your share in cleaning up the sewers of Niger will be great: The U.N. has made a goal of clean water for the third world by 1990. Please, join the crusade.

Sincerely,
Phil Pierce, M.D.

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Terminating EFL Volunteers:

The English Language Program at the American Cultural Center in Niamey is looking for experienced English language teachers for a wide variety of EFL projects. For further details contact Bill Ames, Centre Culturel Américain, P.P. 11201, Niamey.

Things Go Better With MilkBeware the Powder Pitfall

One common habit that many new health people tend to fall into is an acceptance and indeed, almost encouragement, of the use of powdered milk when there is a problem with nursing. I think there are two basic things that contribute to this mistake. The first is the availability of powdered milk; either in our markets, or large supplies shipped directly to our health units. In the latter case we tend to feel guilty for not using it. The second is that the preparation of powdered milk is simpler and less time consuming than some of the alternative methods available to us. We must always strive to give our best to our patients, even if it means extra hassles. None of us will ever become Nobel Laureates (which I'm sure you are all shooting for) by cutting corners.

Let's examine our alternatives. Imagine a case where a child can suckle, but for one reason or another the mother cannot provide milk. The best alternative in this case would be the use of one or more wet-nurses; lactating friends, relatives or co-wives of the woman, who would be willing to nurse the child. As long as the surrogates are reasonably healthy there should be no problem with producing the additional amount of milk, she will soon produce enough to satisfy demand. (Unfortunately, this idea is far more easily stated than put into effect here. In most African communities the use of wet-nurses is customary, the minute a woman cannot nurse someone will take over the job for her. That is not true in this area, and the idea goes over about as well as a dead rat in a wedding cake. But since it is the best option one should always make the entreaty at least. The most success I have had in this area is in the case of orphans. Sometimes I can get the grandmother to take over the nursing of the child, even if she is not currently lactating. In some cases she can start producing milk if the child is put to the breast many times a day. She'll often put it to her breast anyway to keep it quiet. This practice should not be immediately discouraged, but at the same time you must insure that the child is receiving an adequate supply of milk from another source until she starts producing a satisfactory amount. Sometimes the surrogate will start producing, but not enough. In this case use all the milk of her's that you can, and then supplement the child's diet with another protein source.

Another alternative is animal milks. These entail teaching the mother to prepare the milk properly; boiling, cutting with water, and adding sugar. Have her come to your center everyday to show you the formula, so you can ascertain that it has been made correctly. And always insist that it be kept in a covered bowl and administered with a spoon, NEVER in a bottle.

A third alternative is the evacuation of the mother's breasts, either manually or with a pump. This milk should also be kept in a covered bowl and given with a spoon. This is an optimal alternative; for the child is receiving it's mother's milk, and milk production will continue, so the mother can return to regular nursing procedure when the original problem is eliminated. I want to discuss this in more detail below.

When Breasts Need Kneading

There are several situations where regular nursing is not possible, and evacuation of the breast the optimal alternative. These would include cases where the child is too ill, weak, or pre-nature to suckle correctly.

Also cases in which the mothers breasts are infected or engorged, or if the nipples are severely recessed. That milk has to be expressed anyway as part of the treatment, the problem will only get worse if this is not done several times a day. Also, the milk will stop being produced if it is not extracted. The month of Ramadan is an especially bad time for all of these problems; there are lots of premature babies, women who stop lactating, and cases of engorged breasts.

The Gentlewomen Dairy Farmer

Most women in traditional societies are well versed on the methods for evacuating their breasts when necessary. Unfortunately, I have not found that to be true here, they really have no idea how to properly express their own milk. So this must be carefully taught; using the same simplicity and repetition we use for other health lessons.

One method available is the use of a breast pump. These are available at some of the larger pharmacies, but are of poor quality and design, and don't work to well. Good ones can be sent from the states cheaply in small packages. I find that these can only be used successfully in some cases. Most milk problems will be found in either primigravidae or grand multiparae women. Expression with a pump can often be performed on the former, but the breasts of the latter are often too flaccid or distended to use a pump effectively.

Manual evacuation, in any case, works just as well. First, wash your hands and have the woman do the same. To begin, clasp the breast gently but firmly about two-thirds of the way up from the areola. Slowly draw your hands towards the areola, and end by squeezing the milk out of the nipple. Repeat this several times until the milk starts flowing. You should be able to continue the flow with application of the same sort of pressure and pulling action to the area surrounding the areola and nipple. Continue until the flow of milk ceases from that breast, and start with the other. The milk is collected in a bowl held under the breast.

A little water on the hands or breasts makes this operation go more smoothly. If a woman has very dry or cracked breasts oil can be used. Also suggest that she put a few drops on after each evacuation or nursing, and before she retires at night. Sometimes, especially if the breast is engorged, the milk ducts will be clogged and the milk won't flow. In this case apply warm, wet compresses to the breasts for a couple minutes, and then try to evacuate them. This may have to be repeated several times. Important; if a breast is bleeding or producing pus, evacuate it very gently, but DON'T administer the contaminated milk to the child.

Lastly, and most important of all. Breast milk will not flow correctly if the woman is scared, worried, or upset. So approach all this slowly; sit her down and talk to her until she is relaxed. Ask whether she would prefer to learn this alone with you, or with other women present, and accommodate her wishes. Explain every step to her before you do it.

If a woman is relying solely on manual evacuation, and not mixing it with actual nursing, the procedure must be followed at least FIVE times a day. Always endeavor to get the child back on the breast, at least for a couple feedings, as quickly as possible. Once you are satisfied with the woman's ability to evacuate her breasts, she can do it at home. Check up on her often, and weigh the baby two or three times a week to ascertain that the method is working satisfactorily.

How To Make Life Miserable For Powder Freaks

As has been shown, there are really very few cases in which we should have to resort to the use of powdered milk. Sometimes we will run accross women who will use any small excuse to justify the use of powdered milk, f or they consider it the modern or western thing to do. This should always be strenuously discouraged. If the mother insists, make life as difficult as possible s o that s he'll change her mind. For example; insist that only Guigoz (the most expensive milk) be bought. Then take the cans away from her and insist on mixing each batch yourself. Make her come to the dispensaire, or your house, with a pot of hot boiled water at least three times a day for you to make the mixture. If the water is the least bit diety, or if you suspect that it hasn't been boiled long enough, send her home for another batch. Shake your head, sigh, look perturbed, and mutter darkly while you mix the milk. Before you give it to her insist that she sit down and manually evacuate her own breasts. That way, if you can convince her that this is all nonsense she'll still be producing milk. Make her come to the dispensaire twice a week to have the kid weighed, and make huge sceans if the kid loses as much as one gram. If the child gets dirreahea, no matter what the cause, blame it on the milk. When she complains about all this work and running around point out that SH E was the one who chose this feeding method, not you, and that you'd be happy to assist her with another. These women can be real slow, and put up with grief for a long time, (with thier lives they get alot of practice). But eventually the idea will dawn on them that it isn't worth all these hassles and effort.

