ICWA
LETTERS

Institute of Current World Affairs
The Crane-Rogers Foundation
Four West Wheelock Street
Hanover, New Hampshire 03755 U.S.A.

CG-17
Southeast Asia
Curt Gabrielson, a science teacher and an Institute Fellow, is observing the re-establishment of education in East Timor.

Life from the Land, Part II

By Curt Gabrielson

MAY 1, 2002

BAUCAU, East Timor — My previous newsletter detailed the two most important crops for the people of Bukoli, a small town near Baucau, East Timor. Rice and corn provide calories for the people of Bukoli, and the land in Bukoli provides that rice and corn, as well as the vast majority of everything else Bukoli uses on a daily basis. I estimate that if Bukoli were suddenly isolated from the rest of the planet, the residents would need to work a bit harder making local clothing and footwear, find some local source of salt, and wean themselves from coffee (East Timor's national drink, which is grown only in the higher regions of Timor). Beyond that, and the few health problems that are dealt with successfully at Baucau Hospital, life would go on quite smoothly.

I am careful not to romanticize life in Bukoli.[1] I would be hard pressed to get used to it: few books, no telephones, no electricity, no wheat, no refined sugar. At the same time, I recognize that the residents of Bukoli have a vast and valuable knowledge that we in the US have lost nearly completely: a knowledge of their land so comprehensive that they can provide for themselves with very little outside input and rest content that this provision will continue without end into the future.

We can learn much from them. Perhaps the information laid out in these two newsletters will be of no use to most readers, but the underlying philosophies and attitudes toward life held by the residents of Bukoli are well worth pondering.

I ended my previous letter promising to describe cassava, the ultimate staple of Bukoli. Cassava is a drunkard's dream, an amazing plant that requires virtually no tending from start to finish. Part of the woody stem lopped from another cassava and jammed into moist soil will produce a fat, yam-like root within a few months. A bit of time weeding around the plant, and the root will get even bigger. If the drunkard grows impatient for the starchy root to form, the plant's leaves can be eaten if steamed and fried.

The cassava has an enormous range of harvesting time. If you are hurting, you harvest it when it is small. If you are doing ok, you let it get huge, and even if you wait too long and the root rots, before it goes bad it will send out several new plants around the edge and your planting will be done for the next season. Bukoli, like most locations in East Timor, can provide two crops of cassava in one year.

My friend and chief informant in Bukoli, Silverio, has cassava plants scattered throughout his fields, around the edges of his fields, and all around his house. It is sort of a food insurance program. Silverio's family eats rice everyday when they have it, but a roasted or steamed cassava tastes great from time to time, and can be relied on if the rice runs out. Cassavas can also be sliced and dried for longer storage, or pounded into flour for making sweets.

Cassava is fundamental to most diets here, but is not by any means the only

[1] When romanticism tempts, I am brought to my senses by the memory of dining with a foreign journalist in Dili who blathered on and on about how grim city life is and how we should all go back to the jungle and live off the "gifts of the forest." His tender white hand gripped a $2.00 canned drink from the Pepsi-cola bottling company.

(Top, right) The cassava. (Top, left) Would you have known to dig here to find a snack? (Bottom, right) Neighbor kids gathered to help us enjoy the sweet juicy sinkomas*. You can peel it like a banana and not even have to wash it. (Bottom, left) The* kumbili *root grows wild. This Bukoli family will get a bit of money from it, if anyone stops to buy.*

important root. Potatoes, sweet potatoes, taro, carrots,[2] and onions also grow in various places throughout Timor. Several local roots I've never seen before include *kumbili* (koom-BEE-lee), which grows wild and supported thousands of East Timorese throughout the terrible chaos and displacement of the Indonesian occupation,[3] and *sinkomas* (sin-koh-MAHS), a white tuber as sweet and juicy as an apple.

These roots are full of calories and can be cooked by placing them directly in a fire. The big problem with them is that they contain only about one percent protein. Rice and corn (like wheat) contain about ten percent. Thus, eating cassava day after day will leave one weak after a while if there is no additional protein coming in from somewhere.

