

NOUAKCHOTT NOTES

Extra! Extra!
Britney
married in Las
Vegas!



Look inside for the exclusive article brought to you, the Mauritanian Volunteers who want to know, by us, your dedicated staff, who already know. We're here for you, to bring you all the latest scoops on your favorite personalities, trivialities, maladies, and sector updates. You may think: Britney on the cover of Nouakchott Notes??? We think: Britney on the cover of Nouakchott Notes. Thank you to the wonderful staff, all the contributors, and to you, our ever important and loyal readers.
NKTT Notes Staff

Creative Manager
.....Megan Kaufmann
Grammar Manager
.....Alden Kline
Font Manager
.....Adriane Lella
Digital Manager
.....Whitney Rokui
Ungeneral Manager
.....Kevin Spicer

PCVs TAKE MOROCCO BY STORM

BY WHITNEY AND ADRIANE

Help your fellow PCVs plan their next vacation. Please submit vacation stories and tips to Nouakchott Notes at rimnews2003@yahoo.com

Alhumdillilah, Tarbakallah, Morocco's only a short plane ride away if you need a refreshing change from the RIM. Flights from Nouakchott to Casablanca are easy to come by since you have a choice of either Air Mauritanie (aka Air Inshallah) or Royal Air Maroc. The word "swank" comes to mind when entering the Mohamed V airport, and you can acquire a wheelchair if you are visibly injured as proven by Angus.

Our first stop was Marrakesh, which has a fascinating medina and fun surrounding

plaza. The plaza has an interesting nightlife full of entertainers and food booths. Feeling adventuresome, we sampled boiled snails but passed up the goat head.

Erin was a fan of the tea that made her hiccup. Warning: expect to be harassed, even felt up, and don't expect anyone to be your bodyguard because they would rather eat dinner than make an extra dollar. In terms of a place to stay near the medina, we highly recommend the Hotel Ali whose bargain price includes:



Vacationing PCV at Voloubulis, Morocco

breakfast, internet, a room with a bathroom, and hot showers. There is an option of including dinner with the price of a room but we recommend the street food- try number 146- or McDonalds if you miss America.

The next stop was Essouira, a relaxing coastal town that can

Continued on page 9

FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK BY KATERI

Happy New Year Everyone! Happy end of first stage of your service! Happy entry into your second year! Thank you and best wishes to our historic

batch of extendees - Happy rest of your lives! Ok enough with the exclamation points.

International Volun-

teer Day happened in December and for the first time, the Peace Corps volunteers were honored and represented. *Continued on page 2*

THE SMALL BUT MIGHTY MUST CHANGE IT'S NAME

BY RACEY BINGHAM, LEGENDARY PCV

The small but mighty must change its name: we are no longer small but we are still mighty, Al-humduillah. Sadly, this is the last time I will have the pleasure of updating you all on the amazing work of our EE PCVs. I will be COSing on December 20th; I wish everyone a fruitful and reflective service.

SO, what's going on....

In the Adrar, during the summer, Nick Allen finished the installation of a water pump at his primary school. This will allow the students to plant trees in the yard, and hopefully (depending on soil quality), establish a garden as well. He also helped organize Arbor Day in Ouadane during which the authorities planted Moringa at the primary school.

In Chinguetti, Caroline has been doing a lot of outplanting of Moringa and other reforestation species started in school and community

tree nurseries prepared with school children and the mayor in May. She has begun the Chinguetti Eco-Tourism initiative by distributing at least one Moringa in every Auberge. She completed her mini-Moringa Tournee in the oasis around Chinguetti, and has kept busy with one-on-one consultations in 10-15 home gardens. With her counterpart she is developing a workbook for children to do community environmental assessment. She has just submitted a Peace Corps Partnership proposal between her school in the US and the school in Chinguetti to enclose an area in the school compound for gardening.

In the Trarza and Brakna, our

Newbies seem to be settling in fine with host families, learning the ins and outs of their communities, and doing their Baseline Data Studies. After the elections, they began meeting the teachers and spending time at school so that the students get used to them. Alice has been helping her counterpart get a new



EE folks at an environmental assessment during stage 2003.

water pump for his garden from Self Help,

Continued on page 14

Kateri continued from page 1

Thanks very much to those Nouakchott volunteers who offered their time and tried their patience on the organization committee. Rarely does participation in an organization committee also entail a certain degree of physical risk, but I can attest that I was seriously worried about being trampled by hysterical Mauritians at one of the ceremonies when the local equivalent of a Saturday Night Live skit comedy team really got going. Even Sidna had tears in his eyes, he was laughing so hard. Personally, I had the same confused sensation I do witnessing men lose control at Three Stooges movies. I am clearly missing something.

The elections – very glad we planned. We know we can handle whatever comes our way. Both the volunteers and staff were up to the task. Thanks. I have taken into account the recommendations I have received on communications and other issues related to our planning and hope you all will see improvements soon. Please keep communicating with me when you have special concerns about your security or communication systems.

I have been very lucky to meet some of your visitors from the states. I really enjoy talking to your friends and family and hope more of you will bring folks by my office when they arrive. You might also ask other volunteers how they organized their family visits. It is not an easy thing to do and I must impress upon you that the goal should not be to try and find their breaking point. I remember when my own mother visited me when I was a PCV in Niger. It was not a total success. She did come back to Africa again until many

Continued on page 16

HELLO FROM THE GREEN CORNER, AGAIN?

BY AW MOHAMMEDOU



Aw and carrot in Kaedi

I hope you have enjoyed your first Ramadan experience with your community. It was nice to see all at your site or here in Nouakchott. Kane and I have visited all of you already.

I saw the EE volunteers in Nouakchott attending the CCBI training. Things seem to be going well for the most part. I hope the same for the other new volunteers too.

I would like to first say that we have sadly said goodbye to Racey Bingham. She has made a great contribution to the EE program. We will also say goodbye in a couple of weeks, to both Naruth Phadungchai and Liz Kenton. They all three have done a lot for the Moringa promotion in this country. They will be missed. We wish them all good luck with their future endeavors.

