

Going Places

UNIVERSITY OF OREGON MICRONESIA AND SOUTH PACIFIC PROGRAM

Teaching Assistants at Work in Micronesia and South Pacific

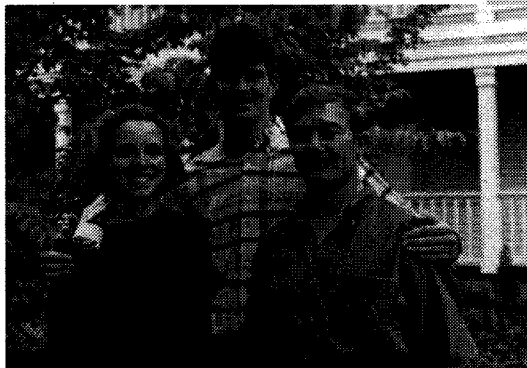
American Samoa

Jen Shaffer is a graduate student in the Environmental Studies Department at the UO. In June, she will begin collaborating with the Power Authority to design a public education campaign promoting a new energy efficiency building code. Jen will use her experience in environmental research to participate in the exploration of alternative energy and appropriate technology. She is looking forward to contributing to the awareness of environmental issues and how daily decisions impact the environment.

Under the auspices of the Coastal Management Program, **Ethan Taylor** will assist the Public Awareness Coordinator with an environmental survey and assessment. The results of the survey will be used to guide local conservation efforts. Ethan recently completed his first year as a graduate student in the Environmental Studies department at the UO. Prior to graduate school, Ethan was a Peace Corps volunteer in Panama

where he worked in a small rural village as an environmental educator.

John Black will be working with the Historic Preservation Office to implement a Geographic Information System. For the past year, he has served as a computer specialist for the Department of Planning, Public Policy, and Management, where he is pursuing a Master of Community and Regional Planning. John's experience overseas includes teaching history and English in Tokyo and traveling extensively.



Jen Shaffer, Ethan Taylor, John Black

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The Group



Mandel Hale
FROM THE DIRECTOR

Greetings! And please excuse our long absence from your mailbox. This large issue is the compilation of many stories that have been accumulating over the past 8 months, waiting for the next newsletter to be published. Due to a combination of reduced funding and increased responsibilities, the months kept slipping by without a newsletter being developed and printed. We hope you will enjoy the stories and articles for which you have been waiting!

Several things have been in the forefront of my mind over this past academic year. One of these is community sustainability: how can we assist communities everywhere to increase their levels of economic stability, environmental integrity, social equity, and cultural richness? The relentless onslaught of "western" consumerism, advertising, media images, and economics is both seductive and fraught with peril. And in some cases, it is so pervasive as to be nearly impossible to avoid.

Sustainability is not an issue for developing countries alone; my own state of Oregon faces the same issues as pressures mount to grow ever bigger and more productive in the traditional economic sense. Yet common sense tells me that nothing can continue to grow unabated; there will eventually be a collapse of these systems and high prices to be paid for short-sighted decisions we are making at this point in time. I have long been fascinated with small islands in part because they are semi-closed and somewhat isolated systems, on which it is possible to see quite clearly the relationships between cause and effect. It is also the case that many island communities are not far removed from

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TAS AT WORK *continued from page 1*

Kosrae

Kim Grover will be working with Commerce and Industry to assist in the promotion of the benefits of sustainable ecotourism development. Specifically, she and her counterpart will be assessing potential nature-based tourism development. Kim is a masters degree



Kim Grover, Jessica Cote, Kristin Bonner, Beth La Fleur

student in Anthropology at Oregon State University. Her experience with ecotourism was gained while working for an ecotour company in Colorado.

This year, the Kosrae Island Resource Management Program and Malem Municipality will receive assistance from **Jessica Cote** concerning coastal erosion and sedimentation. Jessica is working towards her masters degree in Ocean Engineering at Oregon State University, focusing on nearshore processes. By combining her marine resource management field experience and engineering knowledge, Jessica hopes to help the environmental planners of Kosrae to implement a proactive solution to slow the erosion of their coastline.

Kristin Bonner is a graduate student in Community and Regional Planning at the UO with a focus on training and community development. She will train employees of the Departments of Health Services and Commerce

and Industry in the use of computer applications. She has experience as a teacher and volunteer coordinator. Kristin enjoys working in organizations and communities to transfer planning skills that will assist people to meet their established goals.

