

# the ~~last~~ UPDATE



HAPPY THANKSGIVING

2 Nov., 1984

Here's hoping that your Thanksgiving was blessed and Joyful and that you look back on your past year of blessings (pleasant & painful) giving thanks to Him for all....

I'm at a new typewriter for this edition. We have begun the unpleasant but inevitable process of leaving St. Vincent and my trusty typewriter is one piece of 'excess' baggage I don't want to return with. I still have nightmares about walking down the endless miles of corridor at the Miami airport with that 20 lb load slowly stretching my arm until it drags on the ground. Our plan is to travel LIGHT and what we can't sell we will give away. Still, we knew we'll have quite a bit of luggage and accumulated (but very dear) JUNK. Starting early eases the pain. A few things here, a few there....

Ah, yes, I am well ahead of myself already. You can tell that imminent departure is foremost in my mind. But what of Europe?? Can it be that we have already forgotten our extravagant days cruising in our Polo (Marco Polo? No, VW...)? Certainly not. But, a long telling of the tale would completely dominate this Update and besides we have to have SOMETHING to bore you with when we return. Spinning yarns about our European Adventure in front of a warm, crackling fire is much better than spelling it out on paper. However, we did enjoy it very much (despite the rain, cold and occasionally chaotic traffic). We met some wonderful people, saw some old friends and made new ones, toured some amazing places and over-dosed on beautiful churches. Of course we spent too much money (all but \$60 of our budget) but we got a lot of bang for the buck (U.S.) as most currencies were trading at historical lows. We have had ENOUGH of flying for a while (9 hours on a plane is almost suicidal). However, we will soon be back into the jet-set on probably one of THE most convoluted route to Salt Lake City ever devised (but I am getting ahead of myself again).

The last Update had filled you in on our latest runnings. The new physiotherapist had arrived, elections had taken place, we were in the process of getting a Peace Corps Volunteer for the handicap programme we were involved in in Bequia. To be quite honest not much has happened since that time mostly because we were in Europe for about half the time. The other half has been spent sort-through the Peace Corps paper-chase in order to get OUT (harder than getting in...). The Peace Corps will be recruiting a Volunteer in Special Education for Bequia. So, if you know of any special-ed. instructors who would like to spend a couple of years setting up a community-based special ed. programme on a beautiful Caribbean island call your nearest Peace Corps recruiter and tell him/her specifically about this assignment. It should show up on their TAC printouts in January. Or ask them to call the Caribbean desk officer... Well, with that recruitment drive complete, back to our story... Deb and I have both been busy with the odds and ends of winding up our jobs. Actually, my winding-up begins this week-end as my 'replacement' will arrive this Sat. I will spend two weeks training him on the ins and outs of Marketing Intelligence in St. Vincent. I'll have a busy schedule as the week he leaves to go back to Antigua to finish his Peace Corps Training, is my final week of work and the same week that I need to get out the November issue of the M.I.U. Report. The final day of work for me is also my birthday. I couldn't have a better present... Deb is also busy with job-related stuff. Irene the new physiotherapist, settled in quite nicely while Deb was away.

Deb is feeling good about that adjustment and is spending her final days at the hospital finishing up some training objectives with the assistant she has been working with over the past two years. She is also making some final home visits to patients she has been seeing in the community. Add to that some last minute shopping (Christmas, Wow.) packing, Peace Corps paperwork and a couple of farewell gatherings and you begin to get an idea of the pace our lives have taken on. We leave this adopted home of ours on Nov. 26 to spend 4 days in St. Lucia where we are having the P.C. Close of Service Conference. Since they have an airport large enough to handle jets there, we will fly from there to Miami on Nov. 30th. Back in the U.S.A. to stay.

Its fortunate that things are so hectic because we really haven't had the chance to think about leaving. That is something that will be more difficult than my earlier rantings about how miserable this Peace Corps experience is would indicate (awkward sentence). 18 months ago I thought I'd be camping out at the airport in anticipation of leaving. Now, though you won't have to drag me out to the plane, I am reluctant to go. I'd like to stay. Not only because I like St. Vincent, but also because I worked so darn hard to adjust to this experience that I hate to leave now things are going so well. My job has blossomed into a challenging position with many exciting potentials. I hate leaving that too. Our 'roots' here are no more clearly displayed in than in our 'social circle'. The collection of friends with whom we feel so comfortable and who, presumably, feel comfortable with us. It is this, more than any other single thing, that makes St. Vincent 'home' for us. All of this became apparent to us when we returned from Europe. Everyone seemed so welcoming and glad to see that we were back (which surprised us to no end). That unexpected response forged our affection even deeper. We are very thankful for this experience. It has challenged our patience and perseverance. It has made us think and made us grow. It has, hopefully, broadened and strengthened our compassion and love. It has made us ever more mindful of the Christ within us and within others. It is something which has shaped our future and altered our worldview forever. All that, and more....

But we have decided to return to the U.S.A. and we will. We eagerly anticipate seeing our families (some of whom we have never met). We welcome the chance to get caught up on the two years we have missed in the States. We will turn up the fire on old friendships. In short, we're comin' back, and anxious to do so. We also need to say "Thanks" to all of you who supported us with letters, love, prayers and thoughts. All of the kindnesses were greatly appreciated. Even you, in an indirect way, have made an impact here..... So, we're finished. The last St. Vincent update is done. St. 'Anywhere' is next. We hope to see you all VERY soon. WERE COMIN' HOME.