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Striving for Excellence

Margaret Kelly Presses for Change as New HRD Director

Margaret Kelly is the newly appointed director of the recently formed Human Resources Department (HRD). Beneath her calm exterior, she is clearly excited about the challenges and the possibilities her new job provides. Read on.

What areas are covered by HRD and what are its goals?
The Human Resources Department includes the personnel functions that were part of ADM—recruitment, staff development, and compensation and benefits policies and administration. HRD has three main goals. First and foremost, our job is to help the Fund recruit the best and most qualified staff—one that is also diverse and in line with the multinational character of the Fund. Second, through our career development programs, we help staff members remain at the cutting edge of their fields and develop their management and leadership capabilities. Third, by encouraging positive changes in the way the Fund does its business and fostering an environment of continuous learning, we aim to improve the Fund's organizational effectiveness.

What do you see as the staff's main concerns in the human resources area?
Staff want to be treated fairly—to be given equal opportunity to develop and succeed in the Fund. Greater responsibility early in one's career, flexible work arrangements, a better balance between work and private life, improved management skills for supervisors are also

important. A competitive compensation and benefits package is also necessary.

What specific Human Resource initiatives will you pursue? During my first few weeks in HRD, I have been struck by the sheer size of the work program, ranging from activities necessary to keep the wheels turning, to producing policy papers on compensation, benefits, and other HR issues, to developmental initiatives that respond to the needs of departments and the staff. Our top priority is how best to structure the department and work processes to handle this agenda as efficiently as possible, which the Managing Director asked me to do when he appointed me. We are taking a hard look at priorities in the work program to make sure it is focused on activities that provide the maximum value added for our partners—management, other departments, and the staff.

On specific initiatives, we are taking a look at our training and career development programs to place more emphasis on key leadership competencies and to see how we can help people better use their managerial and leadership skills. In particular, we need to more clearly articulate needed leadership competencies and to build a leadership development program for senior managers. We also plan to build on existing training in negotiating and other mission-related skills by providing consultant services to help teams prepare for missions. This was successfully tried for a recent mission and could be done more.

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The Annual Performance Review exercise is being reviewed to include input from subordinates on managers, including department heads, as well as a more specific assessment of performance against relevant job competencies for all staff. In other areas, we will review the benefits package to make sure it is in sync with changes in society. In recruitment, we will examine how to bring in staff with the skills mix that is required to cope with the Fund's new responsibilities on financial and social sector issues, changes in the international financial architecture, and the increased emphasis on communicating what the Fund is about to the outside world. Leena Lahti-Kotilainen, our Diversity Advisor, speaks often of the need to integrate diversity in all its aspects—gender, nationality, culture, and diversity of thinking—into all of our HR policies and programs. I agree with this. We will discuss these and other issues as well as the organization of the human resource function at an HRD senior staff retreat this month. In the lead-up to the retreat, we are meeting with our partners to obtain their input.

What measures have departments taken on the follow-up to the health report to alleviate stress, and what is being planned? The health report identified four main areas of concern—breast cancer, cardiovascular disease, tendinitis, and stress. Our June 30 administrative circular updated these areas. Progress has been made in the first three—dealing with stress is a more difficult and stressful issue. Departments have been working directly with the Health Services Department [HSD] to tackle stress. We believe this is a positive step. HRD is also working with departments that have requested assistance in dealing with specific stress-related problems. Within HRD, I continue to follow the good example of my predecessor, Burke Dillon, by encouraging staff to plan and take their leave and to "take time to smell the roses," and I encourage all Fund managers to do the same.

On future plans, Mr. Fischer has asked HRD to give high priority to measures to attenuate stress in the Fund. In an August 19 memorandum to the staff, he asked me to set up a Fund-wide working group to develop practical suggestions on reducing unproductive and harmful work-related stress. We expect the group to complete its work by December. HRD will assist this group and work with departments to implement recommended measures.


Margaret Kelly discusses human resource issues with *Staff News* editor.

How large is your department? Are its resources adequate?
HRD has 85 regular staff members and total effective staff resources of 114 staff year. The department also manages the secretarial support group—about 46 people—as well as contracts for outsourced services—EDP and language training and health plan administration. And, of course, there are some HR resources in other departments—the Senior Personnel Managers (SPMs) and Administrative Officers (AOs).

By industry standards, the ratio of HR staff to total staff in the Fund is reasonable, given the broad range of services provided and the nature of the organization. This is not to say that our resources are adequate to undertake all of our high-priority initiatives. Like other departments, we face a constant challenge to enhance productivity in day-to-day activities through improvements in work practices and technology. Research shows that international organizations allocate fewer information technology resources to the HR function than do other knowledge-based institutions. We will be looking at our access to information technology resources because it affects the speed with which we can reallocate people to high-priority developmental initiatives.

You are the first head of ADM/HRD to come to the job with experience as an SPM. What difference will this make?
I hope all of my experience in the Fund and elsewhere will help me in this job. Apart from being an SPM—which I think is a valuable experience for any department head—I have served in several economic departments—APD, FAD, MED, and PDR—and in EXR. I have also been involved, at one time or another, in practically every committee associated with HRD, as well as many of its working groups. In a way, this extracurricular activity, as well as my time on the Staff Association Committee, was my entrée into HR.

At one level, however, my job is easy, because I am fortunate in having a team of HR specialists who are highly motivated, highly competent, and extremely energized by the creation of this new department. As a manager, I am a great believer in team work, because it encourages more creativity and better solutions to problems than traditional approaches. If you empower people and give them challenges, you really get their best. I am pleased that other managers and staff in HRD share this view. Indeed, one of their first suggestions to me, which I quickly accepted, was to set up an action learning group of Human Resource Officers to provide advice on the organization of HR work.

What is an action learning group?
It is a group that helps its members develop leadership skills while solving real-world problems—one of the best ways to acquire new skills. This approach could be used in other Fund working groups to solve problems and develop proposals.

Economist staff, staff in specialized career streams, and contractuals are treated somewhat differently with regard to job grading and promotions. What is HRD working on in this area?
Broadly, the same policies apply to everyone, although there are issues that need to be examined. During the job grading exercise, the Fund, like many other institutions, viewed the jobs within core functions as having a somewhat greater weight than those in specialized career streams. In general, this remains the case. However, a review of positions in specialized career streams at Grades A14, B1, and B2 is being undertaken to ensure that the full range of responsibilities have been appropriately valued. This may result in some reclassification of selected positions. As we look at other HR policies, clearly our aim is to have one set of policies for everyone. Starting pay and grade should reflect a new hire's qualifications and experience. We will be taking another look at this, but past problems in this area has been, to a large extent, dealt with. I encourage departments to continue to get back to us if they think the starting grade and salary are not consistent with a new hire's qualifications.

Career development is critical for all career streams and training is available for everyone. The promotion criteria are basically the same for all staff. There are time-in-grade requirements in all career streams, and, as we move to greater use of grade bands in advertising jobs, audits for promotions in specialized career streams are required less often. For managerial positions, all incumbents are required to have the necessary competencies. These are examined by the Review Committee for A14 to B2 promotions or the Senior Review Committee for B3 and B4 promotions. These committees also review external appointments to these grades.

For contractuals, benefits packages were developed separately to reflect the short-term employment they were meant to have. For a long time we have had contractual and vendor staff with identical responsibilities to regular staff. Toward the end of last year, the Executive Board decided that contractual employees who perform the same functions as regular staff will be properly classified. While acting on this decision, departments will also be examining whether additional functions can be outsourced. This is a major step forward in treating people fairly. I expect that over the next couple of years some contractuals will be converted to regular staff.

The Fund has been slow to implement initiatives that give staff greater control over their work schedules (9/80 workweek, more leeway to work at home, and job sharing). And staff often comment that the Fund expects them to put work concerns above family. Will you be looking at these issues?

We are already looking at these issues. We have many jobs well suited to alternative work arrangements, and there has been some progress. We have arrangements for working at home, job sharing, and part-time work, which people in some departments have used. They seem to be working well. However, managers could do more to encourage use of these arrangements to deal with stress—part of dealing with stress is having control over your work—and the challenges faced by dual-career families. We have been a bit slower implementing the so-called 9/80 work week. Once we have the Personnel Committee's input and management's agreement, we will begin a pilot project in a number of volunteer departments.

We will need to encourage managers to follow these kinds of initiatives by demonstrating that the arrangements work. It will be important to show that staff get their work done, stress is reduced, and productivity is increased as a result of individuals having more control over their work.

Now that the Fund and the Bank seem to be going their separate ways on compensation, pensions, and terms of employment, what risks and opportunities lie ahead for the Fund?

The opportunities and risks that have arisen from the Bank's decision to depart from parallelism are mainly in the areas of salaries and benefits. This is where we maintained parallelism. The departure from that system will enable the Fund to focus its compensation and employment policies on its particular needs. On staffing, the Bank is moving toward emphasizing short-term staffing and shifting a larger proportion of its staff to field offices. Our needs are different from those of the Bank, so we will continue to focus on recruiting and retaining longer-term career staff to be made up of staff joining at a young age, like EPs, as well as those coming at mid-career. On salaries, this year we refined our comparator markets to better take into account organizations and jobs in parts of the market where we compete.

On benefits, for new staff, the Bank is replacing education and home leave with a general cash expatriate allowance to be phased out over 10 years, and changing its retirement plan to a combination of a defined contribution or savings plan and a pension plan, and it is changing from gross, pretax pensions to net-of-tax pensions with tax allowances. For existing staff, the Bank has introduced the "Rule of 50" to allow retirement any time after age 50 without an early-retirement penalty.

We think our retention of the targeted education and home leave benefits is a better approach for our longer-term staff. We will look at our retirement programs during the next year to see if some changes would make sense. For example, increased portability of pensions might make it easier for staff members to get outside policy experience and bring that experience back to the Fund. The Bank's Rule of 50 probably would not be appropriate for us, and Fund staff who transfer to the Bank will not be eligible for retirement under that rule. We will have to watch and see how policies of the Bank and the Fund evolve.

Looking ahead at changes in the Fund and in the global workplace, what issues do you see as predominant over the next 5–10 years?

First, there will be increased competition for highly qualified human resources. Added job mobility and the "graying" of the population in industrial countries will mean that institutions will be scrambling to get high-quality employees, including those from underrepresented groups that bring diversity to the Fund. So we will want to ensure that potential employees view the Fund as an employer of first choice. This requires programs to help employees enhance their intellectual capital. And we need to demonstrate that the Fund is a well-managed organization—one that responds to employees' desire for greater participation in decision making and deals with the realities of modern life.

Second, the Fund will need to respond flexibly to recruit and retain staff with the skill mix required to meet new issues and challenges. In a knowledge-based institution like the Fund, the key to success will be its ability to respond flexibly and quickly to fulfill its human resource requirements. Managing information and knowledge will be vital for the Fund.

Third, many Fund staff will retire, underscoring the need for careful career planning, career development initiatives, and succession planning.

How would you characterize the progress made by women in the Fund since the Report on the Status of Women in the Fund was published in 1994?
The Diversity Advisor prepares her annual report, which highlights progress as well as steps that need to be taken. All of the indicators for women—recruitment and promotion rates—have improved. Nevertheless, the challenge remains that representation rates for women decline the higher you move up the organizational ladder. Approximately 30 percent of new EP recruits are women, which, compared with the market we are recruiting from, is very good. It will take 10 to 20 years for these new recruits to become managers and then to move up into more senior positions. We will continue to recruit a diverse staff at the entry level, but there's also a need, in seeking outside candidates, particularly at the senior level, to ensure that the pool from which we recruit is diverse. This is also an issue for underrepresented nationalities in the IMF. Hence, the issues are how to identify diverse candidates and then, how best to recruit them.