Here is an update on what happened since the last memo I have sent to all of you

- EE volunteers, their counterparts from school and their departmental inspectors have participated in 4-day Community Content Based Instruction (CCBI) training in Nouakchott. The training was led by the Environment APCD from Senegal. The training was very well evaluated by participants. This training has given the volunteers and their counterparts the skills to incorporate the community environmental issues into the existing lesson plans using the 4-mat method. The CCBI technique should lead to action in the community.
- The World Food Program (WFP) is launching a school garden project with the objective of improving the quality of the school lunches that it provides to schools in the country, promoting Moringa for its nutritional values and medicinal virtues, using the garden as an environmental education tool and for community outreach activities. A total of 20 schools have been chosen for that purpose. Eight or nine of these sites will be coordinated by PC and the remaining will be by World Vision. Volunteers involved in this project have already been contacted and most of them have already established management committees and have chosen the garden site with the school staff and the community members. The role of the Peace Corps volunteers will be to provide technical assistance in the establishment, monitoring and evaluation of the gardens. The goal for the volunteers in these sites will be to help teachers and school directors find ways to use the garden to increase participation and hands on activities for the students.
- Gardening Manual: PCV Naruth P. has been working hard in his last trimester to put together a gardening manual for PC Mauritania. He has done a wonderful job of giving good and concise information in this manual (thanks Naruth J). I will share it with you at the IST in Kaédi and solicit your suggestions for improving the document. Moringa Manual: As you all know Racey Bingham and Liz Kenton have compiled a Mauritania Moringa Manual (M³) for volunteer use. I have copies for the Agroforestry volunteers that I will distribute during the ETR or at the IST in Kaédi. Thanks Racey and Liz!

Aw's Schedule

- January 04: ETR in Nouakchott
- January 06-09: Agfo IST in Kaedi
- January 11-13: Site visit in the Trarza
- January 19-22: Site visit in the Tagant
- February 08-11: Site visit in the Adrar

More News from AW

PC is working with World Food Program, World Vision and other organizations to review the WV Moringa flipchart to make it an even

better animation tool. After the revision is done the different organizations (including PC) that have worked on the improvement of the document will have their logo put on the flipchart if they so desire. World Vision has produced a videotape about Moringa. They have promised us a couple of copies of the video and more flipcharts (WFP also).

Locust issue: Locust invasion has been a major issue this year for the crops. The weather conditions have been ideal for the reproduction and the proliferation of the locust this year. Because of the combination of a good rainy season and lots of vegetations. They are even predicting locust outbreak for next year if adequate measures are not taken. To deal with the situation an emergency committee has been created and is comprised of the Minister of Rural development, the Ambassadors of Morocco and Algeria, FAO, the American Embassy, PC and other organizations. To properly deal with this problem a sub-regional collaboration is a must. That's why two teams from Morocco and Algeria are coming this week to help the Mauritanian crew to fight against these devastating creatures.

I would like to coordinate with the Center for fight against the locust here in Mauritania to give a presentation about their center, the locust problems and what volunteers can do to help. I would like to see with them if we can schedule it in the morning of January 5th before we head down to Kaédi, for the volunteers passing through Nouakchott, or do it on the last day of the IST in Kaédi. I will keep informed about it, at the latest during the ETR in Nouakchott.

Below is an update on what some of you have been up to since the last edition:

Most of the first year volunteers and for most part, have been smoothly integrating into their communities. They have started gardening activities with their respective communities. Are you really still reading this? The EE volunteers have finally been introduced to their schools after everything was put on hold because of the election and Ramadan. The volunteers are learning more about their communities using community entry tools such as social maps, transect walk and by gathering the baseline data information about their sites.

The second year volunteers continue to be very active in their communities.

In Dieuk, Amy Helmick is helping the women's cooperative of her village expand their orchard using the SPA funds and she has even introduced date palms and coconut trees in her community. She continues to do Moringa sensibilisation. The women's cooperative is also experimenting a drip irrigation system with the assistance from the CNRADA research station in Rosso. And she is still working on getting that Biogas system to work.



Nick and Amy lead a training in Boghé

Heather DeLong in Dioullom has been working with the women's cooperative to prepare the garden for the gardening season. They have re-established all the plots and have used the seeds given away by World Vision to start a new gardening season. She has also helped her community fill out a SPA request for deepening the well for the women's cooperative garden and for digging a new one for the school to establish a school garden and start environmental education activities with the children.

Continued on page 16

News and Views From the Health Sector

By Alassane Diakite, APCD/Health

Posting Follow Up Visits:

I just completed all the posting follow up site visits and I am impressed with the level of integration of you all. I would like to thank you and your Counterparts for your hospitality while I was visiting your sites. As I mentioned to all of you then, IST time will be an opportunity for us to assess needs and agree on follow up actions. Please, make up for some time to meet with me should you need to discuss any specific points in detail.

HIV/AIDS Strategy for FY04:

The Center has granted post 7,500 USD for HIV/AIDS programming. I would like to share with you my vision of the Program direction as it relates to that matter. I am pleased to go over such an exercise with you and your Counterparts during IST.

IST:

This year's IST has been designed to meet four specifics objectives:

1. Provide all Volunteers and counterparts with a clear understanding of Mauritania's HIV/AIDS strategy for the five coming years, the existing resources and how to ac-

cess them in Nouakchott and in the regions.

2. Allow Volunteers and Counterparts to see how that strategy is being implemented by different actors (bilateral, NGOs, Associations).
3. Provide Volunteers with specific skills as they relate to designing and operating feeding centers, succeeding in introducing moringa in feeding centers, hear from WFP about their type of support to a better nutrition strategy in the RIM.
4. Allow Volunteers and Counterparts to better grasp the big picture behind the immunization policies in Mauritania and how they could better fit into the ministry of Health plan.

A draft schedule of the IST has already been sent to all of you.

I am looking forward to seeing you all and in the meantime, wish you a merry Christmas and a happy new year.



WANT TO JOIN THE FOREIGN SERVICE? APRIL 24, 2004 BE PREPARED!

Go to: WWW.CAREERS.STATE.GOV

Deadlines: Applications for the April 24 exam must be received by March 17, 2004 for foreign test sites, and March 24, 2004 for domestic test sites.

Study Guide Order Forms: Order forms for the 2004 study guide are located at the end of the registration booklet, or can be downloaded from the Department of State website. The guide may be ordered by telephone from ACT, Inc., (319) 337-1429 or FAX (319) 337-1578. The guide is not available through the Department of State, so don't bother them.

FROM THE SED DESK:

Hello and Happy Holidays to all the Volunteers and Staff!

I am very excited to inform you that I will be visiting all of your sites in the coming month with our Washington D.C. Small Enterprise Development counterpart, Kyeh Kim. We are looking forward to seeing everyone's sites and discussing short and long term project ideas and action plans.



Obie and Karla mad cooking on Thanksgiving

And speaking of long term action plans, oil has recently been discovered in Mauritania. And lots of it. The benefits are projected to be affecting businesses in 2006. That gives us 2 solid years to prepare Mauritania for the onslaught of specie influx and foreign direct investment. According to the Dutch disease theory, after the initial boom, further separation of rich and poor, followed by outrageous speculation and investments, there will be a sharp increase in inflation and wages due to the increase in the supply of money. A solid central bank would be able to decrease interest rates and counteract this inflation to a certain extent, but due to infrastructure, money that can only change hands 30 times without falling apart, and cultural reasons this is not possible. Therefore, we have much work to be done to prepare for this inevitable third world economic life cycle and I look forward to discussing and implementing these plans with you on our visits.

