staff news
INTERNATIONAL MONETARY FUND
NOVEMBER 1988

THE ART OF JOY

An Interview with Rosalia Miller

Rosalia Miller's *basement studio is often filled with children. It is particularly rewarding, she finds, to work with minority and disadvantaged children.*

The World Bank Volunteer Services International Arts and Crafts Fair, which will run from November 15 through November 17 (10 a.m.–3 p.m.), largely draws its participants from the Bank's staff and spouses of staff. This year, however, there will be several Fund exhibitors, including Rosalia Miller, who has been making handcrafted jewelry with her children for five years. It took some doing to get Rosalia to talk about herself, and, even then, periodically during the interview, she'd stop in sheer amazement. "I'm torn, you know," she said. "I fear that I will sound like I'm bragging, but I'm so excited about the work." Enthusiasm triumphed over reticence.

Rosalia Miller has worked at the Fund since 1966—first with the IMF Institute, most recently part time with the Administration Department. She talks here about how she manages to combine her art with her love of children.

Were you formally trained in art?

My parents sent me to boarding school in Pennsylvania and throughout boarding school, art was my thing. When I returned to Nicaragua, though, my parents encouraged me to pursue languages and another career—certainly not art. My father would always say, it's wonderful to be an artist, but you really can't earn a living that way. But though my family was not supportive of a career in art, I was able to enroll in Bellas Artes, the Nicaraguan school of art that later became part of the Universidad Nacional de Nicaragua. I received my bachelor of arts there but, afterward, to please my parents, I went mostly into languages and secretarial work. I worked for the American Embassy, and my art was sort of dormant.

In 1969, working at the IMF, I just couldn't stand it any longer. I decided I needed to do more with art. I enrolled at the Corcoran, studying under Professor Frank Wright, who is now the head of the Art Department at George Washington University. I went there at night and continued my daytime work. I took different courses, polishing up things that I had learned in Nicaragua. I principally studied drawing and composition. I wanted better skills, particularly in drawing, because it is so basic to so many things.

But then I didn't do anything with that either, except to enter a drawing of a cabbage in the IMF Art Show. It won first prize—I'll never forget that. I continued working at the Fund—for the Institute, which is really my cradle—and I continued at the Corcoran and took advanced courses at George Washington University in French.

Then in 1974 I realized that I just couldn't stay here any more, I was bursting with the urge to do more. I resigned from the Fund and applied, and got accepted, to the Inchbald School of Design in London. I did a year's program there and got a diploma in interior design. The curriculum was very intense, but it was fun. We'd go to the manufacturers, interview them, and discuss materials. It was one of the best things I've done in my life.

I came back to Washington in 1975 and shortly after my return I got married. My husband was chosen to participate in the President's Executive Exchange Program and we went to New York for one year. I promptly enrolled at Parsons School of Design. I specialized in environmental design—a fascinating field and very much "au courant." In New York, when you go to Parsons, people are waiting for you with a job. I was immediately hired by Harry and Marian Zalenko, well-known designers in New York, but it was temporary because we were returning to Washington in two or three months.

When I came back here, I found an interior design job, but it required working on Saturdays and that didn't fit our lifestyle. A position came up at the Fund at that point and when they called to see if I was interested, I said yes. I put art on the back burner again. But not for long, because I began to study privately with Jill Hinckley, a local potter. I did pottery with her until I was so big with my first child I couldn't fit around the wheel anymore.

After my second child was born, I got my own potter's wheel and kiln. I began making pins because it allowed me to pull all of my background together in a manageable medium, and it was something I could do with my children. Everything about me has to do with children. Everything. Everything I make is childlike, because my goal is to be able to bring up my children myself; I don't want the housekeeper to do it—I will bring them up.

The pins developed while I was playing with my children. We began by using cookie cutters; my children would do the clay, and then we would design them and play with them. We later expanded to doing animals—fish, pigs, roosters, and ducks. It's just the children and me playing, and it is sheer delight. It's all whimsical and very pretty. It's a family affair, and my husband Richard has been so supportive of all this.

Every summer, for a week or two, we go to the beach in North Carolina, to Emerald Isle. I found myself collecting shells again—something I did as a child at my grandmother's beach house in Nicaragua—a frail house that was one day taken away by the sea. I spent days and months there, gathering shells. I had no collection at home, really, I would just gather them on the beach. Now I found myself doing the same with my children.

We had all these shells, and none of them was whole. They were pieces of shells, some with brilliant colors, and others muted grays. I said, why don't we see if we can put them together? Why don't we make pins out of the seashells?

We gradually began to do several different kinds of pins as well as ceramic necklaces. People would ask about the pins; we would make more. It grew like that. A woman who runs a gallery in Bethesda has contacted me;

she's now selling these pins. Then the Smithsonian heard about me and signed me up to do workshops with parents and children this fall. It's on Saturdays, and we are doing ceramic jewelry.

Privately I still do pottery at home when I have time. I do pots and bowls and mugs. I'm doing a set of plates for my family, which will probably be ready for Christmas. Time is what is a problem.

When do you work?

When I leave the office here, I just take care of my children—they have to be picked up from school and taken to ballet classes and so on. When we do work is after dinner. When I thrive is maybe at eleven o'clock at night; everybody is in bed at that point, and I have some time to throw a pot or create something.

I have a studio downstairs in my house—it's above ground, like an English basement. There are always children coming in to work with me. Parents call and ask if I would work with their children. I am especially proud of working with the needy, with minorities; there are so many of them in Washington that we're not aware of.

These children, you give them a ball of clay and you have to control your own tears, because you see the marvel, the excitement, and the happiness they feel when playing with that clay. These children have never had the opportunity to have a ball of clay in their hands, not even play dough. I work a lot with Hispanics and Blacks. There are so many in need; it's not hard to find them. The organization So Others Might Eat (S.O.M.E.) doesn't work with children specifically, but it can refer you.

