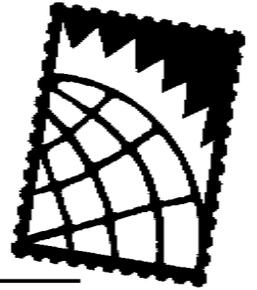


Earthbeat



SCIC NEWSLETTER SASKATCHEWAN COUNCIL FOR INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION September/October 2010

Barriers to Peace

By Sarah MacDonald

"If I could go anywhere in the world, I would go to Jerusalem," says Tarab, a 23-year-old Palestinian woman from Nablus. "And I would go to Haifa and the other cities that Israel took from us."

Jerusalem is just 69 km south of Nablus, but most Palestinians are banned from accessing their capital city, so Tarab's dream of seeing the Dome of the Rock and Al Aqsa Mosque, may never be realised. This is just one of the realities she faces living under occupation, and one of the things I learned while volunteering at *Project Hope*, a Canadian non-profit organisation in Nablus, for a month.

I had long been interested in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and rather than just talk about the Palestinians' plight, I wanted to help them. I came to teach English and French to the Palestinians, but ultimately it was I who learned more from them. I learned how awful the occupation is and how hopeless the people are about their country's future.

"In 10 years there will probably be Israeli settlers living in the centre of Nablus," Tarab predicts during a discussion about peace in her English class with me at Project Hope.

Nablus has many illegal Israeli settlements around it, and a settlement in a Palestinian city isn't unheard of. Hebron, a city of about 160,000 southeast of Jerusalem, has a settlement in its centre. The city is divided and the 500 or so settlers and 30,000 Palestinians who live in the settlement zone are surrounded by barbed wire, security fences and many Israel soldiers. While having lunch with a Hebron family, I learned that at one point there were 4000 soldiers posted in Hebron...that's eight soldiers for each settler. The Palestinians are frequently attacked by the settlers and many have left.



The Wall at Qalandia checkpoint.

Another sign of the occupation are the Israeli military aircraft which fly over Nablus almost daily, causing the buildings to tremble. The first time I heard them I panicked and ran outside to see what was happening. The Palestinians who work at Project Hope looked at me as though I were crazy. I realised that the planes have become a normalised part of their lives.

It is also normal to wait hours at the numerous military checkpoints along the roads. Sometimes the soldiers make the Palestinians get out of their vehicles or the buses and walk through, and often after waiting in line, the people are turned away or the checkpoints are closed. One such checkpoint is Qalandia, between Ramallah and Jerusalem. The pedestrian gates are like cattle pens, and to either side of the checkpoint is the illegal "Security Fence," known to the Palestinians as the "Apartheid Wall," which snakes through the West Bank, separating Palestinians and settlers, Palestinians and their land, Palestinians and their cities.

There are bombed-out buildings, posters of Palestinians who were killed by Israelis, settlers who throw stones at Palestinian vehicles and burn their olive trees, and physical scars which will never disappear.

Zaid, an 18-year-old who just finished high school, lifts up his shirt to show me a thick scar that runs from his chest to his bellybutton and two smaller ones on the right side of his stomach. "I was shot twice by the soldiers when I was 10," he explains.

For there ever to be peace here, Tarab and her classmates agree that the occupation must end but they aren't at all optimistic that this will happen.

"The Israelis won't leave. They will just take more of our land, and maybe kill us all," she concludes.

Sarah MacDonald is originally from Prince Albert. She teaches English at a university in Oman, and has just spent one month volunteering with Project Hope in Palestine.



Earthbeat

is a publication of the Saskatchewan Council for International Cooperation. SCIC is a coalition of organizations involved in international development and committed to the recognition of the dignity of all people and their right to self-determination, to the protection of the world's fragile environment, and to the promotion of global understanding, cooperation, peace and justice.

Publication of this newsletter is possible thanks to the generous support provided by Member Agencies and CIDA (Canadian International Development Agency).

We welcome readers' comments and contributions, including donations to help cover production and distribution costs. Put your pen to paper, or your fingers to the keyboard, and send your contributions to: SCIC Newsletter, 2138 McIntyre Street, Regina, SK. S4P 2R7 or communications@earthbeat.sk.ca.