And speaking of the short term visits, literally and figuratively, as you can see from my schedule I will be attempting to defy the laws of gravity by not visiting all of your sites in a helicopter; therefore, without further ado, I will see you shortly. Keep up the great work!

Written for the traveling Obie Shaw by the Nouakchott Notes Staff with permission from the Executive Editor and Country Director, Kateri Clement.

JANUARY 2004 APCD Shaw Travel Schedule

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						10 Kyeh Kim arrives Nouakchott AF #764
11 Nouakchott to Atar (car) with stop in Chinguetti and Oudane.	12 Atar to Nouakchott (car) with stop in Tirgit.	13 Day-trip to Nouadhibou 09h30 – 18h00	14 Consultations in Nouakchott. Meetings with Ministry of Tourism, CDHLP, SETN	15 Nouakchott to Kaédi with site visits in Touldé and Bababé (car).	16 Kaédi to Sélibaby with site visit in N'Djajibine (car).	17 Sélibaby to Aioun with stop in Kankossa (car).
18 MLK Aioun Finalize all EDDI Center related issues.	19 Aioun to Tidjikja (car).	20 Tidjikja to Maal (car).	21 Maal to Nouakchott (car).	22 NKC consultations Kyeh Kim departs for USA.		

Next Stop: Education Station

Hello all,

I would like to wish to all of you a Happy New Year 2004. May it be a year of Success, Peace, and Harmony for Humanity!

ETR

The Early Term Reconnect (3&4 of January) went well as did the PDM (Project Design and Management) Workshop that took place immediately afterwards for 2 consecutive days. On the fringe of the IST, the Education group (APCD and 12 PCVs) met over Lunch on the 5th and 6th to discuss Ed. Specific issues with a view to troubleshoot some pressing ones and share relevant working strategies. The lunch talks, which were seasoned by occasional comments by Mitch of Bababe to keep up everyone's appetite, were, I think, both instructive and pleasant. The following topics were addressed:

- Classroom Management: issue re: students peep-in, stand outside and disrupt class;
- The 'need to go out' issue: Students continuously going out and disrupting the flow of class;
- Anti-American statements/comments in class;
- Cheating;
- Testing and Grading (Exams length and writing)
- Syllabi and textbooks matching;
- Secondary projects (English clubs, Sports, Book drives, computer literacy programs...);
- Multi-level and large classes teaching.

As it has been recommended some of these topics will be covered more in-depth during the March Tech IST.

Upcoming site visits

For this here is where I intend to go and when:

Adrar: January 19-22

Guidimakha & Hodh G.: January 25-29

North Brakna-Tagant-Assaba: February 8-13

Trarza: February 23-26

South Brakna, Gorgol: March 7-11

Dakhlet-NDB: March 17-18



Drawing the world map in Boghe

March IST

As it had been announced prior to the ETR, the Technical Ed. IST was postponed.

The idea was to get more time to prepare the content, especially, but also to see how we can have it around the same time as the SPA sponsored activity that Erin et al. are organizing in NKC and Boghé. The project will revise and publish *Lesson plans that Work* book. It is also planned to conduct a teacher training in NKC prior to the implementation in Boghé (School Practicum). As we planned this project we also thought of incorporating a Gender Equity workshop around the same time. So what do we have now? Dates for the trainings are: March 22-27. PCVs and their counterparts are expected in NKC on March 21st p.m. Yes, I know it's going to be an overwhelmingly busy week, but the idea is to make the most of the time we could have together. The following is a broad outline of that week (*courtesy: Erin B.*)

	Sunday March 21	Monday March 22	Tuesday March 23	Wednesday March 24	Thursday March 25	Friday March 26	Saturday March 27
Morning		Tech IST	Gender Equality Workshop	Teacher Training	Boghé Model School	Boghé Model School	Finalize Lesson Plan Book
Afternoon	Volunteers Counterparts Participants Arrive in NKTT	Tech IST	Gender Equality Workshop	Volunteers Counterparts Onward to Boghé	Lesson Book Revision	Lesson Book Revision	Travel from Boghé to sites or NKTT

That's all from me now!

Thank you



GLAD TO BE GAD

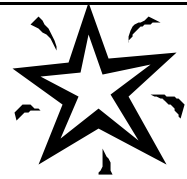
BY BETH BROGAARD, PCV

Have you ever noticed how we are always waiting until this or that takes place so that we can begin? Wait until the elections are over.... the end of Ramadan....after Christmas....the New Year...ETR... It looks like the time has come for work to begin in earnest! GAD held a planning meeting in late October – Doritos and sandwiches on the beach (maybe some of you boys will be joining GAD?!) We shared information

and brainstormed some new ideas for this upcoming year. We are hoping to publish our first inter-GMC newsletter by summer. Also, mentoring workshops will be held nationwide to rally women and encourage them to be mentors. The Selibaby, Tidjikja and Aioun centers will be getting a fresh start this year – best of luck to them! And let's not forget our two satellite centers – Toulde and Bababe. Hopefully the centers will be able to be open on a continuous basis now that the

new year has begun. It's never too early to think about upcoming projects – so start now with ideas for March 8th, International Women's Day. There is a women's fair held annually in Nouakchott, but each region is encouraged to hold local events as well. As a closing remark, I'd like to share that while I was attending the Conference for Education in Africa it was made clear what a unique GAD program we have in Mauritania. Good job!! And as the driver Sy says "God bless GAD!"

*Welcome Back
Mariam mint El
Bechir, Gad
Coordinator. We
missed you!*



We here at NKTT Notes would like to present this star to the outstanding submission award of the issue. Never have we received such a thorough article so early. Congratulations AW!!



Securite Update

By Macire



La situation sécuritaire d'un pays dépend souvent de sa stabilité politique, et en Mauritanie la situation est relativement calme depuis les élections présidentielles qui ont eu lieu le 7 novembre 2003.

Pendant cette période, la tension était montée d'un cran à cause de l'arrestation de certains dirigeants de l'opposition, mais le verdict de la cour criminelle qui a presque gracié les accusés a apaisé la situation qui est redevenue presque normale.

Cependant, il est à noter une certaine tension qui existe depuis quelques semaines le long du désert qui s'étend le long de la frontière Mauritanie-Maliennne et va jusqu'au Niger. Cette zone est truffée de bandes armées qui s'attaquent aux convois isolés, devant cette situation, les deux gouvernements ont dépêché sur les lieux des unités de leurs forces armées à fin de mettre fin à l'insécurité qui règne dans cette zone. C'est d'ailleurs pour cette raison que les étapes du Rallys au Mali ont été annulées. Et dans ce cas il est déconseillé pour le moment d'entreprendre un voyage au Mali et ce jusqu'à nouvel ordre..

Au niveau interne, les trois derniers mois ont été marqués par des vols qui ont eu lieu dans certaines résidences de volontaires.

