

Around the World

with

Stan Delaplaine

Paradise Islands, Bahamas—it will be a swinging New Year's Eve here this year. First for Paradise Island Hotel and Villas, newest of the West Indies resorts. The hotel has just opened: 500 balconied rooms and private villas; white sand beaches; and a bridge to Nassau town and the duty-free shopping.

This is a dressy, Miami Beachish affair. Luxury oozes from the place—it should, it cost \$15 million. The huge lobby is in dark woods with area rugs of bright, hot Caribbean reds, raspberry, and orange. It is hung with chandeliers of massive amber glass.

It's built in a Y-shape. Three wings springing from the central complex. All rooms look on the blue water. Nine stories built in the breezeway, layer cake look that fits the tropics.

The rooms are in limes and blues with antiqued white bamboo furniture. Drapes are in bright floral patterns, and there's a modernistic painting on the wall.

THEY TRAINED 700 local Bahamians for several months. Result: the service is first-rate. There's an 18-hole golf course, and there'll be gambling, they say. Management by Loew's Hotels who run the Mark Hopkins in San Francisco, the Ambassadors in Chicago, the Regency and Americana in New York.

Not inexpensive. (But it isn't a youth hostel either.) Single without meals is \$35 to \$59 in winter; doubles \$40 to \$64. With breakfast and lunch add about \$8 per person.

"Is there any way for two teen-age boys to travel anywhere by working their way? We can scuba dive and are healthy."

I ran into two boys in the British Virgins who were diving for lobster-size crayfish and selling them to the resort hotels. They were camped on a little uninhabited island and using a kayak.

How do you get there? Well, I run into young people all the time who hitch rides on small boats whose owners are tramping around the world. You work and you pay a little for your food. You work ashore in a port town until you get enough money. At the same time, hang around the yacht harbors. Some crew man will have to get off and work awhile. You might be able to trade your job for his berth.

I should tell you that most of these kids are working somewhat illegally. That is, they have no work permits in these foreign ports. They take the desperation jobs—the restaurant that can't get a dishwasher. Things like that.

The boys in the British Virgins had no permits. And it was just a question of time until one of the local fishermen turned them in and they would be tossed out. But I see a lot of boys traveling on short money. And that's the way they do it.

"Can we drive to Guatemala City?"

Yes. Mexico City south until you turn toward the West Coast on the road that crosses the border at Tapachula. The direct road through the El Tapon pass is always in danger of slides. Duck around it.

"Can we yet get good gasoline in Mexico? And is it available always?"

The new P-100 is high-test and no ping. Used to be that whole highways would run out of gas, but in recent years I've always been able to get some gas. I've run into stations that were out of P-100 though. If so, get Gasolmex—the next best.

A Thousand and One Travelers' Tales: The most enthusiastic reports from readers are coming from the South Pacific, Australia and New Zealand are not tourist countries. The islands are still calm and warm and not cluttered up with a thousand people on the beach. Air fares are down to a reasonable amount.

"Don't buy and depend on

YMCA World Service Gets People Together

This year, the Torrance Family YMCA has contributed \$1,750 for World Service so that Ys all over the world may continue to bring people together, according to Joe Wilcox, executive director of the local branch.

The YWCA in Nazareth, Israel, for example, is one of

the few places in the city where Arabs and Jews can work and play together, Wilcox said.

The Nazareth YMCA also provides its affiliates with a normal atmosphere in the midst of a tense international situation.

Nazareth, Wilcox said, is predominately Arab but many Jewish families live in surrounding areas. At the Y, they compete together in sports, share club activities, serve as volunteer leaders, and enjoy the fun of day camp.

For Arab girls, brought up in the tradition that "women's place is in the home," the Nazareth YMCA has opened up a new world. Through the Y, many of them have participated in public for the first time in sports, plays, and club programs.

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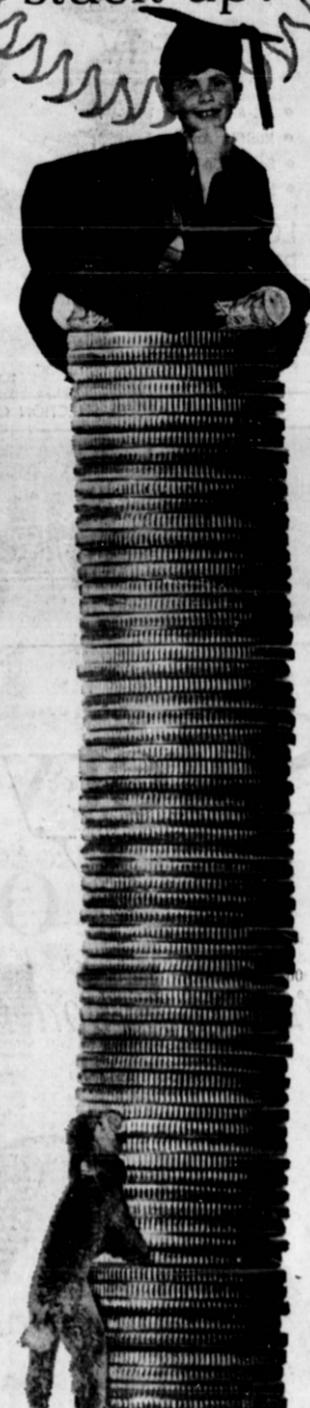
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