



December 12, 2011  
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*Whooooooooooooo, turkey dinner and great company! Topped of with Nanci's own homemade apple pie. After cooking the first through the smoke detector, the second went over really well.*

## **RECENT NEWS**

A Thanksgiving day Benefit! Here's to your Health! The Inspectors are coming! The Tribes gather at The Bridge. Making Chocolate. First GoodSearch, then GoodShop, now GoodDining – the opportunities are aMazing!

## **THANKSGIVING DAY BENEFIT**

A prayer of gratitude to a great host on Thanksgiving Day



*Alfred Richardson conceived, coordinated and cooked a lovely feast to benefit The Bridge bringing a friendly bunch of well wishers to his home, 'Casa Alfie's' in San José. Alfie's is right near the National Theater and close to the CIMA hospital. An easy walk to many wonderful places. Everyone went home happy and replete with Turkey, mashed potatoes and fresh veggies, and a wonderful Salad bar and pumpkin pies and OMG were we stuffed. We had a lovely time in San José. Thanks for comping the room too, Alfie.*

## THEN OFF FOR A FEW DAYS R&R

At Vista de La Valle with Mike and Joanna who own probably the most beautiful resort in all of Costa Rica. Very amazing people with a lot that they are offering the world. Thank you for allowing us to extend our time away and for your amazing hospitality. You can find out more about these lovely people by looking up [www.vistadelvalle.com](http://www.vistadelvalle.com) and a video on the Children Feeding Children Program at <http://bit.ly/gIQDJX>

## WE'RE KNOWN IN WELL COMPANY

Our first visits from the health inspection folks happened recently. We don't feel picked on – even Sardi's, a well-known eating spot in New York, was, according to the New York Times, also visited by their local health inspectors. We're in "well" company!

The outcome of the visit to El Puente? The official report used words like "very clean and organized". They may prefer to see us wear "closed shoes" – we've been barefoot in the house for 9 years. The new sign at each of our sinks reads:



*"Wash hands before cooking or serving food."*

We thought to use pictures, since most of the adults we serve are illiterate.

## A GATHERING OF THE TRIBES

Or, at least, members from several tribes. Usually, we work with the Bribri. On a recent Tuesday the Community Kitchen noticed something special. Members from four tribes gathered to share bowls of fresh vegetable soup.



*At the left is Albino, a member of the Cabecar Tribe.  
Next is Alejandro – our first Bribri in the School Program.  
Then we see Galindo, from the Ngobe Bugle Tribe in Panama.  
At the right is Valentine, a member of the Guaymi Tribe, also from Panama*

They all share Spanish as a second language. Would love to have been a fly on the wall

**LET THE NEXT SCHOOL YEAR BEGIN!**

*Of course, we'll slip in a little Christmas along the way!*

And here's Bobbie Banks, the Canadian Angel, already here in Costa Rica, finishing off her third year of fund raising by showing up here herself and giving a whole bunch of school kids fits! I mean, of course, that she's going to be helping Nanci get kids suited up for school for next year. So without any further ado, ladies and gentlemen, meet Bobbie Banks!



*Bobbie and her husband Ron at The Bridge a couple of days ago.  
They're sitting in front of a suitcase full of school supplies that  
they happened to bring down with them.  
Thanks, guys!*

Bobbi's super active back in Nova Scotia as well. Besides speaking to groups to raise money, she's also recruited a woman I'll call...

## Amazing Grace

Grace McClung, an 85 year-old woman from Chester Nova Scotia, is one heck-of-a knitter. This amazing lady knitted 14 precious teddy bears and 12 adorable vests as Christmas gifts for the Bridge kids. Her bounty, which Bobbie and Ron also brought down with them, is spread out for you to feast your eyes.



*Here are the vests and teddy bears all the way from Canada.  
I can only imagine how excited the bears were about the trip!  
Wait 'till they find out what the temperatures are down here – they'll  
toss off their warm sweaters and jump rope with their scarves!*

When the vests arrived, Nanci immediately started handing them out to little Bribri kids – after all, the temperature had just plummeted all the way down to 75 degrees the night before, and around here, that's **COLD!**

The teddy bears, though, were a bit of a different thing, Nanci jumped on 'em like a duck on a June bug.



I'm hoping we don't have a bit of a problem here.

If we can get them away from her, these will make for some happy little kids at the Christmas Party on the 24<sup>th</sup>. We are so very grateful for all the work that has gone into insuring that each and every child that comes through The Bridge walks away with a meaningful gift

## MAKING CHOCOLATE

Nanci got her hands on some cacao the other day, and she thought she'd try making chocolate. Remember those yellow/orange fruits that volunteers Femke and Christina were holding in a recent newsletter foto? Those things with the good-to-eat white goo inside? Inside that goo are seeds. When those seeds are dried, either in the sun or by baking, they are shelled and then ground.



*Here she is swinging in her favorite chair and husking the seeds from the cacao fruit. She baked them first, which loosens the husks. After husking, ground them up – in a coffee grinder! Then she made the grounds into a brown paste adding dulce de leche – you guessed it – looking and tasting just like chocolate. Yum!*

## “SO, WHAT ABOUT THE SCHOOL PROGRAM?”

We're still trying to learn who's graduating from Escuela into Colegio (High School). Lots of year end exams and flurry of Christmas parties and special projects. It's all very exciting. Graduation ceremonies that are sure to bring on the tears. We'll be sure to keep you posted with the good news.