My own daughters, Cristina, who is ten years old, and Luisa, who just turned four, go with me. I want them to see both sides; I want them to know that their mother comes from a very poor country, and that there are children there who don't even have half of what they have, so that they will be able to appreciate that. And I want to teach the children of minorities who are here in this country how to appreciate what they are getting. It all stems from appreciation, because people have been very good to me in the United States. I really do think that in this country you can do anything you set out to do. If you really want to do it, you can.

I am a busy mother, and I treasure and value my job in the IMF. I feel tremendous loyalty toward the Fund; I have been here for 22 years. It's very hard to leave this place, I grew up here. But it's hard to juggle these things. I don't have the time to call or visit galleries; I just don't have time. I produce something when I can; that's why I don't want to sign contracts with stores or galleries to show my work; I cannot have another commitment at this time. First I am a wife and a mother, and then I have my work here, and then I have my art.

The Washington arts and crafts scene has changed, though, because the gallery people are looking for little people like me now. There are great possibilities out there. Washington's a good place to be and I am very, very happy here. I've been here for so many years that I feel that I belong; in no way do I feel like an outsider. Yet I'm always aware that I am a foreigner. And I am most of all aware of Latin minorities; I am very much into that. I am concerned with how they struggle to be recognized.

You've been working largely with pottery. Do you draw still?

Yes, because when you don't have the clay right there with you—when you are in a car—you can take a pad of paper and draw. We draw constantly. I am also interested in photography. In fact, it was photography, and my knowledge of several languages, that got me into Nicaragua after the earthquake in 1972.

I was stunned when I heard the news of the earthquake; I don't know how I managed to get to Dulles Airport. There was one seat left on the plane but I got there almost too late. I pleaded with the people and they took me in the luggage cart. While on board the plane, I learned that an NBC crew was looking for an interpreter. They asked whether I would help and I said of course I would. When we landed in Guatemala, we were told the airport was closed and we couldn't go into Nicaragua. NBC had talked to me enough to know that I had an interest and some background in photography, and could help them with that. They took me on as a photographer, secretary, and interpreter; we hired two private planes, and I landed in Nicaragua with the NBC crew.

It took me 12 hours to find my family. They were not at the house, but my brother had written in charcoal—he just knew that I would come—where they were and that they were alive. Since I knew they were alive, I fulfilled my commitments—I interpreted and got the trucks, and made all the necessary arrangements for NBC. And I also took photographs, which they used.

I found my family, and was able to gather all kinds of supplies for them. I found my mother and grandmother in a daze—they hadn't had food for two days. But I brought them supplies and they were able to survive. Photography really saved me; I would have never been able to go into the country without my camera.

You've worked with different mediums. Are there certain qualities about each that you particularly enjoy?

Well, clay gives people peace. The working of clay is a communion between you and the clay. People don't need psychiatrists or shrinks—just give them a ball of clay. It's good for children, especially for disadvantaged children. They need something to hold on to; actually the clay is the earth where we all end up anyway. Clay gives me peace.

Photography is challenging, it's surprising—you never really know how it's going to come out. And the kiln has a mystery of its own. Overall, it is the surprise that keeps me alive, that keeps me enthused. You're like a child, you're surprised each time. To me all these media are exciting, and, childlike, we go back to being children—which is a nice, safe way to be. The world can be so threatening.

Is your family artistic?

My father is a composer. He left a fabulous job in the business world—but he waited until he was 55 and I don't know whether I can wait that long—to teach piano and compose his own music. My father was opposed to my doing art, but it was because he wanted the best for me. It's like when a child says I want to go into the circus. You say sure, but what kind of life is that? My father is still alive and very proud of me.

Probably the biggest force behind what I am all about is my mother; she was incredible. She taught me that you can do anything you want, if you exercise discipline with yourself and you set out to do it. It's really true. It's not easy, you stumble a lot, but it can be done, absolutely. My mother was diagnosed as having an incurable disease; they gave her three to five years to live when I was 12 years old. She lived for 30 more years. Thirty years! She opened her own boutique; she managed it and sent my brother Alejandro, who now works in the World Bank, and me to study at university.

She's the one who taught me that if you dedicate yourself, persevere at something, you *can* do it. I hope I can teach that to my children.

THE WBVS INTERNATIONAL ARTS AND CRAFTS FAIR

"Mrs. McNamara was dying," Carla Scearce recalls, "and a small group of Bank wives who had worked with her wanted to give her a gift. We wanted to create a scholarship in her name." The scholarship program was conceived in 1981, but in its first several years the group struggled to find ways to fund it.

Why not do a bazaar, thought Carla Scearce. It was a popular fall custom in the local area, but the idea did not crystallize until she attended a concert in the auditorium of the H Building and realized it would be perfect for such an event. The World Bank Volunteer Services International Arts and Crafts Fair was born; Carla Scearce still serves as its chairman.

Now in its third year, the fair has a waiting list of participants, and its success yielded $26,000 last year for the Margaret McNamara Fund—a sum sufficient to underwrite two scholarships. The scholarships have been set up to provide financial aid to women from developing countries who study in the United States and make a commitment to return to their home countries and work to better the lives of women and children there.

The spacious H Building Auditorium, whose ground floor entrance is situated on G Street between 19th and 20th Streets, holds 60 tables. Exhibitors, with international crafts and handmade work, donate $40 for a table plus 15 percent of their sales to the Margaret McNamara Fund. An array of donated food provides fairgoers with a wide range of pastries and snacks. World Bank Volunteer Services sponsors the show, which runs for three days—Tuesday, November 15 through Thursday, November 17. It will be open from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Judging from last year's crowds, it is best to visit before or after the lunch hours.

TAKING A HEALTHIER APPROACH: FUND, BANK REVAMP SERVICES

***Megan Plummer** consults with Nurse Suzy Robbins at the Fund's satellite health unit on the Red Level. The Administration Department and SAC will be exploring the possibility of expanding services at the satellite unit.*

Initially the news that a World Bank committee had been charged with examining the future of the Medical Department stirred some concern within the Fund. With the committee taking shape amid the Bank's reorganization, there were fears that the Medical Department might be dismantled or see all of its major functions contracted out to save costs.