I'd like to say a quick good-by to the lab techs and RNs leaving us this month. We all hope that your re-entry into the real world; where things work, people think, and good food abounds, is splendid.

And to the new group joining us, welcome! May you feel that you are successful at least half of the time.

Final word- I promise. I signed up to be the editor of this column, not writer. So please, send me words of wisdom, ideas, useful advice, anything, to put in this column. Look at it this way, if you don't you're going to be subjugated to having to read my stuff all the time--- which is bound to bore e ven the most isolated brousse bunny! my address: Karen Godley BP 39 Chef de Canton de Bande Magaria.

THE GAVIN DIBBS STORY*

Gavin was beginning to think that Fleimeister had forgotten their rendezvous when he spied the portly Russian strolling toward his favorite spot at the Musée--the hippo pool. Gavin wondered how such an unimaginative oaf (whose real name Gavin didn't know) had managed not only to infiltrate the German relief organization ERAC, but be named director of it in Niger. He took one last draw on his now warm Petit Flag, spit it expertly into the crushed gravel just beyond his toes, and dragged himself to his feet.

"No doubt Fleimeister wants to lecture me again on the dangers of excess," Gavin mused. Fleimeister was a drone, a steady Eddy bureaucrat with no flair for making espionage fun. He had always resented Gavin's antics with the Peace Corps and couldn't appreciate the considerable havoc Gavin had succeeded in wreaking on that organization in only eleven short months. It was primarily to unnerve Fleimeister that Gavin had threatened to hang on in Niger as a teacher at the American Cultural Center. In fact, Gavin had no intention of staying on. The Niger stint had been a field trip--nothing more, and his superiors in Moscow were anxious for him to continue with the PLAN. The PLAN called for Gavin to resume his studies in the U.S., finish his M.A. in economics, and return to Africa--this time as a USAID agent in a southern African nation.

The object of the PLAN had never been revealed to Gavin, but he imagined with relish the inestimable damage he could do to America's standing in Africa with the "accidental" leak of just one indelicate official memo.

"Yeah Fly," Gavin smirked to himself with satisfaction as he neared the hippo pool, "I won't be in your hair much longer. It's been fun, but I've got bigger fish to fry."

Gavin sidled up to Fleimeister at the railing. They didn't look at each other.

"Dressed to kill as usual, Dibbs," Fleimeister remarked humorlessly.

"You like these jeans, Fly?" Gavin replied, looking down at the baggy, grimy dungarees he wore rolled halfway up to his knees. They'd become his trademark in the Peace Corps.

"No," Fly said. "I was admiring that lovely T-shirt. You've got at least six of those green ones, don't you?"

"Just five, Fly, but I'll leave you one as a souvenir when I go," Gavin shot back in a tone of mock earnestness.

Fleimeister ignored him. "Got your plane ticket yet?"

"Why no, I haven't, Fly," Gavin answered, with as much seriousness as he could muster. "Matter of fact, I was thinking of staying on for awhile. You know, get a job at..."

*A Camel Express exclusive. The author chooses to remain anonymous, but is said to have taken an interest in Dibbs early in his Niger career.

"Don't bother Dibbs. You're done here. No more fun and games." Fly's voice was strained, irritated. Gavin glanced at the old fellow. His face was shiny and red with perspiration.

"You look beat, Fly. You really shouldn't come out in this hot sun." Gavin tugged at the green canteen that hung from his belt and offered Fly a swig. Fly turned on him angrily.

"You think you're a pretty smart cookie, don't you Dibbs? First, that scene at the Nigerian Embassy, then that nonsense in Yaoundé. And now this foolishness about staying on--all for your own amusement. Well, it won't win you any points in Moscow!" Fly knew that his tirade was useless. Gavin wasn't even listening.

"Have a good flight Dibbs," Fly muttered. He turned abruptly and strode out the way he'd come.

Gavin leaned against the railing, gazing languidly at the hippos until the crunch of Fly's footsteps had faded away. As he mounted the path to the buvette Gavin saw that some Peace Corps friends had seated themselves at a table near his. As if by reflex, Gavin's stride slowed to a jerky stutter-step and his shoulders slumped forward. They still hadn't noticed him. Gavin gritted his teeth and, muttering "That FUCKING bastard, THAT FUCKING BASTARD," Gavin walked toward his friends' table. He pretended not to see them.

"Hi, Gavin," a cute young lady in Touareg pants called out.

"Oh, hi guys," Gavin answered, twisting his head like a lizard and peering at the group through coke-bottle lenses.

"What's the matter, Gavin?" Gavin twisted his fingers together and began pacing frantically. "Hey Gavin. Sit down for a second, relax. Tell us what's going on."

"Okay," Gavin said. He slumped into a chair. "Mind if I have some of your peanuts?"

"No, go right ahead."

Gavin grabbed for the dish and tipped over a beer.

"Oh, sorry about that, Bob."

"The name's Bill."

"Oh, sorry."

"That's okay. So tell us, Gavin, who's a fuckin' bastard?"

Gavin smiled to himself. The stupid bastards--it never failed.

Although some people may groan upon sight of the following (just turn the page, Nancy), there are those who have time for games and such. For you who have only 10 hours, or are waiting for the planting season, or waiting for some malnourished infants to fall into your hands, the Peace Corps Niger Crossword Puzzle has been created. You won't need a dictionary for this one, but the list of volunteer posts will aid you considerably as the name of each town or village where PCV's are presently posted has been included. In addition, it's advised to use a red pen to provide contrast and avoid confusion when writing in the answers. It's doubtful that anyone will be able to fill it out completely, no matter how long you've been here. There's your challenge. . . face it.

