

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER

For Projects Abroad Argentina



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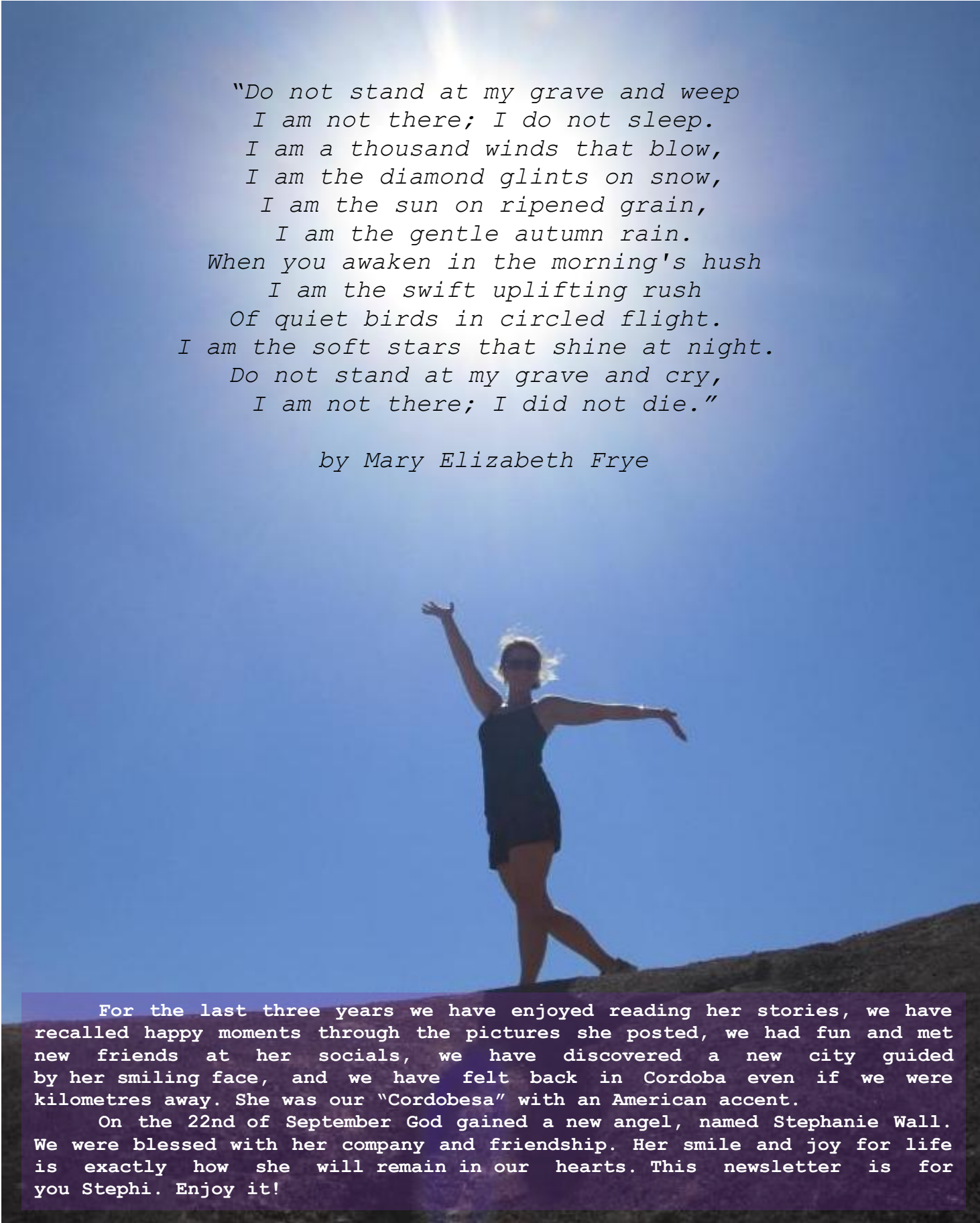
ProjectsAbroad