As work got under way, however, the sense of alarm gradually evaporated. Jean-Yves Maillat, an internal management consultant with the Bank and project leader for the study team, explains that the brief of the new committee never included a mandate to reduce services. Nor was the study specifically supposed to be a cost-cutting exercise. The Bank's Reorganization Support Units Task Force had been looking at all support services but did not feel it had the expertise to review the Medical Department, so a special committee was set up and consultants brought in to assist with the review.

A steering committee, which included a Fund representative, Chris Ahl—the head of the Staff Benefits Division—reviewed broad issues and examined the specific medical needs of the staff. Its report and recommendations, which have now been accepted by both the Fund and the Bank, reaffirm both institutions' commitment to the maintenance of an in-house medical facility but recommend a number of changes in the use of the facility's resources—including a phasing out of annual physicals and a greater emphasis on travel-related needs.

The review was conceived as a two-phase study—first, to look at what services should be offered and, second, to determine how these could best be provided. "In practice," Jean-Yves Maillat says, "most decisions about how services would be provided were taken in the course of the first phase. A separate second phase wasn't needed."

The underlying question for the two institutions was, Chris Ahl observes, "how to reconcile the individual's responsibility for his or her own health with the employer's responsibilities. The employer clearly has a role, particularly in an organization such as the Fund or the Bank, but it must be understood that the primary responsibility for an individual staff member's health rests with the individual."

To help define the role, and the responsibilities, of the two institutions and to provide some perspective on what other international agencies or operations might be doing in this area, the steering committee brought in a consultant, Dr. William Bicknell. "The steering committee was particularly interested," Chris Ahl says, "in looking at what type of responsibilities other employers were willing to assume."

The steering committee was also interested in determining what staff and managers in the two institutions perceived was needed. The Fund conducted three surveys: a random sample was taken of 15 percent of all staff; department heads were asked to comment on the main issues; and a series of meetings were held with a group of division chiefs, including many who headed missions.

Jean-Yves Maillat sat in on many of the discussions in both institutions and found most of their concerns similar. The only difference he noted was that Fund staff, and those working with Fund staff, consistently cited a need for greater mental health services. It is only in recent years that the Fund has been fully using the Medical Department's counseling services. "In both institutions, mission heads, division chiefs, and others raised the issue of doing more to meet psychological needs," he observes.

On most of the major issues, such as whether annual physicals should continue to be provided by the Medical Department, the Fund and the Bank found themselves in relatively ready agreement. To date the Bank has required annual physicals for all of its staff; it reimburses staff for physicals taken outside the Medical Department, but places a cap ($200 at present) on such reimbursements. The Fund, on the other hand, does not require annual physicals, and its medical insurance fully covers physicals done by a personal physician, although some staff still opt to have their physicals done at the Medical Department. Both institutions agreed that annual physicals were absorbing a significant portion of the Medical Department's resources, while often having the unintended effect of discouraging staff from finding and developing an on-going relationship with a personal physician.

Under the new arrangement, annual physicals at the Medical Department will be phased out, and the Department's referral service will be improved to give greater assistance to staff who seek help in finding a suitable personal physician. This expanded referral system, Dr. Eugene Chap, acting head of the Medical Department, notes, will carry information on such things as the languages doctors are able to speak and as much detail as possible on the areas in which they specialize.

Jean-Yves Maillat emphasizes that the restructuring of the way in which services are delivered also reflects an important change in attitude. "We wanted to change from a control-oriented approach to a support-oriented one. We wanted the Medical Department to be more oriented to identifying and meeting individual needs."

Lesley Shneier, an internal management consultant with the Bank, worked with the Medical Department personnel and found them responsive to the openness of the review and very receptive to change. "They made changes in their approach based on staff responses to our surveys. They didn't wait for the report to be issued; they realized they had to reach out more. It was not a drastic change, rather a reorientation of priorities."

Differing institutional needs and concerns prompted the Fund and the Bank to concentrate on certain specific aspects of the committee's review. The Bank, for instance, spurred by concerns raised by its Staff Association, spent a great deal of time reviewing the confidentiality of staff medical records. For the Fund this proved a non-issue; personnel and medical records had always been maintained in separate departments in the Fund, and the question of the confidentiality was never perceived to be a problem.

Both the Fund and SAC were very concerned, however, about the expansion and improvement of travel-related services. It was a concern that Dr. Eugene Chap found very understandable. "A greater proportion of the Fund staff travel," he observes. "Its secretaries and support staff travel, where the Bank's do not." The Fund was anxious to improve the services provided to staff going on resident representative or mission assignments; the report agreed that the Medical Department's resources should be reallocated to give this top priority.

"We'd like to improve the information that staff receive," Chris Ahl says. "The Medical Department is very well plugged into a broad range of information through the UN network. We would like to increase the individualized information and counseling that staff receive on particular countries, and improve pre-travel facilities. The Medical Department is currently looking at whether the Fund's satellite unit, for instance, could begin dispensing medication. The feasibility of going even further in expanding the services offered by the Fund's satellite unit will be examined in consultation with the SAC."

With the shift in resources, the Medical Department, and possibly the Fund's satellite unit, will be providing more on-site services to staff. It is already doing more to treat minor ailments. What is treated there, and what is not, will always be a matter of the physician's discretion. If the ailment is likely to require repeated treatment, it will be referred to the staff member's own physician. On-site treatment of minor ailments is provided as a convenience for staff, who might otherwise have to leave work to seek treatment elsewhere. It is not meant to substitute for the broader, on-going care that would be provided by a personal physician.

The shift in resources will also allow the Medical Department to give greater emphasis to the mental health counseling that is provided through the Staff Counseling Services. Efforts will be made to extend services to the families of staff members as well. A structural change to come out of the steering committee's work is the refashioning of the Medical Department—which will be renamed the Health Services Department—into four units: staff counseling, clinical services, evaluation, and administrative support. The chief element in this reorganization is the separation of clinical from evaluative services.

