

**ACTION**

August 13, 1980

# update...



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**ACTION Takes  
Part in White  
House Energy Panel**

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## FACE--Prototype of Energy Efficiency



*Secretary Bergland, Brown, Mayor Gilmartin*

"ACTION's Community Energy Projects are demonstrating that any community can immediately reduce home energy consumption by 15 to 25 percent," stated Sam Brown, a participant at a recent White House forum addressing ways to combat the energy crisis. "Energy conservation is easy," he said.

"The techniques are known—people will participate if you involve them directly by showing them how and by making the personal benefits clear to them," continued the director of the federal volunteer service agency, adding that in most cases, "local communities have the resources, the skills and the volunteers," which need to be mobilized to reduce energy consumption.

The forum was assembled in the East Room of the White House as President Carter arrived to launch the second phase of the administration's Energy Efficiency Program. The other forum panelists were Secretary Charles Duncan of the Department of Energy, Secretary Moon

Landrieu of HUD, Secretary Robert Bergland of Agriculture and David Gilmartin, the mayor of Fitchburg, Mass.

The city of Fitchburg "took ACTION's community energy concept and made it a successful model for other cities," said Brown, introducing Mayor Gilmartin.

"Our city is an average American community," pointed out Gilmartin, "a population of 38,000 people in central Massachusetts—that proved what can be done when people commit their resources in order to solve their collective problems."

Last fall, ACTION assisted the citizens of Fitchburg in waging the first all-out, city-wide campaign in the country to tackle the energy crisis. Throughout the nine-week drive, residents were trained to carry out simple do-it-yourself energy saving measures and volunteers distributed low-cost winterization materials to people who couldn't afford to buy them themselves, and weather-stripped and caulked

doors and windows of homes belonging to the elderly and infirm. The intensive campaign conducted by the Fitchburg Action to Conserve Energy (FACE) resulted in significant energy savings for the city's residents.

The FACE campaign involved public and parochial schools, the local utility company, the chamber of commerce, hardware stores, the Home Care Corporation and other service agencies for the elderly, the local community action agency and Fitchburg State College.

"These resources are not unique to Fitchburg," said Gilmartin. "What was extraordinary is that we mobilized all of these resources in a short-term, very intense campaign that successfully involved thousands of people in energy conservation."

The mayor recalled the first visit by ACTION staff members in Fitchburg last September, "when all they had in hand was an idea. . . . No promise of money, no complicated design, no advance work," he said.

FACE was launched on October 10 and at the end of nine weeks, more than 3,500 people were trained to take low-cost/no-cost energy conservation steps in their homes, according to Gilmartin. "Thousands of others did things on their own. They were inspired to conserve energy by

newspaper ads, posters on Main Street and announcements on the radio," he noted.

"The people of Fitchburg came forward because we designed a project that suited our local situation and drew upon our own resources," added Gilmartin. "While FACE is unique to Fitchburg, I am sure that the same kind of effort is possible everywhere."

The success of the FACE project led ACTION to expand its involvement in community-do-it-yourself energy conservation campaigns through a nationwide Community Energy Project, which now assists 18 cities and towns across the country in conducting their own energy-saving programs.

Community Energy Projects, said Brown, "can be led by nearly any organization and can take almost any form." The chamber of commerce has taken the lead in Ellsworth, Maine; the mayor and the local community action agency in Haverhill, Mass.; a neighborhood association in Rochester, N.Y.; a citizens' steering committee in Jackson County, Ill. and public housing tenants in Inkster, Mich.

"This program is the embodiment of a sign I saw on a storefront in Oregon," stated the ACTION director. "The sign said: 'Ask not what your country can do for you. Do it yourself.'"

## Public/Private Sectors Join to Fight Energy Costs

ACTION is linking resources with United Way of America (UWA) and the Hartford Foundation to help local communities continue a grass-roots struggle against the high cost of energy.

A \$231,000 grant on Aug. 1 from the Foundation to UWA, is enabling eight to ten communities selected from the 18 involved in ACTION's Community Energy Project (CEP) to build up their already existing energy programs and to develop longer range, more comprehensive programs, according to Hamp Coley, UWA's senior vice-president for National Agency Relations.