Dans ce cadre, les directives sécuritaires suivantes doivent être prises en considération :

1. Le choix de l'emplacement d'une résidence dépend d'un ensemble de critères :

- La stabilité et la quiétude du quartier, car la situation sécuritaire diffère d'un quartier à un autre et dans ce cas, il faudrait toujours choisir le quartier le plus calme et pour connaître la différence entre les quartiers, une petite enquête avec vos homologues vous édifiera plus sur cette situation.

Continued on page 10

Parting Words from Miranda

As a long time volunteer, I have been asked to provide some parting words of wisdom. The wisdom of the words by someone who voluntarily spent four years here may be debatable. I was recently reminded they don't give that to criminals. However on short notice I will endeavor to recall enough English to offer some advice.

- Ø Learn to speak local language very well but be judicious when deciding when to reveal this knowledge. It is a great weapon in bargaining and taxi brousse.
- Ø Don't travel by taxi brousse when you can bum a ride from an ONG or random car owner. This proves cultural integration.
- Ø Learn to prepare tea. You never know when you will be called upon to serve it. Possibly to tourists while on vacation in another country.
- Ø Lie. About everything.
- Ø Procrastinate. If God wants you to accomplish something, it will get done.
- Ø Always factor in the tiredness.
- Ø Don't do anything your Mauritanian counterparts wouldn't do... or you'll never get that 25% contribution.
- Ø Be mean. They like it. And it's the only way to get anything done.

Morocco continued from page 1

be reached by either bus or taxi. DO NOT show up at Supratours 45 minutes before departure; the bus fills up quickly. There were plenty of nice hotels in Essouira for a decent price. Avoid the Hotel Civilisation des Ramparts at all costs. We stayed at the Hotel Majestic which was a bargain. In Essouira, Jessica and Karla enjoyed their hamam experience despite the fact it hurt and they had to haggle over the price butt naked.

After a night of eating food that may have resulted in some gastrointestinal difficulties, DO NOT enter fancy shops with stuck up salespeople who don't appreciate the gifts you might leave behind.

Overall, we highly recommend Morocco for its great food, shopping and sites. Just keep our tips of what NOT to do in mind, and you will be guaranteed to have a great time.

After a long, but comfortable train ride, we arrived in Fes. We stayed at the Hotel Royal, which is walking distance from the train station. The medina is a short cab ride from the Ville Nouvelle. It is probably the highlight of Fes for its historical sights and good shopping. You could easily spend half a day haggling over the price a leather jacket (tea is included).

Last on our list of places to visit was Meknes and Volubulis. Again, a fun medina with good snacks. The ruins of Volubulis are well preserved and worth the visit although when it comes down to it, Volubulis is just a pile of rocks. We learned taxi drivers in Morocco are a bit sensitive, so DO NOT imply their vehicles aren't up to par if you want to get home in one piece. The Hotel Toubkal gives you the biggest bang for your buck around town and the manager, Moustafa, is nice and very informative.

Item	Price local Currency	Price in Dollars	Adriane and Whitney's rating
Roundtrip plane ticket	78,000 um-Royal Air Maroc	\$294.00	? ? ? ?
	71,000 um-Air Inshallah	\$268.00	?
Hotel Ali 5 person room	300 dirhams a night	\$33.00	? ? ? ?
Dinner in the medina	45 dirhams	\$5.00	? ? ? ? ?
Train ride from Marrakesh to Fes	178 dirhams	\$20.00	? ? ?
SNACKS!!!!			
1/2 kilo salt lick	15 dirhams	\$1.67	? ? ? ? ? ? ?
1/2 kilo apricots	40 dirhams	\$4.44	? ? ? ? ? ? ?
glass of orange juice	2.5 dirhams.	\$.27	? ? ? ? ? ? ?
bag of cookies	10 dirhams	\$1.11	? ? ? ? ? ? ?

Introduction: What's New for IRCs

NEW RESOURCES

New Titles from ICE/*The Whole ICE Catalog* (WIC)

Focus on ICT

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Training of Trainers:

Computer and Internet Use for Development, Facilitator Guide and Reference Manual. Peace Corps, 2002. WIC# T0122

This publication contains a facilitator guide and participant reference manual. Together they provide a complete outline for the design and content of a basic ICT training of trainers (TOT). The content assumes trainees have a basic knowledge of computers and the Internet, therefore sessions focus primarily on enhancing participants' ability to transfer their knowledge to others. The outline is relatively generic and should serve as a guide for trainers as they select and tailor sessions to their specific situations. At the end of the ICT TOT, Volunteers and others should be able to conduct effective computer technology and Internet training to help others better accomplish their development objectives, understand and apply participatory training methods that are effective in experiential learning situations, and learn how to tailor a training program to the needs of the [audience](#)[m1].

Orders for WIC publication number T0122 can be sent via e-mail to:

Madou, ICT/IRC Coordinator, mfall@mr.peacecorps.gov

Securite continued from page 8

- L'emplacement de la résidence : il est recommande que la maison ouvre sur une rue éclairée avec un mur élevé et sur lequel des tessons de bouteilles ou pointes doivent etre places. Il faudrait avoir des voisins dans les environs immédiats et surtout tisser avec eux de bon rapports a fin qu'ils veillent sur votre maison au moment de votre absence.
 - La résidence proprement dite : Il faut que le bâtiment soit solide, avec des portes ayant de bonnes serrures ainsi que des barres ou grillage au niveau des fenêtres.
 - Eviter de garder avec soit (dans la maison) de grandes sommes d'argent si il ne sera pas utilise immédiatement.
 - Limiter l'accès des visiteurs dans les chambres où se trouve votre matériel.
 - Varier l'emploi de temps de vos sorties car les heures de pointes pour les voleurs sont généralement entre 10h et 12h en plein jour et entre 0h et 5h30mn pendant la nuit.
2. Dispositions à entreprendre en cas de Vol :
- Avertir immédiatement la police en partant au commissariat pour faire la déposition.
 - Demander à la police un certificat de déclaration de perte.
 - Donner à la police toutes les indications permettant d'éclairer les policiers dans leur recherche.
 - Avertir, le duty officer, L'APCD concerne, le S&SC.



SPA and PCPP Update



By Kane Oumar, SPA/PCPP Coordinator

Hi all,

I wish all of you Happy New Year, and especially success for all your projects. I would like you to note that the SPA funds have been cut by 50% this year. Mauritania's SPA Grant funds for FY04 is only \$20,000 USD, and \$7,500 in HIV/AIDS grant funds, all to be transferred in Q1. This is a big cut from what we requested (\$60,000). So projects will need to be chosen carefully because of the limited funding.

We have 4 outstanding SPA Proposals awaiting budget here in Nouakchott.

