

Notes from the Underground

Volume IV • June 2005

Missing child alert!



Help us find this boy. Last seen staggering out of the VIP in the early hours of the morning, young Angus has been missing for 8 days. Contact APCD Aw Mohamedou with any information as to his whereabouts.

In this issue:

Obie admits he loves reading the Underground (in the bathroom).

Special feature: Hallucinogenic shrubs of the sahel.

Fight at Qin Huang restaurant ends with man in boubou getting his ass kicked by small Chinese lady, again.

John: Audrey Bottjen
Ringo: Karl Adam
Paul: Miriam Edwards
George: Janine Kossen
Ryngo: Carl Strolle

The Changing Face of the Mauritanian Work Force

M'Bout -- As the hot sun scorches the barren earth along the dusty, dirty, and dilapidated stretch of dirt road called M'Bout, a World Food Program garden is well under construction. Remarkably, the garden is being constructed at record pace. The well is being dug, the fence is being raised, trenches for basins are being picked, and honestly, this reporter was extremely shocked. Was M'Bout in a different country, was this a different time, could this be a Mauritanian project that is actually succeeding? A quick glance around the site revealed dozens of half-finished construction projects confirming that I was still in Mauritania. What made this project different? To find out I spoke to project coordinator, Angus Kelly.

My first impression was that Kelly, being a member of the hardworking and highly esteemed Peace Corps community, was the reason for the success of the project. After visiting him at 11 a.m. on a Tuesday morning and seeing him slamming shots of mouthwash and chewing cigarette butts I started to have my doubts. Doubts mixed with intrigue when he stopped to buy 20 balbastiques, but soon all was revealed.

At the worksite, three kids were in the well chipping away at rock. Dozens of children were moving rocks out of the garden. A small army of toddlers was

putting up a section of fence. Their faces lit up with glee when they saw Kelly. Like moths to a candle they flocked to him. He promptly gave each one of them their choice of either a frozen bissap treat or a cigarette and yelled, "Break!"

During the break Kelly explained, "I used to get really upset at my workers. If I was lucky enough to have any of my workers show up, I would spend most of my day convincing them to do something. They spent more time drinking tea than doing work. One day I got



Kelly spends some time training some new workers on Site in M'Bout

really upset at a guy and said that I could get better work out of a toddler. I know it is cliché to say the light bulb went off, but it did. I haven't employed anyone over five since that day." Ten minutes later all the children were back to work. There were some older boys, maybe 5, with sticks that kept all the other children in line. Kelly said that these kids were the bosses and that he paid them a pack of cigarettes every week. About 5 minutes later we left the work site.

continued

Kelly explained as we headed back to his house that he doesn't like to micromanage his crew.

Further investigation into this seedy business led me to Brock Emerson. He was an old business acquaintance and friend of Kelly. I found Emerson in an anal-retentively clean and organized office in Selibaby. He was the president of first Union in Mauritania, the Communal Union of Laboring Toddlers (C.U.L.T.). I when asked about his views on child labor he said, "Child labor is great, it is the only way I could keep this place clean." Just as he said that a



Adama Sal, CULT's employee of the month for March 05, on site.

three year old walked out from behind his desk with a dust-buster. Emerson opened a jar on his desk and flipped a piece of hard candy in the child's direction. When asked why he would unionize children he simply responded, "COS trips don't pay for themselves." He continued, "CULT is here to make sure that no children are exploiting their employers. You see, childhood labor is a new thing for many employers. Sure, they know how to have the kids do everything at the home, but these people had no way to judge how much to pay toddlers for a day of labor. When you come to CULT you get a good work for a good price." He proceeded to insert a promotional tape into the VCR.

The tape started with a shot of Emerson sitting amongst a sea of tod-

dlers. With "I believe the children are our future" playing in the background he went into a very convincing monologue about how there is no shortage of kids in Mauritania, just a shortage of good uses for these kids. My favorite part of the video was the testimonials. Keith Gaddis in Atar explains, "When I came here I thought people like Kathy Lee and corporations like Nike should rot in hell for the way they treated children. I saw the light during stage. I learned that kids could be used for moving rocks, picking up manure, shoveling—hell, almost anything. Currently, with the help of CULT, I have a 40 kid workforce and my out-of-pocket expense is 200 UM a day, that's 70 cents, baby! My PCPP has a line item for \$20 labor a day. You know, COS trips don't pay for themselves." Audrey Bottjen's testimony was one of changing personal choices. "I wasn't going to have kids" she starts, "but now that CULT showed me the earning potential of these little shits I am turning myself into a baby factory."

