



NATURALLY NOMADIC

June, 2008

**Welcome to the first edition of the Carpe Diem Newsletter!**

This will be a monthly publication exclusively for students and parents of Carpe Diem. Its intent is to generate awareness of the global community, interest in, and information regarding pertinent details about upcoming semesters.

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Our Human "Footprint"

Have you ever thought about your *personal* environmental impact or that of your family? Most of us haven't, but thanks to several resources today you can see not only well-established statistics about the environmental consequences of our consumer culture, but also simple ways for each individual to make little alterations that effect global results.

As much as possible, Carpe Diem wants to promote the ethic of "take only pictures, leave only footprints". Carpe Diem encourages all students to bring their own water bottles, recycle, use re-useable shopping bags, and take public transportation, walk, or bike, while overseas *and* at home. If you've ever contemplated even a fraction of your environmental impact, not to mention the impact of everyone collectively, you understand why.

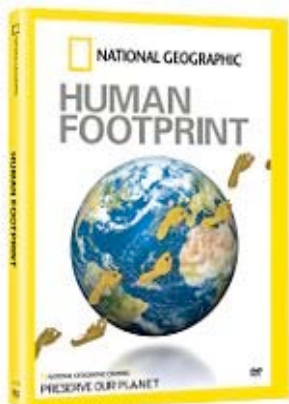
DID YOU KNOW?

- HUMANS HAVE INFLUENCED 83% OF THE EARTH'S SURFACE
- THE WORLD'S LARGEST "LANDFILL" ISN'T ON LAND—IT'S THE PACIFIC OCEAN:
  - THE "GREAT PACIFIC GARBAGE PATCH" COVERS FIVE MILLION SQUARE MILES OF OCEAN WATERS—THAT'S THE SIZE OF THE US, MEXICO, AND CENTRAL AMERICA COMBINED!
  - THE PACIFIC CONTAINS 6 PARTS PLASTIC TO 1 PART PLANKTON!
  - PLASTIC BREAKS INTO TINY PELLETS CALLED "NURDLES" THAT WILDLIFE INGEST, SICKENING OR KILLING THEM.

SOURCE: [NATIONALGEOGRAPHIC.COM/PRESERVE-OUR-PLANET](http://NATIONALGEOGRAPHIC.COM/PRESERVE-OUR-PLANET)

Anyone who has visited India in the last 10 years can attest that plastic is killing their environment and their animals, and our oceans are rife with plastic waste wreaking havoc on fragile ecosystems. Though we cannot undo the harm already done, we can commit to not participating in contributing further.

Recently we became aware of the National Geographic Channel's "The Human Footprint" which chronicles waste production over a single American's lifespan. This doesn't mean simply the garbage we produce, but also the fuel waste involved in our driving habits and the shipping of food (and other goods) that we consume. This presentation is such a good reminder to confront our complacency that we've added the DVD to our leadership training library. If you get a chance, check it out or surf to their online resource at <http://channel.nationalgeographic.com/channel/human-footprint> for interesting stats and facts about each individual's personal consumption and global imprint.





## **Current Events Corner: Tibet & the Olympic Protests**

On March 24, 2008 the relay of the 29th Olympics torch began in Olympia, Greece—the birthplace of the Olympic games. The relay was named “*Journey of Harmony*” and was scheduled to cover 137,000km (85,000mi)—the longest distance in Olympic torch history. In addition, for the first time it summited Mount Everest, and to that end the Chinese constructed a 67-mile “highway” up the Tibetan side of the mountain. From the outset the torch’s relay has been anything but a “journey of harmony” as international protests of Chinese treatment of Tibet have erupted everywhere the torch has gone. We’ve all seen the coverage on the news, but do you understand the basis of the controversy?



Throughout recorded history the Tibetan plateau has been a coveted piece of real estate, abundant in natural resources. Over the millennia, scores of nations have set their sights and their armies on Tibet, with short terms of relative success. By far the most prolific nation to do so over and over again is China, who most recently claimed Tibet for good in 1951 after numerous failed treaty talks and false treaties beginning in the early 1900’s. China claims that Tibet has always been a part of itself, an assertion that the Tibetans categorically deny after what they assert were thousands of years of autonomous rule. The protests arise further out of alleged human rights violations that have been perpetrated by the Chinese on the Tibetan population since their occupation and after Mao Tse Tung declared to the Dalai Lama “religion is poison”. Mao invaded Tibet

under the banner of liberation of the Tibetan people from their theocratic “oppressors” such as the Dalai Lama. As the birthplace and outpost of a unique and evolved form of Buddhism, Tibet’s conquer was not a difficult endeavor for China.

