



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



**A bimonthly newsletter**

**Issue No. 6: July/August 2008**

## It's our 2nd Birthday!

On the 1st of September Yanapuma officially turns two years old. To celebrate the 6 founder members spent the weekend relaxing in Puerto Quito, about 3 hours from Quito, the first weekend off for most of us for a long, long time.

### Introduction

On the 1st of September Yanapuma celebrated its 2nd birthday. It seems like only yesterday that we were celebrating surviving our first year. This year we were all a bit more tired. It has been a year of continued growth. We have probably doubled by most indexes of growth – financial, number of students attending the school, staff, donations received, etc.

But we are all optimistic for the coming year. We know that we need to keep on developing and promoting the Spanish school in order to have sufficient income to pay our overheads and basic admin costs. As with many smaller foundations, a constant shadow lurks – where will the funding come from, and what if it doesn't? Our plan is to be as largely independent and self-financing in this respect as possible,

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ble, with basic funding from the school and group volunteer activities to keep us afloat. Our personal aims are to reach a salary level that is appropriate by Ecuadorian standards for the work that we do and the commitment that we make; a reasonable middle-class salary. At the moment we are about 35-50% of the way there, depending how you calculate what is average here in Ecuador. So we still have a good way to go yet and need to keep our belts tightened for another year.

We have to keep reminding ourselves that we have actually achieved a huge amount in the past two years. Not only getting

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### School News

Thanks to an effort spearheaded by Edison Rendon, Yanapuma's academic coordinator, we now have a full program with text and audio materials for teaching Medical Spanish. We will be launching this new program in the coming months.



### Donation News

A generous donation from a fundraiser held by **Meander School** in Holland gives us \$12,800.00 for the renovation of the health center in Bua. We will also be able to train community members in areas such as nutrition, health and hygiene, and basic first aid. We expect to get started on this project at the end of the year once our ecological toilets project in the Bua school is finished.

We also received an \$800 donation from Brian Zinn and Pauline Smit, two visitors who went to Bua on the Cultural Exchange Program. The money will be split between the community of Bua and another project to be decided upon.



*Staff and interns of the foundation and Spanish school*

## Project News: Bua

July and August saw a lot of activity in Bua. Three volunteer groups from Outlook Expeditions of Wales each spent 5 days working on different projects, to construct speed bumps outside the local school, and to renew bridges on the interpretative trail that winds through the rainforest in the Shinopi Bolon cultural centre. A group from the LEAP continued the work on the bridges and walkways and also began construction of new beds for guest at the cultural centre.

Interns, Idalia, Michelle and Noemie organized and ran workshops for the community leaders on self-esteem and leadership issues which are very pertinent in this community. They were well received and we have been asked when we can offer more.

More good news was that the Shinopi Bolón Cultural Group became legalized as a group to preserve and promote traditional Tsa'chila culture. We had been urging them for some time to do this, working with them to define statutes and form a proper organizational structure. This will help their future development and ability to receive funding from other sources, as well as from Yanapuma.

Ecuadorian student, Tatiana continued her work on the GPS mapping (see page 3)

We also received a donation for Bua from two visitors on the Cultural Exchange Program (see Donation News on Page 1).

## Project News: Kamak Maki

In August we received a copy of former intern, Carly Leusner's Master's thesis called "Growing Plants, Tourism and Medicines: A Perspective from Ecuador's Amazonia." This will be translated into Spanish so that we can send a copy to Kamak Maki where Carly worked with Alonso Andy to create a book on medicinal plants, and teach them how to prepare medicinal ointments and pastes. A copy of Carly's paper is available at this web address: <http://www.yanapuma.org/en/Archives.php>

## More School News

Full-time teacher Betty Benitez left us in August to concentrate on finishing her Masters', which she predicts may take up to 6 months maximum. She is developing a methodology and creating a curriculum for teaching Spanish to foreigners with an emphasis in gender issues. All being well she will be back with us as a teacher once graduated and ready to put her studies into practice.



*Chinese whispers game in leadership workshop in Bua*

## Janneke returns to Holland

On 13 August, Janneke Robbe, who worked for 6 months as our student, intern and volunteer coordinator left us to return to Holland. She did a great job during that time – always super organized and efficient, and will be much missed. Stephen Barnes, who was previously our volunteer group coordinator has taken over Janneke's post.