Beth La Fleur will be traveling to Kosrae to assist in the implementation of a community monitoring strategy for the Utwe-Walung Marine Park. Beth is a 2nd year graduate student in Community and Regional Planning with a focus in environmental planning. Prior to her graduate study, Beth worked as a conservation assistant for the Pacific Rivers Council in Eugene, Oregon, where she gained a deep interest in water resource planning and community involvement.

Marshall Islands

Dan Miller is a masters degree student in the Community and Regional Planning Program at the UO. His interests are in outdoor recreation and sustainable tourism planning. This June, Dan will be assisting the Jaluit Atoll Development Association to develop an ecotourism marketing plan. Additionally, he will be assisting the



Dan Miller, Arnim Fischer

Marshall Islands Environmental Protection Agency to designate an aquaculture Conservation Area. His past work experience includes resource management and recreation planning.

The College of the Marshall Islands will be hosting returning Technical Assistant **Arnim Fischer** to help improve their computerized student database. The administrative staff would like to evaluate the progress of students, identify problem areas, and increase student retention. A Fulbright scholar from Germany, Arnim is a graduate student in Landscape Architecture at the UO. He has a background in database management and statistical analysis. In 1995, Arnim assisted the Kosrae Island Resource Management Program with a solid waste management strategy.

Northern Marianas

This September, **Todd Sigaty** will be assisting the Land and Natural Resources Division with the management of protected areas on Rota. Specifically, he will help with the implementation of the Sabana Habitat Conservation Plan. Todd has a background in international environmental law and conservation. He was previously the judicial clerk for the Chief Justice of American Samoa; as part of his work he helped establish the National Park of American Samoa. He is currently



Todd Sigaty, Pam Kylstra, Chuck Schonder

completing a masters degree in International Studies at the UO.

Pam Kylstra will be assisting the Division of Environmental Quality with their ongoing marine monitoring project. She hopes to obtain a masters degree in Marine Resources Management at Oregon State University. Her area of interest is habitat restoration and community involvement stemming from her fascination with coastal and near-shore environments.

Chuck Schonder will travel to Saipan to help Coastal Resources Management complete a watershed atlas using Geographic Information Systems technology. Chuck is also currently pursuing a masters degree in Marine Resource Management at Oregon State University. He is particularly interested in applying new technology to coastal management decision processes in the dynamic setting of island environments.

Palau

Chantel Seely will be assisting Palau Community College with a program assessment of their ten-year educational plan. She holds a Master of Science in Arts Management, with a concentration in community arts, from the UO. Chantel has professional experience in evaluating community needs, and has traveled extensively.

Rebecca Sweatman will also be working at Palau Community College. Rebecca and her Palauan counterpart



Chandel Seely, Matt Van Ess, Rebecca Sweatman, Scott Fitzpatrick

will be facilitating software training for several of the faculty and staff. She gained extensive computer experience working at a Eugene-based software company after receiving a degree in communications and writing. Rebecca has a special interest in dancing and she is looking forward to seeing and learning about Micronesian dances.

Returning Technical Assistant **Matt Van Ess** will be working with the Bureau of Lands & Surveys. After completing a technical assistance project with the American Samoa Coastal Management Program last December he has become increasingly aware of the unique opportunities available in island coastal management. Matt is a graduate student in Community and Regional Planning with an emphasis on coastal issues. He is

particularly interested in the role of Geographic Information Systems technology as a way of linking education and informed policy development with a healthy environment and economy.

For the past several years **Scott Fitzgerald** has been involved in a number of archaeological projects in the Caribbean, England, and the United States. He is looking forward to assisting the Division of Cultural Affairs with the preparation of a long-range strategic historic preservation plan for Palau. Scott is currently a doctoral student in Anthropology at the UO. His main interests lie in analyzing prehistoric ceramics, migration and settlement patterns of island voyagers, and theoretical perspectives dealing with cultural evolution.