Representatives from the three organizations will review proposals from participating communities and choose those having the greatest potential to curb energy use and cut fuel costs.

UWA will administer the grant through allocations of \$15,000 to \$25,000 to participants, and along with ACTION, will provide the selected communities with technical assistance and materials on energy conservation.

"United Way's participation in these conservation programs marks the beginning of a unique partnership in community problem-solving between the nation's public and private sectors," Coley said. "The voluntary sector will now have the capacity to work with government agencies, private foundations and business, to conserve and better manage our nation's energy resources."

According to Coley, United Ways have initiated energy conservation programs for voluntary agencies in more than 40 communities.

(cont. page 12)

# PC Renews Program in Nicaragua

In August, Peace Corps will resume operations in Nicaragua with an initial group of 29 volunteers after a year and a half absence.

John and Anne Heard of Santa Barbara, Calif. were recently appointed by Peace Corps Director, Richard Celeste, as co-directors for the renewed program.

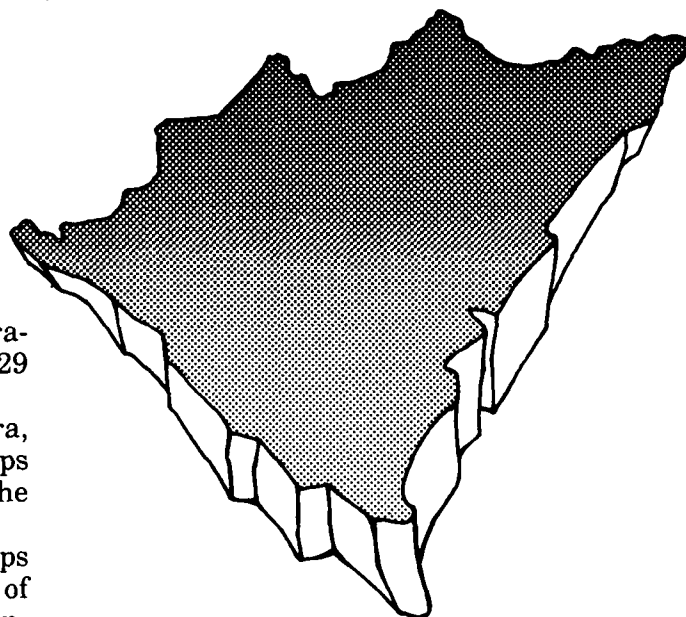
In August 1978 there were 95 Peace Corps volunteers serving in Nicaragua. By the end of the year, 74 had been withdrawn due to country-wide civil strife. In anticipation of further violence the 21 remaining volunteers were recalled by the end of February, 1979, full scale civil war broke out in June 1979.

The new group of Peace Corps volunteers is expected to start arriving in Nicaragua by the end of August this year. They will be working in the areas of special, vocational, and agricultural education under the Ministry of Education and in forestry and conservation under the Institute for National Resources. Several volunteers will also be working with private, non-profit development organizations.

This first corps of PCVs will be made up of veteran volunteers transferring from other Latin American countries. The Latin America Region has taken this extraordinary step both to guarantee a strong initial presence, and to hasten re-entry. Volunteers recruited through the normal delivery system will go into training in the winter of 1981.

From August 1970 to January 1978 the Heards, both of whom are fluent in Spanish, lived and worked in Costa Rica and travelled extensively in Latin America. Mrs. Heard, who has a masters in social work from Arizona State University, worked in a psychiatric hospital and also established a group counseling program for students of the Costa Rica Academy, a bi-national school in Costa Rica's capital of San Jose.

For the past 10 years, Heard, 38, has worked



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in foreign assistance program management (primarily in the field of rural development in Latin America) including service as an employee of and a consultant to the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). A 1963 graduate of Stanford University in International Relations, Heard received a masters degree in 1970 from the Thunderbird Graduate School of International Management in Glendale, Arizona.