Child labor seems to me the next big thing. At first I was very judgmental and skeptical of Kelly and Emerson, but after visiting several worksites and seeing the true power of child labor I have come around. In fact, Emerson said that there was a spot for me in his next "Seeing the Light" video. He also helped me get a 10-kid crew to dig a swimming pool in my side yard. It really takes having your own crew for you too really appreciate the awesome power of child labor. The workers never demanded more money, or need apprentices. Maybe this was because most of them can't talk yet but I like to think that it is because the just know what a good day's work is supposed to be.

News Briefs

COSing Male Volunteers Claim that Coughing Not Part of Required Medical Physical
Reports from the vanguard of COSing PCVRIM class of 2003-2005 are being received concerning the lack of testicular examination by the medical staff. Soon-to-leave Dana Weymouth said: "I never felt so vulnerable to testicular cancer or even the dreaded 'Kyle.' I certainly check myself often enough, and Dan checks me sometimes multiple times a day. I was really let down that medical here is so lax. What would Lance Armstrong say?" Soon departing Angus R. Kelly III esq. remarked, "I invested in this, man. I even stopped, well, you know, for a couple of days to get that healthy firmness and the blue tint. No dice, man, no dice were rolled."

Locusts Prepared for Upcoming Smite-Season

"The RIM Locusts have had a good offseason in Burkino Faso and are prepared to eat anything this spring," claims Locust head coach, Pinky. After eight months of conditioning, weightlifting and starving, they are ready to, "fuck West Africa."

"The offensive coaches are doing a good job of simplifying some things and utilizing guys in different ways," he added. "Last year we definitely ate every single moringa tree to powder and we really made Dan B. cry when we ate his reforestation project, not to mention the billions of dollars of subsistence farming along the river. We can't really say what we got comin' up this year, but let's just say the goats had it coming."

"There's a lot you can learn in the off-season," he said. "I don't think you have to beat them up and I like our mental aspect more than anything, what we're doing

Music Review

Dark Molly Goes Down Easy

Sprung kicking and screaming from the bedrock of the Mauritanian brousse, Dark Molly is a band on the rise. Delivering a live show that leaves you breathless, and slightly nauseous, Dark Molly produces music that's cocky and uncompromising.

Critics stood in awe of the cheeky tenacity built around chart toppers "O.B.I.E." and "Infidel" on their debut CD, *Out Cold*, as Dark Molly quickly established itself as the beguiling badass of the music scene. With its second CD scheduled for fall 2005 release, Dark Molly again peels the RIM onion, exposing layers of complexities.

The group labels their sound "kinetic chaos" and wrote and recorded the second CD in five days to maintain unpredictable energy and the capture the PCV experience. "We want to accurately represent what it's like here. We want the audience to smell, taste, touch the music! We won't soften what we see to make it palatable," says bassist/Siman. "If our music makes



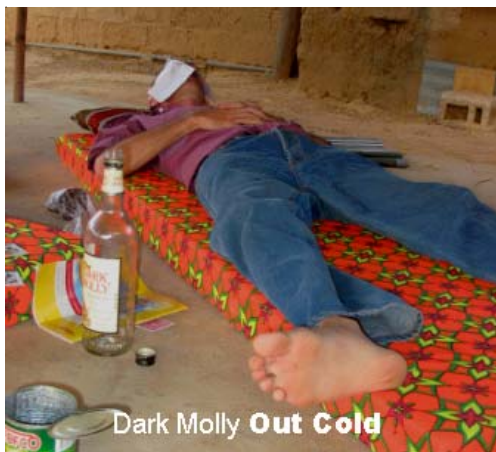
all in the music."

