

Stay up to date with all the news at Yanapuma!

A bimonthly newsletter

Issue No. 13: Sept-Oct 2009

Introduction

September and October have seen all of us at Yanapuma as busy as ever. The school has continued to hum with activity, although with fewer students than at the peak in July and August. But there have been regular excursions and activities to keep everybody occupied. We rallied all the international support we could to keep Ecuador's chances of qualifying for the World Cup next year in South Africa alive, but sadly they failed to qualify in the end.

On the academic side we continue to develop our methodology and methods, a process that Edison, our academic director reckons will take us up to a year to integrate fully into the teaching in the school. He has produced a synthesis of the various pedagogies that are relevant to our work overall as a foundation, which will form the basis for the development of specific methods of teaching Spanish. Some of these are already in place, but it will take time to propagate fully through our materials, as well as to work with the teachers to implant these methods.

The foundation has been very busy too, with volunteer and student groups from the USA and UK (see pages 2 & 3), as well as preparations for carrying out work funded ... *(continued right)*



Spanish School students explore above the snowline on Cotopaxi volcano

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by the Interamerican Foundation in Bua in 2010.

In Bua we finished the renovations for the new Integrated Health Center and inaugurated it with a ceremony along with the community (*see right*).

We are also grateful to have received several small donations this past two months for community projects (*see page 3*). In addition we have been shortlisted for funding by the UN Small Donations Program, which resulted in a field visit to Bua on 7 October. The community was very excited to receive them is enthusiastic about being able to start reforestation work. Now we have to wait with fingers crossed until late November for a response.

For more details of the foundation's work in September and October see pages 2 & 3.

We have also received a steady stream of volunteers for the Volunteer Ecuador program, for projects both in and outside of Quito.

Territorial Disputes

On 13 October a delegation of Tsa'chila from Bua went with Azalia, our Director of Projects to the offices of INDA (Instituto Nacional de Desarrollo Agrario) to try to resolve various land disputes occasioned by colonists who have invaded Tsa'chila territory recently. The invasions vary from a matter of several meters to tens of hectares. Unfortunately the visit to INDA proved futile as they demanded \$500 to even begin to investigate their claims, and we were left wondering just who INDA can help when, as a state body, they charge so much.

Although the outcome was frustrating, we smiled to ourselves - after having gone through such grief over the making of the map of Bua using GPS, all the accusations of how we were only doing it to sell their land from under them, or to allow the municipio to tax them, and nearly giving up on several occasions, the Tsa'chila of Bua now recognize what a powerful tool they have in their hands for the defence of their territory. Hopefully we can help them to resolve these disputes and maintain the integrity of the lands that were ceded to them.

Health Center Inaugurated!

On 3 October we were pleased to attend the inauguration of the new Integrated Health Center in Bua. This was attended by the community and its leaders, the school and a representative from the "Escuelas Saludables" initiative, interested in working with the local school with their program to promote healthy practices in schools



in the region.

The ribbon was cut by Alfonso Aguavil, director of the cultural center Shinopi Bolón.

The building will also offer a space for Giovanni to locate an office and space for local farmers to seek help and information. As part of our commitment to working in an integrated manner, we see agriculture, education, and health as closely tied together.

Project News . . .

Estero de Plátano

Water project

Yanapuma has teamed up with Fundación Agua Muisne to bring pure drinking water to the community of Estero de Plátano. Using an anonymous donation of \$1500 we have purchased the equipment to purify water from a local well. This will be sold through a micro-business for 25 cents for 25 liters (5 gallons), and given free to the local school. Agua Muisne will take care of all the practical issues – the set up, construction, training in managing a small enterprise. Yanapuma's role will be to prepare the community for this new Enterprise, promote the use of clean drinking water, and monitor the process to catch any problems before they get out of hand. We will take possession of the equipment in early November, and expect to start producing clean drinking water in January of 2010.

One last minute hitch surfaced when the person who offered to donate the land backed out at the last minute saying that his son was now planning to build a house there. But as we



always say—the process is the result—and we will continue working patiently with the community to define the best place to site the project which locals are beginning to get excited about.

Bua de los Tsa'chila

UN PPD Visit . . .

On 7 October a delegation from the UN PPD (Small Donations Program) visited Bua to talk with the community and Yanapuma about a proposed reforestation project that will also include a cacao and fruiting trees component. This project will extend beyond the borders of Bua itself and begin a process of working in a wider context to improve the environment of the area in general. There is a great need to improve water quality through protecting river banks and basins all over Santo Domingo. This area was thickly forested only 30 years ago but is now mostly cleared for agricultural production. We will have to wait with fingers crossed until late November to find out if our application has been successful.

Ongoing Monitoring . . .

Paulina continues to monitor the use and functioning of the ecological sanitation that we have installed in the school, cultural center and various families in the community of Bua. This will result in some small modifications to the design and materials used in the future. In general the projects have worked out very well, with just some minor teething troubles to sort out. As these installations have attracted a great deal of attention from surrounding communities and local authorities, we are determined to solve all the most minor issues to ensure that we can promote a reliable sanitation solution.

Bua de los Tsa'chila

Delivery of equipment to cacao project

On 24 September the association of cacao growers in Bua which has been carefully nurtured by Giovanni over the last year and a half took possession of new equipment designed to speed up management of their farms. The group of 3 promoters are actively engaged in training 3 small groups of Tsa'chila farmers in improved cacao production. At a presentation held on the day they demonstrated their success using PowerPoint to an assembled crowd which included a women's group that manages a community fund, and a reporter from a local TV station.

