



Walking the Spanish Countryside.

## New Madrid Program Launched

By BOB GRIFFO

A semester in Madrid program is being offered in the spring of 1977 for students with little or no background in the Spanish language. All the courses will be taught in English.

"Madrid, a city of three million inhabitants, is the geographical and cultural center of Spain. It is a beautiful and sophisticated city with a wide range of cultural and social amenities." This new SLU program takes advantage of the

many benefits of studying in Madrid. Students will live with Spanish families, one or two students per family, and experience the close ties that Spanish families are proud for. Academically, participants will take an art class in the famous Prado Museum. Also two courses of Spanish language are provided (where else can one learn this true Castilian Spanish) on the other hand a sociology course entails a special student project concerned with social agencies (schools, hospital and day care

centers). This course which deals with contemporary problems in Spanish society allows American students to observe and help in social action agencies which will certainly benefit both the students of the Spanish people.

The comprehensive fee of the program is comparable to the co-campus expenses and include the cost of airfare, group excursions, and cultural activities. More information may be obtained from the Department of Modern Languages and Literatures in Richardson Hall.

## A Year In Spain

By LEIGH LANNING

"Aviaco flight 292 for Madrid, Spain is now boarding."... so began an interesting year abroad.

The events leading up to that moment actually began the October before when students who had already been in Spain spoke at a series of meetings. These meetings primarily covered travels, info on Spanish families and academics. Applications were turned in Feb 15 processed, and then those accepted in March attended meetings to orient them to the Spanish way of life. Questionnaires were passed out to match each student with a family, and information about various cities was passed out. Late in August our group flew to Madrid and went immediately to Salamanca for a week's orientation. This enabled us to begin speaking and hearing the language, as well as, make the switch into the Spanish culture.

A week after arrival we went back to Madrid to meet our families. The families are carefully selected and encompass a wide variety of Spanish society. Most are very interesting and amiable people, and try hard to make you feel a part of the family.

During the year the group goes on about six excursions. These are decided on by each year's program participants and include Segovia, Valencia and other interesting places. Various families accompany the group, at one time or another throughout the year.

Classes are held at the Universidad Complutense, at the Facultad de Filosofia y Letras. Several outstanding professors are on the staff chosen to teach the American Programs. There is a wide variety of classes offered, therefore not limiting the program to Spanish majors. The work load wasn't excessive, but there is a greater need to keep up with daily assignments. Many students take the travel opportunities open to them during the year, since there is ample opportunity to travel.

Although many people feel that going abroad for a year is too long a time to be away, there are many advantages to it. I think the other people that were in my program will agree that you gain an in depth understanding of the Spanish people by having lived there for a year. This is due partly to the fact that the language is not an obstacle during the second semester and communication opens up. Aside from all that you learn about the culture, each individual learns a lot about himself. A sense of responsibility is obtained simply because you are on your own. That old group of friends is no longer around. Each person grows up and learns to establish himself in a new environment.

Last but not least, by the middle of the year the language suddenly becomes easier, you can understand and be understood almost fully, that's a great feeling. It was a challenge to go away, but a very interesting and good experience, one that I would recommend.

## Nairobi Offers Vast Contrasts

By PEGGY MOORHEAD AND TRACEY MCNAMARA

Have cries of "Jambo, rafiki" been ringing in your ears in recent weeks? Don't despair, the Language Department has not introduced another tongue to plague the Saints. Rather, the spread of the bizarre dialect can be attributed to the return of SLU's Nairobi semester participants.

St. Lawrence has long been renowned for its overseas study programs. With the implementation of the Nairobi semester, SLU has indeed expanded the realm of educational opportunity. Students generally opt for foreign study because it provides exposure to unfamiliar cultures. For those who are seeking more than their share of adventure, and are willing to risk culture shock, East Africa would more than measure up to expectations. Kenya is often referred to as the "Land of Contrasts" and deservedly so. Its potpourri of land, people, and lifestyles contribute to its intrigue.

The Nairobi program differs from those previously established. Due to varying opportunities and situations, each semester differs from the next. Having recently returned from Kenya ourselves, we can only record our experiences though various factors within the program will always remain the same. The semester is designed to maximize a student's interaction with Kenyan culture. Upon our arrival, the naive group was subjected to a goat roast, after which we were thrust into the

unknown. Students were scattered among numerous villages. Accommodations ranged from cramped mud huts to luxurious one room tin shanties (well, a bit exaggerated perhaps!). For three days students immersed themselves in the daily activities of rural living — an opportunity a "tourist" might not relish. (And which even some of us didn't appreciate except with hindsight!).

Having survived a full dosage of culture shock, the group was more than receptive to the comforts of the Safariland Hotel, in the center of Nairobi. After a brief orientation period, we commenced classes and students began investigating a unique aspect of the program, internships. This facet of the curriculum enabled the student to pursue and actively participate in a chosen field. The diversity in internships was striking: whether discovering oneself in the Kenyan bush in the company of a physical therapist and a witch-doctor, or pursuing an interest in law by attending trials with a Kenyan attorney, most students found their internships highly rewarding.

Students gradually filtered out of the Safariland into their city homestays for a month's duration. During this time, everyone found themselves engravated by the hospitality of their Kenyan hosts. We valued this contact and discovered that the establishment of a close rapport with our families led to a deeper insight into Kenyan culture.

While much is to be gained through classes, internships and

homestays, nothing can parallel travel as a learning experience. Whether this entails hitching on your own or participating in a group trip i.e., Mount Kilimanjaro, one is continually confronted with novel situations and unforeseen problems. (See below!). Gaining the ability to cope with the unpredictable is perhaps one of the more vital attributes a student can acquire through travel. As Dr. French so often repeated, "flexibility" is the password for a memorable semester.

Kenya's Believe it Or Not's

—Kenya's version of Montezuma's Revenge, the Kikuyu Quickstep (try that without toilet paper!).

—Ethiopian Airlines, otherwise known as "Sleezy Breezes"

—Masses of "ugali", a national dish resembling Play-Dough.

—Being told, while on safari, to head for the nearest tree if you see a water buffalo but be sure to check the branches first for leopards!

—Being picked up by a member of Parliament while hitching.

—Bribing traffic cops with bananas.

—Bargaining: A battle of wits between buyer and seller (or; how to convince them a Mickey Mouse shirt is worth a string of amber beads).

—Adjusting to the cyclical Kenyan concept of time while waiting for that date who is late again.

—Encountering baboons and elephants while hitching to Mombasa.

—Slumbering on a moonlit beach along the Indian Ocean while a monkey rips off your gear.

