



Woodcutting of John Chapman, courtesy of J.J. Lippincott Inc.

Johnny Ipil-Seed News

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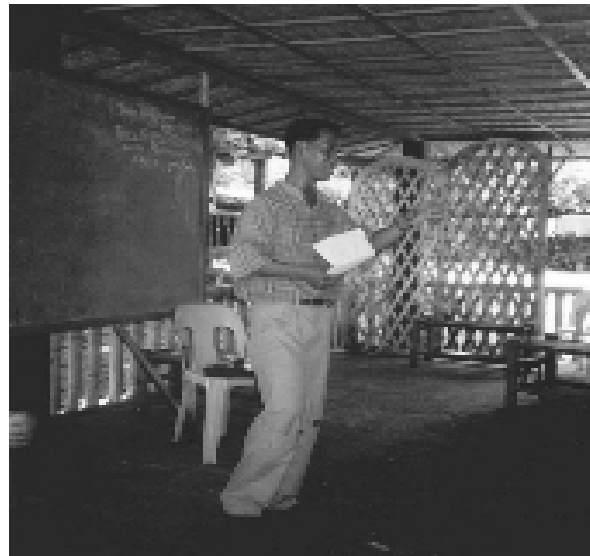
As El Nino Returns, Training Brings Benefit

Philippine Update:

Last year, at the request of Peace Corps/Philippines, 40 people took part in this four day workshop. The training was a joint effort, assisted by the SASFI Foundation, in Iba, Zambales in the northwestern Philippines.

The trainers included **Gabriel "Gabby" Mondragon**, project director for SASFI, Peace Corps volunteer leader **Jeremiah Grossman**, involved officials from the nearby towns and several of the project leaders from the upland areas of Zambales.

Zambales is famous for its mangoes, bananas, pineapple and other fruit crops, which bring premium prices locally and for export. In the months since this workshop, the national priority has stressed expanding the mango industry of Zambales.



*Program Coordinator **Gabby Mondragon** tells Peace Corps volunteers about local projects.*



*Volunteer project leader **Denia Duncan** (on left) asks Aeta women about water supplies. Planting more trees helps replenish the underground aquifers.*

The program demonstrated by TREES and SASFI emphasizes growing many types of trees, together with other crops, on the same land. Known by Filipinos as a "**forest garden**", the land yields far more than if the various trees and other plants were grown separately. There are indications that insect and pest problems are greatly reduced and these combinations limit the damage and spread of grass fires, which are a serious problem in the long dry season of these uplands.

Until about six years ago, most of the former inhabitants, fearing continuing eruptions of Mt. Pinatubo, were hesitant to return to their former homes. Now the resettlement areas are rapidly growing but people face new threats - from fires and a growing water shortage.

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Dear Members and Friends,

We'll, in my first letter to you I would just like to say thank you for helping us in our efforts to communicate with and develop agricultural solutions for people in dire environmental situations. Your support directly impacts people who suffer without natural resources.

The calls are coming in to our office from places like Honduras. Will we be able to help Tan Vu? He's a member of the Ag. Department of El Paraiso in Honduras working on a reforestation project. He and volunteers from Peace Corps have built a nursery to replace lost fruit trees from Hurricane Mitch, but still need to pay for tools and planting materials. He called because he heard that we may not be supporting projects anymore. I suddenly saw how important my job really is!

Here's a guy who just want to replace some Mango trees for the community but doesn't have the resources. I think we can help him and others like Tan Vu around the world.

Trees for the Future is implementing ways to help people replant deforested areas and return diversity to lands over developed, over grazed, misused or destroyed in the last fifty years. Time and foreign governments cost Ethiopia a tremendous price in natural resources and trees. Now exiled nationalists are returning to find horrible conditions and they have vowed to replant and restore once fertile Ethiopian sanctuaries. The bird life is especially robust there, but species are threatened as their habitat disappears. My new colleague, Bedru Sultan brings first hand knowledge of the struggle he and members of Greener Ethiopia fight against erosion, lack of firewood and drying riverbeds. Our assistance provides the spring board communities need to begin solving agriculture concerns. Some of your donations have created the nurseries and training programs essential to ging about real benefits for communities.

Just a note about our Tree Pals Program and our efforts to bring education to children who may be interested in helping by planting and selling tree seedlings. Involving children in our programs makes perfect sense if we are to have the long term, environmental recognition we will need as our climates change and the human impact becomes more profound in coming years. This program will raise money and awareness and encourages tree planting where it's needed most.

This organization plans on meeting the challenges put before us, but we would ask that you take a moment and renew your pledge to plant trees and help people help themselves.

Sincerest regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mike Jordan". The signature is written in a cursive style and is placed over a light gray rectangular background.

