

UBUNTU



- "Ubuntu" is an ancient African word, meaning "humanity to others".
Ubuntu also means "I am who I am because of/through other people".

Projects Abroad South African Newsletter

December 2010



Above: The Christmas Party held at one of Projects Abroad care projects - Where Rainbows Meet in Vrygrond (Clockwise from top-left: Sarah Wegner – German, Alex Giles – German, Apolline Chaize – French, Jean Pierre Gauthier – French.)

Contents

Cape Town Christmas Party	<i>by Jean Pierre Gauthier</i>	2
Volunteer of the Month	<i>by Lyndon Metembo and by Deen Singh</i>	3-5
PAHRO's first Conference	<i>by Laura Rodgers</i>	6-7
Updates from Projects	Journalism Office Update <i>by Caroline Wegner</i>	8
	Human Rights Office Update <i>by Sarah Wegner</i>	9-11
From Italy to Cape Town	Director's experience in Cape Town <i>by Simona Eco</i>	12-13
Place of Interest	The Noon Gun <i>by Gisela Madden</i>	14
South African Cuisine	Mielie Bread	15
Connect With Us...	Follow us on Facebook, MyTripBlog and Twitter	16
Volunteer Contact List	Get in touch with other volunteers in Cape Town	17-20

Les petits bouts d'Apolline



– by Jean Pierre Gauthier (FRA, 3 months)

Cela se passe au pied de la montagne de la table, entre océan indien et atlantique dans cette magnifique ville du Cap tout au bout de l'Afrique. Mais cela se passe aussi dans un 'township' ces quartiers où les maisons sont faites de tôles, de planches disjointes où l'hygiène, la propreté sont des luxes que peu de personnes peuvent s'offrir.

Nous sommes ce samedi 11 décembre 2010 à la crèche de ce quartier 'Capricorn', construite elle aussi de bricks et de brocs avec des vieux containers agencés en classes et qui chaque jour accueillent quarante huit enfants. Et aujourd'hui c'est la fête 'Christmas Day'. Apolline travaille ici, elle est l'une des volontaire de l'association Projects Abroad, comme Elena, Serina et Colin. Elle nous avait dit, "venez voir mes petits bouts, ils sont si mignons..." et nous y sommes allés Cathy, Vincent et moi.



Above: Apolline Chaize (FRA, 2 months)



A peine arrivés ce fut pour nous un choc. Que d'émotions! Très vite, ils venaient dans nos bras ou sur nos épaules, nous faisaient des démonstrations de danse....De leurs regards pétillants affectueux coulait de la tendresse. Nous avons joué dansé avec eux, le bonheur était pour nous. Une autre association avait apporté des jouets et des boissons et des sandwiches. C'était la fête dans ce petit coin du monde si loin du bien être, de notre société dite



de consommation. Ils nous ont emmenés sur un chemin où le bon heur nait de rien.

Merci les petits bouts de rien, bouts d'entrain, bouts caresses, bouts tendresses, bouts d'amour sans retour. J'ai a soixante huit ans reçu le plus beau cadeau de Noël comme quoi il faut savoir attendre.



Jean Pierre Gauthier

Volunteer of the Month

November: Laura Rodgers

(Human Rights, 2 Months, Nationality: British)

Laura has been an absolute asset to the Projects Abroad Human Rights office and has exemplified what it is to be an excellent volunteer. She has shown a remarkable amount of independent initiative, has a very good work ethic and demonstrates strong leadership ability. Because of this she has been awarded 'Volunteer of the Month.' She demonstrated and continues to demonstrate her skills as a hard working and diligent volunteer. Her confidence and strong personality mixed with dedication to the chosen field of interest serves as a motivation not only to her fellow volunteers but also to the staff at the PAHRO office.