Locust remains faithful to the band's original vision while expressing more mature themes. "I Was Drunk" is a moody, dark mix of hypnotic sensuality and forbidden desires. The faster paced "Itching, Burning" reinterprets love in the ranks. "27 Months" is an aching dirge to end of service parting. According to Angus, lead bagpipes and recorder, band members "...are all a bit older and these songs reflect our personal growth. The relationships on this album clearly take a different angle than, say, 'the BBC' (Brousse Booty Call) from the first album."

There's so much good stuff on this sophomore effort. The band shows an impressive range, including, surprisingly, a deep spiritual side. "The Oops I Did It Again/Allahu Akbar acoustic remix was something we wanted to do on the first CD but it seemed risky at the time," reveals Brock, drums. "We're much more focused and confident now and we were able to work with one of the best pray callers in the country. We

thought it worth the gamble." The gamble pays off, big time. The song is a pop meditative sensation -- naughty and sacred.

So, should you get this CD? If you want to be transported to a land of heat, sandstorms, personal struggle and triumph, brilliant night skies, flies, trash...yes!



the audience squirm or physically ill, so be it."

"We're inspired by the volunteer experience," adds Molly 1, co-lead singer. "From the Nouakchott volunteer who faces the nightmare of finding good domestic help, to the brousse volunteer who has to recycle his own urine and sweat during dry season, it's

News Briefs Cont.

out there. Guys are really chewing, there are not a lot of errors. Last year, we had guys chewing rocks and rebar. That's just sloppy. I think we corrected those mental mistakes."

"Last season, our ground game was great, and the air game was unstoppable. This year we are just trying to keep up the intensity while not drowning in the irrigation canals and the ocean." He continued, "And we've been checking up on the competition. Our scouting video shows them running the same old plays of making tea and napping. I think we can pull off another championship smiting this year."

Four locusts on the 91-billion bug roster did not take part in the mini-camp. Cornerback chomper 'Ungry Mutha has been holding out, trying to negotiate a new contract in Senegal and defensive treetackle Mohamed (back) and Jerry Rice (mandible), who are rehabbing from off-season surgery, did not participate.

Also missing was wideflyer Jumpy Jerry, a fourth-round draft choice who underwent surgery after suffering a season-ending human foot-on-head injury from Obie in rookie minicamp last month.

Hardworking Volunteer pays small child to pat him on the back

Departing PCV Marc Valentin recently paid a small dirty boy to pat him on the back, having already taught Ahmed o/ Salem, 11, of Quartier Cinquieme to say, "Good jshob Mark. You wo'k verry harrd." Marc, still in his underwear at four-twenty in the afternoon, said, "I worked hard and it's about time I got the credit I deserve from the people who love me."

An Interview with Brad Pitt

By Janine Kossen -- Move over Diane Sawyer! This "Notes from the Underground" crack reporter proves that you don't have to be an educated, pompous, experienced journalist to get the latest scoop on Brad Pitt. Just moments after finishing his "Primetime Live" interview June 13, I cornered this celebrity to get the real inside scoop on his recent humanitarian efforts to end poverty through educational scholarships, debt relief, and access to life-saving AIDS drugs in Africa.

After 7 years together, Hollywood's hottest couple shocked the world in early January by announcing they were calling it quits. Representatives for Jennifer Aniston, 35, and Pitt, 41, confirmed that no plans for divorce have formally been made yet. Sources tell this Hollywood insider that it will only be a matter of time before the inevitable occurs—Aniston will go on to become a semi box office smash while Pitt finally embraces his true calling and joins PCRIM. I caught up with Pitt at his new home in Kaédi where he immediately stripped naked and began making traditional Mauritanian tea for his blushing guest.

Notes from the Underground: So, Brad, welcome to Mauritania. How do you find it so far?

Brad Pitt: Thanks. It's a challenge for sure. Going from a mansion and designer clothes to a mud hut and a boubou is like night and day obviously.



Notes News Alert: USG Teams With Boeing to Provide Remote Vision Correction Surgery

LASIK, the safest optical correction surgery currently available, is now being offered to Americans overseas through a new alliance between the State Department and Boeing. Using the company's newest Space Lasers and GPS technology, patients can text message their coordinates to a special number and have their vision corrected, often to 20-20.

The cost is only \$2499 per eye and can be deducted from your readjustment allowance. Talk to your PCMO about scheduling a cloud free timeslot on a rooftop near you. Don't forget to take off your glasses! Mauritel only, results may vary, may result in infection and blindness.

