

Costa Rican trip enables students to care, share

by Tina McFarland
Feature Editor

To some, spending 27 days in a foreign country might seem like a great vacation, but for Carola Holley and six second-year Spanish students, it was a vacation and much more.

For the past six years, Holley, a Spanish instructor, has coordinated the Retired Persons Exchange Program, which is part of the Partners of the Americas Program. This year, however, she decided to start a pilot exchange program for second-year Spanish students, in conjunction with the Retired Persons Exchange.

Holley had planned on going to Costa Rica this summer, which is Oregon's partner in the Partners of the Americas. She opened the trip up to students in her class and, "received a very enthusiastic response," she said.

The Costa Rican homes the students were placed in are also involved in the Retired Persons Exchange, and the host families were willing to make the students feel at home, Holley said.

"I feel like I have two families now, one here and one there," said Ann Johnson, a pilot exchange student.

The participants were required to pay their own way for the trip, and had to meet a few other qualifications as well. Before they departed, Holley and the students agreed to speak only Spanish while they were in Costa Rica, even to each other. And according to Johnson, that was one of her biggest fears.

"I wasn't confident enough in my speaking. But by the end, I could understand people

and they could understand us," she said.

The host homes were based in San Jose. There, the participants traveled to 15 different elementary schools to take school supplies to Costa Rican students who couldn't afford them.

"There was not enough (supplies) for everyone; they were just a symbol from Clackamas Community College," Holley explained. "We went to some very remote schools, in the mountainous regions. We had to take the bus, ferry, canoe, walk. It was a wonderful experience for the students. They learned Spanish and were able to give of themselves."

Most schools the group visited had only one room which housed students in the first through the sixth grades. While the schools are "good" in Costa Rica -- the country has an 87 percent literacy rate -- Holley and her students went to the most remote schools which "don't get the support of the parents or the government, like the city schools do," Holley said.

"One school we visited had only one room with six grades. That teacher approached us with tears in her eyes and said, 'Thank you for coming, for remembering us so far away (and) for travelling so many thousands of miles to bring us supplies,'" Holley said.

Holley bought supplies for the schools with the money that was made from International Day and the Spanish Club and classes last May. Holley said they earned enough money to take crayons, scissors, erasers, tablets and pencils to the schools, as well as footballs and soccer balls that the group had to deflate to pack in their luggage, then inflate once they arrived in Costa Rica.

Despite the work, Holley said it was worth every minute and all the heart ache. "It was not always easy. It was hot and there were sometimes rustic cabins. No one minded; they loved it."

Johnson said the purpose of the trip was to "create a link between Oregon and Costa Rica, to show there are people here who care about them. I learned how small the world is ... how willing people are to help."

"People learn to come out of their shells," Holley explained. "We really aren't any different from anyone else. We all cry, we all need food. We all have the same basic needs to fulfill. We all want to be a part of a whole."

Holley said the students who went now understand that they can touch others. "It was extremely evident when it was time to leave, everyone was crying; no one wanted to leave."



Clackamas students meet with Costa Rican students to share culture and school supplies.

Photo by Eryn Ellersen

Forensics team excels in debate workshop at Willamette University

by Staci Smith
Staff Writer

The Clackamas forensics team sent speakers Avril Johnson, Nicole Turley, James Spiering and several others to the Willamette University Individual Event Scrimmage and debate workshop in early October.

The competition gave new speakers the opportunity to listen to and participate in the "newcomers debate workshop." The workshop was designed to introduce the nature and principals of non-policy debate. It also provided students with the chance

to view a demonstration of debate, and offered those students who were comfortable, the chance to participate in practice debates.

Johnson placed first in persuasive and informative speaking. She made the finals in dramatic interpretation and took second place in the "all over sweepstakes award."

Johnson's awards were all received in the open division competitions.

Turley made it to the finals in the open division of dramatic interpretation.

Spiering placed first in

the novice round of dramatic interpretation, and third in the novice prose competition.

Johnson also participated in the Oregon State University Scrimmage, where she placed first in both persuasive and informative speaking. She also made it to the finals of the dramatic interpretation category.

After combining the overall points accumulated from both the Willamette University and OSU competitions, Clackamas took second place.

