

A co-operatively run NGO driven by the enthusiasm of its staff and volunteers to promote sustainable development in marginalized communities throughout Ecuador and to promote Cultural Exchange for mutual benefit in our increasingly globalized world

Stay up to date with all the news at Yanapuma!

A bimonthly newsletter

Issue No. 18: July-Aug 2010

Introduction

July and August are the peak months for the Spanish school and as would be expected we have been very busy with students arriving from all corners of the world – North America, Europe, Australia, India, among others. Our “Study and Travel” programs have proven especially popular and it has been hard to find enough teachers who can travel with students – to the Amazon lodges, programs in the Andean sierra, the Pacific coast, and to the indigenous communities that we work with. Particularly popular has been the “Ruta de los Volcanes” program, 5 days travelling with a teacher along the spine of the Andes visiting several volcanoes along the way and including bicycling, canoeing, trekking, white water rafting among other activities.

Our “Volunteer Ecuador” program has been equally busy with 9 volunteers placed in projects in Quito and 6 outside in this two month period. In addition 7 groups arrived from various countries, which you can

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read about on page 2.

The foundation has been equally busy, moving into the final phase of the **Inter-American Foundation** project which finished at the end of August. This project has been very successful, beginning profound processes of social change in the Tsa'chila community of Bua which we hope to be able to sustain and encourage in the coming years.

In addition we began to work with another Tsa'chila community, los Naranjos, in preparation for the arrival of a group of students from **Thinking Beyond Borders** in September who will work on a reforestation project, planting between 8-10,000 trees during one month. We welcome this opportunity to begin working with another of the 7 Tsa'chila communities. For more on the activities of the foundation see page 2.



Students from Abraham Calazacon school with the school vegetable garden behind



Studying Spanish at Yachana Lodge in the Amazon rainforest



Mushuk Muyu wins prize!

The project “Mushuk Muyu” developed by former interns Linda Westberg and Matthew Tasker and sponsored by Sotogrande International School involved creating multi-media teaching materials for the Kichwa language. Co-developed with the Department of Bilingual Education (DINEIB) and 5 schools in Cayambe district, the materials provided an innovative method for interesting children in learning Kichwa. DINEIB originally planned to print 64000 copies of the books to distribute in the sierra, but due to internal politics and budget issues the plan got derailed although the materials were put on their website (<http://www.dineib.gov.ec/pages/interna.php?txtCodigo=193>)



However, we were delighted to hear that after the project was submitted to a competition sponsored by Microsoft for innovative educational materials, Mushuk Muyu was selected as one of the 10 finalists from 127 entries. In the end the project won first prize for the most innovative educational materials developed in Ecuador. This subsequently led to a revived impetus from DINEIB to get the materials disseminated.

We congratulate Matt and Linda who worked so hard on this project during their time with Yanapuma and we continue to look forward to seeing the books in print.

Project News . . .

Bua

August 31 saw the official end of the project co-sponsored by the **Interamerican Foundation** in Bua. The project involved improving cacao production as well as reforestation with native species, with the focus on the social processes that underlie the Tsa'chila's ability to manage their own development. Although this project was relatively short in development terms, we were able to see significant improvements in the areas of leadership, organization and self-esteem which encourages us to continue working in these spheres in the coming years using a similar methodology.

Another aspect of the project was to create a vegetable garden in the local school to grow vegetables to increase the nutritional content of the school meals (*see photos right and on back page*).

On 26 August we held a closing ceremony with the Tsa'chila in Bua. See page 4 for photos. We also produced a short video and publication. (*See box right for details of how to view them*).

Of course, the end of funding from the Inter-American foundation does not spell the end of our involvement in these issues and we will continue with small funds and self-financing to keep these processes moving until we achieve more long-term funding.

Meanwhile, as reported in the introduction, we began the process of organizing a reforestation project in the community of Los Naranjos, another of the 7 Tsa'chila communities. We look forward to starting work there later in September with the arrival of 15 students from **Thinking Beyond Borders**.

Estero de Plátano

Our work in Estero de Plátano during July and August has been restricted to managing the scholarship students under the watchful eye of intern Amelia Brandt. We plan to pick up the pace in the coming months with the additional input of Guadalupe Peralta, our social/community worker, who will work with new interns Nik and Allie on several issues within the community. These include sexual and reproductive health and rights and work with the youth in general, funded by a grant from the **Souter Trust** of Scotland.

UNDP Project Report

On 20 August we also handed in the final report for the first three months of the project funded by the United Nations Small Donations program. It was delayed for over a month due to the changeover in our accounting systems which is now complete.



