

The Voluntary Traveler



Adventures from the Road Best Traveled



Created by
Nola Lee Kelsey

ORBIS TERRARUM NOVA ET ACCURATISSIMA TABULA. Auctore NICOLAO VESCHER.

The Voluntary Traveler

Adventures from
the
World Best
 Traveled

Created by

N o l a L e e K e l s e y



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Dedicated to

Possibilities

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I shall pass through this world but once.

Any good therefore that I can do or any kindness
that I can show to any human being, let me do it now. Let
me not defer or neglect it, for I shall not pass this way again.

-Mahatma Gandhi

Foreword

A whisper out of nowhere alerts us. It instructs us to pack our bags and seek adventure afar, even when friends and relatives warn us it's crazy to run off to India, Romania, Mexico or (fill in the blank) to save the world. Even dull.

Nola Lee Kelsey has collected the personal tales of talented individuals who realize the world we live in is far from perfect. They don't question why, they just roll up their sleeves to fix it. That's what *The Voluntary Traveler: Adventures from the Road Best Traveled* is all about.

No matter if we catch the *volunteering bug* at 20, 40 or 60, we volunteers are a strange lot. We may not fully calculate the risks of what we do. We scrimp (perhaps take out a loan) to pay our own way to go gallivanting around the globe. *Who has time for a normal life in between projects?* My mom termed my haphazard career path a “downward mobility program.”

This is bigger than 24/7. We sense another dog limping along the roadway is in need of a hug, a meal and a forever home. An orphanage lacks funds for refurbishment. A rural school needs a teacher. A farm asks for help with the upcoming harvest. (Check out the book's resource listing for more.)

Every one of these contributing authors is making a difference and I consider it an honor to be in their company.

- Roberta Beach Jacobson, humorist and author
Karpathos, Greece (May 25, 2009)

Animal Welfare Karpathos

Roberta's Selected Feature

Animal Welfare Karpathos was started because the island was full of strays. Volunteer vets come twice a year to neuter/spay. After almost a decade, real progress can be seen in that area.

The vets also take calls for various emergency procedures, including for farm animals. As things have evolved, we're the only place islanders can turn to for help with pets. We give routine shots, microchips and offer birth control shots (in between vet visits).

There are no fees charged to volunteer with us. Donations are gladly accepted and oftentimes locals “pay” with a jar of fresh honey or a sack of oranges! We have a charity book. For every copy of *Almost Perfect: Disabled Pets and the People Who Love Them* sold, the publisher (Enspirio House, an imprint of Word Forge Books) makes a donation to Animal Welfare Karpathos. The book is available at amazon.com, amazon.ca and barnesandnoble.com.

Learn more about volunteering with Animal Welfare Karpathos – see page 216

Introduction

Forces of nature are not to be denied. Mankind can give into them or turn away under the delusion of defiance. It makes no difference. In the end what makes us happy is so ingrained in our personal natures that to oppose these forces in exchange for what society claims will bring happiness inevitably leads to a lifetime of misery or, worse, mundane normality.

For three years during college I was at the wildlife rescue five days a week. No pay, just play. Knowing the animals needed cared for, not showing up simply never occurred to me. Why was I even studying zoology? I already had the privilege of working with bobcats, sidestepping a disgruntled alligator, feeding birds of prey, hanging out with mountain lions, being shit on, knocked over, rib-kicked and covered in a fabulously tacky coat of food prep residue. Life was perfect. It was indeed a riotously good time.

As most stories go, however, over time the circumstances of life, family and career (or the temporary illusions of a career(s)) forced me towards that obligatory 'real' world. The voluntary nature of my life slowly faded from view.

A decade later I found myself shooting pool in a bar on Koh Samui in the Gulf of Thailand. I was traveling with my high school friend,

singer/songwriter, Lincoln Kroll. Across the table were two new best friends whose names I can no longer recall. You bond so quickly with strangers when you travel. It's an odd phenomenon of the road, to be so sure you have made an unyielding life-long connection with people you'll probably never so much as email in the future.

All around us, local working girls with silky, raven black hair and perfect, diminutive smiles cast their flirtatious glances Lincoln's way. Yet, to his credit, Lincoln noticed my own distraction from the game. He lifted a book from my hands, tossing it among our ever-growing collection of empty beer bottles. "If that's upsetting you so much, just quit reading it."

Given his fondness for the ladies, I knew my distress must have rated as beyond obvious. For me to have crossed Lincoln's radar in that moment, my own frizzy head (and smile) would normally have had to catch fire. Given my fondness for rebellion (and dogs), the book was back in my hands in under two minutes.

The book, as it were, was a handmade hodgepodge of photos and stories haphazardly compiled by a small animal rescue group which had just opened on the island. The Dog Rescue Center Samui (DRCS) left promotional literature at prevalent tourist destinations (i.e. bars), around the island in the hope of attracting donations and volunteers. It worked.

Perhaps I was haunted by the memory of a dog that had graced our bungalow on the island of Koh Phangan the previous week. Her injuries sickened Lincoln and distressed me. Ten years earlier I would have leapt into action and attempted to fix her up with whatever tools the village had to offer, like some veterinary MacGyver with peroxide and a bikini top muzzle. At least I would have tried. Instead I felt helpless due to the lack of silly luxuries such as a veterinarian or medical supplies. Overwhelmed by so much need, so many strays everywhere, and skills seemingly lost to leading a life of normality, I shut down - frozen in my mental tracks. To my greatest shame I did nothing to help the suffering dog which chose us that day. I had forgotten myself, my nature. I will never forget her.

That experience primed me for finding that book in the bar the following week. With the back of my hand, I swept cigarette ashes from the cover and turned to the first page. Horrific 'Before' and affirming 'After' pictures were collaged among the shelter's story. There was hope for island dogs after all. Hope. There were ways I could help.

Two days later, I visited the rescue's clinic. Upon returning home I created the DRCS's first website. Admittedly it was as haphazardly assembled as their first promotional books. What I know about websites could fit inside a thimble with ample room to spare. Nonetheless my voluntary life had been rekindled in full force.

Over the following years, I volunteered for the Zoological Society of San Diego. I volunteered with local animal shelters wherever I happened to live at any given moment. Next there was Care for Dogs in Chiangmai, Thailand. In the USA no dog dared cross my path less he be picked up and taxied around for hours until his/her home was located. I volunteered for the lost and for their families - that bungalow dog I failed always in the back of my mind.

Later I signed up for an extended trip to Africa that was to involve monkeys, then dolphins, then rabies boosters and, ultimately, even larger lions than the predators from the wildlife rescue of my youth. Yet, somehow, I wound up back with dogs. I turned up unannounced at the renowned Best Friends Animal Society (Nat Geo Channels 'Dogtown') in Utah for two weeks of volunteering. I left nearly a year later, departing fully trained as a volunteer Rapid Responder for Animals in Disasters. I was addicted. I had found my true nature again - or perhaps it had found me.

"My name is Nola and I am a serial volunteer."

Frankly I thought I was the only one, cursed by some mental defect to a lifetime of quitting 'jobs' or selling my cars to fund free work in uncomfortable surroundings, like some heroin junkie pawning her silver fillings to get her next fix. No doubt my family felt the same. They equate working with generating an income. Go figure.

It was not until I began assembling this anthology, *The Voluntary Traveler*, that I learned so many other beautifully addicted travelers are

out there. Now I know my natural compulsion for volunteerism is only about a 6.0 on the Richter Scale of give-back travel obsessions; although I am rapidly careening toward a 9.8.



The first half of this book is a collection of the actual experiences of volunteer travelers from snippets to odysseys and from program overviews to lessons learned. The authors selected their own subjects, their own passions. Each story, like each volunteer experience, is unique and told in the contributing writer's own words and own unique style. Like their styles, their backgrounds are eclectic. Some are travel writers, some photographers and some dedicated vagabonds of more dubious incomes. There are race car drivers, dental types, students and more. Yet, their commonalities are greater than their differences. Each has walked the walk, not just talked the talk, of volunteer travel. All have confessed to harboring a "voluntary addiction."