For more information on the work of SCIC and its Member Agencies, please check out our Web site: www.earthbeat.sk.ca or e-mail: communications@earthbeat.sk.ca or call 306-757-4669.

Payment of *Earthbeat* subscriptions (\$10) and Friends of SCIC donations are welcome anytime!

SCIC REPORT

Summer is coming to an end, but things are heating up at SCIC!! Let's review some of the events that have taken place over the last few months, and what will be happening in the coming months.

On May 11 SCIC held **NGO Information Day**. This year we realized that we have almost outgrown our space at the Legislative Building. There were so many members displaying their information we need to double up on tables. Minister Rob Norris gave a really positive talk about the province's vision and priorities for international development. Many MLAs toured the displays and chatted with members. The food was delicious and we can't wait for the next NGO Day in 2012!

Only a few days after NGO Day we travelled to Saskatoon for the **WorldBeat Stand Up, Speak Out Student Summit**. Almost 400 students from Saskatoon and area attended amazing workshops, ate delicious food, and heard from keynote Mariatu Kamara. The evaluations were really positive, and we are hopeful that we can host another similar conference in the future. On a side note, we would love to publish a short article by one or more of the youth that attended the summit. If you or someone you know what to share a bit about your experience at the summit please contact SCIC.

In June SCIC was pleased to welcome **Fiseko (Fifi) Musonda and Alexis Nyandwi** to our staff team. Both Fifi and Alexis have been working out of the Saskatoon office on youth engagement and summer camps.

The **Government Relations Committee** has also been very active working with Angus Reid on the design of a province-wide opinion survey on the issue of global poverty. We expect this survey will provide clear evidence that public interest in Saskatchewan on global poverty and international development is strong and increasing. This important survey will also provide insight into what motivates people to become involved in addressing global poverty, how do they want to contribute and how strong their support is for the Matching Grants in Aid Program.

SCIC Overseas Program Officer, Denise MacDonald, has just returned from **Southern Sudan**. She was there as part as a mentoring project which you can read more about on Page 5.



Mariatu Kamara brings students participating in the Stand Up, Speak Out Summit on stage during her presentation.

On August 12 **Tamarah Olarie** started a 4 month internship with SCIC. She joined us as part of the YMCA's Eco Internship program. Tamarah will be working on youth engagement, *WorldBeat* and other SCIC programming.

CIDA Update

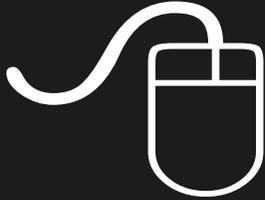
- SCIC and all other provincial/regional international development councils are in the middle of preparing a proposal for federal government funding through **Institutional Strengthening Grants**. Our current grants expire on March 31, 2011. New proposals for three year funding from 2011 to 2014 will be submitted by each provincial council in September 2010.

- **The Canadian Council for International Cooperation** has officially been defunded. CCIC, based out of Ottawa, received CIDA funding for 40 years, and it was a shock that they are no longer partnering. Even though CCIC was a parent organization of SCIC, we are still optimistic that CIDA will fund our next grant.

- At the time of producing this *Earthbeat*, we have still not heard whether the **WorldBeat** Global Classrooms Project will be funded by CIDA for this coming September.

- On August 18 CIDA representatives will visit Saskatchewan to discuss the new CIDA **Partnership Modernization and Effectiveness Strategy** released by Minister Oda in early August. We are keen to hear more about this new plan that will potentially lead to dramatic changes to CIDA's in Canada work.

The Earthbeat is going **ELECTRONIC!**



The times are a changing, and in order for SCIC to keep sharing stories about international development, helping Saskatchewan people stay informed about local initiatives, and profiling the work of SCIC and our members we need to lower the cost of the Earthbeat. The easiest way for us to do this is to print fewer copies. We also hope that by distributing the Earthbeat electronically more people will read it and be inspired to change the world!

If you would like to start receiving Earthbeat in your inbox please send your email address to communications@earthbeat.sk.ca. Also include your mailing address so we can remove it from our list.

If you are attached to these fantastic yellow pages, that is ok too. We will keep mailing it to you unless we hear otherwise.

Thanks for reading the Earthbeat!
We hope to keep telling stories to change the world for years to come.