Charles Roberts, Christine Mitchell, Keith McDade

Pohnpei

Charles Roberts, an Architecture and Community and Regional Planning graduate student at the UO, will be assisting the Historic Preservation Office to document their third canoe-building project for Pohnpei State. In July, Kapingamarangi villagers will build a voyaging canoe on Pohnpei. Charles holds associate and undergraduate degrees in photography and architecture. Prior to attending graduate school, he worked as a shipwright constructing a variety of boats, from small 14-foot dingies to large yachts.

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Pohnpei Daydreams

Jeffrey Jane Knoche

During the summer of 1996, I spent three months assisting the Office of Historic Preservation on Pohnpei,, by designing and building displays for the Nahnschlang Maritime Center. While I was there, I kept a running list of the people and events that defined my journey, both personal and professional, and which provide the spark for stories to share now that I have returned. The following is just a sampling of the memories that I treasure when thinking of an island now so far away.

The smells and colors of mwarmwars:

Made of flowers, leaves and yarn. Wearing them at many celebrations. Learning from my counterparts how to make them, and keeping a carefully dried collection of them on the living room wall.

The stars:

Seeing the Southern Cross for the first time. Watching the stars and planets move across the sky and understanding for myself how navigators charted courses to distant islands using the night sky.

The living stars of the sea—cobalt blue starfish and tiny glowing sea creatures that sparkled as they washed up on the coral beach. Swimming with these stars and feeling magical when they stuck to my legs and arms.

The children:

Enthusiastic and open—eager to share a mango or teach me a new word. Happily taking care of each other and helping their parents with housework by the age of eight to ten, and carrying the scars of skin diseases and/or minor accidents which were the badges of growing up in the tropics.

Learning about local foods:

Six different recipes, demonstrated by our Pohnpeian neighbor, for breadfruit from the giant tree outside of our apartment. Tasting fish fresh from the boat, discovering which reef fish makes the best sashimi, and which are taboo for different clans.

At feasts, long tables overflowing with

huge platters were the best places for sampling new dishes. One feast, featuring roasted dogs, one male and one female, reminded me of my own pets back in Oregon.

An occasional craving for American foods meant waiting for the ship to come in with a brief abundance of imported produce, cheese, butter and wine. Getting by on Budweiser, rice and dusty cans of spaghetti sauce in between.

The dogs of Pohnpei:

A short-haired set of mutts, lean and often mean. Sometimes a recognizable streak of Labrador retriever, Doberman or Welsh corgi. A set of puppies found nursing on an island under an overturned boat. The neighbors adopted one and promptly turned it over to me to care for, but she died after playing with a poisonous toad.

The most incredible day:

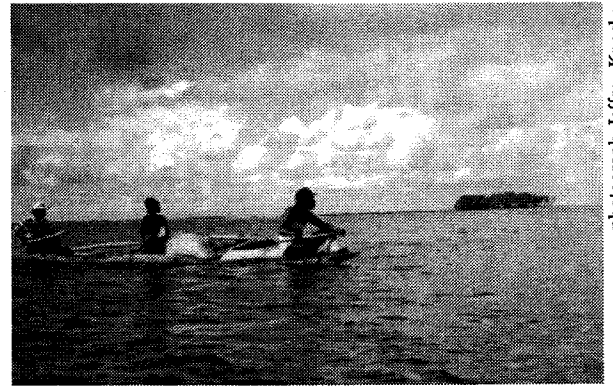
Climbing through mountainous jungle to a place where a giant breadfruit tree trunk had been transformed into a monstrous canoe. Falling on muddy rocks, wondering how I had ended up in a world that most people only know through the cameras of National Geographic.

Waiting for the canoe hull to be pulled down through the jungle by the village's men, their friends, and clan. Listening to a traditional chant that directs the ropes to be pulled in unison. A long, labor-intensive process with many stops as ropes broke and paths were cleared, producing not frustration but chances to rest and laugh and anticipate the party waiting back in the village.

A feast in honor of the god who protects canoes, Nahnschlang, at the end of the day. Eight sakau stones pounded in unison invited all in the area to join in, and guaranteed that there was plenty of the special liquid to be distributed to the extended community.

Being a novelty:

Comparing cultures with my



photograph: Jeffrey Knoche

counterparts and my supervisor. Knowing that people were laughing at my tallness, my Americanness, my clumsiness in formal settings, and learning to laugh at myself.

Knowing that my skills in painting murals were appreciated by the people who shyly watched through the windows as well as those who came into the Maritime Center to smile and name the fish that I had painted.