Since the initial invasion by China, thousands of monasteries have been destroyed along with thirteen hundred years of written historical records. Indigenous Tibetans have been killed, and thousands have been pushed out of the job market as a form of racial favoritism has emerged. For a period of 25 years foreigners were not allowed into Tibet for this reason, many assert. Some have called it an “ethnic cleansing” not unlike the brand that took place in Nazi Germany. To this day, thousands of Tibetans will risk the 3-month trek by foot over the Himalayas each year to seek refuge in India where their government is in exile. Many do not succeed; of those that do, many suffer from frostbite, exposure, and malnutrition. One has to wonder what severe stimuli causes people to risk their lives in this manner.

This is not to say that Tibet was a Shangri-La prior to China’s occupation, though in the West we tend to romanticize the Tibetans’ ethic of non-violence; there are documented accounts of slavery perpetrated by the Tibetan theocracy that remained relatively unknown to the global community. Tibet kept its borders closed for hundreds of years as a method of avoiding future invasions, as well as to further develop their spirituality. Given hindsight, this was misguided, however their non-violent ethic persists as they follow the Dalai Lama’s lead. This means that the world will have to do it for them, as has begun now with the Olympic torch protests.

The Olympics have historically served as a premier venue for international goodwill and cooperation, a time when differences are put aside in exchange for the universal language of celebration of human potential and achievement. To that end, every four years they are held in a different area of the world, allowing various countries to showcase themselves.

Carpe Diem’s spring India group recently returned from visiting McLeod Ganj, the home of the Tibetan government in exile and the Dalai Lama, and were overcome by the emotion and peacefulness of the candlelight vigil protests there.

WHAT DO YOU THINK? WANT TO KNOW MORE?  
[TRY THESE SUGGESTED VIDEOS:](#)

KUNDUN  
SEVEN YEARS IN TIBET  
TIBET: CRY OF THE SNOW LION



## Words, words, words...

This little corner is the indigenous zone, because that's what turns us on at Carpe Diem. Indigenous is synonymous with the Greek word 'autochthonous' meaning "sprung from the earth" or more simply, occurring naturally from a region or environment. Simply put, in terms of people and culture, it is the ethnic group in a geographic region with the earliest historical connection. We seek to learn more about ourselves and our connection to the greater global community by spending significant time with the indigenous communities in the places we travel.

Have you ever thought much about the meaning of the words you say in greeting or parting with someone? Do you shake hands when you meet someone new? Do you hug them when you part ways? How many times do you go through your day saying a mindless hello to someone or maybe avoiding eye contact all together so you don't have to speak?

One of the beautiful and important aspects of traveling is learning even small snippets of foreign language. Not only is it a respectful gesture to try to learn the language of the cultures you are in, but how they position nouns, verbs, and adjectives in a sentence (seemingly little things) can give you huge insight into their culture's values and priorities. The actions that are also incorporated into the greeting as signs of respect also gives a glimpse of their approach to life and each other. If you think making eye contact is uncomfortable, imagine greeting everyone with the Maori hongi in New Zealand. With the hongi, you hold noses together to literally pass the life force to each other. Here's just a glimpse of greetings and farewells from some of the areas we travel to:

**HELLO:** Of course we all know it but did you know it's theoretically shortened from the sentiment "hail thou" or "thou be whole"? **GOODBYE:** "God be with ye"

**KIA ORA** (Maori-New Zealand): Hello ; also common to use **HAERE MAI:** "come well" and **HAERE RA** "go well"

**NAMASTE** (Hindi): "the divine in me greets the divine in you" with palms together at the heart center and a slight bow

**KARIBU**(Swahili): "welcome", **KWA HERI** (goodbye) "with happiness or success"

**BULA** (Fijian): much like "Aloha" for "welcome" or "goodbye"

**HOLA** (Spanish): "hello" also common to shorten buenos días, buenas tardes (good morning, good afternoon) to just Buenas; **ADIOS:** "to God" (vaya con dios-"go with God"); it is also common to use **chau** (similar to 'ciao' in Italian, which interestingly means "I am your slave"; in today's language literally meaning "you can count on me".)

