



Experience the World

FALL 2002

Abroad . . . a most interesting place to learn

Published and paid for by the Office of International Programs

witnessing the Impact of Eco-Tourism

by Andrea Woodworth '02

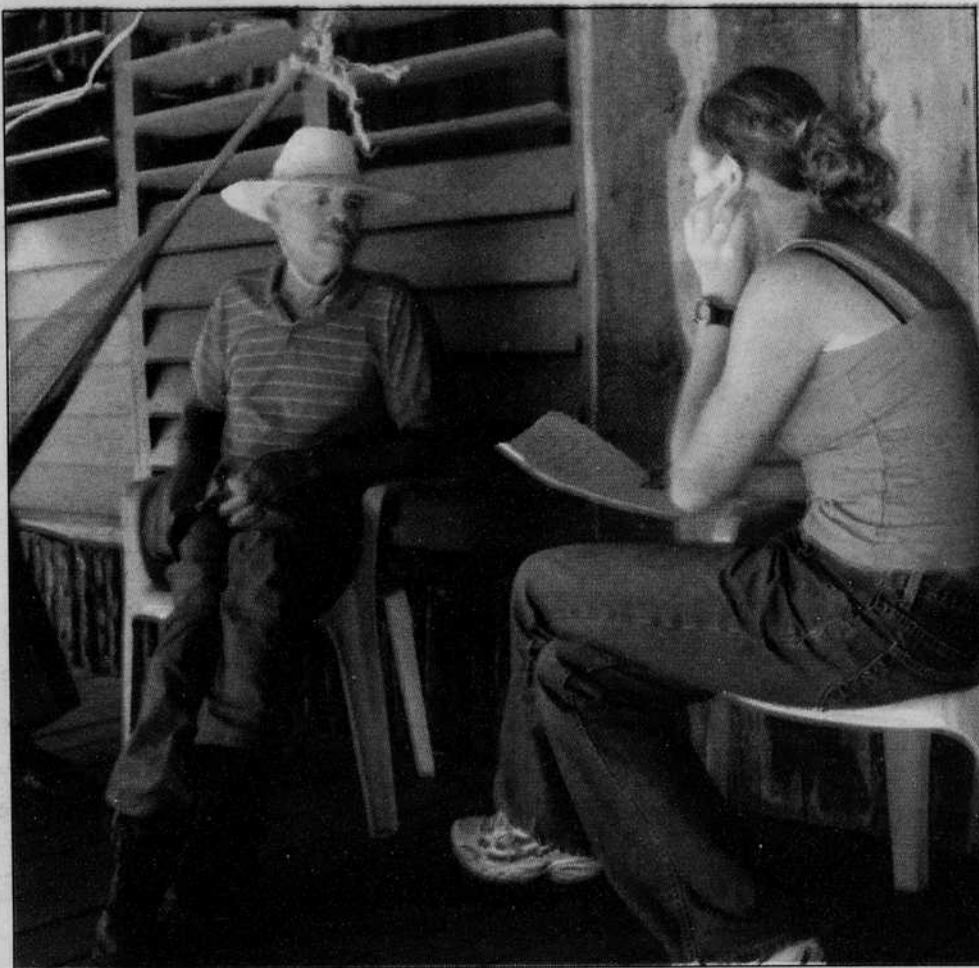
Belize. It's a place where the people are as warm and inviting as the climate, and the ecology and landscapes are as diverse and unique as the peoples and their cultures. For three months I was able to experience Belize's lands, cultures and environment by interning at the Belize Audubon Society (BAS) in Belize City.

BAS is an environmental conservation organization that was once associated with the Audubon Societies of the United States but is now fully independent, operating in conjunction with the Belizean government. One of the many dimensions of the organization is to manage protected areas throughout the country.

As the marketing and development intern, one of my tasks was to evaluate the aesthetics and function of each protected area, including a variety of national parks, national monuments, and nature reserves. I then made recommendations as to how the function and aesthetics could be improved upon. This provided an excellent opportunity to travel the country to see and experience many different ecosystems as well as the different indigenous groups that reside in various regions of the country.

As my internship progressed, I became more and more involved and personally interested in the role of eco-tourism and its impact on Belizean society, particularly in rural communities. This deep interest mostly arose out of the opportunity I was given to conduct market research in regard to eco-tourism in five villages that surround Crooked Tree Wildlife Sanctuary.

Crooked Tree is one of the seven protected areas managed by BAS. In this project, I spearheaded the conduct of the market survey, recruited volunteers to conduct the survey, and participated in its actual implementation. It was a wonderful learning experience that could not have been possible without great insight



Andrea (right) interviews a community member from Crooked Tree Village as part of the eco-tourism survey she managed.

and advice from my Belizean mentors.

Those Belizean mentors are emerging leaders in the world of environmental conservation. Among developing countries, Belize stands out as a truly unique island in a sea of resource consumption. These leaders have provided and will continue to provide for the world progressive environmental policy and foresight for the future.

