

# BUENA ONDA

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF PROJECTS ABROAD ARGENTINA



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## BIENVENIDOS!

When I was a boy growing up, we had several gardens around our old house. The largest one of all was used just for growing potatoes.

I can still remember those potato planting days. The whole family helped. After my Dad had tilled the soil, my Mom, brothers, and I went to work. It was my job to drop the little seed potatoes in the rows while my Mom dropped handfuls of fertilizer beside them. My brothers then covered them all with the freshly turned earth.



For months afterward I would glance over at the garden, while I played outside and wonder what was going on underneath the ground. When the harvest time came I was amazed at the huge size of the potatoes my Dad pulled out of the soil. Those little seedlings had grown into bushels and bushels of sweet sustenance. They would be turned into meal after meal of baked potatoes, mashed potatoes, fried potatoes, and my personal favorite: potatoes slow cooked in spaghetti sauce. They would keep the entire family well fed throughout the whole year. It truly was a miracle to behold.

Thinking back on those special times makes me wonder how many other seeds I have planted in this life that has grown unseen in the hearts and minds of others. How many times has God used some little thing that I said or did to grow something beautiful? How many times has Heaven used these little seedlings to provide another's soul with sweet sustenance?

Every single day of our lives we step out into the garden of this world. Every single day we plant seeds that can grow into something wonderful. We may never see the growth that comes from the kind words or loving acts we share but God does. I hope then that you always tend the garden around you with care. I hope that you plant only goodness, peace, and compassion in the lives of everyone you meet. I hope that every day you help miracles to grow.

Un abrazo para todos!  
Guillermo Cogorno  
Country Director

## PROJECT UPDATES

### WELCOME MARCIA!

I take this opportunity to introduce myself. My name is Marcia de Ocaña. I'm a new member of the Law & Human Rights office staff. I will work alongside the volunteers as Legal Assistant.

I am a lawyer and before coming to Projects Abroad, worked before in the Legal Area of another NGO in Córdoba. I also took part in the legal investigation of human rights crimes during the last dictatorship period in Argentina while I was doing an internship in the Human Rights Secretary of the Federal Court in Córdoba.



Those experiences made me so interested in this field, and that is one of the reasons why I love what we at Projects Abroad. The other motive is because of the challenge that this job represents: if we work together we will find the way to empower the people in order to they can get themselves solutions to their main legal and human rights issues. I hope 2014 be a fantastic year for us, and I'm sure that we will do our best effort to achieve these goals. Thank you very much!

### SUMMER SCHOOL!



Though school is out for the summer, teaching volunteers still had the opportunity to do some teaching. A summer school has been set up at the Los Pimpollos placement, inviting all the neighborhood children to afternoon English lessons. The school started at the beginning of January and has attracted a large number of neighborhood children that came to learn English in a fun way. The children are eager to practice what they have learned when a new volunteer starts! Great work to the volunteers!

### ANIMAL SURGERIES

In January our medical volunteers have had a unique opportunity to observe animal surgeries at a local veterinary clinic. This experience has allowed the volunteers to see something completely different – something that they definitely would not see in the hospitals where they work! Last week they observed the castration of a female dog. The veterinarian explained in detail each step of the procedure and volunteers were able to help at different moments.

Volunteers who are doing the Veterinary program also help out in these surgeries, as part of their placement is working 3 times a week at a veterinary clinic in Córdoba!





## NEW CARE PLACEMENT

At the start of the new year we began working with a new Care placement here in Córdoba. The Centro de Cuidados Infatiles Juana Azurduy is a daycare center located in a marginal neighborhood of Córdoba. It was opened 20 years ago with the purpose of not only providing children from low income families with good food, but also caring for them and helping them as they grow.

The children that attend the center are between the ages 1-12 years old. There are two shifts of work, and volunteers will work in one of the two shifts. The children that come in the morning receive breakfast when they arrive and eat lunch before they leave. The children that come in the afternoons receive lunch and later the afternoon a snack before leaving.

In the month of January the center is closed for summer vacations. However our Projects Abroad volunteers have stepped in to open the center daily in the afternoon to provide the neighborhood children a safe place to play and to give them a nutritious snack. Our volunteers organize various activities for the children – from water balloons, painting, crafts and different sports. They serve a snack to the children before leaving.

There has been an excellent turnout from the neighborhood children to the center. Both volunteers and the children are all very happy! Great work guys!



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## VOLUNTEER STORIES

### CAMILLE SCHOALLERT BELGIUM EQUINE THERAPY & CARE

18 year old Camille Schoallert first learned about Argentina while studying Spanish in high school in Belgium. She was intrigued by the people, language and the diverse landscapes that she saw in photos and knew that one day she would like to discover Argentina for herself. When she finished high school, she decided to take the opportunity to travel and volunteer before entering university. She landed in Córdoba in September, ready for a 4-month adventure working in the Equine Therapy and Care projects.

Camille became interested in the Equine Therapy project after reading about it online and



speaking with former volunteers at an information session held by Projects Abroad in Belgium. Though she had never ride a horse before, Camille was happy to learn that she could still help in the Equine Therapy program in Córdoba.

The Fundación Cordobesa de Equinoterapia works with children and adults of varying physical and mental disabilities to improve their lifestyles by doing physical therapy while on horseback. Every day at the center has been a learning experience for Camille. Her daily responsibilities at the center included cleaning the stables, grooming the horses and preparing them for the lessons. Once the students arrive, Camille steps in to help with the lessons, standing alongside the horses to help support the students or to guide the horse.

“Veronica (the director) gives us a lot of responsibility and freedom. It is really nice because it shows that she trusts us. We are

able to create the lessons for the students, but we know that Vero is nearby to help when needed.”

“The experience overall has been very rewarding,” says Camille, “I think that the students are making more of an impact on me, than I am on them,” she adds. “In the short time that I have been here, I have seen the students evolve and grow from our work with them on a weekly

basis. It is really amazing.”

While it is hard to pinpoint the most memorable moment of her experience thus far, Camille told of one of her favorite moments, “When I was working with an autistic boy who didn’t want to get on the horse for the lesson, I stayed with him and began playing catch and making contact with him to build his trust. After a while I could eventually get him on the horse. Simply by talking to and playing with him, he calmed down. It turned out to be a really nice lesson.”



While ever day at the center has been a learning experience for Camille, her biggest piece of advice to other volunteers is to take initiative! She adds; “Veronica is not always going to tell you what to do. It is important that you look for things to do – whether it is cleaning a horse stable or jumping in to help a class when they are short of a volunteer. There is always something to do. Don’t be afraid to ask a question, that’s the only way

to learn.”

Though still not sure what to study when she returns to Belgium, Camille would like to continue working with people with disabilities back home. She has learned the value of patience, teamwork, responsibility and initiative which are all valuable lessons that will help guide her to a successful future!



# VOLUNTEERS IN ACTION