In remembering past Peace Corps contacts, Heard states, "I have a very positive feeling about the value of Peace Corps involvement in the development process, especially at the community level. We are anxious to initiate the Nicaraguan program as soon as possible," he continues, "and to demonstrate early the potential value of Peace Corps contributions within the context of the country's current national recovery effort."

The Heards have two sons: David, 19, who attends Wesleyan University in Middletown, Conn., and Ted, 15, a student at the Thacher School in Ojai, Calif. Mrs. Heard has a B.A. from Stanford University ('63) and a masters degree in social work from Arizona State University ('70).

1965-1980

# Foster Grandparent Program Marks 15th Anniversary



This month the Foster Grandparent Program celebrates its 15th anniversary. Since August 28, 1965, American seniors have been bringing joy, companionship and love to children with special needs.

Celebrations honoring the Grandparents' service will be held in communities throughout the country as well as in Washington. And in order to draw national attention to the uniqueness and benefits of the program, an FGP television spot has been prepared and sent to television stations all over the nation, and in early August, a national press release was sent to 1,150 daily newspapers and the black and Hispanic press.

In honor of the anniversary, FGP headquarters staff prepared a variety of materials that were distributed to every project in the 50 states. Leading the list is a 19 minute color documentary entitled "A Touch of Love," that was filmed recently at FGP sites in Michigan, Virginia, Oklahoma and California. A new brochure with the same title was also distributed, along with key rings, multicolored balloons

with a large "15" stamped on them, and rubber discs inscribed with the FGP logo. The discs are useful in opening bottles and jar tops and, as OAVP Director Helen Kelley says, "They really work!"

For 92 of the Foster Grandparents the highlight of the anniversary celebrations will be a two-day trip to Washington, D.C. beginning on September 4. These 92 special people have served continuously since the program's inception. This would make their minimum age 75, and they're still going strong!

While in Washington, the Foster Grandparents will tour the nation's capital, with a special side-trip to the botanical gardens on the Capitol grounds. Their visit will culminate at a reception and a viewing of the new FGP documentary at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. During the reception, they will be presented with engraved plaques honoring their many years of continuous, dedicated service.

**Editor's note:** *Be on the lookout for coverage of the Foster Grandparents' trip to Washington in an upcoming issue.*



## Earl and Rhoda Brooks Named Co-Directors in Chile

Ever since Earle and Rhoda Brooks left Ecuador in 1964 after two years as Peace Corps volunteers, they have dreamed of the day when they could return to live and work again in Latin America.

In the meantime, Brooks, 47, became a vice president of The Pillsbury Company and Mrs. Brooks, 44, a special education teacher, most recently coordinated Title I, a federally-funded remedial math and reading program for a large suburban school district west of Minneapolis, Minn. The couple, who lives in Excelsior, Minn., also raised six children.

"We didn't know how or when, but through all those years, we always said that someday we would go back," maintains Mrs. Brooks.

After 16 years, their dream is coming true. Just recently, the Brooks were appointed co-directors of the Peace Corps in Chile by Peace Corps Director Richard Celeste. Beginning in early September, the husband and wife team will supervise the activities of about 100 Peace Corps volunteers serving in health, nutrition, agriculture, special education and youth development programs in the South American country.

"We are looking forward to serving the people of Chile through the Peace Corps for the exact same reasons as when we became volunteers in 1962," states Earle Brooks. "During all that time, miraculously the Peace Corps' philosophy and purpose—its enthusiasm and the opportunity it affords to help people help themselves—has not changed. It ought to be praised highly for maintaining its integrity and its goals."

The couple views their coming roles as Peace Corps co-directors as supportive ones. "We look forward to working as part of a team with the Peace Corps staff and volunteers," stresses Brooks. "Our jobs will have been done well when we make the assignments of each and every volunteer in Chile as satisfying as possible."

Among the first group of Peace Corps volunteers to serve in Ecuador, the couple helped to establish a hot school lunch program; a community-wide garbage collection system; self help classes in dietetics, child care, carpentry and mechanics; and other community development projects in Manta, a fishing port on the



## Braille Labels Placed in Headquarter's Elevators



Sam Brown looks on as ACTION staff member Jerry Fells demonstrates the use of the new Braille labels on the elevators at ACTION headquarters. Fells, a switchboard operator at ACTION, is blind.