Broad beans will do nicely, and are eaten regularly by most Timorese. A soup is generally made with bits of other vegetables (no meat). Other kinds of beans are also eaten, though soybeans (with about twice the protein of broad beans and four times that of rice) are conspicu-

[2] Carrots are called *senoras* in Tetum, East Timor's lingua franca, making one wonder if perhaps the Timorese of old thought the newly-introduced bulbous orange roots resembled the portly colonial Señoras from Portugal.
[3] See my first newsletter of January, 2001 for details on East Timor's recent history.

ously missing. Peanuts are popular, and have plenty of protein and calorie-rich fat as well.

If you saunter about the vicinity of Silverio's house with him and his neighbors, you soon realize that nearly everything that initially appeared to be "jungle" is owned, controlled and put to use by people. The "undergrowth" is growing for *them*. Viney vegetables creep up trees and leafy vegetables win out over random weeds. Tree saplings bust their way through the incredibly rocky soil. There is a grand plan, though it is anything but obvious from casual observation.

In the midst of the "wild" undergrowth we find… a pumpkin!

Trees play an enormous role in the lives of the East Timorese. Whereas only the odd American kid can tell you the names of all the trees in the neighborhood, every last East Timorese kid can. I developed a science activity here with two long narrow leaves from a tree near our home. Tie the two leaves together at the stems with a rubber band, add a stick for weight at the bottom, toss them in the air and they come twirling back down like a wounded helicopter. I showed the project to some other kids far from our home and they asked me, "Do you have to use mango leaves?" Only then did I notice that indeed it was a mango tree I had plucked them from.

Silverio said the trees most important to his family were banana, papaya, breadfruit, *kami* (kah-MEE), coconut and the sago palm, as well as two types of local hardwood trees used for construction and craft. The range of commodities provided by this set of trees is astounding. Bananas trees are tireless producers of sweet calories, and like papaya can be used as vegetables or fruit depending on variety and time of harvest. Everyone in East Timor can name six or eight types of banana, and has his or her personal favorite. Both banana and papaya flowers, as well as papaya leaves, are eaten as vegetables. Both trees produce year round.

When I showed up at Silverio's neighbor's house, they scurried around to make lunch for me. Auntie went out with her long stick and brought down two green papayas, which were then cut up and fried to make a delicious vegetable dish something like squash.

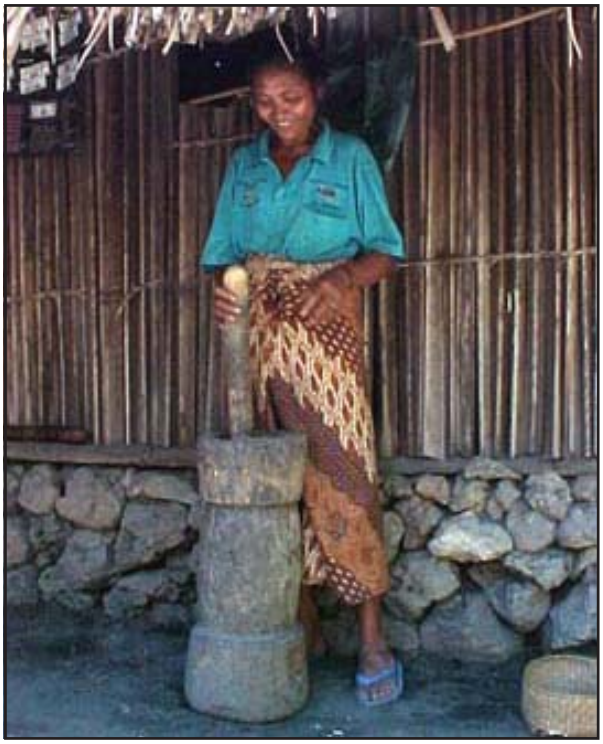
Breadfruit are one of the many fruits in East Timor that could kill you if they fell from the tree while you happened to be passing beneath them. Enormous green blobs with tiny spikes coming out of the skin, they are an unlikely looking food. But delicious they are, and a large tree can give piles of them, food enough for months of family dinners. Among the various varieties of breadfruit, one can be placed directly in the fire for cooking, and upon opening looks much like a loaf of white bread. If left unopened, it is a ready-packed lunch.

Silverio's son holding up a breadfruit leaf.