These are the stories of serial volunteers. They are the best wandering hearts the world has to offer, giving their help, hands and hearts without considering it a sacrifice. Instead each is grateful for the chance to share their skills in exchange for experiencing new worlds and to live a life well beyond normality. By sharing their adventures with you, they do not seek recovery from their addiction, but to bring you into the folds of positive-impact travel and its world of possibilities.

At the start of each author's chapter is their bio; at the end a brief feature. Each writer was given the opportunity to select/feature an organization or cause they most wanted to teach you about. Some wished to feature the organization focused on in their chapters, others featured charities they have founded themselves, still others wanted to donate the space to teach the world about a different, sometimes lesser-known organization in need of some extra "voluntary hands."



Beyond these stories of the everyday extraordinary moments ‘voluntourism’ has to offer travelers are the tools you need to plan your own volunteer adventure. The second half of this book consists of a Volunteer Travel Guide and a selection of additional resources. Don’t stop until you find the project that makes your heart race. The diversity of worlds you can step into via volunteering is immense. Whether you long to be an archeologist, wildlife researcher, teach music to orphans or be a witness for peace, you can live out your dream. Travelers can contribute in every manner of field – long or short term. The only way you can do too little is to do nothing at all.

In exchange for volunteer work you will receive experiences beyond what you ever imagined possible from a “vacation.” Find the level of travel that makes you feel comfortable. Join an organized volunteer/tour group, contact organizations in countries or fields you wish to immerse yourself in or simply wash up on some island beach with a music man, forgotten skills and a long-suppressed desire to do more, then offer a hand. Each traveler will find his/her own way to journey along the road best traveled. Your voluntary style is your own – share your wisdom, open your heart and feed your soul. If you do your best, nature’s forces will inevitably do the rest.

- Nola Lee Kelsey, zoologist, author and serial volunteer

Update: The Dog Rescue Center Samui has grown to be a model for animal rescues in Thailand. The island of Koh Phangan is now home to Phangan Animal Care, which you will read about in this book. The third inhabited island in this chain, Koh Tao, is now home to the Noistar Thai Animal Rescue Foundation. All have websites listed in the travel guide section of this book and all have opportunities for dedicated volunteers.

Care for Dogs

Nola's Selected Feature

You can help make a difference for the homeless dogs in Thailand by joining the volunteer program at Care for Dogs. We are looking for people from all walks of life to help us with the many tasks that help improve the dogs' lives.

Working with street and temple dogs is a very rewarding experience, even if you sometimes come in touch with sad situations. You will find new four legged friends, see their health improving and enjoy how they greet you excitedly whenever they see you. On a weekly basis, we visit temples to pick up dogs for sterilization, to vaccinate puppies, arrange medical care with vets, to feed malnourished dogs, and, last, but not least, pet them.

We also run a shelter for approximately 100 puppies and dogs, about 20 minutes outside of Chiang Mai. We need individuals to help socialize our dogs through grooming/bathing, walking, light training, and playing! We sometimes need help with bandaging, wound repair, administering IV fluids, doing heartworm tests, as well as transporting dogs to and from the vet clinic.

Additionally, assistance with fundraising is also appreciated! Without funds we cannot help dogs! We are therefore urgently in need of individuals who have fundraising ideas and are willing to organize fundraising activities. You could also help by writing letters to companies (foreign and Thai) to ask for their kind donations and support. We are also planning on holding sales and would need smiling volunteers to come and help us with the booth.

Discover more opportunities for changing the lives of the dogs of Northern Thailand at: <http://www.carefordogs.org>.

Learn more about volunteering with Care for Dogs – see page 248

The Voluntary Traveler



Derek Turner ✈

Derek was raised in a small town in Northern Arizona (USA). After studying film, theater and public relations in school, he moved into the corporate world of sales and marketing. Yet his dreams were bigger than his office. Six years deep in an established career, Derek took a chance to follow his heart. He left his job and joined an old college friend to sail around the world and do a bit of humanitarian work. Days before stepping foot on a sailboat (for the first time in his life), Derek started a website designed to raise money for the needs of people along the way, documenting his adventures by video, camera and blog. Eventually, the vision out grew the boat and Derek now travels by all means possible. You can follow Derek Turner's journey and random acts of kindness on the website: www.theworldbysea.com



How You Can Change the World Through Volunteer Work

Find a need. Fill a need.

For many of us there comes a point in life, when you take pause, look around and realize we have it pretty good. It's that moment when you discover that no matter how many points the Dow has dropped, or how high gas prices have become, we still live like kings and queens compared to a lot of people in the world. Then comes the wave of guilt, compassion, inspiration - whatever it is that moves a person to say: "I want to do something. I, (*insert full name here*), want to make a difference."

This is probably the biggest step: realizing that we can, even should, make a difference. But then, after that beautiful, humbling moment of self-realization where we decide YES (I am going to change the world!), comes the more complicated and often demotivating, "how." This step, as it turns out, is even more difficult than the first.

Volunteering is a broad term. It can be as simple or complicated as you like. It can mean anything from picking up trash, to serving bread at a soup kitchen, to serving on the front lines for a country you love. You don't have to go anywhere to do it, but if you're like me and would

rather travel than stay home, the opportunities are endless.

From the first time I flew at the age of 3 and fell in love with my flight attendant, I have loved to travel, to see new places and meet new people. However, the more I've traveled, the more I've been haunted by that motivating whisper to make a difference in this world. So one day, standing hip deep in the corporate world of sales and marketing, I decided the time had come. Despite a new promotion and other promising job offers, I quit. I left my job, and at the tender age of 30 years, joined an old college friend on 33' sailboat adventure around the world.

I had never sailed a day in my life, but I had traveled, and I wanted this trip to be more than just a vacation. So, days before I left, a friend and I designed a website. The idea was simple: I would raise money on my website-all of which would go towards needs I saw and projects I volunteered with along the way. Then through the website I would blog about everything. Through video, picture and word, I would raise awareness and hopefully money, and those giving could (literally) watch their dollars work.

It was sort of a pipe dream at the beginning, but contrary to many skeptics, it actually worked. And, a simple idea for grassroots humanitarian work has since moved past the bow of the boat. Money was raised and needs were met. Orphans were given clothing and supplies for school. Prisoners were given books to study and seeds to plant. We even raised enough money to buy one charming, less fortunate man a prosthetic leg and the doctor's appointments to support it.

Five tips to help you find volunteer opportunities

How and where do you begin? There are needs everywhere, but it can be hard to know where to start. Fortunately, there is no one right answer, but I've learned a few things since I began:

- 1. Contact Before Contact:** If you've never been to a place and would like to get involved, the best thing you can do is find

someone who's been there. Ask around. Try to find a contact who is already plugged in. If you don't mind letting someone else call the shots, there are a number of volunteer companies that can organize your entire trip. On occasion they'll at least provide a name or email. Personally, I started with Facebook. Asking friends or friends of friends for advice, usually (or eventually) I found someone in the country I was headed for. Not only can they help you find a project, they can help you find the bus station.

2. **Watch and Learn:** The more you know about a culture, the more you'll understand their true needs. If you can, learn about the culture before you visit. Read about their history, their current situation. This will help you relate to people you may not have much in common with. But even if you enter a country, without a contact or prior information, you'll learn a lot just by watching.
3. **Ask Around:** As simple as it is, nothing has paid off for me more than this. It doesn't take long to spot a malnourished boy or a girl with no shoes, but some problems are hidden. I knew there were children with needs in the Dominican Republic, but I didn't realize children had to meet certain uniform requirements to go to school. I also would have never learned about "Viejito" (the man without a leg), had I not simply asked around a community for people with needs. Even the "Tourist Information" may be able to point you in the right direction.
4. **Be Flexible (in action and idea):** Even if you know the project beforehand, you may be asked to do something that to you seems unimportant. Be prepared to be insignificant. Not all jobs are glamorous and often times you will be behind the scenes where neither you nor your work are obvious. And that's okay.