After the discrimination study and the follow-up, are we in a position to say that the Fund of the future will provide equal opportunity to all staff?
The Managing Director has recently issued a memorandum to staff on this issue. In it he notes that the Code of Conduct and the Fund's policy of zero tolerance for discrimination make clear the standard of behavior expected of all staff. We need to respect all people and treat them fairly, and we should leverage the different perspectives we gain from staff from different backgrounds to our advantage. This deals with the management of diversity, and in some respects that job is never done; it is a process. We have made a lot of progress. Our approaches, policies, and training programs are considered "state of the art" by other international institutions, but we need to keep bringing these ideals into everyday work and management. The payoff, if we do, is great. The Fund deals with increasingly complex problems, and people with different skills from different countries and cultures can contribute to effective solutions. Diversity, by nature, creates tension, and managing diversity requires high-quality people-management skills.

Would you like to add anything?
I am extremely honored to have been appointed the first Director of the Human Resources Department. It is a great challenge, and one that I enjoy. In the Fund, we pride ourselves on excellence in our technical work. My vision is for the Fund to apply that same standard of excellence to human resource management—to developing strong, effective leaders and to fostering organizational change. This is critical if we are to continue providing the best service to our member countries and to deal successfully with the enormous challenges we face in a rapidly changing world. ◆

Staff Compassionate Fund

J.B. Zulu retired from the Fund on September 1, and resigned as chair of the Staff Compassionate Fund (SCF). The new chair, Vito Tanzi, longtime SCF trustee Paul Chabrier, and newly appointed trustee Carol Carson will administer the fund. Bert Keuppens will continue to serve as its treasurer.

The SCF provides financial assistance to staff members who suffer unexpected financial hardship as a result of circumstances beyond their control. Most frequent requests are related to medical costs associated with catastrophic illness or death in the family. Before cases are considered by SCF trustees, the staff member has usually exhausted other resources normally available in the IMF. Requests for assistance may be made directly to one of the trustees.

SCF resources come mainly from donations from staff and management, and from honoraria received for papers, lectures, and/or interviews.

circa 1968

Goodbye, Alassane D. Ouattara

Alassane D. Ouattara, who began his IMF career as an economist in 1968, resigned on July 30 as Deputy Managing Director, a position he has held since 1994. Below, colleagues at the Fund talk about what it was like to work with him.

Leena Lahti-Kotilainen, Diversity Advisor

I worked with Mr. Ouattara on the range of diversity issues. I appreciated his sensitivity; he understood the special nature of the Diversity Advisor's work, which often involves dealing with complex issues that don't have clear answers, rights, and wrongs. He was also very easy to talk to: I could give him frank, even critical feedback from staff regarding what they expected of management, and also talk openly about problems I was having with organizational units. I was always sure that he would keep our conversations in confidence and proceed in a wise way. He expected good preparation for our meetings and served as an excellent example of efficiency and precise follow-up. He appreciated my independence in reporting diversity issues to staff and management and reminded me of this often. I could always rely on his support if I needed him urgently, no matter where in the world he was.

Lyn Blatch, Ombudsperson

I spent most of my time with Mr. Ouattara working on basic systemic issues such as discrimination, work stress, and diversity, and occasionally took a case to him if I didn't get results or to make him aware of something I thought he needed to know. I can't say enough nice things about him. He had a genuine understanding of the work pressures here and was very eager and willing to help resolve problems. Because he came here as a staff member, he had an understanding of the little guy, but he also had a lot of outside management experience, which gave him a broad perspective and an understanding of both perspectives. He was compassionate, had a wonderful sense of humor, and his concern for the staff was very real. He had a very accurate view of things, knowing where the Fund was on the mark and where it was out of touch. While he didn't always do exactly what I wanted him to, he did what was in the best interest of everyone involved and never held back.

Michel Camdessus

What is so special about Alassane? What is the secret of such an exemplary career, making him...one of the greatest Africans of his generation? Outstanding gifts for life, of course: intelligence, charm, leadership, steadfastness, and generosity. Alassane is a man who says "yes" and does what he says. On every occasion his contribution has

Alassane Ouattara and his wife Dominique.

been superb; his advice, the wisest; and his job, untiring in caring about the institution and its personnel. He went from one country to another—always with a special message, always offering the positive, constructive response or suggestion for the most intractable problems.

Mr. Ouattara has left a major legacy of accomplishments that has deeply improved the institution and has no doubt touched the lives of innumerable people all around the world. Perhaps his most significant contribution has been his support and his imagination in favor of the establishment of a strong ESAF. He will also be remembered for his clear vision and deep understanding of the economic reform and adjustment process. Mr. Ouattara also worked tirelessly to improve the internal operations of the Fund....He should be viewed as the human incarnation of all that this institution, and all of us here today, aspires or should aspire to accomplish. Alassane has helped us realize the good that humanity can achieve when joining forces on the basis of integrity, mutual respect, and friendship.

Shahpassand Sheybani, Vice-Chair, SAC

One of the Deputy Managing Director's core tasks has been personnel management, and as such, we on the Staff Association Committee have come to appreciate him as our main interlocutor. Well before the Administration Department was renamed the Human Resources Department, he made sure that personnel policies were human policies.

Observing him from the staff, and sometimes more closely as members of the SAC, we saw that a key to his effectiveness and success as the DMD in charge of personnel issues was that he was not only "for" the staff but also "from" the staff.

He began his Fund career as an economist, and this gave you a firsthand knowledge of the life, and not just the work, of a Fund staff member. He understands the trials and tribulations of balancing a demanding work schedule with life outside of work.

As the Director of the African Department, he managed to build a close rapport with his staff, gain their trust and respect, and earn the reputation of a supportive manager.

I recently asked an administrative assistant who knew him both as an economist and as the head of the department what qualities she remembered most about you, and she said spontaneously:

"He is accessible. He is approachable. He listens. He remembers. And he acts upon what he promises."

Invariably, everyone I called in the past few days echoed the same words.

Mr. Ouattara has an innate sense of good manners and a quiet consideration for others. His Fund experience also gave him an invaluable institutional memory that gave him a unique perspective on all issues and facilitated our dialogue.

These elements have been essential in making us feel confident that our concerns would be heard and our interests would be well represented at the highest level of management. Once he became the DMD, he continued to remain accessible to all staff, and you continued to "listen, remember, and act upon his promises." ◆

Ouattara Says Goodbye

It is very hard to leave such a great and prestigious institution. What a rewarding and truly exciting time to have been, first an economist, then the Director of the African Department, and finally one of the Deputy Managing Directors—to have been part of this formidable team of women and men that is the true strength of the Fund and whose hard and dedicated work produces the incomparable efficiency of this institution. I salute your work, your dedication; I also salute your families who have to cope with your workaholic habits!

The decision making through consensus and the collegiality that characterize our daily work are the true jewels of this institution. They need to be preserved, as they are the greatest strength of the Fund, making it so able to respond quickly to new challenges.

I am proud and blessed to have worked with all of you—a staff who, in a way, is a microcosm of the world. Its multicultural diversity needs to be preserved and strengthened. You represent a unique blend of qualities and backgrounds; you are, in fact, the world of tomorrow: people from different horizons working together for a better world and above all for the betterment of humanity. The example you show to the rest of the world, to the 182 member countries you relate to, is of tremendous importance. You show that there is no such thing as cultural boundaries, when relations are based on respect for the other, when dignity and integrity are placed at the forefront. This unique blend also produces unique solutions to problems; it is, in fact, the collegiality and the consensus that result in the best solutions to the problems of the member countries.

A Star Comes of Age

Article IV consultation, Stand-by Arrangement, technical assistance, SDR. Sometimes, Regina (Regee) Newport, who joined the Fiscal Affairs Department as a Staff Assistant in 1981, finds herself seeing these economic terms in her sleep. Regee has worked in FAD, STA, and EU2 and is now an Administrative Officer in MAE. Duties ranging from typing, editing, and preparing economic charts to supervising assistants with zest and enthusiasm—these have been a daily part of the professional life of Regee "the international team player."

Very diligent in her professional life, Regee is even more assiduous when it comes to her home life. But, Regee "the mother" displays a different type of zeal and excitement. Life in this area does not consist of economic jargon, but of lingo of a different order, such as the arts, cultural events, theater, and Broadway, all of which spark an emotional response in Regee. She is not the average spectator of sensational theatrical performances—she is overcome with chills, goose bumps, and tears of joy when watching her son, José Llana, perform in *The King and I*, *On The Town*, *Street Corner Symphony*, *Saturn Returns*, and *Rent*—on Broadway.

Leda Montero, Regee's good friend and former co-worker in FAD, informed *Staff News* about José's story. We learned not only that José is on Broadway, but that Regee raised him and his sister, Patricia, as a single mother working at the Fund. Regee often worked long hours and arrived home late. While the overtime pay was helpful, she felt the pain of being away from her children. Regee did not go on mission while they were very young because she did not want to leave them alone. However, José and Patricia were responsible teenagers. When Patricia turned 15, she assured her mother that she and José were responsible enough to take care of themselves while she was away. Regee never had reason to worry about her children, but high telephone bills were the norm while she was on mission, when she called home to reassure herself that everything was fine.

Regee and José after a performance.

Regee knew from the time he was a child that José had a strong, full voice. He would sing all the time throughout the house. After a long day at the Fund, Regee sometimes sought peace and quiet, and often asked José to tone it down a bit. Little did she know that his voice would be the secret to his success. José and Patricia both attended the Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology in Fairfax—each aspiring to enter the architectural or engineering profession. While there, however, José's primary interests were the choir and drama clubs, planting the seed for his success in the arts. José's high school choir director, Laura Clark, took a special interest in his talent, realizing he had the potential for something big. Laura insisted that Regee look into professional voice instruction for José. Regee investigated the cost and realized that on a single parent's salary she could not afford lessons. So Laura made José her protégé. As José's mentor, Laura provided encouragement and support and gave José a gentle push to pursue singing more seriously. The two became very close as José acted in many of the high school musical plays and sang in the choir performances. He had no formal acting, dance, or voice lessons; his only training was his rehearsals and performances for the school plays. "José's dancing skills come naturally," proclaims his proud mother. A native of the Philippines, Regee keeps in tune with the festive culture. She hosts dinners and parties for relatives and friends that almost always include dancing and singing. Those parties provided ample opportunities for José to dance.

In 1996, José enrolled at the Manhattan School of Music in New York to study voice. He intended to study there for one year, then go on to the prestigious Royal College of Music in London. Acceptance in both schools requires a very tough screening with voice tryouts and exams. José never made it to London because during spring break of his freshman year in New York he auditioned for the Broadway musical, *The King and I*. Since José had no past experience, he was initially hired as the understudy for the role of Lun Tha, the lover of TupTim. However, after auditions closed, José was told that he would be given the actual role. This was his big break, and the starting point for José's busy Broadway career.

The portrayal of Lun Tha lasted just over a year. From it, José gained exposure, contacts, experience, and lasting friendships. He then got the part of Gaby (played by Gene Kelly in the original movie) in the remake of *On the Town*. This role gave José the amazing chance to work at the prestigious New York Public Theater, under Tony Award winning Director George C. Wolfe. Wolfe's musicals include *Bring in Da Noise, Bring in Da Funk*, *The Colored Museum*, and *Jelly's Last Jam*.

The reviews for *On the Town* were fabulous and brought him to the attention of producer/songwriter Adam Guettels, who cast him in a lead role in *Saturn Returns*, a musical, also under the auspices of the New York Public Theater. Once again, the show was critically acclaimed, and José became more comfortable with his acting and networking skills. He was now "in with the in crowd" on Broadway. In between *On the Town* and *Saturn Returns*, José took a role singing and dancing in a successful rock-and-roll revue, *Street Corner Symphony*.


Patricia and José enjoy the holidays.

After hiring a more aggressive agent, he immediately landed a lead role in one of the most successful shows on Broadway, Jonathan Larson's *Rent*. His role was that of Angel, an intense young musician struggling with AIDS. After two years on Broadway, *Rent* is still drawing a full house. This role, for José, has been at times both emotionally and physically grueling. Shows ran eight times a week, with six evening shows and an additional two matinee performances. Despite the challenge of the long hours and demanding role, José is having the time of his life on Broadway.