Silverio's family has around 20 *kami* trees. The *kami* nut looks like a cross between a chestnut and a pecan. It is greasy to the touch when opened up, and creates a great deal of oil, though it is not very palatable. When I looked up *kami* in the Tetum[4]-English dictionary, it said "candle-nut." Silverio's wife Florentina showed me why. With a handful of nuts, a few sticks, and some "cotton" from another tree, one can make candles.[5] The candles give great light, but also belch black smoke. In Indonesian times, the *kami* and its oil could be sold to Chinese-Indonesian traders. That market is gone and millions of *kami* nuts throughout East Timor go to waste. A local factory making whatever it was that was made from *kami* oil (locals are not sure) would be a significant boost to the economy.

I've had quite an education about palms here in East

[4] Tetum is East Timor's lingua franca. Bukoli uses another language, *Waimo'a*, but most everyone can communicate with me in Tetum.
[5] Candles or lamps are also made from other nuts, coconut oil and beeswax.



(Top, left) With these nuts and this bit of cotton Florentina made four candles in about ten minutes. This same cotton from local trees can be used to make sturdy cloth. (Top, right) First she put them in her wooden mortar and pestle and smashed them soundly into a sort of dough. (Above) Candle dough just drawn from the mortar. (Below) Florentina forming some of the dough around a stick to make a candle. (Right) Silverio's cousin steps up to light a finished candle.

Timor. Just last year I wasn't sure if a coconut palm also gave dates once in a while, or not. I can now name six types of palm trees and their uses. One is purely ornamental, and locals say the Indonesians brought it. Another gives the betel nut, a mild narcotic staple for locals, especially farm women. I've yet to partake of it, but have had plenty of experience trying to deal with giddy vendors, tipsy from its bright red juice.

Two other palms yields intoxicants. Dates from the local date palm are not eaten much, but made into alcohol. In fact, the local name for the tree translates to "black-alcohol tree." Its canvas-like bark also makes a tight roofing material. The lontar palm produces a fragrant booze ready to drink from the tips of its flower stems. Distillation can raise this alcohol to arbitrarily high potency, and everywhere I've ever been, locals brag of the harshness of this popular drink. If the drink goes bad, it becomes vinegar for cooking and the preservation of vegetables. The tree has two sexes — the other offers no booze, but

instead fruits that look like small black coconuts usable only for animal feed.

The lontar palm is also extremely important for its leaves. Most baskets used on a daily basis in East Timor are made from splitting and weaving these fronds. Here plastic is expensive by local standards and money is hard to get, so baskets still rule the light-transport business. Women do weaving, and girls learn the various techniques from a young age. It takes the better part of a couple of days to make a basket, but in many ways it is better than its plastic equivalent. Certainly, when a basket woven from palm fronds is worn out after a few years' use, it doesn't stick around for the next hundred years in a dumpsite as a plastic one would.

The sago palm is the most fascinating to me. That its Tetum name, *tali* (TAH-lee), also means "string" is no coincidence. One narrow finger of a sago palm frond cannot be broken by hand. The frond fibers are not used to make string; they *are* string, ready for action. Put several together and you have a magnificently powerful material. Five-gallon baskets with forehead tumplines made from these fibers can withstand being filled with rocks. House roofs are held on with them. One-ton water buffalo are tied up with them.

Lay the entire frond on the ground, put your load in the middle and tie up the tips of each frond finger for a custom bag complete with tie straps. Weave two or three fronds together and you have a tarpaulin. The uses are limitless.

One way to tell these palm trees apart is to check whether the fronds are a stiff branch with green strips coming off all up and down each side of it like a feather, or a bare stiff branch with a tuft of green strips coming off the tip end of it like a yard rake. The sago is the latter, and that bare stiff branch does not go to waste: it has a V cross-section so several branches can be stacked together like Legos, skewered together at top and bottom with narrow strips of wood, and cut to equal length to make a plank. Several planks make a wall and most of Bukoli's houses — including Silverio's — are built with walls of sago branches. This building material has its own name, *bebak* (bay-BOCK), and was pictured in my newsletter CG-9 of September 2001.[6]

The coconut palm matches the sago for productivity.

