

March 2014

General Update

We have had an incredibly busy month here at the foundation. Volunteers have been working hard after two new programmes were introduced. It's not only specific volunteers who are working on the programmes they started but the support they receive from others that keeps everyone on their toes.

We're also pleased that we finally have found workers to complete the maintenance on the pool so we'll be back to throwing each other in in no time.

Kavanayen

Emilia and Helena returned from Kavanayen where they have stayed through March as part of the medical programme. Working alongside nurse Aurelia, who is Pemon, they helped serve the community in everyday medical needs such as administering antibiotics and medicines for colds and infections to aiding with more special occasions such as births.

The past month has been more hectic than usual with a large push for vaccinations.

Children arrive in the the hospital most days to receive flu, polio and tetanus vaccinations.

Helena described the ups and downs of past month.

"The children are quite difficult sometimes, no one likes to be injected but the kids squirm and move around a lot and then they often cry."

"It's been really nice to have another volunteer with me. We've had some dance parties and the company is really good."

Football classes

Football fanatic Manuel has decided that kickabouts with volunteers is not enough and that he wants to play on a more regular basis so created a programme to train teenagers in town. Setting up a football program is not something entirely new for him as during a previous volunteer experience working in Rwanda began a programme with football for older teenagers, playing five days a week for three hours, with regular matches.

Playing against proper opposition is something Manuel hopes to do with this group to as a way to motivate them and introduce teamwork.



A big problem is finding working materials and equipment, a broken goal and no nets have made practices tricky but Erve and Suzy stepped in to the rescue. After finding a design on the internet they twisted and tied diamond shapes for several days with nylon string making a fully working net.

Football practices can now be spent on the pitch, not chasing the ball every 5 minutes.

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English Classes

Tatiana has begun been teaching English to residents of Santa Elena which is another of the new programmes started in March. The classes take place twice weekly during the evenings evenings at Ezequiel Zamora , one of many Casa Communal's in town. They are open to students of all ages and cover common phrases such as greetings to basic verbs and pronunciation. Most of the students so far have been beginners but new students are coming each week as word of mouth spreads.



Farewells and Hellos

This month we welcomed Emilia (Australia) who is working on the medical programme in Kavanayen with Helena.

Sadly it's time to say goodbye to Erve, who is returning to Switzerland, thank you for all your excellent work.

A short update on the current political situation

The political turmoil in Venezuela has neither improved nor worsened over the past few weeks. Leopoldo Lopez and other main opposition leaders have been arrested and remain in custody to this day. Furthermore, diplomats from the U.S. and Panama are temporarily send back. This is a direct response to pressure by the governments of the U.S and Panama to immediately stop the ongoing violence.

The government of president Maduro regards criticism as interference in Venezuela's internal affairs, and thereby as a threat of its state sovereignty, which partially explains why diplomatic relations have suffered.

Life in Santa Elena remains completely unaffected by the political situation in Caracas and other major Venezuelan cities. Some products are temporarily missing from the supermarket shelf (such as those imported through Panama), but other than that life is calm and peaceful. While we do feel the need to inform you on contemporary Venezuelan politics, it can only be stressed that there is nothing to worry about when coming to and staying in Santa Elena.

Get in touch

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