

THE PAULMAR PRENSA

MARCH 2013, VOLUME 2.1

HAPPY NEW YEAR ☒ FELIZ AÑO NUEVO



NEWS IN BRIEF

READY FOR PRIME TIME!

A television crew from the Ecuavisa program, "En Contacto" recently visited our town to film a segment. Paul and members of Neo Juventud's board accompanied the crew as they enjoyed Palmar's various tourists attractions including visiting the Sanctuary atop the hill, kayaking through the mangrove forest, and playing sports on the beach.



MI CASA ES SU CASA

Beach season is here and it seems we are more popular than ever. In January alone we rang in 2013 with Steve & Susie Wilson, hosted fellow PCV Nikki on her second visit, welcomed PCV couple Cherith & Rich, and then spent a day in town with Frankie & Jess before heading to the Galápagos together (see last page for photos). Just last week a group of medical students from Pennsylvania came by to visit our Saturday children's class. Not a bad way to celebrate **ONE FULL YEAR IN ECUADOR!**

WEATHER

85°F



40%

FEATURED PROJECTS



DEMUESTRA TU CULTURA!

Thanks to a generous grant from Disney through Youth Service America, Palmar now has 10 new trash cans for its beach right in time for the tourist season.

Painting and installing the trash cans were the last steps in a campaign called, “Demuestra tu cultura y no botar BASURA,” (Show your culture and don’t litter) which also featured an event where youth ambassadors collected hundreds of signatures from residents who promised to keep the beach clean.

In addition, youth group members taught event participants how to re-use plastic bottles to make decorative flowers, gave out stickers, and led a contest to “kick the soccer ball in the trash can.”



MUJERES CAMBIA UPDATE

From Mari’s surprise birthday party in November and the holiday party in December to Paul’s birthday bash in February, there has been a lot to celebrate lately.

Mujeres Cambia’s 18 members were hard at work completing orders through the holiday season and they’re not putting on the breaks anytime soon with new stores in Pennsylvania and Massachusetts carrying MC merch. To top it all off, last month the group celebrated an important milestone: earning **over \$10,000 in sales!**

This month, 4 *mujeres* will travel to Peace Corps HQ in Quito to participate in and present at a week-long conference on recycled art. Sponsored by USAID, this workshop promises to inspire members as well as give them the opportunity to share what they have learned about how to run a successful micro-enterprise.

Finally, members are learning how plan for the future through the new Savings Program, which rewards members who save at least 20% of their earnings.



DESIGN FOR GOOD

The next time you buy a cup of coffee at Starbucks think of us! Each year with support from the International Youth Foundation, Starbucks awards grants to exceptional youth-led and youth-serving projects from around the world. Fundación Neo Juventud is fortunate to count itself among the recipients this year for its project, Design for Good.

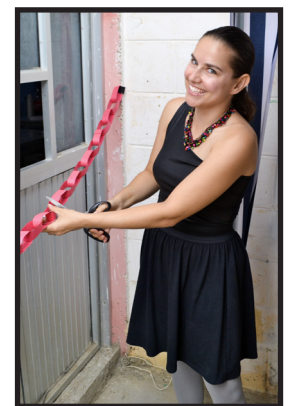


Imagine living in a place with no street signs or maps. A place where you can graduate from high school without ever taking an art class. Where the closest you've come to a digital camera is taking a picture with a cell phone. That's life in Palmar. The Design for Good project fulfills a demonstrated community need for professional creative services coupled with a need for high quality art and media instruction.

We're training youth in the media arts in order to use those skills to serve the community through a town map, website, brochure, and beautification campaign. This year-long project started in November and in the first four months we have renovated the Center for Art & Design, which consists of a large studio/classroom as well as a computer lab that can only be accessed through a secret passageway (hint: pull one of the books on the bookshelf to open the door) and we have completed one full semester of classes.

Currently, we are teaching classes in crafts, photography, graphic design, and creativity to students of all ages. Additionally, we are training 7 teen interns who will be tasked not only with managing the Art Center but also with completing the professional design projects to benefit local businesses.

If this sounds familiar that's because it's pretty similar to the work that Mari was doing in Brooklyn with Starting Artists. Only it's more complicated not just because we are teaching in Spanish but also because students here have not had nearly the same opportunities as kids in NYC. You know you're not in New York anymore when no one has heard of Leonardo Da Vinci let alone Andy Warhol. So, there is a lot of work to be done but we're having a blast and hopefully making a difference, too!



GALAPAGOS 2013