(Top, left) People climb up the lontar tree and set bottles to catch the booze dripping from its freshly-cut flower stems. Since cutting steps into the trunk reduces the productivity, small structures are tied onto the side of the tree to assist in climbing. (Top, right) Silverio's neighbor dividing a lontar frond into strips to weave with. (Left) My partner Pamela contemplates life without plastic.

[6] The reproductive system of sago palms is also fascinating. They give no sign of flower or seed for around ten years, then at the end of their lives, after giving hundreds of branches for *bebak* and hundreds of fronds for string, they sprout miniature branches from the tip of the monolithic trunk that give forth thousands of perfectly round, rock-hard seeds. Local kids use the seeds as marbles.

(Above, right) My house-mate Ato on his way to getting us two nice coconuts to drink. Few of the food-producing trees here drop their goods for easy claiming, so tree-climbing is an important skill. (Bottom, left) A row of coconut palms with two betel palms amid them, one at far right, the other central left. To get at the narcotic nut, people have to scale these spindly trees. (Top, left) Even brooms come from coconut palms. The bristles are the central spines of individual leaves of a coconut-palm frond.

The picturesque tree gives fronds for building, leaves for shelter, husks for burning and coconut water for drinking or coconut meat for oil. The tree goes on producing coconuts all year round. Silverio's family uses only coconut oil for cooking. Once I followed them through the process of extracting that oil. If coconuts are available in your local supermarket, you can try out the process yourself.

Coconuts go through most of their lives with thin layers of tender meat on the inside of the hard inner shell, which is filled with mildly sweet water. When the life cycle (several months) is over the coconut turns brown, dies and falls to the ground. This is the fully-floatable seed for a future palm tree, but if you pick it up before it starts to rot and take root, strip off the thick husk, break open the hard core and chip out the meat, you are on your way to making oil.

According to local methods, the meat must be grated to get the most oil out. Locals use a grater made from punching holes in a sheet of metal or a commercially roughened metal plate. I'm told of a plant that does the job, but apparently not as well as metal, since I've never seen it in use. Gasoline-powered rotary graters also appear from place to place, and one exists in Bukoli. The owner will grate your coconuts for a price: 30 cents for ten coconuts.[7] The gratings are then squeezed and a thick milk comes out. Silverio uses a large beam set up in the form of a second-class lever with the coconut gratings in a porous plastic bag near the fulcrum. His family and friends sit on the top end of the lever and the milk comes squirting out of the bag to be channeled into a pot. It is a remarkable process, since so little effort involved.

When the gratings are squeezed dry, they are given to pigs to eat. The milk is boiled on a hot fire, and after a while the color changes and the oil begins to separate. The oil is transparent, and can be removed by pressing a ladle into the boiling mass.[8]

When most of the oil has been removed with a ladle, the rest of the sludge in the pot is dumped into a piece of the same porous plastic bag that was used to press the

Continued on page 8

[7] Early on in my stay in East Timor, I designed and built a hand-powered rotational grater out of readily available materials: a tin can, a piece of bamboo, and a couple pieces of wood. Silverio found it quite functional and grated nearly 100 coconuts on it. At the same time, when I took it back to show to other people, he didn't go out of his way to build another one for himself.

[8] A man from Australia told me of a technology available to extract the oil from these gratings without heat. A very specific moisture must be achieved and then a lot of pressure exerted on the gratings. The equipment to do this costs around $2,000, so I doubt Silverio will be buying it soon. On the other hand, the process could be do-able with local resources if a bit of research was done. Extracting the oil with heat uses much precious wood from the rapidly diminishing forests of East Timor.

(Top, left) Silverio and his son using the coconut grater I built. A black bucket beneath the machine catches the gratings. (Left) Florentina inserting a bag of coconut gratings into the press. (Top, right) Florentina and a neighbor sitting on the end of the lever arm of the oil press. At right the coconut milk flows out into a pot. A big pan of gratings ready to be pressed sits in front of the pot. (Middle, left) Florentina and two of her daughters boiling the coconut milk. (right) The oil beginning to separate. (Bottom, left) The oil being ladled out into another pan. (Bottom, center) The remaining sludge in the pan is loaded into a bag in order to squeeze the remaining oil out of it. (Bottom, right) The candy left over after final squeezing.

milk out. This piece is tied and put into another squeezing lever to get out the last drop of oil. Then the bag is opened and what remains is a most amazingly rich candy for all the neighbor kids. It is so sweet and rich that I could handle only a small piece.