Mauritania: \$20,000 in SPA Grant funds, and \$7,500 in HIV/AIDS grant funds, all to be transferred in Q1

Total SPA Amount: \$20,000

Volunteer Last Name	Project Cost (\$)	Comments
Handshuch	2,274.89	Awaiting Budget Authority
Lella/Kaufmann	809.96	Awaiting Budget Authority
Laribee	3,441.2	Awaiting Budget Authority
Eneh	1001.09	Awaiting Budget Authority

PCPP		
Volunteer Last Name	Project Cost (\$)	Comments
Handshuch	188.81	Awaiting Budget Authority
Eneh	2513.01	Awaiting Budget Authority



Quarterly Living Allowance Additions

Have you ever wondered why you get more than your living allowance deposited into your account each quarter? All volunteers receive money for one trip to Nouakchott each quarter. Amounts depend on site location and availability of flights as noted by *.

Site	Travel in Um	per diem - 7 days @2,300 UM/day
Atar	7,000	16,000
Chinguetti/Oudane	9,000	16,000
Brakna	5,500 U	16,000
GUIDIMAKHA	19,980*	16,000
Tagant	19,600*	16,000
Kaedi	6,000	16,000
Gorgol – all sites except Kaedi	8,000	16,000
Trarza	3,500	16,000
Hod	28,680*	16,000
Assaba	19,880*	16,000
Nouadhibou	27,270	16,000



Mauritania's Literary Journal is accepting submissions for its second issue. Please send any articles, poems, works of fiction, quoi to wittdmc@yahoo.com

Thank you very much!

Peace Corps Signs Historic Partnership with....

Mexico !!!!

WASHINGTON, D.C., November 12, 2003 – Today, Peace Corps Director Gaddi H. Vasquez signed an historic agreement with the country of Mexico that will lead to Peace Corps volunteers serving in Mexico for the first time.

"The citizens of the United States and Mexico have shared culture, family connections, history and common triumphs, and now, for the first time, Peace Corps volunteers will be a part of that tradition and history," Director Vasquez stated at the ceremony. "The Peace Corps is in an historic time and nothing could be more historic than this Partnership with the citizens of Mexico and CONACYT. As Peace Corps continues to expand and reach new areas of the world, it will be through innovative partnerships like the one we are signing today."

Director Jaime Parada Avila of The National Council on Science and Technology (CONACYT) of Mexico joined Director Vasquez at a signing ceremony at the Mexican Embassy in Washington, D.C. The U.S. Ambassador to Mexico Tony Garza and the Mexican Ambassador to the U.S. Juan Jose Bremer were also there to witness the signing of the new partnership agreement.



Peace Corps Director Gaddi H. Vasquez and Jaime Parada of The National Council on Science and Technology (CONACYT) of Mexico shake hands after signing the agreement that will send volunteers to Mexico for the first time.

This article was originally published at peacecorps.gov



VAC Meeting Highlights

January 11, 2004



- Quarters for ALL (quarterly reports, hotel vouchers, and living allowance) run as follows: Oct-Dec, Jan-Mar, Apr-Jun, Jul-Sept.
- Hotel Vouchers
 - You should ALWAYS go to the PC bureau upon arrival in Nktt to get vouchers.
 - ALWAYS go to the hotel on your voucher, not any other.
 - If you do come into town late, with approval from your APCD, and your vouchers are not in the CAC (the front room where the guards sit), call the duty officer (648-05-97) to come and fix the problem.
 - There will also be a box placed in the CAC marked "messages," which will hold all messages and vouchers.
- US Embassy Self-Help Funds
 - The ambassador asked that the following message be conveyed: Proposals for Self-Help grants from sites where there are PCVs will be fast-tracked and given priority.
 - Also, please send any info/updates on USG funded projects to the PC bureau.
- The next VAC meeting is tentatively scheduled for April 4, 2004.

Please not that the full meeting minutes have been placed in each PCVRCs' mailbox.

TALKING EVALUATION AGAIN

BY DAOUDA

Top management is increasingly demanding harder evidence of how training improves on the job performance and organizational results. For us trainers, looking at the impact of training is part of an ongoing performance tracking and feedback system. And one way to show concrete evidence that training is achieving its goals is to see that it is changing volunteers' behavior on the job and contributing to the bottom line.

After PST, the training staff goes back to the office and starts working on other training activities and planning next stage. Your feedback and evaluations are absolutely important for the preparation and implementation of new training events. This year, only **53%** of trainees filled out the PST final evaluations to say what they thought of the way they have been trained.

Based on the opinions of the 53% and other feedback data collected from different sources at different occasions, we have compiled a list of **60** recommendations that were brought at the Training Review Meeting with Peace Corps Senior staff (CD and APCDs). All recommendations were processed, and in the light of that "2003 PST processing meeting", other recommendations were made for the improvement of next PSTs. More feedback on the impact of PST in your work as volunteers will be requested from you at ETR (Early Term reconnect) on January 4th. Please be prepared to fill those out. During this training event, we will also do a processing of your first few months at site. So take notes of all challenging situations affecting you as a community

member and extension agent in your communities. They will be brought and discussed before the whole group, and we hope to find coping strategies for each of them.

As you see, fortunately, unlike regular schools, training is not a good-luck good-bye system where all trainees leave to never be seen again. Since there is plenty of feedback about the on-the job results of training, we still need to stay connected after the instructional program is completed. Please bear with us!! But seriously, it's always a pleasure to see you guys...

We would like to express extended congratulations to our 46 new Peace Corps volunteers who have been sworn in after 11 weeks of intensive training, patience and hard work. Bravo and good luck in your new exciting but challenging jobs.

Below are some of the important trainees' and trainers' recommendations from this year's PST. Please bring any other important recommendations that you can think of at Early Term Reconnect.

The Training Unit.



Karla and Sherif will host teenage Americans in Aioun.

Attention: More Toubabs Are Coming!

The bewildered Americans you see around town might not be tourists this January. Thanks to Justin Oliver, RPCV 2003, students and teachers in Aioun, Mauritania and Derby, Kansas are participating in an exchange during Thanksgiving and Tabaski. Oliver wrote a grant for the funding, and the French students started corresponding last year. They have been corresponding more formally this year through e-mail. Two Mauritanian students from Aioun and one teacher visited their penpals in Derby, Kansas during Thanksgiving. The Americans are expected to arrive January 17. They will attend classes at the high school in Aioun and celebrate Tabaski with their Mauritanian hosts. Look for the whole story of how the Americans fared in the next issue of Nouakchott Notes.

EE continued from page 2

and Katie has started to do the environmental assessment social maps of Niabina. Anyone interested in natural mosquito repellent talk to Lisa Jackson, who also wins the award for most difficult transport out to site. Just ask Naty: I've heard stories of walking through mud up to the knees in the middle of the night, and taking a horse charette over a barrel-style river crossing.

A big thanks goes out to Ayrin for all the help she's given me in the last few months, relaying messages, getting info and running around town trying to find the DREF. All of you interested in helping plan the EE summer camp should talk to her. Rumor has it a preliminary planning meeting will be held soon.