I was able to draw an incredible amount of educational value from this short, three-month period.

This education did not just come from BAS's working environment or its wise leaders; I also greatly benefited from the kaleidoscope of languages, cultures and heritages of this small country. I will forever remember and treasure the Belizean hospitality that I enjoyed.

Andrea, a spring 2002 graduate of the UO, majored in journalism and environmental studies. She participated in an IE3 Global Internship in winter term 2002.

The Many Faces of the Mexican Healthcare System



The kids and Lucinda enjoy a back-to-school fiesta.

Last August I went to Morelia, Mexico, for three months to participate in a Global Graduates (now IE3) Internship. I had no idea what to expect and was not even sure what I would be doing once I arrived. Little did I know what an unforgettable summer it would turn out to be.

I began working with volunteer

paramedics at the local Red Cross. Speeding around Morelia via ambulance was a great way to see the city. We responded to calls of various natures from broken bones to serious illnesses. I witnessed stages of cancer, those suffering from kidney disease in need of dialysis, and the death of an elderly woman. Not only did I see the illnesses

first-hand; I also experienced very new surroundings, healthcare systems and ways of life.

Once I became more accustomed to my new environment, I began volunteering at a nursing home. Working with a doctor and nurses, I learned how to give injections and start an I.V. I took blood pressures daily and learned many medications and treatments

for the elderly. A great deal of responsibility was given to me, and I seemed to learn something new everyday. Interacting with the patients was an amazing experience and, because of them, my language skills improved greatly, as did my knowledge of Mexican culture.

I also became involved in an organization that helps children who work on the streets of Morelia. There are over three hundred children in the program. Scholarships are awarded to kids, allowing them to attend school instead of working. The organization also provides them with food and necessities to help support their families. I traveled with social workers and visited homes all over the city, while getting to know the children and their families.

Aside from the invaluable experiences I had while working, I also had a great time when I wasn't. I got to know the beautiful colonial city of Morelia, and traveled throughout Michoacan and its neighboring states, meeting amazing people, eating delicious foods, and making unforgettable memories.

I am grateful for the variety of experiences I had in Morelia because they gave me a chance to see the different sides of a healthcare system. My eyes were opened not only to the physical aspects of medicine, but also to its social and cultural aspects.

Lucinda, an exercise and movement science major with a pre-med focus, participated in a healthcare internship in Mexico in summer term 2001. She graduated in June 2002 and is planning to attend medical school at the Universidad Autonoma in Mexico.

Living with Yuri

by William Gardner

Before leaving for Ukraine, I had chosen to live with a local rather than in the student dormitory, even specifically requesting an elderly woman as landlord. I wanted someone who knew no English, could spin tales about wartime, and would have no qualms nagging and doting as if I was her own son.

I ended up boarding in an apartment, however, with an elderly man—a history professor from the university where I studied in Kiev. We shared a three-room apartment in one of Kiev's prestigious neighborhoods, with the Ukrainian Parliament a block away. While the dormitories were a thirty-minute bus ride away from the university, our apartment was ten minutes on foot.

My seventy-eight year-old host, Yuri, spoke four languages—not one of them English. We communicated in either Russian or Ukrainian, as I had hoped. Yuri was also a war veteran and certainly never let me down with a dearth of war stories. As a historian, he also regaled me with sermons on historical events—private class lectures, if you will.

He was also skilled in the art of doting and nagging, often simultaneously. Almost daily he fixed enough for six to eat and, when I ate only enough for three, he chided me for eating poorly.

Even for one who had hoped for it, daily admonitions about my eating habits, my tobacco smoking, my susceptibility to 'the grippe' became tedious. All the same, I realized his knit-picking stemmed from concern, so I humored him. Besides, as Yuri said, he had learned to nag from his wife who had, for forty years, scolded him with a passion. He had lived alone for four years and was pleased to 'take care of' someone again.

We got along very well. As a professor, he had amassed a small home library that I was welcome to use. Our exchanges were not all nagging and nodding—we played chess, watched poorly dubbed detective movies, and discussed George W. Bush over tea. He also allowed me time alone in my room to study, write or listen to the Alla Pugacheva LPs bought at the Lvivsky flea market.

Despite not being an elderly woman, Yuri indeed provided an ideal living situation. Living within five minutes of central Kiev, I improved my language skills and learned to make cabbage rolls.

My stay in his room appeared to be good for him as well. At 78, working seldom and having trouble walking, Yuri often remained at home. Whether it was a trip to the market to buy carrots for my soup or simply remaking my bed ("properly"), he had something to do. He seemed to enjoy being useful again.

But, naturally, like his wife, he often complained about all he had to do.

William Gardner is a post-bac Russian and East European studies major who plans to graduate with a second bachelor's degree in 2003. William participated in the American Council on International Education (ACIE) program in Ukraine in spring semester 2002 and received an ACIE scholarship to help cover his program costs.