We got about 1.5 liters of oil from 18 coconuts. This oil, like the coconuts themselves, will go rancid if left around for more than a month or so. Silverio and his family make oil about once a month.

When Silverio sees this creature, he sees cash, not meat.

After a bit of thought, I realized that I have no idea where the cooking oil I use in the U.S. comes from or how it is made. Corn oil must come from corn, but I know that if you squeeze and boil corn, you don't get oil. Vegetable oil likewise must come from vegetables, but which ones, and again, how is it separated? I can envision sesame and peanut oil being made with some sort of high-pressure process, but I'm not sure. Furthermore, I've asked nearly every international friend I know here and no one else knows either. It is truly astonishing to me (and the locals) how far from the land "modern society" has drifted.

From trees also come the heavenly fruits of the tropics, offering themselves fresh one by one as the seasons change: mango, pineapple, orange, lemon, lime, grapefruit, tangerine, pomegranate, avocado, jack fruit, custard apple (it looks like a soft green apple, but it is, I swear, filled with ultra-sweet custard), guava, sour sop, passion fruit, and queen of them all, the mangosteen. Easily opened, and with a white, firm yet silky pulp that melts in your mouth giving the perfect combination of sweet and tart, mangosteen has to be one of the ultimate fruits ever grown on earth.

Silverio's house, quite shabby according to his declarations nearly every time we step into it, is a veritable work of art, created entirely from trees. We counted eight types of tree used in the construction of his house, which is about ten years old. Each one is used according to its availability and its properties. A deep understanding of geometry and physics is displayed by the structure. While his house lacks many conveniences (glass windows, a concrete floor), it was built by him and his neighbors with supplies, mostly trees, found within a few miles of its site.

Silverio and his family do not eat much meat. They have a flock of chickens, but these chickens represent money: they can be sold for $4 or $5 upon fattening. Silverio has two sows that produce a litter of pigs each year. The pigs are also sold, often to people putting on a party.[9] Beef and fish need to be purchased, and since Silverio has no steady income, they are not eaten much either. The situation is not ideal: Silverio's house is surrounded by meat on the hoof and Bukoli is less than five kilometers from the fish-filled ocean, yet Silverio's family probably eats a bit of meat only once or twice a month.

A paltry percentage of Silverio's foods are purchased. The most common are coffee, sugar, salt, and… instant noodles! The Indonesia-produced noodles, made vivid with the enclosed seasoning packets, are used as a topping for rice or mixed together with vegetables. Kids also munch them for a snack, albeit an expensive one at ten cents a pack. Aside from these few items, everything comes from the local land.

Someone told me once of a theory that peoples of the world's cold and snowy climates have needed to develop a high level of planning ability in order to store away provisions and make it through long cold winters, whereas tropical peoples have not developed this ability because their jungle homes provide them with constant abundance. Listening to Silverio's intricate plans and complex methods of gaining his family's livelihood from his tiny parcels of land makes me think this theory is bunk. Bukoli's residents not only need the web of millions of bits of information required to grow and harvest food from the land, they also need to know equally complex storage methods so that harvested food will last in the face of rotting heat and humidity

As the older generation shakes its head, the younger scarfs down Indonesian-made instant noodles – raw.

[9] Silverio tries to avoid putting on parties because they are so costly, particularly for a one-day event. I pointed to his three teenage kids and said that perhaps if they get married they will want parties for their marriages. He said he would rather do simple marriages without a party. We'll see what happens.

(Top, left) A young sago palm like this one is the easiest to glean branches and fronds from. Though this tree will grow to be as tall as a coconut palm or lontar, it begins providing when it is still young. Piles of fronds lie at its base, ready to be made into someone's roof. (Top, right) These branches from the sago palm will be stacked together to make bebak *and become someone's wall. (Bottom) These two spools are from the trunk of a sago palm. They are being transported to feed pigs. The spools have been shaped for easy rolling, and a spindle has been driven into each end. The long sticks leading to the handle are sago palm branches. The boys are just modeling the technique — the real pullers are the men sitting in the background. They told me each monstrous spool would feed three pigs for about a month when broken into chips.*

and the onslaught of bugs and vermin.[10] Furthermore, if the rains are not on schedule, or are too much or too little, any one of the crops mentioned above can be eliminated for the season, leaving a gaping hole in the family food supply.