Close to the end of José's contract with *Rent*, he wanted to take a role in a new hit musical, *Martin Guerre*. The contract negotiations for this show were particularly exhausting. Contracts stand for one year, toward the end of which agents, actors, and producers renegotiate. When this time came for José, the producers of *Rent* fought hard to keep him, but finally, with only a few days to spare, the negotiations worked out. José started rehearsals for *Martin Guerre* on August 10. Cameron McKintosh, Director of *Les Miserables*, *Miss Saigon*, *Cats*, and *Phantom of the Opera*, will produce this show as well. Before hitting Broadway, the company will tour Minneapolis, Detroit, Seattle, Los Angeles, and Washington, D.C. Kennedy Center performances will be December 23, 1999 through January 16, 2000.

The accomplishments of such a young man would honor any mother, and Regee is justifiably proud. Regee has an endearing and humble way of describing how pleased she is with her son's success. *Staff News* may not have gotten wind of the story had it not been for José's fan club leader, Leda. Whenever José stars in a new Broadway show, you can bet that "Regee and Company," Ian Newport, Regee's husband of four years and a Chief Counsel at the World Bank, Patricia and her fiancé Adrian, and Leda, are in attendance for opening night.

Regee is hard-working in her professional life, yet able to balance her work and home life. The family dream of engineering has not fallen by the wayside, either. Patricia received her M.S. in mechanical engineering from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in June 1998 and works for an engineering consulting firm in Boston. The demands of her job, coupled with raising two children alone, could have been overwhelming, but Regee has managed it beautifully. After nearly 20 years at the Fund, Regee "the international team player" and Regee "the mother" have achieved career success, raised an engineer daughter and a "Broadway son," and married a wonderful man. There is no more silencing her son's powerful voice as he sings throughout the house—now Regee shares in José's Broadway success. ◆

Deirdre Clark

On Guard

IMF Strengthens Local Security


The state-of-the-art equipment at the headquarters security control room.

Anyone who drives or bikes to work at the Fund's main building at 700 19th Street can't help but be aware of one of the latest improvements to headquarters security—the installation of card readers at the garage entrance as part of the computerized Access Control System. This action is just one of many that have been or are about to be taken to maximize the personal safety and security of staff at the home office.

Background

The keen interest of staff in security at headquarters—including the main building, I-Square offices, the Concordia apartments, and other leased space—was highlighted by the flurry of e-mails that circulated last winter with respect to several incidents at George Washington University. This deep concern about security issues at headquarters also drew the attention of Alain Coune and Maria Lourdes Drach of the Office of Internal Audit and Inspection (OIA) when they elicited feedback from staff while conducting an audit of the personal safety and security of Fund personnel, the report of which was released in June. Many staff took time to express their views, sometimes strongly held, on the subject. A previous survey conducted by OIA indicated that 69 percent of respondents were "extremely satisfied" with security at headquarters and 27 percent were only "moderately satisfied."


Incoming packages are X-rayed.

The OIA report, an independent complement to the series of ADM studies assessing security risks for Fund personnel, is primarily concerned with security in the field, but devotes a section to headquarters security. The report incorporates the results of a survey on security at other international organizations and private sector companies and also benefits from an independent assessment of IMF security by a reputable security consulting firm. The OIA's overall assessment is that "the Fund has been effective in ensuring the safety of its personnel and that considerable improvements have taken place in the last five years." Bill Gerber, account manager for the IMF with Security Technologies Group, Inc., the firm that has been providing the Fund with its security systems since 1994, agrees. "The IMF has upgraded its security systems in many areas over the last five years, and is using state-of-the-art technology," Gerber says, adding "As far as security systems in the Washington area, the Fund's is one of the best."

Coune and Drach are quick to credit Frank McLaughlin, head of the Security Services Unit, and Inger Prebensen, Deputy Director for Administrative Services, TGS, for their cooperation in the preparation of the report and their efforts to strengthen security at headquarters—through initiatives taken before the report's release and a prompt response to the recommendations on headquarters security. One statistic in the report—alarming at first glance—shows that security incidents at headquarters rose from 273 in FY97 to 425 in FY98. However, Coune and McLaughlin agree that the better reporting of security incidents—resulting from the successful campaign to encourage staff to report all incidents, even the seemingly minor—is probably a large factor in the increase.

Another important factor is the large rise in fire alarms reported, attributable mainly to false alarms at I-Square and those triggered by Phase III construction activity. Tellingly, the report also notes that the value of the losses declined from \$132,000 to \$87,000 from FY97 to FY98. According to McLaughlin, this improvement is largely due to the "more efficient system that area departments are using to safeguard computer equipment, including the introduction of an improved computer cable lock, and the more extensive background checks the Fund now requires vendors to conduct on their employees."

Recent Initiatives

One of the concerns expressed by the staff and reflected in the OIA report—the need for security escorts for personnel working late at night—has generated a quick response from the Security Services Unit. Effective July 28, a security escort can accompany staff to the Farragut West metro station or contract garages, or remain with staff waiting for a taxi in front of either the main building or the I-Square building. Also, as before, staff who have to work late and park outside the main building can bring their cars into the main building garage after 5:00 p.m.

The news is also good on the implementation of the Access Control System (ACS). TGS is considering a proposal to install garage lightweight gates in the main building. These gates, triggered by staff members' electronic security cards, could open and close quickly, thereby greatly reducing the possibility of unauthorized access to the building, even during regular working hours. In the short term, McLaughlin notes, a less confusing set of red and green lights will be substituted for the currently used red and yellow lights in the garage. Moreover, at end-August, another problem discussed in the OIA report—the continued access of separated staff to Fund headquarters and facilities through their electronic cards—was eliminated when the ACS became fully integrated with PeopleSoft as part of the Year 2000 upgrade.

In response to the report's recommendation to improve the fire prevention and emergency evacuation program, ground floor exit doors in the main building have been clearly marked to avoid confusion. In that connection, McLaughlin observed, training of emergency wardens—departmental volunteers—for each floor has been completed, and the revamped emergency evacuation system was tested successfully on August 31. As part of this system, all building emergency response team personnel have received their evacuation training. As part of the continuing upgrading of security personnel, moreover, mandatory additional training has been scheduled for the coming fiscal year.

Finally, OIA's report cites inadequate controls over master keys as a significant security issue at headquarters. Some master keys, allowing access to restricted areas, are still in the hands of vendors whose contracts with the Fund have long expired. As an interim step, the Security Services Unit has developed—with the assistance of Administrative Officers—procedures for locking closets to secure expensive information technology equipment. For the longer term, according to McLaughlin, a program to rekey all of the key cores in Phases I and II will be implemented in FY2000.

What can staff do to improve security at headquarters? In addition to continuing to report suspicious incidents, McLaughlin offers a common sense suggestion: "Always wear your ID badge, and immediately report anybody unknown to you not wearing one." McLaughlin added that the Security Services Unit is designing a website that, when completed, will provide a comprehensive list of security tips and up-to-date security information for staff. ◆

Emergency wardens are trained.

In its next issue, Staff News *will report on the OIA's assessment of field security and the actions that are being taken in that area.*

Tom Walter

With Benefit of Hindsight...

An Interview with Lyn Blatch

Lyn Blatch, ombudsperson since 1994, will be leaving the Fund on September 30. Staff News *spoke with her on her experiences here.*

What was your biggest adjustment in coming to the Fund from Ethics Counsel at SEC?
The biggest adjustment—although I did expect it—was working totally alone. I can't discuss things freely and use other people as sounding boards because of the confidentiality requirements. At SEC, we had similar confidentiality requirements but I had a staff and we worked closely together to share ideas within that group.

An ombudsperson spends a lot of time working through staff members' emotions to get to the point where we can think about solutions. I was surprised at the level of emotion that people in the Fund's sophisticated white-collar environment expressed about their situation. It was very powerful, even overwhelming. In my first report, I talked about the high level of anger and distrust. I still feel that it is stronger here than in other organizations.

Why do you think emotions are so high here?
For a combination of reasons. First, and primary, the Fund is an international organization. People have left their home countries and invested their whole lives in working here—much more than if they worked in a national economy. Second, the Fund is a very inward-looking organization, like a small town. To work here, staff have to understand the Fund's culture. Certainly the Fund is unique, but I don't see a high level of awareness of what the outside world has to offer, and it would be healthy to focus in that direction. Third, the Fund has an extremely competitive environment. Everybody at every level seems totally focused on getting ahead. In every employment environment, some people are totally focused on getting ahead, but you usually have a larger number of people satisfied to reach the highest nonsupervisory level in their career stream. They enjoy their work and then go home and enjoy the rest of their lives. Very few here seem to have that attitude. It would be healthy for people to learn to appreciate what they have, instead of focusing only on getting ahead. For me, career fulfillment is not the sole source of my happiness. You can be very happy without getting the next promotion. But it becomes a habit to think that you need the next promotion, and that intensity adds a lot to the stress level.

Did you have an image of the Fund before you joined? What most surprised you?
The image that I had was of a very competent, hard-working, loyal, and dedicated staff at all levels. When I asked friends in the financial community about the Fund before I arrived, they said it is a wonderful organization. That strongly entered into my willingness to undertake the assignment.

The ombudsperson's job is to listen to complaints. It would have been hard for me to do that if I didn't think highly of the staff. I am tremendously pleased that this wonderful image of the staff proved accurate. It is difficult to express how enriched I have been by my association with the staff. I feel that I have gotten more out of it than they have. My horizons have been expanded so much. It has been a wonderful experience for me.

What surprised me most is that the Fund is quite different from the rest of the financial sector. The Fund seems more like an academic environment—I don't see the grounding in the day-to-day business world that you see elsewhere in the financial sector, and the incredible autonomy that department heads have resembles academia.

I was also surprised by the extent to which departments with staff in specialized career streams are dominated by economists. It would be one thing if economists crossed over early in their career, but the Fund parachutes them in as heads of these departments. Although they may be wonderful individuals, the Fund loses by doing that. It is perhaps the cause of some of the Fund's inward focus. It would be healthier to open it up and bring in people with outside expertise to achieve a better balance.

When you arrived, you said you wanted the staff to become less fearful about using the ombudsperson and

Blatch: The Ombudsperson is a neutral office available for all.

managers more positive about being in situations where the ombudsperson is involved. What kind of progress have you made? Staff had to overcome a lot of fear before they made an appointment, and I was quite concerned about that. However, looking back, my case figures and Gene Herbert's are extremely high. Other organizations such as the World Bank or American Express consider 3.5 percent of their client base a good annual rate. Both Gene and I averaged between 7 and 10 percent a year. What is even more interesting will be the figures for the entire five years. A preliminary count in mid-May shows that, counting by individuals, I have seen over 22 percent of staff. Counting by cases, I have seen almost 29 percent. Even though some individuals are still fearful, obviously they are coming.

Increasingly, managers are also seeking the assistance of the ombudsperson both on their personal career problems and on handling departmental matters. When very senior people seek advice that really enhances the credibility of the office as neutral and available for everyone. Managers are learning that they don't have to be worried if the ombudsperson is involved.

However, for some managers, there's still a tendency to think that it is somehow disloyal to go to the ombudsperson before you go to your supervisor or your senior personnel manager. Both my terms of reference and the code of conduct make it clear that employees always have this option. I have been encouraging managers to think of the ombudsperson as an alternative—it is often better for the manager if the staff member talks to the ombudsperson first, calms down and gets information, and then talks to the supervisor, because once you say something in your department you can't take it back. Some managers also seem to think of the ombudsperson as the first step of the grievance procedure. Many managers do not know that the ombudsperson may not have any involvement once the grievance is filed. The ombudsperson is an alternative to the grievance procedure. I have had close to 700 cases, many of which would have gone to grievance if we hadn't found other solutions.

What positive changes have you seen since 1994, and what challenges remain?

The most progress has been in transparency, and that is largely due to the internal web page. You can now go to the web and have access to most GAOs and staff bulletins. A big step forward was the approval by the Board of the employment policy paper involving contractual and vendor employees. The new policy will go a long way toward ensuring that all employees are treated fairly and that there will be equal pay for equal work. It will be a challenge to implement that policy, but it is important that the Fund do so.

