A Letter from Spain...

By Elaine Repogle

Greetings from Spain. I thought of writing “from Sunny Spain,” but seeing as it’s rained practically the whole time we’ve been in Madrid, I didn’t think it was appropriate.

The Earlham group is doing well. Aside from classes (grammar, conversation, and art history), we’ve been travelling as a group every weekend to nearby cities. We recently spent four days in southern Spain—in Granada and Cordoba—and tried vainly to learn “baile sevillanas,” a dance similar to Flamenco. We’ve come to the conclusion that it takes more than one evening to learn the dance.

We’ve been quite disciplined in speaking Spanish all the time, enough so that when we write home in English we have to laugh at the awkwardness of our grammar.

Madrid is a great city, with lots to do. So much, in fact, that we’ve all waited until the evening to learn the dance.

We’ve been quite disciplined in speaking Spanish all the time, enough so that when we write home in English we have to laugh at the awkwardness of our grammar.

Miller Farm offers students a firsthand look at agricultural life

By Christopher Parker

Miller Farm and the associated Ag Hall are two of Earlham’s most misunderstood features.

Miller Farm is a working farm with goats and chickens (they are not raised for meat) and a full garden. It functions as a student activity and for some students an off campus house.

According to Bob Kehoe, the Agriculture Program convener, “During the week people [living on Miller Farm] have chores like feeding the animals, getting eggs, composting, making bread, house cleaning, getting wood.” The farmhouse holds eight people along with four cats (because of a past mice problem, Miller Farm is the only off-campus house that is officially allowed to have cats).

Ag Hall is the only Living/Learning hall on campus not devoted to Humanities. It is designed for people who are interested in the Ag Program. Ag Hall residents are supposed to participate in Saturday “farm days” (attendance is not always as regular as ideals would dictate).

These farm days, which are open to all Earlham students (and quite a number of non-Ag Hall people do come) occur on Saturday mornings from around 10:30 to a homemade lunch around 1:30.

Farm day activities consist of chores around the farm that range from big projects to routine maintenance that always has to be done.

The farm got its start relatively recently. In 1976 Bill Copernhagen, with the help of Tony Bing, built, as an exercise in self-sufficiency, a Mongolian Yurt (a portable building made of wood).

Building on the lessons involved in this project, students applied to the college for a garden.

This also grew, and in 1975 some of the same students involved applied to Earlham to start a farm project. The farm was established in the fall of 1975 and interest grew still more.

In 1976 moves were made to start a living/learning agriculture academic program.

Things took off when a grant for $163,000 was received from the W.K. Kellogg Corporation for the purpose of generating agriculture courses, and to establish Agriculture as an Earlham program.

During this time there was a lot of faculty involvement. Ag Hall was started in 1977 in Barrett basement, and an Ag office was established on the fourth floor of Dennis (where it still is today). A classroom was used on the fourth floor as well.

Ten courses were modified for an agricultural emphasis, including Economic Politics, Ecological Biology and Food Ethics. The main living/learning agriculture class was taught until 1979.

The grant ended in 1981, and with it the academic side of Earlham Farm Project. The farm became just a student activity.

In 1982 Introduction to Agriculture was taught by Larry Fisher, and unsuccessful attempts to organize an Agricultural Ecology course were made.

After this, interest waned. According to Kehoe, “Things were just kind of coasting along. Miller Farm was shaky, and Ag Hall’s future was in question. Only a couple of people were really interested.”