Natty C's site, Jidrel Moguene may rival Louboudou for the site with the worst transport during the rainy season; the roads from Rosso were blocked and even the road between the two main parts of the village was flooded. Not much food was getting through and the variety and quality of what got through was not good. Despite these challenges, she's has been spending her time getting to know people, going house to house, making up songs and exploring the forest. Since school started she's been visiting classes at the school getting to know the kids. In Medherdhra, our resident Arabic expert has been collaborating with her local Agfo PCV to start a garden at the primary school.

Here in Nouakchott, recently Aw and I have been involved in setting up an agreement with the World Food Program (WFP) to target EE and Agfo sites that have an existing "Cantine Scholaire" (school kitchen) supplied by WFP for a school garden and reforestation project. Each school will receive fencing, gardening materials and cement as needed for well construction. Volunteers will give technical assistance when needed as well as oversee the proper use of the materials. They will monitor the progress and act as a liaison between the site and the WFP. Unfortunately, WFP is only targeting the Assaba, Guidimakha, Gorgol, Brakna and Tagant Regions.

FYI -

- Kane Oumar has two Moringa CDs that are available to volunteers. One contains the FLM cultivation pamphlet in all the local languages including French and English. The second contains Ben Richey's mini-version of the reproduction of the World Vision flipchart as well as a down-sized version of the original.
- Moringa seeds are now available in large quantities from Frank at FLM. All Agfo's and EE should have the formula for asking for seeds. Anyone else (including Mauritians) is welcome to ask for seeds as well as long as s/he has a specific project in mind.
- A Moringa Manual is in the process of being edited and should be available by the time you come in for ETR, if not then soon after. For now, every Agfo, Health and EE PCV will get a copy, extra printing can be done as needed.
- Preparation of the Lesson Plan Manual will be handed over to Caroline when I leave, so please send her (or Aw) your lessons as you create them, so that this can be done before stage next year.
- Those of you interested in doing a Plastic Bag Recycling training the name of the assistance Environment Trainer in The Gambia, who has previously offered to come here and lead it, is Isatou Ceesay – isatouceesay2002@yahoo.com. I have contacted her to let her know that someone from Peace Corps Mauritania may be getting in touch with her.

AGFO/EE WORDS OF WISDOM FOR THE WORLD

By Racey Bingham



- Don't expect to accomplish much; study language and culture and try to get to know people around the community that you might work with in the future.
- Start a tree nursery and a garden at the local co-op; try different methods and observe closely methods used by the local people.
- Take a slow and deliberate course of action – always try to find people who are interested in EE activities to help with the introduction of EE in the community.
 - Having the bathroom door closed keeps the mosquitoes from breeding and living in there.
 - Just because someone claims to be a *cultivateur* doesn't mean they were good at their job.
 - Ornamental gourds, when planted and grown, are not good to eat. In fact, they might be the worst tasting things in the world.
- Don't start a project early on, because people will expect you to be there doing something all the time. Take time to get to know your community if you don't have any other commitments that hinder this important part of integration.

• FIND A TREE TO CLIMB

- "Patience is a virtue" was coined by a wise person!! If you learn nothing else your first three months – try to develop or improve your patience – it will help keep you sane!!
- Before venturing into the desert on a great bike ride – knowing the way to destination would help!!!
- The success of any project depends on personalities (even one specific person) involved. Follow-up takes dedication, and cannot just be left to the volunteer.
- Mauritians do a better job of training their peers that PCVs do. If they are well oriented, organized and supervised, they are much more tolerant of the idiosyncrasies of RIM learning styles.
 - Read the memos and emails that you get from the bureau.
- In village life, routine everyday activities tend to be done using only one method. The cliché that there is more than one way to skin a cat has been reworked that there is only one way to skin a cat. This applies to things like tying knots, washing hands or clothes, serving food, etc. If you do not do these tasks in the way that everybody else does, they tend to assume that you do not know how, even if your way gets the job done. **It helps a lot** to closely watch how people do things and imitate them exactly, or be prepared to be told you are not able to help someone take water off their head, knowing full well that they are not insulting you.



Lisa, Racey and Katie

- I have learned and am still learning that everything from work and personal relationships to even the most mundane activity must be approached with PATIENCE.



Aw continued from page 4

Christopher Heming has helped three communities in his area get a loan from FLM to establish village boutiques. Catherine Horn, SED volunteer in Kaedi, has been helping him with management and book keeping training for the management committees. He has worked with the women to help them with the maintenance of their fruit tree plantation establishment for over a year now with the help of the former volunteer.

In Tijikja, Ben Richey is still working with the delegation and a local cooperative for the establishment of a tree nursery that will be used for different purposes. It seems like they are giving the Moringa "l'art de lion" for this project. As stated in the last memo, the nursery will be used for dune fixation, compound planting, Moringa promotions, etc.

Kane Oumar has two Moringa CDs that are available to volunteers. One contains the FLM cultivation pamphlet in all the local languages including French and English. The second contains Ben Richey's mini-version of the reproduction of the World Vision flipchart as well as a downsized version of the original. As for the EE second year volunteers, see Racey's contribution.

Last but not the least, please find below some important dates:

January 04: ETR in Nouakchott

January 06 – 09 Agfo IST in Kaedi

January 11-13 Site visit in the Trarza by Aw

January 19-22 Site visit in the Tagant by Aw

February 08-11 Site visit in the Adrar by Aw

Thanks and keep up the good work!

Kateri continued from page 2...

years later and that next time she didn't cry more than once or twice. Definite progress.

The early term reconnect and in-service trainings were a great success. Thanks all and especially Sidna and Douada for your hard work. I have already thanked the Ambassador and Justin Crevier from the embassy on your behalf for their important contributions. One of my favorite parts of the conference was the dinner I had with the WOMYN OF PEACE CORPS MAURITANIA (yes, that's womyn with a "y"). It was fun and informative. I am still thinking of something I might organize for the MEN. Your ideas are welcome but please see second paragraph for information on how I feel about the Three Stooges.

Finally, we had a very nice VAC meeting in my office the other day. Thanks to all the RC's and alternates for attending. Megan K. has prepared a good summary of the issues we discussed, so I will not go into details here. I would like to reiterate the Ambassador's offer to fast track and prioritize "Self Help Fund" projects submitted by PCV's. This is a great resource for funding in the \$2-5,000 range, especially for rural PCV's whose villages need wells and fencing (anyone heard that before?) If you have any questions and can get to a phone or email please call 5252660 ext. 4632 or kallam@state.gov.

!!!! Have a very merry Tabaski!!!! And don't forget- unlike excesses of the Thanksgiving turkey that is fabled to have a calming, almost sedative effect on the brain, over-indulgences of the Tabaski sheep most definitely have the opposite effect on the lower intestines.

The RIM, Quoi



What's Cooking in The RIM?