I questioned Silverio sharply on this issue. What happens if the rice crop doesn't pan out? What happens if the coconut trees get a disease and stop producing? What if the chickens all die? What if the corn doesn't dry after harvesting, or if the rats get it? Naturally, he has answers for each of these questions, answers that any person in Bukoli could have told me, answers that will keep these people living when a shift in nature eliminates one of their food supplies. The sago palm trunk, normally reduced to chips and fed to pigs, can be processed and eaten by people. The roots and leaves of a whole range of less tasty plants are also edible in times of crisis. Blowguns and slingshots can be used to harvest birds and small animals from the jungle nearby. More effort can be spent harvesting from the ocean. As one crop is failing, plans are already going into action to make up for its loss.

Silverio is confident when he states that Bukoli can support itself even in the worst of years. He knows this from experience, and from tales his elders have told him. I can see that this gives him great peace.[11] The combina-

[10] With concrete, steel, poison, traps and cats at our disposal, my family in Missouri still had trouble keeping the rats and other thieving critters out of food, both our livestock's and our own. Traditional houses in certain areas of East Timor are built atop posts, which are equipped with large, slick plates and overhanging eves that stop climbing rats from entering.

[11] With this information, the great famines and starvation of the late 70's and early 80's in East Timor must be seen to be entirely man-made. The Indonesian military carried out policies of massive population displacement and forced labor, taking farmers from their fields as well as explicitly preventing people from tilling their land. The results were disastrous: around 200,000 people died of hunger or hunger-related sickness by 1985.

tion of this knowledge and his habits of simple living will take him and his family through thick and thin.

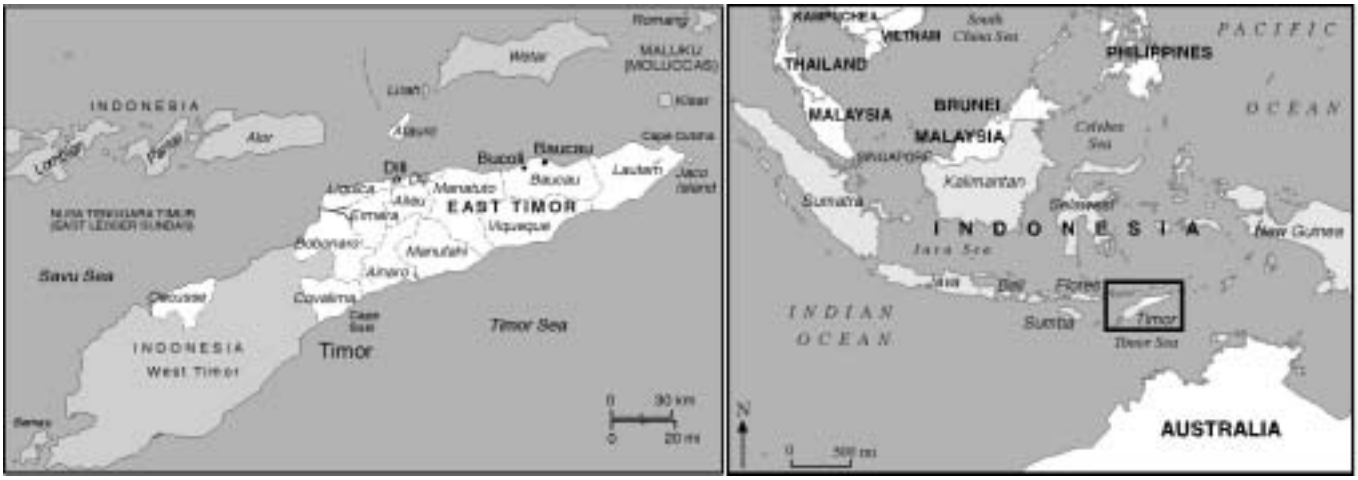
And he is not alone. The working cooperative of which he is part, along with his neighbors and extended family, will be working together to face hardships as they come. Bukoli people have a strong history of organizing themselves to work together. Literacy programs and agricultural cooperatives have been in operation in Bukoli since Portuguese colonial times.