Di-

Mike Jordan
rector of Develop-

ment

Training continued from page 1

Now, as El Nino has returned, the situation has worsened. Fires are destroying much of the vegetation remaining on surrounding mountains. In the *barangays* (villages) themselves, fire is less a problem because the trees local people have planted already form a dense, green, barrier. But water, coming from the higher, denuded, areas, is already short of needs.

Gabby has convinced people in the 11 *barangays* of the Loob Bunga community to re-green 100 hectares (about 250 acres) of the nearby mountains with "Ipil-Ipil" trees to protect the water source there. With support from the town mayor, **Roger Yap**, 200 students from a local school are also growing seedlings in their nursery. A Philippine foundation, COLF, which focuses on family based education, has adopted use of firewood as an energy source from the trees grown in this program. **TREES** will provide seed and training for the nearly 400,000 trees that will be planted in this program.

Another project has begun reclaiming the Bucao River which runs through the area. *Lahar* (volcanic ash) from Pinatubo's eruption has raised the river bed more than 30 feet, making it more than a mile wide in some places. In the dry season, ash blown by the strong winds on the river creates a serious health risk.



Above: *About 200 students in the upland community of Loob Bunga are planting deep-rooted, fast-growing trees to protect the water supply of their village.*

We are showing that several species of trees, planted along the course of the river, can keep this dust out of the town. Once **TREES** has demonstrated that these trees can survive in the *lahar*, the town is ready to undertake this massive project - more than 12 miles long.

The training provided by TREES and SASFI over the past several years is starting to produce important benefits for the entire Province of Zambales. Now, with twice as many villages joining in, those benefits will come even faster.

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Profitable Re-Greening: *Local business leader Danny Zabala shows how integrated planting of pineapple, papayas, bananas and fast growing trees has increased productivity.*



ABOVE: *A typical home in Loob Bunga. A three year old *Leucaena* tree in the yard provides shade, firewood and organic fertilizer. This is step one to returning diversity to the denuded lands.*



Bucao River, Zambalas, Philippines

Reclaiming the Land: *The Mt. Pinatubo eruption deposited three billion cubic meters of ash on Zambales. Leaves of Ipil-Ipil trees, mixed with the ash, add humus to hold water. The land is again producing food.*

Winds from the Bucao River, now "a mile wide and an inch deep", **blow dust** into nearby **Botolan Town,** causing a serious health threat.

Fast-growing trees are an effective solution.



Behind the Green Door

Spring has arrived here along the East Coast and your **Loret Miller Ruppe Center for Sustainable Development** is getting some much needed attention.

The staff, with some local volunteers, are all chipping in. We're painting the outside of the building, cleaning gutters, trimming and replacing plant life, fixing wiring and brightening the place up again.

The ancient front door, which didn't respond very well to stripping and varnishing, is instead going to be painted a deep forest green. Once the brass work is polished, we believe it will be an inviting entrance.

That's our hope because you and all our members are invited in any time you happen this way. Your home here is intended to bring together people concerned about the environment, its effects on humanity and to share ideas and experiences. We look forward to the development of even more beneficial programs in the future and encourage your input. Also, our web site is being updated with new info and pictures all the time.

We remain committed to Loret's vision of peace through development.

In these threatened times, we think that goal is more important than ever before. Your ideas are needed. We hope you'll stop by.



*Staff does a little clean up around the **Loret Miller Ruppe Center.** (From Left) Mike Jordan, Colm Gent, Francis Deppner, Dave Deppner*

Below: A local girl climbs a tree!



Trees, Coffee, and Migrating Birds

Staff technicians **Bedru Sultan** and **Dave Deppner** accepted an invitation from the Specialty Coffee Association of America, SCAA, to represent TREES at their annual conference and exposition in Anaheim, California in May.

There they met with coffee growers, roasters and marketers to discuss the issue of sustainability, which is much on the minds of the industry. **Paul Katzeff** of **Thanksgiving Coffee** of Ft. Bragg, California, came up with a model in which he planted 46,000 trees in Ethiopia.

The trees provide shade, which increases coffee quality. Each year they remove more carbon dioxide from the atmosphere than the entire operation of his company puts there - plus enough to offset the emissions from the electricity needed to perk 40 million cups of coffee.

Producing shade-grown coffee has a couple of other advantages. The deep roots of the shade trees guide rainwater back into underground storage, helping solve a major concern throughout the tropical world.

About Diversity

She's far up in a mango tree. The bamboo pole is to knock down some choice fruit for our lunch.

On the same small parcel of land, her father has planted bananas, coffee, papaya, cashews, guavas and other trees. Underneath are kamote yams and other crops. There are Ipil-Ipil trees that provide a steady supply of firewood and leaves for the livestock.