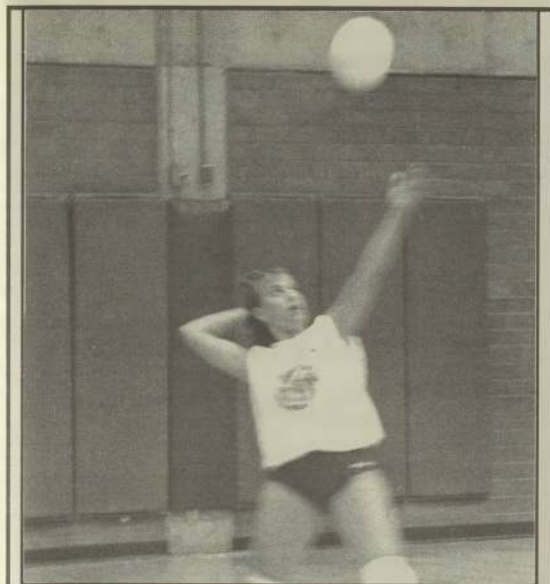


photo by Kate Gibbons

Lady Cougars prepare for a game against Clark College in Vancouver at 5 p.m. tonight.

Coach optimistic about volleyball season

by Scott Morris
Staff Writer

Although the school year has just started for most of the student body at Clackamas, the women's volleyball team has been hard at work since Aug. 20.

The Lady Cougars, who are 1-4 in league play and 4-7 overall, have not done as well as they would like, but Coach Kathie Woods is still optimistic.

"The girls are working hard and we have depth at every position. We've just been mak-

ing too many mistakes to win," Woods said.

Three returning sophomores, team captain Carla Nofzinger, Alyson Kingsley and Jennifer Potter make up the nucleus of the team that also includes 11 freshman.

Potter was named Southern Region offensive and defensive player for the week of Sept. 3.

The Lady Cougars will be playing a home game tonight at 7. Admission is free.

Clackamas cross country runners stomp opposition

by Paul Valencia
Staff Writer

School is in full swing, the nights are a little cooler, the calendar reads mid-October and the Cougars are running all over their opponents. It must be cross-country season at Clackamas.

The men's squad has accumulated an astonishing 37-2 record this year as they prepare for the Oct. 23 Southern Regional Championships. The Lady Cougars have a 13-16 record, but that is a misleading figure considering the competition this year, according to Head Coach Mike Hodges.

"We have upgraded our level of competition this year significantly over last year," Hodges said. Last year, for instance, the team's first meet was against several community colleges from California. The Cougars dominated. This year, however, the first meet was against four-year schools.

The Lady Cougars have "totally dominated all the community colleges they have seen this year, and they are holding their own against the four-year schools," Hodges explained.

Despite the win-loss record, the women's squad will still be one of the favorites in the upcoming championship meet.

Hodges said the men's squad is the favorite, but will get competition from Clark Community College from Vancouver.

This past weekend, both squads were once again facing stiff, four-year competition in Tacoma, Wash. The men finished second to the University of Puget Sound, which is ranked in the top five in the NAIA. The Cougars beat

Simon Fraser, Western Washington and Whitman, who are all ranked in the top 10 in the same poll.

Hodges said that four-year schools have the advantage of having juniors and seniors with more experience. But the Cougars still finish near or at the top regularly. "Our team, although obviously young, is very strong," Hodges commented.

Freshman Cruz Gonzalez finished the 8-kilometer course in 25 minutes, 45 seconds and placed fifth in Tacoma. Defending NWAACC champion Mike Hickey wound up 11th at 26:06.

On the women's side, freshman Cindy Keene led the

Cougars, finishing seventh on the 5-kilometer course with a time of 18:56. "She's the first woman to run under 19 minutes in the eight years I've been here," Hodges said. "She's done it three weeks in a row."

Hodges said he hopes the stiff competition during the season will help his teams do well in the Southern Regionals. Both teams have streaks to keep in mind. The women are going for their sixth straight title, while the men will aim for their fifth consecutive first-place trophy.

It's just that time of the year again for the Cougar cross-country team.



photo by Jason Hunter

Clackamas' Cross Country team prepares for Southern Regional competition. The Cougar women will be competing for their sixth consecutive championship, while the men will compete for their fifth.