

29 February 2012

RECIFE



Greetings!

I'm glad to report that Carnaval has passed!

Brasil basically shuts down for the 5 days around carnaval! It's a very noisy, colourful yet incredibly depraved 5 days!

I was hoping to get away from Recife and the Roda for this period, but my church didn't get their act together and arrange a camp and I don't know anyone with a place to let outside of Recife! So stayed here and hung out with friends from church. Was still bombarded with all the sounds of carnaval and some pretty awful visual images too! Although it rained for a lot of the time, which actually reduced the constant frenzied nature of carnaval a little here (there was only one day where carnaval arrived literally on my doorstep!) so God was good and for once I was thankful for rain! Although I had hoped to be able to get to the beach, but yet again was thwarted! So am still transparent!

Now the Roda has returned to its normal noise level! Much more bearable ...well most of the time!



feijão

Prayer Points:

Thanks:

- That no-one from church was hurt when there was gunfire outside church
- That I have been able to sing again
- That all the redecoration at Vale went smoothly

Requests:

- For finances for Vale to arrive
- For wisdom and guidance for Nane and I regarding where to lead Vineyard em Açã

Also during the carnaval period I did get to try and make feijão (traditional beans) on my own. Nane had given me more or less instructions and I'd made it at hers before, with her in the background to ask advice if needed! Was a success, though the beans could've done with cooking a little longer! Did get the thumbs up from Nane too! (she don't say something is good if she don't think it is!) Beginners luck? We'll see the next time I make it! Not had time yet.

As I write this the whole of the Roda is without water! Has been on my street since Monday evening (27th) the majority of the Roda only since yesterday (28th) We've been informed it will return on Thursday (but who really knows!) However my street weren't informed in advance, so I wasn't able to store water! Having a shower is a game of how little water I can use, from the bucket that I'd filled last week! May have to resort to using mineral drinking water, but we'll see! It's all part of living here, although everyday when there's water in the taps I thank God! It's interesting when what you took for granted isn't assured anymore! I so don't take it for granted! It's a blessing!

Talking of life at the Roda, church is going well. Ricardo has now taken over the leadership of church from Jana (although she is still here and still on the leadership team) I have been able to sing again at church (although I still can't hit all the notes that I used to be able to or that I want to!) Hence my sax got shelved for a good few weeks and I didn't have time to practice either, so when I played him for the first time for about a month, my lips and cheeks struggled to last for the whole service!!

There's a joke going round the band at church that I gave my illness (lack of voice) to my sax (this is because a couple of the notes aren't playing right and things are sticking a little) I think it's 'cos of the heat! Need to find someone who knows about a saxophone to have a look at him, to see if it's actually just wear and tear or it really is to do with the heat.

My small group of pre-adolescents has had a break for a month or so. This was principally because Nadir left co-leading it with me as she had new commitments and we were looking for someone to replace her.

However the person who was going to replace her is now studying at night so

can't help ...so Nadir has returned to run the group with me, for the time being!

Vineyard em Ação continues to go out on a Monday night, although we didn't go out on the Monday of Carnaval (too dangerous) We are continuing to seek the will of God for this work of his, 'cos we are rather frustrated at the moment with various things, so really need to hear his voice!

The last few weeks since returning to the square there has been a reduction in the number of folks there, this is partly due to the "clean-up" of street dwellers that the Recife council are trying to do (in preparation for the World Cup in 2014) Yes I know, it's only 2012! The other reason is because we took some time out and they are reacostuming to the fact we go out every Monday night, or are learning this as they didn't know us before, 'cos the Monday before carnaval there were alot more folks at the square. The majority of whom we didn't know, including some new street kids too, one of them, Andre only arrived on the streets two days before and was already sniffing glue! When I asked him why he'd already started to sniff glue his reply was..."well there's nothing else to do is there!". Although this last Monday, there were alot more folk, so word is getting round again!

February at Vale was just us teachers and involved basically completely redesigning 3 of the classrooms for the older kids and transforming the classrooms of the teachers who teach the 4 - 5year olds! Talk of extreme makeover! We took out the middle walls dividing 6 classrooms, turning them into just 3 big ones as there will be bigger classes this year. This was my idea, fortunately it looks like it will work, 'cos it was a big job to do and Pastor Armindo took alot of persuading that it would be a good idea! Finally this year Vale has been decorated in bright colours suitable for kids! I've said it since arriving there that the classrooms and general ambience wasn't conducive to a place for kids! It's always been very drabbly painted! However, finally they listened to me and with the extremely limited funds that we had (we improvised alot!) we've transformed the place! The kids were blown away with the changes when they returned on the 28th!

Seeing as I'm the "Arts" teacher, whatever designs they wanted I had to draw. All in all I designed, leaves, big and small for a tree, different styles of flowers, butterflies, clouds, sun, a big (a little taller than me!) tree new notice board, bubble numbers 0 - 9 and the vowels in the same style! The other teachers then cut out from different colours and types of material! I also painted grass round one of the classrooms! They had wanted it only on one wall, but it looked silly, so I suggested we continued it round all the walls. It was alot of work and painstaking for myself and Rosana, but the end result was very cool! I added extra types of "grasses" to it aswell, to make it look a little more authentic! Should've taken a before photo aswell as the after, but I forgot! I also was given the painstaking task of creating a large chess/draughts board from an old table! I used my creative liberty as the "arts" teacher and just used material, all 64 squares! Had alot to do with

my perfectionist streak, as I thought the way they wanted it, wouldn't work! Fortunately my idea worked and they loved it! Took me all one afternoon to do! We covered the material with sticky plastic to protect it from dirty hands and fingers! And yes, I was proud of the finished result! All in all my creative juices were free flowing during February and fortunately everything worked! Elienai even said how surprised she'd been at what I'd done!

We also have been preparing for another Womens conference, that will take place at Vale on the second weekend of March. They are hoping that 150 women from the community of Dois Unidos will attend. In 2010 we hosted the first Womens conference with a team of women from America, well they are returning this year! The team at Vale will principally once again be responsible for hosting, providing food, and generally supporting and assisting the team from America. I will be on translation duty aswell!

Ooops, run out of room, so until next month ...

lossa love *Ali x*



Grass!



chess/draughts table



Notice board tree

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