ACROSS

3. love nest south of Maradi
6. what Tom Doneker hates being called
8. thieves' paradise
9. famous Sunday market on the river
10. "care of" in French
12. he does push ups in your concession
15. West Africa Wins Again (from The Zinzin Road, by Fletcher Knebel)
16. Maggia Valley Dam(n) village
17. Prison Civile
19. sounds like "good morning" as pronounced by 6^e's
21. a real knockout
23. what PC women say to male visitors
24. home of a horse with massive erections
26. last outpost on Zinder - Agalez piste
27. Tamacheque spoken here
32. the town for girls who want to get married
33. B - A - N - I S - O M - K - E - Y; Birni N' _____
35. town of women, and it applies to PC/Niger
41. cuku city on Hausa-Berberi border
- 42a. capital de l'Air
43. birthplace of Gar and DIK; Damagaram, capital of PC/Niger
46. José Foray site in Maggia
- 48a. Balyara is on the road to _____
49. garden of Eden east of Zinder
51. a closet English speaker in the PC Office

53. a Nigerien town and an American state
54. high on the Hausa rocks
55. rice and _____
57. "new city" in Hausa; Wild Man's hangout
58. Babban Cuku (ex-); the latest and the greatest
59. Kassai Follies
60. river and country
61. slurp it up, but don't get hooked
62. he sends your Newsweeks. . . sometimes.
63. stay out of the water!!

DOWN

1. ZAWO; goes with 50 down
2. something fishy is going on here
4. mortar and pestle capital; house of butchers / Klinger; Guidan _____
5. postcard city
6. means "Dagondoutchi" in Zerma; the Cult is based here
7. what you'll be when you go home. . . for about a week
11. Judy and Jimmy control rats
13. Zarmanda - home of Zermas
14. goes with 55 across
17. Serengeti east
18. in the shade of the old Baobab tree
20. what PC women say to most fonctionnaires
22. Niger's King Kotton Kapital
24. take a pirogue to get there
25. home of Niger's master punstress
26. capital of the West Bank
27. blanket and kilishi capital; garin anasara mai cin brodi
28. "Barnacle", flies and Petites Soeurs
29. squat carefully here
30. Niger's favorite truck stop . . .
31. a nice place to visit, but. . .; The Gritty Date (copyright, Sid Bliss)
33. cheap booze across the water
34. stabilized dune village; Fred the Camel, R.I.P.; Dan Sarkin Daji
36. haayni / hatchi research center
37. gateway to Kano; home of Miss Autogare
38. garin Sarkin Larkin
39. it's the Pitts

40. Dean of the PCV community; the man with the answers
42. if you take this, your hair will fall out and you'll lose your memory
43. some C.E.G. classrooms could be accurately described as this
44. home of Niger's worst punstress and best songwriter
45. money, money, money city
46. they'll eat anything (no, not PCV's)
47. inevitable, but wash your lettuce anyway
48. home of Niger's Beth Heiden
50. don't fall in. . . like Karen and David did
52. "warehouses" to D.C.; kingdoms of Djibo and Hamani
54. the real PC Director, Mme. _____
56. some PCV's anticipate this from Day One

* / * / * / * / * / * / * / * / * / *

THINGS TO DO 1) on a rainy day

OR

2) if you live on brousse

OR

3) when your school's on strike

1. Bob, Carol, Ted and Alice are sitting around a table.

- a. Bob sits across from the jogger.
- b. Carol sits to the right of the racquetball player.
- c. Alice sits across from Ted.
- d. The golfer sits to the left of the tennis player.
- e. A man sits on Ted's right.

WHO PREFERS WHICH SPOT?

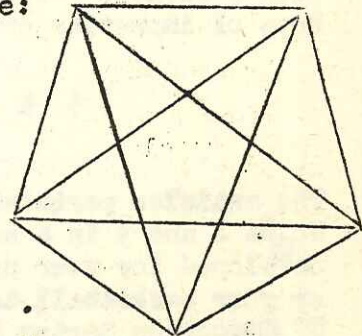
2. Excavating in England, an archeologist found a Roman coin dated 44 B.C. and bearing a likeness of Julius Caesar. Why was he sure it was a fake?

3. Arrange the numbers from 1 to 9 to form a 3 x 3 square so that each row, column and diagonal add up to 15.

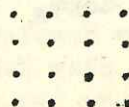
4. Three playing cards are face down in a row:

- a. to the right of the Jack is a diamond
- b. to the left of the diamond is a club
- c. to the right of the heart is a Jack
- d. to the left of the King is an Ace

5. Figure out how many triangles there are here:



6. Without lifting your pen from the paper, join all the 16 dots with 6 straight lines.



AN ALTERNATE PROGRAM FOR TEACHING

The purpose of this article is to develop a program and teaching method that will keep students productively occupied to increase the quality of technical instruction. In order to keep the students productive, the assigned task must be specifically related to the activities being studied in class.

To get the students motivated to complete the task it is necessary to give the students a goal and require that upon completion of the skill the results are to be recorded. The goal that is given should be attainable by most of the students. To challenge the student, indicate the required outcome for a specific grade. For example, a faster time or a higher number of repetitions will result in a proportionately higher grade.

To implement a technique such as this, it is necessary to subgroup the class into workable numbers, depending on the size of the class. The class should be broken down into an even number of groups - two, four or six groups - dividing by sex, height or roll sheet order, for example. Give each group a name and a captain, leader or responsible. This will help the group feel more cohesive hence increasing efficiency which will in turn increase productivity and decrease discipline problems.

Secondly, give each group in each class a notebook. Be sure to put the name of each group on the cover along with which class it is.

Thirdly, at the top of the page, each day write the assigned task with grading criteria. This will help the students understand completely what is expected and hopefully decrease the amount of confusion in class. Be very clear with organization and instructions, brief and to the point.

Lastly, insist that the group complete the task within a specific amount of time, i.e.; before the end of the period, half the period, fifteen minutes, etc.

By implementing an organized task completion teaching technique, one is able to give good quality technical instruction to a smaller number of people. Requiring that the independent groups record the task and a specific statistic indicates that tangible evidence of participation must be produced. When students know their activity is being received and watched, they become motivated, and theoretically when motivation is increased, enthusiasm is increased, which in turn can lead to a decrease in discipline problems. Maybe the students will even look forward to coming to Physical Education classes in the hope of improving over the previous performance.

& & & & & & & & & & & & &

The articles pertaining to basketball which follow in this issue are Nos. 3 and 4 in a series of 5 offensive drills or patterns which were developed for your use in working with your physical education classes or your basketball team. The first two articles appeared in the November 27 Recreation Sector Newsletter and were the first two steps leading to a set offensive play pattern. The fifth and final article in the series will appear in the next Newsletter or the next Camel Express.

whichever comes first.

