

## Stay up to date with all the news at Yanapuma!

A bimonthly newsletter

Issue No. 15: Jan-Feb 2010

### Introduction

The first two months of 2010 have been extremely hectic for all of us at Yanapuma – in the Spanish school, the volunteer department, and in the foundation itself. Our aim for the school this year is to average 20 students per week, a target we exceeded in the first two months, in part with the help of a group of 14 students from Sweden who studied with us for one week during which their presence boosted numbers up to a grand total of 34 students! It was good to see that our administrative system and available space coped adequately with this number, as that is where we aim to get to one day in the not-too-distant future.

Fran and Shanti were kept very busy in the volunteer section with groups from Canada, the US, and the UK, as well as more than 25 individual volunteers taking part in our Volunteer Ecuador program. You can read more about their activities on page 3.

The department of projects immersed itself in the initial stages of the two grants that we are working on in the community of Bua – the Interamerican Foundation grant to improve self-esteem, organizational abilities and leadership in the community,

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as well as to improve nutrition, and the UNDP grant to carry out reforestation and improve cacao production.

Both involve detailed planning and reporting and so the team has been kept busy organizing and initiating the projects simultaneously.

Last minute hitches due to the Consejo Provincial de Santo Domingo partially backing out of their funding commitment have led to further complications, but as of the end of February we are relatively sure that we will be able to rescue the project and push ahead. *Read more on page 2.*



### Annual Report

Yanapuma's annual report for 2009 is now available online from the home pages of either the Spanish school or Foundation websites. The accounting figures are provisional until the end of March by which time we will have finished reviewing the accounts for 2009. You can also read a shortened version in Spanish that was prepared for our teachers and other staff to make them aware of how we function and why Yanapuma exists; information that can easily get lost in the day-to-day bustle of activities in the school.

One of the lessons we have learned recently from the communities we work with as well as from our own teachers is that although we uphold values of transparency and communication, we have not always been successful in putting these into practice, not for lack of motivation, but mostly for lack of time and human resources to devote to these activities. However, we have learned the importance of clear communication all around and are determined to pay closer attention to this area in the future.

### Carnaval!

February 13-16 saw the celebration of Carnaval in Ecuador. In Quito this is an excuse to flee the city and head to the coast for a long weekend. But in smaller towns like Guaranda in the province of Bolivar, carnaval is an excuse for madness and mayhem. A group of our students and volunteers travelled to Guaranda to experience it for themselves . . .



### Videos . . .

The latest Yanapuma video to be uploaded to YouTube features the children of Estero de Plátano. This was made by Belgian volunteer Sophie Pesquidous, a graduate in film studies from video shot by German intern Friederike Hoppe at the end of her stay with Yanapuma in December. The video was made principally for the children of Lochardil Primary School in Inverness, Scotland as part of our plan to promote direct contact between children in developed and developing countries to promote cultural understanding and increase knowledge of the ways that each affects the other despite the distances between them. You can see it here: <http://www.yanapuma.org/en/school/VinMar.php>



## Project News ...

The foundation's attention at the moment is primarily on the two grants that involve our work in Bua:

Work with the **Interamerican Foundation** grant got underway in January. We had already hired **Guadalupe Peralta** to begin to work on issues of self-esteem, leadership, and organizational abilities in Bua. Her contract on this grant runs until August, but we understand that this task will not be over by then, so we are actively looking for ways to fund her continued activity in Bua which will be vital in order to develop sustainability through the assertive participation of community members across all the areas in which we are working.

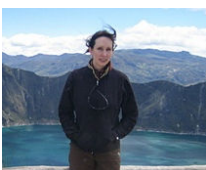
As part of the grant Yanapuma is working with the a Quito-based group "Pimangu", who are carrying out workshops using puppets and theatre techniques. The name is a Tsa'fiki word meaning "breath of air." One of their members, Miguel, has been active in talking with many people in the community and gathering stories and oral accounts that he is writing down.

At the same time as we work on the IAF grant, we have started a reforestation and cacao project through a grant from the UNDP (United Nations Development Program).

This was complicated by the announcement of the Consejo Provincial of Santo Domingo that they did not have the money to fund all that they had originally promised to fund. The Prefecto signed the draft agreement at an event to which they invited TV and radio stations to demonstrate to all their commitment to development for the Tsa'chila and rural communities in Santo Domingo. This back-peddling caused us to lose time in contingency planning and trying to find out exactly who had decided to renege on the deal and whether we could pressure them to stick to their commitment.

It seems there are so many departments within the Consejo Provincial through which funding is processed that it is easy for someone somewhere along the line to simply say no, and that is it. But meetings held directly with the Prefecto have led to the possibility of alternative sources of funding the two promoters who would be responsible for helping families create tree and cacao nurseries in both Bua and San Jacinto del Bua, a nearby mestizo community that is also badly affected by deforestation and degradation of the rivers. Without the promoters it would be impossible to coordinate the families and create the nurseries that would grow the trees for reforestation.

Yanapuma welcomed **Dr. Janet Roccanova** in January. She takes up the post of Director of Academic Programs and will work on the development of service learning, study abroad and experiential learning programs for individuals and groups of international students. She has many years of experience in the field of international education including leading programs to Ecuador, Chile, Peru, Mexico, France, Germany, Ireland, China and India



## Organizational Development ...

**Yanapuma** is currently in negotiations with local companies involved in business and organizational auditing to carry out an independent review of our organizational structure and internal communication with the aim of improving our overall performance. Our aim is to streamline our processes and achieve efficiency in all that we do in order to make optimum use of both our human and financial resources.

