

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

New Delhi Cudos

JANUARY 30, 1990

To fellow wanderers abroad, and those concerned with these matters at home.

This is a letter of praise for worthy individuals. It is also a piece of advice, a suggestion for the appropriate box in the bureaucracy back home. I am writing from a post where the transition from Ottawa was as smooth as a hand slipping into a fine kid glove.

In Delhi, you are met at the airport at 2:00 A.M. (all flights arrive here in the middle of the night), snuggled into an airconditioned car, whisked to a hotel, where you find fresh fruit, bagels, and milk in the fridge ready for the next day's breakfast or a late night snack.

As a "new arrival", you are accompanied to the markets, schools, and essential services. Maps are distributed that locate all the High Commission staff quarters and lead the way to a variety of useful and interesting excursions that are organized in the first few weeks of a new posting season.

This is a country where amoebas and dysentery are endemic. As a result, a food handlers course is organized to familiarize your cooks with hygiene and proper handling methods.

Social events are well thought out. There are children's movies, co-ed soccer matches, polar bear swims, medieval parties, and so on.

If that isn't enough, a bilingual newsletter comes out weekly that is both informative and funny.

When one speaks to experienced foreign service people about this post, they agree that there is a strong feeling of camaraderie and support here that is better than in most postings. Why is this post so fortunate/different? Two reasons: Donna Hughes and Ann Clasper. They're the Community Co-ordinators and they do the job superbly.

Given the success of these Community Co-ordinators, Delhi might be the place to look for a description of what this position should encompass. The job could be broadened in most posts to include many of the services offered here, as well as some others (spousal employment, for instance).

Salaries should be raised to compensate for the amount of time spent if the job is to be done well. At present the pay doesn't do justice to the time and effort required.

I suppose we're lucky here, but the Department can't continue to rely on luck to run a successful program.

With many thanks to Ann and Donna.

From New Delhi
Clara Hirsch

Perfect Pets in Israel

February 30, 1990

I am ten. Last year I lived in Israel. I went to the school there (A.I.S.). We went to school in the Embassy van. Shlomo was our driver. We had to be out waiting every morning at 7:30. I hated waiting for the van. It was either unbearably hot and sticky all over you or pouring down rain. We had Hebrew lessons (very boring) and that's why I am very behind in French now (I live in Ottawa.) The work was much harder there. Classrooms are things like gyms and libraries (we had a HUGE library) and a wonderful librarian Mr. Nevrenburger. We only had lunch recess, not 3 recesses.

The playfield was huge. We had pet frogs in our class (Mrs. Thomas') and we would catch grasshoppers, and lizards in the field. That was fun!

I remember me and my friend, wishing it would snow. We were just bored of no snow and boiling hot, or very muddy weather. Here, before school, I want to go in because of the cold; there, I wanted to go in because of the heat. It was very fun in Israel. I wish I was there now.