

Stay up to date with all the news at Yanapuma!

A bimonthly newsletter

Issue No. 9: Jan-Feb 2009

Introduction

Welcome to the first Yanapuma newsletter of 2009! It comes fresh on the heels of our annual report for 2008 which is now available online from our homepage (www.yanapuma.org). This gave us all the chance to reflect on the past year's activities and with this hindsight, look forward to this year. It shows the strength of the organization and our determination to forge ahead in these uncertain economic times.

Our biggest surprise so far this year has been just how busy the Spanish school has been! We were expecting around 8-10 students per week in January, but quickly found ourselves with 18-20, and a little short on space for classes. Fortunately this has gone some way to counteracting the effects of the low value of sterling and consequent lost income from volunteer groups. These unexpected numbers have kept Vinicio busy organizing the social events of the school. At a recent goodbye for a student there were 25 of us out on the town between students, volunteers and staff!

Bookings for the next few months are coming in, and although we expect April and May to be lower, as is normal for that time of year, we are hoping that we will continue to see growth in numbers of students choosing to study with Yanapuma. *(continued ...)*

The Dale family in the Amazon...

This intrepid UK family spent 10 days in Chichicorumi learning about traditional Kichwa culture, and volunteering in the medicinal gardens and museum construction. The children found lots in common with other local children of course and loved the opportunity to play with and feed the monkeys and other animals that roam around Kamak Maki.



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... The most exciting developments have been the launch of our Medical Spanish program and the Online Classes. These have kept Edison busy, finalizing the last details in time. We have struggled a bit with the technology for the online classes with some software not living up to its promise, but we are working out these bugs. Four teachers are now trained in giving online classes, and we will soon be starting a pilot project to offer Spanish classes to students and families of Soto-grande International School in Spain in addition to regular individual classes.

On the foundation side we have been busy with our ongoing efforts to put solid organizational structures in place as well as plan for the coming year's projects. As well as Kyle Muther who is now the project coordinator, we welcome Shanti Freitas and Fran Henry as full-time staff. Shanti is working with Steve on the Volunteer Ecuador program, and Fran continues to take responsibility for the LEAP and other volunteer groups.



Welcome Klaus...

Klaus Boas joined us in February for 2 months. Semi-retired and with many years of experience in international business as an internal consultant in financing, analysis, benchmarking, sales and efficiency, Klaus is helping Yanapuma to achieve standards for accounting, administration and organization that will define us as a competent and reliable non-profit at the international level. His help will be invaluable in achieving compliance with international standards and reporting requirements for NGOs.



Bua grant from Holland:

Maria Marone, an Italian teacher resident in Holland, returned to Bua during August last year to develop funding proposals. The result is a grant of €4619 which will go towards the construction of a library in the school, and on curriculum development with the teachers.

Donations News:

In February we received an anonymous donation of \$3000, to be used for the ongoing organizational development of Yanapuma, in particular to continue the work of Kyle and Giovanni in Bua. An additional donation of \$1000 at the end of February will go towards materials costs for the current projects in Bua—to improve cacao production and start a reforestation project.

(see also page 3 for more donation news. ...)

Congratulations to Tatiana!!!

... who successfully defended her thesis on 20 February to receive her Masters from the **Universidad Central del Ecuador**, department of **Environmental Engineering**. Her study of the ecological toilets in Bua is the first study of its type in Ecuador, and will help to provide hard data on the effectiveness of this form of ecological waste management. Tatiana carried out tests on the results of the first ecotoilets that we built as well as establishing baseline data for the second project. She also contributed to the environmental impact aspects of the design.

We are hoping to continue working with Tatiana on the monitoring and evaluation of these projects, as well as on environmental education and other related projects, subject to being able to find funding for her position. We know that she will make a significant contribution as a member of the Yanapuma team.



Project Mushuk Muyu and project Yanukua:

By Mathew Tasker

After humble beginnings and nearly a year of hard work we have finally finished the four Kichwa textbooks for Mushuk Muyu and submitted them to DINEIB (the ministry of Bilingual education) for a final revision. In March we will begin recording the material for the interactive classes, and if all goes to plan, we should finish the project by the end of April! The material should be published in May and will be distributed to schools throughout the Ecuadorian Sierra in August. Spurred on by the success of the project, one of the teachers we have been working with has also begun holding workshops with the families of his community on the importance of recuperating the Kichwa language and identity. So far things are going very well and the community is starting to focus on speaking Kichwa at home. For us it is really great to see the project having an influence outside the educational arena.

As for the Sápara project (Yanukua) we are excited that we are able to return to three of the communities and visit one new community further in. This means we will be out in the jungle for around two weeks and will have time to begin developing the material for the textbook. We also hope to capture some recordings of the elders to begin building an audio library for the communities. The great news is

that DINEIB has confirmed they will publish the textbook and after having a very positive reaction from UNESCO, they will endorse the project!



Online classes:

Our new program of online classes is well underway, with students from Brazil, UK, Belgium, France and the US. Normally 2 hours in length the classes use shared audio and video conferencing, shared desktop, whiteboard and documents, and a chat option, to provide a broad range of educational tools (for details <http://www.yanapumaspanish.org/online/spanish.html>)

Get Involved – Spread the Word!

As part of our strategy to weather the world financial crisis we are focusing our efforts on promotion.