EDITORIAL

Country Director's Note - Inés Mariani

*"Do not stand at my grave and weep
I am not there; I do not sleep.
I am a thousand winds that blow,
I am the diamond glints on snow,
I am the sun on ripened grain,
I am the gentle autumn rain.
When you awaken in the morning's hush
I am the swift uplifting rush
Of quiet birds in circled flight.
I am the soft stars that shine at night.
Do not stand at my grave and cry,
I am not there; I did not die."*

by Mary Elizabeth Frye



For the last three years we have enjoyed reading her stories, we have recalled happy moments through the pictures she posted, we had fun and met new friends at her socials, we have discovered a new city guided by her smiling face, and we have felt back in Cordoba even if we were kilometres away. She was our "Cordobesa" with an American accent.

On the 22nd of September God gained a new angel, named Stephanie Wall. We were blessed with her company and friendship. Her smile and joy for life is exactly how she will remain in our hearts. This newsletter is for you Stephi. Enjoy it!

STAFF PRESENTATION



Natalia Gómez

Naty is 29 years old she was born and raised in Córdoba where she obtained a Degree in Tourism in 2010 and has been working in the travel and hospitality industry ever since. She travelled through South and Central America for almost two years before becoming the new Projects Abroad office assistant in Argentina. She loves Latin American literature, almost all kinds of music, weekend trips, sightseeing and spending time with her friends.

Sol Baldi

Hello everyone! My name is Sol. I am Projects Abroad Argentina's new Communications Officer. Here's a little bit about me: I'm 22 years old, I was born in Cordoba, but when I was little my family moved to Argentina's capital, Buenos Aires. While there, I went to university and got my degree in Advertising and Corporate Communications. Once I finished university, I planned to travel for a few months, making Cordoba my first destination. I spent about two months working at my cousin's hostel. There was something



about Cordoba that really attracted me, and made me feel at home, so, I decided to settle down here. I love meeting new people, learning about other cultures, travelling, music and animals.

VOLUNTEERS IN ACTION



COMMUNITY DAY

Clothes collection for Foundation G.A.N.A.S

Our Human Rights volunteers came up with the idea of collecting clothes, shoes and powdered milk around the neighbourhood of Cerro de Las Rosas, with the aim of donating everything to the foundation G.A.N.A.S, an organisation which provides homeless people of Córdoba with free meals and basic assistance.

The project started on Monday the 6th. We gathered in our office in order to prepare some posters to help us explain to the community about Projects Abroad and the foundation. The volunteers finished this really quickly, so we had time to start walking around the neighbourhood to tell people about the collection.

We divided into two groups; each group having at least one volunteer who could speak fluent Spanish. Volunteers were really motivated with this project! I had to accompany them only for a block before they started doing it on their own. Surprisingly, some houses already had some clothes separated to donate, but didn't know where to take them. We found out that most of the neighbours didn't open their doors, probably because it was around 3pm, typical Argentine "siesta" time, so we left flyers in most of the houses' mailboxes.





On Wednesday we had some other volunteers come to help. We continued asking the neighbours for donations. Also, Shaun, an exchange coordinator visiting us from South Africa joined us! We had a really good time while we walked through the neighbourhood. Shaun doesn't know Spanish, but he knocked the doors and said "¡Hola! ¡Colecta de ropa para gente de la calle!"

Thursday afternoon we continued handing out the flyers around the neighbourhood. This time we just left them in the mailboxes so that we get to as many houses as possible. We decided to leave some more days for people to collect the donations. The final clothes collection was carried out the following week. We were surprised by the amount of donations received. Handing out flyers was very successful, since a lot of people have seen them and collected their clothes for us.

The following week we went downtown to "La Merced" square. Each Tuesday and Thursday, people from the Foundation go there to give out dinner to people living in the streets.

We carried all the donations in a car, then gathered people in small groups and asked them which clothes they needed the most. We gave out a lot of clothes to homeless men, women and kids. However, we kept some donations for next week. Hopefully we will be able to help some more people who need it as well.