I am also in the process of developing some defensive drills and play patterns that will appear in forthcoming issues of the Express. I would appreciate any ideas or suggestions you might have that would be applicable to the development of Nigerien basketball, or for that matter, to the development of the physical education program as a whole. Send to Thomas Parminster, B.P. 10537, Niamey. Thank you.

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Are you a Penn State grad? Do you know of any Penn State alumni in Niger? If so, please tell Barbara Hale. She is collecting material for a story for Penn Stater Magazine. If you're in Niamey, you can call her at 72-30-57. You can also write to her: c/o PAO/USICA American Embassy, B.P. 11201, Niamey.

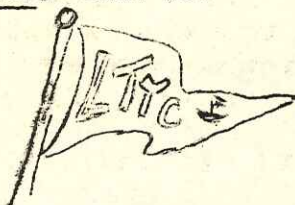
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LAKE TCHAD YACHT CLUB - Now accepting applications for membership!

Moorings still available for boats with low drift. Located in exotic downtown N'Guigmi in the always surprising department of Diffa. Now's the time to join, in time for the 1981 Quinze Avril Festival! During the Festival there will be special rates on camels to get to your boats. Also many special races, including the unique to Tal and back - cleanest sandbox you've ever seen (so study those charts and come up with the best route). Regular to the water and back to famous Lake Chad Bar (now with cold Grand Flag!) held every Sunday! All types of money (Tchadien, Nigerien, Cameroonian, Nigerian, etc.) accepted! If you need a place to stay, just ask for the Anasara Logements - one bar of FA soap for each night. Prices can't be beat! So get your applications in NOW! Send to:

Commodore Susan
B.P. 18
N'Guigmi, Niger

Only redheads accepted.



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I am looking for a used camera, preferably a 35mm but make me an offer on other types. I am not rich. Please contact:

Sean Boyle
s/c Eaux et Forêts
Madarounfa

BACKDOOR TRAP

Aim

- A. Teach players very basic offensive patterns.
- B. Working together as a Unit.
- C. Learning Basketball strategy.

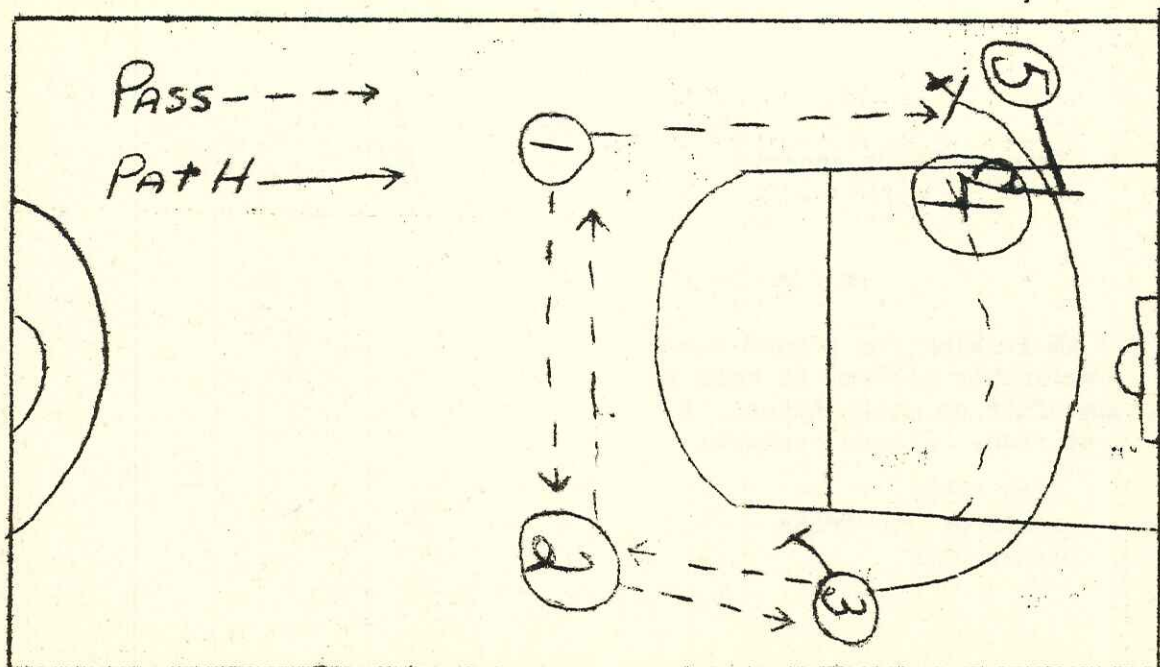
Players - 5 offensive x 5 defensive

Background

The relevance of this drill is to teach the student a very basic offensive pattern. It will be important to you as an instructor as well as the students themselves, that they can work together as a unit, and successfully complete a called offensive formation. It is a very basic formation, and will entail all of the previous skills forementioned.

Technique

- A. Offensive team sets up in 2-3 Pattern with the Pivot man set strong side left.
- B. Strong side guard (1) starts play by giving designated signal or call.
- C. Player (1) passes ball to weakside guard (2) who passes to weakside forward (3).
- D. Weakside forward (3) passes quickly back to player (2) who returns ball to player (1).
- E. As soon as (3) passes off to (2) he gives his defensive man a fake and cuts back under the basket.
- F. The Pivot man (4) is joined by the strong side forward (5) beside the key as soon as the ball is passed from player (2) to player (1), to form a screen.
- G. Weakside forward slides in behind screen for a quick jump shot. Defens man is screened from play.



SWING-N-GO

AIM

- A. Teach players how to use pick in play making techniques
- B. How to counter man-to-man stick or switch offense
- C. Ball control-awareness, discipline

Players needed

Two guards - Pivot man - two defense men

The basic idea behind this drill is again, to learn how to play off a pick, and how to set a pick, only this time, in a game type of situation.