Eight years ago the only thing growing around this place, now called "Loob Bunga" was cogon grass, which burned every year in the dry season. All this has been brought back by people determined to make a good home for themselves.

But if you take just five steps outside the village, you're right back in the desolation these families saw when they first came to this resettlement area. Despite years of inter-government spending to try to re-green these uplands, there are less trees every year.

Governments *talk* about trees but they seem unwilling to understand that people *plant* trees. If they were to help these people start forest-based industries, and give them long-term occupancy of the lands, the mountains would already be green.



An ostrich wanders across Bedru Sultan's Farm in Ethiopia during its twice annual migration. Birds move hundreds of miles each year to find suitable habitat.

Trees also offer habitat for both native and migrating birds. North America and much of Europe have lost much of their songbird population because their winter migrating grounds have been largely deforested. Adding shade trees to these lands offers an acceptable habitat for many species of birds.

We're asking members of SCAA to continue their support of this program, to make their industry non-polluting, to make an important environmental impact for these denuded lands, and to give you better coffee.

Opinion: In Belize, Remembering Julian Cho

The great thing about working here is the extraordinary people we get to meet. One of the best was **Julian Cho**, leader of the Mayan communities of Belize, who bravely worked to secure their basic rights as human beings.

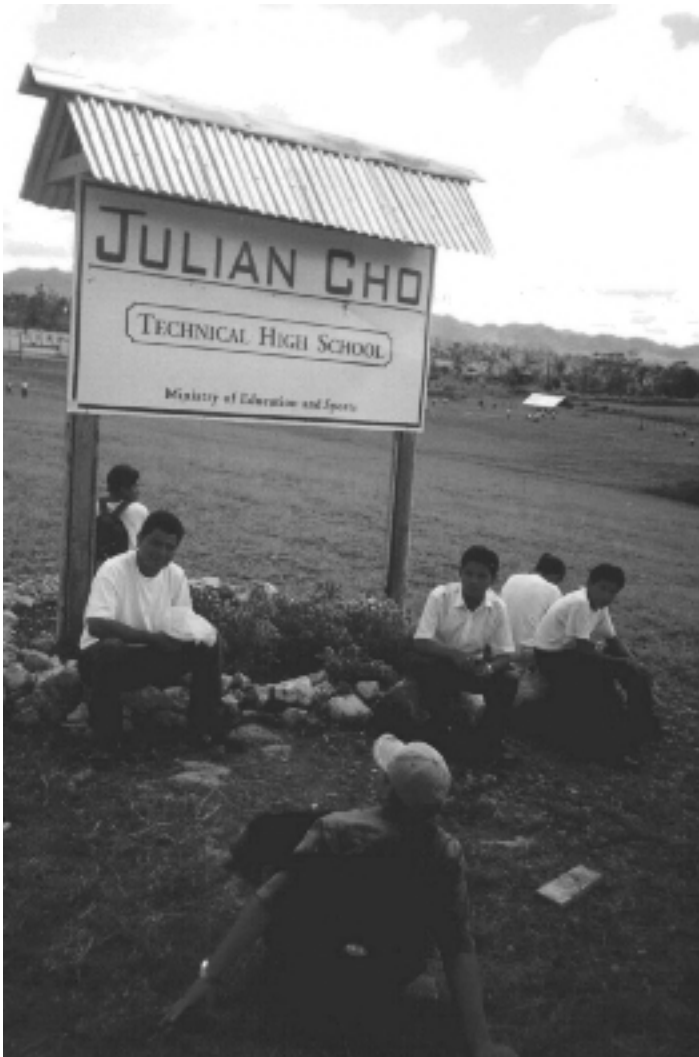
Julian and the other members of the Mayan Cultural Council kept up this struggle in the face of a multi-million dollar logging concession on lands that had, for centuries, been considered the Maya reserve. **TREES** was often involved in this because the Mayas, rightly, knew that with the loss of their forests would come social and economic extinction for all of them. Working with Julian and students of his environmental club at the Toledo Community College where he taught, we demonstrated some technology, actually developed by the Maya People many centuries

Ago, that could save and restore the barren uplands of the Maya Mountains.

Julian sometimes traveled to Washington DC looking for help for his people. One November evening in 1998 he stayed here at our Center. We talked until late that night about his work and the dangers he faced. I passed along the latest warnings to him from his many well-wishers and added my own: that there were many millions of dollars of timber on those Maya Mountains and, as far as the loggers were concerned, he was just one Indian boy trying to get in the way.

