



Global Village

“Gifts for a better world”

June 2007

Mexican Weavers try to sustain family with craft

by **Mary Anne Michelet**

Tlaccachistlahuaca is a village in the mountains of Southern Mexico. Just in this small area, there are three tribes of Mexican people whom we met, Misteco, Amuzgo and Nuagua. They have distinct languages and similar cultures, but they are not Spanish, although the national language is, of course, Spanish. Some of the folks we met did not speak Spanish because they had not gone to school. Our church, Holy Family in Peoria, sponsors a sister parish and a dormitory

project for children who live too far in the mountains and must stay overnight in town to go to school. There are many very remote areas in Mexico and fortunately they do try to keep the culture alive. Part of this culture is the beautiful hand weaving done by some of the women. It is done to supplement the family income if there is a bad crop or illness in the family.

As in many impoverished rural areas, the main source of income is farming. However, now, some have relatives who

have immigrated to the U.S. and send money from those jobs back home. As



President's Letter...

Dear Friends,

A new customer asked if we carried buttons. I started to show her our basket of “opinion” buttons; we were both disappointed when she explained that she wanted to change the buttons on a dress.

Our recent product analysis by Bradley MBA students (and Global Village volunteers) Ivona Taborska and Marketa Veberova revealed that we do a brisk business in buttons and bumper stickers. Ivona once remarked that people in the U.S. are usually reluctant to discuss political issues in everyday conversation. She said that in Europe it's quite normal for people to discuss—and disagree about—public events with friends and acquaintances.

It made me wonder why we are so reluctant to use our freedom of speech, why we can easily disagree about sports teams but save our political opinions for people who agree with us? Maybe our bumper sticker and button sales are an attempt to begin those dialogues about our deeper concerns.

I am always delighted when Global Village is asked to provide a speaker for a class or church gathering. In April Tonya Sneed and I were invited to make
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a presentation about Fair Trade to a Bradley University graduate class in Finance called “Corporations and Social Responsibility.”

The students, mostly professionals from other countries, asked tough questions and engaged in a lively discussion. I for one would be delighted if similar discussions take place at the Moss Avenue Sale!

On the lighter side, Global Village and other businesses in Peoria Heights are seeking musicians and other entertainers (musicians, mimes, chalk artists, etc.) to enliven the streets this summer as people walk to and from area restaurants. The Free Fridays initiative will encourage performances on the sidewalks from 5 to 8 p.m. on Fridays.

I have enjoyed such street night life in other cities, as well as at our recent Sidewalk Art drumming event with Cecil Grubbs and Garry Moore, and hope you will also.

We hope to keep the shop open on Friday evenings for the summer also, so stop by and say hello, and help us build community right here in the Heights!
Peace and justice,

Nancy

you can imagine, this also tends to erode the local culture as well as family ties.

Weaving in this area is known for its floral patterns and bright colors. We witnessed some of this weaving while we were there. They don't use the “back strap” type of loom as in Guatemala. They attach their threads on a wooden stick hooked up to a tree many feet away from where they begin the weaving. They sit on a short stool and each project takes many hours to complete.

We met Adelfi who told us she learned to weave from her mother, Marian, when she was 14. Now she is 21 and does very beautiful work.

Unfortunately, since clothing is cheaply available (probably from sweatshops right in Mexico) it is very hard to sell what they make because most people in the area are very poor. And, with the

Weavers

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Update on Jordan: progress, but serious violations continue

Progress, but Serious Violations Continue Despite significant progress, serious violations continue in some of Jordan's garment factories which are exporting duty-free under the U.S.-Jordan Free Trade Agreement.

At the Concord factory, young women are routinely beaten and kicked, forced to work 13 to 14 hours a day, and cheated of their overtime pay. Workers asking for their rights are threatened with deportation.

At the Fashion Curve factory, many guest workers' passports remain confiscated. For the "crime" of helping lead a struggle to bring the factory into compliance with Jordanian law, ten workers have been imprisoned on false charges.

On May 27, factory management brought in gang members to beat and threaten the workers.

At Central Clothing, 50 percent of the guest workers' passports remain confiscated. Four workers have been imprisoned on false charges for protesting the agonizing death of a young co-worker who was denied proper medical care. Three guest workers have been

forcibly deported from the Group Talent factory for asking for their legal residency permits, while two other workers have been imprisoned.

At the Cotton Craft Garments factory, workers have not been paid for the last three months, and their appeals to the Jordanian Ministry of Labor have apparently gone unnoticed.

The Jordanian and U.S. Governments must move quickly to end the violations and restore the rule of law in these factories. - Learn more about each case: <http://www.nlcnet.org/article.php?id=322> - The issue of worker rights violations and human trafficking in Jordan continues to

inform Congressional Debate on U.S. trade policy. See recent Salt Lake Tribune article on Peru and Panama Trade Deals: <http://www.nlcnet.org/article.php?id=324> - The Decent Working Conditions & Fair Competition Act would provide legal protections, backed up by sanctions for the rights of workers in the global economy—just as companies have fought for and won protections for their labels, trademarks in the global economy.