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KALEIDOSCOPE
DÉFI VIDÉO / REAL WORLD VIDEO CHALLENGE

KALEIDOSCOPE
is an **online video contest**
about the most pressing
global issues and
what youth can do about it.
This **public engagement** project
aims to sensitize and engage
8 to 12 and **13 to 18** years old
to global development issues and
to support them in becoming
responsible and engaged global citizens.



Contest Launch:
Fall 2010

Deadline:
March 2011

Visit

www.videochallenge.ca
for contest guidelines, video and other resources

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SCIC's 2010 Annual

Saturday, September 25, 2010
All Saints Anglican Church
142 Massey Road, Regina

9:00 am

REGISTRATION

Member Reps arrive, register, enjoy a cup of coffee.

10:00 am

AGM BUSINESS MEETING

Member representatives will receive delegate packages in early September. AGM resolutions and nominations for Board of Directors will be open until September 25.

12:00 pm

LUNCH

1:15 pm

PRESENTATION

SCIC, CHAKAM and SHHADA will talk about their mentoring project in Sudan this past July. Members of each organization spent several days in Lire Sudan visiting a development project related to the construction of a technical college. They will speak about the project, the process of mentoring, and their overall experience.

3:00 pm

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

****Note the AGM will move to the**

U of R Classroom Building Room 110**

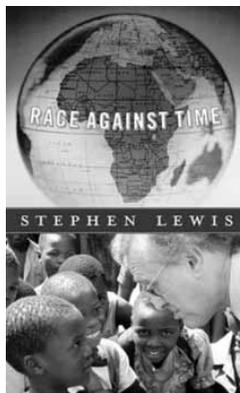
SCIC is thrilled to have Stephen Lewis give the keynote at this year's AGM.

Stephen Lewis is Chair of the Board of the Stephen Lewis Foundation, which is dedicated to turning the tide of HIV/AIDS in Africa. Additionally, Stephen Lewis' work with the United Nations has spanned more than two decades. He was the UN Secretary-General's Special Envoy for HIV/AIDS in Africa from June 2001 until the end of 2006. From 1995 to 1999, Mr. Lewis was Deputy Executive Director of UNICEF at the organization's global headquarters in New York. From 1984 through 1988, Stephen Lewis was Canada's Ambassador to the United Nations.



Stephen Lewis will present the Keynote Address at the 2010 AGM.

Mr. Lewis is the author of the best-selling book, *Race Against Time*. He holds 32 honorary degrees and is a Companion of the Order of Canada, Canada's highest honour for lifetime achievement. He was awarded the Pearson Peace Medal in 2004 by the United Nations Association in Canada; the award celebrates



outstanding achievement in the field of international service and understanding.

This portion of the AGM will be open to the public. Tickets will be for sale at SCIC and on our website for \$15 each in advance or for \$20 at the door. If you would like to attend contact the SCIC office at (306)757-4669 or scic@earthbeat.sk.ca.

Also see the SCIC website www.earthbeat.sk.ca

SCIC would like to thank RPIRG for their financial and logistical support for this event.

General Meeting!

Development through education in Southern Sudan

By Denise MacDonald

Sudan is a country that has long been in the headlines, in most part due to decades of conflict between North and South. Though Sudan is one country the people have long been divided since those in the North share little economically, culturally, or politically with the people of the South. In 2005 Sudan was once again in the news with the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) by North and South Sudan.

Senos Timon, a Saskatchewan resident who fled Sudan during the war, returned to his home in Southern Sudan in 2002 and wanted to help his community develop, specifically by improving access to education for young people. Senos founded the Southern Sudan Humanitarian Action Development Agency (SSHADA), became a member of SCIC, and began to raise money and awareness to help his community. Through SCIC and the Community Links Fund, Senos facilitated the building of a secondary school, and began



Senos Timon at the secondary school.

to work with another SCIC member, Chakam School of the Bible, to build a technical college. Together, Chakam and SSHADA were able to secure CIDA funding, and in July 2010, a team from Saskatchewan went to Juba, the capital of Southern Sudan to Kajo Keji County in the far south near the Ugandan border to visit the project.

Education is important to the people of Kajo Keji County; although they

have very few resources and little support, they have flourishing nursery, primary and secondary schools, but the addition of the technical college means that they can remain in their community to continue their education, and get the skills that are needed to rebuild their community and country.