Amy's African Kitchen

Moringa Pretzels

Equivalent of 6 tea casses of water
 2 packages of levure chimique
 Equivalent of 1 tea casses sugar
 1/2 T salt
 A little less than a tea casse of oil
 1 kg of flour
 1 egg beaten and doubled in volume with water
 Approximately 3 good fistfuls of Moringa leaves
 Seasonings: hot pepper, garlic, onion, mustard...

Mix water, levure, sugar, salt, oil, and half kilo of flour. Add Moringa leaves and other seasonings, then gradually add in the rest of the flour, mixing until a soft dough is obtained. Knead on a floured surface for 10 minutes until clean and elastic. Place in a bowl and cover with a cloth in a place free from draft. Leave 30 minutes. Divide dough to make pretzels.

Place pretzels on a greased pan and bake for 10 minutes in the brousse oven or for 12-15 at 425 in a conventional oven.

Healthy Moringa Bread

1 medium onion, chopped
 2-3 handfuls Moringa leaves
 1/2 Jumbo cube
 About 8 bisap leaves
 Garlic to taste if you like

Smash this using a mortal and pestle, then make brousse cheese (delicate art of mixing 1 cup heated milk with less than a casse of vinegar, add a bit and stir until it curdles) Mix the cheese with the first.



Amy cooking in Ayrin's House

Ben In The RIM



Sob Story

Story written by Megan Kaufmann
Adapted by Adriane Lella

**I had to say,
“Hurry up!
We are get-
ting the hell
out of here.”**



I'm homeless. I don't mean that I broke the contract on my home or that I moved out, I mean that I really do not have a home. "Why?" you ask. The answer is quite simple, it fell down. Let me explain...

It was a heavy rain during site visit. By the time we were ready for bed it was still raining enough that we didn't want to sleep under the stars, so instead we chose the veranda. The 6 of us squashed under the roof and began sleeping. I was awoken around 2:00 a.m. when everyone began moving their matalas inside because the wind and rain had both picked up and it was blowing into us under the roof. So, I went into my room and slept right by the open door, 2 others stayed outside, but moved further back and closer to the wall, while the other 3 moved inside to the other room.

I had no sooner entered my room when there was a huge crash followed by some sparks. I went out to see that the front of my veranda had collapsed, including the roof, severing some electrical wiring. I yelled to my friends, and everyone was fine, but then I had to say, "Hurry up we are getting the hell out of here." They got their bags and climbed over the rubble to get out of the room. My whole courtyard was flooded, so much so that I almost could not get our front door open. Armed with one flashlight, the 6 of us waded through the streets of Atar, the gateway of the Sahara, and went to our regional office. We got there around 4:00 a.m., and we waited out the night on the comfort of our cement floor in our wet clothes.

~~~~~  
Do you have a sob story you would like to share with the Peace Corps community? Send photos and text to [rim-news2003@yahoo.com](mailto:rim-news2003@yahoo.com). If it is sad enough we'll print it in the next Nouakchott Notes.  
~~~~~

The Pizza Chronicles:

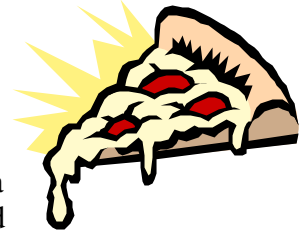
Part 2

The Nouakchott Notes team of food critics will review a different pizza place each issue in the quest to provide accurate, useful information to the pizza-eating public. This issue's featured restaurant:

Ma Pizza

Ambiance

Ma Pizza ('Ma' as in the French possessive, not the maternal sense...) has a comfortable, homey feel with indoor and outdoor dining options. It is located across from the Novotel, not far from Galerie Tata. The menus look something like grocery store coupons making them a bit painful to read without a magnifying glass. The indoor seating area is a bit small making it unsuitable for parties greater than four. However, the staff is happy to rearrange the outdoor tables to accommodate large groups. Eating outdoors allowed us to enjoy the sounds and sights of Nouakchott traffic. Our meal was lit by oncoming headlights while car horns provided background music.



The Service

The staff at Ma Pizza was very friendly and helpful. They explained that "ham" topping was not pig ham rendering it Muslim-friendly. Since water is not available, they were proud to bring us the specialty drink of the house, The San Francisco.

The service was quick considering the large order. The waiter ran to the closest boutique in order to provide us with napkins, but there was only one set of silverware for the entire group. This was acceptable since we were happy to eat with our hands.

By far the best thing about Ma Pizza is the price.

Food

Ma Pizza is acceptable at best. The crust is thin and bland and the toppings are a bit sparse. On a positive note, it is well seasoned and will certainly satisfy a craving for cheese.

Ben in the RIM®



Conclusion

You can't beat the price when it comes to Nouakchott pizza restaurants, but if you are looking for quality, Pizza Hot is a better bet. The small touches like the specialty drink set Ma Pizza apart from other places.

What's going on in America?

ET Update:

This just in....

Mike Wright is still working with Muslims. He is building houses in Russia and seems to love it.

Brett is making lots of money in NYC.

Owen is going to the library for free Internet.

Tiffany just returned from China.

(This sounds made up, but it's all true)

Top Movies

Are you at a loss when Obie asks what DVDs he should order? Here's a list of what's cool in the United States aujourd'hui.

1. Big Fish
2. The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King
3. Cheaper by the Dozen
4. Something's Gotta Give
5. Cold Mountain
6. My Baby's Daddy
7. Chasing Liberty
8. Paycheck
9. The Last Samurai
10. Mona Lisa Smile

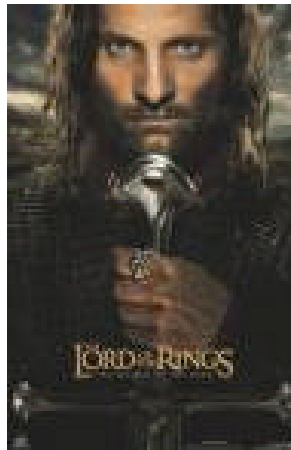


What Won't You Do?

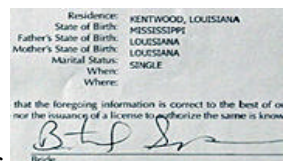
No matter how culturally integrated we try to be there are certain things we all refuse to do in order to remain true to ourselves.

- Jay says he spoke to a volunteer who wouldn't buy African clothes.
- It is a little known fact that Kateri won't wear a headlamp.
- Megan refuses to wear socks with open toed shoes no matter how cold those Adrar mornings get.
- Kevin won't eat goat head, or anyone else's for that matter.
- Adriane carries TP with her where ever she goes.
- No matter how African she may seem, Amy will never grab another girl's breast to see if she's lactating.

Let us know what you do to stay American:
rimnews2003@yahoo.com



Yep, Britney Tied the Knot



After some boozin' and a viewing of Texas Chainsaw Massacre in Las Vegas, Britney Spears allegedly married a friend from Louisiana. They had a seven minute drive-thru ceremony that was annulled the next day. He reportedly returned to Louisiana, and she returned to the dance floor. (It was annulled within the week.)