There has been a lot of progress in making sure that managers without managerial skills are not appointed, but, as the economist group pointed out, it needs to continue to be monitored. I am very interested in the subordinate appraisal of supervisors exercise—now used only for self-improvement—being made part of a manager's APR. Progress has also been made in doing meaningful performance reports of department heads.

The recognition of stress is another area of progress. I identified stress as the most important issue in my second report. Now, it's spoken of as a given, although it is going to take a real willingness and commitment to do something about it.

The biggest challenge is to begin to look outward. In some respects, the Fund seems to be in a time warp—people are so focused inward, and many people work here their whole lives. You need a dedicated career staff, but they need to look out more and become more open. Many people hired midcareer talked to me about this problem. Their managers said it was their problem, because they couldn't adapt to the Fund environment, but I think the Fund needs to look at what midcareer staff have to offer.

What do you think of working at home and part-time work?
Working at home and part-time work are effective solutions to the stress/workload problem, but there is a real resistance to trying them here. When my children were young, I did trial work part-time. Fortunately, I had a very open-minded supervisor. Everyone up the chain of command said that I got more done in 20 hours than a full-time person. It is a great solution to some of the family issues here. Even for people in the front office, working at home, where they could concentrate without interruptions, could be of great benefit. All you really need is your manager's willingness to try it.

Another of your concerns was the culture in the Fund that places blame on people when problems occur. Have you seen any progress in Fund staff and management making more of an effort to work toward solutions without placing blame?
There has been some progress. Improved management practices now mean that one negative remark on an APR or one bad relationship with a supervisor need not ruin your career, although it may slow it down. People do move forward despite a negative history. There is still a lack of awareness that people change and improve. In that respect, it is a very intolerant environment here, but it is improving.

Blaming the victim is still alive and well at the Fund. There is a tendency to point fingers, and individuals will claim someone was out of line to excuse their own bad behavior. Managers should behave calmly and appropriately, regardless of the behavior of others.

Can you comment on your working relationships with management and departments?
I feel tremendously fortunate to have worked closely with Mr. Narvekar and Mr. Ouattara. They were compassionate and humble men who had been staff and understood how it felt to be the low person on the totem pole. They were dedicated to working to solve problems. There were four directors in ADM during my term. I had good relationships with all of them, but Burke Dillon and I were able to be the most productive because we had the longest term together. The staff within ADM has been wonderful. Relationships with staff in other departments in general have been very good. I feel that managers have come to trust me, and our relationships have been cordial even when we worked on difficult issues, or when I put them on the spot a little. Still, there are a couple of senior staff who are just innately defensive—that creates problems.

How will you advise the new ombudsperson?
The new ombudsperson will start with a clean slate. I will brief her on pending cases, but I am not going to give her my view of different managers. There's a great advantage to having a new ombudsperson every five years, and I would hate to undermine that by giving her my views on people.

Do you feel your terms of reference need to be updated?
Yes, my terms of reference are not accurate regarding access to information. Currently, the ombudsperson does not have access to the original PeopleSoft database—although there is access to a separate database—and I have been told the ombudsperson cannot find out who else at the Fund is accessing information on a staff member without prior consent from TRE. Both situations violate the terms of reference. It's important that the terms of reference be honored to the letter, because the Fund is immune from all external law. If the terms of reference are violated in one area, what assurance is there that this will not happen in other areas? At a more practical level, not having access to the original database hurts management. With access, the ombudsperson would use that information primarily to assure staff that they are being treated the same as other staff and that the rumors are not true. Now the ombudsperson does not have access so she or he can't tell staff what the original records show.

Where do you go from here?
I plan on taking a long rest. Then I will think about what to do next. It has been a wonderful five years for me. ◆


Singin' the blues.

He's Got It

Watch me! I've got it.
Watch me! I've got it...
I've got something
That makes me want to shout.
I've got something
That tells me what it's all about.
I've got soul, and I'm super bad...
—James Brown, "Super Bad"

He's got it, all right—and he walks in our midst. He can be spotted moving briskly along the corridors of the Fund, the round wire-framed glasses lending his face an air of seriousness, the long ponytail betraying his bohemian spirit. It's Jimi Smooth, Fund messenger by day, and lead singer of not one, but two bands by night.

Born James Smoot, Jimi switched to his current pseudonym early on, when his career as a singer was just gathering momentum and his fans found "Jimi Smooth" easier to pronounce and a tad more hip than his given name. He is a native son of Washington, D.C., and has been filled with the desire to make his living as a musician since adolescence. Inspired by such D.C. natives as Marvin Gaye and Billy Stewart, whose careers took seed in this city's music scene in the 1960s, he has pursued his dream relentlessly over the years, gradually building contacts in the local club scene and making a name for himself.

Jimi's persistence has paid off: he now has a substantial and loyal fan base in D.C., Maryland, and Virginia. His music—mostly rhythm and blues and old Motown favorites—is danceable and familiar, and Jimi's rendition of old favorites like "Mustang Sally" or James Brown's "Sex Machine" has the power to lift spectators right out of their seat. Jimi is the lead singer of two bands: Hittime and Déja Blues, both of which play at a number of venues in the metropolitan area, including Clyde's and Lewie's in Bethesda; Madam's Organ in D.C.; and Old Glory in both D.C. and Virginia. Each performance of either of Jimi's bands, both of which have loyal followers (not to say "groupies"), normally ends with more than half the audience on its feet, clapping hands overhead, and moving their bodies to the music.

Jimi came to the Fund in 1996 through a temporary agency for which he still works, and this move was a lucky one from several points of view. For one thing, he has worked out an arrangement with his supervisor whereby he can take the occasional Friday off if he has to prepare for a gig; for another, he has met people at the Fund, economists and specialized staff alike, who have ended up playing with him in his bands at one time or another. Other Fund staff have hired him to play at private parties or wedding receptions, or have simply shown up to show their support at local bars where he performs.

Where does he go from here? Jimi is on the cusp of something big. He feels it, his audience senses it, his fellow band members hope it. He has cut a CD called *Be What You Wanna Be* with his band Hittime, which includes the single "No Problem" and is available at Tower Records. He hopes that by distributing the CD to club managers and radio stations over a large part of the East Coast, he will consolidate his reputation and broaden his base of support. He has also hired an agent in Nags Head, North Carolina, a beach resort where he travels on weekends for regular gigs. Having an agent, he explains, is crucial to expanding his audience beyond the local clubs where his popularity has spread via word-of-mouth.

Jimi's charisma and energy are hard to describe in words, and are best experienced...either in cyberspace, at his website www.jimismoothandhittime.com—where you can listen to an excerpt of his music and consult a schedule of his upcoming concerts—or live, at Old Glory in Georgetown, where he will perform with Hittime on October 8. You could also catch a performance of his other band, Déja Blues, on November 6 at Clyde's in Friendship Heights. ◆

Maureen Burke


No pre-show jitters here.

Neiss Steps Forward

APD Director Builds Public Support for Indonesian Program

Vasuki Shastry, formerly the Indonesian correspondent to The Business Times *in Singapore, is now the Asia and Pacific Press Officer in EXR. He spoke to Hubert Neiss about his popularity in Indonesia, and the success of the Indonesian program.*

Neiss: The strategy in Indonesia is part of a carefully thought-out exercise to build wide public support for the IMF program.

Hubert Neiss, Director of the Asia and Pacific Department, is a certified celebrity in Indonesia. His public pronouncements on the IMF program routinely grace the front pages of major Indonesian newspapers. He is surrounded by hordes of journalists and photographers every time he makes an appearance—be it outside the finance ministry, the presidential palace, or even the Grand Hyatt Hotel. As a result, Neiss has true name recognition among ordinary Indonesians. During a visit to Jakarta in June, I saw Neiss, standing in a hotel lobby, being greeted by a young Indonesian couple with a child. The man shook hands with Neiss and then asked his child to do the same.

His remarkable popularity in Indonesia should not be attributed to superficial public relations. It is part of a carefully thought-out exercise to build wide public support for the IMF program. Since he took over as mission chief of the program in April 1998, Neiss and his team have reached out to a broad cross section of Indonesian society, including major opposition leaders, trade unionists, student leaders, businesspeople, bankers, parliamentarians, and academics. The discussions have centered on major elements of the IMF program being implemented by the Indonesian government and the strategy to achieve economic stabilization and recovery. More than any other factor, this sustained outreach campaign has helped in building wide public support for the program.

"Like in Thailand and Korea, it was clear from the beginning that to make the Indonesia program work, it needed the broad support of the community—not just of the various government agencies, but of important groups in society," Neiss said. Frequent television interviews played an important role in this effort. As head of APD, Neiss has not been just the Fund's "Indonesia man" but has been intimately involved in other crisis countries, including Thailand and Korea, and, earlier, the Philippines and India.

Dark Days

"My first impression, when I took over as the Indonesia mission chief, was that the policymaking process had come to a dead end," he said. "There was no willingness on the government's part to be bold and take new initiatives. And there was a general sense of defeatism that whatever the government does, nothing works." After former President Suharto was reelected in March 1998 and appointed a new cabinet, Deputy Managing Director Stanley Fischer and Neiss traveled to Indonesia in April to discuss the economic situation with the authorities, and within a short time a new program was initiated."

Program implementation was interrupted, however, by the unprecedented rioting in the Indonesian capital on May 14, and by Suharto's resignation a week later. When B.J. Habibie took over as president, he inherited a devastated economy. "The new government was willing to continue the IMF program, but under greatly deteriorated economic conditions. In such a situation, it was important to immediately get the understanding and support of the main groups of society," Neiss explained.

Indonesia's economic situation was indeed grim. The exchange rate of the rupiah plummeted against the U.S. dollar due to the social unrest and political uncertainty. Inflation rose sharply to close to 100 percent because of the steep fall in the rupiah and a poor rice harvest. The May rioting had also disrupted the country's extensive food distribution network. Analysts began to warn of impending food shortages, even famine. Ahead of an

IMF mission in June 1998, Neiss visited Jakarta and met with senior government officials including President Habibie, as well as with key leaders of Indonesia's opposition. "The coordinating economic minister and I told the press after these meetings that there was broad public support for continuing the program and therefore an IMF mission was invited to come back to Jakarta. In Washington, I briefed the Executive Board about the outcome of my meetings and a decision was taken to continue the program," he added.

To be sure, Neiss emphasized, there was only grudging support among opposition leaders for the IMF program at that stage. "There was a great deal of suspicion, first that the program would be used to prop up the government beyond a short transition period. Second, and more sinister, they feared that IMF money would be used to privately enrich government officials. I could discount the second suspicion because our money goes directly to Bank Indonesia, the central bank, and use of these funds can be tightly monitored," Neiss said. Nevertheless, he pointed out that the time between June and September 1998 was the worst time for the Indonesian economy.

"The difficulties were managed by the authorities with the international community's active support. The government made immediate efforts to reestablish the rice distribution system, to liberalize rice imports, and to launch a major program to distribute rice to the poorer sections of society," he said. Neiss monitored retail rice prices during his morning run through crowded sections of central Jakarta, a routine that became widely known. Neiss attributes Indonesia's success in achieving broad macroeconomic stabilization to three factors: the government's rice policies, the central bank's consistent tight grip on monetary policy, and external support through new money and debt relief.

Through these tumultuous months, opposition groups, civil society, and even militant student groups continued to lend support to the IMF program. Once, when Neiss and his colleagues had to walk through marching students to reach the finance ministry, a number of them spontaneously shook his hand. "The main preoccupation of all these groups was politics. It wasn't immediately clear whether government had a scheme for smooth political transition. As far as the IMF was concerned, it was not part of the controversy. One opposition figure said the IMF was a necessary evil, but we have to go through with its program," he added.

