

# Mexico City

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home and found him a job as a gardener. Then he went to driver's school and became a chauffeur, so he could finish high school at night.

"And then I took an electricity course," he told McDowell. "So now I have worked three years in electric repairs with a friend. I want to open my own shop in Oaxaca. Margarita now had her own lunchroom. It's nice. And two of our cousins have come to live with her." Success.

### Water Woes Deep

The problems of Mexico City cannot be overestimated. Lacking a river for a water supply, the city has depended on wells and springs. Now the wells are running dry, aggravating the natural subsidence of the land, and the city must pay heavily to pump water in and sewage out over the mountains that surround the city.

City planners conservatively estimate that half of the population lives in "irregular" housing, in which either the title is faulty or

the structure does not comply with code requirements. Traffic snarls the city streets, and 11,000 tons of gaseous waste spews out into the air daily, 70 percent of it from motor vehicles running largely on leaded gasoline.

Poverty is rampant. Thirty percent of the city's families sleep in a single room, and those families average five people. Squatters, known as paracaidistas-parachutists--invade any available vacant land, including hillside caves, and many former rural residents still keep chickens. About 40 percent of the housing units lack adequate sewerage.

Though the people keep coming, the city continues to fight its problems. A deep drainage sewer system is being built; planners hope to reach 85 percent of the city by 1988. An ever-growing subway system now covers 65 miles and hauls more than 4 million passengers a day at the world's cheapest fare—less than a U.S. penny a ride. Computers have begun to aid city planners in figuring out where to put their efforts.

### Volunteer Spirit

Perhaps most important, the city's hordes seem willing to do their part to make it a better place to live. McDowell watched one of many neighborhood organizations of unpaid volunteers at work on a Saturday morning—"housewives, lawyers, shopkeepers, students, accountants—ringing bells and welding brooms to clean up their streets."

"We keep the neighborhood much cleaner this way," a cheery woman told him.

A citywide council of neighborhood groups has been formed, the closest thing to an elected city government Mexico City has ever had. Appointed city officials listen carefully to the requests forwarded by the advisory council.

McDowell tells of a community of shacks at the bottom of a ravine. They were small and jerry-built, but they stood in neat rows and each had a collection of flowers planted in tin cans.

Residents had named the community Esperanza—Hope.



These crafts give some hint to the variety of corn crafts which will be on display during the Shippensburg Corn Festival next weekend. Here, Dot Ocker shows some of her creations.

## Cumberland slates Corn Festival

BY SALLY BAIR  
Staff Correspondent

SHIPPENSBURG — The Cumberland Valley's finest crop will be celebrated for the fourth year at the Corn Festival in Shippensburg. Dates for this annual event are Saturday, August 25 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., and August 26 from noon to 5 p.m.

Downtown Shippensburg streets

will be closed to traffic as the corn festival gets underway. Sponsored by the Shippensburg Heritage and Recreation Preservation (SHARP), there is special emphasis on downtown historic preservation and an appreciation of the architecture. Proceeds from the two-day event are contributed to revitalization in the community.

Corn is king for two days and will be featured in everything from the food that is served to the crafts that are sold. Over 100 craftsmen and antique dealers will offer their wares along the sidewalks.

Dot Ocker is getting into the spirit of things and offering her corn husk crafts for sale for the first time. With the help of her husband Alvin, Dot makes many different corn husk items, from wreaths and flowers to dolls and scarecrows. She said she works

with some of the husk wet and some dry.

To make corn husk crafts, the husk must be gathered in the fall. Dot has an authentic source for the corn husk, getting it directly from her son-in-law Wayne Hall, a dairyman in Shippensburg. She said she gets a supply each fall and stores it, working on it throughout the year, usually incorporating it into holidays, making such diverse items as witches for Halloween and angels for Christmas.

Dot's daughter, Diane and granddaughter Debbie both get involved in the festival too. Dot will have some spice balls and other craft items, but says, "I want to make as much as I can out of corn husk."

Corn foods will include the traditional chicken corn soup, corn on the cob, corn dogs and many other corn treats. A cooked breakfast will be available as well as a chicken barbecue meal.

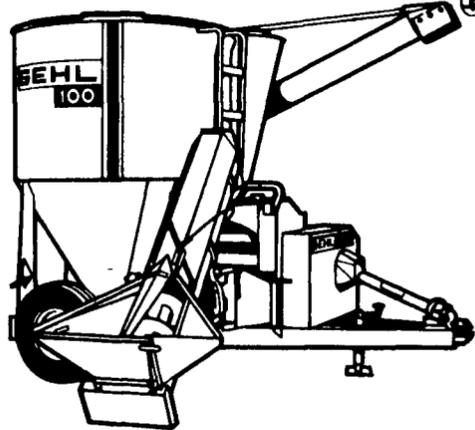
Antique cars will be on display, and there will be wagon rides available along with displays of antique equipment in store windows. A working blacksmith will demonstrate his talent.

A five-mile run will open the festival on Saturday, starting at 8 a.m.

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