

Boulder, Colo.

Daily Camera

MONDAY  
December 23, 1996

# ENVIRONMENT

## VITAL SIGNS



REED GLENN

## An amateur's travel guide to the planet

**O**n vacations and between jobs as a Washington Post graphics editor and Baltimore Sun assistant financial editor, Jeannette Belliveau spent 10 years globe trotting to such places as Madagascar, Borneo, Polynesia, Thailand, Java and Bali. She was awarded a professional journalist fellowship with an Asian focus and spent two months-plus in China and Japan.

The product of her travel experiences is the newly released "An Amateur's Guide to the Planet: Twelve Adventure Journeys and Lessons for the Contemporary United States." It is interestingly different and not the ordinary travel guide book.

Addressing the "Age of Adventure Travel," Belliveau is trying to help travelers understand what they are seeing in the exotic destinations that have recently become so accessible. She feels that U.S. education fails to provide backgrounds for people to grasp the significance of what they are seeing in places like China, Kenya and Amazonia — so different from our own culture.

The book is well-balanced between light and heavy reading: explaining complex environmental problems in particular areas, while rating the world's best sailing areas from the Sea of Cortes to Greece and Tonga. With her expertise in data analysis, graphics and statistics, Belliveau provides facts and figures not ordinarily found in guidebooks, like heights of pyramids: Coba (Mexico) 10 stories, Tikal (Guatemala) 21 stories — tallest Indian building, Western Hemisphere — and the Great Pyramid of Cheops (Egypt) 48 stories — tallest pyramid in the world.

Although this book is for serious travelers who want to understand cultures and concepts, it's written in an entertaining, conversational style, sprinkled with funny quotes from Belliveau's plentiful and witty traveling companions. The 272-page, large-format book with black and white photos is available for \$19.95 directly from the publisher (toll free) (888) 817-9522 or through the Adventurous Traveler Bookstore at (800) 282-3963. It will soon be available locally. A portion of the proceeds from the book supports a black lemur named Polydorus as part of the Adopt-A-Lemur Program at Duke University.