Progress

Indonesia certainly has come a long way since those dark days of May 1998. The economy has bounced back in 1999 with two straight quarters of positive growth, the exchange rate of the rupiah has strengthened, interest rates have fallen, and inflation has been negative for several successive months. True, much remains to be done in terms of financial and corporate restructuring, and institution building. But what makes Indonesia's achievement even more creditable is that an agreed timetable for the political transition was established and the country held peaceful and orderly general elections on June 7, 1999. There was widespread expectation that before the elections, major social unrest would once again jeopardize economic recovery. "The pessimists expected a total breakdown in law and order. But to the contrary, the violence abated and the economic situation improved beyond everybody's expectations," Neiss explained. Fischer and Neiss traveled to Jakarta after the elections and met with President Habibie and leaders of the five major opposition groups. The political players conveyed a uniform message to the Fund—they would continue to support the program and believed that the IMF strategy, by and large, was right for the country.

Reflecting on his experience in Indonesia, Neiss said, "Personally, I have found it very gratifying to be in contact with so many interesting people there." But what lessons should the IMF draw from its experience? "It will always be true that an IMF program needs to be understood and supported by a majority of the people if it is to work. How to achieve this goal varies from country to country and depends on the prevailing political situation. For instance, in Thailand right now it is very difficult to get that consensus, not so much due to issues of the program, but because of a fierce struggle among the political parties ahead of the next elections," he said. Nevertheless, he says it is important for the Fund to remain engaged even under the most difficult circumstances. "You also have to face the Fund's critics. It is just no good to read what they say and get upset about it. If you have met them in public, they will tone down their statements since they know that they cannot say irresponsible things without being challenged," he said. ◆

PICNIC '99

september

Read Anything Good Lately?

In time for those long winter nights, IMF staff review books and a PBS TV series available on video.

The Fall of a Sparrow

Robert Hellenga's novel documents the travails of Alan "Woody" Woodhull, a popular classics teacher at a Midwestern college, whose life is transformed upon the death of his daughter, Cookie, in a terrorist bombing of the Bologna train station in 1980, and the subsequent breakup of his family. He decides to attend the trial in Italy of the terrorists responsible for his daughter's death as part of his continuing struggle to begin a new life and come to terms with his sorrow and loneliness. He thinks he has learned all of life's painful lessons, but finds himself painfully bound to the past through Cookie's death. Going to Italy is the beginning of what unexpectedly awakens in him a new life and new hope.

Hellenga is able to paint a vivid portrait of Woody's self-destructive spiral before going to the trial, and he very skillfully weaves in the deeper conundrums of life in personal situations as well as in the trial itself. It was easy to sink into the book and literally live and breathe the vivid cast of characters Woody encountered in Italy, and the things he learned about himself and about life, without ever planning or hoping to. Hellenga's sense of the ironic added richness to what I perceived as a very engaging psychological insight into the characters as they dealt with sorrow and the chance at redemption. And what I ultimately was left with from his engaging ability to breathe life into his characters was that their lives, and quite possibly our own, are really rich with the possibility for experiences that are very hard to foresee and that get obscured by travails, large and small. When I finally put this book down, I was not left with powerlessness, but with a wondrous sense of hope and adventure about the uncertainty of life. Hellenga's absorbing storytelling was blended very well with a subtle yet complex portrayal of a man's journey through turbulent times. The book is to me a late-twentieth-century sequel to Maugham's *A Razor's Edge*, one of my favorite books.

Subir Lall

Gift from the Sea

As Anne Morrow Lindbergh spent a two-week vacation at the Connecticut seashore, away from the demands of family and work, she contemplated the various phases of life for women. Each phase she represented by a seashell: the channeled whelk—a simple life shed for the more complex; the moon shell—the need for inner solitude; the double sunrise—the pure relationship of early marriage; the oyster—the growing years of an expanding family and responsibilities; and the argonauta—a fully personal relationship possible only after maturity and self-realization are attained.

Although *Gift from the Sea* was written 35 years ago as an essay designed to help the author analyze the problems of women and those she faced as a mother, wife, and writer, the conclusions she reached are valid today, making this book a compelling read for women and men.

I received Anne Morrow Lindbergh's book as a gift from my cousin Charles before my vacation at the beach last year. He was fortunate enough to have once spoken to the author and told her how much he enjoyed her writing. Indeed, she writes beautifully and concisely and uses the sea and its shells as a wonderfully descriptive analogy of life. While the length of the book and the graceful flow of her writing make this a quick read, it is one whose richness will linger in the reader's mind for quite a long time.

Sharon Slattery

Ishmael

Ishmael is a story told by a gorilla. Why a gorilla? Daniel Quinn tells his story through a gorilla's eyes to exclude cultural and human biases and better convey his message of our need to change our relationship

with the earth. Ishmael is a half-ton silverback gorilla who recruits a young pupil, Allen Lomax. The pair communicate telepathically. Ishmael is a speaker for the nonhuman community on earth, which we all call home. Through Lomax, the reader is never alone with the ideas Quinn presents, the way he/she would be with a book written solely on argument.

Throughout the book, Quinn gives you questions to ponder. This he does with an easy-to-follow writing style—a Socratic dialogue between two who share their ideas and understandings of life's realities. While primarily concerned with the questions of environmental sustainability and overpopulation, the dialogue provides a tool with which to examine other questions not necessarily addressed in the book. For example, I found myself asking why there is so much crime, and so much cruelty in the world today. Through *Ishmael*, I found that there is a reason for everything, but it is not always evident or easy to understand. To better understand and save our planet, Quinn argues, we must discover why things happen, and work to correct our problems to ensure the future of life on earth. Throughout the book, I found myself thinking long and hard about the issues it presented, sometimes finding my own answers to important questions, and other times just better understanding the questions. Once I read it, I found myself looking at things in a different

The Six Wives of Henry VIII

The classic six-part BBC television series in two volumes, starring Keith Michell as Henry VIII

Did you walk out of the movie *Elizabeth* feeling disappointed? Cheated? *Elizabeth* has zero period flavor, and the opening sequence, in which Nicholas Ridley is burned at the stake, is merely the first in a tide of factual errors. Cate Blanchett's lovely performance in the lead role cannot rescue this misbegotten venture.

Viewers on the lookout for a better portrayal of England's Tudor period should consult the BBC six-part television series *Elizabeth*, featuring Glenda Jackson (who recently traded in her acting career for a life in politics). Better still is the BBC's companion production, *The Six Wives of Henry VIII*, which I had the pleasure of watching once again this summer.

Three decades after its first appearance in 1971, *Henry VIII* stands unsurpassed as a pinnacle of the small screen. All facets of the period are done full justice: the pomp and pageantry; the disputes over theology; the intrigue and backbiting; the English language taking wing; archery, hunting, and hawking; and the specter of death by axe and fire.

The doomed queens are portrayed with wit and zest. First prize goes to Dorothy Tutin in the plum role of Anne Boleyn (although the actresses who play Anne of Cleves and Catherine Howard are close runners-up). Indeed, each historical character is impeccably cast; watch out, in particular, for the fanatic Robert Barnes and heresy hunter Stephen Gardiner—both servants of the Crown, and polar ideological opposites—who fluently evoke the kill-or-be-killed atmosphere of the time.

For here is a world in which "stone dead hath no fellow"—a world bereft of trust, privacy, or comradeship, in which all and sundry press for advantage at every step of the way. Lurking behind each footfall, curtain rustle, and knock on the door, we sense the mind of Henry Tudor, described by biographer Jasper Ridley as a "formidable, frightful monarch." King Henry reigns over his Privy Council, a cabinet of ministers who plot to tear each other limb from limb. A master of divide-and-conquer, Henry makes vague pledges of support to each faction in turn, thereby tempting both sides to overplay their hand and show their cards…just as Henry intended. In his vanity, machismo, and resolve to stay top dog until the last, Michell's Henry is a painful pleasure to behold. Available at Borders.

Neil L. Inglis

light, and think you may, too. *Ishmael* is now available in Chinese, Dutch, English, French, German, Hebrew, Hungarian, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Norwegian, Portuguese, Spanish, and Swedish.

For more information visit www.ishmael.com. The website includes great information on the background of the author, question and answer sections by Quinn, suggestions for further reading, and information on how to order a copy in one of the many languages.

Sheldon Rhyne

The Professor and the Madman

A delight for any bibliophile, this book, by Simon Winchester, provides a fascinating account of the extraordinary literary relationship between James Murray, the formidable compiler of the first Oxford English Dictionary, and William Chester Minor, an incarcerated homicidal lunatic. When Murray, an austere Scot, launched his historic enterprise in 1878 by appealing for volunteers to research the literary canon and compile references for the dictionary, he could not have foreseen that his most faithful and productive correspondent over the next three decades would be an independently wealthy American murderer. For Minor—who had served as a surgeon in the Civil War and developed irrational hatreds and phobias as a consequence of the human tragedies he had seen—killed a man at random in London one winter night and, as his punishment, was incarcerated in Broadmoor, then as now the leading asylum for the criminally insane.

In restrained Victorian fashion, the men corresponded for nearly a decade before they actually met in 1891. They then established an uncommon friendship that was to last for nearly 20 years before ending in tragedy.

Simon Winchester's book is fascinating, combining as it does the best elements of the detective story with the intrigue and drama of literary history. It describes perceptively the enormous challenge of compiling a dictionary in an age where there were no real precedents (there had been nothing comparable since Dr. Johnson's great work was published in 1755). And it leaves the reader with a great sense of admiration for two remarkable Victorians—James Murray, born into poverty, who taught himself over 20 languages by the age of 30, and William Chester Minor, surgeon, millionaire, rake, schizophrenic, and indefatigable researcher. ◆

Ian McDonald

Off the Beaten Path

With their mission to Pakistan coming to a close in early March, the mission chief inquired about Administrative Assistant Irmgard Svenson's homeward-bound arrangements. "I'm staying for another two weeks," she said. Her mission chief smiled and admitted that he had not taken her seriously when she had earlier told of her plans. But she was serious: she had some trekking to do.

Having scoured the Internet and found two trekking groups in Rawalpindi that offered guided hikes into the Hunza region, Irmgard opted for one that featured a series of day hikes and furnished a Toyota van, a driver, and a tour guide. The company also offered to fly her to Gilgit—near her starting-off point for the day hikes. But Irmgard had other plans—she wanted to experience the famous Karakoram Highway, a true engineering feat. En route, she hoped to visit the remains of scores of Buddhist monasteries and stupas embellished with Gandhara art with its Hellinistic influence and a series of archeological sites, Taxila among others, where Buddhism reached its zenith about two thousand years ago. The company obliged, and a day after the mission wrapped up, Irmgard was off on a 10-day personalized tour of northeastern Pakistan.

Once in Karimabad, not too far from the Chinese border, she settled into a hotel, pulled out her hiking boots, spread out an array of warm clothing that she

Irmgard's guide Shafi (left) and their driver in Pakistan.


Trekking in Kenya.

would need in the higher elevations, and loaded her camera. The snow-covered mountains around Karimabad, visible from her room, offered her a range of day hikes. Wake-up time was 6:30 a.m., a hefty breakfast was waiting, a lunch was carefully packed, and by 7:30 a.m., it was off into the cold, crisp air up snow-covered mountains. To reach more distant areas, at times her driver would deliver Irmgard and her guide by jeep to the start-off point. The frequent rumble of avalanches provided vivid reminders that, while spring was around the corner, winter conditions were only beginning to loosen their hold in the Karakoram mountain range. It was exciting to spot in the far distance a herd of the rare ibex and a warm experience to share a cup of tea with the locals in a little tea hut along the trail. Around 5:00 p.m., the hikers returned in time for a sumptuous local dinner.

Free from the timetables and logistic considerations of group treks, and with the weather gods smiling on her, Irmgard enjoyed five blue-sky treks in the mountains—meeting local people and absorbing another culture and way of life. Night temperatures dropped to below freezing, but day temperatures hovered around 70 degrees Fahrenheit. With the fruit trees beginning to blossom, the terrain was striking in its contrasts, and beautiful. Rice grew in the foothills; corn, wheat, and potatoes would be planted farther up. People lived along the steep hills "like swallows in their clay nests," she said.

On one of the treks, her young guide, Shafi Ahmed, took her to his home village to meet his parents. The family gave her a hand-carved spindle and a fleece of wool. Shafi knew that she liked to spin. The warmth of the family's hospitality moved her very much. When Irmgard returned home, she washed and combed the wool to spin and knit a vest for Shafi's father. Irmgard's only regret is that she expressed her wish for the delicate yak wool too late, after she had left the area where it was easily available.