The community welcomed the Saskatchewan delegation with open arms, and we were able to see what a huge impact Saskatchewan has had in Southern Sudan. Not only are the conditions for learning improved (with the addition of buildings and a generator to provide electricity), but more students from surrounding areas live on-site in dormitories so they can focus on their education. As peace unfolds in Southern Sudan and the newly elected Government of Southern Sudan builds its capacity for providing services, we saw firsthand that the people are very capable and keen to develop their communities to their full potential, and are doing so, with help from Saskatchewan.

Denise MacDonald is SCIC's Overseas Program Officer and was one of the Saskatchewan delegates that travelled to Sudan. Denise, along with other SCIC members Senos Timon and John Fryters, will be speaking about this project and their experiences in Sudan at the SCIC AGM.



The Technical College.

Sleeping Alone

By Echo Fettes

Despite loving both my brothers to bits, I have always wanted a sister. Last September, at the age of twenty-three, my wish came true. Her name was Ncumisa Sharon Mhlotywa, and she was to be my counterpart for the duration of a six-month Canada World Youth program* that we were beginning together with eighteen other young women from across Canada, Kenya, and South Africa.

Misa is a proud South African of Xhosa heritage. Meaning ‘the smile of my family,’ Ncumisa is well named. Full of love and laughter, she is a deeply spiritual person, and worships at a Methodist church in her home community of Kayamandi, Stellenbosch. She also honours her Xhosa ancestors through traditional ceremonies and celebrations.

Almost exactly one year younger than me (our birthdays are four days apart), Misa has lived experiences that, hopefully, I never will. A survivor of rape, Misa spoke openly to our women’s group one afternoon near the end of our program, spurring several others – both Canadian and South African – to come forward with their own stories of sexual abuse. The experiences were difficult to share and, at times, horrifying to hear about. Boxes of Kleenex were passed around. Yet, the overwhelming sense of unconditional acceptance amongst each and every one of us that day is something that I will think back on and cherish for some time to come. While she had our support, Misa was single-handedly responsible for that memorable experience.



Echo Fettes stands with her Canada World Youth counterpart Misa, her sister Sisonke.

In spite of her troubling adolescence, Misa is an extremely caring and compassionate individual. She is planning to return to school to become a social worker, and hopes to one day run an orphanage “to help those who want help and a smile!” Nicknamed ‘Sunshine,’ it was not uncommon to hear her singing along to Sunday evening gospel programs on television or giggling into her cell-phone late at night.

There are many things that I admire about Misa – her wisdom, her courage, her decision to “adapt and adopt” to her surroundings while participating in the program. However, what I miss most are our late-night chats. As one of the few counterpart pairs in our group sharing a bed for the entire six months, we were pitied by those who weren’t and sympathized with by those who were. Yet, although it took us both some getting used to, we came to the conclusion that we liked the arrangement because of the resulting con-

versations. Frustrations and fears, hopes and dreams, families and the future – no subject was too personal or too insignificant to discuss in the dark. And while the conversations often ended with an exaggeratedly terse, “sleep, Echo,” I knew that the following night’s chat would resume where we had left off.

I was also aware that these talks, which sometimes continued into the wee hours of the morning, meant as much to Misa as they did to me. What better way to bond than by whispering about our relationships and plans for the future? However, more often than not, it was me asking the questions – about her culture, her boyfriend, about why women are given a new name when they begin married life, and how she made such a flavourful stew for supper when I couldn’t find any spices – and she patiently explaining.

So, you can imagine my confusion when, at our final debriefing camp, Misa refused to sleep beside me. In or-

der to spend our last two nights together, our women’s group had decided to drag all of the mattresses from two bunk houses to the floor of the common room, and Misa purposefully pulled hers to the side of the room opposite from where I had already rolled out my sleeping bag. “Misa,” I exclaimed, slightly hurt, “I’m over here.” To which she responded, “I know. I need to wean myself from you.” She continued with a sad smile; “I need to learn to sleep alone again.”

I have learned a lot from my Canada World Youth experience, and continue to do so, especially when I consider what I’m seeing through Misa’s eyes. In that moment, however, the only knowledge that mattered was that I finally had a sister. And she is South African.