He told me he was well aware of the danger he faced. But he felt there comes a time when a righteous person just can't look the other way. That's when you have to stand up for what you believe is right and pray to God you can find a way to make people listen. A few days after that, Julian was dead. His wife, Magdalena, came home one morning to find him lying in a pool of blood in front of their door. The local security force came up with a story that he had gotten drunk, probably climbed up on his roof, then fell off.

"**WHAT?**" enough of us screamed as we kept the e-mails flying back and forth! Our protests finally caused the authorities to conduct an autopsy and it was established that Julian had been murdered by persons "unknown". With no evidence about who those unknown persons might have been, that's as far as it ever got. Our friend was gone. Maggie choked back her



*About 150 students attend the new **Julian Cho Technical High School**. Here some students show off some of the seedlings grown in agricultural classes. These will be planted at the demonstration farm when the rains begin.*



Above: Agriculture teacher **Gustavo Requenos** shows barren land near the South Highway. **TREES** is helping his students to prove this land can be restored to sustained productive use.

grief, managed to get a job and maintains their small house near Punta Gorda Town.

And there was now a clear, unobstructed, path to the tall trees of the Maya Mountains.

I write this on April 6, 2002, remembering Julian on this 3rd occasion of his birthday since his death. His picture still hangs on our office wall, with the words "The Struggle Continues".

And so it does. Not through confrontation but through education. In a way, our friend is back with us through the recently completed **Julian Cho Technical High School**, located at a main crossroads that for some reason has long been called "The Dump", It's a point people in southern Belize must constantly pass, near the town of Big Falls.

There are now more than 150 students attending - the hope of the principal, **Mr. Simeon Coc**, is that there will be 250 of them by next Fall's enrollment. The classrooms are mostly portable structures: a little cramped but fairly cool and quiet inside. Through the help of local business owners, a student activities building and a lunchroom have been started.

Gustavo Requenos, the agriculture teacher, has built a seedling nursery, which **TREES** is providing seeds, hand tools and "poly-bags". The sloping land from the school up to the main road is typical of the area: denuded and worn down from continuous "slash-and-burn" farming. **Gustavo** is determined to use this area as an ongoing demonstration of how degraded land can be

brought back to life, starting with integrating these multi purpose, fast growing trees with other valuable fruit and timber trees and other cash crops. It's a tough challenge for the students, but it is an important lesson they need to learn.

Right now, people of the Toledo Stann Creek Districts need answers about sustainable land use. Last October, Hurricane Iris cut a 50 mile wide swath right through the area. In many places, more than half the tree cover has been flattened, soil erosion is stripping the nearby fields and silting up streams and fish spawning areas.

Other areas, especially the pine ridges, were unprepared for a return of the Pine Bark Beetle, which is destroying both an industry and this very fragile eco-system. The local pine trees, although slow growing, produce dense wood, which is preferred by Belizeans for nearly all construction but this latest infestation may bring an end to that. Already, some local leaders are conducting trial plantings of other promising species.

Thanks to your help, we're working to address several serious threats faced by the rural people of Belize. From commercial plantations trying to bring back mahogany and introduce teak to the indigenous villages of the uplands, planting trees to aid the re-establishment of medicinal plants, we're finding answers and demonstrating them to project leaders. Julian Cho, who dedicated his life to teaching others, would want us to keep his work moving forward.

Dave Deppner

Below: Hurricane Iris slashed a path nearly 50 miles wide across southern Belize last October.





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In This Issue:
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Recent Grants

Grants Awarded

Working Assets, a socially-concerned telephone company in San Francisco, California, has provided a grant of \$12,000.00. This funding will be used to provide on-site technical and planning assistance that will plant more trees in these developing communities than are being used to provide the paper used by their business in a year. John Denver's **Plant-It 2000 Foundation** in Highland Ranch, Colorado, has provided a grant of \$5,500.00. This fund will provide all the seeds, more than six million of them, for all of the Central America Program for more than a year. A grant of \$5,000.00 has been provided by **NULUX Corporation** in Brooklyn, New York, to support tree planting programs in the East Asia and Pacific Region. Much of this funding will be used in the northern Philippines. And the **Heller Family Foundation** has provided a grant of \$1,000.00 to use in the rapidly expanding Indonesia program.

On behalf of our field technicians and volunteer community leaders supported by these grants, please accept our sincere gratitude.

Johnny Ipil-Seed News is a quarterly newsletter of **TREES FOR THE FUTURE, Inc.**, a non-profit organization dedicated to helping people of developing countries begin environmentally beneficial, self-help projects.

This newsletter is sent to all supporting members of **TREES FOR THE FUTURE**, to inform them of what their support is achieving. If you wish to receive this newsletter, or more information about **TREES**, please contact: **TREES FOR THE FUTURE**

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