Other Trekking Experiences

Trekking provides the slow pace, the intimate contact with nature and local residents, and an absence of commercialism that are staples, for Irmgard, of an enjoyable and rewarding vacation. "I don't enjoy visiting many countries over a brief period," she observes. "I'd rather cover a small territory and really get to know it." Always physically active and fond of the outdoors and of travel to out-of-the-way spots, she finally, in the early 1980s, decided to trek overseas. Her first experience—in Japan—was a trek through the Japanese Alps and a day hike up Mount Fuji. Years as an avid walker and local hiker had prepared her—she hoped—for its more serious rigors.

When she looked for a trekking adventure abroad, she did not opt for an easy hike. She had always been struck by the beauty, in photos, of Japan's legendary Mount Fuji. She located a professional trekking company there and joined a group of hiking enthusiasts. The company had rated the trek a strenuous one, but she convinced them she was in shape. She had taken many hikes and also walked daily up the stairs to her twelfth floor office. The guides, when introduced to her, said, "Oh, you are the one who walks up the stairs all the time."

The stairs must have helped, because the serene beauty of Mount Fuji belies an arduous trek. Irmgard opted to go in October, when the air was cooler and the slopes decidedly less crowded than they would be in summer. Their group and a handful of individuals were the only ones to attempt the ascent that day. They started off at 7 a.m. and were told to turn back by 1 p.m.—regardless of whether or not they had reached the summit. Irmgard walked at a steady clip and was among the few who did reach the top. As she savored the gorgeous view from Mount Fuji's peak, the mix of exhilaration and satisfaction sealed her interest in trekking abroad. This was exciting—this was the way to travel. "I enjoy the quietness, the air, nature, the people you meet," she recounts; there was no question that she would be doing this again.

Indeed, in the years that followed—often in conjunction with missions—Irmgard continued to trek, choosing remote locations far from the madding crowd. After Japan, Kashmir-Ladakh was the attraction. Few treks offer contrasts as startling and beautiful as this one, passing from the lush, green fields of

Irmgard on the bridge across the Gilgit river.

Kashmir to the windswept desert moonscape of Ladakh, along pilgrim trails to remote villages and monastries over a 16,000-foot pass. In 1991, she embarked on a 10-day trek by way of the spectacular and remote Tien Shan Range in what was then Kirgizia, and enjoying the hospitality of people living in yurts and sharing their homemade bread and kefir. The trek concluded with a visit to the magnificent cities of Samarkand and Leningrad.

In Kenya, she spent most of her precious free time on mission locating a travel agency that would provide a guide to travel there. She wanted to experience the life of the local people and climb Mt. Kenya. Climbing the mountain over a week with three Kenyans was a great and touching learning experience, she remembers.

Rules of the Road

Irmgard has a few simple rules. She reads as extensively as she can about the area she wants to visit and tries to acquire a basic vocabulary of the local language. She chooses her trekking companies carefully, relying on those that have established track records but who have not yet gotten either too big or too commercial. She packs simply—a pair of well-worn hiking boots and comfortable clothing. She complies with the detailed checklist of items that trekking companies advise participants to bring, but also carries packets of dried fruit to eat and share. She also learned that U.S. currency can come in handy—even in the remotest spots—and she always takes with her a supply of one-, five-, and ten-dollar bills, which she uses for tips and small purchases.

Resourceful, curious, patient, and determined, Irmgard has just the right temperament for a physical activity that rewards perseverance and delight in the everyday. She is adventurous and comfortable exploring remote areas with only a guide at hand. But she is also conscious that things can go wrong and that even minor medical problems in inaccessible areas can pose major challenges. She always buys emergency medical insurance—"You never know," she said, "when you will break a bone or need to be airlifted out of a remote area." But she has been lucky with her health—despite treks to elevations as high as 15,000 feet, she has never experienced altitude sickness. She is careful to keep hydrated—even when this means using chlorine tablets to purify the water. "It doesn't taste good," she admits, "but you have to drink a lot when you are in high elevations."

She prefers to travel alone or with small groups. Her fellow trekkers tend to be interesting, but she is more intent on soaking up the natural beauty and the culture of the spot she is visiting. She relies on experienced trekking companies to be cognizant of political or physical security concerns. She stresses the importance of being aware of one's surroundings and of respecting local customs. Reading and talking to knowledgeable Fund colleagues provides excellent preparation, she adds.

Now a veteran of many treks, Irmgard still considers herself in training for her "ultimate" trek—a much-dreamed-about hike to the summit of the 19,000-foot Mount Kilimanjaro. If all goes well, she will achieve that goal early in the next millennium. ◆

Sheila Meehan

*staff*interview
Furnishing the Fund

Ever weary of looking at your office furniture? It could be because it has probably been here longer than you have, and has been moved around and beat up numerous times. The Fund is in the process of getting a furniture facelift. Staff News *spoke with the Furniture Replacement Study Project Managers, Debi Pyne and Tommy Llewellyn, of the Headquarters Design Unit, about the selection process.*

Please describe the process of selecting the furniture.
Pyne: A couple of years ago, we recognized that we needed new furniture. Our existing desk furniture manufacturer had notified us that they did not want to continue making the furniture for us. They had been custom-designing furniture for the Fund since the early 1970s. Every time the manufacturer produced a run for us, it had to retool its shop, make our furniture, and then retool again to make its standard furniture. Our existing furniture is made of teak veneer, which is an endangered wood. In addition, it doesn't address our ergonomic requirements, and it is extremely cumbersome; you often can't move one piece without taking the whole arrangement apart.

Given all this, the Facilities Design and Renovation Section (FDR) and the Procurement Section issued a request for proposal, and hired an architectural consultant through a competitive bidding process. FDR established a user's group that included all levels of employees and the health services department's ergonomic nurse, Danielle Ali. We also ran focus groups with BCS employees, administrative officers, electricians, movers, design staff, and about two dozen staff of various sizes, heights, and physical attributes. We interviewed the tallest person in the Fund and the shortest, as well as people with physical limitations and people who have carpal tunnel syndrome, to get their input. We made sure we covered it all.

As part of the process, our architectural consultant, Studios Architects, developed an electronic survey last fall that was sent to all employees in the Fund, asking them what their furniture requirements were. We were very pleased to have close to one-third of the staff participate, which was a high rate. The user's group was brought in again to review the survey and to ensure that we were asking all the necessary questions. They also reviewed the results of the survey to make sure we were interpreting the answers correctly.


Checking out a new keyboard...


and a new desk.

The next step in the study was to give our consultant all of the information that FDR had on the existing furniture, including drawings of every floor in the building and every furniture layout. Studios Architects developed new layouts that were reviewed with the user's group, and then took the finished layouts and did marketing research to see what manufacturers were making and which ones were most appropriate for us. We started with about 12 manufacturers and winnowed it down to six, at which time we went on local showroom tours with Inger Prebensen and Michael Gehringer from the front office of the Technology and General Services Department, and reviewed the manufacturers' products. After this we narrowed our potential suppliers to four of the top North American manufacturers. We made an early decision to look only at North American manufacturers because we want just-in-time delivery and local warehousing—things that a manufacturer halfway around the world could have difficulty providing.

FDR, with Procurement's assistance, plans to choose a manufacturer through a competitive bid in the fall of 1999, and to then place the first furniture order soon thereafter. We hope to have the first group of new furniture around the new year since all the manufacturers we are working with have about a 6-week lead time, as opposed to the current lead time of 12–16 weeks our existing manufacturer has.
Llewellyn: Seating and keyboards will be bid separately from the desk furniture, because there are other seating manufacturers in the industry that specialize in ergonomic requirements. In addition, we are looking at alternate suppliers of keyboards that can focus on the issues of interchangeability from manufacturer to manufacturer.

When can staff expect to see their new furniture?
Pyne: This was originally proposed as a five-year project, with the first three years' funding to outfit headquarters, and then the last two outfitting Phase IV (PEPCO site). Staff at International Square would get new furniture when they move into Phase IV, which current projections suggest will be in late 2004–early 2005.

How much will the new furniture cost?
Pyne: We took our historical costs for furniture and then Studios Architects did a market survey to get comparative pricing for wood furniture. We also checked with the Bank and found our estimates were close. The head of the Procurement section, Paul Churchill, has a furniture background and is a strong negotiator, so we will get a good value.

How will the final choice be made?
Llewellyn: It is a combination of elements. The staff's opinion will be taken into account through the results of the mock-up evaluations—500 staff members and the user's group and focus groups attended and gave us their views. The furniture will also have to meet the latest ergonomic requirements, and manufacturing issues need to be considered, such as construction materials and methods, shipping, warranties, lead time, and price. We developed a matrix to include all those factors that we will be using, with weights assigned to each, and the contract will be awarded based on overall best value to the Fund.

How is the new furniture an improvement over the old?
Pyne: It will have increased flexibility so that staff can make changes themselves. One of the specifications we gave to Studios Architects was that we wanted all the furniture groups to include rolling file cabinets—one day you may want your files in one spot and the next day in another. Now if you want to make a change in your furniture, you have to meet with a designer, then have the movers, BCS, and telecom all get involved, and it takes lots of time. With the new furniture, on moving day you can just put a sticky note on your file cabinet and it can be wheeled down the hall—some files don't have to be packed up. It will be a great time and money saver for everybody.
Llewellyn: The new furniture will meet today's ergonomic requirements and also offer more flexibility. There will be two standard layouts for each office category: senior, professional, and outer, and within each, there are a hundred ways the office can be arranged and moved around by each staff member. Employees will have more options and be in control of their own space without having to wait the six weeks it takes now for something to be moved.

What will happen to the old furniture?
Pyne: Often, manufacturers have programs to recycle old furniture, and if not, we will dispose of it through property management—either through sale, recycling, or donation through the Civic Program.

How did you bring the Fund's image into this process?
Pyne: We wanted to get wood furniture to maintain an aesthetic similar to that found in the best furniture now in use in the Fund. Some staff asked us why we didn't show some of the more cutting-edge glass and chrome stuff. We need to select furniture that is acceptable to as wide a group as possible. We also have to consider the functionality: While glass looks nice, it is a horrible work surface. Throughout all the design work we do in the building, we buy good quality, and we also purchase with a view toward long-term use. We try to avoid design decisions that might appear dated or out of fashion 5–10 years from now.

Would you like to add anything?
Pyne: We have gotten comments from staff asking us why we need new furniture, that they are perfectly happy with what they have. It's a necessity—we can't order this furniture anymore, it is aging rapidly—some furniture in the building is 40 or more years old—and it doesn't last forever. It is needed more from a functional and ergonomic standpoint. Other than the desk furniture replacement, we are also looking at other items: the manufacturers that make our sofas, our cubicles, and our chairs have all discontinued these products. Their time has come and their replacement helps contribute to an overall upgrading of the Fund's interiors. As part of the Phase III project, we began installing new carpeting, lighter paint, and the glass next to office doors to give the Fund's office areas a much-needed shot in the arm. ◆

Carolyn Worth: A Tribute

Carolyn Worth's death on July 21 brought sadness to her many friends throughout the Fund. Carolyn was a gentle person with a warm and caring nature, lively sense of humor, great strength of character—and determination bordering on stubbornness. Although determination never eclipsed Carolyn's other qualities, it was an important part of who she was, enabling her not only to cope with but to excel in managing challenges that would overwhelm many of us.

Carolyn was born and grew up in Peoria, Illinois. She started college there, but left to take a job at a firm where she met her husband, Ron. In 1980, Ron accepted his company's offer of a transfer, and they moved to Washington. In March of the following year, Carolyn joined the Fund as a clerk-typist in the Treasurer's Department. She transferred to the Bureau of Computing Services in June 1984, where she spent the greater part of her Fund career. During her 12½ years in BCS, she worked in its front office and in two divisions, starting off as a secretary and leaving as a senior administrative assistant. She moved to the Administration (now Human Resources) Department in January 1997, where she held the position of senior administrative assistant in the Staff Benefits Division.