**SAWATDEE** (Thai): "Goodness, Beauty" while bowing with palms together known as the wai

How about an indigenous hello from the US? Try to say hello in Navajo: **Yá'át'ééh** meaning "it is good"

## THE INDIGENOUS ZONE





Going “green” is the up-and-coming lingo of this generation. In a very short time it has become a household expression, due to an epic increase in mainstream marketing by big business as it realizes the importance (and profitability) of creatively and responsibly managing natural resources. Fortunately for consumers, this means easier access to better, greener choices in the marketplace, recycling and transportation options, and [perhaps most importantly] a greater sense of personal responsibility to the earth.

An unavoidable aspect of traveling abroad is flying over oceans and large expanses of land to get there. The result of this is that we leave a huge carbon footprint in the effort to have a legitimate, enriching life experience in another culture. For example, the average carbon emission *per passenger* for a flight from LAX to Delhi is over **4 tons--each way**. Carpe Diem struggles with this issue, and we constantly weigh the value of the

experience against the costs. Ultimately we always realize that the price of an unengaged life can be much greater over the long term; and there are ways that we can work to offset the emissions we inevitably incur en route to our experiences.

What are small habits *you* can participate in daily to minimize your impact on the environment? As mentioned previously under ***The Human Footprint***, Carpe Diem recommends the use of personal water bottles, avoiding plastics wherever possible, and make bicycling, walking, and public transportation a priority. (As a side note, we would add shopping for your semester or future trips abroad in second-hand or army surplus stores. Why? By the time most semesters abroad conclude, clothing is ready to walk off it’s wearers on its own, as it will be so soiled and worn. There is no need to buy expensive new things from outdoor stores—with perhaps the exception of shoes and a good headlamp!)

Some other easy “earth friendly” home activities:

- ⇒ Compost vegetable and fruit waste as well as eggshells. Add twice a year to your landscape or indoor plants—they will thank you for it!
- ⇒ Cook at home—buying only what you know you can consume so it doesn’t go to waste. Have you ever heard about the “2 calorie principle”? The premise is that for every calorie worth of energy we consume, it has taken 2 calories to produce and deliver that calorie somewhere in the world. Think about it...Puts wasting food in a whole new light...
- ⇒ Unplug appliances/devices in your home that you are not using—even though you may switch them off, believe it or not they are still consuming energy! It’s called “phantom load” and accounts for 8 gigawatts of energy in the US alone annually; that is the amount produced by 8 large power plants and a full 1% of the *world’s* carbon emissions.
- ⇒ Shorten your shower by 1 minute. The average family, if each member participates, can save almost 3000 gallons of water annually, not to mention the fuel going into heating it.

FOR MORE INFORMATION AND IDEAS FOR GREEN LIVING, VISIT:  
[HTTP://WWW.GREENLIVINGTIPS.COM](http://www.greenlivingtips.com)



**VOTING WHILE ABROAD**



November 2, 2008 will be the first time most of you will be eligible to vote in the general election, and this year it's a big one. This is your chance to have your voice heard in an election that will directly affect the next (and very important) 4 years of your college and work lives. Carpe Diem is committed to assisting in any way possible to creating the opportunity to vote while our fall students are overseas. After all, if you don't vote, you can't complain about the outcome!

As many of you will be traveling in developing countries during this election, you will have some special circumstances to work around. We've had many phone conversations with some very helpful folks in the State Department, and here is the upshot:

- ◆ You can register to have an absentee ballot sent to an overseas address. Each state has its own policy on how this works. The ballots are placed in the mail 30-45 days prior to the general election. They cannot be sent to an embassy in your name. It is possible to register to vote from a US Consulate *if you turn 18 after departing* the United States.
  - ◆ *Problem: your group will be moving around a great deal, may be in fairly remote areas, and not in one specific place for more than a couple of weeks at most. In addition, mail service in these countries is unreliable and tediously slow. Even if you received a ballot, it likely will not make it back to the States in time to be counted...*
  - ◆ *A very few states allow electronic return of ballots if your ballot actually reaches you abroad. To determine if this applies to you, contact your state's election department.*
- ◆ If you don't have a ballot within 3 weeks of your state's ballot receipt deadline, you may use an "emergency ballot"—also known as a Federal Write-in Absentee Ballot [FWAB] at the nearest US embassy or consulate. Each embassy has a Voting Assistance Officer that can assist.
  - ◆ *The major benefit of this method is you can vote well ahead of time and be assured that it will count.*
  - ◆ *The major drawback with this method of voting is you can vote only for the president, vice-president, and federal representatives of your state (i.e. congressman and senators).*
- ◆ Some states allow to vote early. At this time, this appears to be the most inclusive option available. **You will need to check with your state to see if this service is possible and what it means to them.**