Getting lots of attention and offers of help while using hammers and saws to build display walls and pedestals. Couldn't I find a man to do that for me?

Playing a Native American wooden flute at an evening picnic on a tiny island. Being honored weeks later when one of the chiefs told me he wished that he had a tape of my music so he could listen again and again.

The critters:

Termites, toads and geckos. All three of these came together in my apartment one night as the termites swarmed, the geckos feasted up high, and the toads were invited inside as I admired their enthusiasm for picking off the insects near the floor.

Lots of lizards, including a Pohnpeian crocodile handy for casting black magic spells.

My friends:

New and different people from Pohnpei, Australia, Japan, and the US. Some of us passed through a lifetime in three months, some may have already forgotten. I know that I will never forget the lessons that I learned about nature, tradition, family, and culture in my one summer in Pohnpei. And I will always be thankful to all of the special people who took the time to share their world with a funny American woman from the University of Oregon.

Counterpart Profile—John Waayan

Blending Land Use Planning and Tradition In Yap

Jason Kruckeberg

Building codes, land use surveys, site planning and design; these activities bring up images of architects, engineers, and planners. John Waayan is a little of each. Waayan is the principal planner for the Yap State Office of Planning and Budget (OPB) and his job duties extend to most of the planning projects conducted by the Yap State Government.

From August through October of 1996, Waayan worked with Jason Kruckeberg, a technical assistant from the University of Oregon Micronesia and South Pacific Program (MSPP) to create a building code for Yap. Waayan has worked with the MSPP twice before, acting as a counterpart for technical assistant Larry Vasquez on a land use surveying and mapping project for the Colonia area, and with Vasquez and Ned White on a planning and design project for the proposed Colonia Center. Each of the three projects Waayan and the MSPP have worked on has a common thread: they are all attempts to introduce land use planning measures to Yap.

John Waayan grew up in Maap Municipality and became interested in drafting and architecture in high school. In 1984, he went to college in Texas, where he studied and worked for six years, earning a degree in architecture. Waayan returned to Yap in 1990 and, after a six month position as a building inspector, accepted a job as planner with the OPB. In addition to managing planning projects, Waayan writes

“One of the biggest issues for land use planning in Yap is that often nobody agrees on the boundaries of each others’ land.”

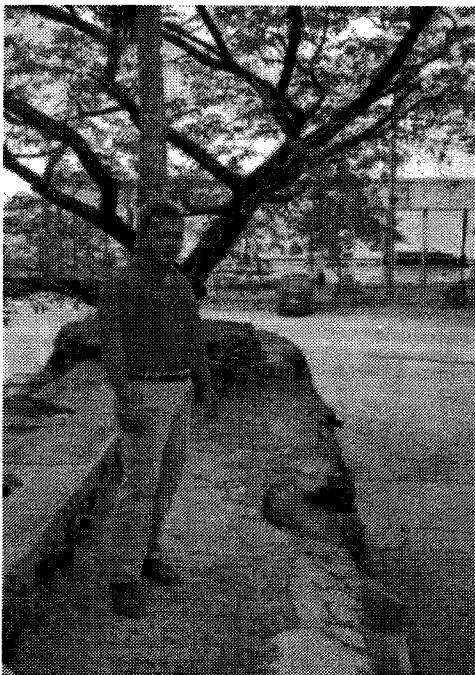
specifications for buildings, performs field inspections, and is one of the operators of the new Disaster Control PEACESAT radio terminal. As his job has expanded to include more responsibilities, Waayan has become increasingly interested in land use planning issues.

Land use planning in Yap is a fairly new concept. The idea of creating certain zones to identify the most appropriate land use for different parcels of land goes against Yapese traditions of private property. Additionally, Yap has a very complicated land ownership and tenure system which makes it challenging to establish land use planning measures. Land is passed down through the family for generations and it is often very difficult to figure out who owns what. As Waayan says, “One of the biggest issues for land use planning in Yap is that often nobody agrees on the boundaries of each others’ land.”

