



February, 2011

The Mano Amiga



This is the Rebirth of The Mano Amiga. A newsletter made by Manos Amigas Volunteers (MAVs) for Manos Amigas Volunteers. It will be published once every two months to help keep us united, and provide a tool to maintain and strengthen the family we already are.

Your comments, stories, and participation are what will make this newsletter successful.

The Mano Amiga will consist of five sections:

1. What's New - This will be an update on projects, special events, and future plans involving Manos Amigas.

2. News from the House - This will also be written by current MAVs, providing insight into their lives and activities at the house.

3. One of our own - These are stories written by former MAVs, about experiences they have had, and what they are doing now. Please send any stories you have. This section is about you!

4. People of Manos Amigas - Profiles written by current MAVs, about the kids of the foundation, and people involved in the various programs of Manos Amigas/Let's Go Volunteer. We take requests!

5. News from Colombia - This section will keep you updated on current news from Colombia.

6. Classified Section - This section will provide a forum for former MAVs to gather support for projects they may be planning in various cities around the world. It can also provide assistance for those volunteers with travel plans, looking for a place to stay, and suggestions on what to see and do. Please send us ads you want posted.

My name is Nick O'Neill. I will be serving as the Editor of the Mano Amiga. I served as a MAV from Oct. 1st, 2010 - Jan. 7th, 2011. I am originally from New Orleans, LA, USA and for the next few months I'll be living on the Pacific coast of Guatemala. I'll be in constant contact with Volunteer Supervisor David Dunkley to help organize the newsletter. Suggestions, comments, and critiques are welcomed and encouraged. Of course this first issue is without certain sections, but with your help next time we will have a full issue. Please enjoy!

What's New

February 18, 2011

Due to the increase in number of children and volunteers, the front area of the foundation in Las Vegas del Yuldaima is being extended. What you will remember as being the front door is being moved forward to give us another classroom downstairs, making the wall level with the other front room.



This extension also means we will have another bedroom for volunteers, so the house will have the potential to sleep 16 volunteers at any one time.

The construction work is being done by a local builder from the barrio and should be finished sometime later this month.

The only downside is the excellent sign and mural painted by Rene La Bollach (France) and Peregrine Anghius (USA) last year will eventually be lost. Sorry guys but you will just have to come back to repaint them. — *David Dunkley*



News from the House

February 18, 2011

Remember the steep sloping wasteland that existed behind the house? I'm sure some of you recall the soulful chickens that provided a 5:30 AM wake-up call from this area. Denis Charretier, a MAV from France, decided to do something with this space. From his own sweat and tears Denis has built a terraced garden in this area out the back.



Using the very eco-friendly Guadua bamboo from a local supplier Denis built a three tiered area connected with stairs. Guadua is an amazingly strong building material that grows up to 20 cm a

day, making it very sustainable.

"It has been hard work but I wanted to leave something permanent behind. I have carved my name on to one of the poles for people to find," Denis says. "The ground had some very big rocks and is very steep. The work gave me a chance to improve my suntan before heading home."

The area gets very good sun and Berenice already has plans for a small garden growing tomatoes, onions and maybe even yukka. The volunteers also have plans to spend sunny Sunday mornings recovering from a night out while sipping jugo de maracuyá.



We are very appreciative to Denis and the many hours of hard work he has put into making something that will benefit many people for a long time to come. Denis has added some more photos throughout the process. Check them out at the *Let's Go Volunteer* facebook page. — *David Dunkley*

One of Our Own

February 18, 2011

My name is Denis and I have been volunteering for two and a half months at the foundation. I am a 30 year old Frenchman and I have traveled around the world in many different ways (working, cycling, driving, backpacking), but never before as a volunteer. So when I heard about Manos Amigas, I thought it would be a great opportunity to try my hand at volunteering and help out a community.

I was fortunate to experience Christmas and New Year's Eve here with the kids, the family, and of course the Neighbors. I also met some nice volunteers and made some Colombian friends.

I really had the feeling my time here was useful. What is better evidence than watching kids enjoy a healthy lunch? I also had the pleasure of working in the backyard, constructing a terraced garden, in efforts to make the area more enjoyable for everybody.

It's definitely going to be hard to leave, but I'll do so with some of my best travel memories.

Merci Manos Amigas. - *Denis Charretier*