A new evaluation unit will be advising the Fund and the Bank on what Dr. Eugene Chap calls "career juncture decisions." These would include pre-employment, pre- and post-resident representative reports on fitness for duty, medical disability, and fitness for duty after long-term or severe illnesses. The evaluation unit will not, in most instances, conduct these examinations itself but it will review the report of a designated physician, who can be the staff member's attending physician, and request clarification or additional information when it feels that this is warranted.

To the degree that it is possible, the Medical Department will, Chris Ahl confirmed, remove itself from the first level of examination. In the case of resident representatives, who in the past have had their tests done by the Medical Department, this means having a prescribed set of tests performed by outside physicians. The Medical Department will draw up a set of necessary tests and develop a list of doctors who can administer the tests and are sufficiently aware of the general demands of overseas assignments and related health issues to be able to judge a staff person's fitness for such assignments.

The actual details of many of these changes, as well as their implementation, will await the appointment of a new head of the Medical Department—an appointment expected in 1989. Some points, such as what specifically constitutes an annual physical and what would thus be covered by the insurance plan without a deductible, still have to be resolved and may require guidelines. Staffing at the main health room facility and the Fund satellite unit has also not been resolved, although nurse practitioners may be used more than in the past. And continued emphasis will be placed on health promotion—an area in which Jean-Yves Maillat feels the Medical Department already does more than many comparable institutions.

Drafting the final report was an unusually arduous task. "In 15 years of consulting," Jean-Yves Maillat notes, "I never spent as much time on a report as I did on this one." "We crafted each sentence," Lesley Shneier adds. On the Fund side, both the Administration Department and the Staff Association representatives, who worked closely on this issue, are pleased with the outcome and with the cooperative spirit that marked the effort. "We were involved at every stage," commented SAC representative Joslin Landell-Mills. "We felt a real effort was made to keep SAC informed and to both solicit and take account of our views on the issues. The experience was a very positive one."

HOBGOBLINS AND HAYRIDES

BOO! Bretton Woods celebrated Halloween a day early, with pumpkin patches, hayrides, and toasted marshmallows. In the cafeteria (bottom right), some rather mischieviously masked pumpkins guarded the doors.

MANAGING DIRECTOR BIDS FAREWELL TO FIVE LEAVING EXECUTIVE BOARD

On October 31, Managing Director Michel Camdessus paid tribute to five Executive Directors who were leaving the Board. His remarks, at a dinner in their honor, are reproduced here.

It is a sad occasion when the Executive Board loses five of its members—almost a quarter of the total, with 21 years of Board experience among them. This "Group of Five" illustrates the diversity that comes together to make the Fund the very special, very unique, very remarkable institution that it is. As well as their different national backgrounds, these Big Five bring together experience as academics, authors, diplomats, businessmen, central bankers, and public servants. No wonder, then, that their cumulative contribution has been outstanding.

Ghassem Salehkhou has been in the Board for six years, representing one of the most extended constituencies, ranging from the western edge of Africa to the western edge of Asia. Mentioning the African part in his constituency, I am especially happy to pay tribute to his part of the transformation of the Ghanaian economy—one of the success stories of the Fund in recent years. To his task at the Fund he brought experience as teacher, businessman, and diplomat. He is also a man of deep convictions, for example, on the rights of the least developed countries or the importance of public service, even, when necessary, at the expense of personal plans. I have been struck by his meticulous preparation and balanced presentation and his very special art of making—in passing and mezza voce—very strong points. Having had the privilege of frequently hearing your statements, I can confess to you now—I wouldn't have told you before—that I knew from the soft tone of your voice when the strong points were about to come. The softness was not a matter of tactics, however, but a reflection of your genuine sense of duty and concern for the quality of relations in our Board. This is why you have always been respected, even by those who disagreed with you, and regarded by your colleagues with affection and high esteem.

Alvaro Donoso, who was an Executive Director previously before returning to Chile, is now taking his leave of the Board for a second time. His previous experience, combined with his background in teaching and administration, made him a most effective member of the Board. Representing his constituency at the present juncture ensured that his time at the Fund would be eventful, yet he

has handled the many challenges that arose with Olympian calmness. I think we all listened particularly attentively to his interventions in the Board, for his thoughtful reflections could throw new light on any subject. His colleagues will not be surprised if I tell you now that Leo van Houtven and I could never be sure that we had captured the full sense of a meeting until he had spoken—quite a problem when his very well-known modesty made him speak the very last. In addition, I personally have valued his advice and help on many occasions at difficult points in negotiations.

Ahmed Abdallah has been on the Board for four years now, first as Alternate and then as Director. In my view, his contribution has been distinguished by two qualities above all: his humanity and his objectivity. I can think of many occasions when his interventions in the Board showed an ability to rise above the technical details and draw our attention to the real human implications of what we were discussing. And these were not mere words—I am not sure he will be happy that I say this, but it is true—for the same principles have motivated his commitment to charitable work outside the Fund. At the same time he has earned our respect for his objectivity and for his willingness at times—this is off the record—to take positions different from those of his authorities. This is a difficult path to follow, but it is a mark of his stature that he has been able to do so and retain the respect that he enjoys so widely in Africa. It was just a year ago that I had the privilege of traveling to Kenya with Ahmed as a knowledgeable and good-humored companion. Remarkably, he survived that experience very well and I was able to observe the great affection in which he is held there as well as here.

Guillermo Ortiz has also been on the Board for four years now, first as Alternate and now as Director. His brilliant academic record is the mark of an acute intelligence, which has made him a most effective practitioner of the two-handed intervention to pounce on weaknesses in his colleagues' strongly asserted points. Two-handed interventions are a very special art; as in playing tennis close to the net, you have no margin for error. I have been told that on the tennis court, his returns are as quick and as devastating as they are in the Executive Board. But he has also made many imaginative and original contributions to our discussions. We wish him well in the important task of helping to prepare the plans of the new administration in Mexico. He goes there carrying in his attaché case the full box of tricks of the Executive Board, which makes all of us look forward to the creative content of any future Mexican arrangement.