I do really like those long belts and short pants though.

NU: Any problems with the food or the heat?

BP: Well, it isn't all that different from what I'm used to. Instead of caviar and pâté, I now eat fish eyes and goat intestines. Not that big of a stretch, ya' know. I do spend a lot of time naked...it's a surefire way to beat the heat. You should try it. Come on, get naked!

NU: I'm sorry, but I really couldn't. Peace Corps frowns upon fraternization between PCVs. So, back to the interview, Brad. You're sure you are not running away from all the publicity over your separation from Jennifer Aniston?

BP: I can see why you might think that, but honestly I came here to make a difference. As a GAD volunteer in the thriving metropolis of Kaédi, I know I am reaching out to young women (strokes my leg), giving them a reason to live (winks seductively), encouraging them to be all they can be (licking his lips). With my guidance and expertise on women's affairs, these young innocent girls will become beautiful models and selfish movie stars, inshallah!

NU: What do you have to say about all the rumors linking your failed marriage to a torrid love affair with former co-star Angelina Jolie?

BP: Of course, I deny that entirely. Angelina is nothing more than a good friend to me. As a UN Goodwill Ambassador, she helped encourage me to follow my dreams and apply to the Peace Corps. Without her connections and

support, I know I would never be here. I'd probably just become some washed-up actor known only for a bit part in *Thelma and Louise*. Angie has traveled all over the world publicizing the plight of refugees in war-torn areas. She's been an inspiration to me. I'm actually applying for a SPA grant now to get her to come talk to the GMC girls about how to accentuate their full figures so they, too, can break up countless marriages. All they really need is a positive role model, someone they can trust and look up to. I can't think of anyone better.

NU: Is it true that part of the reason you and Jen broke up was because you wanted children and she didn't?

BP: I'm not going to comment on that. The reasons for our separation are personal and I wish to keep them private. I will tell you, however, that working with the GMC has made me realize that young people, especially young girls, are going to be a big part of my life now. I want to focus on what I can give to these impressionable young teenagers. And I mean more than just Teen Beat pin-up photos (hands me suggestive photos of himself).

NU: That's very big of you, Brad (eyeing the photo longingly). You are certainly to be commended for your commitment to young girls. Mauritania, and Kaédi in particular, is lucky to have you.

BP: Mashallah! With any luck, one day I'll be able to fill the big shoes of our courageous leader Obie and turn PCRIM into a charm school boot camp for wealthy socialite girls around the world. Just imagine the possibilities...

Hollywood Headlines

By Janine Kossen -- In a shocking turn of events, Michael Jackson, once famous for 1980s megahits like "Thriller" and "Billie Jean", was found not guilty on all charges in his 14-week criminal trial in Santa Maria, California. The jury returned the verdict after 7 days of deliberations. The 46-year-old Jackson pleaded not guilty to 4 counts of lewd acts upon a minor child, 1 count of attempting to commit a lewd act upon a minor child, 4 counts of administering an intoxicating agent (the so-called "Jesus Juice"), and 1 count of conspiracy to abduct a child. If Jackson had been convicted, he could have faced up to 18 years in prison. Upon leaving the courtroom, Jackson immediately retreated to his Neverland Ranch where he is reportedly



working on promoting his latest boy band and contemplating going on tour to boyscout camps nationwide.

After just 4 months of dating, Renée Zellweger, 36, and country "legend" Kenny Chesney, 37, wed in the Virgin Islands. It is the first marriage for both. Although they have both achieved a moderate amount of fame, this dynamic duo proves that you can take the hick out of the trailer park, but you just can't



take the trailer park out of the hick. During his barefoot vows, Chesney was reported as saying, "You and a six pack of cold brewskies complete me baby."

Meanwhile, Renée's "Jerry Maguire" co-star, Tom Cruise, has been rather busy himself. Cruise, 42, and Katie Holmes, 26, have gone public with their budding romance. The former "Dawson's Creek" star and her new beau are said to be head over heels for each other, prompting Cruise to jump for joy during a recent Oprah Winfrey interview. Neither are new to the celebrity courtship scene. Cruise spent 10 years married to Nicole Kidman and 3 years dating Penelope Cruz while Holmes announced in March that she and fiancé Chris Klein had separated after several years together. Relationship experts note that the "hours spent together vs. hours spent separately talking about their relationship on television" ratio of 1/4 indicates a healthy start for a budding romance.