5. **Be Cautious:** Remember that in most places, especially those with heavy need, you will be viewed as wealthy. Compared to them, you are. There is a chance when you start offering help, you will be bombarded with requests. Use discretion. I always try to respectfully verify the request with a second or third, unrelated source.

You know that bumper sticker you see on the back of VW buses that says “Practice random acts of kindness”? Well, I don’t have dreadlocks and I’ve never lived in a commune, but I think it’s true. I’m convinced that most things in life are self-perpetuating, which is why when someone does something nice (or not nice) to us, we in turn are moved to also do something nice (or not nice) to someone else. You might change the world. You might find and fill some need so vital it affects an entire culture. Or you might just hammer a nail that holds together a humble home for someone who’s less fortunate. You might just buy a guy a sandwich. I’m not saying you should quit your job, and live on a boat, not all of us can do that. But everyone can do something.

The World By Sea

Derek's Selected Feature

See the world. Make a difference.

When founder, Derek Turner, left a career in sales and marketing to sail around the world, he wanted to do more than just see places. He wanted to make a difference. What started as a pipe dream in philanthropy soon became “The World By Sea.”

The World By Sea (www.theworldbysea.com) is a website designed to entertain, inform and inspire readers to be a part of grassroots humanitarianism. Since its conception, The World By Sea has helped build desks and shelving at underprivileged schools, provided school supplies and clothing to orphanages, medicine to hospitals, educational supplies to prisons and even helped in providing a struggling father with a prosthetic leg and medical support.

Derek started his adventure on a 33 foot sailboat and has been using photojournalism, blogging and creating videos to expose readers to the needs he encounters among different people throughout the world. Readers can follow along, make suggestions, and donate through www.theworldbysea.com with the peace of mind that 100% of proceeds are used to support and meet the needs of people around the world.

Tony James Slater →

Tony James Slater trained as an actor. Sadly, he never became famous because... well, because he was crap. But under the guise of 'Waiting for his Big Break, he managed to avoid gainful employment for several years, choosing instead to spend his time romping around the world getting bitten, mauled, shot at and seduced by exotic foreign women. As a result, he is about to publish his first book, ***That Bear Ate My Pants!***, an hilarious chronicle of his three month long, near-death experience at a wild animal refuge in Ecuador. For more information, photos, terrible jokes and a sneak preview of the book, please visit: www.TonyJamesSlater.com.

BUT BE WARNED!! Some of the writing is in red.



Mad Dogs and Irish Women

I was in love with Koh Phangan before I ever set foot on her soil.

The view from the ferry of postcard-perfect beaches bordering deep green jungle went a long way to allaying my fears. The train ride from Bangkok, traveling third class in a crowded carriage with no windows, for eleven hours on a broken seat next to a toilet that stank so bad I'd rather have shit myself than used it, slightly blunted my enthusiasm. But now it was behind me, forgotten along with my underwear.

White sand fringed with coconut trees and dotted with tiny wooden bungalows; the glorious coastline rolled towards me. I'd come to this island paradise, the crown jewel in the Gulf of Thailand, for two main reasons...

The first was obvious: Full Moon Party! Drunken revelry, semi-naked chicks, crazy dancing beach parties stretching all through the night - loud, sweaty and dangerously irresponsible - a monthly monument to excess and hedonism. I could hardly wait!

The second reason was PAC.

Phangan Animal Care was a volunteer-run charity with a mission: help and care for the stray animals of the entire island. Now, anyone who has been to Thailand will know of their problem with stray dogs.

They roam the cities and the beaches alike, singly or in packs, fighting over scraps and garbage. They get beaten by locals and disgusted tourists, injured through fighting, ravaged by disease and flattened by the traffic.

Even worse is the government's methods of control. Once a year a truck used to drive from one end of the island to the other, dropping poisoned meat the whole way. Strays would eat it. Pets would eat it. And whether owned or homeless, they would die a hideous, agonizing death and then lie rotting in the tropical sun until someone flung the remains into the forest.

Since PAC had been working on Phangan that had not been necessary.



"Let's get you set up with a bike," Avril said.

She'd met me at the pier on an ancient scooter of her own. "It belongs to the clinic," she'd explained as the bike coughed to life beneath us. "We have a trailer we attach when we go to collect dogs for treatment or surgery."

Wow. This bike was struggling to pull me, let alone a steel cage full of anxious animals. If the rest of the clinic equipment was in similar repair it was going to be a tough few months...

Avril was relentlessly cheerful. She'd spent half a year as the administrator of PAC, running the day to day business and keeping up with all the paperwork. She was blonde, in her early thirties with a kind face and a constant smile. It was contagious - between that and the pothole-riddled ride through the jungle I was grinning like a maniac by the time she turned off the main road into the grounds of the island's high school. Behind the school lay the clinic - two buildings converted from teachers accommodations, one for the surgery and one for the office. Avril lived above one and the full-time nurses above the other. Dogs of all sizes came running to greet us, some on three legs, all very excited. "Get down! Boogles! Ploy!" Avril was the epicenter of a small

canine whirlwind. "They're all very friendly," she told me. "Look!" she addressed the pack. "This is Tony!"

All eyes swung towards me. And the licking commenced.



Avril took me to meet Jorik, the meanest, sourest bike rental man on the island. "He hates women," she explained after he swore at her and disappeared back into his shop. "Actually he hates everybody. But he gives us a good discount for clinic volunteers."

"Why?" I had to ask.

"I have absolutely no idea. Maybe he just... likes animals?"

There was no time to ponder the problem. The rental guy was back, pushing a bright blue scooter. He scowled as he presented it to me. "You ever ridden one of these before?"

"Uh . . . yeah, sure," I lied.

"Okay. Any damage - you pay for it. Now gimme yer passport."

And just like that I had wheels.



I fell off it after just one day, on the dirt road leading down to the beach resort where I was staying. It was my own fault. The theme tune from 'Mission Impossible' was playing in my head and I was trying to see how far I could lean over when I went around corners. Evidently not *that* far.

Linda, the other new clinic volunteer, was my opposite number. We lived in the same row of tiny thatched bungalows less than ten meters from the surf.

"You got a bike yet?" I asked her.

"Yeah."

"I just crashed mine." I proudly showed her the pitiful scuff marks on my elbow. "You crashed yours yet?"

"No. I'm too scared! I think the guy who rents it really hated me..."

Linda never crashed her bike. Largely because she never drove it over fifteen miles an hour. But I forgave her that, like I forgave her for being Irish.

“You love being British!” I’d tell her.

“I’m NOT British,” she’d growl. She was so easy to bait, and so much fun.

“Well, being from the UK then.”

“I’m NOT from the UK!”

“You might as well be. I mean, we basically own your Ireland don’t we?”

“You son of a...!” And she’d hit me with whatever lay close to hand. Hopefully not a glass ashtray. Avril was also Irish, as was the legendary lady who’d created PAC. Bloody savages! After a month in a tropical paradise what did Linda miss most? Potatoes. Seriously. “Your head is a potato,” I told her.

Linda was my best friend on the island.



A routine quickly set in. Work days were largely spent cleaning out the cages, feeding the animals and doing the vast amount of washing the clinic generated. We had hundreds of donated towels and blankets to make bedding for animals sick enough to need to stay at the clinic. All the bedding had to be changed daily, of course, and more often if the patient was suffering from diarrhea or vomiting! There were two washing machines behind the clinic, but neither of them worked. We would alternate between them on a daily basis, always trying to coax just one more wash cycle from the battered machines. We fed the dogs. We walked the dogs. We held them steady while they received attention from the nurses. We grew to know them all. Watching their progress back to health was always a happiness.