We have been engaged in the first stages of this process during the past year and although costly, we view this as an investment and an important step towards establishing Yanapuma as an effective development organization.

### Scholarships in Estero de Plátano

Our Christmas fundraiser to provide scholarships for the children of Estero de Plátano raised enough to provide 10 scholarships in 2010. Intern Emilien Amblat took charge of the process of soliciting applications for the scholarships and deciding which children would receive them. This year we are demanding more participation from the parents, and trying to figure out if we can disburse the funds through the community bank as a means of encouraging the bank's growth as well as making it easier for Yanapuma. Details of the students can be found shortly on our webpages.

At a visit to the community in February, Andy and Azalia held meetings with the children receiving the scholarships as well as their parents to emphasize the importance of education and the value of the opportunity they are receiving to study.

In addition there were meetings with the Women's Group and the Caja Solidaria that lends out money to local residents for various purposes and which forms a vital motor of economic development



## Leapers ...

At the start of January a group of 7 volunteers from the LEAP UK began a 10 week program that saw them spend 3 weeks in Chilcapamba working on the construction of new toilets in the local school. The next 3 weeks were spent in Bua where they worked on two community gardens. After spending the weekend of Carnaval in Atacames on the coast they are spending the last 3 weeks in Caimito working on farms to promote production of organic cacao.



## Student Group . . .

In January, Yanapuma was pleased to receive a group from St Olaf College in Minnesota, USA. Working with leader Jennifer Kanz who had been an intern for Yanapuma in the past, 9 college students came for their January break to carry out an academic internship through our Volunteer Ecuador program. Each student was placed in another organization for the month of January to use their academic knowledge and experience.

Students were sent to: Finca Sarita for reforestation on the coast, Brethren and Unida for organic farming in the sierra, a clinic and after school center in Tena, Yanacocha animal rescue center in Puyo, Camp Hope for children with disabilities in Quito, and a public school in Conocoto to teach English. Jennifer Kanz stayed in Quito to help Yanapuma with our ecoschools program. The students came back at the end of the month with exciting new experiences and stories to share! Jennifer is planning on bringing another group of interns from St. Olaf for this summer 2010.

## Volunteer Group . . .



On the 4th of January, a volunteer group from CEGEP Edouard-Montpetit High School in Canada arrived for a reforestation project in Bua. Students spent the first two weeks of 2010 living in pairs with homestay families in Bua and working

with the group of cacao farmers. Each day the volunteers went to a different farm with a few members of the community to plant cacao (chocolate) trees.

In addition, the group worked a few days a week at the school playing and teaching the Ecuadorian students games from Canada, as well as doing art projects and other activities. After only two weeks, the community threw a fun despedida (going away party) for the group, teaching the volunteers traditional Tsachila games and shamanic healing rituals. Both the volunteers and the host families and community members were sad to part ways, but leaders Nathalie and Sylvie have promised to bring another group of students from their school next year to continue the relationship formed this past January.

## Students and Interns . . .

**Davis Courtney** from the US, who worked as a volunteer group leader with us in 2009 returned in February to work in the office on fundraising until April when he will lead another volunteer group on various projects.

**Ines van Dorslaer** and **Len van Heetvelde** arrived in February from Mechelen University in Belgium to carry out 16 week internships with Yanapuma. Ines will work in the school on cultural excursions, publicity and marketing, and general duties, while Len will work in the foundation on similar activities.

**Sophie Pesquidous** from France has been busy filming and editing to create videos of various aspects of the work of the foundation.

## Union College Interns . . .

Tom McEvoy, Associate Dean of Students and Director of the Minerva Programs for Union College visited Yanapuma in February to visit Bua and Estero de Plátano to see about sending interns on Minerva scholarships to undertake 9 month internships.

Yanapuma is excited to begin working with Union College in July when two interns will travel to Estero de Plátano to help the community by moving forward our development agenda in various ways including working with the youth, the women's group, the community bank, and in the development of tourism and related activities.



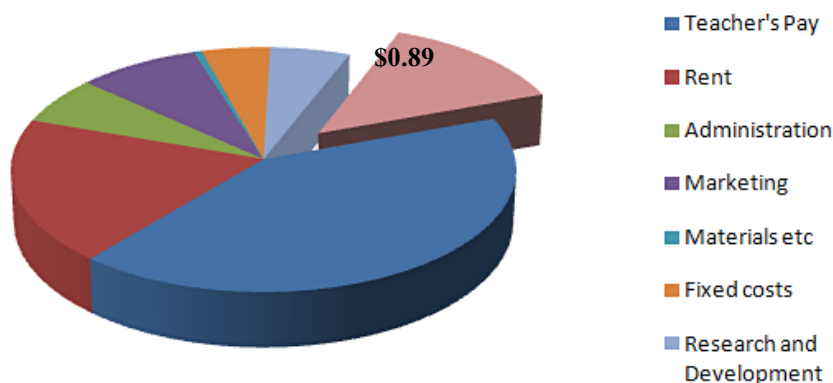
*Presenting the Annual Report to teachers and staff*

## How your Spanish class money was spent . . .

The graphic on the right shows how income from each hour of classes was spent in 2009. The cost per hour is averaged out between our regular retail price and agency and other discounts to give an average hourly cost of \$6.60 for Spanish classes.

The detached slice amounts to **\$0.89** cents, and represents the net profit from each hour of Spanish classes that goes towards supporting the work of Yanapuma foundation.

## Costos de las clases de Español





## January and February Photo Gallery