In other break-up news, the tenacious trio known as Destiny's Child announced June 13 that they too are calling it quits. Kelly Rowland, Michelle Williams,



and Beyoncé Knowles have vowed to complete their Destiny Fulfilled concert tour before pursuing solo projects. Although all have previously ventured out on their own projects, this time they say it is for good. The R & B group has sold more than 40 million records since they have been together. "After a lot of soul searching,

we realized that we could go out on a high note and still remain best friends", said Williams. "After all, who needs that bitch Beyoncé and her fat-ass, stringy-haired, publicity-stealing self. I'm better off without her."



Open Letter to Cheikh Gueye

Dear Cheikh Gueye,

I wanted to tell you about my disappointing stay at the Welcome Hotel last week. I know you seek feedback on accommodations and hope this will help PCVs receive the standard of living they deserve during their Nouakchott days.

Allow me to start with the bathroom. First of all, the hot water lasted only 45 minutes, rudely cutting my shower in half. The curtain did not stretch sufficiently across the tub, allowing water to leak out onto the bathmat. That's a slip risk. The towels provided are thin and shabby, obviously Egyptian cotton. And finally, the toilet paper is only mediocre, and the hand soap made my skin flake.

My bedroom was a mess. The mattress was soft, and the blanket did not match the artwork. Air conditioning in every room is fine, but can they choose a model that oscillates more than 90 degrees? The armoire was large and clumsy and hangers were scarce.

And the kitchen! Oh, what a misuse of the word. The refrigerator was new, but small, and a person could hardly traverse the narrow aisle way with the door open. The mini-oven could not accommodate my 20-pound turkey, but it's not as though the electric carving knife Welcome provides had the horsepower to slice it anyhow.

After so many disappointments I sought refuge in the living/family room. More like refugee! The TV selection was anemic and Arabic-biased, the couch overly firm and floral, the dinner table too big and "ski lodge" for my tastes. And why put the plates, cups, and cutlery out there when I cook ten feet down the hall in the "kitchen?"

Cheikh, we all appreciate your dedication and professionalism. It's time to apply your skills to cleaning up this veritable crack house. We all deserve to feel welcome at the Welcome!

Sincerely,
Tupper C. Rensdorf
PCV, Nema

Now, More Than Ever, Call Me The Deuce

By Jarad "The Deuce" Logsdon -- My dear comrades in the field, I write to you in the shadow of a Great Man. Jared Stearns, for unknown reasons also called Tang, is now dead. Those of us in the Hodh lost a sitemate, many lost a friend, and we all lost a fellow volunteer, battling on the front lines of poverty, ignorance, and other problems suffered by PCVs. But I lost something much greater than the rest, leaving a hole in my heart that aches with the audible sound of thousands of miniature prostitutes being savagely tickled. Whether you call it the other half of my soul, the yang (or Tang) to my yin, my twin, or my no-sex-bottom-bunk-sleepmate, the core of my being now teeters

on the precipice of a sucking spiritual vortex. The very reason people call me The Deuce is now in jeopardy. Vicious rumors circulated the country shortly after Tang's murder at the hands of radical Zoroastrian missionaries posing as a Cirque du Soleil advance team, suggesting that people begin referring to me as just Jarad. The argument goes that since there's only one of us now, a nickname is unnecessary.

My friends, we must not let the same type of barbaric thinking that resulted in my penetration-free-never-even-kissed-each-other-lover-I-mean-friend's death dictate our behavior in The World After Tang (TWAT). Tang was too important. His memory is too important.

And TWAT is too important.

I'm not going to sit here and cross my tear soaked fingers hoping that the next training class has a Jared in it, or a Jayrud or a J-Rod for that matter. My struggle is more fundamental, and it depends on your support.

My friends, look to the sky and listen. If you open your mind you will see Tang in the clouds. If you open your heart you will hear him in the breeze. He will beckon you with a wispy smile and a voice that trickles down from heaven like rain.

"Now more than ever," he says, "call him The Deuce."

