



June 29, 2011
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Two Volunteers, Lea and Devon, are hard at work making a sign for El Puente. Too many people were going right by our place – we really need to give them a sign!

RECENT NEWS

The Bridge Kids are showing up with their homework and school results! Getting crafty can produce some cash. Growing vegetables continue to spread. “Turn Off The Dark” – Barry goes on a boy’s night out. Bobbi’s already is raising money for the 2012 school year! More news about volunteers. And... we’re all Ears!

BRIDGE KIDS AND HOMEWORK

There’s always homework questions here at the Bridge. Maybe even a proud progress report.



Meet 18 year old Danny, in 6th grade...



...and 7 year old Kattia showing off gold stars from 1st

Danny had stopped by to ask some questions on his homework, and we try to help as we can. The parents of the Bridge Kids are generally “analphabeta” (illiterate), and can’t help much at home.

Katie skipped into the house carrying her books, and wearing a big smile. She couldn’t wait to show us how well she’s been doing. You’ll remember her from an earlier story – “The Littlest Entrepreneur”.

What we see are kids getting excited about learning. They’re working hard, and they’re having fun. That’s cool! Thanks to you!!!

GETTING CRAFTY

Nanci's been collecting all different types of beads, mostly as donations, and then pulling them out for the folks who come here to play with. They thrilled with the new selection and get really involved with it, some even making necklaces or bracelets to sell. Meet Uncle Derek and Yamileth.



Derek, one of the Bridge Kids, on an afternoon off from school, gets to play with the baby while...



Yamileth, the baby's mommy and Derek's big sister, gets to play with beads

This kind of thing can get serious. As we reported in a previous issue, Maria is also making jewelry and selling it. Another Bribri mom, Gretel, is now doing the same. And Yamileth? As the Navajo say, "We shall see."

IT SORT OF GROWS ON YOU – Part 2

Here's a brief update on a growing concern.



Last issue we introduced the “nursery” to you, with several of our great volunteers helping Nanci get it started. Now, there’s an on-the-ground growing shelter in place, with more to come! Stay Tuned!



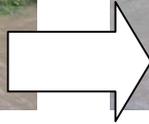
The Bribri are paying attention to Nanci’s growing project, and a Bribri mom, new at The Bridge, with her pre-school-age son, are seeing what’s possible as Nanci explains the growings-on around here.

What makes this really fun is that Nanci freely explains that she’s just as much a novice as they are. Turns out growing stuff here in a tropical climate is different – and they’re all growing together! First step – put it in the ground. Second step – pray!

RAIN, RAIN – GOES AWAY
And Comes Again Another Day

We have some “interesting” weather here. Every so often, there’s a real rainstorm. Not a run-of-the-mill heavy rain, mind you, but a real torrential downpour. Tree branches that may have been a little shaky come down under the weight of the falling flood. A river flows down the mountain trails behind us and flows right through the yard, and there’s no way to control that unless we raise the height of the side road next to us by 6-8 inches or so.

The water flow on the roads can be even more exciting.



*For those looking at real estate here – some due diligence is in order.
Here’s a lot nearby – note the water flooding the area.
That sign says “For Sale”! What is doesn’t say is.
“Bring your canoe!”*

PUERTO VIEJO GETS CRABBY

Count Your Chickens AFTER They're Hatched

Wildlife from the jungle find their way to us. Last week we had a coatimundi in the yard – the coati looks like a raccoon, but a lot more businesslike. As he stalked around, Nanci and I were counting our chickens – literally. He eventually shuffled off unfed into the jungle, and we – and I assume the chickens also- breathed a collective sigh of relief.



The coati jumped from tree to tree with ease, descended to the ground, looked around the yard, and then returned to the jungle.

On another recent day, crabs came out of the ocean en masse and crab-walked their way onto the main roads, where they were promptly flattened by passing cars. It was quite a mess. At first, I was going to take a foto, but felt that you didn't need to see a picture of hundreds of crabs that looked like they'd lost an argument with a guy driving a steamroller. Ugh !

As with everything else around here, a few good rains and the mess was cleaned up.

Back to normal.

For us, that is. Sorry about the crabs.

TURN OFF THE DARK

What does Barry do when he goes out with the boys at night?

This contains information about a project. It's not about Bridge Kids, School, microloans, or other activities The Bridge is normally involved with. I wanted to report it since it shows some of our involvement with the community.

I recently had the opportunity to get involved. Some of the streetlights in this area were out, and other areas were without any lights at all, a situation that some here feel may have contributed to increasing crime against people walking or bicycling in those areas. Folks were having a hard time getting the attention of ICE – the electric utility – to get them repaired. Nick Varnum provided the electric car, a giant flashlight, and the GPS sensor; Ed Berlinguetti – one of our subscribers – wrote down data; and I ran around with Nick's huge flashlight looking for identifying numbers on electric poles and streetlights. I also brought a cool, refreshing drink on each of three "nights out".