VOLUNTEER STORIES

Sophie Stiekema - The Netherlands

After having travelled for more than twenty-six hours, I finally arrived in Cordoba. I hadn't slept on the plane but I couldn't feel the lack of sleep as the excitement rushed through me. I was nervous to be so far away from home, but at the same time, happy, as a whole new world would open up to me. I met my host family a little later: a mother, father and their son, who offer four rooms to all kinds of travellers.

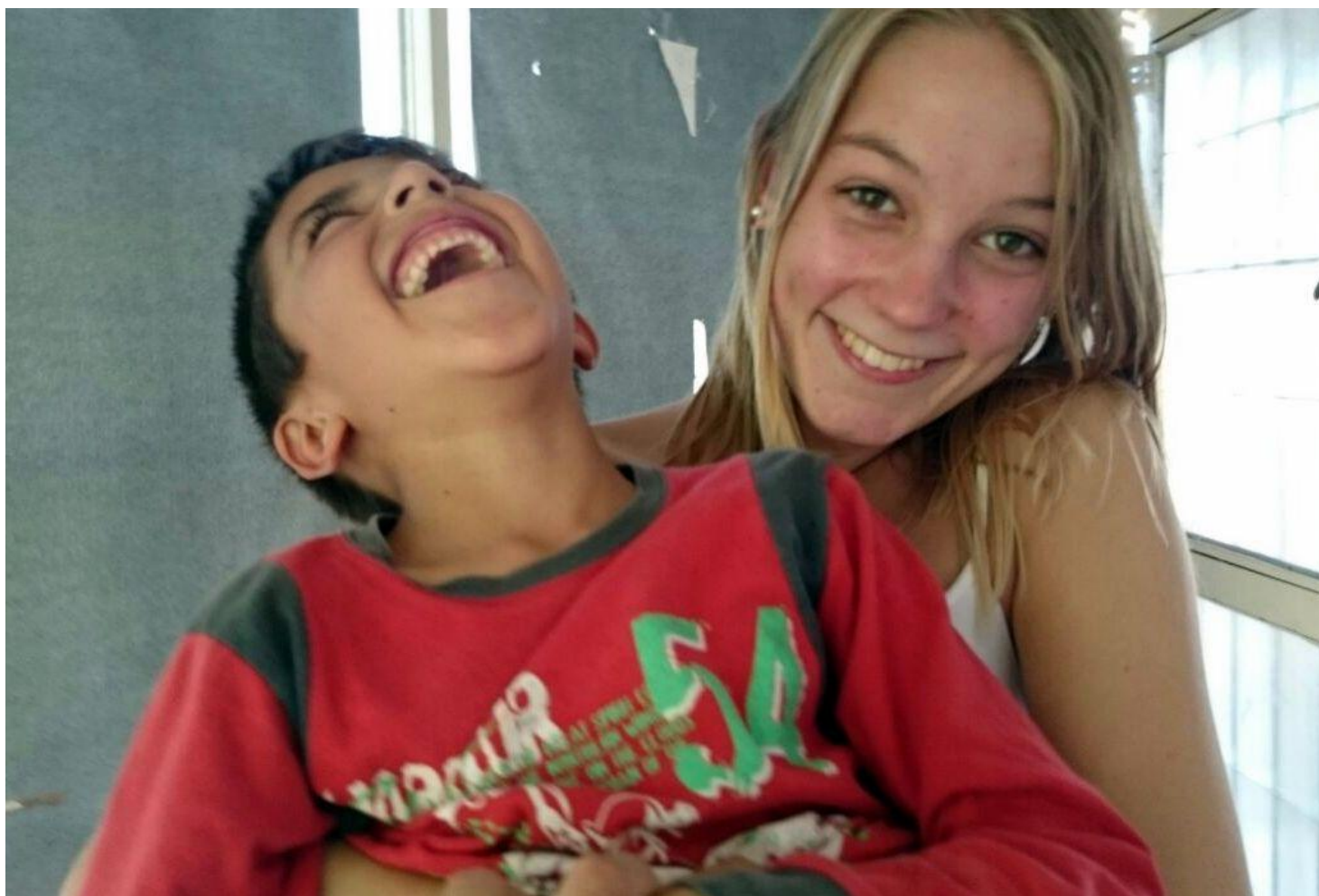
The next day, a Projects Abroad staff member came to pick me up and showed me the town. Cordoba is beautiful; it's a big crowded city with loads of students. It's not very modern but the city has charm. We ate a typical meal: pork with sweet potato fries. As a desert, I felt like trying something local, but I didn't know what I chose as it was in Spanish. It turned out it was a chunk of cheese with a piece of weird jelly-marmalade, the taste of which is indescribable.