Every so often a traveling vet would take a day or two off their holiday and donate some time to us. Then the excitement would begin! A surgery day would be scheduled; every clamp, knife and utensil in the

place would be sterilized. Spare friends would be drafted in as extra volunteers to help capture strays and aid recovery.

Then, when all was made ready, the visiting vet would arrive, don his gloves . . . and cut the balls off every animal in sight.

Alas, I do suffer from being slightly squeamish. So, whilst I could just about bring myself to restrain the condemned animal for anesthetic, carry them into the surgery and help tie them down, once the cutting began I just had to leave. The sobs of the recovering animals on regaining consciousness - only to realize that something vital was missing - even that was almost more than I could take!

One time I was pacing back and forth between the kennels outside, trying to talk myself into keeping my breakfast down after inadvertently witnessing the start of an operation. The girls had been highly amused when I'd realized just what I was staring at, clapped a hand over my mouth and sprinted for the back door. I was walking back past the door for about the fiftieth time when one of the nurses called me from inside. I poked my head in to see what she wanted. "Chuck this in the bin for us would you?" She asked and threw something towards me. I caught it instinctively - and only then noticed both nurses stood watching me with identical evil smiles on their faces.

I opened my hand. I was holding a severed testicle.



I think it's fair to say there were downsides to being the only guy working at the clinic. When Avril had first enthused about introducing me and explained that there hadn't been a male volunteer for quite some time, visions of scantily clad nurses vying for my attention filled my head. The reality was rather more brutal. I was outnumbered. There was a worrying standing joke going on between the nurses. Whenever I cracked a particularly coarse joke or made a remark they considered crass, one of them would look me up and down as though calculating the correct dose for sedation while the other carefully arranged the castration kit...



Racing through the jungle on the back of the clinic's motor scooter was enormous fun. Even when I wasn't driving. Just for a change I was accompanying Por, our Thai vet nurse, on one of her outpatient visits.

Por had a tough job. As the only Thai speaker on staff she ended up handling the bulk of the customers, taking medical histories for new patients and translating everything from drug labels to shopping lists for the rest of us. On top of that she was the only permanent vet nurse, ultimately responsible for everything medical that happened at the clinic.

She had a delightfully sarcastic sense of humor! One of her favorite jokes was to feign complete ignorance when I was recounting my party exploits. Then by asking seemingly innocent questions she'd get me to completely incriminate or embarrass myself (usually both). In spite of her compassionate nature she had some steel in her soul. No animal, no matter how pissed off, would willingly cross her. Her 'Bad Dog!' look would freeze a Velociraptor at a hundred paces.

Today's mission was to be a little different from the norm. Instead of capturing a sick stray dog or returning a cat with a broken leg, this morning she was taking me to one of the island's more secluded temples where a young monk had rescued and befriended a badly treated water buffalo.

We stood in a clearing close to the carved wooden outbuildings of the temple, eyeing up our morning's work. The buffalo stared back nervously. All nine hundred pounds of him. Apparently he'd been abused by his previous owners, so he wasn't overly fond of people. Only his eventual rescuer, an orange-clad teenager built like a coat hanger, could get close enough to hold his lead rope. The pair had become inseparable, and the lad had been treating a nasty wound on the animal's flank. However, without an injection of antibiotics it was sure to get infected. The jungle was hot and humid, the temple beautiful but

poor. Life was dirty for both man and beast. If the buffalo was to survive it had to have some protection from its environment.

Por wasn't fazed in the least. Chatting to the monks she quickly came up with a scheme for restraining the massive creature. The buffalo's lead rope was thrown over a tree branch and pulled taut to coax him closer to the tree. The plan was for me and another guy to haul on the rope, hoisting the buffalo's front legs off the ground, thereby immobilizing him long enough for Por to run in and administer the jab. But the beast was agitated. His sole guardian had been called away to a safe distance leaving nothing between him and us but the tree. We took the rope and hauled with all our might.

Nothing happened.

The combined weight of two people would never be enough to counterbalance even a quarter of this beast. Especially not if one of the guys was Thai. Even on his tip-toes he only came up to my nipples. We needed reinforcements.

To her credit Por still had a go, but the unrestrained buffalo proved impossible to corner. All she got for her trouble was a jab in the finger from her own needle!

Another two guys were drafted in, gardeners or farmers from the looks of them. "Take Two" was dramatically more successful. The front quarters of the buffalo were hoisted off the ground. Por made her dash - just as the buffalo began to swing. Trotting on his hind legs he was swinging around the tree towards us at an alarming rate! What to do? If we dropped the rope and ran we'd never be able to try again. He was way too spooked by this unnatural treatment already. So we hung on, moving clumsily around the other side of the tree whilst falling all over each other. We desperately wanted to keep solid wood between his horns and our bodies! I could actually feel my bowels loosening. And the buffalo kept coming! Soon, either he was going to swing into us or we'd all end up twined around the tree like ribbons on a maypole.

Then Por gave a yell of triumph! She'd braved the flailing hooves and the very real danger of us letting go, dropping half a ton of angry cow on her - and successfully delivered the drugs.

We backed away easing off on the rope, and hoping his first move once he regained his freedom wouldn't be to run straight over the top of us. No. He retreated from the group, not at high speed, but more of a tactical withdrawal, reversing warily all the way back to what he considered safety.

And that was that. Por bowed to the monks and we were soon on the scooter speeding back through the jungle.

"You never expect to do that huh?" Por sounded exultant after her heroics.

"No... never..." I could hardly believe what I'd just managed to do.

"Hopefully he should be okay now," Por explained, "the young monk tell me if him still sick, but I think he get better."

We paused at a junction and she turned in the saddle to give me a cheeky grin. "If not, we do same thing next week eh?"



Back on regular duties Linda and I took turns at doing the washing, walking the dogs, feeding the kittens and cleaning out cages. There was never any shortage of stuff to do, though for days at a time we might follow our simple routine.

Life could be monotonous right up until it wasn't.

Like when a local man skidded to a halt outside our front door. In the back of his truck his dog was dying - poisoned by a neighbor he'd annoyed once too often.

Emergency stations!

Instantly the entire crew sprang into action, sprinting around the clinic for supplies whilst calling measurements and drug names across the room to one another. I could do nothing but hold the terrified dog as a charcoal solution was brought and fed to her to induce vomiting, injections were administered and tubes inserted. The staff whirled

around us like soldiers on maneuvers, precisely and efficiently deploying every treatment in their arsenal.

I don't even remember the name of that dog.

Everyone there knew it was too late within minutes of her arrival. But it didn't stop them trying, desperately grabbing for any technique, any possibility that might prove lucky and somehow save her life.

The dog died in my arms about three quarters of an hour later. I held her as she thrashed, shuddered, then merely trembled until she was finally still.

You win some, you lose some. And we won more than most.

I cried myself to sleep that night.



PAC is run entirely on donations. The volunteers didn't pay for the privilege of mopping up poo and vomit on a daily basis, and the few paying Thai customers had very limited means to cover even our meager bills. So when cash was needed, we had to hit the streets! Well, the street - there really was only the one. We deployed our forces at a strategic location, outside a cafe whose owner had been instrumental in bringing PAC to the island. We recruited the tiniest, cutest little bundles of fluff from around the clinic - there were always plenty of homeless kittens and puppies in residence - and prepared to unleash some serious emotional blackmail.

It was a simple concept. I'd approach some partygoers on their way to the beach and thrust a minute kitten at them. Any women in the group were immediately entranced, leaving them and their attached friends/partners sitting ducks for my well honed sob stories.

It worked like a charm!

By the end of an evening, our various kittens and puppies were totally played out and curled up asleep on our table. It was getting too dark for a passers-by to see our large 'before' and 'after' style posters featuring animals the clinic had rescued and treated. As the crowd around us became progressively drunker, my sales pitch had simplified

from trying to explain the individual case histories to just pointing at the table full of baby animals and saying, "Give us money or they'll all die!"