Wacky Stories From The Field True! Off The Wall! Undeniably Zany!

By Cynthia Cheng, Kaedi -- I'd been at site about a year when it I had to face the facts. My language skills were the pits. Though I took 5 hours of Pulaar classes a week with a very competent teacher, it was apparent that I wasn't making progress. I don't know if it's my accent, or some kind of mental block, but I can hardly buy bread in the market.

I was about ready to "ET-Phone-Home" when my APCD recommended a vacation. I decided to meet a college friend for a little European tour, and one day in Budapest I tried speaking Pulaar to mess with a guy who was flirting with me on a bus. This man was as white as they come, but he understood me perfectly.

Turns out, my novice-low Pulaar is intermediate-high Hungarian! I came back to site, and the change of scenery really turned me around. Now I'm more relaxed, my Pulaar is coming along, and I have a Hungarian boyfriend. Jaxatu!

MadLib^(tm) 1. 2. 3. Give me 4. Why? I'll tell you why 5.! 'Cause this 6. infection ain't goin' away 7. The least you could do is give me some chewing gum. And your 8. And your 9. And your 10. virginity. And what about that 11. It's not going to drag around on a string by itself, is it? Look at me, I put the "can" into "cankid," if you know what I mean. This ain't as easy as 12. a 13. I mean, I got bills to pay too. You don't just get these kinds of rags in 14. These are designer holes by 15. I can't just hang my 16. through just any chump brand of holes. These days just a can ain't enough. You gotta look sharp. Especially your 17. I've been studying English too. Howareyoufine. Hugh? Yeah, pretty good. Canning's gotta keep up with globalization too. Give me lessons. Tomorrow. So, how 'bout it 18. Are you going to give me 19.?

Replace the numbers above with words inspired by the clues below:

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. inappropriate greeting | 10. any orifice |
| 2. respectful gender specific title | 11. piece of trash in your yard |
| 3. toubab or nassrani | 12. slang verb of copulation |
| 4. multiple of ten less than one hundred | 13. domesticated RIM animal |
| 5. profanity in local language | 14. local village |
| 6. body part | 15. brand name designer |
| 7. time in the future | 16. slang word for male genitalia |
| 8. something you prize in your yard | 17. another slang word for male genitalia |
| 9. random word in French | 18. toubab or nassrani |
| | 19. multiple of ten under one hundred |

The Fall from the Golden Age

Treatise on Civilization and Empire, Chapter 4 by Oberstürmbahnführer Udo Krautmeister. Translated from the original German by Karl Adam

In the twenty-first century of the Christian era, the Imperium Pax Corpus Voluntarius Mauritanium comprehended the severest part of the earth, and the most abject portion of mankind. The frontiers of this extensive empire were guarded by ancient habit and unquenched desolation. The gentle but powerful influence of Corpus Voluntarius cemented the union of the provinces and their heretofore unruly tribes. Pax Voluntarius was their unprecedented contribution and therewith, the largely nomadic inhabitants settled and developed a great city, enjoyed and abused the advantages of wealth and luxury. The image of a free constitution was preserved with decent reverence: the Senatus Voluntarius Consuasor Concilium appeared to possess the sovereign authority, and temporarily devolved on the Directorex Maximus all the executive powers of government in times of emergency. It is the design of this chapter, to describe the prosperous condition of their empire; and afterwards, from the death of Directorex Marcus Obicus, to deduce the most important circumstances of its decline and fall; a revolution which will ever be remembered, and is still felt by the nations of the earth.

The rise of every known civilization is the result of extraordinary creative responses to physical and social challenges; to this end Finis Africae was certainly no exception. The chronic plagues, droughts, famines and calamity had served well the noble tribes of the Novo Colonia Chinguettia to solidify the sweet ether of civilization in the primal heart of the barbarian. As a single potent seed can alight upon a fertile loam and create bounty, the arrival of the Corpus Voluntarius fomented a glorious civilization of enlightenment, progress and pragmatism.