Laura (27) is a British volunteer who studied at the University of Sheffield and did her postgraduate work at the University of Nottingham. Before joining us as a PRO-Volunteer, Laura worked as the Equal Pay Officer at the Nottingham City Council. Since she joined us she has been involved with several projects two of the prominent being Siyakhathala in Khayelitsha and the development and hosting of a Conference on Violent Crime in South Africa.



Siyakhathala Care & Support is a community based project staffed with experienced childcare workers and volunteers operating in Khayelitsha. They are currently operating in 8 Primary Schools in five areas namely where they focus on assisting child headed households, vulnerable and abused children.

With one full-time staff member and 6 volunteers, systems needed to be put in place to ensure that the work that Siyakhathala does is done in the most efficient and effective manner. Laura, together with support from fellow volunteer Darlene, developed systems that can now be used in the organisation.

With 200 children and counting, these systems are not only needed but also has a positive impact that reverberates throughout the community. The following are examples of how this system has in fact impacted the community - from teachers being taught how to identify children that are neglected, to social workers who can reach families quicker because of the referral systems that Siyakhathala.

Having arrived in October, Laura was keen to put her skills at organising conferences to good use. Based on discussions with Theo Kamwimbi she embarked on the challenging task of arranging a conference in one month. The conference entitled, Violent Crime in South Africa, took place on the 29th of November with MEC Albert Fritz and Judge Vincent Saldanha the two keynote speakers.

Recognizing the fact that communities are often under-represented at conferences of this nature, she undertook to involve and include various community sectors in the conference either through direct invitation or through Community Focus Groups where communities were given the opportunity to give their opinions on crime and the violent nature thereof. PAHRO partners in Lavender Hill, Manenberg and Khayelitsha were approached to assist with the focus groups and the feedback was then incorporated into the conference. By undertaking this initiative, Laura has established a platform for further discussion and research that the PAHRO office will take further in the future. Her dedication and commitment has set an example and a standard for other volunteers, making her the natural recipient of this honour.

Social Justice Coordinator: Lyndon Metembo



December:

Andrew Friedenbergl, Rick Milderbrath, Alex Albeck & Lutz Stuke

Building Project

**Andrew: American (3 months), Rick: German (3 months),
Lutz: German (3 months), Alex: American (2 months)**

Teamwork, where the sense of *brotherhood, tolerance* and most of all *genuine respect* for one another is integral, is one of the rare cornerstones of a successful society. Andrew (USA), Rick (Germany), Lutz (Germany) and Alex (USA) have displayed these qualities not only on the building site but also to other volunteers and staff.

In 2010 Bernadine Thomas opened a Community Centre situated in Village Heights, an informal settlement with no proper infrastructure. Bernie together with her husband Edward have had a huge task in hand to assist and care for the needs of the families around her. The problems Bernie faces each day ranges from children being victims of severe abuse and neglect, woman being raped and beaten and teenagers being victims of drugs and alcohol abuse. Bernie's sheer determination and willingness to assist the community have given us, the building team at Projects Abroad, the determination and drive to assist her in the construction of buildings structures to cater for the needs of the community. We are presently working on the completion of an Eco-friendly solid sandbag building structure. Our next project is to construct a building with a proper toilet and washing facility (the first in the area). With a huge task in hand and with no support from the local council or the community, the building team at Projects Abroad are in full force to achieve this.

Well done to:

Andrew for your warm, sensitive, hardworking and very accommodating character.

Rick, they say that dynamite comes in small packages. Wow! I admire your enormous strength, hardworking and friendly character. The team work towards the completion of the building especially the plastering and the roofing have left a lasting mark!

Alex, What can I say! You have displayed an impeccable sense of caring not only to us on the building site but to Bernie's family. You have left a lasting impression of caring for the lives of this family.

Lutz, Your contribution of plastering and roofing have assisted to finish off the last bits of the building. Thank you for your respect, hard work and leadership qualities you have displayed. It is an absolute pleasure to have you stay longer at the building project. You have also been awarded the position of a site foreman. I know and trust that your leadership qualities including your respect and hardworking

attributes will be a great influence to the future volunteers assigned to the building project.

