

OPINION PAGES

Our VIEW

Contribute a solution

Help eliminate hunger on World Food Day

This week the Earth's population topped 6 billion. That means there are now 6 billion mouths to feed worldwide, many of which continue to go hungry.

While billions of people in this country and abroad fight starvation, university students complain that the line at Burger King is too long.

Hunger and starvation have been problems since the origin of humanity.

“*There is no reason why parents should go hungry to feed their children.*”

But as our numbers grow, the problem only gets worse.

In the heart of the most opulent and omniscient country of the world, we should combat hunger, and today is the perfect day to start. Today is World Food Day.

This is one problem where everyone can contribute to a solution.

Events on campus today and tomorrow highlight the uncertain future of farming and dangers to the world food supply through speakers, displays and live music.

The 16th annual event is designed to inform students about the challenges to the world food supply and what the United Nations is doing to protect it.

But we can all work to combat hunger. There is no reason why American farmers should struggle to put food on only their plates. There is no reason why parents should go hungry to feed their children.

There is simply no reason people should go hungry.

Farmers struggle with low prices because there is too much grain already in storage while in other countries, people must survive on a few handfuls of grain.

But before taking on the world, you must deal with what is right before you.

Get involved on campus, in the community or elsewhere. The benefits you reap will outpace your efforts tenfold.

And it all starts simply.

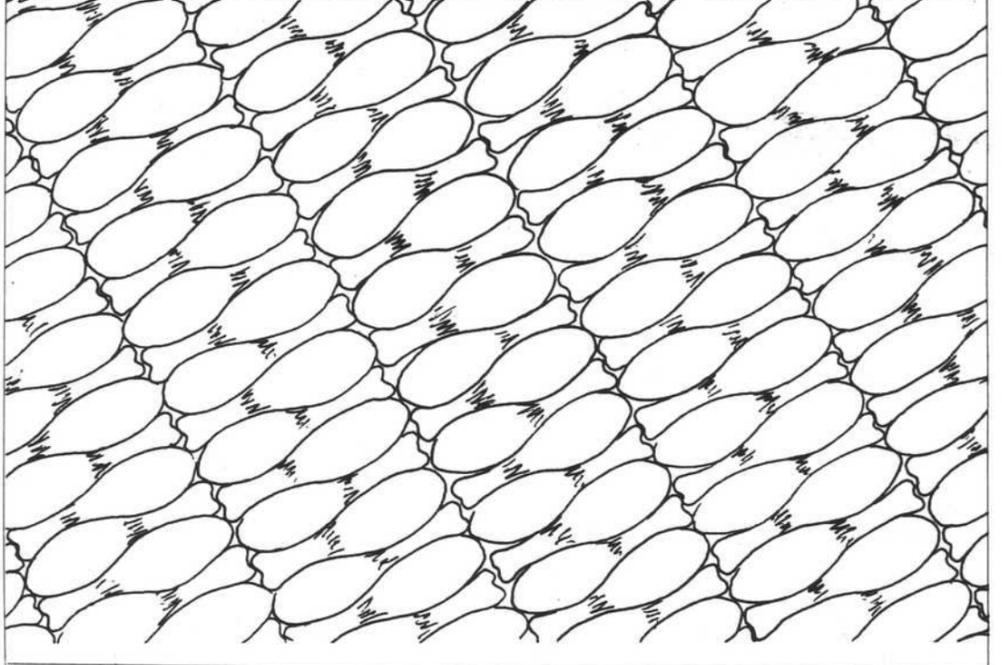
Join an organization dedicated to eliminating hunger, volunteer at a soup kitchen or simply extend an act of kindness to someone less fortunate.

It doesn't take much, but it does matter. So quit complaining about the quality of your happy meal and contribute something to the solution.

Obermeyer's VIEW

FIND OUT WHO PAID FOR TOM GREEN!

STARE AT THE PICTURE OR HOLD YOUR NOSE UP TO IT AND MOVE IT AWAY AND TRY TO DISCOVER WHO IS RESPONSIBLE!!



Playing it by ear

Traveling in Africa does not include rigid itinerary



My three week trip across Africa, beginning on the Indian Ocean Coast and moving southwest, maintained its spontaneous, erratic flow until the day I returned to school in Dar es Salaam.