The State Department voting representatives readily admit that the structure currently in place for voting while abroad is in need of improvement. That said, however, they are making concerted efforts to make understanding the process much more accessible and engaging. In fact, they just launched a new website [www.studentsabroad.state.gov](http://www.studentsabroad.state.gov) about 2 weeks ago. We are happy to report that it is a very nice site to navigate, is visually interesting, and is loaded with tons of information relevant to US students traveling abroad in general. In fact, it doesn't look like a government site at all!

Carpe Diem encourages everyone to visit this site and investigate your specific state's process on how best to cast your vote. **If you need contact info for your state, email [nannette@carpediemeducation.org](mailto:nannette@carpediemeducation.org) to have it emailed to you.** Carpe Diem will do its best to schedule groups to interface with US Consulates in their respective countries so everyone has the chance to vote. Periodic updates will be given as the semesters approach. In the meantime:

**REGISTER TO VOTE!!! CONTACT YOUR STATE'S VOTING OFFICIALS,  
THEN VISIT:**

**[WWW.STUDENTSABROAD.STATE.GOV](http://WWW.STUDENTSABROAD.STATE.GOV)**

**FOR IMPORTANT ABSENTEE VOTING INFORMATION  
& HELPFUL TRAVEL INFORMATION**



## The HEALTHY TRAVELER

One of the most prevalent (and important) issues generating questions from parents and students alike, is that of health and wellness. After all, you are involved in this program for specific personal reasons and a run of illness can really detract from the experience—not to mention make for a few potentially miserable days. To that end Carpe Diem requires certain immunizations, encourages all travelers to periodically review the CDC guidelines specific to your area of travel, and lists several suggestions for supplements to pack.

In future newsletters we will cover more specific methods of thwarting potential illnesses, but it all begins with developing an overall *awareness* of your own body.



Reflect on, and/or observe the following in yourself in your home environment:

- ⇒ How do I respond *physically* to mental or emotional stress?
- ⇒ What happens when I don't get enough sleep?
- ⇒ How do I feel physically, mentally, and even emotionally when I make less healthy food choices?
- ⇒ Have I noticed a relationship between my level of physical conditioning and how often I get sick?
- ⇒ How do I know I'm getting sick? What are my symptoms—i.e. does my "hair hurt", do I "feel tired", am I "unable to concentrate", do I tend to feel nauseated, headachy, etc.?

By far, *the most important factor* in your health—*anywhere you find yourself in the world*—is *YOU*, so having a good ability to assess yourself is key so you know when to respond. We'll cover *how* to respond later.

WELCOME to the Challenge Question section! Each newsletter will pose questions relevant to your semesters so you will be pros once you get there!



- ❑ The Maori name for New Zealand is "Aotearoa". What does this translate to in English?
- ❑ What country is home to the oldest discovered city in the Americas?
- ❑ The name of which Central American country means "land of the trees" in the Maya-Toltec language?
- ❑ What Cambodian ruling party is most known for killing over 1.5 million (1/3 of its population) between 1974 & 1979?
- ❑ In which East African country is over 50% of the population under the age of 16?
- ❑ What is the term for India's form of government, according to its constitution?



## International Challenge Question Answers:

- ❑ *"Aotearoa"* translates *"Land of the long white cloud"* and originates from the prevailing weather pattern created by moist ocean air butting into the New Zealand mountain range from the west.
- ❑ The oldest city discovered in the Americas is Caral in Peru, and is dated as far back as 2627 BC.
- ❑ *Guatemala* means *"land of the trees"* in Maya-Toltec, and is the area of greatest concentration of ozone in earth's atmosphere. *Side note: Where is the greatest hole in the ozone? Australia.*
- ❑ The Khmer Rouge was responsible for decimating the Cambodian population in the 1970's in an effort to wipe out any traces of capitalism and form a collective agrarian society. Professionals and other educated individuals were assassinated to that end.
- ❑ Over 50% of Uganda's population is under the age of 16 due to widespread orphaning caused by the AIDS crisis.
- ❑ India's constitution identifies its government as a *"sovereign socialist secular democratic republic."* Yikes!