The labels were installed late last month beside all buttons on the two non-attended elevators at the main headquarters building at 806 Connecticut Ave., N.W.

"This represents only a small first step on the part of ACTION's International Year of Disabled Persons (IYDP) 1981 Committee to make our buildings accessible to everyone," says Mary Jane Owen, ACTION's IYDP Committee chair. According to Owen, the labels were installed at next to no-cost, in only a few hours.

The IYDP Committee hopes, eventually to see the labels installed in all ACTION buildings.

## Chile

country's Pacific coast.

Upon returning home to Minnesota, they co-authored a book, *The Barrios of Manta*, on their experiences in Ecuador which was published in hard cover in November, 1965 by the New American Library, and in soft cover in February, 1967 by Signet Books. It was the first story ever written by returned Peace Corps volunteers. They also collaborated on an article for the *National Geographic Magazine* which appeared in the September, 1964 issue.

During her years as a teacher, Mrs. Brooks was involved in programs for youngsters with learning disabilities. This involvement and interest led to the founding, in 1967, of "Timbertop," a non-profit summer camp in central Wisconsin for children with special learning disabilities, one of the first organizations of its kind in the country. The couple operated the residential facility until 1974, when it became

part of the Madison school system. Since that time, other school districts in Wisconsin and Minnesota have started similar programs of their own.

A 1957 elementary education graduate of the University of Wisconsin in Madison, Mrs. Brooks received a master's degree in educational psychology and special education from the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis in 1973. Her husband received a bachelor's degree in geophysics and engineering from the University of Wisconsin in 1955.

When the Brooks go to Chile, they will be accompanied by four of their six children: a 16-year-old son, Ned, Rico, 20, and Carmen, 19, whom they adopted in Ecuador; and Josie, 13, from Puerto Rico. The couple also have two married foster sons; Joe, 25, from Liberia, and Phim, 27, from Viet Nam, both of whom live in Minneapolis.

## Staff Spotlight: Mel & Naty Beetle



Between them Mel and Naty Beetle have more than 20 years of Peace Corps and ACTION service.

It began back in 1962, when Mel Beetle, with a brand new bachelor's degree in education from Trenton State College in Trenton, N.J., joined the Peace Corps. His first volunteer assignment was as a TESL teacher in a rural school in the Philippines, and then he was reassigned to the Northern Luzon Teachers' College as a math instructor.

It was here that he met Natividad "Naty" Gapuzan, a student at the college. They were married at the end of Beetle's third year of volunteer service.

Mel Beetle, 40, now works for ACTION's Office of Policy and Planning/Evaluation Division (OPP/E) as the Domestic Programs evaluation coordinator. He's in charge of evaluating all

domestic programs, including OPP Part C demonstration grants and programs in the Office of Voluntary Citizen Participation.

Naty Beetle, who smiled and looked enigmatic when asked her age, is a secretary in the Program Development branch of VISTA, where the focus of her work is the national grants program.

The intervening years found the Beetles working in Peace Corps training centers in California, Hawaii and Wisconsin. He as an instructor and project director, and she as librarian, language instructor and secretary. In 1966, they returned to the Philippines, where Mel Beetle served as Regional Peace Corps director for the Southern Mindanao Region.

At this time, his wife took several years off to raise their two sons, Darryl, 14, and Rico, 7, "That was one of the few times," she says, "that we didn't work together . . . although working together had never been planned. It just happened that way, because we both really believe in the mission of the Peace Corps."

Beetle nods in agreement. "For us, all these years were time well spent—a truly good investment. I believe in giving people the opportunity to contribute, as well as the opportunity to help themselves."

After two more PC assignments—one in Manila and the other in Hawaii—the Beetles returned to the U.S. in 1975. At ACTION headquarters, Mel Beetle worked first with OPP/E on the national VISTA evaluation, then the Youth Community Service/Syracuse (YCS/S) project and, other evaluations. Following a brief stint with HEW's Division of International Education, Naty Beetle returned to ACTION and undertook her present VISTA position.

