

BUENA ONDA

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF PROJECTS ABROAD ARGENTINA



WHAT'S INSIDE

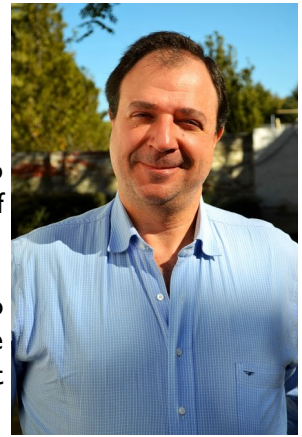
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BIENVENIDOS!

Top five regrets of the dying

A nurse recorded the most common regrets of the dying, and among the top ones is; "I wish I hadn't worked so hard". What would your biggest regret be if this was your last day of life?

There was no mention of more sex or bungee jumps. A palliative nurse who counseled the dying in their last days revealed the most common regrets we have at the end of our lives. Among the top, from men in particular, was 'I wish I hadn't worked so hard'.



Bronnie Ware is an Australian nurse, who spent several years working in palliative care, caring for patients in the last 12 weeks of their lives.

Ware writes of the phenomenal clarity of vision that people gain at the end of their lives, and how we might learn from their wisdom. "When questioned about any regrets they had or anything they would do differently," she says, "common themes surfaced again and again."

Here are the top five regrets of the dying, as witnessed by Ware:

1. I wish I'd had the courage to live a life true to myself, not the life others expected of me.

"This was the most common regret of all. When people realise that their life is almost over and look back clearly on it, it is easy to see how many dreams have gone unfulfilled. Most people had not honoured even a half of their dreams and had to die knowing that it was due to choices they had made, or not made. Health brings a freedom very few realise, until they no longer have it."

2. I wish I hadn't worked so hard.

"This came from every male patient that I nursed. They missed their children's youth and their partner's companionship. Women also spoke of this regret, but as most were from an older generation, many of the female patients had not been breadwinners. All of the men I nursed deeply regretted spending so much of their lives on the treadmill of a work existence."

3. I wish I'd had the courage to express my feelings.

"Many people suppressed their feelings in order to keep peace with others. As a result, they settled for a mediocre existence and never became who they were truly capable of becoming. Many developed illnesses relating to the bitterness and resentment they carried as a result."

4. I wish I had stayed in touch with my friends.

"Often they would not truly realise the full benefits of old friends until their dying weeks and it was not always possible to track them down. Many had become so caught up in their own lives that they had let golden friendships slip by over the years. There were many deep regrets about not giving friendships the time and effort that they deserved. Everyone misses their friends when they are dying."

5. I wish that I had let myself be happier.

"This is a surprisingly common one. Many did not realise until the end that happiness is a choice. They had stayed stuck in old patterns and habits. The so-called 'comfort' of familiarity overflowed into their emotions, as well as their physical lives. Fear of change had them pretending to others, and to their selves, that they were content, when deep within, they longed to laugh properly and have silliness in their life again."

What's your greatest regret so far and what will you set out to achieve or change before you die?

Un abrazo para todos!
Guillermo Cogorno

PROJECT UPDATES



DENTAL HYGIENE DAY

On Friday November 22nd, medicine volunteer Jan Kleefeldt (Germany) visited the Ricardo Nassif Primary School to give a lesson on dental hygiene to a classroom of 10-year old children. With the help of volunteer coordinators Roman and Natalia, the activity was organized in an informative yet fun way for the kids to learn the importance of brushing their teeth. The first activity tested the kid's knowledge on what foods and drinks are good or bad for their teeth. By looking at pictures the kids had to decide yes or no, as to if it was something they should or should not eat; Coca Cola or water?

fruits or chocolate? Most of the kids knew what was better for their teeth, but for some answers we did have to explain.

Next, some kids came forward to show how they brush their teeth using a large toothbrush and mouth that the medicine volunteers prepared the day before. Finally, the kids completed a short quiz to see what they had learned in the activity. The kids were really silent while Jan graded the tests, all eager to see how they did. To congratulate all for their participation and to encourage them to keep on brushing correctly, we handed out toothbrushes to all the students, as well as a calendar so that they can keep track of when they brush their teeth. The kids were really excited to have an international visitor.

We hope that they will remember the importance of proper dental hygiene, and that the task of brushing their teeth will become a normal habit so that they can preserve their teeth!



DIRTY DAY AT EL VAGÓN



On Saturday November 30th, we held a dirty day activity at the El Vagón Community Center. El Vagón is a community center that provides a safe place to play, sports, after school activities and meals to the community where they are located. They receive very little to no funding from the government and depend heavily on donations and fundraising, much of which they do on their own. Projects Abroad started working with El Vagón about one and a half

months ago and for a while now they have wanted to make improvements to the center. It worked out well that our Projects Abroad volunteers could help make this happen!

There were 7 volunteers in total who participated and when we arrived we saw that we certainly had our work cut out for us! Some volunteers got



started sanding and preparing for painting an old large storage container that was once used as the center's main office. Many years ago the container was set on fire, leaving the outside surface showing parts where it was burned and rusted. When it was ready to be painted, volunteers started coating the surface with white paint. It was pretty impressive the difference of the before and after!



The other half of the volunteers worked on painting old tires that were going to be used for two purposes. About 15 tires were painted in bright colors and will be used for flower pots throughout the back garden where the kids play. The other tires, about 24 in total, were used as a border to line a new sandbox that was made for the kids. After the space was dug for the tires, the volunteers painted them bright colors.

