

BUENA ONDA

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF PROJECTS ABROAD ARGENTINA



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BIENVENIDOS!

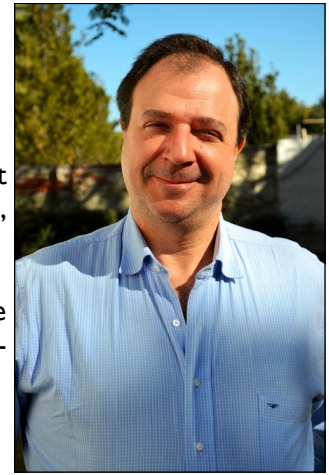
Learn from Mistakes

Thomas Edison tried two thousand different materials in search of a filament for the light bulb. When none worked satisfactorily, his assistant complained, "All our work is in vain. We have learned nothing."

Edison replied very confidently, "Oh, we have come a long way and we have learned a lot. We know that there are two thousand elements which we cannot use to make a good light bulb."

Un abrazo a todos!

Guillermo Cogorno
Country Director



PROJECT UPDATES

NEW SIGN AT HOGAR INFANTIL BELEN

Volunteers put their artistic skills to the test to make a new sign for the Hogar Infantil Belen care placement. This placement is located in the Las Violetas neighborhood, a marginal community about 20 minutes from the center of Cordoba, and provides day care services to the local families. Volunteers have been working with this placement for about two years now, organizing activities and helping the teachers with the many kids that come to the center on a daily basis.



The sign was in need of a colorful facelift, but we wanted to keep the design of the old sign. We traced over the old design, sanded off the old paint and then prepared it for the base coat. We painted a bright blue base coat this once dry volunteers went to work tracing the design and painting it with bright colors. We are almost done – pictures of the final product to come!



INTERNATIONAL FOOD TASTING

In April volunteers met at the Projects Abroad office for our weekly social and an evening of tasting food from around the world. Volunteers prepared a typical dish from their country and shared it for all to enjoy!

The weekly socials are an opportunity for volunteers - both new and old - to meet other volunteers and get to know each other a bit better. When accompanied by food it makes everything even better!



Volunteers were busy on Thursday morning and afternoon preparing their dishes for the night. That night volunteers met at the office for an international food tasting. We were about 20 volunteers, all hungry to try some of the delicious food that was displayed on the table. After each volunteer explained a bit about their dish - where it is from, what it contains - we all grabbed plates and dug in!



We tried dishes from Denmark, Holland, Argentina, New Zealand, England, USA and Canada. It was quite the feast! Thank you to all who participated. We will have to repeat this again soon!

NEW RADIO PROGRAM AT PAULO FREIRE PLACEMENT

*Paulo Freire is an institution whose role is to provide a safe and beneficial environment for youngsters who have had problems with the law. This article was written by **Charles Pritchard (US)** a Law & Human Rights volunteer who is working at the placement.*

Two weeks ago I started working at the Centro Socioeducativo Paulo Freire. "Freire" as it is called, is a place where boys of different ages can go to during the day if they have been convicted of a non-violent crime, instead of going to prison. They do not have to spend the night there, and may go back to their homes as they choose. Freire offers many opportunities to these kids, and at the same time, gives them a way to give back to their communities in different ways. In the past, this meant helping fix neighbourhood toys, repairing bicycles, tending gardens, and other activities. When I arrived, I was told that I was going to be working with the boys on a special project. I would be working with a smaller group of the boys on a radio broadcast, over the internet.



The last two weeks at Freire have been momentous, the online radio was reequipped with two new, functioning microphones, and is now up and running from around ten in the morning to around one in the afternoon. In the beginning the radio station featured commentary and history on the Argentinian group, Patricio Rey y sus Redonditos de Ricota, as well as news about past and upcoming musical events. As of right now, if you tune into the station, you will still hear about musical groups and their histories. The name of the station right now is *Somosvoz*, and the name of the current program is *Sangre Ricotera*. However, in the near future, there will be more than just music on the station. Changes are being made so that the talk on the radio will start addressing other, less light-hearted topics.

After a discussion with the one of the directors at Freire, the boys working on the radio and I will work together to begin to include and cover human rights issues. Over the next few weeks, we are going to work to include personal accounts, experiences, and thoughts on the issues regarding human rights. To-

gether, the boys and the listeners will learn more about the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, what the individual rights are, what the rights themselves mean, and how they affect the lives of others as well as our own. We will try to bring personal accounts onto the air, of past experiences with human rights abuses, as well as daily experiences with violations. It's going to be hard at first, but we hope that, over



time, through these changes in the broadcast. It will help teach the boys about how they can spot and understand the human rights violations that may exist around them in their daily lives.