* Funded in part by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), Canada World Youth is a non-profit, non-governmental organization that provides opportunities for cross-cultural and experiential learning. Young people ages 18 – 25 live and volunteer for three months in a community in Canada, followed by three months in a partner community in Asia, Africa, Latin America, the Caribbean, or Eastern Europe. In addition to its many mixed gender programs, CWY offers one women’s exchange per year, in keeping with CIDA’s Millennium Development Goal to promote gender equality and women’s empowerment. Echo Fettes feels pleased and privileged to have had the opportunity to have participated in such a program.

SCIC MEMBER PROFILE

United Church of Canada

By Bonnie Morton

The United Church of Canada (UCC) is, and has always been very active at the international level. But due to funding struggles, all levels of the church are having to re-structure how we do this, and still honor those we work with and for. All levels of the church – from congregations to the national organization – get involved in this work through participation in projects, fundraising, and travel overseas to work with our international partners. The following is a very general overview of this involvement.

The national office of the United Church of Canada is located in Toronto. Out of this office we have staff whose job it is to work internationally with our partners. This work will sometimes take them to the homelands of our partners, and there are times when our partners from Brazil, South Africa, and other places come to Canada. Together we decide how best to have the United Church become involved with the development work of these partners.

In May of this year eight United Church people, including myself, from across Canada, were invited to be International observers during the elections in the Philippines. Things were peaceful, for the most part, but a couple of our observer teams were caught in the middle of gun fire and other tensions. Our reports provided the Filipino people with enough evidence to take their case before the United Nations Human Rights Committee. Democracy can be fragile, and it was amazing to be apart of the elections. Being in the Philippines we were able to meet with United Church of Christ in the Philippines partners while we were there. Having a connection with the people, and knowing that they want you to be a part of this work was an empowering part of my journey there.

On another lever, the Local Global Advocacy Committee of Saskatchewan Conference has been newly formed. This committee is responsible for engaging the people of Saskatchewan on

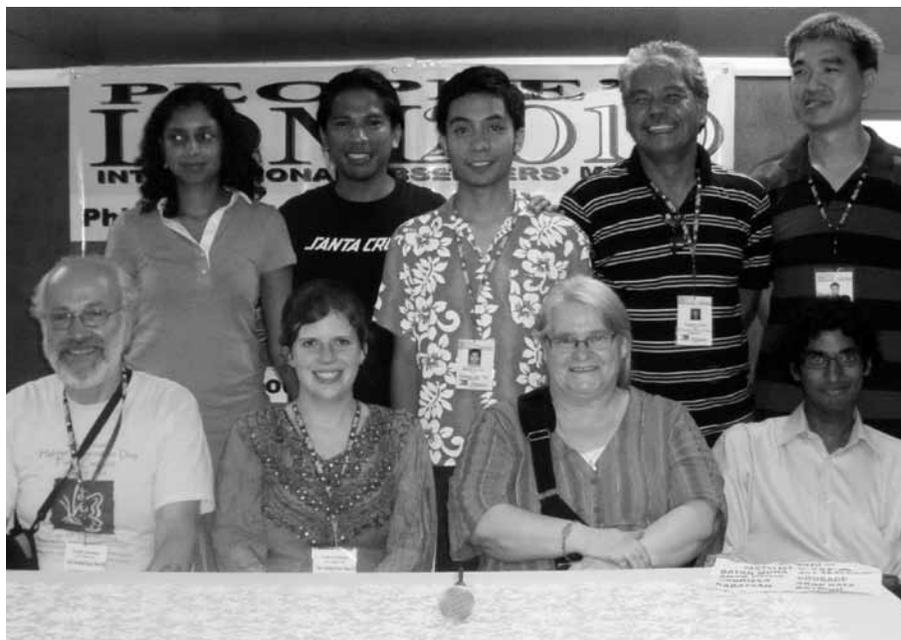
justice issues locally and globally. One of those areas is the small role we play in assisting Palestinian Olive farmers. This Committee orders boxes of olive oil from Zatoun, which is a Toronto based distributor. This oil is then distributed to churches and interested people within our province to sell and help support the marketing and sale of this home grown Palestinian olive oil. This is just one example of how this committee tries to be in solidarity with our international brothers and sisters. Very recently we had new United Church representatives move to Dodoma, Tanzania and a minister who has taken a position with the Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea (the PROK).

