Some recent statistics about Rapa Nui: The 3,700 inhabitants have nearly 1,500 houses, 1,800 vehicles, 1,000 televisions, 700 telephones, and 260 computers, 70% of which are connected to the internet. At present there are 12 hotels, plus cabañas and residences; an airport and a port. The latter are the ports of entry for tourists who, in 2004, numbered 34,000.

A Chilean orthodontist, Jaime Briones, sent a letter to the Editor of El Mercurio de Valparaíso to inform readers that he has e-mailed three times to the island’s mayor, Petero Edmunds, and also tried calling him on the telephone, but to no avail. He wanted to stress to the mayor that the island desperately needs a dentist, that Rapanui have to suffer toothaches and knocked-out teeth, or else go to the mainland for dental care. He stated that he, personally, would be happy to volunteer.

El Mercurio de Valparaíso for 21 May 2005

The Rapa Nui Language Academy/Commission. Last December, in the Provincial Governor’s offices, some forty Rapanui assembled to read and accept a tentative draft of bylaws and to formally register their intent to establish a private, non-profit Academia de la Lengua Rapa Nui. Legal approval and recognition by the government are currently being sought. Initially, a provisional acting board of directors was selected, however, the new current board - of which Virginia Hiao is President - was elected for one year. The matter of determining just who will be the 36 permanent Rapanui members of the Academy is still in flux. And some work is needed to better define the language needs and objectives, and to orient the community.

The Academy meets weekly and is beginning to address issues of alphabet, spelling, and the creation of neologisms. During a one-hour long television program in June, a few of the members explained to the community about these issues and about the Academy that is being established. Overall the reaction and participation of the Rapanui population has been favorable. One concern is how to motivate the majority of adults who still lack fluency, and even interest, in reading in the Rapanui language.

Earthquake tremors in the region around Rapa Nui prompted a note in El Mercurio de Valparaíso (June 28, 2005), about strong tremors in the zone around the island, and wondered about the catastrophe of a tsunami that might result from the quakes, and if the Rapanui were prepared for such a disaster. Between June 16 and June 28, there were 13 quakes listed for the region around Easter Island. While they have been of 5.7 or less, there were five quakes on June 23rd alone. They have been occurring at a depth of ten km.

The latest “Explorer’s Log” (Vol. 37, No. 3) 2005, states that John Loret, Robert Hemm, and Marcelo Mendez returned from a “flag expedition” to Easter Island where, along with eleven other members of the Explorer’s Club, they surveyed a ‘newly discovered ahu with two moai...’ They measured and recorded the exposed ahu and moai and surveyed the surrounding areas, taking extensive photographs both “on the ground and from the air”. Nowhere does this item mention where this “newly discovered ahu” is located or how it was photographed from the air. Levitation?

Recent publications


The next is to make the transition back to my resume. The July issue has an extensive article. Soler Hotu, Wiegand Scholarship winner, now attending college in Southern California.

SOLER HOTU, who is attending college in the United States.

WIEGAND SCHOLARSHIP AWARD WINNER, IOAN HAUMOANA SOLER HOTU, who is attending college in the United States with the help of his scholarship award, sent us a brief update on his progress.

I was relatively young, but I had some experience in the field. I originally came to the United States to improve my English skills. I also wanted to gain some experience and improve my résumé. The next is to make the transition back to my island home: I want to give back to my culture what I have learned in America.

Living in California is like a rollercoaster in comparison to the quiet and slow pace of life on Rapa Nui. Despite this, I believe that I have made a successful transition. During these years I have been joined by three more students coming from Rapa Nui in pursuit of their dreams and ambitions. I live with one of them, a cousin of mine; we have known each other since childhood. His name is Ioan Pakarati, an up-and-coming recording artist whose music has become very popular on the island, with a CD released just a couple of years ago. He is studying music and has a scholarship at Brigham Young University, Oahu, starting this fall. The other two young Rapanui are Tongariki Teave, a film major, and Martin Hereveri, an architecture major.

Eventually I hope to transfer to a four-year college and finish my education. I hope to begin classes next spring at either California State University at Long Beach or Dominguez Hills. Both have transfers with my school and are within a 15-mile drive. The drawback is the high tuition and expenses (around $20,000 yearly, which is the rate set for international students). As an alternative, I might consider a transfer to Brigham Young University, but it is not my priority at this time.

Hopefully, after school is finished, I will take a year or so to work in the field and gain some experience and improve my résumé. The next is to make the transition back to my island home: I want to give back to my culture what I have learned in America.