

The Air Over There

Overseas Development Network allows students interested in working abroad the resources to discover more about opportunities and experiences

BY BRANDI BALLARD
Staff writer

A couple of years ago, I heard a sociologist say that the world was entering a period of history that will be called the 'Pax Americanus,' like the Pax Romanus, that period when the world made great strides under the stabilizing force of the Roman Empire," said P.J. Vanpool, a construction management graduate student.

Vanpool said the idea of the American Century should be an honor for its citizens.

"A huge and humbling sense of responsibility should come with that realization," Vanpool said. After all, what makes us better than anybody at leading planetary change?"

Vanpool is vice-president of the Overseas Development Network (ODN). ODN is a student organization that brings together people interested in international development issues. Formed in the spring of 1997, ODN provides an opportunity for TAMU students who eventually want to work overseas.

"ODN helps speed up your transition from seeing the world through

CNN news clips to seeing the whole process of change," Vanpool said. "When you're really overseas,

that change process requires a knowledge of lots of areas of study and an ability to adjust to how different people see different problems. ODN helps explain the true complexities of those issues."

Grant Suhm, an advisor for ODN and special project administrator for the Department

of Agricultural Education and Texas Agriculture Extension Service, just returned to the United States after six years spent overseas.

"Those in the administration and faculty who are attempting to provide students with international opportunities are watching ODN closely," Suhm said. "In the College of Agricul-

ture, a number of us are busy developing a Masters/Doctoral Certificate in International Agriculture and Natural Resources."

Steve Sywulka, president of ODN and a junior agriculture development major, said the organization really brings people together who share an interest in all aspects of international development.

"Development means anything that will improve the standard of living overseas," Sywulka said. "Any major can be applied overseas."

He said farmers can help with agriculture and crops in developing countries, and medical doctors can help cure diseases. Individuals from other areas such as civil engineering are needed so they can assist in the construction of dams and roads.

"My main goal is to learn what is going on overseas and what I can do about it," Sywulka said.

ODN is a young organization with around 25 active members. Meetings are held every other Tuesday focusing on a different topic of discussion.

"We give an update on global issues at our meetings," Sywulka said. "Then we can talk about what is going on."

PLEASE SEE ODN ON PAGE 4.

Living in African jungle offers rare cultural perspective for growing up

"Homeward bound. I wish I was homeward bound"

Ahhh, the music of Simon and Garfunkel. There were few constants in my life other than family, Simon and Garfunkel and moving. And when I had finally learned that Simon and Garfunkel had broken up, there was only family and moving.

I have rarely met anyone else who has moved as much as I have. I have moved so often I cannot remember all the places I have lived.

I have visited every state except five. I have lived on four of the six habitable continents. When my family finally moved into a "permanent" home, I was 13 years old, and I had moved 14 times.

Most people have a house in the suburbs they have always lived in. For me, the most per-



AARON MEIER
lifestyles editor

manent part of my life was a 1979 Mercury Cougar that my family had since I was three. I later wrecked that car when I turned 16. Ironic, huh?

However, moving was always an adventure into the great unknown. Never was it more an unknown than when I moved to Africa — Nigeria to be exact.

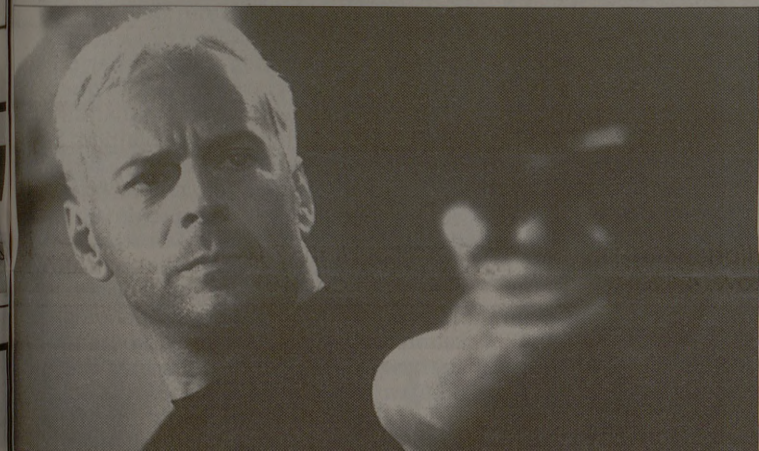
For three years I drank Coca Cola in glass bottles, never talked on a telephone (there was a phone in the capital of Lagos which was a three-hour drive) and generally lived a normal life. Or as normal as it could get considering less than 20 feet from my house was a jungle housing poisonous snakes and tribal witch doctors.

Despite the lack of American culture and technology that existed, life was pretty fun for an 11-year-old kid.

What was it like living in Nigeria? It's like Vincent Vega said in the opening scene of Pulp Fiction, "It's the little things."

PLEASE SEE MEIER ON PAGE 4.

The Jackal proves to be laugh of a movie for Willis and Gere



Bruce Willis stars as an assassin in the new action-suspense film, *The Jackal*.

Movie Review

The Jackal
Starring Bruce Willis and Richard Gere
Directed by Michael Caton-Jones
Rated R
Showing at Hollywood 16
★ (out of five)

The Jackal, a movie based on the suspense novel *Day of the Jackal*, is an attempt to find middle ground between the sophistication of a James Bond flick and the intensity of the *Die Hard* series. It fails miserably on

both accounts.

The story is simple enough. FBI agents (most notably Sidney Poitier) and NVD agents led by Valentina Koslova (Diane Venora) attempt to arrest a Russian mobster in a Moscow club. When the mobster resists and is killed, his psycho brother hires the Jackal (Bruce Willis) to assassinate a high-powered government official. The FBI must enlist the aid of ex-IRA sharpshooter Declan Mulqueen (Richard Gere) to find and stop the Jackal.

Despite the promising opening, the script is an inexcusable insult to intelligence. The dialogue is completely uninspiring. The casual manner with which intelligence

officers disseminate classified information and compromise national security to the average Joe on the street offers no semblance of reality.

The cursory attempts to explore the developing relationships between characters should have been left on the editing room floor. Finally, the musical transitions between scenes are crafted with all the subtlety of an episode of MTV's "The Real World" and annoy the audience (especially in the opening sequence) instead of creating a proper mood.

The movie has precious few bright spots and action sequences

and would have done much better if random violence had done more liberally applied. Instead, the director tried to recreate the tense desperation of a cat-and-mouse chase. Unfortunately, the foreshadowing devices are so simplistic, anybody with a functioning frontal lobe knows what is going to happen five minutes before it does.

The only reason to see this movie in a theatre is to see a few decently choreographed gunfights on a large screen with loud music. The best option would be to wait for it to appear on the 99 cent rack at the video store. Then you would only be wasting a dollar.

— By Stephen Wells

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PHYS 218	6-8 PM	CH 10	CH 11, 12	CH 13	PRAC TEST
CHEM 101	8-10 PM	CH 9	CH 10	CH 11	CH 12
PHYS 201	10 PM-MID	CH 14, 15	CH 16, 17	CH 18	CH 19
MATH 151	9-11 PM	PART 1	PART 2	PART 3	PART 4
PHYS 208	4-6 PM OR 11 PM-1 AM	CH 30	CH 31, 32	CH 33	CH 34

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