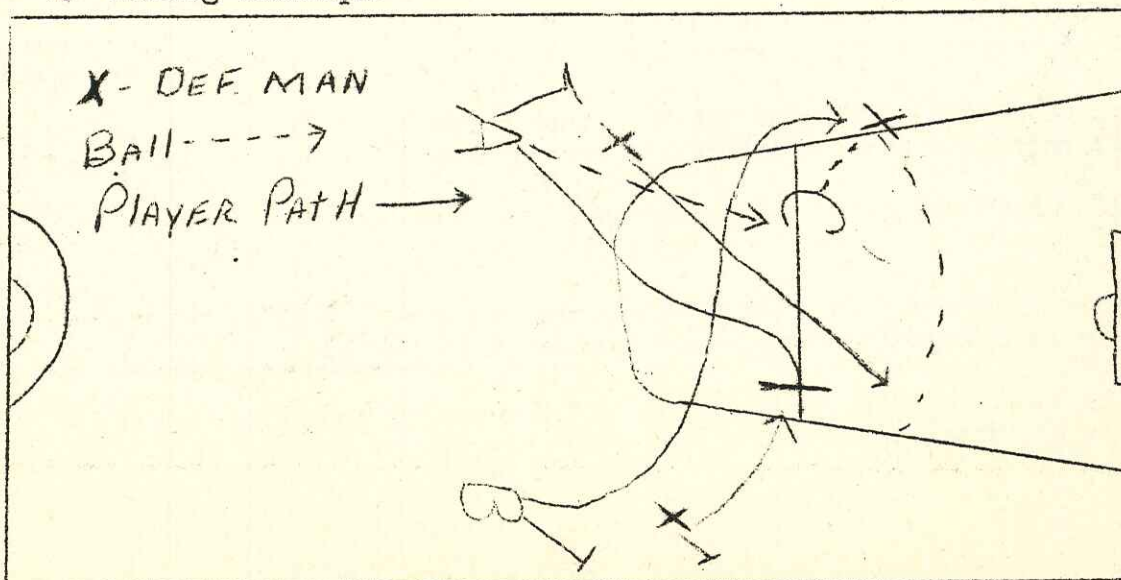
In a game the player must be able to react to a called pattern, and their reaction if correct, could lead to the successful conclusion of the play. This also is an introductory into a pattern type offense; which will take accuracy, discipline and mental alertness, all three of which will make the student a better athletic.

Technique

- A. Players A and B in front court - Defensed - Pivot man Free throw line left side.
- B. Ball is passed to Pivot man by player A.
- C. Player A fakes out to left, cuts right.
- D. Player B hesitates one moment then fakes right, forcing his defense man to back up and off.
- E. Player A has faked and cut past as defender moves by.
- F. Player B now cuts left forcing his defense, who is back, into player A who has set pick at right Free throw line (approx).
- G. B picks successfully - A drives past - Pivot passes off to A who can either drive basket or shoot a short jumper.

Skills

- A. Ball handling - control
- B. Awareness - Court presence
- C. Picking technique



The sun was just a setting to the left of the baobab tree
When out from the hut strode Sally, anasura, P.C.V.

Her hips were held defiant her hips were strong in stance
For Sally was preparing to hit the tam-tam dance.

Sweet Sally was a legend from Lagos to Timbuctoo;
There was none a P.C.V. in Nixer could do what Sal could do!

For Sal, she was a dancer from her head down to her toes
And she bought elastic panyis to make her dancing clothes.

Her movements were swan-like then rough like a storm at sea -
All connected with subtle foot work... Allah! A virtuoso was Sally P.C.V.

She came from old New England, her dance was in finance,
But she'd checked it all for Peace Corps, for T.E.F.L., and for dance.

"Why go there," her friends all asked her, where sand will burn your feet
"So much the better," replied old Sal "I'll move quicker to the beat."

The plane came in at three a.m., volunteers waiting in the night.
When out came Sweet Sal already dancing; man was she a sight!

She had twisted in Viamey writhing on that WiTi floor,
Until one night she heard a new beat comin' through that disco door.

She threw aside her partner, and out the door she flew
Towards the sound of drumbeats - percussions primitive and true.

And there she found the tam-tam, wild men dancin' in the sand;
"Allah, this must be heaven," she cried, and started dancin' with the band.

Her life became an endless line of movements with her feet,
Of pounding drumbeats in her head, and dances in the street.

She had danced at all the big ones, at all but this one fête;
She had driven drummers to frenzy and El Hadjis into debt.

But now it was all behind her - it had come to this last dance.
She was to have a dancin' show-down with Tuareg Effad and his lance.

Effad danced a wild beat with twists and rolls and shrieks,
And when he did his dervish dance he cleared the dusty streets.

Effad danced a Tuareg twist with turban, robes, and lance;
Stamping the sand, whirling his spear, slowing to a sensuous prance.

The drumbeats rolled as Sal appeared and moved into the ring.
Effad gave her a sidelong glance and gave his lance a fling.

They moved into the ring at last - not one word was said;
Someone flipped a camel, and Effad won with heads.

The Tuareg yelled across the ring "Hey woman, hey-knock knees!
You go first, you show me how! Dance now if you please."

Sal, she didn't say a word, but met the Tuareg's stare,
Then with a motion to the band she leapt into the air.

She started slow and easy with dance steps lean and hip,
Then urged the band to drum, and started the Zinder dip.

The Zinder dip had a disco beat which Sal had learned as a girl
From a former P.C.V from zinder - I think his name was Earl.

The crowd, they loved the Zinder Dip - they screamed and yelled and clapped,
And three men nearly pissed their pants when Sal leapt into their laps.

But now it was the Tuareg's turn, and he started in a crawl.
His movements were slow and subtle; behold the M' Guizmi Barnacle.

The urists in the crowd cried "Wahali, this is dance!"
But "It's trash," cried the plus part, "we want the magic lance."

The first round went to sweet old Sal. A grin crept across her face,
But the Tuareg had something up his sleeve - she hadn't won the race.

The Asacès shuffle was her second dance; the crowd was in a buzz
At Sal's variations on a dance she learned from a gal named Fuzz.

The shuffle was a soulful dance with shoulder drops and little sighs,
with stamps in the sand, and waves of the hand - her eyes rolled towards the sky.

"Allah!" screamed one man, and "Fuzzy!" cried an old Malam.
Things looked bad for Effad, but his dance was still to come.

Effad yelled for a latin beat - the crowd it watched in awe
As the Tuareg danced a rhythmic dance called Tchinchabaraden cha-cha.

Lean and low with hands held high the Tuareg did his dance.
He shifted left, then shifted right, but never touched his lance.

"What is it?" they all whispered. "Why won't he touch his lance?"
The crowd was left a buzzing as he did his final prance.