Finally, I come to **Arjun Sengupta**, who has made good use of the Fund's new revolving doors, to leave the Board but return as my Special Advisor. I have already elaborated on the qualities that prompted me to ask him to take on this most demanding assignment: his background as an administrator at the highest levels of the Indian Civil Service and the international respect he has earned as an economist. Let me here, however, refer to the contribution that he has made to the work of the Board, as polymath (illustrated by his erudite discourse on Edmund Burke in his farewell remarks), vigorous debater, and contributor of strongly argued proposals on debt and quotas among many other subjects. Although he will be missed in the Board, we are fortunate that he will continue to serve the Fund. And, of course, I am the one feeling most fortunate.

The more general remark is very simple. You were all of you elected Executive Directors: you had to represent large constituencies with from time to time conflicting interests. Frequently you had to fine tune your positions, to convince members of your constituency of a wiser position, while taking the risk of not being well understood in all your constituent countries. In other circumstances you had to act the other way round: to be steadfast in your positions in order to progressively influence and improve the conventional views of the Executive Board. Each of you has had the experience of the loneliness of courageous positions, or the "lonely voice" Mr. Salehkhou referred to in his remarks. This requires more than the virtues normally expected of international civil servants; and it requires a readiness to pay a very high price for the progress of the international community. All of you paid it—as if it were a matter of course. This indeed is what is remarkable and what gained for all of you our respect and our pride in being your colleagues.

Allow me to give you all our best wishes on your return to Teheran, Santiago, Mexico City, Nairobi, or new positions in Washington. We wish you and your families what is abstractly but warmly conveyed in the words "all the best."

The five new Executive Directors are El Tayeb El Kogali of Sudan, who replaces Ahmed Abdallah of Kenya; Ernesto Feldman of Argentina, who succeeds Alvaro Donoso of Chile; Leonor Filardo of Venezuela, who replaces Guillermo Ortiz of Mexico; Mohammed Reza Ghasimi of the Islamic Republic of Iran, who succeeds Ghassem Salehkhou of the same country; and Bimal Jalan of India, who succeeds Arjun Sengupta, also of India.

Q & A

A QUIZ ON FUND HISTORY

A. Vasudevan's quiz, on the history of the International Monetary Fund, continues in this issue. The answers to the questions appear below.

1) Which was the first country to formally withdraw from the Fund after having joined it?

China
Czechoslavakia
U.S.S.R.

2) Which member country requested a drawing from the Fund against gold collateral?

Mexico
United Arab Republic
South Africa

3) Was a drawing ever made against gold collateral?

Yes
No

4) Can the Fund, under the present Articles of Agreement, float its own bonds in the international capital markets?

Yes
No

The answers: (1) Czechoslovakia; (2) United Arab Republic; (3) Yes; and (4) Yes.

FUND FINDS A NICHE FOR ITSELF AT HUGE FRANKFURT BOOK FAIR

Haroldo Suarez *mans the Fund's booth at the Frankfurt Book Fair.*

It is the mind-boggling dimensions of the event that everyone mentions first: more than 220,000 visitors, nearly 8,000 exhibitors, over one million square feet of exhibit space, some 350,000 book titles. The Frankfurt Book Fair is in a category by itself. The modern day version of the fair (first record of a book fair in Frankfurt is in 1462—in Gutenberg's time) covers all aspects of book publishing, as well as calendars, posters, and art prints. It is indisputably the world's largest and most prestigious book fair.

This year the mammoth event, which draws exhibitors from nearly 90 countries to the traditional October gathering, had three Fund staff in attendance: Ken Young, Senior Publications Officer with the Fund's Publications Services Unit; Haroldo L. Suarez, Publications Assistant; and Barbara Perry, a Reference Librarian with the Joint Bank-Fund Library. Ken Young and Haroldo Suarez, who spent much of their time setting up and manning the Fund's exhibit there, had an intensive insider's view, while Barbara Perry, who was returning from the Annual Meetings and was there to explore publishing sources that the Joint Library might not be aware of, had an opportunity to see more of the fair. She was able to form a broader impression of the sweeping event and its sometimes extravagant displays. The sheer size of the event staggered her. "I've attended the annual conference of the American Library Association and thought its 1,000 exhibitors was impressive. You see the Frankfurt Book Fair, with eight times that number, and it is overwhelming." She was struck, too, by the truly international scope of the fair and equally fascinated to find that English served as the nearly universal language of communication. "Even in the Soviet section," she noted, "English was the language I heard most. Of course, for counterpoint, Harper & Row's display featured Gorbachev's *Perestroika* in 21 language editions."

"What most struck me, though," she added, "was that unlike the library exhibitions, which are geared to the book purchaser, the Frankfurt Book Fair is really meant to bring together producers and distributors. The deals that one observes being struck can potentially involve millions of dollars."

It was the distribution end of the publishing business that drew the Fund's official participation in the fair. The Fund has only recently begun to use local distributors to broaden its publication sales efforts, but last year they accounted for 17 percent of book sales, and that proportion seems likely to grow as the number of distributors increases. "The volume of sales is really a secondary concern for us," Ken Young observed. "We use distributors to make our publications more accessible. It is an accommodation to our readers—to make it easier for them to purchase our publications, particularly when nonconvertible currencies are involved."

This is the fifth year that the Fund has been represented at Frankfurt and both Ken Young and Haroldo Suarez believed the cumulative effect of their presence in recent years was beginning to pay off this year. "People were really looking for us this year," Haroldo Suarez reported. Both are certain that a number of new distribution arrangements will result from their Frankfurt negotiations.

The Frankfurt Book Fair provides publishers and distributors with a hectic, but usually very productive six days in which to meet. The alternative—too costly and time-consuming for a publications program the size of the Fund's—would be to travel to individual countries for information and discussions. "Distributors are hard to find if they don't seek you out," Ken Young added.

"This was a watershed year for us. We co-sponsored a reception with the World Bank to which all prospective and current distributors were invited. It was a very successful event."