The few, yet elite, Legionnaires of Pax Corpus Voluntarius had reached a high degree of professionalism and ef-

ficacy at the turn of the millennium. Most feared and rightly so, Legio Bestus '0III – '0V brought a sense of purpose and dignity formerly missing from their previous comrades (Legio Retardo). In this new age, indeed the Golden Age of Imperium Pax Corpus Voluntarius Mauritanium, the rhythmic step and tread of legionnaire Tevas and Chacos marching over the paved roads, kept pace with the hoes and scythes of their subjugated, yet empowered peoples. These sunscreen greaved legionnaires were led by the banner of the age, a symbol of ancient empire and power, a golden eagle, wings spread, grasping in one clawed fist, moringa, the other, a SPA form.

Beginning with the consolidation of power within the Senatus Voluntarius Consuasor Concilium and self-crowning of Katerimus Klementius to both Pontifex Maximus and Princeps Imperator Caesar Augustus Gaius Octavius during the First Beard and Turban War of the Republic, and continuing on with the peaceful transfer of power to Marcus Obicus, a Golden Age of Corpus Voluntarius under Legio

Bestus '0III-'0V created a thriving and viable empire-state. The two (for it is of them that we are now speaking) governed the empire for six years, with the same invariable spirit of wisdom and virtue. Their united reigns are possibly the only period of history in which the happiness of a great people was the sole object of government. Actuated by these motives, and apprehensive of disturbing the repose of a recently settled empire, Katerimus surprised the world by an edict which was not unworthy of a statesman or a philosopher. She extended to all the inhabitants of the empire the benefits of a free and equal toleration; and the only hardship which she inflicted on the Christians was to deprive them of the power of tormenting their fellow-subjects, whom they stigmatized with the odious titles of idolaters and heretics. In dealing with the dissident Salifist Group for Bestiality and Incest, through her tribute of internet porn (and perhaps it is no more than the boast of pornography), her gentle hand was able to eradicate from the human mind the latent and deadly principle of fanaticism.

It is scarcely possible that the eyes of contemporaries should discover in the public felicity the latent causes of



decay and corruption. This long peace, and the uniform government of the two Caesars, introduced a slow and secret poison into the vitals of the empire. The minds of men were gradually reduced to the same level, the fire of genius was extinguished, and even the military spirit evaporated. The once stolid warriors of Legio Bestus '0III-'0V, grim-eyed harbingers of conquest, order and NGO funding, were no longer concerned with the expansion of the Empire after years of plunder and Biskrem. Indeed as an anonymous legionnaire of this celebrated legion inscribed in the marble above his mausoleum, "Fuckus offio. I goingia homia am." A general lassitude crept into the Corpus Voluntarius, a lethargic sense of contentedness in the presence of greatness and success. It would prove to be terminal.

These factors were finally catalyzed in the private feud between the former and present Directorii, once the auguries of the age and paladins of noble ideals. Though the transfer of power to Marcus Obicus was bloodless and efforts were made to present all trappings of respect and civility, Katerimus become jealous of her successor's popularity and relative comfort. Her original efforts to expand Imperium Pax Corpus Voluntarius Mauritaniun further east necessitated her departure to Bamakum, a wild and lawless wasteland devoid of air conditioning. Katerimus was ambitious of fame; and as long as mankind shall continue to bestow more liberal applause on their destroyers than on their benefactors, the thirst of military glory will ever be the vice of the most exalted characters. Frustrated with her meager backwater conquests of Taodennium and Tessalitia, she re-assumed her imperial titles and turned her efforts back on her previous seat of power and admiration, Nouakchott, formerly Kateria.

The First Directorex War was characterized by the disciplined core of Legio Bestus '0III-'0V, aligned to their

respective Caesars, leading auxiliary units of canchildren and goat-chariots into battle. Devastation and plunder ruled from Rosso to Aioun, the land had become broken. Along the Senegalese frontier, the conflict was reduced to a bloody stalemate, while Obicus seized the initiative in the impasse to launch an epic campaign by his most zealous troops (The Nouakchott Brotherhood of the Fataya) by albino camel through the mountains of Algeria, advancing on Bamakum from the flank. Finally, at the barbary portals of Klementium Magnificia, formerly Bamakum, her recently conscripted mercenary



Senegalese lutteurs held and finally repulsed the daring attack. As the sun finally set on the First Directorex War, the omens of the future were to be read in the glinting of sweat off savage mercenary skin and their dangling medalions of a primitive age.