The vast majority of the land area of

Yap State is held in private ownership. All land projects must be cleared through the Council of Pilung (for Yap Proper) or the Council of Tamol (for the outer islands) before they can proceed. The councils are made up of the chiefs of each municipality. For all planning projects, Waayan talks to the chief of the municipality where the project is taking place. The chief then is responsible for informing the residents about the proposed project. Waayan and the OPB are not trying to replace the traditional system; they are trying to enhance it with some modern land use planning tools. “Yap has a long history of oral culture and tradition and our subsistence lifestyle is very strong. We aren’t going to change that. We do need to plan for development though, because development is changing Yap in many ways.”

Regarding Yap’s next steps in land use planning, Waayan hopes to improve mapping and information for all of government-owned land on Yap proper. Once this is completed, he will attempt to move these ideas into the private holdings, most likely beginning with a public education program to promote planning. Waayan also hopes to implement the newly drafted building code to ensure that new buildings are sited and built according to standards. Regarding the building code, and all planning projects on Yap, Waayan feels that, “It’s best to start slow, put something in place, and then change it over time as the situation changes.” Using this philosophy, Yap will be able to plan for development, while at the same time retain the culture and traditions that make it so unique.



Photograph: Jason Kruckeberg

John Waayan

TAs continued from page three

Keith McDade will be working with the FSM Historic Preservation Office to develop a multi-year historic preservation plan. Currently, Keith is pursuing a masters degree in Community and Regional Planning. As part of his studies, he is completing a master plan for the City of Canby Parks and Recreation in Oregon. Keith has worked with Peace Corps as a Volunteer in West Africa and looks forward to spending time in Micronesia.

Christine Mitchell will be working with the staff of The Nature Conservancy to research ways to provide long-term sustainable funding for ongoing government and conservation activities. Christine has recently received her masters degree in Environmental Studies from the UO. She focused her studies on the impacts of development on island nation states. She is interested in the way organizations and individuals work together to protect the unique island ecosystems.

Western Samoa

Aranzazu Lascurain will be the first MSPP Technical Assistant to work on a three-month project in Western Samoa. She will assist the South Pacific Regional Environment Program to develop individualized environmental education curricula for the islands of the South Pacific. Aranzazu has professional experience working for governmental agencies on public education and

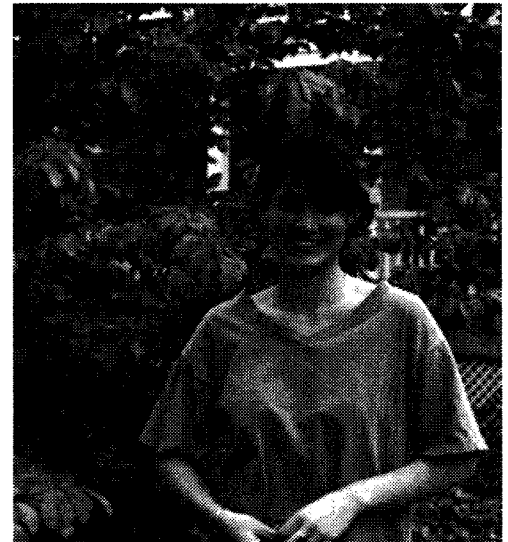


Aranzazu Lascurain

outreach. She recently received a masters degree in Environmental Studies from the UO.

Yap

Denise Walters will be helping the staff at the Yap Community Action Program to increase their grant writing skills and expand their ability to research funding possibilities. Denise is presently pursuing dual masters degrees at the UO. Her primary degree will be in Planning, Public Policy and Management, and the second degree will be in International Studies. She is interested in environmental policy and environmental justice issues.



Denise Walters

Pohnpei State Election Office To Be Automated

Terri Harding, MSPP staff member

Things are changing at the Pohnpei State Election Office. In order to improve the management of voter registration information, a computer database has been created through a joint effort between the election office and the University of Oregon's Micronesia and South Pacific Program.

The project began in 1996, when Election Officer John Thomas sought out the support of Governor Del S. Pangelinan. Once the governor approved the project, Thomas requested funding from the state legislature and then applied for technical assistance from the University of Oregon. According to Thomas, the objectives of automating the election data are 1) to illuminate problems of duplicate voting and sort out double names, 2) to keep records up to date, and 3) to speed up the election process.

