

News from Paraguay

April 2015



Dear Friends,
Greetings from a much cooler Paraguay. We are now in Autumn and it's slightly cooler (although it still reaches 30°C in the day time) and not as humid.

Today we are off school for Teachers' day and tomorrow is a national holiday for "Worker's day". We're not complaining! In 2 weeks time we get another 2 days off for Independence Day! Yesterday we celebrated Workers' day in school with a school lunch for all the staff. Pastor Ronnie gave a short message first of all. Then there are always gifts to give out.

Before that the teaching staff joined a national march/ strike. The private school teachers don't get a pension. They have fallen through a gap as state schools have a different pension fund which private schools couldn't join. The state pension for other workers wouldn't take private school staff as they were teachers! To cut the story short, 5 years ago our school administrator started working with other schools and the Association of Christian teachers to get pensions for teachers. They managed to get a law passed giving teachers the right. This was passed in 2011 and so far no one has had a pension.



Nothing has been done!...and now they want to change this law to pay out much less. We have staff who have left school at 65 years old with no pensions. In one case we had a teacher working until she was 82 yrs old. A number of schools took part and we marched through the city. We wait to hear the outcome.



Staff who've been in school 10, 20, 25 and 30 years



Heads & Coordinators



The pupils had prepared a little show for the staff to celebrate Teachers' day but those had to be postponed for the march so they will do them on Monday. The year 10's are going to the Chaco on Monday too, to dig and paint in Maxawaiya. Mags is going with them. The 6th form go the next day but visit an historical site first before going to work. Our school rule book is almost finished. We keep thinking we are at the end but something else always crops up. After that we will be doing something for the Ministry of Labour. The lawyer assures me that will be much easier and faster!!

Fashion Show

The year 11's organized a fashion show this month to make money for their class fund. They are going to use some of the money to build a wall around the school they visit in Aregua. They have their parents helping too and they always do everything on a grand scale...from the press launch to the show itself. They invited the British ambassador and his wife too and they came along. The show was in a grandparent's garden and the walkway was over the swimming pool! They even had lifeguards on hand but they weren't needed. They reckon they had about 800 people there for that!! We went to both events and were given VIP seats!!



School has been going well. Most of the children have settled again. The oldest pupils went on a sports camp in Brazil last week and returned yesterday having had a great time. The younger ones go at the end of May.



We continue to help in church. We took the Easter Sunday service and had quite a few extras turn up for the special day. There was a good atmosphere there. We also took the service last Sunday so we are hoping for a break for the next few weeks. We are using a book about the names of God. The good thing is that we have used it in school assemblies too and so, sometimes, we are able to re use our assemblies for church. We both have assemblies lined up for the next few weeks.



Bible verses & Book Day



Annexe Book Day



Visit to Congress

Our animals are all fine. Milly is our oldest dog and she will be 11 in August. She's still bouncy but she is showing signs of age now and always has something we need to medicate her for...she was one who never needed anything before. We sent Misty (our half persian cat who had long hair) for a bath the other week .She was so full of knots that they said she'd need to go again as it would hurt to do it all at once. We told them to cut it if it would be better for the cat. They took us at our word and we barely recognized her when she came back! Our cat that we thought was short and fat turned out to be tall and skinny under all the hair! It hasn't bothered her anyway! Her new hair is like velvet.



As always this comes with our gratitude for your faithful support.
God bless and Love
from Gwen and Mags xxx