"ACTION is a very special agency," she explains, "it's a pleasure to work with the people here . . . there seems to be a closeness among the staff. Perhaps it's because those who have been exposed to other cultures have a sensitivity for people."

As the only husband and wife team at headquarters, the Beetles don't feel this is too much "togetherness". "In fact," explains Mel Beetle, "since we work in different sections, and we're both so busy, days go by when we don't see each other until closing time."

"And if one of us has to work late," says Naty Beetle, "the other goes home to be with the kids, so this arrangement is good."

There don't seem to be any immediate plans to change the working arrangements, since

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# Handicapped Want "Full Participation"

"The rage and frustration experienced by disabled persons is beginning to be translated into affirmative action and organization," says Mary Jane Owen, ACTION's coordinator of activities for the United Nations International Year of Disabled Persons (IYDP), which begins on January 1, 1981. The theme of the Year is "Full Participation."

"President Carter has called for an increase in public recognition of what remains to be done before handicapped persons are permitted full participation in the life of the community, and we are working to fulfill that mandate," says Owen. Established in March, 1980, the ACTION IYDP Committee operates under the leadership of the Office of Voluntary Citizen Participation (OVCP), and intends to raise awareness, plan and promote IYDP activities and recommend policy and programming goals at ACTION.

"We need to raise awareness among temporarily able-bodied people," says Owen, "so they can recognize the disabled movement as a civil rights movement. ACTION has always supported such grassroots movements," she adds, "and we are very excited about the progress being made by the Committee to promote IYDP activities within the agency."

An IYDP planning conference was held in late June at Gallaudet College for the Deaf in Washington, D.C. by the People-to-People Committee for the Handicapped and Partners for the Americas. This led to the formation of the U.S. Council for IYDP to coordinate a series of planning and programming efforts on behalf of the country's disabled citizens. Over 200 organizations and a number of mayors, governors and concerned citizens have joined as "partners" to work with the council in an effort to strengthen public understanding of the needs and potential contributions of the more than 35 million disabled people in the country.

Shortly after the formation of the U.S. Council for IYDP, a Federal Interagency Committee for IYDP was established to insure the proper federal direction and coordination of organizational planning and program development within the federal sector. The committee, which consists of representatives from over 28 federal departments, agencies, offices and commissions will, over the next year, initiate, develop and

promote federal programs geared toward disabled persons.

ACTION is one of eight members of the Federal Interagency Steering Committee for IYDP. OVCP Director Mercedes Miller, who represents ACTION on the Committee, says, "It is important to provide a link between the public and private sector efforts on behalf of all disabled people. It is also our goal to advocate for more involvement of disabled people as volunteers in their communities and in ACTION/Peace Corps programs in 1981."

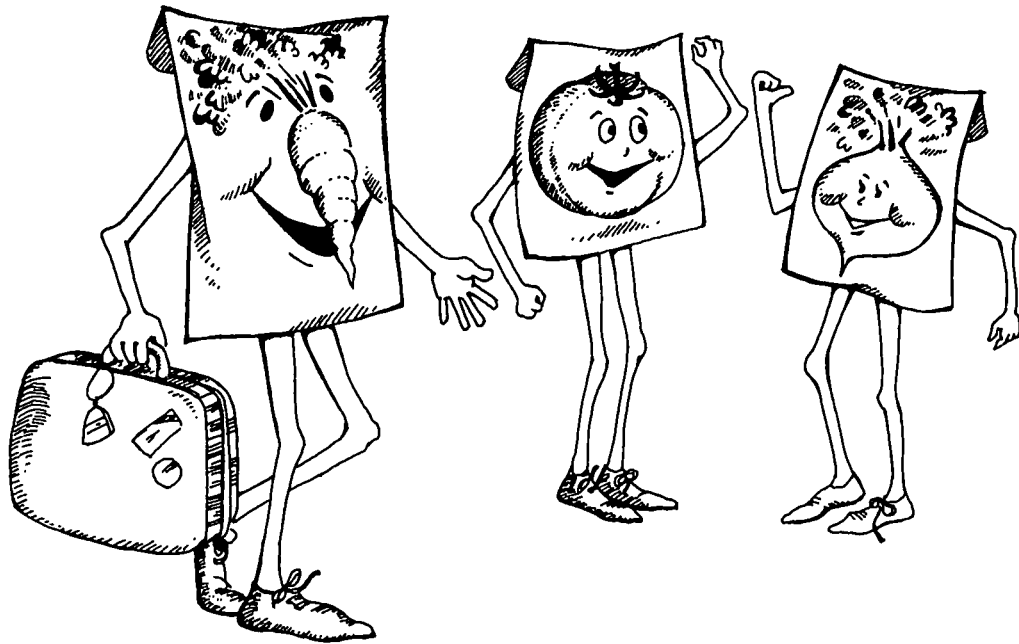
According to Owen, the critical issue for ACTION will be independent living (for the handicapped.) Noting that the recent executive staff conference at Coolfont, W. Va. declared independent living a major policy and programming issue for the 1980s, Owen says, "The 35 million disabled citizens in this country must have the opportunity and responsibility to participate fully and live as independently as possible in our society."