The terms offered distributors are generous. In return for holding a minimum number of publications, the Fund provides them with catalogs, the best discount available on stocking, replacements, priority handling of their accounts, and shipping by air (without charge). Profit margins are slim, but both Ken Young and Haroldo Suarez emphasize that customer convenience rather than money is the goal.

It is the Publication Services Unit's insistence on customer service that has led it to break with tradition and offer nonexclusive rights to its distributors. "If we receive a request from someone in a country that has a distributor, we do not forward it to the distributor. We handle it ourselves because we want the customer to receive the publication as quickly as possible. Customer satisfaction is our primary concern." Of course, the unit has to deal with a wide variety of business customs in these countries, and payment methods in particular can be trying. The Fund, however, has a very good record with its distributors and has had to cancel only one of the 35 distribution arrangements it has made to date.

There are fringe professional benefits from the Frankfurt Book Fair quite apart from those to be garnered from the distribution negotiations. "The fair gives us a chance to meet with peers, get new ideas, expand our professional contacts, and compare our marketing and service experiences," Ken Young said. "All of the international agencies get together during our 'set up' day to discuss shared problems."

Informal discussions, as well as formal presentations, can generate new ideas. "This year OECD's report of success in marketing diskettes has stimulated us to take a look at that approach and Oxford University Press's presentation on the use of an outside press has started us thinking about that possibility as well," Ken Young added.

"The Frankfurt Book Fair is the most important publishers' meeting in the world," Haroldo Suarez noted. "From our perspective, it's important as a way of helping booksellers gain a better understanding of the Fund, and it gives us a means of gaining a greater appreciation of what distributors expect from us." "It's absolutely fascinating," Ken Young concedes. After the crowds, the hoopla, the exhibits that sometimes "look like they came from outer space," it is the individual contacts that remain. For the Fund at Frankfurt, it was a very good year.

A NEW STAFF ASSOCIATION COMMITTEE TAKES OFFICE

Reinold van Til
Chairman

Mark Allen
Vice-Chairman

K. Burke Dillon
Vice-Chairman

Janice M. Smart
Secretary-Treasurer

Gail O. Berre

Howard P. G. Handy

Robert K. Rennhack

ALTERNATES: Clemens F. J. Boonekamp, Ian McDonald, Duncan M. Ripley, Lyndsey B. Livingstone, Anamaria Handford, Peter S. Heller, and Richard Hemming

SAC Comments On...

THE ISSUES, AND THE NEEDS, IN THE YEAR AHEAD

Over the next few months, the Executive Board is due to take some far-reaching administrative decisions, specifically on salaries and pensions, that will affect the Fund staff for many years to come. What the Board decides will determine whether the Fund is able to continue to attract and retain a high-quality staff, able to provide the necessary support to sustain or even enhance the role of the Fund, or whether it will sink into mediocrity, dooming the Fund to ineffectiveness.

With this in mind, a widely representative group of 14 staff members decided to run for the Staff Association Committee as members and alternates. We decided to run because this is a critical year for the staff and the Fund, and we care deeply for the institution where we work and have chosen to make our careers. The Fund and its staff have faced concerted attacks in recent years from some important member countries, the work load has risen by leaps and bounds, and morale is at a low ebb. Effectiveness of the Fund can be preserved only if the quality of its staff is maintained. We believe that Management, Administration, and most Executive Directors know this, but our job is to make sure that policies toward the staff are consistent with this goal.

The Board has before it the report of the Joint Committee on **Compensation.** The proposals contained in this document could lead to a further compression of salaries and a reduction in benefits. These proposals come at a time when comparative salary developments (including exchange rate developments) have made the recruiting of staff of an adequate quality in many member countries all but impossible, and when the Fund is even having difficulty recruiting all levels of staff in the U.S. market. The U.S. administration has made no secret of the fact that it wishes to bring salaries and benefits in the Bretton Woods institutions down toward the level of those in the U.S. Government. It is pursuing this line even as the U.S. Government salary system is itself breaking down, and the long-run damage done to the civil service is becoming all too apparent. In these circumstances, it is incumbent upon the staff to ensure that Management, Administration, and the Executive Board recognize the implications of such a policy and its incompatibility with the Articles.

It is also expected that in coming months the Pension Committee and the Board will be considering a report on amendments to the **Staff Retirement** plan. Our guiding principle is that pensions form an integral part of the compensation package, and proposed changes in the plan must be seen together with specific salary proposals. It would be wrong to determine pensions separately from compensation. The proposed changes in the plan will affect differently long-term and short-term staff, those with dependents and those without, U.S. nationals and expatriates, staff at different grades, those planning to retire in the United States and those planning to return home, and so forth. We do not have the answers to the questions posed by this reform, but we intend to ensure that staff views will be forcefully and effectively expressed on these vital matters, and that benefits will be in line with contributions.

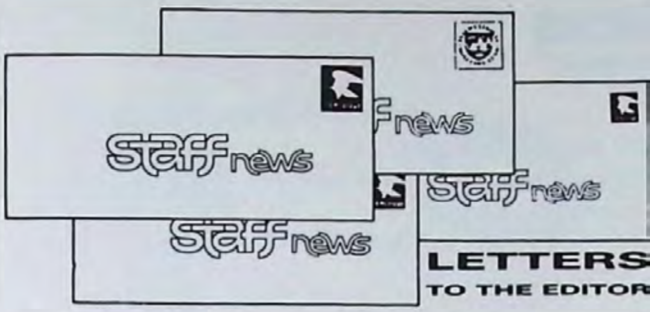
While salaries and pensions will provide the most important focus for the new SAC's work, **other areas** cannot and will not be neglected. These include the establishment of an Administrative Tribunal, tax issues, the revision of policies governing a wide range of benefits, the aftermath of the job-grading exercise and other career development issues, and a range of issues raised by the very active Working Group on A1–8 Staff Issues.

We are very conscious of criticism that the Staff Association has been less effective than it could have been in recent years. While this contains an element of truth, it fails to pay tribute to the Herculean work of past Staff Association Committees. We intend to build on their achievements. There has been some sagging of interest by staff members in the work of the Staff Association. By running for the SAC, we are trying to reawaken interest and involvement. We need the support of the membership in this effort and shall be calling for volunteers to help us with the enormous volume of work that faces us.