## Kichwa Multimedia Project

Matt and Linda have been busy developing a project to teach Kichwa in small schools throughout the sierra using the internet and multimedia technology. With seed funding from Sotogrande International School we have created the first 12 classes with a group of Kichwa teachers from the Cayambe area, coordinated by our own Vinicio Quinchiguango who is himself a Kichwa teacher. The classes are ready for piloting when the schools start again in September. We will use these to gauge the student's responses and to seek collaboration and funding from local authorities and organizations to fully develop the project and disseminate to more schools.

We hope eventually to be able to create a full library of classes in Kichwa, from basic to advanced level. These will be stored on a server where they can be downloaded by schools with internet access, or distributed on CD to those that do not. School children can then record their own stories, accounts of their communities, etc, on their computers and upload these with photos to the server so that they can be shared with other schools throughout the sierra.

So far the response from everybody has been incredibly positive. Let's hope that we can convert this into some solid financial and logistical support!



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... a successful and reliable Spanish school that is much-appreciated by its students up and running, but developing a foundation with its methodology and approach and beginning to achieve positive results in several communities. From the original 8 founder members we dropped down to 6 in the first year, but now count around 13 salaried employees plus a number of contract teachers depending on how busy the school is.

At the beginning the foundation was very reliant on the input and work from its student interns, and remains so today, but we are moving away from this way of doing things which has had both positive and negative effects in the past. We are focusing instead on having employees doing the major development of the foundation, with the aid of interns and students. But there will always be a place for dedicated students of development to carry out research and work on various projects.

We often joke with new interns that they set out with ideals of working in this field, bettering the conditions for the less fortunate. They reach a point of realizing that, firstly there are relatively few jobs and little money in development, and that secondly, they have to work for free for organizations like Yanapuma to even get a toehold on the career ladder. It would be nice one day if we could get some funding to at least pay some expenses for our interns to save them having to go into debt in order to move forward with their chosen careers.

From the point of view of the development of the foundation, the learning curve has been very steep. We find ourselves questioning all the time our aims and methods in light of our developing relationships with the communities and projects that we work with, sometimes wondering if what we are trying to achieve is even possible. We work with cultures that are so different in their outlook on life that it becomes obvious that there are no quick fixes. To change the entrenched belief systems and cultural experience of any group has to be a long and delicate process. We do not seek to impose a new set of values or practices on any community. But if they do not develop the intellectual tools to deal with the globalized context of their lives, they will always suffer from under development and abuse from those around them.

This problem has become abundantly clear with the Tsa'chila culture, but exists in relation to all. A people who were forest-dwellers until 20 or 30 years ago have seen their culture and relation to the environment change drastically for the worse. Unable to comprehend the changes that are taking place they have allowed these processes to continue, developing a lack self esteem and devaluing

their own knowledge and traditional practices, copying the practices of those around them without any understanding of the consequences. Many of them are unable to read or write very well, and although they form the committees that represent an imposed structure of governance, they have no clear idea of what a "president," "vice-president," "secretary," etc., actually do. This simple fact is easy for an outside agency to miss. Without any internal structure to their organization based on shared responsibilities, things fall apart all the time with disastrous consequences. The result is a dependence on people from outside to do things, organize things, and a willing acceptance of paternalism and hand-outs that further undermines their ability to be self-determining. In any community this makes developing any sustainable project difficult, worst for tourism and related projects where dealing reliably on a daily basis with foreigners is a necessity. Solutions to these problems have to be clearly defined and consistently applied over a long period, to the point of being woven into the curricula of the schools where the best hope is for the emergence of a new generation that both value their culture and traditions and are able to deal with the globalized context.

This is the work we have chosen to do as a foundation and it will remain our focus for the coming year. We hope to count on the continuing support of our current and previous partner organizations, students, interns, volunteers, friends, and all those interested in promoting sustainable development.

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## Mapping Bua

The project to map Bua is being continued by Tatiana, who reckons that it is about 70% completed. The process was initially dogged by rumours and unfounded speculation that we were only doing this project so that we could sell their land from under them or give the map to the municipality to charge taxes—all spread by members of the community who are afraid that the map will expose the unfair land distribution situation.