Eventually Avril called us off. We had collection boxes stuffed with notes and heavy with coins. Some tourists had parted with the price of a beer - about 30 pence in loose change - and some had been swayed to a greater degree, leaving us with large denomination notes and promises to come and visit us at work.

They never came. But they had done their part, as had we. I was always amazed by how much money we counted out when we got back to the clinic. And if the evening had gone particularly well, I mean if I had been really, really successful... then I would have a scrap of paper in my pocket with a couple of hot phone numbers on it.

Everyone's a winner!



One of the things I loved most about my job was the sense of identity it gave me. Back home I was no one in particular (and what with all this gallivanting off around the world I was likely to stay that way), but here I was 'That Guy Who Works at the Animal Place'. Everyone recognized me, regardless of whether or not I recognized them. It was kinda spooky at times, when random Thai people would just start chatting to me as though I knew them. Maybe I'd held their dog while it got its jabs or come to collect a sick cat from their resort. But, the strangest occurrences were when someone had an animal problem and came straight to me.

I was stretched out in my hammock one afternoon when my landlady came rushing up. "Tony, need help at next door! Have... ah... monkey!" she told me urgently. I hadn't been working at the clinic for some weeks by that time. My three months indentured labor were long since up and I was now diving for a living. But I still kept a weather eye on the clinic, helping out on odd days and doing little chores for them when I could. Linda still worked there and all the staff were my best

friends. I couldn't bring myself to leave the place alone! So, with an urgent problem occurring just up the beach and the clinic typically up to their eyes in sick animals, I had to check it out.

My landlady led me around the line of coconut trees separating her resort from the next one over. "There! In restaurant!" she pointed.

A truly massive monkey sat on a table glaring belligerently at the customers. He was the kind kept by coconut farmers for climbing trees - face like a baboon with a bulbous nose, greyish fur and long, heavily muscled arms. A length of thick chain hung from a leather collar around his neck.

Interspersed with the customers now hovering around the restaurant entrance were a fairly hefty number of cops. Koh Phangan is a tiny island - the six or seven uniformed officers in attendance must have comprised at least half the force. Yet they seemed to be having a spectacular lack of effect on the situation. Some lounged up against palm trees. A couple were on their phones or sending text messages. Probably telling the other half of the force to come and have a look...

The resort owner spotted me and hurried over. "Help!" she insisted. "He escape from somewhere... go crazy in restaurant! He throw things, break things . . . scare everyone. Him not happy!"

Contrary to this assessment, the monkey now seemed to be picking his toe nails.

I gave the owner a reassuring smile and walked into the restaurant. Everyone had panicked, I figured, when the monkey landed in their midst and started flinging things. Their panic had probably made him worse. Then, his chain must have gotten stuck as the free end was currently jammed beneath a table leg.

But he didn't seem the shy type. By now, sitting around with Phangan's finest taking photos of him on their camera phones, hopefully he had cooled down a little. I looked at the floor as I approached his table, lifting my eyes occasionally but without making eye contact. When I was next to him I reached down and freed the chain. I crooned and hummed under my breath, a low rumble of sound

that I hoped would communicate my desire for friendship. Where this idea first came from I have no idea. It's just something I've always done around animals. Mostly it seems to work. The monkey grabbed my arm and hauled himself upright. "Let's go," he seemed to be saying. So chain in hand I led him calmly out of the restaurant and into the shade of a nearby tree.

All around me people stared with open mouths. This must be what it felt like to be Jesus, I mused. We sat together on the sand, the monkey and I. Neither of us betrayed much concern in our surroundings until a tourist from the resort edged a bit too close with his camera. Suddenly my buddy bounded forward with a deep growl. He smacked the ground and bristled at the guy, who must have realized just how much damage this fellow could do to his soft, pink body. The tourist went a bit white and edged slowly backwards.

Now what?

Our dilemma was solved by a tiny Thai boy. To my western eyes he looked about six, which meant he was probably approaching his teens. The resort owner was telling me that this lad knew where the monkey had escaped from.

Excellent! With nothing better to try I simply stood up and led my new friend out of the resort. The boy stayed a good distance ahead of us and led the way. I followed, occasionally encouraging the huge monkey with a gentle tug on the chain. Before long we turned onto the main road and our strange procession headed towards a scattering of shops.



Jorik was sitting on the forecourt as we passed his bike shop. "Huh. Whatcha got there?" he grunted.

"Oh. Escaped monkey. I'm walking him home." I explained.

"He belong to that guy from behind here?"

"Err . . . yeah, I guess so. This boy thinks so."

"Okay. Give him here."

"Oh! Well..."

Jorik took the end of the chain off me and stared down at the monkey. "How's the bike?" he asked.

"It's . . . good, yeah. Thanks." I was a little thrown by his sudden change of tack.

"Right. See ya." He replied.

And just like that Jorik walked off with the monkey in tow. As though it was the most natural thing in the world.

I never did figure that guy out.

"I think," I said to no one in particular, "I need a drink."



Leaving Koh Phangan was one of the hardest things I've ever had to do. The clinic staff threw me a party - several actually. After all, that little island is the party capital of the world!

Linda drove me to the pier as I was bike-less for the first time in months. "I can hardly believe you're going, Tone," she told me. "You only came for three months and you've been here, what? Nearly a year?"

Originally, I'd had a flight home on Boxing Day, which I had accidentally-on-purpose missed. As if I was going to spend Christmas Day on a train to Bangkok! But my meager diving salary was never going to add up to another ticket back to England. Eventually, I scraped together enough cash for a flight to Australia. Hopefully there I would earn some real money. Linda had gone one better than me. She'd flown home to Ireland on que, and managed to stay there for just over a week before flying back to Thailand and begging to take over as clinic Administrator when Avril's contract expired.

We'd been inseparable from our first day together, working and partying. Now I was leaving. Linda still had another year to go.

"Hard to believe it's all over..."

We hugged each other fiercely and I choked back big, manly tears. There was a blast of the ferry whistle.

I turned my back on so much that I'd come to know and love, climbed up through the rusty decks of the boat and stood by the railing

as Koh Phangan receded into memory. It was a view every bit as beautiful as the day I'd arrived and sharpened now by a heartbreaking poignancy.

My thoughts drifted back over my time on the island. The parties - yeah, well, they all kind of blended into each other after a while. Jumping through fire hoops, staggering around a beach crowded with drunken revelers from every corner of the globe - snapshots of memory-like pages from a photo album I only half remembered making.

What had really made me feel alive on Koh Phangan had been the animal rescue adventures, the seemingly impossible tasks, the sense of responsibility and identity. And, the warm, easy friendship of so many volunteers who had come and gone over the months, the feeling of belonging, to both a group of close friends and to something just slightly bigger than all of us.

"Promise you'll come back and visit," Linda had said.

I was leaving not just her, and Por, and Avril; not just the bricks and mortar, and temperamental washing machines of the clinic, the kennels full of patients and the house full of puppies and kittens. Somewhere back there amidst those gleaming strips of white sand I'd found something even harder to part with. I'd found purpose.

"I promise I'll come back," I'd told Linda.

And I did.

But that, as they say, is another story...

PhaNgan Animal Care

Tony's Selected Feature

PhaNgan Animal Care (PAC) is primarily a nursing clinic, providing basic nursing care for the island's animals. PAC's main focus is to care for street and temple animals, but as we are the sole animal care providers on the island, we provide care for every animal brought to us. We enlist occasional veterinary help to assist with our neutering program, which has made an enormous difference to the temples, to population control on the island and to the health of the individual animals.

