

Far East lures Peace Corps volunteers

BY ARLENE VANDERLEUN

Jim Alger and his bride Ellen find life in the Orient a tasty cup of tea. The newly-wed Alger is fresh from a stint with the Peace Corps in Korea and have squeezed in a few weeks visiting Jim's parents (the William Alger) in Westland before taking off for training that will send them back to the Far East.

Their dream is to apply experience and knowledge of Oriental culture during "the best two years of our lives" to work at an agency that aids underdeveloped nations.

To some persons, their life may seem like a segment from a George Peirrot travel show as the couple have become accustomed to new sights, sounds and smells. But adventures aside, Jim and Ellen value most highly the cross-cultural exchange of Eastern and Western customs.

For Ellen, 24, the shift hasn't been quite so radical. Fresh-scrubbed, blue-eyed Ellen was born and raised in Japan by parents employed in missionary work with United Church of Christ.

After graduating from McAlister College in Minnesota (her family hails from there), Ellen joined the Peace Corps.

THAT'S WHERE bearded, curly-haired Jim came into her life. After graduating from Livonia Franklin High in 1968, Jim, formerly a Westland resident, went on to Eastern Michigan University and a bachelor's degree in psychology.

"That prepared me for absolutely nothing (in terms of employment)," said Jim, now 28. So Jim took electrical training, spent some time in Arizona and entered the Peace Corps in June 1976 after two previous, unsuccessful attempts.

"I had always wanted to join the Peace Corps, but (before) I didn't have a college degree or a skill," said Jim. Guidelines the lightened or relaxed, depending on the philosophy of the Peace Corps director, he added.

Jim met Ellen while attending

Peace Corps training sessions in San Francisco. They continued to keep in touch after taking assignments miles away from each other in Korea — Jim as a technical manual translator and Ellen as an English teacher.

"The first thing that hits you is the smell of open air markets where Koreans go every day" to buy fresh vegetables, rice and other food staples, said Jim.

That custom is necessary in a country where refrigeration isn't widespread, added Jim.

Jim plunged into several weeks of training, where he learned Korean language and customs. He lived with a family composed of a grandmother who was "tiny and so kind," her grandsons and a maid.

INTENSIVE LANGUAGE training took up four hours a day. While the Peace Corps volunteers learned a few survival phrases, more in-depth instruction was taught by the "sit-down" method which places most of the responsibility on the student.

Under this system, the teacher gives a word of phrase, then students repeat it. Color charts and visual aids help the learning.

If a student says the wrong phrase, the teacher gives a non-verbal response such as a shake of the head. The student is in the position of developing the ability to fend for himself in learning the Korean alphabet, which also uses some Chinese characters.

It was essential for Jim to become fluent, because his job was translating technical and mechanical manuals from English to Korean. The manuals accompanied goods bought from American firms.

Korean cuisine and customs offered other challenges for Jim.

For example, Korean diet staples are rice, soup and vegetables, with pork, fish and an occasional serving of beef. Meat was served a couple of times a month.

"The national dish is Kimchi, which is Chinese cabbage and hot red pepper," said Jim.

Other Korean foodstuffs were more unusual.

For instance, it was customary in the rural community where Jim was living for Korean men to eat dogs — barbecued or in soup — during the hottest days of August. That custom was to "improve their virility," said Jim.

FOR THAT same reason, men also ate ginseng root, other penis (very expensive) and snake whiskey. Snake whiskey is snake meat fermented in alcohol for about six months.

It's very strong, very rancid — it works. Just ask Ellen," said Jim, with a laugh.

Korean men drank a rice wine called Mokkai on social occasions. Jim said he ate and drank the same food as his Korean hosts. "I wanted to develop rapport (with them)," he said.

Indoor activities took place near the floor because heat fueled by coal was piped through tubes under the floor.

People sleep on thick floor pads and bundle up with several blankets, including the intricately designed ibol covering. Because of this heating system, Korean schools are closed during the coldest winter months.

"You can't be judgmental about different cultures," said Jim. "You should try to understand them. You don't have to incorporate them."

"Not unless you want to," said Ellen.

While Jim was absorbing the local customs, he still found time to visit Ellen, who was nine hours away by bus.

Ellen, too, was adjusting to her life as an English teacher.