Nick transcribed the data and entered it into Google Maps. You can "tune in" and see the result by clicking on these links:

Manzanillo to Puerto Viejo <http://on.fb.me/kd6aZs>

Puerto Viejo to Hone Creek including Playa Negra <http://on.fb.me/iGfKMk>

I accumulated signatures on a petition, including from the Municipal Government, the Puerto Viejo Development Association, the Tourism Association, and the Regional Deputy to the National Congress, along with thirty other business owners or concerned residents. We prepared several copies of a bound document including the petition, signature pages, and printouts from Google Maps, and contacted the regional manager of ICE Maintenance. Turns out the Congressman had already been in touch, and the manager showed up at our home at 7 AM shortly thereafter. He received the signed copy, looked at the Google Maps pages, and apparently later drove around and checked them out.

Our "intelligence sources" (cab drivers – who else?) report that lights are being repaired, and some new lights have been installed. To again use that saying from the Navajo culture, "We shall see."

GEARING UP FOR THE NEXT SCHOOL YEAR

Is It 2012 yet?

Would you believe, this year the BridgeTeam (you) has suited up 75 "regulars", and has provided partial assistance to a half-dozen other students through a request by a tribal elder. The next school year will start around February 15 of 2012, and Nanci and volunteers will be once again "Suitin' Up" the "Bridge Kids".

You'll remember Bobbie Banks, wonder Angel from Canada who has, for two years now, flown South to help Nanci in person in the "Suitin' Up" process after raising a significant portion of the funds required. We're amazed and delighted to report that Bobbi is at it again. She gave us this foto from one of her speaking engagements on behalf of El Puente and the School Program.



That's her hidden behind the enormous sign. Thank You Bobbie!

VOLUNTEER CORNER

Is there a life outside of El Puente for our volunteers? You bet there is! Step right up, find a table, sit down and listen to **Sarah and Renee Galli**, volunteers from England!



*Here are **Sarah and Renee** entertaining the crowd at Stashu's, a local restaurant where the owner, Stash, has completely mastered the art of blending things together to make an amazing mixture of many wonderful flavors – of both food and music. A visitor's must!*

Thank you **Sara & Renee**, for the wonderful spirit you brought with you and the energy you put into helping us here at The Bridge! We sure do miss you.

There are, of course, the basics that still need doing, and these two angels dove right in for months and helped keep The Bridge running smoothly! Say Hello to **Jim Harrell** and **Marcia Williston**!



*Here's a shot of **Jim and Marcia**, hard at work cleaning up at one of the many Community Kitchen sessions they attended.*

And a hearty Thank You! to **Marcia and Jim**, for the unfailing smiles and warmth that came with you while you were volunteering here! Jim and Marcia are repeats who bless us with their goodness every year. So love having you around.

And then there's **Noemi and Soa**, like two side by side keys on a piano and such differing parts of the world like Switzerland and Canada, met at the Bridge and are now friends for life. Never missing a day and always saying "yes" to Nanci's and my bizarre requests for help, they gardened, and data based, got their hands really dirty and then doing lots and lots of dishes, got them very clean again.



Say Hi! To Noemi and "Sue".

Noemi Marcano is from Switzerland. "Sue" is from Canada. Actually, her real name is Soanandriana Annie-Hélène Rajaona, a name that may trace back to her family's Madagascar roots. She says she prefers to be called "Sue".

Without angels like these, we'd have a very difficult time getting things done around here. Thank you, Volunteer Angels!

Farewell, and happy traveling, ladies. Come back soon!

And Even MORE Volunteers!

Meet **Jennifer Hayashi, Lea Marasovich, and Devon Torbert (All three from SOKA University)**. Our time with these three was all too short and although they whizzed in and out of here in a flash, we kept them busy.



Jennifer is wrapping a birthday present, Lea is recording it for posterity, and Devon is contemplating which of the tasks waiting to be done to take on next.

Turns out they came with a truck load of talent and left in their wake a video documentary of Nanci and me and also made darn good progress on the new Bridge sign we are wont to install. And yes, as usual, they washed lots and lots of dishes. How we love our dish-washers. Thank you so much! And God speed.

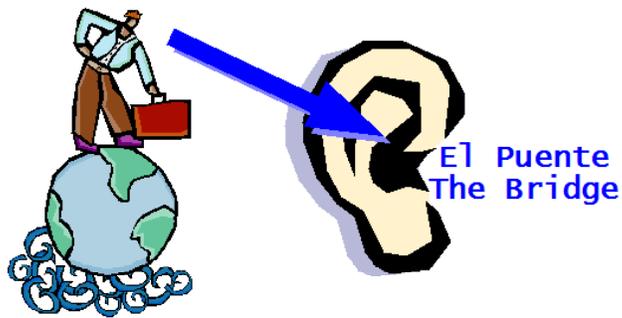
In Harm's Way

A special thanks to a special volunteer of a year or so ago who made the end of this month much easier to manage. While he here, this angel whizzed through projects like a whirling dervish, and it was all we could do to stay out of Harm's way.