During the Second Directorex War, in contrast to the first, the capitals of Nouakchott and Klementium Magnificia practiced no restraint in the waging of total war. The once civilizing presence of Legio Bestus '0III-'0V had dissipated during the years of fat and ceeb, releasing the combatants from the fetters of civility and turning their brutal attention to archaic practices of bloodshed. A period of unprecedented savagery on an already wounded land realized the prophesied "Twilight of the Goats." In the end, Katericus' insertion of fifth column elements in the new Legio Lame-o '0IV-'0VI during the annual obinalian orgy of Legio Bestus '0III-'0V in the Territorium Badassia Louisia turned the

tides of war against Marcus Obicus. Laden with warm-milk nipped Nalgenes, the treacherous Legio Lame-o '0IV-'0VI was able to treacherously burn the barracks of the Gladius Obicus (Sword of Obicus or Marc's house) and definitively end an age with the assassination of Obicus by poisoned DVD. Historians have not yet definitively determined the identity of the assassin, but myth and legend point to someone close to Obicus, infiltrated into the palace by the Katericus-allied Tribe of Brian from Nigerium.

At the hour of midnight the Obican gate was silently opened, and the inhabitants of Nouakchott were awakened by the tremendous sound of the Malian trumpet. Legio Bestus '0II-'0V of the Golden Age, their strength in solidarity, had been broken and scattered by the corruption of success, their blindness to the excesses of their Caesars, and little boys. Forty-three years after the foundation of Nouakchott, once Kateria, the Imperial City, a flaming beacon of civilization in the stygian darkness of sav-

agery, which had subdued and civilized so considerable a part of mankind, was delivered to the licentious fury of the tribes of Bambara, Tuareg, Senoufo, Songhai, Dogon and Brian.

A warlike nation like Malium (later known as Katerium until the gladiator slave revolt of '0VII, see next chapter) without cities, letters, arts, or money, found some compensation for this savage state in the enjoyment of liberty. Their poverty secured their freedom, since our desires and our possessions are the strongest fetters of despotism. The possession and the enjoyment of property are the pledges which bind a civilized people to an improved country. The union of the Imperium Pax Corpus Voluntarius Mauretanium was dissolved; its genius was humbled in the dust; and armies of unknown barbarians, issuing from the burning regions of the East, had established their victorious reign over the fairest provinces of Africae.

HOT or NOT

Final Top 10

We've got the list and checked it twice. Who's Hot or Not?! Amazingly, the entire newsletter staff snagged the top six slots!! We knew we were hot, but damn we look good! Here's how the top contenders ranked...



J9
1st
119.4



Will
6th
25.6



Carl
2nd
116.2



Dana
7th
9.7



Audrey
3rd
114.8



Mark H
8th
9.1



Karl
4th
109.1



Angus
9th
8.7



Miriam
5th
105.3



Marc
10th
8.1

Healthy Hints

With Archie Wasserstein

Know Your FCI

"Archie, I really need to fart, but if I do I think I'll shit my pants!" If I had ten ougiyas for each time I heard that, I'd buy a Mercedes and drive to Cape Verde for the summer.

But let's get down to butt-biz, my friends. Basically what we're dealing with here is a low Fart Confidence Index, or FCI. Developed by NASA during a 19th century cholera outbreak, the FCI tells you whether you'll toot squeaky clean (score of 7 – 10) or erupt like a bottle of chocolate syrup under the wheel of a donkey cart (score of 2 or less).

Thanks to a grant from the Pampers Foundation, PCMOs worldwide will now provide FCI Readers upon request. An FCI Reader looks a lot like a tire pressure gauge and works in much the same way. Try to get one of the new ones, which are only two inches in diameter and thus hurt less upon insertion.

Sometimes I call this handy tool a Butt-rometer, because when the index starts to drop, it means a storm's a comin'! So know your Fart Confidence Index, my friends, and don't be afraid to cut the Laughing Cow!

DISCLAIMER: *PCV Archie Wasserstein did not attend most of his health training sessions, so use great discretion when implementing his advice.*

Picture of the month!



A couple Mauritanian volunteers make an impression on William Conquest of Bakel, Senegal. According to Conquest, it was not a completely distasteful experience.