Although this process of changing from more rock and roll to less music and more covering of important topics about universal rights may take some time and substantial effort, the change in the long run will be worth it. Many of the boys in Freire and the surround neighbourhoods have not previously learned about human rights. Hopefully, over the coming weeks, we will be able to educate the boys at Freire and their listeners about the importance

of human rights, as well as include some music as well.

If you wish to follow the progression of the radio, tune in, or make comments. You can follow the radio's Facebook here at <https://www.facebook.com/Somosvozonline>. If you wish to listen to the radio itself, the address is: <http://www.ustream.tv/channel/somosvoztadio>. Stay tuned over the next few weeks to see the changes we end up making.

VOLUNTEER STORIES

Pieter Baecke

Belgium

Animal Care & Journalism, 6 months

Until two weeks ago I was a volunteer with the Veterinary Project with Projects Abroad and right now I am doing the Journalism Project. Both are in Argentina and in total I will be staying here for five and a half months. Halfway through my stay I was asked to write about my experience here so far. Here goes.

In the beginning of February I left a cold and rainy Belgium for Argentina. When I arrived, the weather was as I expected it to be: sunny and extremely hot. The former would soon change, since, as it turned out, this particular February would be the rainiest it had been in a long time in Argentina. I did not mind it that much however, since every time it stopped raining, it was dry mere minutes after.

After an exhausting series of flights and taxi drives I finally made it to my host family, which consisted of Liliana, my host mother, and several of her grown-up sons who frequently came by. The apartment we lived in was located in the very center of Córdoba. Since it was evening by the time I made it there Liliana offered me some dinner after which I quickly turned in for the night. The next day I would be introduced to Córdoba by a Projects Abroad coordinator who would explain how things worked around there.



That same week I started the Veterinary Project. The aim of the project is to aid the street dog problem in Córdoba, among other animal-related things. My weekly schedule for the next two months would consist of three half days' work at a clinic and two at a dog shelter. The first month at the clinic started out very slow, since in February Argentinian schools are on summer break and the vet I should normally have been working at was on vacation. There was not much work at the start, but when there was an operation at the clinic I got to help out with. The surgeries I saw were mainly sterilizations of female dogs. The first couple of these were an odd experience but I soon got used to it. However, I was surprised by the amount of things I was allowed to help with as someone who had no medical training; they even let me inject antibiotics with a syringe on my first time.



The second month I moved to the other clinic when their vacation was over. Here I took part in a lot more surgeries, since the clinic was located much closer to the center, so it was busier and, fortunately, closer to where I was living. Gradually, I was allowed to help out even more during surgeries and saw a couple of operations that were not 'just' castrations (by that time they had gotten to be quite a 'normal' thing.)

During these two months I had also been working at a dog shelter every Tuesday and Thursday. The goal here was to give a large amount of street dogs a home. My task was to clean their cages and give them food and water. This mostly involved clearing the cages of feces and other waste. It was hard work, but at the end of my shift I felt like I had amounted to something. The people at the shelter were also very grateful for the work we did.

Having seen enough dog intestines and feces it was time for the second, bigger, part of my stay in Argentina. After eight weeks I began a Journalism Project in Unquillo, a town about an hour away from Córdoba's center. This meant changing host families. While I was sad to leave my host family and the big city, I was also excited to experience a different part of Argentina, since Unquillo was quite a lot smaller, and



people live differently here. But mostly, I was excited to start the Journalism project.

As I am writing this I am only two weeks into the project, but so far it has been great. I work at a radio station every morning where I help around and get to be on air every day. For the most part I just join in the conversation whenever I can and every day I get to prepare a little piece of news to discuss on air. This project suits me a lot better since it relates more to my interests.

During my stay in Argentina I have also had the chance to explore other parts of the country. Whenever there is an extended weekend due to some day off (of which there are many here), I try to visit some of the other cities that interest me. So far I have been to Salta and Mendoza, and soon I will be admiring the 'cataratas de Iguazú.' Travelling the country and talking on air at the radio have been the best experiences here for me so far. I would therefore recommend anyone planning on coming here with Projects Abroad to leave Córdoba whenever there is a long weekend and see the rest of Argentina.

VOLUNTEERS IN ACTION