Thanks all of you who make it easier for us to do what we do at The Bridge.

And To All Of You Other Volunteers and Supporters Of The Bridge...

We'd LOVE to hear from you. We'd love to find out where your life travels have led you. Have you taken anything you may have learned at The Bridge out into the world in one way or another? What is significant to you about your service here? What else might you want to tell us?



As you can see, we're all ears! Let us know!

And THANK YOU ALL for your wonderful support at The Bridge!

GLOBAL ISSUES YOU CAN ACT ON

Natural Healing Being Made Illegal. A while ago, I sent you an email about a new law in the European Union as of April 30 banning all natural healing. I sent a rare email out to our subscriber list, and promised I wouldn't send out that kind of separate email again.

Why is it important to me? We work with Don Candido, a Bribri curandero whom we've seen work miracles with terminal illnesses using medicinal plants. We want to see him stay free to continue to work his miracles. The original email I sent contains a link to a petition demanding that the European Union not implement that law. They are looking for 1,000,000 signatures world-wide to convince the EU and European countries not to implement that directive. At last count, they had reached 860,386 signatures. If you're interested in learning more, and perhaps signing the petition, click on this link to go to the website. https://secure.avaaz.org/en/eu_herbal_medicine_ban/?fpla

How Do You Feel About Oxygen and Fresh Water?

Another Petition from Avaaz.

From the Avaaz.org website:

“The Amazon Is In Danger – and the Amazon Is vital to life on earth -- 20% of our oxygen and 60% of our freshwater comes from this magnificent rainforest. That's why it's so crucial that we all protect it.

Brazilian loggers are demanding clear cutting of the Amazon rainforest. You have an opportunity to sign a petition demanding that clear cutting stop, and protecting the lives of those trying to stop it. The petition will be delivered to the President of Brazil when they get 500,000 signatures.

79% of Brazilians support the Brazilian President's veto of the forest law changes (which allow clear cutting), but their voices are being challenged by logger lobbies. It's now up to all of us to raise the stakes and make Amazon protection a global issue. Let's come together now in a giant call to stop the murders and illegal logging, and save the Amazon. Sign the petition below -- it'll be delivered to the Brazilian President when they reach 500,000 signers.”

As of this writing, they've collected 645,690 signatures from all over the world, and they're still coming in. Now they're shooting for a million. Click on the link to learn more. http://www.avaaz.org/en/save_the_amazon/?cl=1129882296&v=9449

Why am I involved? I breathe oxygen – I drink fresh water. I'd like future generations to be able to do the same.

WHAT GOOD IS GOODSEARCH?

You've heard us refer to GoodSearch and GoodShop before. In a nutshell, when you use GoodSearch to search the Internet, and select El Puente – The Bridge as your favorite charity, The Bridge gets approximately 1 penny every time you search.

WHAT KIND OF SHOP IS GOODSHOP?

Then, when you shop online using GoodShop, saving gasoline, driving time, air pollution, and waiting in line, you can have the products from over 1,100 brand-name stores shipped directly to your house – and, the online vendors have promised to pay the charity you select as your favorite an average of 2.5% of the purchase price as a donation. Of course, we suggest you choose El Puente – The Bridge as “Your Favorite Charity”.

We can tell by the numbers on the GoodShop web page that some of you are already trying out this fabulous idea! Yay! Thank you!

Go here to learn more and to sign up!

<http://www.elpuente-thebridge.org/page33.html>

Thank you for your support!

YOU CAN HELP US AT THE BRIDGE!

There are several ways you can help.

- **Send this email to people you know** who might also enjoy it.
- **Post a message about us on relevant web sites or discussion boards.**
- **Look at our list of critically needed supplies** – [click on this link to get to the “What Can I Bring?” page on our website.](#)

VIEW FROM THE BRIDGE

**Thank You for the continuing support we have been getting.
You all are allowing us to continue to serve!**

NOW's a GREAT time to contribute.

Make a **Monthly Pledge** by [clicking here.](#)

Make an **Immediate Donation** by [clicking here](#),
and donate online using PayPal, or mail a check.

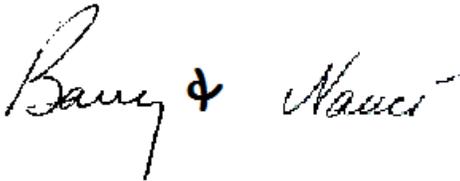
Do it NOW! You'll be glad you did!

Thank you for your support!

Well,

...djmiache

Enjoy!



IF YOU HAVE TROUBLE SEEING THE PICTURES

...go to www.elpuente-thebridge.org/weekly and download the file with the date of this issue.

Go to The **Bridge Website** by [CLICKING HERE](#)

Download a **Powerpoint presentation** or a **narrated slideshow/video** by [CLICKING HERE](#)

Download **brochures in Spanish, English, or French** by [CLICKING HERE](#)

Go to the **newsletter archive** by [CLICKING HERE](#)

See some **Video clips** showing activities at The Bridge by [CLICKING HERE](#)

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