So, after my induction day, I started my volunteering at Copa de Leche. It is kind of a day care where children come to have an afternoon snack and play. They play football, draw, colour and some other games. After that, they should clean up and wash their hands but they're always reluctant to do that. Some children are really sweet and offered to help, but some of them are naughtier. I've bonded with some girls, they are really cute and one of them made me drawings and tried writing my name and another one even bought me some candy! That really touched me because these children do not have a lot of money and then they spend it on buying a present for their friends. That's really beautiful.



I tried to give all the children affection but not all of them want it. Some are eager to learn new things and are very interested in other countries, so they ask a lot of questions about me. Others keep their distance and keep to themselves. Towards six o'clock, the children should leave but a few often stick around. It's heart-breaking to see them leave as they go home by themselves without any supervision, and it doesn't feel right as in Europe you would never see a five year old walk on the streets alone.

After a month of work, we came up with a plan to give healthier food to the children. At this time, they receive cookies, crackers with jam, cake and chocolate milk with a lot of sugar. My idea was to replace those snacks with fruits and vegetables. So the next week we carried out a presentation about healthy food and the consequences of "bad" food. Instead of cookies and chocolate milk with sugar we gave them fruit salad, nuts, dried fruit, and once even pizza as we decided that once a week we can give them something 'not so healthy'. To drink we abolished adding any sugar and gave them either yogurt or low calorie orange juice. The children did not always respond happily, they didn't always finish the snack but I think they are adapting.



When I asked a child what he wanted to eat the next day he said "salad! So, I think that after explaining the effects of healthy and non-healthy food for the body, the children will adjust to eating vegetables as a snack.

For Europeans this might seem normal but in Argentina, everyone is very used to consuming large amounts of sugar, in fact there are these shops called "kioskos" on every block that sell chocolate, candy, cookies and other sweets.

It will be a challenge to get these children to eat all of the healthy food but I really hope that this will continue even after I leave.

I am thinking about volunteering at the human rights project for a time. I think there I will be able to help and make more of an impact as that's what I came here to do. I'm having a great time in Argentina. I think my volunteering is going very well, I made a lot of friends, and my Spanish is getting better every day!

VOLUNTEER STORIES

Noortje Vanger - The Netherlands

This story began in September, when Noortje started her volunteering in the dog shelter "Refugio Revivir". Noortje is a 19 year old animal lover from the Netherlands, currently studying to become a veterinary assistant. She came to Argentina to get international experience for her career, and maybe to take a dog back home.

During her time volunteering at the shelter, she carried out several tasks, including cleaning the dog cages and helping to maintain the placement. The shelter holds more than 200 dogs in total, which are kept in kennels and are provided with their necessary daily food. Some dogs stay there for years, waiting for a family that may or may never come. Some of them, like Nacho, are luckier and stay just for a little while.

Noortje saw in Nacho the "perfect dog". He is a one year old puppy, with a shy and quiet personality, which has to get really confident to let someone get near. Due to this, Noortje bonded with him in a very special way and decided to take him home with her once she finished her volunteering.

This wasn't easy at all as there were lots of requirements that Noortje had to meet to be able to take Nacho to Holland: a microchip, a kennel, vaccinations, a health certificate, and a special authorization from the CENASA authorities. Although getting everything done was hard and stressful for Noortje, she finally could get everything ready to take Nacho home and make him part of her family for the rest of his life!

