



FRIENDS OF ALALAY (SANTA CRUZ)

Registered charity no. 1123425

LATE SPRING 2014 NEWSLETTER

So far this year has been very busy, in the UK as well as in Bolivia, with my attendance at a reception at the House of Lords, many long distance project discussions with Alalay and talks to more than 500 children and adults! In this Spring newsletter we are focussing on one of our current very successful projects, as well as sharing other news from both Bristol and Santa Cruz.

The carpentry workshop continues to expand, in large part due to our fantastic carpenter Emilio. Emilio originally comes from a village near La Paz where he helped his brother with woodwork from a young age. A couple of years ago we set up a workshop on-site, equipped with both carpentry hand tools and power equipment, as well as contracting Emilio to work there. We are now able to complete much repair and new work on site (for example, all of the window frames and doors for the prevention house were made in-house). In addition, Alalay are now getting many orders for their beautiful furniture, which includes dining table and chair sets, bedside tables and beds, wardrobes, doors, windows and much more.



Another new exciting project, with much potential, aims to support older street children. Over the years Alalay has built up a wealth of experience in dealing with younger children, much of which would be highly applicable to adolescents and young adults still living on the streets. There is virtually no help given to this group in Santa Cruz, as they are expected to miraculously "sort themselves out and get a job", even though many are drug addicts, alcoholics, illiterate or with hugely low self-esteem. To assist this vulnerable group, Alalay plan to set up a drop-in day centre offering them help and support. We are funding some of the building construction, which has already started.

Friends of Alalay continues to grow due to generous giving from supporters here in the UK and around the World. In fact we are now one of the largest single international funders to the Alalay organisation! However, Alalay itself is currently facing huge budget cuts - for example, one big international donor (whose own funding had been decreased) suddenly reduced their Alalay giving by 40% at the start of the year.

These financial constraints have resulted in the need to combine a couple of the children's cabins and reduce the number of house parents. We have therefore decided to channel some more of our funding this year to pay for four other existing house parents. At first sight this may not directly appear to fulfil our commitment to support "educational or self-sustaining projects", yet without enough house parents, there will be very direct adverse consequences for our children.

Finally, an advance notice to those who might live in the Bristol area. The Rotary Club of Bristol are very kindly organising a concert to raise money for our work. "A Night at the Opera" promises to be an unmissable event, featuring singers from the Welsh National Opera. It will be held at St Mary Magdalene Church, Stoke Bishop on 5th July from 7:30pm. Tickets can be purchased via the Rotary Club or directly from us. More details will be sent out next month. My thanks to all the members of the Rotary Club for so generously organising this event.



Thank you all for your great support – I remain hugely optimistic for the future of our street children.

Annie Syrett, Bristol – May 2014

www.alalay.co.uk