

# Paraguayan Dinner To Sponsor Local Peace Corps Volunteer

Residents of a Paraguayan community served by a local Peace Corps volunteer will benefit from a fund-raising dinner Tuesday, Dec. 18, from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. at the Brunswick County public assembly building at the government complex in Bolivia.

When Kathleen Somers, 22, of Long Beach graduated from N.C. State University last year, she had plans to use her English literature degree to become a writer. Since joining the Peace Corps in February, she has collected plenty of stories to tell of her stay at Tacuru Pyta, translated as Red Termite Hills, in a remote area of mountainous Paraguay.

Ms. Somers will remain in Paraguay over the Christmas holidays, but her stories will be shared with those who attend the dinner. Her mother, Ruth Somers of Long Beach, and Gloria Yount, her former English teacher at South Brunswick High School, will read excerpts from the more than 30 letters that Kathleen has written to her mother in Long Beach. They serve as a journal that Kathleen may one day compile into a book.

"We're trying to reach her former classmates, people who are interested in doing something at Christmas time for people who are in dire need," Mrs. Somers said.

Kathleen's sister, Candice, will be traveling to Paraguay over the Christmas holidays to take the donations collected in Brunswick County to the country. The money will be used to buy the basic necessities for people there. Since postage to ship something to the region is so expensive, a local support group is asking only for cash donations.

Kathleen is a 1985 graduate of South Brunswick High School. After joining the Peace Corps in February, she went through three months of training to learn about the Paraguayan culture and to study the Spanish language. She was also taught to install and repair water pumps.

"Her title is sanitation inspector," said Mrs. Somers. "Her role is to try to get basic sanitation for this region like toothbrushes and water pumps."

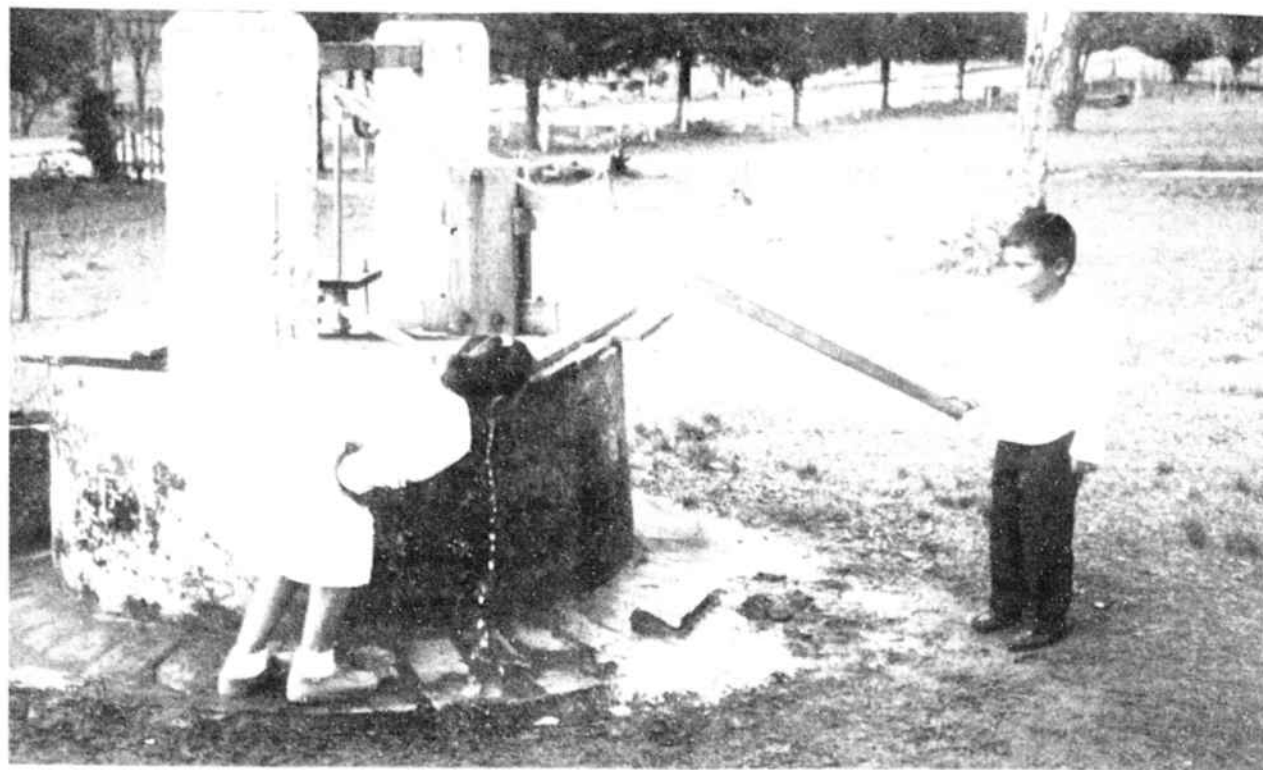
The group was sworn in on May 5 and dispersed to their assign-

ments. Kathleen was assigned to the "compo," or country, about 7 kilometers from the nearest English-speaking person. She quickly had to learn to speak Guaraní, an Indian tongue in the bilingual region.

