



May 14, 2012
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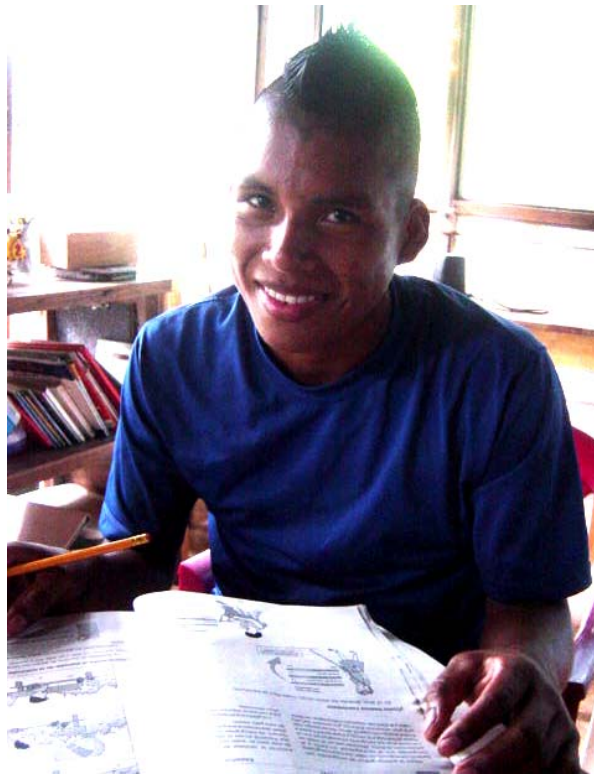
RECENT NEWS

Dreams are becoming Reality – with your help – at The Bridge! Many uses for the new platform! A Smilestone for El Puente! Community issues that need some attention. Going to a new Latitude! Another dedicated Volunteer! Opportunities to help!

DREAMS ARE EMERGING

The Bridge serves people who are living on extremely low incomes. According to the World Bank, that includes about 54% of the world – living on less than \$2 a day. It feels great to be able to share with you the progress being made as we help serve this community's basic needs for education, income generation, and food support, and help them build hope – by showing them models of success and introducing basic Science Of Mind techniques on a one-on-one basis. One by one, one step at a time, dreams are emerging and being realized. And *you* can feel happy and proud that you are a part of making these dreams come true! Here are three examples I'd like to share.

Danny is a 19 year old who has been in our Bridge School Program for several years. His dream is to become a professional soccer player. We help him toward that goal with financial support for school, the costs of soccer uniforms and with an encouraging outlook saying, "Yes – you *can!*"



Here's Danny doing homework at The Bridge

Even though his parents both bring in money, they can't always afford the bus fare for him to attend soccer games with his team. When asked, we try to help with that too. Danny started first grade at the age of 14. He's now in 6th. His love of soccer helps to keep him from bailing out of school and getting a menial job. . Little by little, he's on his way to living his dream.

Yalny is a young single mother enrolled in the Bridge School Program. She has three small children, also with us in school. She has been working to support her family with handcrafts, some of which are shown in this photo. Her dream? To be a teacher.



One of Yalny's handcraft items are these decorative egg holders.

Yalny received more training and continued to work to support her family. She came to El Puente recently, thrilled over the latest development - she had been hired as a third-grade teaching assistant. Her dream is on its way to becoming a reality!

Alejandro is in high school, and has been in the El Puente School Program since he was 9 years old. His dream is to finish his studies and work in development for his indigenous community.



Alejandro being interviewed by CNN reporter Sebastian Castro

You can see him "in person" as he was interviewed in a recent CNN news report filmed at El Puente - <http://bit.ly/yQSVOZ> . His dream, too, is on its way to being a reality!
(English subtitles are available by pushing "CC" at the lower right of the playback screen)

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One by one, dreams are coming true as these and many other students that we serve at El Puente make progress on their way forward in life. And we thank all of you for being a part of this effort – because of you, their future is looking bright indeed!

WHAT'S GOING ON THE NEW PLATFORM?

Things are getting even busier! As we start using the new structure, check out some of the things that are possible!

EL PUENTE—USING THE PLATFORM



Getting ready for Easter



Community Kitchen
for El Puente



Area residents meeting with AYA
discussing sewage plant



Birthday party for Appolonia , mom
of several of the Bridge Kids



Yoga



Babies Playing

1. A great place to spread out for arts and crafts.
2. The community Kitchen up and away from the rain.
3. Area residents meet to effect positive changes.
4. Birthdays allow everybody to have a special day.
5. A platform for stretching and centering.
6. A safe and clean environment for the babies.
7. A place for trade school classes – in process
8. ???

And the discussions have begun with tribal leader Timoteo and the state run program, INA, to see what can be taught here.

Can't wait to see how all this comes out!

TIME BEING SPENT ON COMMUNITY ISSUES

Much is going on around town, and a large portion of my time these last few months has been following or participating in meetings, and gathering information and advice from experienced people who are part of the Advisory Board that helps El Puente as it goes about its business. It seems that the national government of Costa Rica has begun enforcing new environmental protection laws. Two hotels built too close to the ocean have been already demolished as part of this effort, leaving the scene looking like a war zone – not a very good example of the approach to environmental protection the country is taking. I thought about including a foto here. Nanci and I took a bike ride through the ruins on Sunday, and – trust me – it's not pretty.

More demolitions are scheduled beginning in November, including some locations within Puerto Viejo center. This would radically change Puerto Viejo. People whose lives are invested in this town are in danger of losing their homes

and businesses, some of which have been in their families for generations. Needless to say, the community has come alive. There has been enough of a reaction that further demolitions have been put on hold as a result of the many groups that have sprung into action. To the extent I can help, I've been getting involved.