At the local level there is also a lot of education and action for international development taking place within the United Church. One example in this province is the Social Justice Committee of Wascana Presbytery (Regina and area churches). At this time this committee is working on getting our local churches involved in assisting one United Church of Christ partner in

Manila to purchase school supplies for a school/Day Care they have started on “Smokey Mountain”. This mountain is a dump site where poor people struggle to make a living and build their homes from the garbage they gather. Children from this area would probably never get to attend school because there are no public schools. The Tondo Church in the area created and runs this school.

As funding dollars shrink, and the poverty and problems get deeper, people of the United Church are trying to educate themselves about their role in global poverty and injustice. From there we try and work with locals to find the need and work for a better world.

Bonnie Morton is a poverty activist based out of Regina. She is one half of the team at the Regina Anti-Poverty Ministry. She is the chair person on both the Local Global Advocacy Committee and the Social Justice Committee mentioned in this article. She has worked tirelessly for the rights of the poor in Canada and abroad for over 2 decades.



Bonnie (front row, arms crossed) and the team of election observers she worked with. This group was assigned to Davao and Santa Cruz in the Philippines.



Upcoming Opportunities and Events

SEPTEMBER 1, 8 & 15 **Transitions Economic Justice Film Series in Saskatoon**

Three nights of film in lead up to the Economic Justice Summit (see below). All films will be shown at the Francis Morrison Library (downtown branch) at 7 pm.

September 1 – *The Corporation*
September 8 – *The End of Poverty?*
September 15 – *The Take*

Search Facebook for more information and to watch trailers.

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 6 **Labour Day Picnic in Regina**

The Saskatchewan Provincial Building & Construction Trades Council, in coordination with the Regina & District Labour Council are hosting a picnic! Bring your family and celebrate Labour Day. Free food and drinks, with special entertainment for the children. Picnic starts at noon at the Legislative Building Lawn (west of the flower gardens).

SEPTEMBER 20-22 **United Nations Summit on the Millennium Development Goals**

This summit will be taking place in New York City. Make Poverty History (MPH) has started a campaign to urge Canada to be well represented at this Summit. MPH wants Canadians to write to Stephen Harper, and urge him to take part in the summit. They are also asking people to participate in a Stand Up campaign in the days leading up to the

summit. On September 17, 18 & 19 individuals and groups are asked to stand up against poverty, and then log the number of participants online. These types of events are massive shows of support, so why not get involved! More information can be found at www.makepovertyhistory.ca/standup

SEPTEMBER 24-25 **Saskatoon Economic Justice Summit**

This summit is a people's convergence to plan for tomorrow's more just economic system. This event is being hosted by SCIC, Transition Saskatoon, and Mobilization for Global Justice.

Workshops will include topics such as:

- International Trade Agreements
- Fair Trade, Full Cost Accounting & the Value of Nothing
- Understanding the Development of Cooperatives
- Workplace Rights & Organizing
- Local Economies & Global Justice
- Communicating About Economic Justice

We are also trying to organize a webcasting of Stephen Lewis' presentation that will be taking place in Regina. This event is taking place at the University of Saskatchewan Neatby Timlin Theatre. Friday starts at 7 pm and Saturday at 9 am. Please stay tuned for more details.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 25 **SCIC AGM, Stephen Lewis and Youth Events in Regina and Saskatoon**

Read more about all this good stuff on page 5 of the *Earthbeat*.

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 17 **International Day for the Eradication of Poverty**

The United Nations' International Day for the Eradication of Poverty is observed on October 17 each year since 1993. It promotes people's awareness of the need to eradicate poverty and destitution worldwide, particularly in developing countries.

SCIC along with many other Saskatchewan organizations will be holding events on and around October 17. We will be promoting these events through our E-Zine. If you have any event you would like to share please email it to communications@earthbeat.sk.ca

Kaleidoscope is on its way!

That's right the short film competition will be launched in Saskatchewan this September. This national competition will see films made by youth from all over the country compete for travel, prizes and glory. More information coming soon. Keep reading SCIC's E-Zine and *Earthbeat* to get all the details.