However, Yanapuma finally received on the 18th of July a letter from the community urging us to complete the process. The need for and future uses of the map are now obvious to residents, and Tatiana had pointed out to them that the cost to have the work done by a surveyor would be many thousands of dollars.

A donation of several thousands of dollars-worth of ArcGIS software from ESRI, solicited by former intern Cliff Jones, will allow us to produce accurate map information that will be of invaluable use in future projects.

## Student and Intern News

### NEW INTERNS ...

**Kathryn Bawden (USA)** – is helping the foundation look for funding by making contacts, having meetings with other organizations and submitting grant proposals. She works together with Andy in the office. She recently graduated from the University of Michigan with a BA in Social Studies (with a focus on development studies) and Minor in Environmental Science. She will be here from the end of June to the middle of November.

**Katrien Cnaepkens (BELGIUM)** – is an Agro and Biotechnology student from the University of Kempen in Belgium. She is currently in Búa, working on a project related to deforestation. She will be primarily talking to Alfonso and registering the current situation in Búa with respect to deforestation and the disappearance of local plant species (walking along the forest and recording comments with a tape recorder.) She will be here until the end of September.

**Jenny Joussement (FRANCE)** – is studying towards an MA in International Relations and is currently writing her Master's thesis about bilingual education. She is supporting Linda and Matt with their project and is also doing independent research in other communities such as Chichicorumi with respect to the bilingual education system there. Furthermore she is investigating what the current government is doing to support bilingual education. She arrived in early June and will be here until the end of August.



**Michelle Davis and Andrew Yonki (USA)** – Michelle and Andrew are a couple from the USA who are working at the school in Búa. Andrew is teaching music and Michelle is working on a project about recycling. They arrived early June and will be here until August. Michelle is at the American University majoring in International Peace and Conflict resolution and minoring in Education. Andrew has graduated with a degree in Journalism and Sociology.



*Interns give workshop with Azalia and Giovanni in Bua*

**Rachel Soper (USA)** – originally wanted to do a water study in La Chimba. However, Linda and Matt found out that water is a very sensitive issue in La Chimba and it was decided that she would just do some informal research by talking to Vinicio from La Chimba. In September she will start teaching English at the school in Puliza. She will be the first volunteer to go there. She has spent a bit of time getting to know La Chimba and in the meantime she is visiting other communities in the Sierra such as Peribuela where she will be staying a few days with Don Gerónimo to do research about agricultural practices. She has just graduated from UC Santa Cruz and will be studying towards a Masters' degree after her time with Yanapuma. She arrived mid July and will be here until mid October.

**Jane Higgins (AUSTRALIA)** – is helping Yanapuma find more places to send volunteers to, in Quito as well as outside of Quito. She is currently contacting different clinics, hospitals and other medical institutions in Quito to create agreements about sending volunteers as part of a package for medical students offered through the Spanish school. She will also help with the promotion of these locations as new volunteer options with Yanapuma. She is an Economist working at a prestigious Financial Consulting firm in Australia. She is currently taking some time off to travel and to dedicate her time to work within the development field. She arrived at the end of July and will be here for a couple of months or so.



**Shanti Freitas (USA)** – graduated from Smith College in May 2008 with a degree in Sociology and is working with Azalia, coordinating with the other interns and students to help organize their internships and studies and to see that the correct reporting is done. She had previously spent time in Ecuador as part of her studies, living in Quito and in Napo province.

**Maria Marone – (ITALY/HOLLAND)** volunteered last year as a teacher of English in Bua, and returned this year to continue her work and to write two grant proposals for funding projects in Bua and the community of Quisapincha, a small community in the Andean sierra in the province of Tungurahua where Yanapuma hopes to start work soon. Maria returned to Holland to resume her teaching job in late August.



## Intern and Volunteer News

### WHO LEFT . . .

**Michelle Stoler** – worked on a project related to organic cacao production in Búa (see last newsletter..)

**Pamela Daley and Sophie Bouteiller (volunteers)** – taught English at the school in Puka Chicta and set up a summer program for English classes for adults in Chichicorumi. They created a book for teaching English specifically aimed at the community Puka Chicta, incorporating local customs, culture, food, and pictures of the students themselves.

