

March 2010

- 3 AND A HALF YEARS
- 500 KIDS
- JOY & SADNESS
- EL MANGUARÉ

Iquitos news

Dear family and friends,

Our time in Peru has finally com to an end! After 3 and a half years Jos and I have turned over the project to our friends Marielle and Yolathe. More about that later...

When we first decided to go to Peru we said, "well depending on how well we like it, we'll stay 1 to 4 years." So I say we liked it.

We did a bit of maths and figured out that between Lima and Iquitos we (and you) helped put more then 500 children back into school. -- no small feat!! This included walking through some of the most dangerous shanty towns in Lima and Iquitos to find them, gaining their confidence, teaching them, feeding them, and finally after months and months of preparing them in our little schools, sending them off to the state schools. We also bought them all uniforms and school supplies. there was lots of counseling done with parents, and arranging copies of birth certificates and National



Identity cards, needed to enter school.

We leave with our hearts filled both with joy and sadness . Joy for the obvious reasons- helping to give back hope back to so many children and families, being able to work with amazing individuals who care so much about improving the world, and finally we loved being able to work in a new culture and language.

Sadness for leaving behind friends, the heat of the jungle, but mainly for having to leave Lucas, our little neighbor. We are thrilled that our friends Marielle and Otto, have agreed to look after him, make sure he is feed and clothed and offer him advice when needed. He is a smart young adult, he will make it.

Back to Yol and Marielle and El Manguare'. El Manguare' is the name of their new charity, which will incorporate our back to school project within theirs. We leave our project in very trusted hands. Both women are Dutch and married to Peruvians and live permanently in Iquitos. They intimately know the life of this jungle town with all its ups and downs.

Yol is a psychologist who previously ran an orphanage in Iquitos for seven years. Marielle is a special education teacher who has years and

years of teaching experience. There are several Peruvians already working and volunteering with the project as well.

They will also be expanding the project to include quality improvement in the actual state schools and setting up day care centers for women in extreme poverty so they can find work knowing that their children are well taken care of. Jos and I will continue to serve on the board of directors back in the Netherlands.

So what will Jos and I be doing now... we are back in Iowa for a short visit with my family. In April we will head back to The Netherlands, with our 2 doggies, to look for jobs and a house.

Finally it is with deep deep appreciation to everyone who helped and supported us, rather it was financially or in interest shown in our work, that we say thank you.

Dennis & Jos

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