Owen represented ACTION on June 22-27, at the 1980 World Congress of Rehabilitation International in Winnipeg, Canada. "One of the most exciting achievements of that Congress," she says, "was the formation of the World Coalition of the Disabled, by disabled citizens from over 70 countries."

"The capacity to be a citizen within the United States is dependent upon full-participation, particularly in the election process," Owen continues. "The polling places in this country are often inaccessible to many disabled voters. This is going to change."

In a memo announcing the formation of ACTION's IYDP Committee, Brown said, "I would hope that we would have both headquarters and field participation in the activities of the year, and that our programs and activities will be carried out in partnership with private voluntary groups and organizations both within the U.S. and abroad."

ACTION Update will feature further developments regarding IYDP in upcoming issues. Interested readers or those with questions, suggestions or information may contact Mary Jane Owen at FTS 254-8080 or 800-424-8868.



## Surplus Seeds Benefit PC Countries

An ongoing program is helping people in some Peace Corps countries to put a little more food on their table, according to Jim Carpenter, volunteer recruitment specialist in the Chicago Service Center.

For the past five years, Carpenter has coordinated the donation of surplus vegetable seeds from a private company in Illinois to Peace Corps countries requesting them.

"As a placement specialist on the agriculture/skilled trades desk more than five years ago, I knew that vegetable seeds and supplies in many Peace Corps countries were scarce," Carpenter says. "I knew that additional seeds would be helpful."

When he moved to his present position in Chicago, he contacted several seed companies to see if they could help. Carpenter learned that the Vaughn Jacklin Seed Company in Downers Grove, Ill., had about 4,000 pounds of surplus seeds a year. They agreed to donate the seeds to Peace Corps, who in turn, agreed to ship them to requesting countries.

"This is a pretty small outlay, when you consider that Peace Corps is getting nearly \$200,000 worth of seeds a year," Carpenter says.

Vaughn Jacklin donates 17 varieties of seeds—including tomatoes, corn, eggplant, spinach, squash and lima beans.

Every April, Peace Corps countries are con-

tacted to find out how many and what kinds of seeds are needed. CDOs respond by July 1, generally requesting those seeds which have adapted well in the past. They receive the seeds in late July or early August.

"The country directors have been enthusiastic," says Carpenter. "About 25 to 30 countries a year request seeds. This year, we are sending seeds to 27 countries."

Carpenter says the seeds formerly were shipped through diplomatic channels, but Peace Corps now ships them by international air-mail directly from the Chicago Service Center.

"The requesting countries are making good use of the seeds," Carpenter says. In Chile, for example, they are being used by PCVs in school garden projects. Morocco is involved in a pilot vegetable growing program and Nepal has an ongoing vegetable seed support program.

"Not all seeds are suitable for distribution in all countries," Carpenter says, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture has prohibited some seeds in certain countries because of possible adverse effects of in-country environments on them.

"Overall, though, the effect has been positive," Carpenter says. "Some 200 PCVs are working on projects involving the seeds. I expect that number to grow."

