

Costa Rica Mission Trip Opens Students' Eyes

BY JOHN MARTIN
STAFF WRITER

Beautiful, warm, sunny Costa Rica — most people visit for its fishing, beaches, mountains and food. Over Spring Break, however, some students, ministers and directors from the Episcopal campus ministries of UNC-Chapel Hill, UNC-Greensboro and UNC-Charlotte visited this Central American country for a different reason than sunning and funning.

The group did enjoy the mild weather, but its main objective was to share different cultural and religious experiences with Costa Rican natives. The Rev. Charles Hawes, an Episcopal chaplain at UNC-

Greensboro, and the Rev. Gary Brower, a chaplain at UNC-Charlotte, co-lead the mission trip and accompanied 21 students and campus ministry directors. The trip was divided into three different aspects.

The beginning of the trip in the capital city of San José offered the religious aspect. Visiting a Christian congregation's service in one of the poorest parts of San Juan allowed the students to witness another form of Christian life and worship besides the typical Sunday suit-and-tie services in which many Christian Americans take part. The simplicity and extreme devotion displayed in the service by the small congregation impressed and inspired the group, the participants said.

"We noticed the overwhelming devotion of Christians to help their people

through word and act, getting the means and the power from very small resources, with strong faith and hope for the outcome of their work," said Schmid.

The second aspect of the trip involved observing the Costa Rican educational experience and the country's society. The group traveled to different schools in nearby towns and cities. Having been brought up in a country with a superior educational system, the Americans couldn't believe the lack of space, classroom materials and equipment in the classrooms due to insufficient funds.

The students were very hospitable and enthusiastic about their visitors. "Of all the people we met in Costa Rica, the children made the biggest impression on me," explained Elizabeth Moore, a recent graduate of UNC-Greensboro. "It was obvious to me that the children and me wanted to get to know each other despite the language barrier."

The final aspect of this Costa Rican mission trip was witnessing firsthand the nature of Costa Rica and its environment. This was especially interesting because of the variety of climates and terrain which Costa Rica contains. While driving in two vans from the city of San José to a mountain national park and on through the flatlands along the Pacific Coast, the voyagers constantly had to navigate through potholes and over unpaved roads with missing or damaged signs. This also exposed the students to Costa Rica's diverse climates, where temperatures range from the high seventies in San José to the fifties in the mountains.

The group spent one day at La Selva, which is the Biological Research Station of the Center for Tropical Studies (OET). After receiving a brief introduction to the rain forests, the group trekked through one of Costa Rica's many rain forests. In addition, the group observed banana and coffee farms and other forms of tropical plants along the road.

As Schmid, who is also an international graduate student at UNC-CH, explained, "I have never seen such a great beauty of nature. Constantly I was amazed about a great view from the van or an animal or plant that we found right on our walk through the rain forest."

After spending most of the time on a strenuous quest learning about the life, the people and the nature of Costa Rica, everyone on the trip relaxed back in San José with some time for shopping and a little dancing in one of the local "disotecas." The participants said they felt very lucky to have learned about such a culture.

"The most important thing that I learned was that our culture needs to understand that just because a different place of the world doesn't have the same material possession as we do, it doesn't make this place inferior to ours," said Richard Helmer, a junior at UNC-Greensboro. "We have to learn to respect their dignity."

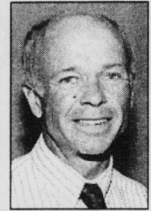
The group members said they planned to maintain a lasting relationship with the Costa Ricans. This mission trip not only provided the participants with an invaluable experience, but also enhanced planning for future trips, which is always the case with virgin exploration.

Council Pleased With Community Gym Project

BY GIBSON PATE
STAFF WRITER

The proposed Hargraves Gymnasium, which will serve as a multi-purpose community center for the town, came one step closer to becoming a reality Monday night.

The Chapel Hill Town Council, which has already allocated money for the gymnasium, voted to refer the project to the town manager, with construction slated to begin next spring.



Council member **JOE CAPOWSKI** said the Hargraves Gym project was needed and a good idea.

Town staff member J.B. Culpepper said tennis courts, a baseball field and an outdoor swimming center were also in the works.

Mary Reeb of the Planning Board said the design of the facility by architect George Smart was very well planned.

In order to build all of these new facilities, the town must apply for modification of the current park's special-use permit, which should not be difficult to obtain, said Town Attorney Ralph Karpinos.

Assistant Town Manager Sonna Loewenthal acted as the applicant for the town of Chapel Hill, requesting a special-

use permit to change Hargraves Park to a new Hargraves Gymnasium on North Roberson Street.

Council member Pat Evans said she was pleased with the support shown in favor of the gym. "I wish the town could fund more projects like this one."

Likewise, Joe Capowski agreed the discussion of details and the decision to forward plans for the Hargraves Gym were productive. "I think it's wonderful that we can do something like this," Capowski said. "We have the money for the project, so now it is time to take action."

Capowski said the cost would exceed the given budget, but the council would find ways to solve the problem.

Evans said the Hargraves Gym was something the council had dreamed of implementing for a long time. "The facility is in a good location, and the council has been talking about the project since I was first elected to the council," she said.

Capowski said there was a great need for the new gym. "This project has been talked about for a long time, it was just a matter of it bubbling up to be a main priority."

Residents of the Roberson area have looked forward to the building of the gym since the idea was first proposed three years ago. "I am very anxious to see this project get started," said Elaine Norwood, a Chapel Hill resident. "I want this project for the kids in the neighborhood," she said.

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WEDNESDAY
11 p.m. **DISSERTATION SUPPORT GROUP:** Handle the problems that block progress with specific strategies. University Counseling Center in Nash Hall. 962-2175. Reservations required.
12 p.m. **ZEN MEDITATION** in Room 210 of the Union. Meditation Instruction from 12 to 12:20. Meditation from 12:20 to 12:50. Everyone welcome.
3:30 p.m. **WOMENTORS AND PROTEGES**

are invited to a discussion of networking in Toy Lounge, Dey Hall.
4 p.m. **UNDERGRADUATE SOCIOLOGY CLUB** will meet in 220 Union.
DR. DAVID PRICE, professor of political science at Duke University, will present the 1996 Alfred I. Dupont Distinguished Leadership Lecture, "Ethics Beyond the Rulebook," at North Carolina State University in Room 2010 Biltmore Hall.

Campus Calendar
5:30 p.m. **STUDENT NIGHT:** Come to Newman Center for dinner followed by a Reconciliation Service.
8 p.m. An evening with **TOM DELUCA**, hypnotist, in Memorial Hall. Free.
ITEMS OF INTEREST
MSA Juma'a Salaat: Every Friday 1:10 p.m.
Student Union 208-209. Need more information? Call Mohammad Banawan 914-3036
SHARON LA WRENCE, two-time Emmy-nominated actress on the popular ABC-TV show "NYPD Blue," will return to her alma mater Sunday to give the 17th Reed Sarratt lecture at 7:15 in Memorial Hall.

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For the Record
In "Oh Say, Can't He Sit," (Mar. 19) the player's name should have been spelled Mahmoud Abdul-Rauf, and he makes \$31,707 per game. In "Parking Up the Wrong Tree," (Mar. 18), Katherine Kraft should have been identified as the president-elect of the Graduate and Professional Student Association. The Daily Tar Heel regrets these errors.

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