For Effad was to the lance as Shakespeare is to plays;
And Effad snas his lance was like Anita sans her gays.

Yet, even without the magic dance, the Tuareg took the round,
And the silence that covered the crowd was long, and grave - profound.

The score was one and one as Sal walked around the ring.
She watched Effad with a wayward eye as he gave his lance a fling.

At last here was a dancer who could take her to one and one,
And from the roer in his hips it had he could be fun.

As Sal mused her sex rhumba, The Tuareg he also thought:
"This white lady - the babe can dance - the best I've ever fought!"

"I wonder if she'd dig it If I asked her in for tea,
And then if things got cozy, maybe later - Mème lit."

"Wait a second," the Tuareg thought. "What's behind that grin?
This lady doesn't want me - this lady wants to win."

The crowd it cried for action, and one man cried for soul,
But another said "Ah Fuzzy's in Asacès," and Sal began the Camel roll.

The roll it was a lusty dance with shrieks and grunts and antics,
And when Sal's hump went up and down even Effad started frantic.

"Wahalli she's a desert girl - I wonder where t'ey found her?"
" If I didn't know t e difference, I'd saddle her and mount her!"

So the talk went back and forth when Sal's dance had ended,
And bets that had been on Effad quickly were recended.

There was fire in Effad's eyes as he prepared his final dance,
And the chaos began i ea rnest when he grabbed the magic lance.

" The lance, the lance,!" a woman screamed." I knew it couldn't stop."
The crowd was a raging frenzy as he danced the Nomad Bop.

Effad spun the lance just twice, then leapt into the air;
He did a full 360 - his shoulders full and square.

He landed in a Tuareg stance with shield a d la nce held high,
and began a subtle head shake that s tarted with his eyes.

His body grew a tremble from his head down to his toes:
The lance whirling all the while past everybody's nose.

Then the lance sunk in the sand, and Effad used its brace
To begin the final two-step of that dancing race.

His feet kicked up, then swung straight out - hovering above the sand,
And there the Tuareg stayed-laughing- balanced on one hand.

He spun around the lance just once as pretty as you please,
Then landed in front of old Sal - smiling- on his knees.

" Lady, I know I beat you. It's is as plain as you can see,
B ut forget it Babe, it's all over - c'mon dance with me."

Sal bowed her head a moment - a movement all could see;
But what she said to Effad were plans for drinking tea.

The couple jumped to their feet and the drum began to roar.
The two were like a shooting star - meant to shine and soar.

Effad said to Sally" Babe, I think it's time to flee."
And out into the sand t'ey left dancing the Bilma Boogie.

So I end this ballad of anasara and nomad sweet freinds they are
Sweet freinds they were to see them go is sad.

Ad so my friends I bid you wait, and I say this dearly,
For another Camel Express, and another HUMOUR REALLY!

Mark T. Sullivan C.E.G. Ayadès

HOW TO PLAN YOUR SUMMER VACATION

Some dared call us tourists. We weren't, of course, and we shunned the expletive. We were voyagers, adventurers trying to resurrect the long buried art of travel. Debutantes were we, coming out to see what the West African world had to offer. Pristine in thought and testless in spirit, we flapped our hands at an oncoming car - hopeful that its destination was Dosso and its back seat was empty.

The car stopped - our first obstacle was hurdled, our first challenge met. We climbed into the welcoming lap of a leopard skin seat. The driver and passengers were three gentlemen hailing from northern Nigeria, and they immediately warned us that they didn't "hear" French. My travelling companion knitted her brow. "N" (we'll call her "N", but this is not to suggest that she is any way related to Miss Nancy, the blithe wonder of the Diffa Department) was unsure of herself in the company of strictly English speakers; so accustomed was she to peppering her speech with French quips and Manga tidbits. I patted her knee in reassurance and we exchanged knowing glances. We were on our way; regardless of the language inconvenience, our vacation had begun.

And so we drove. Conversation was smooth and without awkward pause. The usual questions were thrown and fielded including a request for an address exchange at which point "N", forgetting momentarily that our fellow passengers "heard" English, expressed her contented feelings of security in that her post was so far away, so far out in the sticks; these (I believe the word was "nerds") would have no way of finding her. The car slowed abruptly. Feigning ignorance, "N" peered disinterestedly out the tinted window. I stammered a bit and proceeded to soothe ruffled feathers by happily handing out my CEG Agadez address (sorry, Fuzz) and promising the gentlemen everything sauf my first-born male. The Dosso sign was in sight, and we were deposited without further ado. "N" muttered her good-byes in Manga; our friends reminded her that they didn't "hear" French, and drove off.

After a three hour bask in the gentle noontime sun, we flapped down a large mammy wagon which had two available seats. "N" charitably hopped in the cabine, allowing me a back seat and chance to practice my non-existent Djerna with 35-40 native speakers. I might add here that "N" was extremely generous throughout our vacation in this respect. Although we had to pay a little more than everyone else, we did so in an understanding and enlightened manner. It didn't matter - nothing mattered - no snag or annoying detail - no expense be begrudged - this was our vacation, and we were safely in Gaya, where we passed an animated and enjoyable night with "H".

The following morning at the Gaya autogare, a somewhat ornery mai mota would not settle for the usual 100 CFA fare to Malinville and preferred that we kawo 500 CFA each. Now, as has been mentioned, no expense was to be spared, but this particular fellow, in our questionable but unanimous opinion, did not create the proper atmosphere for vacationers, and we decided a seven kilometer hike to Malinville was just what the doctor ordered. Walking along the river prompted an inspiration. We raced to the river's edge and saw it - a pirogue among priogues, a boat to make gondolas take cover. We hailed it down and climbed aboard. Our bewildered but amused, and by no means "ornery", "chauffeur" Ibrahim paddled effortlessly as we watched for leeches and cursed ourselves for not having purchased Hepburn chapeaux. This was what a vacation had to be - effortless and amusing (we handed Ibrahim 1500 CFA) at all costs. We were debutantes - things fell into place before us.

