

Stark Raving Sane: Tourist Blues

by Catherine SWEET

Tourists. How many hundreds have you waited on in your lifetime? Me, I'm probably nearing a few thousand. Between Subway (shudder), the Confederation Centre and the PEI National Park, my tourist tally has been steadily creeping higher and higher. I'm sure we all have a few tourist stories under our belts. Just last week I waited on a charming gentleman from North Carolina who blantly informed me that everything Canadians do is backward. Well, gee, sir, if I'd known that the fact that I welcome people in both official languages annoys you, I simply would have grunted at you to make you feel more at home.

you "ain't quite right since you fell in the crik."

Maybe the tourist situation is all the more irritating because our hands are tied like they are. If some city slicker from Toronto insinuates that your father is your mother's brother and you "ain't quite right since you fell in the crik", there's nothing you can do but smile and be pleasant about it. Even when they come across the knowledge that we all attend UPEI, they're surprised we have higher education here in Canada's smallest province. If these people think it's ok to mock hicks, it's obvious that they've never seen Deliverance.

You know how in all those science fiction movies there's that guy goes back in time and kills a monkey

and then he's never born in his reality? Back to the Future, right? I think the person who first said "The customer is always right." should be able to see what misery he has wrought. He led the way for generations of employees to get kicked around and then be required to say, "Please, sir, may I have some more?" Maybe this fellow's credo has snowballed into customers abusing flight attendants or pinching waitress' bots.

My worst nightmare came true this past May when I went travelling and realized that I was one of those tourists. I hated that feeling, so I did my best to educate myself to my surroundings beforehand. I was subtle with my map-looking, and tried to minimize the appearance of my guide books. Once I realized that I was one of those tourists that I mercilessly make fun of (I didn't bother to learn any of the native language), I let go a little and relaxed because really, there was no way to hide a six-foot blonde North American woman. Once I was back in an English-speaking country that I was familiar with, I was able to totally be myself again.

I figure that the tourists we wait on all summer long are a necessary evil. Can we even begin to count up the valuable life lessons we are getting from this torture? I love travelling, but there's no way we can all act like we were born and raised in places we've never been. Next for me: Nepal. All I need is a Lonely Planet and a Sherpa and I'm set. I already like yak milk.

MOTORCYCLIST RALLY FOR SCHOLARSHIP

Student motorcyclists, please join faculty and staff in support of scholarships. On Saturday, October 19 there will be a ride around the Island, as part of the Tip-to-Tip Challenge weekend.

If you are interested, please contact David Sims at either: 566-0812 or sims@upei.ca

Young, Guatemalan Human Rights Activists Presenting at UPEI

by Erin FAGAN

On Friday, September 13th, two members of a Guatemalan-based social justice group will be making a public presentation on the UPEI campus. This will take place in the AVC lecture theatre A at 7:00 p.m., and all are greatly encouraged to attend.

Maria Isabel Gomez and Erick Fortin are travelling from Guatemala as representatives of a progressive youth organization called H.I.J.O.S., or Sons and Daughters for Justice, Reconciliation, and Against Forgetting and Silence. This group is formed by the children of those who were kidnapped or murdered during Guatemala's 36-year long civil war, and uses street theatre to protest delays in justice. The performances also provide a therapeutic creative outlet for the young survivors.

According to one Amnesty International estimate, 200,000 people were murdered by army and paramilitary groups during Guatemala's brutal civil war period, peaking in the early 80s. Another 50,000 people remain "disappeared."

In spite of a 1996 peace accord, there is a continued struggle for human rights, justice and social

welfare in the Central American nation.

Human right workers, along with the forensic investigators of mass grave sites, have been subject to death threats, kidnapping, surveillance, assault, and assassination.

Investigations and court proceedings have also been delayed and sabotaged.

Abuses have also been escalating since 2000, when a H.I.J.O.S. office in Guatemala City was raided by masked and armed men.

This presentation is part of a regional speaking tour coordinated by the Breaking the Silence Network, and is being organized on PEI by the PEI Oxfam Committee. Organizers are hoping that the visit, which includes a talk at Colonel Gray High School, will educate and inspire Islanders.

"People here can act, do something about it, inform themselves, and get involved." organizer Stuart Neatby explained.

"Basically, it comes down to solidarity."

For more information, contact (902) 659-2081 or e-mail: mloo@pop.web.net.

Discussion of Human Rights in Guatemala

Sept 13
7:00 PM
UPEI AVC
Lecture Hall A

Speakers:
Maria Isabel
Gomez & Erick
Fortin, of
H.I.J.O.S



H.I.J.O.S is a human rights group based in Guatemala. Its members are the children of the disappeared.

The presentation will address continuing state violence and the effects of globalization in Guatemala.

Dnepr River is the section of what used to be the Soviet Union?)
What's
wall? Nothing,