"She was the first Peace Corps volunteer in that community," Mrs. Somers said. "They have no electricity and no phones. They have no leadership. Her job is to try to organize people to get things done."

She works closely with school children and has initiated a fluoride dental prevention program and vaccinations against diseases in the school. She also provided about 175 toothbrushes for the children, and her mother later sent an additional 170 more. Kathleen's dental program has since expanded to include a number of other schools in the region.

Paraguay is a landlocked country located in the heart of South America. An estimated three million natives live in the nation about the size of California. Its climates are in reverse to the United States. In December, temperatures can top 100 degrees.



TWO PARAGUAYAN school children operate the water pump Peace Corp volunteer Kathleen Somers built over a well in Tacuru Pyta, Paraguay.

Peace Corps workers receive a living allowance designed to help the volunteers purchase some materials.

The Paraguayan Christmas supper will be held to help provide

more funds to the region where Kathleen is working.

A \$5 donation will be accepted for the meal. Door prizes will also be given away at the dinner.

The dinner will consist of foods

typical of the diet of Paraguayans. Reservations can be made by calling Ruth Somers, 278-5971, or cash donations can be sent to 1608 N.E. Yacht Drive, Long Beach, N.C. 28465.

## County Responding To Needs

Area individuals and organizations are continuing to respond to area needs as part of the Volunteer and Information Center's Christmas program.

Executive Director Shirley Carroll said families have been "adopted" for a holiday meal and gifts by the Spanish Club, Interact and National Honor Society at South Brunswick High School, the DECA and Fellowship of Christian Athletes at West Brunswick High School; the Lee Langstons of Shallotte and Cora Frink of Supply; Marsh Links Harbour at Calabash; Town Creek Baptist Church Young Baptist Women at Leland; Mt. Carmel A.M.E. Church, Southport, and Ocean View United Methodist Church, Yaupon Beach.

Employees at the Brunswick County Government Center at Bolivia are collecting food and gifts, as is the National Vocational-Technical Honor Society at Brunswick Community College. Kathy Lewis and

fellow nurses at The Brunswick Hospital in Supply have adopted a special family.

In southwestern Brunswick County, Jimmy Simpson of Brierwood Estates and Maryn Hall of Carolina Shores are spearheading drives to collect like-new toys, games and other gifts.

As of Dec. 7, VIC had received \$1,594 for food certificates, but needs another \$1,406 to make sure

that every basket includes a hen or turkey certificate.

Other foods for the Christmas baskets will be collected by the Brunswick County Council on the Status of Women Dec. 15 outside grocery stores in Southport, Leland, Shallotte and Seaside.

Contributions may be sent to VIC, P.O. Box 333, Supply, NC 28462. For more information call VIC at 754-4766.

## CLUB BRIEFS

### Community To Light Candles

Residents of Carolina Shores, a subdivision in Calabash, will continue the Carolina Shores Garden Club tradition of lighting luminarias, traditional Mexican Christmas lanterns.

Each lantern consists of a paper bag with a lighted candle set inside in a base of sand. The lanterns are placed along walkways, drives and streetfronts by participating property owners.

This year the candles are to be lighted at approximately 4:45 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 15. The lighting will be followed by a party for property owners at the Carolina Shores Property Owners Association clubhouse.

The garden club also plans to judge Christmas decorations. Daytime judging will be Dec. 12, while night judging will be Thursday, Dec. 13, starting at 5 p.m.

### Deadline Approaching

The deadline is approaching for Holden Beach homes and yards to be decorated for the holidays in time for judging by the Holden Beach Beautification Committee.

Jane Steorts, chairman of the group's Yard of the Month committee, said judging of decorations will take place Saturday, Dec. 15, and prizes awarded.

## Union School Has Christmas Program

Union Primary School recently presented *The Littlest Christmas Tree*, a musical play for youngsters, to kick off the holiday season at school.

The Union Primary School Chorus performed at the PTO meeting Dec. 4. The chorus of third graders gave two performances Dec. 5 for the entire school.

Music teacher Susan Reeves directed the program.

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