

Subj: Comes the official word  
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From: expandex@hotmail.com  
To: dsb@burgoyne.com, drb7@email.byu.edu, rbw9@email.byu.com, drhnovatek@aol.com, HHallChem@aol.com, IRHall@aol.com, danithew@hotmail.com, rbw9@email.byu.edu, HTHallJr@aol.com, helenv@itsnet.com, Pasuli@aol.com, langbert@hotmail.com, NeilFam@ix.netcom.com, chowdertime@hotmail.com, en5@email.byu.edu, etn2@email.byu.edu, jww43@email.byu.edu, magistrate44@prodigy.net, JNeil1029@aol.com, hw56@email.byu.edu, Nathan44@aol.com, Bwie@hevanet.com, sarahweight@hotmail.com, GoghHyde@aol.com, markhall@springsips.com, michael.hall@usu.edu, SHall@pol.org, shall57233@aol.com, Marriott.Photography@worldnet.att.net, Wheelerd@uclink4.berkeley.edu, maryandpeter@juno.com, HTHall@math.berkeley.edu, kathryn@gr.ihc.com, katex@xmission.com

Lili was notified today that her visa will be for New Caledonia.

Woo-hoo!

Nouvelle Caledonia is about 250 miles long and 30 miles wide, with a ridge of mountains down the center, two of the mountains mile-high. One percent of the land is arable. A third of the world's supply of pure nickel ore comes from this island-- no wonder France is happy to maintain it as a territory. The Melanesians would prefer independence, but they constitute just 2/5 of the population. The birthrate is high (yay!). Most of the island are Christian, and most of those are Roman Catholic, but there are many Protestants too; a plethora of other religions are also present, including Hindu and Muslim. French is the official language, but about 30 languages are spoken.

I don't know how many of you knew that Lili has had a great interest in

tropical plants and has germinated several such from seed (she has a "Mother Tree" about six feet tall growing in her bedroom). Given this interest of hers you can imagine her reaction to learning today that 3/4 of the plants are unique to the island!

That's today's news and I am outta here!

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From: "Elizabeth \ (Family\ ) Hall" <expandex@hotmail.com>

To: dsb@burgoyne.com, drb7@email.byu.edu, rbw9@email.byu.com, drhnovatek@aol.com, HHallChem@aol.com, IRHall@aol.com, danithew@hotmail.com, rbw9@email.byu.edu, HTHallJr@aol.com, helenv@itsnet.com, Pasuli@aol.com, langbert@hotmail.com, NeilFam@ix.netcom.com, chowdertime@hotmail.com, en5@email.byu.edu, etn2@email.byu.edu, jww43@email.byu.edu, magistrate44@prodigy.net, JNeil1029@aol.com, hw56@email.byu.edu, Nathan44@aol.com, Bwie@hevanet.com, sarahweight@hotmail.com, GoghHyde@aol.com, markhall@springsips.com, michael.hall@usu.edu, SHall@pol.org, shall57233@aol.com, Marriott.Photography@worldnet.att.net, Wheelerd@uclink4.berkeley.edu, maryandpeter@juno.com,

HTHall@math.berkeley.edu, kathryn@gr.ihc.com, katex@xmission.com

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