What can you do to help, we hear you ask? - Try any or all of the following:

To rate Yanapuma Spanish School go to one of these sites:

http://123teachme.com/language_schools/view_rating/1265 (click on "rate this school")

<http://www.languageschoolsguide.com/listingsp3.cfm/listing/37725> (In the left hand pane you can click to add your own testimonial)

Or you can write on our wall on **Facebook**: <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Yanapuma-Foundation/38947443106?ref=s>

Or you could write something nice about us on **Lonely Planet's Thorn Tree Forum**: <http://www.lonelyplanet.com/thorntree/forum.jspa?forumID=22&keywordid=236>

Or to promote **Yanapuma Foundation** you could write a testimonial on Change.org: http://www.change.org/yanapuma_foundation

We thank you for your efforts on our behalf.

Volunteer News . . .

Our **Volunteer Ecuador** program has continued to grow over the past two months, with inquiries starting to come in from international agencies interested in partnering with us to place volunteers.

In January and February we received 5 volunteers to work on projects in Quito, and 7 volunteers for projects all around Ecuador.

Linux-Ubuntu project:

Yanapuma offices run on a combination of Macs and PCs. Currently we are engaged in tests to replace Windows operating systems with Linux, primarily a system called Ubuntu. Apart from being a less resource-heavy system, they are virtually immune to viruses, making them much more secure in daily use. The long-range plan is to look into installing Ubuntu and its companion Edubuntu (educational software) in small schools in Ecuador that are normally plagued by virus-ridden PCs.

Our thanks to Josefa Lasbleis and Inga Gorzolla for their efforts in obtaining donations of books and educational materials from France and Switzerland respectively. Both of these volunteers worked in Quito, Josefa in the Abelardo Flores school, while Inga continues in los Peluchitos day care center

Students and Interns . . .

Returning interns — Ester van Hummel, Muriel Mudde Hester and Muriel, two nursing students from Holland who interned last year in the Hospital Delfina Torres de Concha in Esmeraldas, returned in 2009 to continue their internships there. Hester noted that the kind of work that they get to do there would be impossible as a student in Holland. To view her weblog <http://www.hes-in-ecuador.blogspot.com/>

Noémie Pédrot finished her 9 month internship with Yanapuma at the end of February. Her contribution to the development of the crafts group in Estero de Plátano is greatly appreciated. Currently their designs are on sale in our offices as well as in several other locations in Quito that Noemie organized.

Marc Julmisse also finished her internship with Yanapuma in February. She was instrumental in designing and carrying out the health and community survey in Estero de Plátano (<http://www.yanapuma.org/en/Archives.php>).

Justine Bonnet finished her internship working with George Fletcher in Caimito. During her 3 months there she promoted and encouraged sustainable practices among members of the community.

Dayna Erickson finished up her work in Estero de Plátano. Her principal area of activity was with the artisan group, although she was also involved in the health survey, recycling and education.

Project News . . .

In Estero de Plátano we completed a community survey based on public health parameters. This information will be useful for planning future actions in health and education. The survey was put together by Marc Julmisse, a nursing graduate, with help from Yanapuma staff, and administered by a group of interns and volunteers in the community.



January and February also saw the formation of community action groups around the issues of health, education and youth. A program of sex education was started with the youth as well as workshops related to envisioning and planning their futures, all mixed up with games and other fun activities.

Giovanny also visited Estero de Plátano and Caimito to begin a process of collaboration between these coastal communities and Bua.

Foundation staff visited Puca Chicta at the end of January to arrange projects for 2009. These include the building of a new classroom/library for the school with a volunteer group from Canada's Greys Academy in March and UK volunteers in April and May, and a project to construct a potable water supply through collaboration with the Portland Oregon branch of Engineers Without Borders.

And while we are on the subject of Puca Chicta . . .

Connor, Sam, and Hugh, three gap-year students from the UK ended their 3 months living in Puca Chicta and teaching English in the school. Their efforts were much appreciated by the staff and parents of the school. The three headed south to explore the rest of Ecuador and Peru before returning to the UK in April.

Laure Sandoz, from Switzerland, will be continuing their work for the next 6 months, teaching English to the children in the school.



In Bua, Giovanny has been busy forming four groups of cacao promoters. These are led by Tsa'chila who have learned the various techniques for improving cacao production—pruning, cloning, etc., and who are now teaching those same skills to a wider group. The plan is to keep the circle growing, beyond just the community of Bua to surrounding communities, in a truly grass-roots initiative to improve agricultural production.

FUNDRAISE FOR US?

We have a number of small projects that only require seed funding to get them up and running. From \$120 upwards is all it takes to begin making positive changes.

Follow the lead of other former volunteers and interns—present a small project to your colleagues, school, friends or family. We will be happy to offer ongoing news of the progress of any project through emails, our website and newsletters.

Visit this page to learn about our small funding needs:

<http://www.yanapuma.org/en/smalldonations.php>

LEAP Groups:

On 5 January we welcomed 22 UK volunteers to spend 10 weeks working on 3 different projects; at the coast with George Fletcher in Caimito working on construction of the school house and various environmental projects, in the Andean community of La Chimba working on the reconstruction of the hacienda, and in the Amazon community of Chichicorumi, working on the ethnographic museum.

A journalist who accompanied the group to Chichicorumi in September wrote an article about her experience that was recently printed in the Sunday Telegraph newspaper. Click here to read it: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/travel/destinations/southamerica/ecuador/4610737/Can-a-holiday-mend-a-broken-heart.html>