Communities with such good organization are difficult to exploit and control. Indonesian authorities found Bukoli especially troublesome, that is, difficult to dominate. Taking up an age-old strategy, the Indonesians called Bukoli a communist nest, equated communism to evil and harassed the community continually throughout the Indonesian occupation.[12] Though Bukoli is less than 20 miles from Baucau, second largest city in East Timor, it has never been offered electricity or a water system. Laga, 30 miles on the other side of Baucau, has both. Great hope exists that the current government will work together with Bukoli and other such highly organized communities, and not discriminate against them with some phony anti-communist pretext.

At any rate, Bukoli is likely to continue providing for itself, and at the same time expand its production using modern knowledge and methods. Silverio hopes to see Bukoli connected telephone and Internet to the rest of the world. He hopes to have a health center by a range of medications and a full-time trained nurse. His group, together with other groups, has plans and initial funding for a community center in which to carry out literacy courses, among others. He has made contact with a Japanese organization specializing in appropriate technology for agriculture. With these plans and the strength of their organizing abilities, I see life in Bukoli getting better and better.

Only about 2 percent of Americans are farmers. I'll make

While the metal is all brought in from outside, Bukoli residents are able to shape it with this simple forge. The bellows are two huge bamboo stalks with wooden plungers and an intricate shutter valve at the base. Wood is burned between the stones, and a rod whose tip is in the fire lies to the right. Tips for digging sticks and machete blades are made on this forge.



[12] Bukoli was also a stronghold of the primary party fighting for East Timor's independence, Fretilin. Though Fretilin at no time called itself communist or Marxist, the fact that it wanted independence was enough for Indonesia to call it communist. The brutal invasion of December 7, 1975 was carried out on the pretext of fighting communism.

(Top, left) The ceiling of Silverio's house is a masterpiece of geometry. (Top, right) In this photo of the eaves around Silverio's doorway, one can see wood from seven types of tree. (Right) The main room of Silverio's house. With walls of bebak *and shingles of* tali *fronds, his home is a monument to the sago palm.*

a wild speculation that only 2 percent of that 2 percent produces more than half of what they need to live on a daily basis. In Bukoli, as in half the world, nearly 100 percent of basic needs are met by products from the local land.

Would I like to return to that way of life? Not a chance. But I will admit that I have lost something in the two generations it took to set me at such a distance from the land. I will admit that I am extremely ignorant about the source of my sustenance, and highly dependent on a modern agricultural system I know very little about. I will hold in high esteem those who continue to live in such a close relationship with the land. And I will not narrow my view to think that they must divorce themselves from their land in order to gain the benefits available from modern information and technology.

To paraphrase the great (and practical) pastoralist Wendall Berry, those who would scorn farm life must first acknowledge that city dwellers are incapable of producing anything necessary for human existence. Today specialization, distance and technology blur the source of our food in the US, and science shouts that vegetables can grow in rocks if provided the right nutrients through air and water. Still, the reality is that our food comes from the earth, our lives from the land, and the farther away from this fact we remove ourselves, the more precariously our society sits on its portion of the planet. ❑

INSTITUTE OF CURRENT WORLD AFFAIRS

Fellows and Their Activities

Wendy Call (May 2000 - 2002) • **MEXICO**
A "Healthy Societies" Fellow, Wendy is spending two years in Mexico's Isthmus of Tehuantepec, immersed in contradictory trends: an attempt to industrialize and "develop" land along a proposed Caribbean-to-Pacific containerized railway, and the desire of indigenous peoples to preserve their way of life and some of Mexico's last remaining old-growth forests. With a B.A. in Biology from Oberlin, Wendy has worked as a communications coordinator for Grassroots International and national campaign director for Infact, a corporate accountability organization.

Martha Farmelo (April 2001- 2003) • **ARGENTINA**
A Georgetown graduate (major: psychology; minor, Spanish) with a Master's in Public Affairs from the Woodrow Wilson School at Princeton, Martha is the Institute's Suzanne Ecke McColl Fellow studying gender issues in Argentina. Married to an Argentine economist and mother of a small son, she is focusing on both genders, which is immensely important in a land of Italo/Latino machismo. Martha has been involved with Latin America all her professional life, having worked with Catholic Relief Services and the Inter-American Development Bank in Costa Rica, with Human Rights Watch in Ecuador and the Inter-American Foundation in El Salvador, Uruguay and at the UN World Conference on Women in Beijing.