Thank you guys for the respect and the sincere gratitude you expressed towards Projects Abroad South Africa, and I am pleased with the skills and experience you have learnt.

I am proud of you. Keep it up!

*Building Project
Manager: Deen Singh*



*Teamwork: (From left) Rick Milderbrath, Andrew Friedenber
(USA), Lutz Stuke (German) & Alex Albeck (USA)*

PAHRO's first conference

– by *Laura Rodger (UK, 2 months)*



PAHRO convened their first conference on Monday 29th November, held at the Centre for African Studies in the University of Cape Town. The conference focused on the issue of violent crime in South Africa and PAHRO were pleased to welcome the Provincial Minister for Community Safety, MEC Albert Fritz, and Judge of the Western Cape High Court, Justice Vincent Saldanha, as keynote speakers. They were joined by Dr Majorie Jobson (National Director, Khulumani Support Group), Jody Fredericks (Legal Adviser, Women's Legal Centre) and Sarah Crawford-Browne (Clinical Social Worker, University of Cape Town). The conference attracted around 70 participants who enjoyed a full day of keynote presentations and discussion panels.

The conference was convened by Laura Rodgers (PAHRO Professional Volunteer), Lyndon Metembo (PAHRO Social Justice Coordinator) and Theodore Kamwimbi (PAHRO Manager) in response to a call for research into the area of violent crime by the National Minister of Police, Mr. Mthethwa. This request coincided with the Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation presenting a long-awaited report on violent crime to government and high profile murder cases being covered in the national and international media.



Laura and Lyndon recognised the need to address issues of violent crime at a community level and held focus groups in Lavender Hill, Manenberg and Khayelitsha, questioning community members on the nature of violent crime in their community, their opinion on why crime is so violent and their recommendations for improving the crime rates in their area. These focus groups were recorded and key comments were relayed to the conference participants and MEC Fritz for comment and discussion.

The conference generated much interest in both the academic and NGO communities in Cape Town and PAHRO hope to pursue this theme with further research and engagement with community groups. A conference report will be produced and this will be available on the PAHRO website in the near future, along with podcasts of keynote presentations. Projects Abroad Journalism Volunteers also joined with PAHRO in covering the conference and articles will be printed in the Cape Chameleon.



Above far right: Theodore Kamwimbi (PAHRO Manager) speaking with some conference delegates

Above (left): Matt Fearon (Human Rights Volunteer) filming the conference; (Right): Conference delegates, including a lecturer from the University of Cape Town

Right: Projects Abroad Journalism volunteers interviewing MEC Albert Fritz after the conference



Journalism Office Update

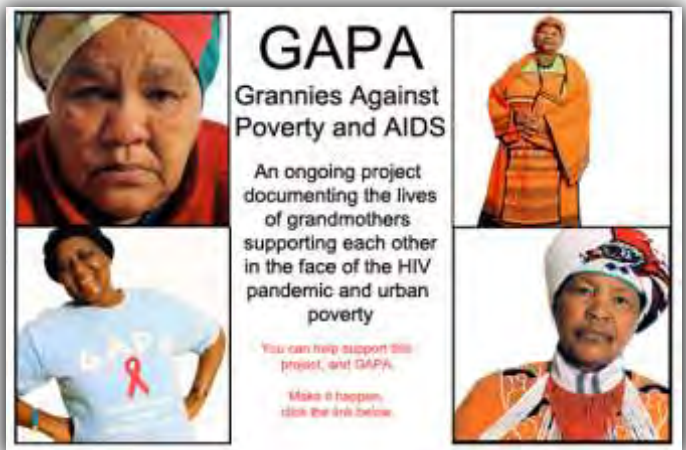
– by Caroline Wegner (German, 5 months)

As we draw closer to the holiday season, the journalism office gets quieter. The only volunteers are Loubna – who is working on her xenophobia article – and of course me, Caroline – I’m working on Diving and Climate change.