Having sailed over the border which separates Niger from her coastal cousin, Benin, we made legal our entry by introducing ourselves to a few comrades and filling out the appropriate forms. Our next destination was Parakou and we carefully chose a large, white, familyish station wagon, the only car in the autogare, to take us there. Our five hour wait was made memorable by fantasizing, in no less a grand fashion than Kerouac may have, about the upcoming section of our journey. Its possibilities were endless for we had no expectations. "Plan" was not in our vocabulary. Our chauffeur shared our fantasy. We had not one, but two flat tires, both of which were simply regarded with a shrug as we were carrying no spares. A true vacationer was he. "Daunted" is the best way to describe Joseph's view of the same situation. Joseph was a teacher from Cotonou who assured our happy-go-lucky chauffeur that he would be escorted to the nearest gendarmerie for his lack of foresight upon our arrival in Parakou. Fortunately, Joseph had some gin to occupy him until he spotted and threw himself upon a boy who was bicycling to a nearby town. When the cloud of dust had cleared, we saw Joseph pedalling away with the sugar-cane-chomping teenager perched on the handlebars of his own bicycle. The rest of us were soon rescued by a landrover and taken to Parakou. Approaching midnight, "N" and I were at a loss for lodging. Though content to park ourselves at the train station and await sunrise, Joseph wouldn't hear of it. He put us in a taxi, gave the driver instructions, and we were driven to a comely hotel, where; for half a mandat or so, we were given two beds and an air conditioner. We agreed that the price was a little steep, but where else were we to go? It was at this time that small but insistent voices (liken them to those that did Joan Of Arc in) whispered inside us, "Careful planning would have prevented this. . . ." We were shocked. From where had these children of doom who dared to tiptoe across our spirits come? We took the key and went immediately to our beds and air conditioner. We had a long journey to the coast ahead of us, and sleep, with its magical power to cure the world's evils, awaited us, and we, it.

We slept until we felt we had gotten our money's worth, ate a continental (this continent) breakfast and ran into three fellow Niger volunteers all before 8:00 A.M. "R", "T" and "C" had been waylaid in Parakou due to a few neighborhood bars which carried not ordinary beer, but Flag in large bottles - a welcome sight so far from home. As the five of us approached the train station, we were struck by an awesome sight. The long, sinuous line leading up to the ticket window seemed to teem with teeth-baring ticket purchasers, a noisy and unruly bunch set on a common goal: first class. We tossed sideways glances at each other. Who among us would battle this predatory mass? Which of we five could possibly obtain the number of seats we needed? All eyes fell on me. I accepted my responsibility, collected the CFA, and dove into the first opening pointed out to me by the always-eager-to-help "T". And there I was, a baby chick in the jaws of a starved and feverish serpent which, on top of everything else, didn't "hear" English, and I knew any cries for compassion would be futile efforts. Silently I inched my way to the front of the line. I could hear the train, I was desperate - our journey's success was up to me. There was one man blocking my way. I bit him on the shoulder blade and barged ahead. The marriage between ambition and the killer instinct is a nasty one. I was appalled to find it so quick to appear in my own self (Gidget grows up). We boarded the train, found the first class car, and took the last five first class seats on the first class floor.

The train trip was a glorious one. Plantanes and chicken legs were bought at every stop, and the bar happened to carry the same brand of beer the boys were so fond of. We arrived in Cotonou, paid three times as much as

we should have for a taxi which brought us to a recommended hotel. The ocean was in sight - all was right with the world. We ate at a restaurant whose aroma did everything but reach out and pull us in bodily. I would mention the name, but this article was promised to be void of lists. Should you find yourself in Cotonou one day, you'll undoubtedly find it for yourself. While my travelling companions wolfed down small, square steaks of debatable origin, I ordered and received an omelette made, cleverly, without eggs.

It was that night in our hotel room that "N" and I, quite by accident as one never purposely counts money on vacations, discovered that we had spent all of our money save a few thousand francs between us. Our funds had been exhausted before we had reached Lomé - our final destination. Although we weren't sure exactly where it had all gone, we were sure that we had had a wonderful time. We weren't worried - debutantes such as ourselves are protected by some inner sense of oblivious and unfounded confidence. As Van Gogh, we had considered, not objective logic, but the momentary experience. Our bubbles could not be burst by even the most persistent of pins. Neither knowing nor caring how we would finance the rest of our vacation, we fell asleep to thoughts of what life would be like as a PCV in Cotonou.

In the few days that followed we absorbed all the sights of Benin's commercial capital. We knew that in order to come to this fair country we had had to put up with ten months of scorn and mockery (all broadcast in improper tenses and with misplaced modifiers) in circuses disguised as institutes of learning, and in order to get out of this fair country, we'd have to get visas. We put it off as long as possible. When the inevitable presented itself, we took the bull by the horns. Eyes fixed straight ahead, we went to the bureau, a world of red tape and rules which instantly intimidates. One look at our passports produced an unexpected and frightening tirade by an outraged man in uniform. Standing, heads bowed in remorse, shoulders slumped in submission, we listened carefully, trying to "hear" his furious French. We were being reprimanded for our procrastination and were eventually sent out to buy a list of things necessary for a visa. Visas are complicated and boring things. They involve pictures, forms, stamps and waiting. In a vacationer's dream they are an alarm clock. This particular visa was the single cog in our free-wheeling mongé, and we were pressed to get it taken care of. In our haste, the wrong stamp was bought and was licked and placed before the error was noticed. Our passports were handed back to us with a fairy godmotherish type warning us to be back within a week if we planned on going home, or our visas would turn into useless pieces of paper, as apt to mean something as George F. Will at that point. Though mildly disappointed, not a word was uttered. It was on to Lomé - the world was at our fingertips - not a spare franc in our pockets. Clocks never strike twelve on vacations.

Once in Lomé we registered with Peace Corps Niger in a salty, beachside hotel. Six to a room, breakfast on the seashore - it couldn't be beat. And there we stayed. Sunshine, sand and laughter were all available and completely without charge - we were flitting with Utopia. The day that brought the first hunger pangs also brought "G". Used to debutante behavior and understanding the reasons behind it, "G" fed us here and there and promised us we would not be hiking back to Niamey. Free were we to pursue in depth the markets, morés and ice cream stores of coastal Togo.

And thus our vacation was passed. Nothing noteworthy to the untrained eye, but to those who live in search of unmeasured and uncomplicated lifestyles, it was an artifact to be filed in personal archives. Some people had money, others didn't. We numbered 10-15; everyone shared - funds were

pooled, cadeaux given, food bought. Nobody went without. It was a large, large vacation with plenty of room to stretch and flounder. Everything was right and nothing was wrong because there were no rules to break, no schedule to keep, no expectations to meet.

A very, very good time was had by all because a very, very good time was shared by all.

A toast to the little voices, heard once upon a doubt, because they were right. Careful planning would have prevented this.

