



Maria Villafranca shows off the hand-carved table which her family sent to the Irwin family at Christmas time. The table was carved from a single piece of wood. She is holding a doll which is wearing a traditional native costume, an outfit that is seen only on special occasions or festivals.

Maria Villafranca

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too difficult. She studied five years of English in school in Honduras and she spoke some English before coming to this country.

Maria is active in Hempfield school activities, including the AFS club. According to Fay Klinefelter, 2928 Fleetwood Dr., Lancaster, club president, its purpose is "to make foreign exchange students feel at home." Miss Karen Jessen, club advisor, said they sponsor fund-raising activities such as a chicken barbecue, a sub sale and bake sales. The money is used both to help pay expenses of a foreign student and also for students from Hempfield who may be selected to go abroad. Miss Jessen said, "We also want to inform others about the AFS program."

A special club project this year is a weekend in March when all 10 AFS students in the county will be invited to participate in a school assembly and attend an ice hockey game in Hershey.

In Honduras, Maria said they do not have as many school activities as we have. If you want to learn to cook and sew for instance, it will be taught through the schools, but students have to attend special Saturday classes.

Maria attends 4-H functions with her host family, although she wasn't familiar with 4-H clubs before coming here. They do have Girl Scouts and Brownies, she said. She also participates in youth work through the Irwins' church, Bethany Presbyterian Church, Lancaster.

Young people in Honduras do not date until they are "about 17, and then mostly in groups," Maria said. Permission to drive a car can be obtained at age 16, but you can't get a license until you are 17.

Drugs are a problem among young people in Honduras, too, but it is illegal to use drugs and Maria said offenders are jailed.

The largest holiday is their Independence Day, September 15. On that day, bands from all the schools parade and compete, and soccer is played. Trophies are awarded by the president of

a joyous time for the Irwin family. All the children were home, and in addition to sharing the holiday with Maria, there was another foreign visitor. A girl friend who graduated from high school in Honduras with Maria and is currently studying in Munich, Germany, came for the holidays and stayed for a month. Christmas in Honduras is celebrated much like in this country, but the most important day is December 24, Maria said.

Maria has two aunts living in the United States, one in Texas and one in Louisiana, and she had visited them before, so this AFS trip is not her first to this country. She said she has also traveled to neighboring countries in Central America and to Mexico, "for vacations with the family."

Maria agreed to give us a recipe from her native Honduras, although she laughingly admitted that she can't cook. There was some good natured joking from "Mom and "Dad" about some Christmas cookies she had promised to bake, but which never materialized.

When Maria returns to Honduras she plays to take some courses at the University of Honduras and work part time. She added with a smile, "I want to get married."

Maria will stay with the Irwin family until July and then will travel to another part of the United States with other AFS students. As is customary with exchange students, she will leave the United States having seen more of it than most citizens.

But sharing a year of family living will surely remain as the most treasured of her year's experiences in this country. The Irwins have given the most

valuable gift possible - they opened their home and shared a part of their lives for a year.

This unique living experience is repeated in thousands of homes around the country each year and is slowly closing the communications gap caused by differences in languages, customs, and cultures. And each time the gap is narrowed we come closer to achieving a lasting peace among peoples of the earth.

Corn Tamales

Out of 10 large ears of corn, you can make 12 to 15 tamales. Scrape kernels off uncooked ears of corn with knife. (Save cobs & inside husks). Place corn in blender a little bit at a time, adding one cup of milk in small amounts. (Add more milk if necessary; the mixture shouldn't be too thin or too thick-about the consistency of cake mix batter.) If you wish, you may strain the blended product to remove skins. Add salt to taste and a pinch of sugar.

Place cobs in bottom of roasting pan and add enough water to cover them. Bring the water to a boil.

Take one or two husks and shape them into a cone, holding them in your hand while you fill them with 2 to 3 tablespoons of the corn mixture. As you make them, place cones on top of cobs in upright position. (The boiling water should not go into husks-use just enough water to cover cobs.) Cover cobs or tamales with two or three left over husks,

then cover roasting pan with its lid. Cook tamales at low temperature on top of range from 45 minutes to 1 hour.

Eat just corn mixture, serving it with sour cream or butter. Maria cautions that amount of milk needed will vary depending on milkiness of corn.

Reminder

A yearly physical checkup is a special safeguard against cancer. The American Cancer Society reminds everyone that it's what you don't know about cancer that can hurt you.

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