PAC is staffed by two Veterinary Nurses, an Administrator, and a voluntary Clinic Assistant. We provide among other services:

1. Education. PAC has developed an education program, which is a permanent part of the curriculum at the high school.
2. Comprehensive rabies vaccination program.
3. Treatment for skin disease caused by ectoparasites.
4. Care, with hospitalization if necessary, for wounds.
5. Basic nursing care for sick animals.
6. Emergency first aid for injured animals.
7. Nursing and recovery care following surgeries.
8. Veterinary care at regular intervals.
9. Disease diagnosis and monitoring. Blood tests which investigate the presence of diseases such as heart worm and FELV.
10. Local advice and education with regard to animal care.

Editor's note: PhaNgan Animal Care has been struggling to rebuild after an arson attack on their facility last year. Please visit their website to follow the progress and learn of more ways you can help keep the only animal shelter on this island open.

Shelley Seale →

Shelley Seale is a freelance writer based in Austin, Texas, but who vagabonds in any part of the world whenever possible. Shelley has written for National Geographic's GeoTourism guides, Andrew Harper Traveler Magazine, the Seattle Times, Austin Woman, Washington Magazine and The International Ecotourism Society among others, and is the Sustainable Travel Columnist at The Examiner. Her mantra is "travel with a purpose." Her recent book, *The Weight of Silence: Invisible Children of India*, tells the true stories of children such as those portrayed in the movie *Slumdog Millionaire*, for whom such lives are their everyday realities.

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Passage to India: A Volunteer Voyage

The plane from Delhi started its final descent for landing and my heart began to race. After thirty-six hours of travel this was the last leg of the journey bringing me to Bhubaneswar, capital of the northeastern state of Orissa located four hundred kilometers south of Calcutta, to volunteer for a week at an orphanage. The home is supported by The Miracle Foundation, a nonprofit group based in Austin, Texas that recruits donors and sponsors for the hundred children who lived there.

I had been volunteering for the foundation and sponsored a child, a ten year old boy named Santosh. Caroline Boudreaux, founder of the organization, had invited me to accompany her and a group of ten other volunteers to Orissa. And so it was that in March 2005, I found myself in India for the first time – a ten-day volunteer trip that I was to make, it turned out, many more times over the years.

As I would soon come to find, in India the children are everywhere - they fill the streets, the railway stations, the villages. Many are homeless, overflowing orphanages and other institutional homes to live on the streets. Amidst the growing prosperity of India there is an entire generation of parentless children growing up, often forced into child labor and prostitution – more than 25 million in all. They are invisible

children; their plight virtually unnoticed by the world, their voices silenced.

In our final destination of Choudwar, a small town about 100 miles south of Calcutta, a man named Damodar Sahoo has dedicated his life to providing a home and family for some of these children. Completely by chance Caroline Boudreaux, founder of The Miracle Foundation, had met Mr. Sahoo and the kids he had taken in some five years before, in the middle of a trip around the world. She was so moved by the plight of these children, and how far just a small amount of money would go in helping them, that she returned to the U.S. and started the foundation which would raise money and recruit volunteers to help ensure their rights to a childhood and a future.

As the plane touched down my stomach tightened. I waited impatiently for the exit doors to open. Eleven dazed Americans emerged into the piercing sunlight and walked across the tarmac to the small terminal. Caroline was immediately spotted by Damodar Sahoo – the man known to all simply as "Papa." In his white Punjabi suit that looked a bit like pajamas, he was just as the pictures I'd seen of him - only bigger. A large man, not fat but substantial, Papa swept Caroline into his arms for a hug across the metal bars separating the passengers in baggage claim from those waiting for them. He lifted his large, thick 1980s style glasses from the bridge of his nose and dabbed at his eyes with a handkerchief.

It was then that I saw he had an entourage. Behind him were his wife, two women staff members, and three girls from the home. They broke into huge smiles, waving excitedly and calling, "Sister Caroline!" Caroline greeted and hugged them all while the rest of us gathered our luggage, our energy suddenly replenished. As we each showed our passport and exited the gate, the girls handed us bouquets of marigolds and red roses, then kissed their fingers and bent down to touch our feet in blessing. The oldest girl, Jhillismita – nicknamed Jilly – was about fourteen and wore a brilliant blue salwar kameez, the casual Indian outfit that most unmarried girls of adolescence and older wear,

comprised of a long top, over matching pants and a scarf. The two younger girls, Pinky and Meena, were around seven years old and dressed in simple cotton floral schoolgirl dresses. Headbands held back their short glossy hair. They were bashful with us, dropping their heads and giggling together when we tried to take photos with them.

Our group made its way outside as everyone else in the small airport stared after us. Two jeep-like vehicles were brought around for all eighteen of us and our piles of luggage. Long moments of delay followed while Papa and the drivers held a frenzied discussion. I stood by with the other volunteers pretending not to notice the passersby pointing us out to each other. I wasn't sure what the waiting and confusion were about, but after only a few hours and two airports I was beginning to understand they accompanied most everything in India. At last our luggage was crammed into one car and tied to the roof of another and everyone piled in. We zoomed away from the airport narrowly missing bicycles, pedestrians, cows and mopeds. Our driver, like all the others around him, merely laid on his horn continuously – presumably to warn those in his path that it would be their fault if they were struck, having been given adequate warning.

As we entered the city, the cacophony of sights and sounds that was Bhubaneswar was jarring after the peaceful countryside I had gazed down on from the airplane. From the air the beauty of the place was unmistakable - lush trees and hillsides, stands of palms along lakes and rivers. The green was a richer shade than I'd ever seen before. The water a serene silver mirror reflecting sky and the pure undeveloped land was seemingly endless. Now, in the midst of it, there seemed no still or quiet space. Instead there were throngs of people everywhere, living and working and sleeping; hundreds of street vendors lined every available inch of sidewalk. The dusty roads peppered with potholes were filled with a constant stream of buses, bicycles, rickshaws, cars and cows. Rising over it all was the constant, blaring beep-beep of the horns. It was the most alive place I had ever been.

Leaving Bhubaneswar we drove another twenty minutes before

reaching the smaller city of Cuttack, near the orphanage. We stopped briefly at the hotel to check in and leave our bags before continuing on our way to Papa's ashram. Another careening ride down the bumping roads and a drive across a curious toll bridge. Again there was much exchange of words, then money, then more waiting, until the gate was finally hand lifted by a guard. Night was falling as we lurched along and then, without warning, turned in through the gates.

In a second, the cars stopped where rows of children were lined around the drive in a semi-circle, waving and chanting "welcome" over and over. I climbed out and they were all around, touching my feet in blessing. Overwhelmed and unsure what to do, I blindly followed behind Papa and Caroline amidst the sea of small bodies. The children were shy at first, excited but reticent. One little girl of about seven summoned her courage and touched my arm, then took my hand. "Hello," she said softly, looking up briefly before her eyes slid away from their contact with mine. As soon as she did this, the surrounding children shed their reserve and moved in close, putting their hands out for me to shake. I did, over and over. There was a never-ending supply of hands raised in front of me.

"Hello, hello," I greeted dozens of children who passed as a blur before me, the throng of us slowly making our way into the ashram. Everything seemed to be happening so quickly. I didn't have time to look around, to see the new wing The Miracle Foundation had built or get any sense of where I was in the darkness. There were just the children, all around and my feet moving forward until we came to a courtyard. As one the kids left our sides and began climbing a staircase in an orderly fashion. We followed with the dozen or so staff, removing our shoes at the top of the stairs and entering the prayer room.

The children were already lined up and sitting on rugs on the floor, boys on one side and girls on the other, ages progressively going up toward the back with older kids sitting behind younger. Ceiling fans whirled overhead to stir the warm air. We were escorted to the front of the room where we, too, sat cross-legged – male volunteers on the boys'

side and female volunteers on the girls'. At the front of the room was an altar holding flowers, small trinkets of devotion, a picture of the guru Sai Baba and a statue of Vishnu, an ancient Hindu god. Tacked to the walls on all sides were pictures of other Hindu gods, Ganesh and Krishna, as well as Jesus, Mary, Mother Theresa and Mohammed. A staff member lit incense at the altar while another blew a horn softly. The children sat up straighter and ceased any fidgeting or whispering.

