

Raphia is the official newsletter of Canadian Organization for Tropical Education & Rainforest Conservation

RAPHIA

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FALL, 2005

Our apologies for the lateness in getting this issue of Raphia out. A hard drive crash was one of several problems! In any event, we think that you will find this issue interesting, with articles from both Canada and Costa Rica.

Happy New Year!

On behalf of Canadian Organization for Tropical Education and Rainforest Conservation, the Board of Directors would like to wish all of you the best of everything for 2006. May this be a very special year for you!

HELP US TO BE MORE ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY

Starting with the next issue of Raphia, we will be able to offer an electronic version. We would like to encourage as many of our readers as possible to receive our newsletter in this format. If you are interested in receiving Raphia electronically, please forward your name and email address to mstone@sympatico.ca, or contact the COTERC office at (905) 831-8809. You will need Adobe Reader in order to open the document.

Cards, Anyone?



Fran Murakami, Keith Woods, David Speed, Malcolm Enright

On November 16th, COTERC held another euchre evening at Papps Restaurant in Pickering.

The number of participants was the lowest so far, but the 19 people that attended had fun. COTERC Raffle tickets and DVDs were on sale. We played "Share the Wealth" and Fran Mason was the lucky winner of \$42.50. The Male High Score was won by Steve Marks, the Female High Score by Hanneke Koonstra, while her husband Aant Koonstra took the Most Honest Male award. The Most Honest Female was awarded to Elaine Christens.

Malcolm Enright won the Lone Hand prize consisting of the new COTERC T Shirt and a DVD.

We will hold another euchre evening in the near

future — details will be available in the next Raphia.



Deb Martin

Steel City Safari

Steve Featherstone, owner of the Reptile Store in Hamilton, Ontario, came up with a brilliant idea. Why not invite a number of naturalist clubs, small local zoos, animal attractions, and conservation organizations to display their interests at the



Dave Vanderbrug & Dave Hennessey

Hamilton Convention Centre, in order to raise money for the Christmas Tree of Hope Foundation? Add clowns who do face painting, some interesting animal shows, a raffle with lots of variety (\$10 got you a guaranteed prize), and a silent auction; get the local radio station CHML and other media to publicize the event; and charge admission, and you will end up with sell-out crowd of 1,200 people!

COTERC was pleased to be a part of this very successful event, which took place on Sunday, November 13. David Hennessey, his daughter Hazel, Dave Vanderbrug, and Marilyn Cole manned the COTERC display and met many people interested in our work. Hazel enjoyed meeting and touching a wide variety of animals that had been brought – everything from snakes to skunks! Many children will be

filled with memories of being up close and



A visitor from Mountsberg Conservation Area

"Hazel enjoyed meeting and touching a wide variety of animals"

personal with a wolf, a lion cub, a miniature horse, tarantulas, goats, and parrots galore—a few of the many,

many animals that were brought.

Hazel Hennessey



One of the more popular animals

Congratulations to Steve (who has visited Cano Palma), for putting on this wonderful event and raising over \$19,000 for a good cause. Hopefully he will consider holding the event next year!

A New Life at Cano Palma

We would like to extend congratulations and best wishes to Mario and Jana, on the birth of their son Emiliano, who was born on Nov 25, 2005 at the Cariari Hospital and weighing in at 6.21 lbs. Jana, in her usual adventurous manner has taken



to motherhood and the challenges of raising a child at Cano Palma in stride, but she has ad-

mitted that she really appreciates the new bathroom that has been built on to the manager's cabin! No doubt Emiliano will be the centre of attention of visitors to the station, and we wish Jana and Mario all the best.

Membership Secretary Change

After many years of diligently volunteering as COTERC's Membership Secretary Hilary Lee is stepping down to spend more time with her family. We want to thank her very much for keeping our membership database up to date and preparing mailing labels for Raphia. Hilary also volunteered at Tropical Treat for several years. Thanks Hilary, for all your hard work!

And we would like to welcome aboard Amanda Stone, who has agreed to take on this task. Amanda lives near Lake Scugog, Ontario and has been a COTERC member along with her husband Mark for many years. Both have been



Kirsten Cowan Says Goodbye

When Kirsten first came on to the Board of Directors of COTERC last May, we all knew we had found a jewel. From the very start Kirsten dug in to address the issues of Volunteer Recruitment and Membership Development, asking lots of questions and coming up with solutions.

