

May 2013

General Update

May has been another busy month for us. Our new term of classes with local children got underway in earnest and is going well. Our multimedia project has started with the completion of the story that we are using and we have now started filming and other content making.

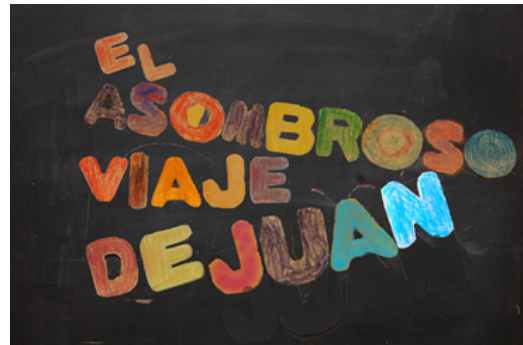
3 volunteers returned to the Fundacion, Gabrielle from 4 weeks working as a medical volunteer in Wonken and Kim and Ashley from 4 weeks of travelling, mostly spent in Colombia. Read more about all of these things and a few others here!

Work at the Foundation

Multi Media Project

We've talked about this for quite some time, now it is actually happening! We have written a great story to use for the project 'El Asombroso Viaje de Juan'. It is about a child's dream which takes him to a variety of places meeting a different animals on the way. The children who attend our classes love the story and are helping us with drawing and acting which will be used to make the film. The story is in three parts and we hope to have completed the first part of it by the middle of July when this term ends.

We are all learning on this project so the first steps are taking time but it gives us a new way of working with children which is a great opportunity for them and us.



Classes at our school

This term we are running three classes at our school as normal but this time we have mixed up children from the various communities to get a better grouping of ages and abilities at each session. It seems to be working well and the children are making new friends. We are teaching mathematics, English and geography and our lessons are themed around our 'El Asombroso Viaje de Juan' story so that we can link the work in the classes to the multimedia project. In total we are working with about 45 children most of whom have attended our classes before but also quite a few new ones. In geography we have been teaching photographic skills which many of the children are really interested in and we have some good photos taken by them.

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This term we are also reviewing the success of our classes more formally. After each session we evaluate how the lessons went and how each child responded to them. We plan to use this information to be able to write a short end of term report for each child to take home. It also helps new volunteers to learn a little about each child and also to plan future lessons.



Wonken – a special experience

Wonken is a remote indigenous community of around 800 people dispersed across a large area. Gabrielle, one of our longer term volunteers, who is planning to train to be a midwife, has just returned from a 4 week placement working with the local medical staff and a group of trainee doctors working as interns at Wonken. Whilst there, Gabrielle experienced three births and one of the mothers had walked for 8 hours to reach the clinic to give birth. Gabrielle will be writing up a longer report about her experiences and we will publish this on our website.

Escuela El Salto

We used to have a class from this school visiting us once a week for our classes but this term they could not commit to this due to teacher timetable pressure. However they still really want to work with us on an ad hoc basis. So this month we visited a class at this lovely school to take some photos for the multimedia project. As part of this Cristobal (our co-ordinator) gave a visual arts lesson which really held the childrens' attention and we were impressed about how much they knew about art and artists. As well as teaching the children something new we took great photos for our film.



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Travels in South America

Kim and Ashley have also returned from 4 weeks away from the Foundation which they mostly spent at Santa Marta in Colombia, a beautiful colonial city with great beaches. They have come back with some good stories particularly about their tricky transfers between the Venezuelan and Colombian borders!

There are so many interesting and beautiful places to visit both within Venezuela and in the neighboring countries so stepping out of volunteering for a few days or weeks is something that we really encourage as it enriches the overall experience of volunteering and puts into practice our improving Spanish.

Our horses

Our horses also look happier now that Kim and Ashley have returned! They are now receiving regular washes, grooming and exercising. Fortunately over the next few months we have a number of horse loving volunteers arriving so the future is looking good for them.



The next few months ...

June, July and August will see a lot of new volunteers which is great. Our numbers will rise to around 12. Cristobal is planning the program and we want to run a 'summer camp' for local children during their school holidays. We have lots of creative ideas in the making so it should be a fun time!

Fundraising for Eilin Torrealba – how's it going ?

Hopefully you will remember our fundraising campaign to help Eilin who is a 7 year old girl who attends our classes. Eilin has a serious disability and urgently needs a back operation and the local children's hospital has agreed to fund this BUT her family needs to raise the money for the materials needed to complete the operation.

Our fundraising target is \$5000, so far we have raised around \$1000 mostly as a result of a push to raise money in a restaurant owned by Riley's (one of our volunteers) parents in Canada. We would like to say thank you to all those who have made a donation BUT we really need more people to do the same.

Donations of any size are hugely helpful to make this little girl's life better. Our Pay Point account makes it easy to donate.

www.peacevillages.org/FundraisingEilin.html