The volunteers worked really hard - MUCHAS GRACIAS to all who participated!! The day was a great success!

LAW & HUMAN RIGHTS FUNDRAISER



The Law and Human Rights office has been working with the residents of Blas Pascal, a peripheral community of government and makeshift housing established in 2009. The volunteers work with the community to help educate and empower the neighbors in their goals to help improve their community and their quality of life.

In the months of October and November, the community saw escalated crime in the neighborhood, causing concern amongst the neighbors for their safety. At a weekly community meeting in October, one of the topics of discussion was that of the purchase and installation of a community alarm to help advise neighbors of robberies in the neighborhood while at the same time working at preventing crime.

The project of the community alarm was headed by volunteer Vicente Biancardi da Camara (UK). His fluency in Spanish, friendly and easygoing character allowed him to easily communicate with the neighbors about the progress of the plan for the alarm. He, along with other volunteers went door to door explaining the idea of the alarm hoping to get more people on board.

When the idea was initially proposed, community members were not convinced by the idea, finding it to be an expensive investment. However, after more discussions and continued crime, more neighbors became concerned



about how to secure their neighborhood. Vicente and the community members studied the maps of the Blas Pascal community to work out the logistics of the area the alarm would cover and how many were needed, depending on the amount of neighbors that wanted the alarm.

Getting the neighbors on board wasn't necessarily an easy task, but by the end of November there were enough neighbors on board to purchase two alarms. Though the volunteers had hoped more neighbors would participate, they are satisfied with this result and are hopeful that perhaps more community members will be interested in purchasing the alarm once they see that their neighbors have it.

The final step in this process is now the installation of the alarms. Rather than to ask the community members to help pay for the costs, the Vicente and the other Human Rights volunteers organized a fundraising activity to collect the money needed to install the alarm. Last week they were busy cooking alfajores in the Projects Abroad office and on Friday December 13th they set out in the community to sell them. Two groups of volunteers canvassed the neighborhood and businesses near the office, while Vicente was thinking creatively, proposed the idea to sell the alfajores in the buses of Córdoba, a high-traffic place where there are always hungry people!

So on Friday Vicente and Annabelle (France) hit the bus stop waiting to get on the bus. The first challenge was to get the bus driver to allow them to get on the bus and sell the alfajores (you always have to ask permission from the driver). After a few no's, one driver let them on the bus and Vicente gave a short speech to explain to the passengers why they were selling the alfajores. There were many interested passengers and in the first bus they sold about 7 alfajores!

Within about one and a half hours all the alfajores were sold, rising a total of \$800 pesos to cover the cost of the installation of the alarm. Muchas Gracias to all who participated and to Vicente for his excellent work from start to finish in the project of the community alarm in the Blas Pascal community!

ACTIVITY OF THE MONTH

Each month we highlight an activity that volunteers have done in their care placements as a way to show future/current volunteers some fun activities that they can do with the kids!

Toilet Paper Roll activities

With an empty paper toilet or paper towel roll and a bit of creative imagination, you can pretty much make anything. At our various care placements volunteers have done various arts and crafts activities with the kids using toilet paper rolls.

From butterflies and angels with the girls, to race cars, rockets and



VOLUNTEER STORIES

DANIELLE VOIGT
(TEACHING, 3 MONTHS)
CURAÇAO

For the past 3 months, I've been working at Saint Mark's English Institute in Córdoba, Argentina and it has been one of the best experiences I've ever had. Saint Mark's is a school, where children and students come to learn English and eventually get their First Certificate in English (the Cambridge English system). The difference between English Institutes and 'normal' schools is that the students come specifically to learn English, while they have various subjects in 'regular' primary or secondary school.



As a volunteer at Saint Mark's, I worked from Monday to Thursday starting at 3 o'clock and finishing at 8:30 at night. Students from the age of 7 to 19 come to the institute twice a week for about two hours to practice their English.

My job was to help the teacher during classes by answering questions, checking exams and explaining or doing one on one speaking exercises with students. The teachers need to stick to the syllabus in order to deal with all the necessary topics for the exams, but apart from grammar, speaking exercises, listening and writing there was also plenty of time to do other activities, such as games, presentations and activities with music and film. When I first came to Saint Mark's I did a presentation about Curaçao, where I'm from. Most of the students had never heard of it and they couldn't believe that I lived on an island, which has less than 150.000 inhabitants (seeing that about 1.3 million people live in the province of Córdoba). After this, the students prepared presentations and told me all about the different parts of Argentina. We also did some listening exercises with music for specific grammar topics. When we were dealing with conditional sentences, the students listened to Beyoncé's "If I were a boy" among other songs and they had to fill in the missing words to practice the conditionals. As it was something different from the booklet they



usually work with, they were really enthusiastic. If you mix the activities you want to do with the topics the students are dealing with, you'll be able to do a lot of fun things!

Saint Mark's organised events frequently. During my time at the school, we celebrated Student's day, Teacher's day and Halloween by having a party at the school and doing other activities with the kids. The school really makes an effort to organise happenings for the students and to make it as fun as possible.

The teachers were very welcoming and were always willing to help me prepare activities or answer any questions that I may have had. As a volunteer you will be helping the teacher most of the times, but I really liked that the teachers sometimes let me lead a class or deal with specific topics. All in all, working at Saint Mark's has truly been an amazing experience and I'd recommend it to anyone who's thinking about doing a teaching project here in Córdoba.

VOLUNTEERS IN ACTION