Her employer Softtech Health also recognized her capabilities and has assigned her to open an office in New York. Consequently she has stepped down from the Board. We all wish her the very best in her career, and we hope that Kirsten will keep in touch!

We now have the difficult task of replacing her in the role of Director of Membership Development and Volunteer Recruitment. If any member is interested in taking on this directorship, please contact the COTERC office (905) 831-8809 info@coterc.org.

Hello From a Former Volunteer

I'm Jeff Young and a little more than 10 years ago I volunteered for a month's stay at Cano Palma. It was an absolutely wonderful experience. I think of it often and fondly and I can honestly say it has had a lasting impact on my career. I am now an environmental journalist with the National Public Radio program Living on Earth, and things I learned during my stay in CR often come to mind in my work. I was at Cano Palma for the month of March, 1995.

Pat Opay was the science guy and Daryl Loth was station manager. I had a few daily chores, helping with cooking etc, leading tour groups around and doing light maintenance to the trail. I also kept tabs on daily rainfall and temperatures, and set up a couple of small experiments with a Berlizi funnel to sample small arthropods in the soil at various points

on the property. I even remember giving the dog, Esperanza, a rabies booster shot after her nasty run-in with some local fauna.

Mostly though, I just remember the joy of learning about the place and its daily rhythms and marvels. Howler monkeys announced each sunrise and sunset (along with the arrival of every boat and thunderstorm). Carabancas would troop along the canal most afternoons and the mono colorado were the ornery ones, shaking limbs and making a fuss as they passed overhead.

I still miss the singing of the ranitas rojas, and the woody, grinding croak of the aracari, the bronzy hermits flying right up to my face to check me out, the splash of colour from kingfishers and her-

ons along the canal, and the spooky orange glow of a caiman's eyes at night. One night, against Daryl's advice, I slept out on the beach to watch a leatherback nesting. Also, for about a week, we enjoyed the migration of the *Urania fulgens*, (colipato verde locally) the

"It was an absolutely wonderful experience."

green moths whose thousands of bodies made

a black track across the sky heading due north to who knows where.

Anyway, I just came across your wonderful web page as I was researching a story (CAFTA, free trade and the Central American environment) and was reminded of what a wonderful, wonderful time it was and wanted to send along an overdue "thanks."

TROPICAL TREAT—2005 VERSION

On Saturday, November 5, COTERC held "Tropical Treat", its ninth annual fundraising dinner. Thanks to Cal White, General Manager of the Toronto Zoo, we were again able to utilize the beautiful Atrium at the zoo – but this time with a difference. Instead of a sit-down dinner, Kings Court Catering served a delicious variety of hors d'oeuvres all night and set up a buffet table, as well as two chocolate fountains, followed by a wonderful strawberry cake. There was enough food to satisfy even the hungriest! By not having a room filled with tables, people tended to mingle more and get to know each other. There were, of course, places to sit when tired, interspersed amongst the silent auction tables, both inside and outside the Atrium.

And speaking of silent auction items, what a range of tempting articles we had—everything from Toronto Maple Leafs tickets to hand-made sweaters to a weekend at a cabin in Pennsylvania to a variety of artwork. The live auction had some exciting items, as well, topped by a wonderful Toronto Raptors Basketball team package – an autographed ball, tickets to a game, a Steve Nash baseball, and a visit to the winner's school or business by none other than the Raptor mascot himself! Other live auction items included an opportunity to try out the Serengeti Bush Camp at the Toronto Zoo; a collector's item doll; a week's stay at Cano Palma Biological Station, together with a night at each of Cacts Hotel in San Jose and Marbella Bed & Breakfast in Tortuguero; more beautiful art; a week at the Safari Camp courtesy of Orono Jungle Cat World; a day spent with Peter Silverman, ombudsman for CITY TV; a steak and chicken barbecue for ten people at the winner's house, courtesy of King's Court Catering; and a Behind the Scenes tour of the Toronto Zoo. Many thanks to all of our donors, who are listed in the newsletter.

To get us all in the mood for a tropical experience, Bing Serrao and The Ramblers provided lively latin music during the course of the night, although it's too bad more people didn't dance!

Thanks also to our emcee, Dr. Bob Murphy, who kept everything moving along, and to Rick Johnson, our auctioneer, who encouraged people to bid and bid large!

