

Stay up-to-date with all the news from Yanapuma!

A bimonthly newsletter

Issue No. 11: May-June '09

Introduction

May and June are usually quiet months for the Spanish school, before the busy summer period. But this year we have maintained a steady average of about 15 students per week throughout, which has been good news for us. On the downside, we have not seen this year the big rise in July and August numbers that usually takes place, indicating that the world financial crisis is having some impact on the number of people deciding to travel.

Our online classes have continued to grow in strength, and a pilot project for teaching students at Sotogrande International School in Spain has proven popular with the children there, so that we will begin making plans for developing a fully fledged program for the next school year.

Our volunteer activities, both with groups and with individuals, continues to keep us busy too, helping to generate a little more profit to fund the work of the foundation. . . .

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. . . On the foundation side, we have been as busy as ever, especially in the community of Bua, and in Estero de Plátano where the scholarship program has gotten under way and 7 students are now studying at secondary college thanks to the generous donations of our supporters (see page 2). In Bua the big news is that we have been joined by Paulina (see page 2), who recently graduated in agriculture, and is helping us part time with the monitoring and evaluation of the ecological sanitation there. This is vital work, as there is a scarcity of hard data about the effects and results of this type of sanitation and we are determined to be able to show the environmental and personal health benefits that they offer.



Students on a weekend trip to Mindo

Donation News . . .

Adam Wright, who volunteered in Kamak Maki last summer, held a small exhibition of photos of his time there, raising \$120 that will be handed to the community to further their work on the ethnographic museum and other projects.

Two new Dell laptops were donated to the school in Estero de Plátano by Stephen Muther, father of Kyle, our projects coordinator. Previously the school has not had any computers, and is still without internet access.



A regular event at the school is sampling various local snacks - "bocaditos"

Yanapuma Scotland!

At the start of May, Yanapuma Foundation became a registered charity in Scotland. The aim of this is to be able to develop links with organizations and schools in the UK to channel resources to Ecuador, and to work towards developing school links and exchanges that will promote cultural exchange and the flow of information back to the UK about development issues and the effects of globalization. There is a significant impetus towards folding such issues into the regular school curriculum in the UK, and Yanapuma aspires to become directly involved. One such initiative is the EcoSchools movement, which is big in Scotland, with over 3000 schools registered. Another is the Global Dimension in Education, promoted by DFID (Department for International Development).

Project News . . .

Bua Update

Paulina Sanguano joined Yanapuma part-time in May, having recently graduated in agriculture. She is working on the ongoing evaluation and monitoring of the ecological sanitation projects that we have carried out in Bua. She also happens to be married to Giovanni, we should point out!

Giovanni has been busy in Bua, continuing with the development of the 3 groups of cacao growers. We are currently buying all the tools and equipment needed to continue with this program as the Tsa'chila learn to prune, graft, and care for their cacao trees. Up to now they have just let the trees grow any way at all, taking what fruit there was, until disease and neglect finally killed them.

Giovanni has worked with the Tsa'chila to set up several "jardines clonales" of improved forms of aromatic cacao that will later be transplanted to their farms.

A reforestation project, in which 26 families have created small nurseries of forest and fruiting trees, will produce up to 6000 trees for transplanting in October with students from Thinking Beyond Borders. The aim is to buy the trees from the families as an incentive to developing more reforestation in the future.



Meeting in Estero de Plátano

Participation in Estero de Plátano

Azalia organized a meeting in Estero de Plátano to look at how the community functions with respect to meetings. Generally there is a lack of interest, to the point that for quite a while the community has had no "directiva" committee. The solution that the community came up with was to hold an event at which they would play bingo and hold a raffle, with the aim of gathering enough funds to offer food at important meetings, as this is the most sure-fire way to get people to participate. So Yanapuma will do its part to publicize the event in the hope of drawing more interest from the community in the future.