An effective Staff Association depends of a number of things. First, the staff need to show Management, Administration, and the Executive Board that they care deeply about the issues that affect them. We intend to represent your views as forcefully as possible, but in turn we need evidence of the strength of your feelings to show that we cannot be taken for granted. Second, the Staff Association needs to produce work of the highest quality on the issues for decision. We believe that in the Fund, even though there are political pressures for decisions, rational argument represents the best hope for and defense of the staff. With the right arguments made forcibly, there should be enough Executive Directors who would be prepared to support Management in preserving the strong staff on which the effective functioning of the Fund depends. Third, we need to ensure that our views are clearly before Management, Administration, and Executive Directors when they come to making decisions. Finally, the SAC has to be responsive to the needs of the membership and to make sure that the membership knows and understands what it is doing.

We are all of us aware of the size of the task ahead. We will need the support of the entire membership if we are to have a chance of reversing the downward trend in conditions of service and staff morale.

Mark Allen, Vice-Chairman



A few days ago, we needed to move some furniture from one office to another. We looked at the furniture that needed moving and the office to which it would be moved and without much figuring came to the obvious conclusion that not all the furniture would fit in the new office. We then decided which pieces we wanted to move and were ready to make the move.

But then we learned something new! Things are not done the easy straightforward way any more. We called the movers and were informed that a move couldn't be made just like that; we must first be visited by an "office planner." Someone showed up carrying the all important and impressive looking retractable tape measure and proceeded to tell us what we had known all along—that all the furniture would not fit into the new office and we must decide which pieces we really needed to move.

We all had a quiet chuckle and informed the office planner that we had already made our decision and would they please just have the furniture moved. No way, they said, plans (were we talking about building a new office?) had to be drawn and submitted for approval and signature by the economist whose misfortune it was to be moving. (By this time he had been in an office full of unpacked boxes for three days because he had no furniture to put his things into.)

Is it really necessary and justifiable to have these office planners to do a job that until a few years ago had been done efficiently without them. It makes absolutely no sense to me that while the Fund seems to be going through a period of fiscal difficulties, as evidenced by the continuous erosion of salaries, especially of support staff, that we hire people who up to now have not been necessary to the efficient functioning of the Fund. If someone has an answer, I would appreciate having it.

Patricia Douez
Middle Eastern Department

Geoffrey Vaughan, Chief of the Facilities Section (ADM), responds:

Those of us responsible for providing facility services often share the sentiment that it would be nice if we could return to some of the simpler ways of the "good old days." Experience has taught us, however, that the process of moving staff is much more complicated today.

Before computers appeared on everyone's desks, offices generally had identical sets of furniture. Administrative officers usually only had to telephone the "movers," who came and moved the boxes from one office to the other. The process of moving was simple, but the downside was that staff had to accept the furniture that came with the new office.

In 1985, when the Fund began to introduce office automation equipment on a large scale, staff needs changed drastically. Complaints came pouring in about insufficient workspace, inadequate secure storage, glare from lighting, computer cables all over the floor, sore backs and stiff necks, static electricity, inadequate air conditioning, insufficient power supplies, and so on. It became clear that the old methods of dealing with furniture, office layouts, and other aspects of the office environment had to be changed. Not only were solutions way beyond the role of the movers, but the size and make-up of our facilities staff had to be adapted to meet the new needs.

To identify problems, and possible solutions, we held a series of workshops with administrative officers and representative staff from all departments—over 400 staff in all. They offered their views on how the furniture should be designed and installed. One of the most compelling needs we found was for greater flexibility in arranging furniture to suit one's individual computer equipment and related work habits. As a result of this collaborative effort, we introduced a new line of office automation furniture. While the new furniture does not in itself address all of the new needs, it does provide the staff with a greater level of control over their environment. We believe this is important, and worth the extra time and effort involved.

Most moves are now accomplished within two to three weeks after approval by the administrative officer. During this time the office planners handle the coordination of computer equipment, networking requirements, and variable furniture layouts. This permits the movers and those who are handling the telephone, power, and data equipment/cabling to coordinate and schedule their work. The drawings that office planners prepare are the most efficient means we have of making certain that all the necessary work is performed correctly, on time, in a cost effective manner, and with minimal inconvenience to the staff. Due to the complexity and volume of the work, office planners more than "earn their keep."

We realize it is frustrating to wait, particularly when a move seems to be a simple matter of shifting boxes or furniture from one room to another. But in an automated office there is always more to it than that. In the case mentioned by Mrs. Douez, the move was also complicated by the fact that it had not yet been approved by the administrative officer; the economist seems to have been caught in the middle of that problem. His existing furniture did, after all, fit into his new office after minor adjustments were made at the request of the office planner.

STAFF NOTES

September 1–30, 1988

TWENTY-FIVE YEAR STAFF

John D. Huddleston

RESIGNATIONS

Jose M. F. Braz
Martin Klein
Maritza R. Moran
Mary A. Nolan
Claudia B. Schlegel

EXPIRATION OF APPOINTMENT

Jean-Philippe Cotis

RETIREES

Luis C. Benito-Cardenal

DEATH OF RETIREE

Berre Lecun

TRANSFERS

Roy C. Baban to RES from ASD

Philippe Beaugrand to Support Group, Resident Representatives and Advisors (Bangladesh) from EUR

Kenneth Bryan Bercuson to EUR from WHD

Teng-Siew Boxall to ETR from ASD

Nurun N. Choudhry to RES from ASD

Steven V. Dunaway to ASD from WHD

Sena Eken to ETR from Office in Europe

Akbar Ghani to SEC from ADM

Richard J. Hides to BUR from ASD

Suheil Kawar to WHD from MED

Hyong Chun Kim to ASD from RES

Wayne E. Lewis to WHD from Support Group, Resident Representatives and Advisors (Sri Lanka)

Mohammad R. Vaez-Zadeh to CBD from Support Group, Resident Representatives and Advisors (Mali)

Rosa A. Valdivieso to Office in Europe from AFR

Gopal Yadav to ETR from WHD

Aldo Polo, Supervisor of the Copy Center, died October 21 after a ten-month battle with leukemia. Born and raised in Sardinia, Aldo Polo worked in Italy, France, and the United Kingdom before emigrating to Canada in 1959. He was employed as a steward on the Canadian Pacific Railways for a few years before moving to Washington in 1969 to take a position with the Canadian Embassy here. He joined the Fund staff in 1971, working principally in the Copy Center and becoming its Supervisor in October 1987.