The highlight of the evening was our two guest speakers. Britt Larsen, Director of Programmes, Central America for Global Vision International flew up from Costa Rica especially for Tropical Treat and gave the guests an insight into what GVI hopes to accomplish in our new partnership with them. Later in the evening Sami Abdelmalik, our 2005 York University intern told us about his involvement with the study of sea turtle poaching on the north beach of Tortuguero (which is opposite Cano Palma Biological Station). Thanks to both Britt and Sami for helping to make this year's Tropical Treat memorable.

Guests came from afar as well as near. In particular Jake Wickham (one of our earlier researchers) brought his family up from New York State; others came from Hamilton, Niagara, Peterborough and places in between.

The main purpose of Tropical Treat is to raise much-needed funds to continue to operate Cano Palma Biological Station. We have two paid full-time staff (Mario and Jana) plus operating costs (maintenance of buildings, supplies, food, etc.), and Tropical Treat provides a vital part of the budget. I am pleased to announce that we raised over \$7,700 towards these expenses. Thanks to all who contributed, either by buying a ticket or by spending money that night!

Thanks also to Erika Babiuk, who took on the task of heading up the planning committee rather late in the planning stages, with little time to get everything done. With the help of June Enright, Malcolm Enright, Kirsten Cowan, Jan Dwire and Marilyn Cole, everything finally came together.

We also need to thank the volunteers who came out to help – Tom Mason, Fran Mason, Malcolm Browne, Donna Boyer, Colette and Barry McKee, David Hennessey, Linda Puder, Michelle Puder, Dave Vanderbrug, Michael Rapley, Michelle Rodgers and Susan Broad. We couldn't have held a successful event without the help of these many volunteers.

Raffle Results

Congratulations to Dan Semoff, of Pickering, Ontario, the lucky winner of the raffle for a beautiful framed print by the renowned artist Robert Bateman, entitled Chimpanzees at Mahale. This is one of the subjects that Mr. Bateman captured during a trip to Africa. The winning ticket was drawn on Saturday, December 17th by Mr. Al Spencer, with June and Blue Enright in attendance.

Thanks to all who participated in the raffle, and a special thank you to Mr. Robert Bateman who has supported us for several years with his donated artwork.



We would like to thank the following donors to Tropical Treat

Live Auction

Orono Jungle Cat World
Toronto Raptors Basketball Club
Kings Court Catering
In Kind Canada
June & Malcolm Enright
Peter Silverman
Gary Gaudet
Cacts Hotel, Marbella B&B, Costa Rica
Marilyn Cole

Silent Auction, Tombola & Door Prizes

Warner Brothers
Leah Woods
June & Malcolm Enright
Frances Burton
Marilyn Cole
Strait's Aqualife
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CN Tower
Art Gallery of Ontario
The Elgin & Winter Garden Theatre Centre

London Regional Children's Museum

Cullen Gardens
Abate Piano
Textile Museum of Canada
Joseph's Estate Wines
Fantasy Fair
Casa Loma
Royal Ontario Museum
Tamara Noak
Montgomery's Inn
Ontario Place
Ontario Science Centre
Black Creek Pioneer Village
Four Points Sheraton
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CBC—Air Farce
Mario Renaud
Regional Marketing
Sharon Steinhaus
Zack Wickham
Bowmanville Zoo

Cano Palma Memories by Marilyn Cole

In late September/early October, 2005, Bryan Bridgeman and I traveled to Costa Rica to visit Cano Palma Biological Station. We would like to thank Global Vision International for providing the travel funding and to thank their staff, Steve Guerin and Britt Larsen in particular, for their kindness. Bryan and I had the opportunity to meet with Steve (who is the Director of Programmes Worldwide for GVI) just prior to his leaving Costa Rica for England. He is a busy man who never seems to stop traveling to exotic places! We were able to discuss some aspects of the new partnership that we have with GVI. We were fortunate to be able to spend more time with Britt once we had traveled to the station, after meeting briefly with her in San Jose.

We also met up with Jana Daigle, our Assistant Manager, who had traveled to San Jose to meet us and accompany us to our lawyer. We are still working on getting all the necessary paperwork accomplished—something that seems to take forever in Costa Rica! However, we are very much closer now to becoming incorporated as a non-profit organization. This has several advantages for getting things done, such as registering boats, arranging medical insurance coverage for our staff, setting up a bank account, etc. Some of you may wonder why it has taken so long, but it is a very complicated story. Maybe for another issue of *Raphia*....



