

crushed the buildings. Now some family members live in Red Cross tents.

Whenever the Turkmen tried to cultivate their most fertile fields, which are closest to the Qaddim fence, Israeli soldiers shot at them. For almost three years, the Turkmen could not tend the young olive trees in these fields. Desperate, they knew the law dictates that land not worked for three years belongs to Israel.

In autumn, Joe, Liv and other ISM members came to help. The internationals and Turkmen women followed the tractor, collecting rocks and stacking them on terrace walls. When Israeli soldiers asked why the internationals were there, Liv said, "We're students learning about subsistence farming." Days of tense but bullet-free plowing, planting and rock-collecting ensued.

I visited during Eid al Fitr, the three-day November holiday that ends Ramadan. The Turkmen were resting, and pale green sprouts of winter wheat and lentils were sprouting in the moist soil near the settlement. In the daytime, men talked, kids chased each other perched on remnants of toy cars, and women did each other's hair, roasted a sheep, brined green olives in soda bottles, and cooked pita bread in a small outdoor oven. In the evenings, the family gathered on mats around the edges of their biggest room and drank coffee, talking and laughing.

Chickens, ducks, cows, goats, and sheep slept in a shed adjoining the house where we were staying. But at 5 am, gentle animal noises were overlaid by a loud "chukka-chukka-chukka." Frightened people rushed outside to look up into the sky, where Apache helicopters circled in arcs toward Jenin. That morning Israeli tanks rolled into Jenin searching for militants.

In March I learned that a local "security fence" would be built around Qaddim (though many settlers have moved back to Israel, leaving only about 30 houses occupied). Bulldozers cut a wide strip through the Turkmen's newly cultivated fields. The family was informed that half their land, 25 acres, had been confiscated for the fence.

In the background of West Bank landscapes, I often saw the path of the Separation Wall (the Security Fence, the Apartheid Wall, depending on who you are talking to) as a wide, pale strip crossing distant hillsides. Sharon's government says the Wall is necessary to protect Israelis from suicide bombers. Many Palestinians say it is a way the Israelis can annex West Bank land and water, sepa-

rate Palestinians from each other and make it impossible for them to survive in what remains of their homeland.

I saw the Wall up close in Zbouba, where it was outside the back windows of every house we visited. There the Wall consisted of multiple rows of high barbed wire fences and trenches, with a raised roadway in the middle. After a mighty Palestinian feast at the home of Joe's friend Mahmoud Jaradat — hummus, stuffed zucchini and grape leaves, roasted chicken, olives, greens, and chickpea soup — we strolled through the village's olive and almond orchards. We adults talked and picked a few last almonds, and Mamoud's children frolicked along until the lane ended abruptly in barbed wire. An Israeli jeep whizzed past on the patrol road.

Traveling through the West Bank, I witnessed the fears and grinding, repetitive frustrations of people's lives. Here is one of the moments that haunts me: Joe, Liv and I were in a taxi driving toward Jenin. A Palestinian girl, about three years old with dark, wavy hair, stood in the yellow dust beside the road.

She wore a lacy, pale green dress and pink hair ribbons, and swung a green purse that matched her dress. It was the first day of Eid, when Muslims gather for family feasts. Near her stood a somewhat older boy who looked like her, and a half-dozen Palestinian men, including an elderly fellow in a white djellabah who was shouting at Israeli soldiers. Another Palestinian man, laughing nervously, pulled him back and shushed him.

The soldiers who had emptied these passengers out of a taxi-van belonged to one of the roving Israeli military patrols that set up "flying checkpoints" and made our talkative taxi driver freeze when he spotted them. A young soldier strutted up to our taxi — narrow face, dark glasses, M-16 automatic rifle in his arms.

"Where are you going?"

"Yamoun," answered Joe.

"Why?"

"To visit our friend who studies Arabic at the university."

The soldier screamed, his mouth twisted in rage, "Your friend is studying to make bombs and blow up Israelis!"

He yelled, "Go!" and we went, leaving the little girl and her relatives and fellow passengers behind. Was this hysteric the person who questioned them? How many hours did they stand beside the road?

Did the little girl ever get to the feast of Eid? I still wonder. **EW**

James von Boeckmann

attorney at law



GENERAL PRACTICE, INCLUDING:

family • business • criminal law
appeals • immigration

* **COST-FREE** INITIAL CONSULTATIONS

* **HOME VISITS** AT YOUR CONVENIENCE

FOR AN APPOINTMENT, PLEASE PHONE: **968-0781**

OR EMAIL: **JLVONBO@MSN.COM**



trekking?

medical advice for
global travelers

THE TRAVEL CLINIC
1200 Hilyard St., Suite S-560
343-6028

Start traveling healthy today at www.TravelClinicOregon.com



Don't let us lose...

the sheets off our backs!

Toga!

Support our 2nd Annual TOGA PARTY

- buy tickets & invite your friends
- be a sponsor (donate as individuals or a business)
- enter the toga contest and parade
- wear a toga and party!

Toga!

September 4th, 2004

www.animalhousecelebration.com

Brought to you by The Hysterical Society a not-for-profit for community-merriment-group.
Portion of proceeds for Parks & Open Space.

2ND ANNUAL
ANIMAL HOUSE CELEBRATION
SEPTEMBER 4, 2004
THE WORLD'S LARGEST
TOGA PARTY!

COTTAGE GROVE, OR
INFO & TICKETS @
WWW.ANIMALHOUSECELEBRATION.COM

FEATURED ACTS
JOHNNY LIMBO & THE LUGNUTS
THE KINGSMEN
BLAZAR ROGUE



West Bank farm children with Joe Gessert