

Jamaican memories and, 'No problem'

by Ken Chamlee

I was thirty-five feet below the surface of the Caribbean and my mask was leaking rapidly. Seawater was up to the bridge of my nose and it was beginning to sting my eyes. I could either close them and swim blind, and risk scraping my stomach or legs on fire coral, or I could clear my mask. That would be no problem for the accomplished scuba diver, but for the novice on his first dive, it was a tense moment.

The mask had been giving me trouble all week, leaking around my nose where the moustache hairs were not shaved closely enough. But that had been while snorkeling, and it was easy enough to pop to the surface, empty the mask, and keep going. Here, nearly ten meters down and breathing through a regulator, I could not shoot to the surface. Four other divers were waiting on me, paddling in a slow vertical hover.

I closed my eyes and took several long, even breaths. When I looked up, the dive instructor was waiting patiently right in front of me. He repeated the procedure for clearing the mask. He put the heel of his right hand on the tip of his mask's face, tilted his head toward the surface, and blew sharply through his nose. With a shrug that said "What could be easier?" he motioned for me to try it. I was wishing I had practiced this at the deep end of the Brevard College pool a week earlier when I had the chance.

I turned my head toward the blue light above, cracked the lower seal of the mask with my thumbs, and blew through my nose. Immediately my mask filled to three-quarters full and the salt water stung by eyes sharply. The instructor shook his head, something he didn't need to do, and demonstrated the process again.

I didn't wait; I tilted my head, used the heel of my hand, and blew so hard I was momentarily dizzy. When I opened my eyes, my mask was clear.

"OK?" he signalled.

"OK," I gestured in reply.

It had all taken less than two minutes. The five of us then began a slow-motion swim through the reef formations looking

at the huge, antler-like spreads of elkhorn coral and at occasional bright blue fish. A large barracuda swam by us and then circled back for another pass. Visibility was 100-150 feet, blue-filtered light easily reaching the bottom where we swam. This was the way to learn how to scuba dive.

That was Thursday morning of spring break week, and the highlight for me of the Marine Biology Field Trip to Jamaica. Led by Dr. Bill Brower, our group of six students and four adults spent a summer-like week at the Hofstra University Marine Laboratory learning first-hand about coral reef zonation and the immense variety of sea life that a coral reef supports. We snorkeled on several prime sites, including large clusters of staghorn and elkhorn coral, turtle grass beds, and an ocean-level cave filled with fruit bats.

Located on Priory Bay near Ocho Rios, the marine lab is the ultimate extension campus. A resident naturalist gives lectures on the reefs, the fish, and the nearby mangrove swamps. The dormitory and cafeteria facilities are owned and operated exclusively by Jamaicans.

Only a small portion of our time was spent in the classroom, however, since there were several afternoon field trips and generous free time. Our field trips included excursions to the open markets in Ocho Rios (straw goods, clothing and carvings sold on the bargaining system), a mangrove swamp where we walked through knee-deep organic muck, Green Grotto Cave (a limestone cavern with an underground lake), Dunn's River Falls (a fresh water cascade that one hikes up for 600 feet, beginning at the beach), Drax Plantation (a beautiful, isolated beach at the edge of a coconut plantation), and Shaw Botanical Gardens (an attractively landscaped estate with immense banyan trees and a variety of exotic flowers).

All in all, it was an exciting and educational way to spend spring break. Despite a few bouts with sunburn and Jamaican Crud, everyone seemed to have fun. The food, weather, and the company were all "no problem, mon, no problem."



Ken Chamlee in Jamaica over spring break. (Ken Chamlee photo)

BC students learn there is a difference

by Mark Brom and Steve Reich

Knowledge of tropical fish and coral reef formations was not all that was learned during Brevard's marine biology class trip to Jamaica over Spring Break. Dr. Bill Brower led the class expedition on many field trips which enabled the group to gain a sense of appreciation for America.

Jamaica is a poor country. The people don't drive beat up old cars or have only black and white television—an American view of poverty. These people have none of these things at all. They see us as the Ewings of Dallas and the Carringtons of Dynasty. Although they are poor, they are rich in spirit. They appreciate the things we have here in America, perhaps even more than we do ourselves. "I want to go to America someday, man"—is not an uncommon remark heard in the markets of

Ocho Rios.

During the group's travels throughout Jamaica, they noticed more obvious differences between the island and America. The farmland is rather limited, and the cattle were extremely lean in comparison to American cattle.

The beaches in Jamaica are neglected and not as clean as most beaches found in America, showing a great contrast in the glossy brochures that only give a limited view of what the country is really like. Even though this is the case, the beach areas are for the most part beautiful—having coconut trees and various plant life.

Basically, the group noticed that the standards of living in America are not set standards throughout the world, and that the opportunities and abundance in America should not be taken for granted.

'Language includes us all'

by Buck Rowlee

Dr. Nancy Hardesty, independent scholar and freelance author, told the students, faculty, and guests at Brevard College on March 24 and 25, that language should be sexually inclusive.

This Spring's Staley Distinguished Christian Scholar, Hardesty explained the need to use language that puts women on an equal footing with men.

Hardesty, of Atlanta, Ga., received her bachelor's from Wheaton College. After completing this degree, she earned a Master's degree in journalism from Northwestern University, and continued to earn her doctorate in Church History from the University of Chicago. After receiving this degree, Hardesty became an assistant professor of American Church History at Emory University. While at Emory, she taught courses in the life and theology of John Wesley, women in history and ministry, revivalism, holiness, and mysticism.

Hardesty is a feminist and firmly stated

that, "language includes us all." She said it does not matter what sex we are because God loves every human being." Hardesty is on a quest for sexually inclusive language and she explained that 15 years ago McGraw Hill publishers began to say, "language must be more inclusive in the books we publish." She also said that the language and the content are becoming more equal, and women are not as "invisible" as they were before.

Hardesty also discussed the possibility of speaking about God without calling God "He," or "Father," and "The Creator Of Mankind," and terms that are exclusively masculine.

Hardesty has written several publications dealing with the role of women in the history of Christianity and in contemporary religion. She is the author of "All Were Meant to Be," and her most recent publication "Inclusive Language in the Church" (John Knox 1987), which deals with what she regards as one of the crucial issues in modern worship and theology.

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