Aldo Polo's two brothers came from Italy to be with him during his final weeks. He died two days after his forty-eighth birthday. One of his brothers, Father Augusto Polo, concelebrated the memorial mass held for him on October 24. Over two hundred family and friends were in attendance.

Aldo Polo is survived by his wife, Liliana; a son, Robert, who is 16; and a daughter, Nancy, 15.

NEW STAFF

September 1–30, 1988

Juan Amieva
Mexican, is in the Economist Program with BUR. Previously Chairman of the Economics Department, Anahuac University, he holds a Ph.D. from the University of Colorado.

Dallas Batten
a U.S. national, is an Economist with TRE. Educated at Richmond and Ohio State, he had served as Deputy Assistant Secretary for Economic Policy at the U.S. Treasury. His interests include golf.

Jesper Berg
Danish, is an Economist with ETR. Previously an Economist with Danmarks Nationalbank, he was educated at the University of Copenhagen and enjoys tennis and skiing.

David T. Coe
a U.S. national, is a Senior Economist, WHD. Formerly the Head of the General Economics Division, OECD, he has a Ph.D. from Michigan. His interests include wine, skiing, and windsurfing.

NEW STAFF

September 1–30, 1988

Carlo Cottarelli
Italian, is an Economist with EUR. Prior to coming to the Fund, he was an Economist with E.N.I. in Rome. He holds a masters in economics from the London School of Economics.

Lorenzo U. Figliuoli
Italian, is an Economist with WHD. He holds a Ph.D. in econometrics from L.S.E. His special interests include the history of the eighteenth century and transportation, particularly railroads.

Dominique M. P. Frecaut
French, is in the Economist Program, AFR. Previously a Research Fellow at Louvain, she received her Ph.D. from the London School of Economics. She enjoys chamber music, tennis, and cooking.

Andres Ricardo Gluski
Venezuelan, is an Economist, TRE. Previously employed by Proctor & Gamble and Johnson & Johnson (Caracas), he holds a Ph.D. from Virginia. His interests include golf and sculpture.

Carol B. Greer
a U.S. national, is a Typesetter with ADM. She formerly worked with commercial graphics arts and printing firms. Her interests include music, cooking, and home decorating.

Elliott C. Harris
from Trinidad, is in the Economist Program, with ETR. He was educated at the University of Kiel and at Georgetown. Among his interests are music and traveling.

Daniel P. Hewitt
a U.S. national, is an Economist, FAD. He holds a Ph.D. from Columbia and previously taught at the University of Connecticut. His interests include tennis and traveling.

Sulochana Kamaldinni
Indian, is a Secretary with ETR. She previously served as Program Assistant with the Academy for Educational Development and enjoys stamp and coin collecting.

Planinko Kapetanovic
Yugoslavian, is an Assistant, OED. Educated at Belgrade and previously Assistant Director General of Yugoslavia's Office of Social Planning, he enjoys films, soccer, basketball, and tennis.

Arend C. Kouwenaar
Dutch, is an Economist, AFR. Previously a Senior Economist with the Institute of Social Studies, The Hague, he holds a Ph.D. from Erasmus. His interests include sports and traveling.

Ashok Kumar Lahiri
Indian, is an Economist with EUR. He holds a Ph.D. from the Delhi School of Economics, where he was a Reader prior to coming to the Fund. He is married and has three children and enjoys fishing.

Helen M. Lynch
Jamaican, is a Secretary with AFR. She previously served as a bilingual secretary with UNESCO's Regional Coordination Office, Caracas, and enjoys films, music, and reading.

NEW STAFF

September 1–30, 1988

Alan MacArthur
from the United States, is an Economist with AFR. He holds a doctorate from the University of California, Berkeley, and is married and has a one-year-old son.

Maxy Pinto
Indian, is a Secretary, IMF Institute. She holds a post-graduate diploma in journalism and enjoys writing (poetry and fiction), photography, tennis, and hiking.

Jean-Pierre Schoder
from Luxembourg, is an Assistant, OED. Educated at Louvain, he was formerly Associate Advisor, Institut Monétaire Luxembourgeois. He enjoys skiing, mountaineering, and reading.

Manuel R. S. Sebastiao
from Portugal, is an Economist, EUR. Prior to joining the Fund staff, he was an economist with the Bank of Portugal. He holds a Ph.D. from Columbia University.

Mark Swinburne
from New Zealand, is an Economist, CBD. Educated at Victoria University, he had worked with New Zealand's Reserve Bank and Treasury. His interests include tennis, music, and literature.

Ralph W. Tryon
a U.S. national, is an Economist, RES. Previously Section Chief, U.S. Federal Reserve Board, he holds a Ph.D. from M.I.T. His interests include cycling, piano, computer modeling, and econometrics.

Rogerio L. Zandamela
from Mozambique, is an Economist, AFR. He holds a Ph.D. from Johns Hopkins and taught at Eastern Michigan. His interests include jazz, modern, and ballroom dance and sports.

Photo credits: Denio Zara (pages 3, 7, 9, 14, and 16), Padraic Hughes-Reid (pages 2, 8, 11, and 15), Claudia Zaritsky (page 5), Richard Miller (page 1), Michele Iannacci (page 4), and Ken Young (page 10).

staff news

Editor: Sheila Meehan
Published by the
Editorial Division of the
External Relations Department
International Monetary Fund
Washington, D.C. 20431