



Living with the Pinatubo Aetas: A Peace Corps Philippines Journal

By Richard C Schneider

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As a Peace Corps Volunteer (PCV), Richard Schneider was assigned in the remote mountain village of Villar to increase rice yield. Immersed in the Pinatubo Aetas' culture for two years, Rich expected to haul water from a spring, sleep in a Nipa hut, read by kerosene lantern, and hike long distances. What he didn't expect to find was a people who would share what little they had with a tall, well-intentioned Volunteer before taking care of themselves. Personal possessions inside a home were safe from human touch, but beware the unexpected critter intrusion. He learned to eat beetle larvae, sleep under a mosquito net, stay away from insurgent activity, and speak Tagalog. After reading this journal, the reader will better understand the daily life of a PCV, customs of Filipinos, and, more specifically, traditions of the indigenous Pinatubo Aetas.

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About the Author

After receiving a master's degree in park planning from Michigan State University, Rich served a second tour of duty as a Peace Corps Volunteer working in a program that he helped establish. He worked with seven other PCVs, the Philippine Department of Natural Resources (Parks and Wildlife Office), and the Development Academy of the Philippines on the development of an international-style national park system for the country. His academic and park-management experience led directly to a 34-year career as a manager for the U.S. National Park Service. Rich has written published articles for the Peace Corps, National Park Service, and the Department of the Interior. He also coauthored a book titled "Buildings...The Gift That Keeps on Taking."

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