To date, nine Senators and 43 Members of Congress have signed on as co-sponsors. Have yours? Find out here: <http://www.nlcnet.org/article.php?id=242>

Fair Trade Quinoa available at Kroger

Bob's Red Mill Quinoa is now on sale at the Kroger at Evergreen Square in Peoria—and possibly in the health food sections of other Kroger stores in the area.

As local newspaper reporter Clare Howard told us in our May 2006 newsletter, this quinoa is being marketed by

former Peorians Midge and Bob Leventry for subsistence farmers in Ecuador. It has been approved as a Fair Trade product in Europe.

Quinoa is a high-protein grain that resembles barley and makes a salad, soup or main dish a complete-protein meal.

Fair Trade Day at Global Village

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Volunteer Corner

Again we say thank you to all those wonderful volunteers who have so faithfully kept the shop staffed these past months. And a special thanks goes to those who willingly took on extra shifts to fill any gaps. (You know who you are!)

We reluctantly say goodbye to Marketa and Ivona, our two wonderful Bradley volunteers. We hope you have a chance to look at their well researched, informative, and helpful project on the strengths & weaknesses of our shop

that they did in conjunction with their university studies. One of our biggest strengths is our volunteers!

But we welcome back another student - Sara - who gave us so many hours last summer. We also are happy to have 3 new shop volunteers - Marcie, Amy, and Anna as well as Kay, who came to us through RSVP, to help Tonya with Data Processing.

Another special plea to **anyone** who has a van or truck to help us transport tables to the Moss Ave. Sale on June

16th. Contact Nancy (688-3419) if you can help. And contact us if you can help at the selling table during the day - it's a good chance to get to know other volunteers. We also would welcome help at the Earth Matters Music Festival at the Riverfront on June 22. Free admission to our workers and a chance to hear some great music! Two great chances for those who can't volunteer at the shop but would like to help at special events!

Norma 691-0481

Calendar of Events...

Friday, June 8

Free Fridays in the Heights,
5-8 p.m.

Continues through August. Street musicians and other performers make strolling in the Heights more fun.

Saturday, June 16

Moss Ave. Sale, 8 a.m.- 3 p.m.

Fri, June 22 and

Sat. June 23

Universal Rhythm Assembly concert, 3-11 p.m.

Thursday, July 12

7 p.m. Kitchen shower, St. John's Lutheran Church, Bartonville. Fair Trade coffee talk & kickoff.

Friday, July 13

Global Village shop's 5th anniversary

Saturday, August 4

Sidewalk Sales in Peoria Heights



Weavers

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Westernization of their native cultures (some of the girls and women wear tight shirts and short skirts and pants); the weaving is no longer valued as it was in the past. There is a larger city about an hour away and sometimes they can sell to tourists, but even tourists do not want to pay what they are worth. As in many impoverished areas, they are in need of a market for their wares.

While visiting our sister parish in Tlaccachistlahuaca, our group was hosted by some very lively and generous Franciscan Sisters. Two of them were natives of the area. The Sisters host a Bible study at which 18-20 local women come and practice the art of weaving while sharing Scripture together. This is the group that made the lovely sleeveless

dresses in our shop at Global Village. The project provides support and community to women who have a difficult life and would like to practice their talent of weaving. With the help of companions who could speak Spanish, I negotiated with the Sisters who represented the weavers to buy the dresses and some purses. I told them we may not be able to sell the dresses even in the U.S. for that much money, but we would give it a try. I was so happy to be able to give them a connection to a market, even a small one.

This was my first trip to Mexico. I found it such a wondrous country and the people so generous; it was very humbling to be there, knowing I had so much back home and they have so little. I hope you appreciate the beautiful clothing from Mexico and now feel a bit of connection to the people who made it.



Check out our web-site at:
www.globalvillagepeoria.org



Mepe Tree Nursery

Would you like to receive
the newsletter via
e-mail?
contact Sharon at
skrjlar64@yahoo.com
This is a new e-mail
address.



What is Global Village?

Global Village is a local, all volunteer, not-for-profit organization providing fair trade products for a better world. **Global Village operates a fair trade shop in Peoria Heights, Illinois where we:**

- Offer a variety of gifts and everyday items from around the world.
 - Give consumers an alternative to use of sweatshop labor
 - Ensure products are truly fair trade
- Goes a step beyond just selling goods by:
- Conducting periodic seminars
 - Sponsoring educational forums
 - Scheduling in store presentations
 - Promoting global economic and social justice

COME CHECK US OUT!
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Peoria Hts, IL 61616
(309) 681-8180

Check out our web-site at: www.globalvillagepeoria.org

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