Curt Gabrielson (December 2000 - 2002) • **EAST TIMOR**
With a Missouri farm background and an MIT degree in physics, Curt is spending two years in East Timor, watching the new nation create an education system of its own out of the ashes of the Indonesian system. Since finishing MIT in 1993, Curt has focused on delivering inexpensive and culturally relevant hands-on science education to minority and low-income students. Based at the Teacher Institute of the Exploratorium in San Francisco, he has worked with youth and teachers in Beijing, Tibet, and the Mexican agricultural town of Watsonville, California.

Peter Keller (March 2000 - 2002) • **CHILE**
Public affairs officer at Redwood National Park and a park planner at Yosemite National Park before his fellowship, Peter holds a B.S. in Recreation Resource Management from the University of Montana and a Masters in Environmental Law from the Vermont Law School. As a John Miller Musser Memorial Forest & Society Fellow, he is spending two years in Chile and Argentina comparing the operations of parks and forest reserves controlled by the Chilean and Argentine governments to those controlled by private persons and non-governmental organizations.

Leena Khan (April 2001-2003) • **PAKISTAN**
A U.S. lawyer previously focused on immigration law, Leena is looking at the wide-ranging strategies adopted by the women's movement in Pakistan, starting from the earliest days in the nationalist struggle for independence, to present. She is exploring the myths and realities of women living under Muslim laws in Pakistan through women's experiences of identity, religion, law and customs, and the implications on activism. Born in Pakistan and immersed in Persian and Urdu literature by her grandfather, she was raised in the States and holds a B.A. from North Carolina State University and a J.D. from the University of San Diego.

Andrew D. Rice (May 2002 - 2004) • **UGANDA**
A former staff writer for the *New York Observer* and a reporter for the *Philadelphia Inquirer* and the Washington Bureau of *Newsday*, Andrew will be spending two years in Uganda, watching, waiting and reporting the possibility that the much-anticipated "African Renaissance" might begin with the administration of President Yoweri Musevene. Andrew won a B.A. in Government from Georgetown (minor: Theology) in 1997 after having spent a semester at Charles University in Prague, where he served as an intern for *Velvet* magazine and later traveled, experienced and wrote about the conflict in the Balkans.

James G. Workman (January 2002 - 2004) • **Southern Africa**
A policy strategist on national restoration initiatives for Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt from 1998 to 2000, Jamie is an ICWA Donors' Fellow looking at southern African nations (South Africa, Botswana, Mozambique, Zambia and, maybe, Zimbabwe) through their utilization and conservation of fresh-water supplies. A Yale graduate (History; 1990) who spent his junior year at Oxford, Jamie won a journalism fellowship at the Poynter Institute for Media Studies and wrote for the *New Republic* and *Washington Business Journal* before his six years with Babbitt. Since then he has served as a Senior Advisor for the World Commission on Dams in Cape Town, South Africa.

Institute Fellows are chosen on the basis of character, previous experience and promise. They are young professionals funded to spend a minimum of two years carrying out self-designed programs of study and writing outside the United States. The Fellows are required to report their findings and experiences from the field once a month. They can write on any subject, as formally or informally as they wish. The result is a unique form of reporting, analysis and periodic assessment of international events and issues.

Author: Gabrielson, Curt
Title: ICWA Letters - South Asia
ISSN: 1083-4257
Imprint: Institute of Current World Affairs, Hanover, NH
Material Type: Serial
Language: English
Frequency: Monthly
Other Regions: East Asia; The Americas; Europe/Russia; Mideast/North Africa; Sub-Saharan Africa

ICWA Letters (ISSN 1083-4257) are published by the Institute of Current World Affairs Inc., a 501(c)(3) exempt operating foundation incorporated in New York State with offices located at 4 West Wheelock Street, Hanover, NH 03755. The letters are provided free of charge to members of ICWA and are available to libraries and professional researchers by subscription.

Phone: (603) 643-5548
E-Mail: ICWA@valley.net
Fax: (603) 643-9599
Web Site: www.icwa.org