Papa walked to his brand-new podium and microphone, a contraption he was clearly proud of, and began to speak. Alternating between English and Oriya, the local dialect, he welcomed Caroline as his "daughter" and the volunteers as "friends", introducing us one at a time. When Papa called my name the girl called Pinky presented me with another bouquet, then bent down to touch my feet.

The prayers began. It started with a simple chant: "Om....om..," the small voices resonating deeply. Finally things slowed enough for me to begin to take it all in, to look at the kids clearly and in light, to start to feel my heart calm. The chanting gave way to a song, a hundred sweet voices dancing in the air and filling the room. Beside me on the rug sat one of the smallest girls, with glossy black curls and deep dimples. She was sitting lotus-style with her middle fingers and thumbs pressed together on the knees of her yellow and green, flowered dress, eyes squinted tightly shut in concentration. Her strong, clear singing distinctly carried to my ears apart from the others. The voice of this three year old rising so pure and true was one of the most powerful sounds I had ever heard.

Soon the singing faded into silence and Papa prayed. He said there were many religions represented and respected in the ashram. "Here, there are Hindus, Christians, Buddhists and Muslims. We pray," Papa said, "to God and Allah and Jesus and Mohammed. The meaning of life is to love all. The purpose of life is to serve all."

It was a simple prayer reminding me that life need not be complicated unless we make it so. A soothing peace palpable in the air filled me and I breathed out deeply. The past forty hours of travel and

little sleep fell away as if they were nothing. There seemed no other world outside this place. As Papa spoke my eyes traveled over the faces all around me. I wondered when each of them had stopped wanting to go home, or if they ever had. As much of a loving community as the ashram appeared, it was not the family that most of the children had once known, only distant and ghostly memories for the most part.

Home is a fragile concept – far more delicate than those of us who have always had one can imagine. When a person no longer has a home, when his family is taken from him and he is deprived of everything that was familiar, then after a while wherever he is becomes home. Slowly, the pieces of memory fade until this strange new place is not strange anymore. It becomes harder to recall the past life, a long ago family, until one day he realizes he *is* home.



That first night I searched for Santosh, the child my friend and I sponsored, and from whom we had received photos and letters. After prayers the children and volunteers were led back downstairs to the courtyard for snacks and chai, the rich black spiced tea with lots of milk and sugar. A few sprinkles of rain fell as we sat under a large mango tree and the summer night air turned cool.

I asked about Santosh.

“Santosh! Where is Santosh?” Papa asked, and sent a worker off to find him. Soon the boy appeared, reluctantly trudging forward. He was slightly built, wearing a green and beige checked button-down shirt and blue shorts, his knees dusty beneath the hem of the shorts. His hair had grown out considerably from the near buzz cut in the photograph I had. It was now parted on the side and combed neatly across his forehead. He barely looked at me as Papa explained that I was here as his sponsor. I shook Santosh's hand, told him how happy I was to meet him and asked for a picture together. He stood stoically beside my chair, his body stiff under the arm I placed across his shoulders, unsmiling as the camera clicked. He seemed bashful or embarrassed to be singled out,

and ran off as soon as the photo was taken.

Santosh had been brought to the home just before his second birthday, a boy who could not have any real memories of his previous family, but must have missed them just the same. His mother had died and his father remarried. The official admittance report stated that after his father wed he “was staying in another place leaving Santosh helpless and alone, because the second mother of Santosh did not agree to keep the child with her.” An ex-resident of the orphanage, another who had been taken in as a child and grown up to a more promising future, learned of Santosh’s plight and brought him to Papa.

I thought Santosh was too shy to interact with me and I wouldn’t see much of him during the week we would be there. I was wrong. He was simply not used to the attention and had difficulty grasping the idea that someone had come from across the world just to visit him. It was a powerful thing to walk into a place like this and call out a child’s name, to say I am here for *you*, to these children for whom no one has ever come looking. To be sought out, to realize that someone else knows they exist. To *matter*.

Moments later Santosh was back, smiling uncertainly up at me. I hugged him and patted his shoulder. He remained by my side, never leaving again except once more. He darted off and returned wearing a baseball cap that we had sent him. He pressed against my chair, claiming his spot, as other children crowded around.

When the time came to leave for the night, a goodbye parade occurred much like the welcome one. Again I shook dozens of little hands. “Good night!” they proudly said in English.

“See you tomorrow,” I told them. Some of the braver kids replied, “Tomorrow!”

Santosh was still by my side as I climbed into the jeep, holding his hand through the open window. He grinned at me and touched the bill of his cap. We all gave a final wave and were out the gates. How I would ever sleep that night?

India was everything I had imagined it would be, only more so.

More colors and smells, more noises and people, more everything. It was an assault on all the senses at once. Its sweeping history as the last of the great early civilizations, in existence alongside ancient Greece and Babylon, has survived virtually unchanged in many places and many ways. While in other ways it has become one of the most rapidly evolving nations in the world. India is too big to describe adequately, too big perhaps to absorb in a single lifetime. The country wrapped itself around me and refused to let go.

Chanting from nearby temples wafted up to my hotel room, along with the sandalwood smell of incense. The woman of the house outside my window was on her rooftop terrace every morning, hanging laundry and watering plants. When I opened the window the sounds of India rushed in, now familiar sounds I knew I would miss. Dogs barking, children laughing, prayers being sung, the beep-beep of horns and underneath it all (one had to listen carefully for it) the swoosh-swoosh of the brooms constantly brushing away the dust of Cuttack.

We were the only Westerners in the town. I hadn't seen a single other since arriving in Cuttack. Everyone stared constantly and we created a spectacle wherever we went. Walking from the hotel a quarter-mile to the internet café, groups of schoolgirls followed me. Other shoppers spied on me surreptitiously, curious about the water or bangles I might buy. I stopped at a vendor stall one afternoon to ask if they had foil packets of henna I could purchase for the girls. The floor space of the small shop was covered in bags of grain and bushels of beans and the shelves were filled with everything from shampoo to candy bars. As one shopkeeper added up my purchase another posed the common question, "Where from?"

"The United States," I answered. "Texas."

"Oh, George Bush," he replied knowingly. Then he asked, "Is close to Chicago?"

I spent the following days just being with the kids, befriending them, playing with them. Our days at the ashram were filled with games, reading, dancing and laughing. It felt like summer camp. There

were puzzles, English flash cards, hopscotch, frisbee and the hokey-pokey, which the children wanted to do over and over once it was taught to them. I began to discover who they were – their individual personalities and dreams. I watched the shy ones come out of their shells and self-confidence blossom.

As it did, their ‘best behavior’ fell away and they were normal kids, not always sweet and perfect but often mischievous as well. When they thought I wasn’t looking they would shove each other out of the way or bestow thunks on one another’s heads in annoyance. They used the language barrier to their advantage, pretending at times not to understand when the adult volunteers said it was time to put a game away, reminding me of my daughter when she was young and seemingly deaf to the word, “No.”

As we began to make friends, I discovered that they were just as curious about us and our lives as we were about them. The kids spoke varying levels of English, largely dependent on how many years they had been living in the ashram and attending school. Some had a large vocabulary and conversational skills; others spoke little more than a few words of English. However, I found it surprisingly easy to communicate without sharing even a word of common language.

In many ways they were just like other children I’ve known with homes and families of their own – except for their neediness, their raw hunger for affection, love, belonging. In the midst of the games, laughter and silliness that we engaged in all day long it became almost easy for me to forget that they were orphans. When that reality came crashing back it never failed to hurt my insides with the same breathless intensity as it had the first time. Especially when it intruded unexpectedly, as happened one afternoon.