Throughout her Fund career, Carolyn was held in high regard for her competence and professionalism. She was supportive of her colleagues, tolerant, and unfailingly positive in her outlook. She made many friends along the way because, as one longtime colleague and friend put it, Carolyn was a "giver." She had a tremendous capacity to care about and give of herself to others.

Carolyn was devoted to her husband, Ron, and their sons, Jason, 14, and Christopher, 8—they were her greatest joy. She treasured her relatives and friends, and loved holidays and special occasions. These are not unusual things to say about a wife, mother, and caring friend. However, what is remarkable is that she was able to deal so well with the daily challenges of caring for a son born with severe disabilities, raise another wonderful little boy, work, and still make time to enjoy her family and friends. In addition, Carolyn pursued for many years a bachelor's degree at the University of Maryland. Finishing the degree requirements was an important goal for her, one that she had almost attained when she became ill. With Ron's intercession, the university granted Carolyn a bachelor of science degree in business administration shortly before she died.

To those of us who knew Carolyn well, the courage and determination she displayed throughout her long illness did not come as a surprise. We already knew that she could handle immense difficulties with grace and dignity. She was a special person—she demonstrated that in every facet of her life. We miss her tremendously, all the while knowing that we are fortunate for having known her. ◆

Carolyn's friends and colleagues

The Dog Days of Summer

SERVATHON '99

On Saturday, May 8, 15 enthusiastic INVOLVErs headed for Takoma Park to participate in the tenth "Greater D.C. Cares Day '99—Servathon." It was a beautiful day to host Greater D.C. Cares' largest annual fund-raiser and marathon day of community service. Each year thousands of volunteers from all over the Washington area provide hands-on volunteer service to community and public service agencies in the greater Washington, D.C. community.

The IMF has participated in the Servathon for the past six years. This year, INVOLVE volunteers were assigned to the Friends of Takoma Recreation Center and spent the day transforming the Takoma Recreation Center into a freshly painted and lovely landscaped work of art. The neighborhood children and residents greatly appreciated our efforts and were very pleased with their new recreation center.

Christian Communities Group Home. On June 12, INVOLVE volunteers worked with the Christian Communities Group Home and DC Cares on three different projects. Bob Russell and Jin Hur helped a 91-year-old man pack up the apartment where he had lived for 30 years and that lacked both air-conditioning and heating. Charmion O'Connor and her aunt stayed at the Home and joined the residents in various activities throughout the morning. Connie Strayer and the DC Cares project coordinator painted the front porch and weeded the garden of a delightful lady who entertained them the entire time with wonderful stories of her life. All the residents had an enjoyable day with our volunteers and look forward to INVOLVE's next visit.

Garden Resources of Washington. On July 17, Lucia Casaravilla, Samantha Falke, and Connie Strayer joined members of GROW to transform an abandoned lot into

1999 All Kids Summer Camp

For the fourth year in a row, children ages 5 to 12 attended the five-day summer camp at Bretton Woods. From August 16–20, some 49 at-risk kids from three groups—the Calvary Multicultural Learning Center, the Fishing School, and the Latin American Youth Center—enjoyed a break from their regular summer routines to swim; play soccer, mini-golf, and tennis; take hikes; and do arts and crafts. Jake Hudson organized the event and assisted 10 other counselors in making the week as fun and educational as possible. Look for additional pictures on the INVOLVE website. ◆

Jake Hudson

an inner city garden for the children at the Studio School. When school begins in September, the children will take over the care of the garden. It is now in the beginning stages, so our tasks consisted mainly of shoveling and sifting soil to remove rocks and glass.

Mentoring. On July 30, Cristina Hayashi, Marta Vindiola, Jan Smart, and Connie Strayer, all mentors at H.D. Cooke Elementary School, attended the graduation ceremony of the 1999 Americorp group at the Latin American Youth Center (LAYC), which coordinates our mentoring program with H.D. Cooke. The Americorp group has provided invaluable support to IMF mentors throughout the year. It was a moving experience to watch these young people, who have dedicated a year or two to work with the community and serve as leaders and role models for the neighborhood children, receive their certificates of appreciation and to listen to the inspiring stories told of them by their teachers. The IMF and the mentoring program received a special commendation from the center for our work with the children during the past school year. They look forward to working with us again.

The Mentoring Program is recruiting for the fall. Come join the 40 staff members who volunteer their lunch hours to spend time with a child eager to learn. Being a young child's mentor can be a rewarding experience and an exciting way to make a difference in the D.C. community. You must be able to commit to one day a week for 1 1/2 hours at lunch time. We very much welcome Spanish- and Vietnamese-speaking mentors. The program runs from Monday through Thursday. Contact Cristina Tie Hayashi (chayashi@imf.org) for more information.

Calvary Women's Shelter. The Calvary Women's Shelter dinner program is also recruiting volunteers. This program, in its fourth year, is the longest-running INVOLVE project. The first Friday of every month staff members prepare and serve a homemade dinner for the women at the shelter. The program is in need of a backup coordinator. Choose simple and tasty menus, collect food, or help out at the shelter. For more information or to volunteer, please contact Lucia Casaravilla (lcasaravilla@imf.org). ◆

Lucia Casaravilla

Staff Race for the Cure

For the third straight year, IMF staff members turned out to support the Race for the Cure 5k run/walk, which raises money for breast cancer education, screening, treatment, and research. The IMF Fitness Center put together a 120-member Fund-wide team for the race.

A smaller group of Fund staff members, "Friends of Margaret" met before the race to greet former Fund staff member Margaret Wallace, who is battling breast cancer. For the third year, Phil Torsani designed a sign for "Margaret's Race" for supporters to wear on their backs as they ran or walked. The group then joined the rest of the IMF team in a sea of over 65,000 participants.

Jane Godfrey

A Note from Margaret

I was so glad to participate for the third year in this momentous event. It was a real morale booster to have so many Fund staff participating and providing such an outpouring of love, friendship, and support. Thank you.

Cancer sneak ups when you least expect it—I urge women to take advantage of health services department's free yearly mammogram. To schedule an appointment on line, go to the Fund's home page and click on Health Services Department. The earlier cancer is detected, the more chance you have of beating it. Don't be afraid to do monthly examinations and have suspicious lumps biopsied. Don't put off check-ups!

To donate platelets or blood, contact the Red Cross at (202)872-8325. Their headquarters for blood donations are just down the street from the Fund. Some day you may need that blood. For information on the national bone marrow donor program—you could be saving someone's life—visit www.marrow.org

I continue my battle and appreciate all the kind thoughts and love extended to me by the IMF staff. In time, a cure for cancer will be found and your support will have helped make it happen! ◆

Race for the Cure crew, with Margaret in pink survivor's shirt, in the center.

*new*imfstaff

Olumuyiwa Adedeji
Nigerian, is in the Economist Program, MED. Formerly a teaching assistant in the department of economics at McGill University, Canada, he holds an M.A. in economics and management and is a Ph.D. candidate at McGill. He likes music, soccer, and table tennis.

Isabell Adenauer
German, is an Economist, AFR. She was previously an economic development officer at the UNDP. She holds master's degrees in philosophy, German literature, and economics from the universities of Bonn and Kiel and has a postgraduate diploma from the London School of Economics. She is interested in development economics.

Camilla Lund Andersen
Danish, is a Recording Officer, SEC. Previously a research fellow at the Nobel Institute in Oslo, and a project manager at the House of Mandag Morgen in Copenhagen, she holds a Ph.D. from Cambridge University. She lists squash, bridge, and crime novels among her interests.

Paul Tizibong Atang
Cameroonian, is a Research Assistant, AFR. Previously an assistant lecturer of economics at the University of Buea, Cameroon, he holds an M.S. in economics from the University of Ibadan, Nigeria. He enjoys reading and playing soccer.

Taimur Baig
Bangladeshi, is in the Economist Program, EU2. He holds a Ph.D. in economics from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Mingyou Bao
Chinese, is a Translator, TGS. Formerly an official at the People's Bank of China, he was educated at Beijing Foreign Studies University and the London School of Economics. Married with one daughter, he likes sports and movies.

Renee Cardenas
Peruvian, is a Staff Assistant, MAE. She was previously a contractual staff member. She studied at the Bilingual Secretarial Business School, Lima, Peru. She includes art, reading, photography, and dancing among her interests.

Jaime Cardoso
Uruguayan, is in the Economist Program, WHD. He holds a Ph.D. in economics from UCLA and enjoys sports.

Aliona Cebotari
Moldovan, is in the Economist Program, EU1. She holds a Ph.D. in economics from the University of Maryland. She lists languages and ballroom dancing among her interests.

Sean Clarke
Canadian, is a Research Assistant, WHD. Before coming to the Fund, he was a research assistant at Laurentian University and the University of Toronto. He holds an M.A. from the University of Toronto. He enjoys playing music and cycling.

Ana Lucía Coronel
Ecuadoran, is an Economist, WHD. She was previously a member of the board of directors of the Central Bank of Ecuador and the Assistant to an IMF Executive Director. She holds an M.A. in economics from Williams College. She enjoys reading and jogging.

Thomas C. Dawson, II
A U.S. national, is the Director, EXR. Educated at Stanford and Princeton universities, he was formerly the U.S. Executive Director to the IMF, and most recently a director of financial institutions at Merrill Lynch. He is married and has three children and enjoys tennis.

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Guido De Blasio
Italian, is an Assistant to the Executive Director, OED. Before coming to the Fund, he was an economist at the Bank of Italy. He holds a Ph.D. in economics from the University of Siena, Italy. He is married and has a newborn baby girl.

Mohamad Elhage
Lebanese/American, is a Senior Economist, MED. He was formerly an Advisor to the Executive Director, OED. He holds a Ph.D. from the Johns Hopkins University. He enjoys tennis and outdoor activities. He is married with two children.

Frank Engels
German, is in the Economist Program, PDR. He previously worked in the economic research department of SwissRe, in the emerging markets group, analyzing Latin American and African countries. He holds a Ph.D. in economics from the WHU Koblenz, Germany.

Carlene Yuette Francis
Bahamian, is an Economist, WHD. Before joining the Fund, she was the World Bank Advisor to the Bank of Uganda. She holds an M.S. in economics from the University of the West Indies. She is interested in reading, singing, and tennis and was featured in the 1999 edition of Marquis *Who's Who in the World*.

Alfred Go
Filipino, is a Staff Assistant, WHD. Before joining WHD, he was a contractual Staff Assistant in STA. He has a B.A. in broadcast communications from the University of the Philippines and enjoys theater.

Mbaye Gueye
Senegalese, is a Research Assistant, STA. Previously a contractual staff member in STA, he holds an M.A. in economics and is a Ph.D. candidate at the University of Auvergne, France. He includes traveling, jogging, and dancing among his interests.

Alexander Hammer
A U.S. national/Canadian, is a Research Assistant, APD. Formerly a senior economic analyst at Wharton Econometric Forecasting Associates, Inc., he was educated at Brandeis University and the London School of Economics and is pursuing an M.A. at SAIS. He is interested in transitional economics in Asia.

Amber Hasan
Pakistani, is a Research Assistant, EU1. She was on the CATS Team/BCS before joining EU1. She holds a B.A. in economics/history from Oberlin College and lists music, swimming, and reading among her interests.

Robert Heath
A U.K. national, is a Senior Economist, STA. He has held positions at the Bank of England, the U.K. Treasury, and was on secondment to the IMF from the Bank of England. Educated at the University of Wales and the London School of Economics, he enjoys running and is married with two children.

Hubertus Hesse
German, is a Translator, TGS. Formerly an interpreter at the Commission of the EU, he holds a diploma in interpretation from Heidelberg University. He is interested in history and music.

Christina M. Hip-Flores
A U.S. national, is a Research Assistant, PDR. She holds a B.A. from the Woodrow Wilson School, Princeton University. She is interested in community development and migration.

Davina Jacobs
South African, is an Economist, FAD. She previously was an economist at the Ministry of Finance and the Central Economic Advisory Service in South Africa. Currently working toward her Ph.D., she holds a master's degree in economics from Orange Free State University.