Five of the seven scholarship recipients in Estero de Plátano

Estero de Plátano

The scholarship program that resulted from our successful Christmas fundraiser got off the ground in May and June with the new academic year that started in late April. Our 7 scholarship recipients began studying in nearby Tonchigwe. Although the new government has done away with matriculation charges, they still have to buy uniforms, books and other materials, and pay the transport to and from college every day, costs that are still beyond the means of most parents in the community.

A volunteer group from the LEAP UK started work on building a new dining room for the school. This work will be continued in July by another group. It was the first time that many families in Estero had hosted volunteers in their own homes, and the first time that they had worked with a group of volunteers. Although there are things to improve for the next round, it was a good opportunity for the community to learn new skills and develop management, responsibility and planning skills for projects.

Yanapuma's Forward Planning

In the Yanapuma offices we continue to work on our Strategic Plan. Kyle has been working in each department - Spanish School, Volunteering and Foundation, to carry out SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analyses with staff, prior to mapping out our direction for the next three years. Our "Social Entrepreneurship" model takes income from the Spanish School and Volunteering activities to fund the sustainable community development work of the Foundation. With the basic administrative overheads covered by these activities, we are able to seek specific project funding with a significant contribution coming from our own sources.

Intern News

Matthew Tasker and Linda Westberg, after working with us for nearly 15 months as interns, left at the end of June. As a result of the successful projects that they carried out here, creating teaching and cultural materials for the Kichwa and Sápara language, they have received offers from the departments of education and culture here to continue working to develop materials for other cultures and languages too (there are more than 17 in Ecuador). But much in need of a break and some serious relaxation after their long period of hard work, they are heading off to Spain and Sweden to consider their options. We are incredibly grateful for all their efforts and dedication during this time.

After working in the Peluchitos daycare centre in Quito and a period of traveling, Inga Gorzolla finally said goodbye and headed back to Switzerland at the end of June. She is much missed by the staff and children of the daycare center, and by Yanapuma.

Laure Sandoz, after teaching English in the school in Puca Chicta, to which she donated \$1500 that she had raised before arriving, finally said goodbye to the community, and to Yanapuma, before heading off to travel before going back to Switzerland too. We are grateful for her dedication to the community that she was working in.

Justine Bonnet spent 9 months as an intern with us, working in Caimito on a community survey, and then on the EcoEscuelas concept, even experimenting in making soap using natural ingredients such as wood ash and vegetable oil. She left to return to France at the end of June and will be missed by us all.



Final Report

Mathew Tasker & Linda Westberg

Mushuk Muyu

It has been almost a year and a half since we embarked on our journey to create Mushuk Muyu. It has been a long and hard road, but an experience we will never forget. After what seems like an eternity all four editions of Mushuk Muyu have been cleared for publication by the ministry of education and are just waiting to be put through the design team. So everything is still on track to have the books in all Sierra bilingual schools by the start of September. The audiovisual classes have already been implemented in a school in Cotopaxi and Otavalo with great success and enthusiasm from the authorities, teachers and especially the children. The Ministry of education is also looking at the possibility of using Mushuk Muyu in Spanish schools to teach Kichwa, but this is still in the beginning stages.

We also received official recognition and support from UNESCO for Mushuk Muyu and Yanawka and therefore are able to use the official logo of UNESCO on the books and in any promotional material regarding the projects!

Yanawka

As for Yanawka we have finished the book and audiovisual classes for the Sapara. However publishing the work is proving harder than with Mushuk Muyu due to a lack of government funding for the Amazon, but we have finally received official support from the Ministry of education for the project and are waiting for a letter to be drafted. Unicef has expressed their interest in funding the publication, but need this letter of support to move forward. So it is a bit of a waiting game at the moment, but we are hopeful that everything will come through once the official documents have been

Long-term volunteer Lesley Arney has kept busy in Estero de Plátano, working on various projects that include teaching English in the school there as well as teaching about care of the environment in the nearby college of Galeras. She has also been helping our scholarship students to adapt to being in college, and is planning with Saskia, another Yanapuma intern, to teach about the environment, health, recycling, etc in the school in Estero de Plátano.

May - June Photo Gallery