- "MP"

* * * * *

The cripple addresses God

I smell the smoke from the homes of our village
rise on the morning and carry on this stronger wind;
wind that moves the desert, blows the sand hard:
Today I will walk over all the world.

I'll put new cloth, new sandals on
and walk through town; put my feet down in the yard
again and again
in all the corners they've never been.

You, Mohammed's God; lord of all the prophets, listen--
and you, who too were born in a seasonless land
but knew each season a million fold--
let my words be carried

on this, your wind;
let the withered limbs
of so wanting a tree
today, be given spring.

Ina jin hyacin dajin garin mu;
da sa sahe acejinci kuma acikin wannan iska mai ka
iskan dace daukan hamada baya kasa da karhi:
Yao, zan je ko ina a cikin daunya.

Sa bon Kaza zan sa, sa bon kaza takalma
in shiga cikin gari; in je fage
so yawa da yawa
ko ina da basuje ko soguda

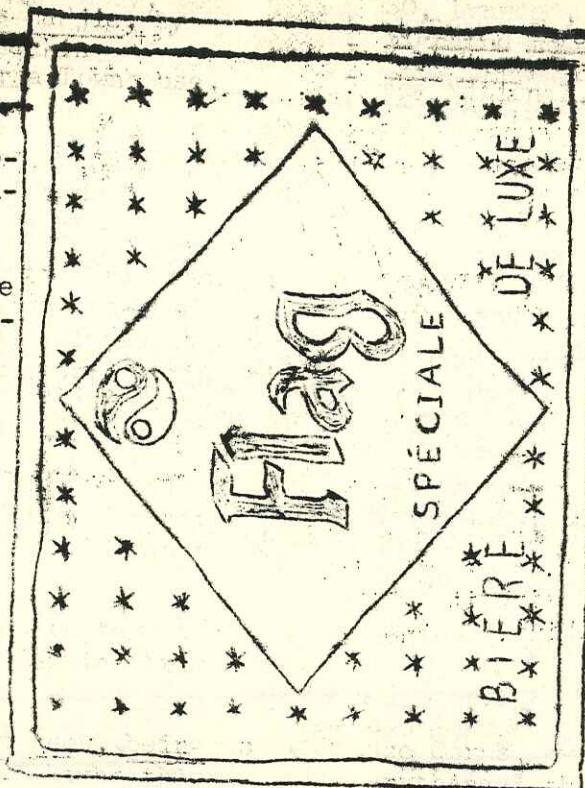
Kai, mai yao da gobe; ubangiji ko wanne anabi, sau
da kai, da aka aifuiwa acikin kasan da bayada loka
Kai da ka son ko wanne lokaci so dubu da dubu
kasa iskan kaya

dauci maganan--na;
Kasance mai sabagi
da ba su darai
yao, ya sa mu sifirin.

--S.D.

Grand Flag

It's finally hap-
one, but two non-
Someone finally
Also, to the un-
Tahqua, next time
criticize, contri-
certainly would
couple female



Profile Page 38

ened. Not just
Zinderis GFPs.
sent us something.
named Ms in
don't just
bute too. We
like to see a
profiles.

NAME: Judy Freeman

BORN: 1957, Little Rhody, USA

HOME: Hotel Djerma Townhouse,
Dosso, R.N.

FLUENCIES: French, pidjin Djerma,
Body Language

HOBBIES &

INTERESTS: mobylette drag racing;
counting out-of-dept.
license plates at the
truck stop; getting rid
of red light bulbs

Tom Parminter

1950, Lynwood, California, USA
(emigrated to Colorado via Nebraska)

Stade National, Niamey, R.N.

The only important language

going to NIGELEC; going to Logement;
opening tough wine bottles; frying
knees

RECENT

ACCOMPLISHMENT: lured people to
Dosso for more
than 20 minutes

saved 20 CFA from my mandat; got
NIGELEC to turn on the lights

CURRENT

PROJECT: preparing to take the
Foreign Service Exam

learning a less important language

RAISON

D'ETRE: "Well, ya know, being is
a reason. Maybe the
reason, ya know?"

"Peace Corps, my life's dream. It's
everything I thought it would be."

FAVORITE

PLACE: the Mobil station next
door - REAL people are
there, no pretensions.

Home - it's the only place I can
afford to go.

LAST BOOK

READ: Sensuous Hadjia, by
Eileen Larkin

What Every Physical Education Teacher
Should Know, by Douglas Jerome

SPARE TIME: playing with little boys who come into my concession; babysitting for French & Belgian cooperants when their kids go out

ghostwriting for the ID Newsletter

MEMORABLE

QUOTE: "Ya know? I mean... well, ya know."

"F... 'em if they can't take a joke." "As well you should."

BOISSON

PREFERE: "Why, Grand Flag, of course. Bein' next door to the Hotel Djerma, it comes right out of the tap. I brush my teeth with it, cook with it, shower with it - like everything ya know?"

"Grand Flag. It's tasty. It helps me to forget the day, some times even before it starts."

Nut News

Update on the "Hot Dates"

Nutrition Class of '80

by Aggie Rickkindson

Mayahi: Informed sources have it that at the same time the American hostages in Iran are being rescued, a specialized rescue team will descend at Mayahi to rescue PCV Karen Chittenden who has been held behind barbed-walls and unable to leave her post since arriving in September.

Up the road in Ayerou, your All-American PCV Dwen Dithmer has such a stream of visiting VIPs that she will soon open a Sunday salon, (that's salon, not saloon)...by invite only.

At the end of the road in Dakoro, Karen Rose is exhibiting true PC adaptability by providing the town a pharmacy and herself...as pharmacienne.

From the Kazoid zone (Birin Kazoe) Barbara Wahn decided it was impossible to follow in the shifting footstems of her predecessor and will take up where Megan Berry left off...in Guidimouni. Ms Berry left that little oasis in mid-November for the Oklahoma snow--the remaining dates wish her well in her new life on the other side.

Andréa Gordon, in the House of the Butchers (Guidan Founji) is alive and well and well, alive and well and well...

The Tessaoua Hilton has reopened with one Robin Brassie playing the hostess with the mostest. Reservations are now being made for her party New Year's Eve soirée. Party favors provided, but BYOE (food).

*This contributor is known for her now infamous quotation uttered under a sag tree on the Tillabery road..."We aren't Girl Scouts, and this sure ain't Ohio!"