The Micronesia and South Pacific Program (MSPP) has been providing assistance to state agencies on Pohnpei since 1990. The main objectives of the MSPP are to transfer skills, encourage

cross-cultural collaboration, and promote sustainable island development. Eldon Haines was sent to work with Thomas from June through September, 1996. Together, Thomas and Haines developed the voter registry database.

Thomas sees the database as part of a larger phenomenon of bringing Pohnpei into the information age. He is currently off-island on educational leave, participating in a one-year computer training certification program at Lane Community College in Eugene, Oregon, where he continues to receive the support of MSPP Director Maradel Gale and Program Manager Nancy Peyron. "They have been very hospitable. The program is committed to helping people and the islands," Thomas commented.

Meanwhile, the Election Officers is busy inputting names and information into the database in order to be ready for the next general election in 1999. The process should run smoothly, according to Thomas. The database automatically keeps track of each voter's polling

Mejit's Women's Group: Moving Toward the Future With Tradition

Lynn Rosentrater

Long ago an *irooj*, or high chief, went to the island of Mejit in the Marshall Islands. In order to welcome him, the women of the island worked together to prepare a huge feast. They cooked fish, breadfruit, and taro, they wove baskets, leis, and head wreaths, and they decorated their village with flowers and palm fronds. It was the first welcoming ceremony on Mejit and the birth of the island's first women's group.

Today the women of Mejit are preserving Marshallese custom by continuing to welcome visitors according to traditional ways. Their organization is called *AKIM, Ainikien Kora In Mejit* which means the voice of women on Mejit. When I came to Mejit to do field work for my TA project last summer, I was welcomed with the same warmth and generosity shown to that *irooj* so long ago.

Returning from a long day of work, I approached the island's airport terminal where our feast was to be held; ladies

lined the path to the entrance welcoming me with singing and laughter. As I walked past, they decorated me with fragrant leis and wreaths. Inside, palm fronds served as our mats, and baskets overflowing with local foods were waiting to be received.

Our feast began with song and a prayer followed by some words of welcome from the group's vice president, Winnie Emmius. We toasted our celebration with coconut milk and then, we ate. My basket was filled with delicious local foods: tuna and turtle caught off the island's reef, sashimi and chicken, breadfruit prepared in five different ways, pumpkin in coconut milk, cooked banana and papaya, bread, and several *ni*, or green coconuts, to wash it all down.

We ate to our heart's content before the singing resumed. A guitar and ukulele provided the rhythm while the ladies treated me to six Marshallese songs. In between songs there were speeches and much laughter, and before our feast was over, I sang my own song for the group (*Wan Pinana*, a Marshallese children's song) and danced *ebin kabaj* (the heron's dance) with local councilwoman Natty Tubay.

Our celebration ended well after dark. We packed up our leftovers and cleaned up our mats, each going our separate way under the light of a full moon, humming to ourselves and remembering the highlights of the evening.

At a time when so much development is taking place in the Marshall Islands it is nice to see such a conscious effort to honor Marshallese custom. It is inevitable that new technology and industry will come to the outer islands, but as *AKIM* has demonstrated, it need not be at the expense of tradition.

Where are they now?

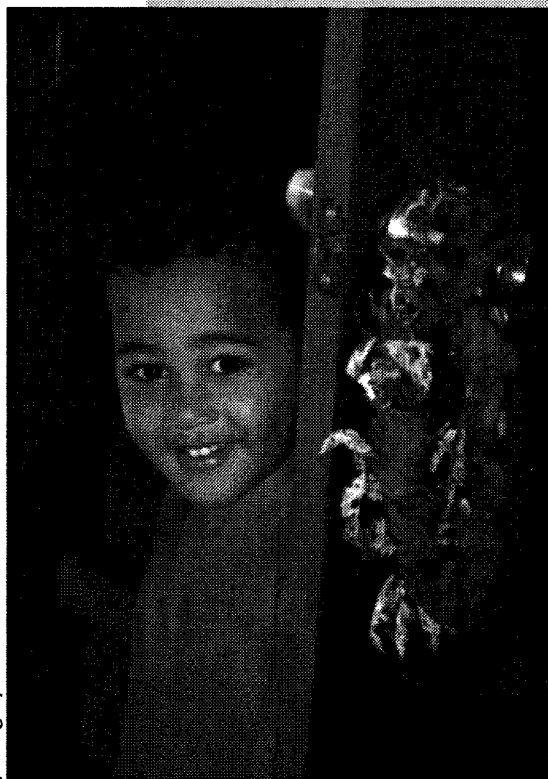
MSPP Director Maradel Gale is sad to report the death of one of the first technical assistants with the program, **Michael Farber**. Mike served on Pohnpei in 1990, working to design a can recycling system for the island. The introduction of the large wire baskets for can collection was part of Mike's project. He also began researching alternate sites for the solid waste landfill. Mike received his masters degree in Urban Planning from the UO, and was working as a housing development director with a firm in Oakland, California, which provides housing and jobs for homeless and disabled people. Mike died from cancer at the age of 35. His positive contributions and creative ideas will be missed.