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Arsene J. Jacoby
Luxembourgois, is an Assistant to the Executive Director, OED. Before coming to the Fund, he was head of a section in the Monetary, Economics, and Statistics Department, Central Bank of Luxembourg. He holds an M.A. in economics and likes literature and skiing.

Izabela Karpowicz
Croatian, is a Research Assistant, MED. She holds an M.A. in economics from CEU, Budapest.

Christian Keller
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A U.S. national, is a Computer Systems Officer, TGS. Previously an EDP consultant, he was educated at St. Joseph's University, Philadelphia. He includes history, science, and archaeology among his interests.

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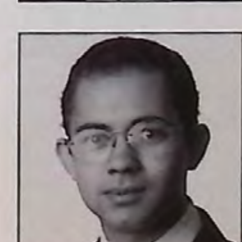
Moroccan, is a Research Assistant, AFR. He worked at Citibank as a summer intern and as a volunteer at a Moroccan hospital. He holds a B.A. in economics from the University of Chicago. He is interested in soccer, squash, community service, and traveling.



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Belgian, is an Accounting Assistant, TRE. She holds a M.A. in international management and finance from the American Graduate School of International Management, Arizona, and enjoys reading, jogging, and yoga.

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E. Catherine Fleck
Patrice P. Guilmard
Doris Matteau-Boggs
Kamlesh K. Sehmi
Frits van Beek

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Pierre Dhonte
Catherine O. John
Omotunde E.G. Johnson
Paulette M. Korkegi
Orlando Roncesvalles
Veronica V. Samson
V. Sundararajan
Mustafa Z. Yucelik

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Francisco De Oliveira
Luis H. Duran-Downing
Zia Ebrahim-zadeh
Luis Eduardo Escobar
Paulo Neuhaus
Graham P. Newman
Monique P. Ridet

Births

Guido De Blasio (OED) and his wife, Diletta, are proud to announce the birth of their daughter, Viola, on July 23, 1999. Ravi Sundararajan (OED) and his wife, Geetha Ravi, are pleased to announce the birth of their daughter, Harshi, on July 13, 1999.

Transfers

Leigh Alexander to OIA from MED
Gemina Archer-Davies to INS from ADM
Vivek Bhushan Arora to WHD from APD
Athanasios V. Arvanitis to PDR from EU2
Z Abdallah Bakhashuwein to JAI from DMD
Michael John Buchanan to PDR from EU2
Ales Bulir to PDR from AFR
Joshua D. Charap to AFR from PDR
Era Dabla to FAD from WHD
Jens Dalsgaard to PDR from EU2
Sonal Desai to PDR from EU1
Julio Escolano to EU1 from FAD
Mark Joseph Flanagan to FAD from EU2
Wim Marcel M. Fonteyne to MAE from MED
Mario Garza to EU2 from WHD
Poonam Gupta to RES from APD
Rahemoon H. Halfmann to JVI from BLS
Shehadah D. Hussein to MED from to
Anna Olegovna Ilina to RES from APD
Samir Jahjah to INS from MED
Dennis G. Jones to PDR from EU2
Graeme Justice to EU2 from AFR
Daniel Stanley Kanda to APD from MAE
Cem Karacadag to MAE from APD
Qingying Janet Kong to EU1 from FAD
Angeliki Kourelis to MAE from AFR
Kathryn J. Langdon to MAE from PDR
Hong Liang to APD from RES
Jianhai Lin to TRE from PDR
John Mary Matovu to INS from AFR
Gary G. Moser to AFR from PDR
Cecilia Roxana Mongrut to WHD from STA
Bhaswar Mukhopadhyay to PDR from AFR
Stefan Erik Oppers to EU1 from APD
Catriona Mary Purfield to FAD from EU1
Uma Ramakrishnan to APD from EU1
Yuri V. Sobolev to PDR from EU2
Piritta Sorsa to WHD from PDR
Constance Strayer to EU1 from EU2
Ling Hui Tan to INS from EU1
Carol G. Thompson to PDR from TRE
George C. Tsibouris to EU2 from FAD
G Castueil Ulmschneider to STA from JVI

Separations

Bijan B. Aghevli
Kadhim A. Al-Eyd
Valerie R. Ball
Alvaro Augusto Correa
Ana M. De Loayza
Patricia D. Emerson
Pietro Garibaldi
Norma M. Gillen
Norbert Goffinet
Elizabeth D. Hawkins
Peter C. Hole
Ivailo Vassilev Izvorski
Hoe Ee Khor
Robert L. Kline
Moira M. Lavery
Fabrice Lenseigne
David M. Maxwell
Scott Melese-d' Hospital
Michael C. Niebling
Ichiro Oishi
Jianming Qi
Marcio Ronci
Hideaki Suzuki
Milagros F. Tuason
Jens Weidmann
Delfina Zagas
Judith Jane Zulu

A tired, but happy, marathoner.

They All to Merry London Came

A neophyte's impressions of the London Marathon

If you asked me where I'm happiest, I'd probably say "at an airport departure gate." But this wasn't the case in April, when I found myself at Dulles Airport, worrying if I was sleeping and eating right—two concerns usually tossed to the winds when I board an airplane. This time was different: I was flying to London to run a marathon.

London was my third marathon; my first, five years ago, proved that almost anything was possible and that the next one would be easier. Since that time, I have used a running club for its organization, coaching, camaraderie, competition, trails, and training. A short search on the web will find clubs and races worldwide.

No one is too overweight, too old, too young, or too slow to run. Some people run in marathons, some run shorter distances, some run longer distances, and we each have a definition of what it means to run. We have private goals, and most of us are pleased just to cross the finish line. Some people run for their health, some for fun, and some to raise money. You can find a marathon somewhere in the world on any weekend. Charities use marathon races for fund-raising—the Leukemia Society of America's Team in Training program, for example, will train and provide transportation and accommodations and pay race entry fees for volunteers who agree to raise a predetermined minimum amount.

At sunrise every day, the mall, its adjacent sidewalks, and miles of parks and parkways from Forest Glen to Mt. Vernon support a steady flow of runners and joggers. Groups of people who thought they could never even walk 26.2 miles trot purposefully along byways. The number of race entries has increased, the closing dates for race entries have crept forward, and, in the words of one racing purist, the mean finishing time has risen. No matter. Me, I run to turn back the clock and to support gluttony.

After my second marathon last October, I decided to continue to run at least 20 miles each week and train for two marathons a year. My strategy is to run abroad in the spring and closer to home in the fall. In April or May, I could run in Paris, London, Vienna, or Prague, and six months later in Washington, New York, Philadelphia, Minneapolis, Toronto, Chicago, Niagara Falls...or maybe go back to Europe again in the fall, for Budapest, Skopje, or even Athens. Who wouldn't like to sport an entrant's T-shirt from the Athens marathon?

I chose the London marathon this past spring because it would be my first foreign race, and I wanted the site to be as familiar as possible. I also wanted to experience a really large race—London has more than 30,000 runners—to see how race officials deal with the start and finish, storage and pickup of our bags of personal clothing, toilet facilities, the frequency and availability of water and sports drinks, and nourishing us at the start and reviving us at the finish. I was also too tempted by London's famed costumed runners to pass this one by.

Marathon

Race day was April 18. Its 26.2-mile course starts in Greenwich Park and winds around the Cutty Sark (mile 6) and through Greenwich before crossing the Thames on Tower Bridge (mile 12) and turning right to the Isle of Dogs, which it encircles before running back by the Tower (mile 22), passing Parliament and running along the Victoria Embankment, up Birdcage Walk, past Buckingham Palace, to finish on the mall.

The day before the race, I explored the start and the finish with Rupert Thorne, who is a serious runner, much faster than I. Rupert was assigned to the office of the U.K. Executive Director five years ago and is now back at the Bank of England. He was full of information about London and England. We visited the Cutty Sark and walked part of the marathon course in Greenwich and then at the finish; this was invaluable.

Race day. Up at 4:30 a.m. for a Power Bar breakfast. It's worse than chilly. The TV forecaster predicts a noon temperature of around 40 degrees Fahrenheit with heavy rain moving in from the north. I dither, and, after seeing two Germans wearing long pants, end up wearing running tights, a long-sleeved shirt under a singlet, and a rain hat, rather than my normal garb for distance running—shorts, singlet, and sweatband. More on U.K. meteorology later. Several tour operators have groups of runners at the hotel; we all get on three buses at 7:00 a.m. On the bus, French, Italians, and Germans surround me. We get to Greenwich Park around 7:30 a.m. I am in the "red" staging area. Foreign entries, "elite" women (serious contenders are called "elite" runners), wheelchair racers, and many of the local runners will start in this area. It isn't too crowded before the start of the race because of the way we are separated: lines where we check redeemable clothing and toilets are manageable. Three canvas shelters are available: body heat make them a little warmer, but the warmest spot is in the tea tent next to the large urns. Two hot air balloons hover. I see a centipede (made of five people) and a rhino (one), but don't see many other costumes until we merge with the local runners. Elite women start at 9:00 a.m., wheelchairs at 9:15 a.m., and finally we foreign entries merge with a huge group of local runners and start at 9:30 a.m. It's crowded but not impossibly tight. Passing isn't easy but that's OK: I've learned the hard way that the tortoise, not the hare, will prevail. The sun comes out and the temperature approaches 50 degrees Fahrenheit. Almost everyone else is wearing shorts.


Ten legs are better than two.

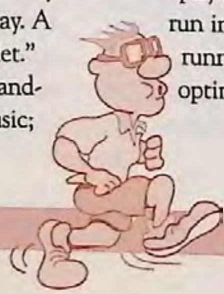
Organization. All 31,562 runners flowed from staging area to post-race photo op with no holdups and no waiting. In my previous marathons, water or a sports drink was dispensed every two miles on one side of the road in leaky paper cups. This race was far more solicitous: water was dispensed in uncapped plastic bottles at every mile on both sides of the road, and the sports drink Liquid Power, in a plastic vacuum container, was dispensed every fifth mile. Temporary toilets were set up along the way. A U.K. race hallucination: "to let" looks a lot like "toilet." Crowds of spectators cheer us all along the course handing out fruit and candy; countless pubs play loud music; several live bands and even a seated orchestra play as we pass. In Greenwich, an almost constant cheering goes back and forth between runners and spectators. The antics of a large male entrant dressed as a woman got roars of laughter from the crowd.


Runner with attitude.

Hilarity

About 75 percent of the U.K. marathoners ran for charities and wore shirts advertising them; almost everyone else seemed to wear a costume, carry a standard, or at least dye their hair wild colors. I ran with a centipede; a rhino; a fairy in a tutu with wings and wand; two leopards; Batman; Robin; Superman (several); "Mark—haggis-fed"; grass skirts; tails; jester hats; tinsel wigs; big hair wigs; huge top hats; gigantic pink Stetsons; pails as hats; witch hats; men dressed as women complete with makeup, wigs, skirts, and net stockings; and one inexplicable purple-green cylinder with arms and legs. I've heard it is humiliating to be passed by a chicken. I didn't see any chickens, but Tweedledum and Tweedledee passed me and pulled away. The costumed runners were legitimate runners—I saw the backs of many of them, including a Viking wearing a huge and heavy-looking horned helmet, a long fur vest, and fur gaiters, and the Hulk—a green giant with a bleached crew cut. I never saw the couple who stopped mid-race to get married, or the man sitting on a toilet seat with fake legs dangling in front, or the running trees, or the two-person camel.

All-in-all. An "athlete's" need for rest on the flight out and a stiff knee on the return don't work as upgrade ploys; airplane food is not sufficient fuel; mats over cobblestones have little effect; men dressed as women still run faster. It wasn't my best marathon or my worst, but it certainly was the funniest. If I can do it, you can do it. By jogging or running regularly, you will "own" some streets on which you'd previously only driven; gain self-knowledge; find new friends; meet new physicians; know physical exhaustion; and eat without guilt. If you run in the morning as I do, you will truly enjoy running the bridges of the Potomac, and carry optimism into the office. ◆



Andrea Chisholm