New Kiosk

species of monkeys); kayaking on the Cano at dawn; accompanying Jana to survey the turtle poaching. For me it was also a chance to visit with Daryl Loth, our former station manager, who now lives with his wife and two children in Tortuguero Village, and to rekindle my friendship with Antoinette Gutierrez, her husband Elvin, and two children. Some of you may know Antoinette from *The Jungle Shop*, her great souvenir shop in Tortuguero. I was also able to

meet up with Nancy Aitken in San Jose, who has been such a help to COTERC over the years.



Jana with her "treasure"

Jana, Bryan and I took the bus to Cariari and then the boat through to Cano Palma — an interesting but tiring way to travel. I must admit that I prefer to fly for one half-hour than travel for approximately five hours! Despite the fact that I had not been to Costa Rica for seven years, it felt like coming home. As we entered Cano Palma and arrived at the boat dock, we were greeted by Mario (our manager and Jana's husband) and the station dogs Maggie and Jack. Bryan and I truly enjoyed our stay, wandering on the trails (Bryan loves to photograph reptiles and amphibians while I prefer the three



New Dormitory

And of course, we spent time with Britt Larsen to learn more about the GVI projects being conducted at Cano Palma. This new partnership is very exciting, and we look forward to collaborative projects with GVI. We also spent time with Mario and Jana, to discuss their projects.

Bryan and I would like to thank Britt, her staff, and Mario and Jana for making us feel welcome and for taking such good care of us.

It was truly a memorable trip, and I for one, intend to be back much sooner next time!



NEW COTERC T-SHIRT AVAILABLE!

Be the first in your neighbourhood to wear this colourful T-shirt, featuring the ever-popular poison arrow frog. Available in Adult sizes XL, L, M, S and in several children's sizes.

Price is only \$15 Canadian for adult sizes and \$10 Canadian for children's sizes (plus \$10 shipping and handling).

Order yours **TODAY** from the COTERC office:

info@coterc.org

Box 335, Pickering, Ontario L1V 2R6, Canada

(905) 831-8809

Donations to Tortuguero Region Residents

It is always heartening to know that there are people who care enough and want to make a difference. Thanks to the generosity of the following people, the residents of the region near Cano Palma Biological Station have benefited greatly:

The students and teacher Rob Friederich of the Episcopal School of Texas (TMI) got together and raised \$4,400 for the construction of a high school for the children who live in the Tortuguero region. On her recent visit to Costa Rica, Marilyn Cole, chair of COTERC, presented a cheque to Daryl Loth, representing the committee planning to build the high school.

Bruce and Diane Wise, of Norwood, Ontario generously donated \$2,000 for materials to rebuild the primary school in San Francisco, a relatively new village near the cerro, between Tortuguero and Cano Palma Biological Station.

We are grateful to both groups of people for their generosity and thoughtfulness. The money will go a long way in providing the children living in the Tortuguero region an opportunity to learn.



The renovated school in San Francisco

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Support us by shopping!

We are a member of the HBC Rewards Community Program. What this means is that we can accept donations of HBC Rewards points from anyone who wishes to give. This service does not cost anything to you, and can leave you with the feeling that you have done something for the rainforest when you go shopping! If you have an HBC Rewards card and wish to donate some of your points to COTERC, simply choose one of the following:

Go to www.hbc rewards.com/community, click on "Donate to a Community Group", then search



for COTERC's community by entering in our Community Organization Public ID # 5352662; or visit the customer service desk at any Bay, Zellers or Home Outfitters store near you. You can specify what percentage of future points you wish to donate to COTERC so that you can keep on giving every time that you shop. Any amounts are greatly appreciated, and go a long way towards much-needed supplies for Cano Palma Biological Station!

Want something different to do?

Here are two suggestions:

If you live in the area, or are planning to visit Niagara Falls, Ontario, the Butterfly Conservatory has two interesting events coming up:

On Saturday Feb. 11 and Sunday Feb. 12, 2006 the Conservatory is offering you to chance to tempt your taste buds with a variety of insects prepared right before your eyes! Tasty Tickets available on site.

From January 20 to March 20 2006 the Conservatory will feature Poison Dart Frogs (those same species that you see and hear at Cano Palma!) For more details, visit www.niagaraparks.com