# An Intimate Look at a CAST Program

The group of 38 prospective Fiji and Lesotho Peace Corps volunteers is greeted by a sign as they pile off the bus on the campus of Hilbert College, which consists of five buildings on a flat expanse in this sleepy town 15 miles south-east of Buffalo. The sign reads, "Welcome to CAST: The longest job interview you'll ever have."

CAST stands for Center for Assessment and Training. For the PCV hopefuls gathered here, it means an intense, intriguing and terrifically busy eight days of training activities, mutual assessment by themselves and staff, country-specific learning, health screening, paper processing and cross-cultural preparation—a melange of carefully planned training that is not a little arduous, exciting, and in most cases, rewarding to those who complete it.

The most tangible result of CAST is the extension at its finish, of an invitation to begin in-country Peace Corps training. Some of those who are not invited to serve are asked to apply again after a year.

In his introductory remarks, CAST director Walter Bennett tells the group, "Each morning you'll think 'can I make it another day?' And then you'll push on." Bennett, a former director at the Office of Economic Opportunity Health Center in Washington, D.C., continues, "The staff will, in a sense, interview you for possible Peace Corps service. You, on the other hand, will interview the Peace Corps and have a chance to ask, 'Is this what I want to do for the next two years of my life?'"

Bennett stressed that the CAST process is a "mutual assessment system, providing an introduction to Peace Corps service and history, cross-cultural training and a framework for understanding the role of Peace Corps volunteers in development work.

A CAST model and training staff was assembled last year by the Peace Corps Office of Programming and Training Coordination. According to Bennett, the CAST was designed to begin training more effectively and help provide better quality volunteers to host countries.

Following Bennett's welcoming talk, participants attend an ice-breaker hour, beginning

the eight-day marathon schedule of meetings, meals, group dynamics, case studies, completion of forms, films, and even play periods. This schedule focuses on subjects like Peace Corps aspirations of volunteer service, country overviews, cross-cultural workshops, volunteers and neo-colonialism, consultation skills, personal support systems, and the volunteer's role in development.

In an exercise called "BAFA BAFA," participants are divided into two groups of differing languages and cultural traits. The groups represent the hypothetical nations of Alpha and Beta, each foreign to each other. Individuals from the different cultures mingle and attempt to communicate. Participants later discuss the experience.

The most intimate, and perhaps reassuring sessions are the evening group meetings held every other evening to conclude the day's activities. People unwind and provide mutual feedback and support. According to one participant, the CAST experience results in making the kinds of friends it usually takes years to get to know.

The trainees' activities end each night at 9:30, after which the staff meets, often until the wee hours of the morning, to review the overall process, the progress of the participants and plans for the next day.

"We try to provide a good mode for training," Bennett says. "We treat people caringly, with warmth—we try to help participants see the kinds of decisions they make in life. It is important to give people entering Peace Corps this kind of experience."

The final Friday, the somewhat worn-out staff and participants celebrate with a party. Later, of the 12 couples interested in serving in Fiji, 11 are issued an invitation to begin in-country training. Twelve people are invited to become Lesotho trainees. (One was deselected for a job in Lesotho, but was asked to apply for service in another Peace Corps country.) Invited trainees go home for a month before leaving the U.S., "hopefully," says Bennett, "with some basic understanding of the many demands of volunteer service."

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# Energy

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"Increased energy costs severely affect the quality of charitable programs and end up hurting the very people who depend on our services for help," Coley said.

Under CEP, ACTION's Office of Voluntary Citizen Participation assisted the 18 communities nationwide, through technical assistance

and mini-grants of up to \$5,000 provided through an interagency agreement with the Department of Energy (See Feb. 29 issue of Update.) CEP was established following the completion of the successful energy conservation project in Fitchburg, Mass.

# Beetles

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both feel strongly about the future of the Peace Corps, VISTA and all the agency's programs, and their dual role in it. "Peace Corps and VISTA are presently involving the countries and the communities in the decisions as to what kind of assistance they want and need," he says.

"These programs will stay alive only as long as the host countries and the American communities want them, and with the renewed emphasis on local participation, I feel this will be a long time."



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## ACTION UPDATE

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