Unlike the United States, Africa has not yet seen massive industrialization and infrastructure developments (for better or for worse).

Therefore, travel and transport on the continent do not always follow a predetermined, mechanized and predictable route.

You have to adapt as you go.

When we arrived in Lusaka after our adventurous train ride, we didn't know where we were going to go next, nor how we were going to do it.

We did know, however, that in every country in the world, until you have adapted to the country's linguistic and cultural norms necessary to integrate, there is always an elite enclave of expatriates (people residing in a foreign country) from a culture not too different from your own.

They range from masochistic shoestring backpackers living on \$30 a week to old-farty millionaires exploiting an emerging market by day and the local prostitutes by night.

They are a good safety net to fall back on for information on how to do what, at least until you feel comfortable in your new setting.

After we got the relevant information from the ex-pats that we needed, we quickly left their fortified encampment and headed out toward the Southern Atlantic.

The first thing you have to do to be successful traveling in third-world countries is put away your watch. In fact, you're better off selling it or giving it away in exchange for a favor at some point than showing off

the wealth it represents.

As a general rule, things happen when they happen, so don't be let down when the schedule says the bus leaves at 8 a.m., and it's 8:05 a.m. and the bus is still empty.

What time does the bus leave?

The bus leaves when it leaves. Things happen when they happen, but not because it is "time" for it to happen.

Mostly, the bus or ferry or even a small airplane will leave when it is full, and not until then, in order to maximize profits.

Never pay the bus fare until the bus is well on its way. If I had a dollar for every time I paid for a phantom bus that was never there, never left or never started, aye! Well, I'd have a lot of money.

We arrived at the bus station quite early and found our bus to Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe. By noon, we were on our way, bumpily rocking down a gravel road at a modest 40 mph.

The bus stopped at an occasional village along the road for a bathroom break or to pick up and drop off others. Luckily for us, this bus only broke down one time on our six-hour ride.

Victoria Falls was spectacular. The tourist industry that developed around the town, catering to that old-farty millionaire crowd, was disgusting and humiliating to everyone involved with it.

In the middle of south central Africa, there was the "Big T-Texas Steak House," with the Zimbabwean waiters and waitresses in full Roy Rogers 10-gallon hats, cowboy boots, spurs, chaps and Garth Brooks in the background.

The place had a hickish appeal, competing with the movie "Deliverance" or a Texas State Fair, spoiled only by a thick African accent from the host.

That wacky town, artificially spawned by some anachronistic investor, almost destroyed the magnificence the falls generated.

Hypocritically, we couldn't resist a medium deep dish from the local Pizza Hut or a giant sundae from the British-imported "Wimpy's." It was a

much anticipated treat after not having any dairy products for five months.

The next day, we visited the falls again and noticed some locals active on the banks of the river. As we intuitively joined them, we found a rocky path across the upper base of the falls.

Foreseeing a remote and emancipating view ahead of us if we could just bounce across the rushing river, we staggered through the water until we reached a natural pool perched on the face of the falls.

Being as stupid and short-sighted as we were, we went for a swim on the edge of the waterfall in a natural pool that formed right before the water fell (and perhaps us as well) 112 meters to the green abyss below.

When we were ready to leave Victoria Falls, instead of plotting a course and waiting for the right transport, we took the most convenient bus to our next destination, which fate determined to be the Caprivi Strip in Namibia.

The bus didn't take us into the town, but we did meet some Peace Corps backpackers who we temporarily teamed with to pay for a taxi.

They told us that to continue traveling in Namibia, our best bet would be to hitchhike, as the buses were sporadic and relatively expensive.

Namibia was our first encounter with white Africans, the Afrikaners (Boers). We were told they were a safe bet to pick up a white tourist for a cheap ride.

The next day, at 10 a.m., we planted ourselves in the official "pick-up" spot where we were told they would come by and give us a ride. After five hours of baking in the Kalahari sun, we were picked up by a Boer trucker.

We rode with him for 18 hours, ate fresh gemsbok at a travel lodge and then slept in a tent that night outside under the sparkling desert stars, dozing off to the sounds of a remote coyote and some chirping crickets.

The next day, we arrived in the capital, which would be the climax of our journey.

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