**Maria Antonio and Leo Winthagen (volunteers)** – A couple from the Netherlands who have worked in the commercial sector during most of their lives and felt that it was time to give something back. They taught English and Maths at a specially created summer program for the students at the all-girls school Abelardo Flores. Their use of music and visual materials was a great success and the classes were very well attended. They were very sad to leave.

**Martin and Dominique (volunteers)** – worked at the school in Búa during July and early August, where they taught English and held workshops about topics related to development such as recycling, nutrition, and sex education.

**Janine de Zeeuw** – Finished her research about nutrition in Búa. At the end of her stay in Búa she supplied all of the children at the school with a card with their current height and weight. She gave a presentation to the director about the situation at the school with respect to nutrition. Her preliminary results show that more than 16% of children at the school suffer from malnutrition, based on the standards of the World Health Organization. This information will be used as a basis for future projects/and or funding. Janine hopes to finish the full write-up of her studies in October.

**Ben Huntley (USA)** worked for three months in the hospital Delfina Torres de Concha in Esmeraldas. His weblog chronicles the excitement and challenges of working in such a difficult and under-resourced environment, and describes life in one of Ecuador's poorest cities day by day during his three month sojourn there. (<http://benhuntleyecuador.blogspot.com>)



**Bryan Kirkup (intern)** - worked in Estero de Plátano on recycling and waste management in collaboration with other communities along the same stretch of coast.

## Other Project News

### Estero de Plátano

At the start of August we submitted papers to CODENPE for the legalization of the tourism and crafts groups. But this has been slowed down a bit due to some bureaucratic wrangling. Hopefully we can get this resolved soon.

Bryan Kirkup, a Yanapuma intern who worked there for 3 months on recycling and waste management left to travel through Colombia before returning home to the UK. He collaborated with Katie, a Peace Corps volunteer stationed in Estero de Plátano, and we continue to work with her to promote development, in tandem with several of the small communities up and down that stretch of coast.

### Caimito

Thanks to the donation of **Sotogrande International School** in Spain, George Fletcher who is working in Caimito to promote sustainable agricultural practices, was able to begin the process of purchasing a plot of land in the nearby coastal village of Quinqué. This will be used to develop a demonstration and experimental plot that will serve as a reference point for local growers on sustainable techniques.

George and his wife, Chrys, were able to also start work on construction of a new building for use as a daycare centre for local children. Chrys has been running the centre, using Montessori principles from a temporary building. This was made possible by a donation from the **Mary Bruton Open Door Montessori School** in Dublin, Ireland.

### Cultural Exchange Program

July and August saw quite a few visitors going to different communities on the Cultural Exchange Program. By their presence in each of the communities these sympathetic visitors help the locals to improve their skills and ability to deal with foreigners, in a relatively low-risk situation. The biggest challenge that communities face is learning to adapt to working with people from a very different culture with different expectations. Without this their program will always fail, as tourists who are paying for an expected level of service will be disappointed if they do not receive good treatment. The feedback that we receive after each visit is returned to the community in the form of suggestions about how to improve their offering. In this way, each project can continue to improve until they reach the point where they can function as independent community-run tourism projects.



## A TASTE OF ECUADOR!...

## Llapingachos



### Preparación

Cocinar la papa en agua con sal hasta que esté muy suave. Guarda 1/2 taza de agua espesa de la cocción. Aplastar muy bien la papa. Añadir el agua espesa que se guardó, el achiote, la cebolla y sal a gusto. Tapar con un mantel y dejar reposar en un sitio cálido por un mínimo de tres horas para darle un poco de agrio. Añadir el queso directamente a la masa o ponerlo como relleno. Con esta masa formar los llapingachos

### Ingredientes

**4 libras de papa pelada y en pedazos.**

**Sal.**

**Achiote (o algo para dar un poco de color amarillo).**

**1/2 taza de cebolla blanca picada.**

**2 tazas de queso blanco desmenuzado.**

**Un poco de manteca de chancho para freír.**

(tortillas), freírlos a fuego mediano en una sartén untada con un poco de manteca y untar las superficies antes de virarlos, cuando los llapingachos estén bien tostados y doraditos.

Acompañar con chorizo, huevo frito y aguacate.

### Recomendación

Se recomienda utilizar un sartén de teflón para que no se peguen las tortillas, también el ponerlos un poco distantes nos ayuda a que conserven la forma deseada.

## July and August Photo Gallery