She grappled with the conflict of an Oriental society dominated by males. It was a lifestyle where authority flowed from father down through the sons.

IT WAS a well-defined, hierarchical society where everyone knew his or her place.

"Conflicts arise when you try to do things a different way," said Ellen. Korean men don't take suggestions from a woman.

Korean women don't hold property in their own name, added Ellen. And if there is a divorce, a woman is stricken from the family.

But if there were differences, there also was great satisfaction in

bringing together Western and Eastern customs.

"You learn to compromise your position," said Jim. "I can look at things and try to understand."

For instance, Jim is pleased about bringing the American Special Olympics (sports competition for mentally and physically impaired) to Korea, where "handicapped are looked upon as a social burden."

One outgrowth of that has been the establishment of some special training programs for handicapped.

Four months ago, with their Peace Corps stint finished, Jim and Ellen embarked on a new adventure.

Following their marriage in Japan, they traveled to India, Hong Kong and nearby Macao, Bangladesh and Thailand. It was there that Jim swam in the Mekong River almost to the shores of Vietnam.

VITTORIO'S DINNER THEATRE

PHIL MARCUS ESSER'S PRODUCTION OF OFF-BROADWAYS BIGGEST HIT

Vanities

DINNER 7:00 - SHOW 8:30
FOR RESERVATIONS, GROUPS AND LATE SEATING INFORMATION, CALL 425-8344

BANQUET FACILITIES FROM 20 TO 600
FREE PARKING FOR OVER 1,000 CARS

LENTEN SPECIAL
Sacred Heart Brothers Club
Friday Fish Fry
March 30th & April 6th
Serving from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m.
CARRYOUTS AVAILABLE
ADULTS \$3.50
SENIOR CITIZENS \$2.75

FABULOUS 7-DAY SPECIAL!
THURSDAY, MARCH 29 THRU WEDNESDAY, APRIL 4
Your Entree Choice Of: **TWO FOR \$14.50**

- ALASKAN KING CRAB
- CRAB LEGS & TURF
- 9 OZ. FILET
- PRIME RIB OF BEEF
- VEAL PARMIGIANA

Regular menu also available • Choice Cocktails & Wine

Antoinette's
8470 N. TELEGRAPH, just South of Joy Rd. 565-4848

FRIDAY LENTEN SPECIAL
ALL THE FISH & CHIPS YOU CAN EAT FOR ONLY \$2.99
CHRISTO'S FAMILY DINING
10% DISCOUNT ON FOOD TO ALL SENIOR CITIZENS
DAILY LUNCH 11:30 AM - 2:00 PM
533-0916

TEN YEN CHINA FAIR
千元酒家 正宗粵菜
425-8910
WAYNE ROAD AT ANN ARBOR TRAIL LIVONIA

京華酒家
349-0441
NORTHVILLE PLAZA MALL 42313 W. 7 MILE RD. NORTHVILLE
NOW SERVING COCKTAILS
CHINESE, CANTONESE, HONG KONG, MANDARIN, JAPANESE & AMERICAN CUISINE
BUSINESSMEN'S LUNCHEON SPECIALS • COMPLETE DINNERS • CARRY OUT SERVICE • BANQUET ROOM (OPEN 7 DAYS)

Serving your favorite cocktails, beer & wine
Lads
HAPPY HOUR 3-6 p.m.
Food Spirits
LENTEN SPECIAL
Served Everyday 3-11 p.m.
FISH 'N' CHIPS \$2.85
15231 Farmington Rd. at 5 Mile (in Shopping Center) Livonia
Open Mon-Sat. 10 a.m.-10 p.m.

FEATURING
Andy Hyland - Tuesdays
Ken & Barry - Wed.-Sun.