At the same time we have received several calls from the Tsa'chila, interested in continuing with the project. We will be meeting with them to discuss the possibilities and their motivations before talking with the PPD to see if there is any way to reformulate the project in a way that will benefit the Tsa'chila.

Volunteer groups . . .

During July Yanapuma hosted 6 groups from Outlook Expeditions from the UK. The groups went to carry out different projects in Chichicorumi (traditional construction and work in the local school) and Bua (planting cacao trees and reforestation).

In addition a group from Theale Green School in England carried out a project in Caimito, working with George Fletcher. They built a class room for the local school and also worked on a conservation project.

In our **Volunteer Ecuador** program during July and August we placed 15 volunteers in different projects, 9 in Quito and 6 around Ecuador. The volunteers are working in a variety of projects—with children, with youth, in schools, in clinics, and on environmental projects on the mainland and in the Galapagos..

To learn all about the project that we carried out in Bua with financing from the **InterAmerican Foundation** please click on the following links:

Video: <http://www.yanapuma.org/videos/FIAvideo.php>

Brochure: <http://www.yanapuma.org/pdf/FIAboletin.pdf>



Giovanny presents tools to the cacao promoters at the close of the Inter-American Foundation Project on 26 August.

Students and Interns ...

Charlotte Lulsens from Belgium left us after 3 months working as an intern coordinating the project work of the foundation. Her efficiency, dedication and "joie de vivre" is missed by all of us.

Danique van den Ven from Holland left us after spending 3 months working in the Spanish school on marketing, excursions with students, publicity, and other activities. She made a significant contribution to the school during her time with us and was much appreciated by the Spanish students as well as staff for her efficiency and personality.

Sabine de Bruijn from Holland also left us at the start of August after spending 3 months working on fundraising and accompanying volunteer groups to Bua and Caimito. Her contributions were much appreciated by us all.

Amelia Brandt spent three months in the community of Estero de Plátano working on social issues with the community. Her work included supervising the 10 students that are receiving scholarships from Yanapuma this year, making sure that they are studying well. She also worked in the local school and with the women's group and crafts group. During her short time in Estero Amelia integrated herself into the daily life of the community and will be missed by all. During the last two weeks Amelia worked to prepare our two new interns for their 8 month stint there.

Nikhil Khotari and Alison Cuozzo are two new interns from the US. Students from Union College in New York, they will spend 9 months with us, focused mostly on the community of Estero de Plátano where they will work on issues of sexual and reproductive health and rights as well as with the scholarship students and other groups.

Maddy Shearer continues to work with us on coordination and reporting for the IAF project.

Melissa Bertolo joined us in August, taking over from Sabine in the area of fundraising before going on to carry out an internship at CEMOPLAF. She is also helping us with the reporting for the IAF project.

Lucas Emmerson from the UK joined our team as an intern in August. He has begun helping Giovanni in his reforestation work in the community of Los Naranjos and will be working with the Thinking Beyond Borders group in September to plant up to 10,000 trees to protect the water courses of the area.

Internships with Yanapuma:

Internships with Yanapuma offer a great opportunity to get hands-on experience in development. We are always happy to hear from students and recent graduates who are interested in carrying out an internship with us.

For Yanapuma interns represent a means of extending our work without straining further our limited budget.

Email us at: volunteer@yanapuma.org

School News ...

Teacher Training: On 31 July the Spanish teachers continued their series of training workshops, exploring different facets of methodology and relating this to their teaching methods through individual investigations and presentations to the rest of the teachers. These are monthly meetings with the aim of developing fully our methodology and translating it into the most effective method of Spanish tuition available.

New offering: In August we added a new "Study and Travel option - "Altos de Pastaza" is an Amazon lodge in the Pastaza region of Ecuador offering a high level of accommodation and a varied list of excursions and activities that allow the student to fully experience the beauty and splendor of the Amazon rain forest.

Online Classes: Our online classes continue to expand. These have proven particularly popular with students who have already studied with us here in Ecuador. They offer a great way to continue using your Spanish even after returning home. A two-hour session once a week is the ideal way to practice and extend your Spanish abilities. Learn more at <http://www.spanishonlineclass.com>



Students on a recent weekend trip to Puerto Lopez where they visited La Isla de la Plata, which is also known as the "poor man's Galapagos" as it contains some of the same species that fascinated Darwin, but is much cheaper to reach. They were also lucky to spot many humpback whales which migrate along the coast at this time of the year. Check out the Facebook page of Yanapuma Spanish-School to watch a short video.

Azalia leaves ...

Azalia Cruz, our director of projects left at the beginning of July to take up another post. Azalia is one of the founders of Yanapuma, working as a teacher at the beginning when we struggled to survive, as well as involving herself in the development of projects as time went on. We wish her well in her new post.

July and August Photo Gallery