However, the office wasn’t always this quiet. On the contrary, it was productive and busy in the last month. We had another interesting workshop, which focused on photo-journalism with Eric Muller, a professional photo-journalist.



Left: Guest speaker at the Journalism Office Eric Miller (Professional Photo-Journalist) and (Right) his most recent project – a documentary on ‘Grannies Against Poverty and Aids’.



Beside this a couple of us went to the PAHRO Conference about violent crime in South Africa. It was there where Alice (UK), Anna (UK) and Lindsay (Canada) had a chance to interview MEC Albert Fritz, the Provincial Minister for Community Safety.

Moreover, Stefan who is back at home in his beloved mountains in Canada finished an article on surf culture. Katie (USA), who was always busy with her blogging, finished her story on Sandbags. Alice completes the update of the PAHRO conference on her flight back home to the UK. Anna finished her Jazz article and is now enjoying the strong sun in Kenya. Lindsay worked on Yabonga (HIV mothers) and will be soon home for Christmas.



Cape Chameleon's "Issue No. 4: Animals" and "Issue No. 5: Children"



So there seems to never be a dull moment in the journalism office, as there’s always something to write or learn about.

Human Rights Office Update

- by Sarah Wegner (German, 3 months)

Dirty Weekend:

On Saturday the 4th of December the Human Rights volunteers went to Khayelitsha to work at one of PAHRO's partner projects, Siyakhathala. Siyakhathala is based in Kuyasa and is an orphans and vulnerable children's project. Based in two modular containers they work in five areas and in eight schools the project indirectly and directly affects the lives of about two hundred children.

The dirty weekend application focussed on cleaning up the school yard, fixing doors, painting the inside of the containers and painting the logo and name of the organisation on the outside of the containers.

The volunteers showed great passion and dedication to complete the task even though we carried on a bit later than expected. The logo and name looks fantastic and the interior of the offices are now livelier and welcoming than before.

A huge thank you to all the volunteers that assisted to make the dirty weekend a huge success.



Field day:

On Friday the 10th of December the PAHRO volunteers, in partnership with Siyakhathala, hosted a children's day at the Kuyasa Primary school in Khayelitsha. PAHRO volunteer, Naomi Intrator, put together a fun program of activities for the children and raised funds to assist with the purchasing of equipment to run the activities.

The children took part in baton racing, soccer, "egg" racing and Simon says. Volunteers from PAHRO were active in all the activities and played a huge role in making the children feel appreciated.



With generous food donations from Game (Century City and N1 City), Quali Juice and Petrina Pakoe, approximately 110 children were not only able to enjoy a meal on the day but also took home food parcels to their families.



Similar to the group of tired volunteers that left Khayelitsha at the end of day, one hundred and ten children left the school having enjoyed a meal, games and with a food parcel for their families.





Below: The Projects Abroad Volunteers who helped make the Field day possible for the 110 children (seen above)



Legal update

The Projects Abroad Human Rights Office is currently assisting a woman from the DRC. She is a refugee who, after a series of traumatising events, only recently arrived in South Africa. She is here with her 16-year-old daughter and 3-year-old son. Her husband died in the DRC and she has no contacts here in S.A. She does not speak English or Afrikaans. One day at a train station a stranger approached her claiming to be a childhood friend of her missing and presumed dead 19-year-old son. The stranger told her that he was alive and living in Cape Town. Just before he jumped on a train, he gave her a phone number of a woman he said her son was living with. After a series of phone calls trying to convince the son that his mother is actually alive and here in Cape Town the mother and son were finally reunited. Last week they came into PAHRO together. They are now living together and trying to rebuild their lives. Sadly this story is bittersweet, her 14 year old daughter and 12 year old son are still missing somewhere in the DRC. We are now endeavouring to find these two children so that this family can be reunited.





Director's experience in CAPE TOWN

- by *Simona Eco (Projects Abroad Director for Italy)*

Here I am, back from South Africa!

