



ACTIVITIES REPORT

Ixiamas, August 2012



SIFAT-BOLIVIA

EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES



Future graduating class of 2014

We continue supporting 15 de Agosto, the new school in town. The school is waiting for more funds from the state to build the necessary amount of classrooms, so two classes meet in our facilities every weekday morning. 15 de Agosto is now in its fourth year and has up to the sophomore class. The first class will graduate in two years. We enjoy having these young people around and having the opportunity to share our lives with them while encouraging them to graduate.

The school also lacks teacher salaries, so Mateo is teaching English classes to the 7th and 8th graders. A short-term volunteer, Matthew Vaughn, helped with these classes during his three months in Ixiamas. It is a great opportunity for the students to have a native English speaker as a teacher, as well as a great opportunity for Matthew to build relationships with the students.



Matthew Vaughn with his English students



Students in the beekeeping class

We continue coordinating with FAUTAPO, a Bolivian foundation dedicated to adult education, with their beekeeping and culinary classes. FAUTAPO coordinates with local authorities and educators to offer technical classes from which students receive a degree from the ministry of education.

Mateo is teaching the beekeeping classes. Participants come to town from their rural communities on Saturdays to have classes in the mornings, and in the afternoons they spend their time in the bee apiary. FAUTAPO provides the beekeeping equipment and hives,

while SIFAT-BOLIVIA provides the classroom and land on which to put the bee hives. Recently seven hives arrived from Rurrenabaque. The students learned to make bee nectar and feed the hives until they are well established.



Mateo getting ready to check on the bees

We have a good group of students of which many already have some experience with bees in the wild. Next, we plan to visit some of their homes in the jungle to capture wild hives and establish them in our apiary. The bees in Bolivia are Africanized, so we always wear the proper clothing and the students have learned how to handle the bees with care.



Feeding the bee hives



Future chefs learning to make apple bread

Rachel has been teaching the culinary classes, specifically topics on hygiene and baking. Apart from learning how to properly set up a kitchen, important hygiene and food preparation guidelines, students also learn many cake and cookie recipes, how to prepare international food and the basics on how to run a business. We recently held a fundraiser in the town square selling beef shish-kababs, cakes and cookies. These funds help the students buy the ingredients and other supplies to continue their studies.

FAUTAPO is active in all areas of Bolivia and usually depends on local mayors' offices to provide classrooms and some equipment for their students. Unfortunately, the local authorities in Ixiamas do not participate, but we have been able to step up and fulfill this role. We are planning on starting a class on raising pigs later this year. We need to raise funds to buy 10 female pigs and construct pig pens. After studying and earning their degree, students will receive a few piglets of a high quality breed and will have the knowledge to begin their own pig raising and breeding businesses.



Taking apple bread out of the oven

MINISTRY ACTIVITIES

Casto, a man from one of the churches in Ixiamas, asked us to start an AWANA program, a nondenominational, international program to help kids learn the Bible, at our facilities in Ixiamas. He has contacts in Cochabamba to get materials and to give us advice to run the program. We have been busy with children from the different churches in Ixiamas every Sunday afternoon.



Mateo helping the kids make tambourines

We usually sing, have a lesson, make a craft and spend time memorizing verses. To end the afternoon, we divide up into three different groups (red, yellow and green) and play games for points. The children also earn points for memorizing verses, bringing their Bibles, attendance, playing games, etc. These points earn them prizes to take home with them.



Eduardo telling a Bible story

It is a blessing to see the children learn Bible stories, memorize verses and learn responsibility while having fun with other kids from all the different churches. We have about 20-25 kids come each week, so it is easy to get to know each other well and form permanent relationships in such a small group.

Casto helping kids learn their Bible verse





Anniversary celebration church service

Rachel is teaching the adult Sunday School class at the local church. We have been doing a study on the lives and beliefs of the Christians in the first 300 years after Christ. It has been an interesting and challenging study, and a surprisingly large number of people have shown interest and responded well. It is such a blessing to be part of the church; our brothers and sisters in Christ encourage us to continue our work here in Ixiamas.

AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITIES

Our demonstrative gardens continue producing vegetables for us. We have recently started harvesting since the rainy season has passed. In the garden at the entrance to our property, we have tomatoes, lettuce, cabbage, green beans, okra, spinach mustard greens, and zucchini. The last three of these vegetables are new to the area, so we get a lot of questions about them!



Some recent harvests—grapefruit, oranges, cucumbers and star fruit

We no longer have formal gardening classes because of a lack of interest. The purpose of the gardens now is to demonstrate how many different vegetables can be grown in a small area using the “Bio



“BIG” vegetable garden

Intensive Gardening” method. Visitors often make comments about our gardens. Through this demonstration, we hope to cultivate more interest in gardening.

We are now butchering and selling our second batch of broiler chickens. With the sale of our first batch, we paid for the labor and materials to cement the second chicken house. Now, the sales of the second batch should be able to pay for four months salary for our part-time animal caretaker.

Raising chickens helps us to be self-sustainable, learn skills to be able to teach and provides fresh chicken to Ixiamas.



Two chicken houses built on the side of the hill



Second chicken coop—chickens 6 weeks old



Matthew plucking a chicken



Layer Hens

We now have five laying hens. We did have ten, but little by little an ocelot sneaks in and takes one during the night. We close them in at night, but if one gets left out, or we don't close them in early enough, he will sneak in and get them. This is one of the dangers of raising chickens in the jungle! The chicken houses for the broilers are all closed securely. The chickens never leave the house, so they are safe.

It is nice to have fresh eggs everyday! At first, we sold a lot of eggs; there is a great market for fresh eggs. Now, there are just enough for our own consumption.

We plan on building a better chicken house and enclose an area to be able to raise more layer hens. We don't want to keep having problems with losing hens, so we need to improve their conditions before we invest in raising more.

We are also raising three female pigs for reproduction. We are learning a lot; who knew it was so hard to get pigs to breed! We rent a male pig from a neighbor; it is quite the process to get the male pig to our pigs, then wait for him to do his duty! Hopefully, we will soon have lots of little piglets. These are local pigs, not of a good breed, but they will bring us a good profit.



Our three "little" pigs

We are coordinating with FAUTAPO to begin some pig raising classes. Our part would be to provide classrooms, to raise the pigs and help with the teaching. We need to raise \$3,500 to buy and transport 10 pregnant pigs of a good breed and to purchase supplies to build their corral. Upon finishing the class, students will take home piglets of a good quality breed to begin raising. Please consider contributing to this endeavor!

We have also begun to raise ducks. This is a new adventure for us, but very enjoyable! The ducks are hardy and very adaptable to the rainy Ixiamas environment.

We enjoy what we do. We hope you enjoy reading about it! Please remember us in your prayers.

You are part of our work in Ixiamas. Without your financial support, we would not be able to help this jungle community that we love. We thank those who are supporting us already, and ask those who have not to please pray about becoming partners in our ministry. You can use the enclosed form to sign up for automatic withdrawals from your banking account.



One of our new ducks in the pond



THANKS FOR YOUR PRAYERS AND SUPPORT!

PLEASE CONTACT US!
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