In the meantime... things are already moving along for school beginning in February. Angels have been donating school supplies, dropped off here or at a very supportive local group at Banana Azul Hotel. Nanci's here organizing them so that maximum “stuff” fits in the smallest space.



*She's really learned how to pack! We'll need a shoe horn for this box.*

And the getting-ready process has only just begun! **Now's the time to send in your school donations.**

## **GOOD GRIEF!!! FIRST GOODSEARCH – THEN GOODSHOP – AND NOW, GOODDINING!**

We've just made it even easier for you to support El Puente - The Bridge --- and it won't cost you a penny!

We registered El Puente - The Bridge with [www.GoodSearch.com](http://www.GoodSearch.com), a company that helps non-profits like ours raise funds through the everyday actions of our supporters. **Here is how you can help:**

Use [www.GoodSearch.com](http://www.GoodSearch.com) when you search the internet – they will donate a penny to us every time you do!

Use [www.goodshop.com](http://www.goodshop.com) when you shop online – they work with more than 2,500 major brands, have over 100,000 coupons and donate a percentage of every purchase you make to us!

**CLICK THIS LINK TO GET STARTED**

[www.goodshop.com](http://www.goodshop.com)



You can also enroll in [www.GoodDining.com](http://www.GoodDining.com) they will donate up to 6% of every dollar you spend when you eat at one of 10,000 participating restaurants!

**Please – join our community on GoodSearch.com and help us raise money for The Bridge Kids and their families!**

## VOLUNTEER CORNER

### Give Me A Sign!

Many times we've been told by a visitor to The Bridge that "we just drove right on by!" One group even got as far as Don Candido's place in Hone Creek before stopping to give us a call. We started in some time ago, having volunteers help with a sign to be put out on the road to show exactly where The Bridge is. The sign was finished, and with volunteer help, put up in cement "footie" right at the corner of our driveway.



I had the able help of this volunteer from Surf For Life as the sign was propped up in wet cement. I apologize for not getting the young man's name – he was one of 18 volunteers who showed up here in shifts, and he'll know who he is. To this unnamed hero, I say "Thank You!" – and in so doing, say "Thank You!" once again to all the Surf For Life volunteers!

And yes, there is yet another volunteer to say "Hello" to! So say Hello! To...



*Nikola Niedermeier, visiting us from Denmark*

Nikki jumped right into just about everything that needed doing around here, and was a joy to have around. She also has family roots in Madagascar, and that pointed us to some really cool music! Thanks for your "vibes", Nikki!

## **BRINGING OR SHIPPING THINGS DOWN**

We've asked people on the website to remove the plastic packaging from things that are meant for delivery here. It would help a lot if you could keep the plastic where there probably is a working recycling program. As an example – here's one sample of packaging around a product that was brought down.



*This was the packaging for donated materials brought here. I've already cut them up so they don't take up excess room wherever they are discarded. The recycling program is not working well here, and there just isn't any place to put these that won't require 500 or more years of decomposition. So far, we've been saving this stuff in plastic bags, hoping for a miracle with the local recycling program. We'll all find out together!*

## **YOU CAN HELP US!**

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** – [www.elpuente-thebridge.org/page26.html](http://www.elpuente-thebridge.org/page26.html), and bring some down
- **And yes, you can make a donation.** We're getting ready for the Christmas Party on the Saturday closest to Christmas – which just happens to be Christmas Eve! Along the way, there are a few critical repairs we need to make. It's all good, and it's all part of operating... El Puente – The Bridge!

To make a donation, click on this link! [www.elpuente-thebridge.org/page30.html](http://www.elpuente-thebridge.org/page30.html)

## VIEW FROM THE BRIDGE

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

The Christmas Party's coming!  
We're getting ready for the next school year push!

**NOW's a GREAT time to contribute.**

Make a Monthly Pledge [www.elpuente-thebridge.org/pledge](http://www.elpuente-thebridge.org/pledge)

Make an Immediate Donation [www.elpuente-thebridge.org/page30.html](http://www.elpuente-thebridge.org/page30.html)

You can donate online using PayPal, or mail a check.

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

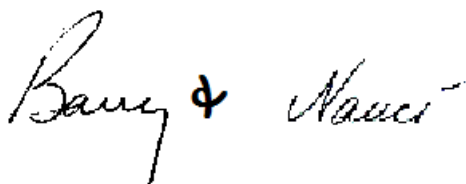
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***Thank you for your support!***

Well,

...djmiache

Enjoy!



### **IF YOU HAVE TROUBLE SEEING THE PICTURES**

...go to [www.elpuente-thebridge.org/weekly](http://www.elpuente-thebridge.org/weekly) and download the file with the date of this issue.

Go to The **Bridge Website** [www.elpuente-thebridge.org](http://www.elpuente-thebridge.org)

Download a **Powerpoint presentation** or a **narrated slideshow/video** [www.elpuente-thebridge.org/present](http://www.elpuente-thebridge.org/present)

Download **brochures in Spanish, English, or French** [www.elpuente-thebridge.org/brochures](http://www.elpuente-thebridge.org/brochures)

Go to the **newsletter archive** [www.elpuente-thebridge.org/weekly](http://www.elpuente-thebridge.org/weekly)

See some **Video clips** showing activities at The Bridge [www.elpuente-thebridge.org/video](http://www.elpuente-thebridge.org/video)

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