The work that Giovanni is achieving in Bua is beginning to attract the attention of farmers in other Tsa'chila communities, who are beginning to ask for our help. We are interested in expanding to other communities, but always aware of the need for a measured pace of development, taking time to work with the local population so that they appropriate the project for themselves.

Thinking Beyond Borders . . .

On 21 September a group of 17 students from Thinking Beyond Borders took up residence in Bua, living with local families for a month while they take part in a reforestation project.

Back in the spring Giovanni organized a group of families interested in reforestation to create small nurseries of native species, fruiting trees, cacao and timber trees. These were planted out on farms around the community as a first step in our reforestation efforts in Bua. The project is now attracting interest from other families who begin to see the benefits and we are hoping to be able to expand the program each year to protect the water courses of the community and reforest degraded soils. In this, the first year, the group planted around 6000 trees.

The idea is to develop an agroforestry model with mixed species that both help protect the environment and produce economic and nutritional benefit to each family. The families will also produce extra trees for sale, adding to their annual income.



Hosting students in their homes offers local families an extra source of income as well as the opportunity to share their culture and learn about the culture of their visitors. Most Tsa'chila have little idea about the world at large beyond what they might gather from watching TV, so having foreigners stay with them has proven a valuable experience for them. For the students too it is an immersion in a very different world well away from the creature comforts they are used to.

For Yanapuma it offers us the chance to introduce concepts in the areas of hygiene and nutrition to the host families, with a practical outcome.

Bua continued . . .

As the renovation of the health centre neared completion the local Ministry of Health arrived asking us to give them the building for their sole use. Aware that the last time a health center was created for Bua it never got used, we asked the community to decide what they wanted to do as the building is theirs. Fortunately they elected to reject the ministry's request and co-develop the centre with Yanapuma. We look forward to working with the community on health issues. Interesting to note— we wanted to make the sign in Tsa'fiki, but the Tsa'chila have no word in their language for health!

Staff, Students and Interns . . .**Kyle heads home . . .**

Kyle Muther, who has been with us as a member of the Foundation team for the past year, and before that as an intern in 2007, left us to return to the US where he will be able to spend time with his family and continue his studies. His efforts on behalf of Yanapuma have been much appreciated and he has been instrumental in moving the foundation forward during his time here. We thank him and wish him great success in the future. He will be replaced in November by Daniela Waldhorn from Chile.



Emily Burnett, after 8 months working as a volunteer group coordinator, returned to the US. We are grateful for all her hard work and skill in managing groups of volunteers in their work in the indigenous and marginal communities where they have been stationed. We wish her great success in the future.

Friederike Hoppe from Germany joined Yanapuma in September to work on publicity and promotion. She is involved in improving the school's website in English, French and German, promoting the school in Germany, developing new publicity materials and making a short video about the school.

Emilien Amblat and Veronica Auzias, from Ecôle d'Etudes



Politiques in Aix-en-Provence in France are working on the development of the eco-schools concept and on other projects in education in the communities of Bua and Estero de Plátano.



Tamasin Knight from England is working with us until December in the community of Bua, developing health promotion materials for women, children, and basic advice on how to treat common health problems and basic first aid, as well as giving classes in these topics.

Davis Courtney from the US spent 9 weeks working as a volunteer group leader for the LEAP group on their projects in Caimito, Bua and Chilcapamba.

Megan Bomba arrived in October to spend 4 months working on projects with Estero de Plátano. She is part of the Graduate Group in International Agricultural Development from UC Davis in California and will be working with the women's group as well as on the school's garden project.

Volunteer Groups . . .**LEAP in Ecuador . . .**

A group of volunteers from the LEAP UK spent 10 weeks in Ecuador during September and October. They started with 3 weeks in Bua working on reroofing the cultural center and other tasks. From there they went to Caimito on the Pacific coast, spending 3 weeks working on various projects including further construction of the new school and working on local farms to improve cacao production. Finally they went to Chilcapamba in the Andean sierra to work on community projects before spending a well deserved few final days relaxing on the beach in Montañita.

**Donations News . . .**

A Small Project Fund donation by Cliff Jones, who worked with us previously on the mapping project in Bua, will be used to fund the creation of a kitchen garden in the local school in Bua. Cliff made this donation for some good friends as a wedding present for their marriage in November.

An anonymous donation of \$1500 will go towards the clean drinking water project in Estero de Plátano (*see E de P news*).

A new scholarship for the children of Estero de Plátano was donated by Celine Soulard. This will allow another student to attend secondary school in the nearby college of Tonchigwe. Next year we hope to increase from 7 to 10 children funded.

A donation of \$25 from Tracy Allard will be added to our general donation fund.

A donation of \$120 by Victoria Rolfe will allow us to construct a medicinal garden outside the new health center in Bua de los Tsa'chila.

If you would like to make a donation, please see our Small Project Fund list at: www.yanapuma.org/en/smalldonations.php, or to make a general donation please visit: www.yanapuma.org/en/Donations.php

100% of your donation will go towards direct project costs!

Other News . . .

Sotogrande International School in Spain have committed a total of \$15,000 of funding for the coming year. This will be split between earned income from the online classes that we are conducting with some of their international students, and project funding for projects that will promote exchange and involvement for their students with our work in Ecuador.

In addition to our daily tasks we continue to work on our strategic plan for the next 3 years in both the Spanish school and the Foundation. With the help of Klaus in Alicante, Spain, we are near finishing the financial plan.

Yanapuma Foundation Newsletter

September & October Photo Gallery

