

NEWS FROM PARAGUAY

September 2014

A beautiful red Macaw has come to the Palm tree by Mags' office.



Dear Friends,

September has flown by, as it always does, and we now feel we are on the run down to the end of our school year! Once October is here the year 11's start their IGCSE exams and we barely see them after that until next year. The 6th form only have a few more weeks of classes left before they too have exams and finish. The primary have another month to go before exams.

This means that we try to pack as much into September as possible and last week was busy with various activities for the older pupils. On Monday they celebrated Youth day in school and then went home at lunch time leaving time for the secondary staff to have more training in computer programmes and the use of the new tablets. Tuesday was their sports day out at the sports ground and they had a great day out there with Blue team winning once more! On Wednesday they had classes and on Thursday they had a day retreat in the cathedral and round school. They had a local pastor come to talk to them and he was able to talk their language and get through to many of them. Some of the older boys asked for more talks afterwards. Sadly, by Thursday we had many missing having already travelled. We reckon the American Airlines flight on Wednesday night must have had quite a number of our school families on it!!



InterKunder

It included games with Special kids



Youth Day & Sports Day

In the middle of the month the infants had their inter school sports competition. They invited 9 other schools to our sports ground to play football, handball and tennis. Of course we had to have a press launch for this beforehand!! We had a good day at the sports ground and all went very smoothly even finishing early! The only drawback was the heavy weather. It was extremely hot and humid...not easy to be outside in. Mags was official photographer and Gwen gave out the medals.



Retreat



CHACO VISITS



It was also busy in that everything came at once in the month so we both had assemblies to prepare as well as meditations and also a church service. We seem to have had lots of meetings too especially Gwen She had a 5th grade representatives meeting which was very good but that alone took over 2 hours. We are still meeting with the lawyer weekly as we rewrite the school regulations and those sessions last about 3 hours each time. We are also working with a security firm to see how we can improve school security ... they all take time.

Two weeks ago the older pupils finally made it to the Chaco after not being able to go for the past few years due to poor weather conditions. The year 10's went up on the Monday and Mags went with them. They were digging latrines and putting a hut over each one. They also painted schools and a church. They worked like trojans and got a lot done. The 6th form went up on Wednesday as the year 10's were due to come back. There are only 4 boys in the 6th form and only one turned up for the trip even though it wasn't optional! That meant there weren't enough boys to dig so Mags asked if any of the first group of boys would like to stay and 4 offered immediately.



Wet roads in the middle of a drought!!

Mags was also supposed to come back on Wednesday but the second group were a teacher short so Gwen rang her and asked her to stay on...which she was more than happy to do! In the end they accomplished all they set out to do. They had one difficult moment when it started to rain and their bus got stuck in the mud. They had no phone signal there and the boys had gone ahead with Chris Hawksbee in the truck with all the spades. They weren't sure they wouldn't be spending the night there but a lot of prayer went up, the girls started to sing "Our God is greater" and the bus finally got back on track. Even the driver said it was a miracle! from God



NEW STAFF NEEDED FOR PRIMARY



A week ago we welcomed a new volunteer to school. Esther came out from Cambridge. She has done just her A levels and will go to university next year. Meanwhile she is helping in various clases in the primary. She will help prepare some of the pupils for oral English tests from Trinity College London as well as helping in classes.

Raquel, the first form teacher, left a few weeks ago and her baby is due any day. This meant her class needed covering. One of the school psychologists, an ex pupil, is able to take them Monday to Thursday which left Friday. That's the one day we have few staff in (no-one wants to teach Friday afternoon!) So, we had no-one else spare and we are both taking the class then. Having said that, Mags was in the Chaco the first week and Gwen had them all afternoon. Keeping them focussed at that time of the week wasn't easy!! We are still desperate for new English staff for the primary for next year. If you know of anyone who is fed up with OFSTED, new curriculum etc send them here ..we don't have any of that!!

We finished school on Friday with a staff retreat in the cathedral. We had a pastor come to speak to us who had been a number of times many years ago. He recently retired as a school chaplain so he knew exactly what his audience was like and could relate to school situations. We all valued his talks to us.



Esther in the middle



Spring Break

We now have a week off school for Spring break! Today is a bank holiday but the rest of the week is a normal week for everyone else. We are busy getting ready for Christmas by making Christmas puddings, a cake and mincemeat! We have a few other projects lined up for the week too that include sewing and knitting. We are both well. The animals are all fine too.



Gloria Morel, survivor of the supermarket fire has just adopted twin girls.

The puppy has now turned one but we don't see any improvement in his behaviour...he still gets things like tea towels, trays etc down when we are out and we come back to chaos. They only have one day a week on their own but he makes the most of it! We have had hot weather for most of the Winter months so we don't want to think what summer will be like! It's over 30°C today but rain seems imminent too. Still, it makes the garden grow and everywhere is looking green again.



Thankyou all for your prayers and support. They are all appreciated by us so much. God Bless and love, Gwen and Mags xx