I went to Cape Town to visit all the programs that Projects Abroad support there. I must say I loved it!

I always love the feeling of finding myself in a new environment: unknown voices and faces, new sounds that wake me up in the morning, different habits. It's like all the senses revive to catch everything around. And I learn so much about the place and about myself!



Cape Town is beautiful and full of contradictions, as I imagined. It's like all the nuances of the rainbow get lost in the contradictions. On one side, the modern city: buzzing, dynamic, chaotic and exuberant. On the other side, the townships where most of our projects take place and where amazing people work hard to change the situation. And you see the problems, you see the lack of services, but you can also learn the dignity, the smile, the strength of a possible change, the pride of people and of Table Mountain that stands on the city like a wave ready to be surfed.

I met special people. The staff in South Africa are great, sweet, cheerful and strongly motivated. Definitely the kind of people you can trust quickly. I had the chance to talk with some volunteers who told me more about the situation, about their experience and their ideas. There is so much to do and they have so much energy!



I wish I could stay longer!
 I met an Italian volunteer who decided to stay there.
 So, no doubt: just go!

Il mio consiglio è di partire e partecipare, conoscere, scoprire e scoprirsi!
 I progetti in cui impegnarsi sono tanti. Troverete energia e troverete tutti i colori, scoprirete anche le sfumature, quelle che a volte si perdono nelle contraddizioni e che si ritrovano nella forza di chi tenta il cambiamento. E quella voglia di cambiamento ve la porterete dentro, insieme ad una maggiore consapevolezza e ai ricordi di un'esperienza bella e intensa.
 Buon viaggio! Waka waka!



Top (from left): Vrygrond, the location of many of our Care Projects, and St James – near our Surfing Project

Middle: Simona and fellow Projects Abroad staff enjoying Table Mountain

Right: Simona, Alyssa (Desk Officer & Recruitment), Dana (Director for South Africa), Aaron (Assistant Director) and Shuan (Volunteer Coordinator)



Place of Interest: The Noon Gun

- by Gisela Madden

It's a beautiful day in Cape Town. The sun is out in full force, but the heat is made pleasant by a cool breeze coming from the ocean, so you're taking the day to explore the Mother City. After a morning of window-shopping and taking in the sights, sounds, smells of the city centre, you start heading towards a great burger place you heard about for lunch.

Suddenly, BOOM! Your immediate instinct screams *we're under attack!* and you drop to the ground, curling into a foetal position. After a few seconds, as you gaze dazedly, awaiting the panic of an impending attack, you become aware that everyone around you is nonchalantly continuing on their way. You stand up, brush the dirt from your jeans and sheepishly continue on your way. No one seems to have heard the explosion. Was it in your head? Did you imagine it? Don't worry – you didn't. The loud boom came from a cannon, which fires every day at noon.



Since 1806 cannons have been used in Cape Town as a time-signal, as ships in the harbour needed accurate time to calculate their positions at sea. Originally, the cannons were situated near the clock-tower at the V&A Waterfront (where you can read about their history), but were moved to their current position on Signal Hill in 1902. The Noon Gun has fired every day, barring Sundays and public holidays, since then, making it the oldest in daily use in the world.

If you're in the area, why not make your way to the Noon Gun on Signal Hill. Around 11:30am the South African Navy preps the guns for firing (they use a main and a back-up).



Mealie bread recipe

This is also known as Sweetcorn bread and is delicious accompanying any braai (barbeque).

Ingredients

2 cups biscuit mix
1 cup creamed sweetcorn
1 tablespoon sugar
1 egg
1/2 cup whole milk
2 ounces butter, melted

Method

In a large bowl, place the biscuit mix, creamed corn, and sugar. Add the egg and milk, and stir just until combined.

Preheat the oven to 400 degrees F. Grease a 9" baking pan. Place the mealie mixture into the pan, and coat with the melted butter.

Bake for 20 minutes.



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