ELECTION *continued from page six*

location, address, and whether they have voted. It generates signature lists for the workers at each polling place. That way, the printouts will correctly indicate where the person is voting, and eliminate problems with duplication.

For example, the printout might say, "voting by absentee" or "voting on Hawaii." This message instructs a poll worker to prohibit those persons from voting at the polls. Regularly registered voters will vote at their assigned location and sign their name, ensuring only one ballot is cast for each registered voter.

Eventually, all new voter registration will be done by computer. The database will require continual updating and maintenance, which the staff are now trained to do. "It is a very exciting project," said Thomas. "And it helps us fulfill our responsibility to Pohnpeians more effectively."



photograph: Clint Chiaorini

FROM THE DIRECTOR *continued from page one*

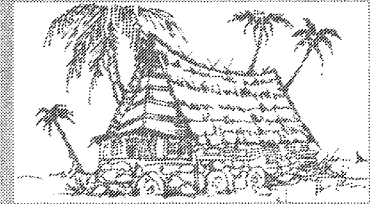
their recent status as self-sufficient and sustainable. I believe there is much we can learn from small island states which may be applicable to the larger "western" states. One of my charges to the technical assistants is to look for and learn from the traditions of the islands. What lessons can we learn from these cultures which predated the industrial revolution? How can this learning be modified to fit into the present quest for increased self-sufficiency and sustainability?

The second issue that has been central to my thinking has to do with the workplace environment in the Pacific islands. The systems introduced, and in some cases imposed by colonial nations, do not "fit" the traditional lifestyles of most islanders. This cultural disparity causes, I believe, the dissonance between what is "expected" of government and private sector workers and what is the reality. Perhaps the issue will be resolved by employment cutbacks engendered by reductions in outside funding. The trend is not encouraging, however, given decisions to reduce the work week from five to four days in order to

accommodate diminished budgets. Such actions avoid the need to take more proactive steps in staff reductions, reorganization, and retraining, and seem to be leading to a scenario of two- or three-day work weeks in the future. As agencies and offices face the future, it might be worthwhile for them to re-vision the type of workplace that would more closely accommodate the cultural background of the people their organization employs and is meant to serve. What are the cultural realities that should be recognized in the workplace, and how can they be incorporated while still meeting the needs of the organization? An excellent book that addresses the many cultural variables that affect the workplace was published in 1993 by Gulf Publishing Co., entitled *Transcultural Leadership: Empowering the Diverse Workforce*, by George Simon, Carmen Vázquez, and Philip Harris.

Good health and best wishes to you until I write again.

GOING PLACES



This edition of Going Places was edited by Maradel Gale, MSPP director. Articles by Terry Harding, Maradel Gale, Jeffrey Jane Knoche, Jason Kruckeberg, and Lynn Rosentrater. Layout by Barbara Oppliger and George Beltran.

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<http://darkwing.uoregon.edu/~mspp/>

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The Micronesia and South Pacific Program was established in 1988 at the University of Oregon to assist with the development of sustainable communities in the Pacific islands. The university affiliation faculty development program links the University of Oregon with the University of the South Pacific and the College of Micronesia-PSM, Palau Community College, and the College of the Marshall Islands. The technical assistance program transfers technical skills to counterparts in public agencies and nonprofit organizations in American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the North Marianas, the Republic of Palau, the Federated States of Micronesia and the Republic of the Marshall Islands. A library development program works with public and school libraries throughout Micronesia.

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The Micronesia and South Pacific Program follows the letter and spirit of all equal-opportunity, civil-rights, and accessibility laws.