The Malady Report



The Winner of the Worst Malady of the Quarter is:
Scott Eidson

Scott took time out of his busy day of MIF Kit collection to answer some questions about his health or lack of health.

Q: What do you think you have?

A: The beastly yeasties. Actually, I'm feeding an army of 1,000 mouths. Possibly, ebola. Okay, no, it was yeast, amoeba, and giardia.

Q: How long have you been sick?

A: When did I arrive in Mauritania?

Q: How many MIF kits have you done?

A: God...how many weeks...(he's thinking hard)...I'm trying to think how many bottled turds I've handed over to Amel.

Q: What are the chances you will be better before WAIST?

A: 0%, but I leave my chickens to Marc Valentin.

Q: Why do you think you deserve to win?

A: Because I've lost a quarter of my body weight competing for this trophy.

This issue's Runner Up:

Carl Strolle

Quote: "I've definitely been stigmatized by little kids making fun of me. Toubab means funny foot, right?"



SHERIF IS MAD!!!
TEA TIMES SUBMISSIONS NEEDED!

Please send any and all submissions to sherif_ayoub@yahoo.com or put them in his mailbox in Nouakchott. Or ELSE!



Love Doctor Gueye

Some people may think of Cheich Gueye as a heartbreaker, but in reality he is just taking his time learning about love. Because he has become so wise in matters of the heart, he is willing to share some knowledge with the readers. Please submit questions to rimnews2003@yahoo.com attention: Dr. Love.

Q: What is love?

A: Love is loving other people and loving yourself. Love is fidelity and loyalty.

Q: How do you know if you are in love?

A: I don't know yet because I haven't been in love. (sigh) If I find love I will get married.

Q: If someone is single how can they find love?

A: You need to know what you want and then take your time looking for it. You have to be willing to compromise on some of your criteria, but it is important to know what you want.

PCV question of the quarter:

I have a boyfriend at home. I thought I was going to marry him, but he hasn't been writing me. Should I look for a boyfriend here?

No. Just because he doesn't write does not mean he isn't serious. You must find out how he feels about the relationship. Maybe he just doesn't like to write letters. Maybe you aren't serious about the relationship if you are so quick to look for someone else.

Aminetou Says...

Ever wonder how Aminetou looks so put together when she walks in first thing in the morning? Well, here's everything you ever wanted to know.



Aminetou believes one of the most important thing is taking care of your body. What does this entail, one word, Hamam. Hamams are the equivalent of a day spa, where you can receive massages, to henna, cut your hair, on top of the normal body scrub. In Nouakchott, the Bathe Moor even has a sports room. Aminetou recommends going bi-monthly in order to maintain you skin's healthy glow. Prices range anywhere from 700-2000 um although the normal price is around 1000 um. She also would like to stress the importance of bringing your own scrubbing glove for hygienic purposes. Another thing to keep in mind is you have to the right to see if the Hamam is clean before entering since they are supposed to clean the floors with disinfectant between customers.

Maintaining the health of your hair can be tricky, according to Aminetou. Although she looks absolutely stunning with braids, she says most likely she'll never do it again. Aminetou has a perfect recipe for those with brittle hair:

- 1 box of Rose Milk
- 1 box of henna
- 1 lipton tea bag
- 1 raw egg
- Olive oil

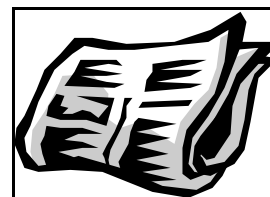
She says to heat the rose milk and henna, stirring occasionally. When warm, remove from heat and add olive oil. Carefully add beaten egg, making sure you don't wind up with an omelet. Leave mixture in hair for an hour and rinse.

One piece of advice from Aminetou is, DO NOT mix Henna with water because it will dry out your hair. The recipe above is not only full of nutrients but also moisturizing. Thank you Aminetou for your words of wisdom and look forward to the next issue.



Aminetou in Action helping Whitney with her hair.

Nouakchott Notes Needs You!



Please send submissions for Nouakchott Notes or The RIM Quoi to rimnews2003@yahoo.com. The next issue is scheduled to come out in the beginning of April. Thank you...Notes Staff yo.

Pathfinder in the PC/RIM

By Jay Davidson

Following are some ideas that have worked well for me. I hope that you find them to be useful. These ten points form an acronym that spell "PATHFINDER."



Passion

Having something to work on passionately has become a theme for many Americans. Most people associate this with a fulfilling career that leads to either personal or humanitarian goals. The chances are great that your decision to join the Peace Corps is related to something about which you are passionate.

Attitude

Your attitude is 100% your choice. I have been waiting (and trying to be patient) for my true work to begin in Nouakchott. There seems to be one excuse after the next as to why things aren't progressing. But I am finding other projects to do to keep busy, and have made the conscious decision not to let this situation bring

Thanks

Meister Johannes Eckhart is attributed with two quotations that I find inspiring: "If the only prayer you ever learned to say was 'thank you,' that would be enough;" and, "If you think about what you *want*, you will never have enough, but if you think about what you *have*, you will always have enough."

Humor

Our PCVs need very little help in this department! I am delighted to see how many fun-loving and enjoyable people are serving in the PC/RIM. If you can keep your sense of humor about your work, learning new customs, and forging enjoyable relationships, then you are well on your way toward putting "RPCV" after your name.

Friends Family

I use these two words interchangeably to recognize the importance that they have in our lives. Family and friends who have told me that they would send me things I ask for are following through. It feels great to have people who care about me and show it. I am seeing now how much my happiness depends on these relationships.

Individual

Be true to yourself. An RPCV who served here told me that he never purchased local clothing, that his American attire was what he needed to wear so that he could feel like himself. Where is your threshold, your boundary? Whatever it is, do what you need to do to honor that part of yourself that is uniquely you.

Nourishment

Nourishment means more than food, though food is important, too. I am thinking more of the nourishing of your psyche – the parts of you that nobody sees. Have you found something that taps into your creativity? Whatever personal artistic outlet you pursue, keeping those juices flowing will help you to feel whole, fulfilled, and committed.

Direction

Where are your projects heading? Are you anxious that they will never be completed? When I feel frustrated and have that "Why bother?" feeling, I like to think of this from the *Talmud*: "Ours is not to complete the task, nor is it to desist from it." You're here; you are giving things your best shot; what gets done will get done.

Education

Lifelong learning keeps brain cells growing! Even if your job description doesn't call you a teacher, you *are* a teacher of many things to the people with whom you come into contact. The example that you show by your actions in working with them is not the *main* thing that will influence them – it is the *only* thing!

Responsibility

I am responsible for my own happiness, misery, successes, and failures. When we accept the consequences of our actions and words, we recognize the part that we played in the results, and we stop blaming others for the things that are not going the way we want them to go.