What I've noticed as this drama unfolds is the various communities themselves as they interact. For the nine years we have been here, we've had a chance to meet people from many demographic groups. This includes blacks, whites, Ticos, extranjeros (people from somewhere else), native born, Europeans, Asians, students traveling for a year after university, people from the US, people from the communities of Manzanillo, Punta Uva, Cocles, Puerto Viejo, Playa Negra, Hone Creek, Cahuita, business owners, home owners. There are people from action groups concerned with tourism, community development, education, and more. What struck me as I got to know more about these groups - they have not, in general, been communicating with each other.

Until now.

With the pressure of the demolition issue, these groups have finally begun to talk, trying to find a solution to this common problem. People who know a lot more than I do about this issue and the culture here say that some solution will be worked out.

My view is – ***this is too good an opportunity to pass up***. People from every group – for the first time since we've been here – are ***finally*** talking to each other. I'm going around trying to sell the idea that something good could result from this near-disaster. A united group can emerge, including all demographic groups from this area – called "Caribe Sur" by some – and ***work together*** to spell out what they ***do*** want to see happen here, and then continue working as a team to build a positive future. A few people are listening.

We'll keep you posted!

In The Meantime...

Doing what we do at El Puente already keeps me busy more than full time six days a week. Throwing these other issues into the mix has taken a lot of my time. I have gotten only two newsletters out in four months, and at this moment I'm not very happy about that. You folks have been wonderfully supportive in so many ways, and I want to keep sending you information and pictures on the results of what you're helping to support down here.

So – I'll do my best to get back to a monthly schedule. Thanks for your understanding!

RIP – COMPUTER

Remember Nanci's trusty computer?




Here's Maria working on a homework assignment using the Internet.

This was the one the Bridge Kids used for homework assignments, and we used it to show movies. Nanci used it for storing and printing her artwork, and answering email. We used it for printing Bridge Brochures.

It died. There's something with the power system, and it isn't turning on.

There's a replacement system available in San Diego. One of our Subscribers, Bill Morgan, owns a company there that takes computers from a leasing company and sells them essentially for their residual value. If you're curious, you can see that company by visiting www.sdiego.com. For about \$300, we can purchase a really good used computer, refurbished, does everything we need doing. Bill is holding it for us until the end of the month. A volunteer is coming here June 1, and she has offered to bring it down with her.

	DELL LATITUDE D520 CORE 2 DUO 1.66GHz -- 1GB Ram -- 120GB Hard Drive -- DVD/CDRW -- 15" SXGA LCD Display -- Gbit Ethernet -- WIFI 802.11 b/g -- FireWire 400 -- 56k F/M -- XP PRO	249.00	1 in Stock
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The direct cost shown is \$249, and with \$15 shipping and other fees that may – or may not – happen as it is carried into the country, the cost could go to \$300.

If you can donate the cost of this computer plus shipping, we'd be very appreciative. Let us know!
If you happen to be in San Diego, and you can get the cash directly to him, so much the better!

Contact me by email, and we can work out the details.

SUBSCRIBER LIST

We're Passing A Smilestone!

The newest update to our Subscriber List will bring us to 2,038 Subscribers!

Thank you so much for being part of the El Puente family!

VOLUNTEER CORNER

We've been blessed with a real long-term volunteer – Marilia de Cesare.



Say "Hi!" to Marilia!

Marilia is an angel from Brazil who has volunteered here on Saturdays for more than a year! She dove right into everything that needed doing around The Bridge. She's a single mom, traveling with her child. Marilia and her daughter Luisa are returning to Brazil in Early June. We will really miss them. You can see more about her adventures by visiting <http://www.trippingmom.com>

Thank you for your wonderful service, Marilia!

DONOR CORNER

We posted a note on April 18, letting you know that we had gone over our goal for the School Program, helping to put 126 Bridge Kids in school this year. I explained that that put us way behind – about \$1,400. You responded quickly and generously, and so far we've been blessed with \$725. We've paid down some of the grocery and vegetable bills we ran up when using all available cash for the School Program. Thank you for your support!

We're looking to get really aggressive this month, with the replacement computer and getting those balances paid off!

To make a donation, go here: <http://www.elpuente-thebridge.org/page30.html>

Thank you so much for your support!

OTHER WAYS YOU CAN HELP!

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 – <http://www.elpuente-thebridge.org/page26.html>**
- **Think about holding a **FUNd** Raising event! Send me an email – let's talk it over!**

VIEW FROM THE BRIDGE

Thank You for your continued support. You all are allowing us to continue to serve!

NOW's a GREAT time to contribute.

Make a **Monthly Pledge** <http://www.elpuente-thebridge.org/pledge>

Make an **Immediate Donation** <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!

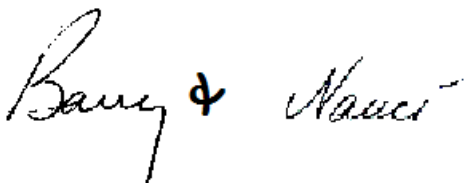
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Thank you for your support!

Well,

...djmiache

Enjoy!



IF YOU HAVE TROUBLE SEEING THE PICTURES

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

Go to The **Bridge Website** <http://www.elpuente-thebridge.org>

Download a **Powerpoint presentation** or a **narrated slideshow/video** <http://www.elpuente-thebridge.org/present>

Download **brochures in Spanish, English, or French** <http://www.elpuente-thebridge.org/brochures>

Go to the **newsletter archive** <http://www.elpuente-thebridge.org/weekly>

See some **Video clips** showing activities at The Bridge <http://www.elpuente-thebridge.org/video>

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