The Weather Bottle Inn
• Businessmen's Luncheons
• Family Dining
• We Also Cater Weddings, and house Parties
522-2420 28937 W. Warren Garden City

NOW SERVING LUNCH THURSDAY & FRIDAY WITH A SPECIAL LUNCH MENU
"ALL YOU CAN EAT"
\$5.50 PER PERSON (sated bar incl.)
• PITCHER BEER • WINE • COCKTAILS
Little MEXICO Restaurant
22350 W. WARREN - 563-0490
(East of Telegraph between Ann Arbor Trail & Order Drive)
TUES. 4 PM - 11 PM
WED. 4 PM - 11 PM
THURS. 11:30 AM - 2:30 PM, 4 PM - 11 PM
FRI. 11:30 AM - 2:30 PM, 4 PM - 11 PM
SAT. 4 PM - 11 PM
SUN. 4 PM - 10 PM CLOSED MON.
-MEXICAN CUISINE-

The Sherwood Inn
N.Y. SIRLOIN STEAK — \$6.95
KING CRAB LEGS — \$8.95
Reg. Dinners served until 11 P.M.
Fri. & Sat. till 12
NOW APPEARING "The Music of KIM STRICKER AND DAVE MORSE"
BANQUET FACILITIES AVAILABLE FOR ALL OCCASIONS
WE SPECIALIZE IN WEDDINGS - CALL FOR DETAILS

CORSI'S FAMILY RESTAURANT
RESTAURANT AND COCKTAIL LOUNGE
NOW APPEARING WEDNESDAY THRU SATURDAY
"DETROIT SOUND COMPANY"
for your listening and dancing pleasure, COCKTAIL HOUR 3-6 P.M. MONDAY-FRIDAY
WEEKLY DINNER SPECIALS 5 P.M. TO 10 P.M.

| | | |
|-----------|---------------------------------------|--------|
| Monday | Spaghetti with meat sauce | \$2.45 |
| Tuesday | Baked Lasagna | \$3.25 |
| Wednesday | Meatloaf with meat sauce | \$2.95 |
| Thursday | Chicken with Fries | \$2.95 |
| Friday | Broiled Pickering or Trout with Fries | \$3.99 |
| Saturday | Roast Beef with Mashed Potatoes | \$3.99 |
| Sunday | Veal Cutlet with Fries | \$3.99 |

ALL DINNERS INCLUDE SOUP, SALAD, GARLIC ROLLS AND BUTTER
Private Room Available For Parties or Meetings
Call for Information
27910 W. 7 Mile, LIVONIA 531-4960
(Between Middlebelt and Inkster)

BONANZA
"Atmosphere On A Budget"

Great **SALAD BAR**
13 Items to mix 5 delicious dressings

MONDAY'S SENIOR DINNER
5:00 PM - 7:00 PM
\$1.99

LUNCHEON SPECIALS
CHOPPED STEAK DINNER \$1.99
N.Y. PETITE STRIP DINNER \$2.39
BREADED VEAL CHLET \$1.89
Includes Toast, Potato, Salad Bar

SERVED ALL DAY MONDAY — 11-4 TUES.-SAT.

SOUTHFIELD 28810 W. 8 MILE RD. 353-4286
AT BEECHDALE RD. 353-4286
BEAUMONT PLAZA 353-4286

BELLEVILLE 33046 W. 7 MILE RD. 496-1038
LIVONIA 33046 W. 7 MILE RD. 496-1038
FARMINGTON HILLS 33046 W. 7 MILE RD. 496-1038

**HOURS: MON-THURS. 11 to 8
FRI. & SAT. 11-4 • SUNDAY 11 to 3**

john patricks
Now Appearing Wednesday, Friday & Saturday
Tir-na-nOg
Performing an exquisite blend of folk music from Ireland and around the world.

WEEKEND DINNER SPECIAL FRIDAY
FISH 'N' CHIPS \$3.50
All You Can Eat
SATURDAY
PRIME RIB DINNER \$6.95
Food-Spirits-Entertainment
32828 W. FIVE MILE Livonia • 425-8530

Friendly FAMILY RESTAURANTS

If you're going out for dinner tonight, come to a Friendly place. We'll greet you and seat you and give you the friendliest service in town at down-to-earth family prices.

Choice New York Strip Steak, char-broiled the way you like it. Ham Steak topped with Pineapple. Fish Frys and Clam Boats. Liver smothered with sauteed onion strips. Veal Parmesan. Deep Fried Shrimp and Scallops. And no matter what you decide to have for dinner, you can round out your meal with the best tasting salad you've ever made. At our Salad Bar.

Join us tonight. You're in for a nice surprise!

You're going to love our Salad Bar!

Plymouth
42370 Ann Arbor Road (corner of Lilley)

Farmington Hills
24234 Orchard Lake Road (corner of Ten Mile)