Caroline and Papa had arranged an ice cream party. Two tables were pulled into the courtyard as the frozen cartons were delivered. The kids lined up eagerly from youngest to oldest to be handed their paper cups of ice cream as we scooped it out in a battle of time against the sun blazing overhead. As we served the icy treats and listened to the kids

slurping away, I noticed that Santosh was nowhere to be seen. I asked some of the other boys about him and they pointed toward the top of the stairs.

I went up and found him sitting alone, seeming sad and listless. He wasn't interested in the ice cream. A housemother named Madhu passed and I asked her to help me find out what was wrong. I was afraid Santosh was hurt or sick. Madhu took him into the boys' dorm and talked to him for several minutes.

"He misses his mother," she said simply when she came back out.

I felt it in my heart and knew that although they loved us being there it could sometimes only make them miss the presence of their own parents. The good of all these caring surrogate parent figures – Papa, Caroline, the housemothers, the volunteers – outweighed the heaviness of sorrow, to be sure. At times though, it was easy to miss the sadness in the presence of the love that filled the ashram. I was reminded anew that these children all carried secret grief and damage inside them, often hidden or temporarily forgotten, but never erased entirely.

I sat with Santosh on the edge of the concrete walkway outside his dorm room. Draping my arm around his shoulders I squeezed reassuringly and held him against my side. I knew that his mother had died when he was so young he couldn't possibly remember her, not really. But to mourn the idea of a mother, that huge absence in his life like a great gaping hole – that was another thing completely. We sat together, not speaking, while in the courtyard in front of us the other children slurped up their ice cream noisily.



The time to return home came much too quickly, just as I was beginning to feel a symmetry of place. The chaos was almost starting to seem normal to me, the maze of streets making sense as we left the hotel each morning. I recognized stalls and vendors and knew where we would turn. What had seemed such mayhem when we first arrived, I could now see had a certain rhythm and organization and I was growing

strangely at home in the midst of it. And of course, there were the children. I was already sad at the thought of leaving them.

After dinner, Papa began our final prayer together. "Om...om..." As the song ended with, "shanti, shanti, shanti," I thought of the meaning of the words I had been taught. Peace to the world, peace to the universe, peace to every heart. I had come expecting this to be a sad place; an emotionally wrenching experience with these parentless young people. But those expectations had been turned on their head.

Yes, there were stories behind each one of these children – many of them painful and tragic. Stories of death, abandonment, abuse, poverty. They all had a past. Yet Papa and his family had made these kids their own in a community of sharing and acceptance. They were poor in wealth but not in spirit; limited in resources, but not in joy and laughter. An interior peace shown from inside them which was unknown – unsought even – by most people rich in resources.

I looked around at the clear, innocent faces and memorized them, already missing this place and these people who had taken up permanent residence in my heart. Whatever I might be leaving behind seemed such a small thing, almost selfish, because the return I had gotten was far greater. Here I was always awash in an outpouring of the innocent, true, powerful love they gave so easily and unconditionally, for nothing more than showing up. They broke my heart and made it whole again all at the same time.

Miracle Foundation

Shelley's Selected Feature

The Miracle Foundation was founded nine years ago on Mother's Day by Caroline Boudreaux. Unable to bear the poverty she had witnessed among Indian orphans, she returned from a trip to India and started The Miracle Foundation.

Our organization is dedicated to empowering children to reach their full potential, one orphan at a time. We are making a significant impact on the lives of orphaned children in India by:

- Raising the standard of living for the children in orphanages
- Reducing the number of non-orphaned children living in orphanages
- Increasing the number of domestic adoptions in India

The Miracle Foundation renovates existing orphanages, builds new ones, raises money for construction and finds sponsors for our children. Because the effort is so focused, there is little overhead. In India, our money goes a long way towards healthy food, tuition, better living conditions, clothing, and medical care. Love, affection, and hope for a bright future come from our incredible staff, ambassadors, and sponsors. The Miracle Foundation currently operates four Children's Homes and one home for unwed mothers and is currently preparing to begin facilitating domestic adoptions in India.

There are currently **25 million** orphaned children in India -- equal to the inhabitants of the state of Texas. Most orphans in India live in overcrowded, under-funded, government orphanages. The rest live **on the streets**. Millions of children in India share a similar story, a life of poverty with no family and little hope. The Miracle Foundation provides these orphans with food, water, clothing, shelter, education, medical care, love, and most of all – hope. <http://www.miraclefoundation.org>.

Read more about volunteering with the Miracle Foundation – see page 338

Jane Stanfield

Jane Stanfield has such a huge passion for animals, volunteering and international travel that she quit her job to travel around the world, completing 12 volunteer jobs, seven with wildlife, within one year.

Upon her return, Jane established her company, Where Is She Heading, which offers presentations, workshops, and classes on how to find a volunteer vacation to suit your heart, interest, time frame and budget.

Jane's book, *Mapping Your Volunteer Vacation*, assists prospective volunteers with finding, creating, planning, packing and returning from an international volunteer vacation. Jane offers a class based on the book at Arapahoe Community College, teaches an introductory volunteer vacation class at Colorado Free University, and is planning her next volunteering-around-the-world trip in 2010.

You can contact Jane about speaking engagements, classes, workshops or the book at:

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The Color of Poo

I am a neat, though not overly fastidious person, but if you had told me before 2006 that I wouldn't mind having colored poo on my pants, I would have thought you were nuts!

It was my sister's idea. She saw them on Animal Planet and told me about them. Then on Christmas morning, at the end of my bed was a print out about caring for orphan baboons. All it took was one look at the glow on the tired volunteers' face as she bottle-fed a small baboon in a diaper, and I knew I had to go to South Africa and work at CARE.

The Center for Animal Rehabilitation and Education (CARE), run by Rita Miljo for over 30 years, is in the Northeast corner of South Africa close to the town of Phalaborwa and Kruger National Park. The rehabilitation center is home to hundreds of baboons waiting for the right season and level of maturity to be released into the wild.

The baboons at CARE may appear at any time of the year and at times are only six weeks of age. It was also not uncommon to receive older individuals who had been taken from the wild to be pets when they were young. As with so many other wildlife "pets", as they grew larger, less cute, or more "wild", their former owners released them to CARE. Some of the stories were pretty horrific. Depending on their

ages, many recovered and rejoined baboon society, but not all.

Until the day of release comes - generally around the time the males are reaching five years of age - the baboons are housed in enclosures and formed into troops. International volunteers, usually from South Africa, Europe, Australia and North America, focus on bottle-feeding, playing, loving the littlest baboons and working with the troops up to two years of age.

While I have degrees working with animals, I had never worked with primates. The staff at CARE understands they will have to train the volunteers and are happy for the help. While there are multiple languages spoken in South Africa, English was spoken at CARE.

During my stay in 2006 there were 450 baboons at the rehabilitation center. On a daily basis the crew of 12 volunteers made up 200 bottles, chopped up 100 milk crates of food for individual adult baboons, chopped and carried buckets of fruit and veggies to our troops, cleaned up after the little charmers and generally acted as playground monitors for the two-year-olds and under.

Our initial introduction in an enclosure included being chewed on by the dominant member of the troop - usually the head female. Once we were accepted and considered safe, volunteers became baboon furniture or playground equipment. At times, we acted as a trampoline for the baboons to ricochet off as they made a circuit around the enclosure. At other times, as the tallest things in the enclosure, they tried to sit on our heads. When they lost their balance, they steadied themselves by grabbing and pulling our hair. At times we acted as a bed and they napped on our laps. Lastly, when they were stressed or tired, they would come to us for comfort, a cuddle and some gentleness away from the crazy antics of their roommates.

I soon learned that it was not uncommon for baboons to play favorites, preferring one volunteer to another. I tried my best to get along with everyone, but I admit I also had my special friends in the three different age groups I attended.

I was thrilled one day when two-year-old Roxie came over and tried

to groom me. Normally she was the best friend of another volunteer, Kim from Southern California, but when Kim was absent, Roxie would make the rounds. After sitting by my side for five minutes, Roxie climbed into my lap. She found a mole on the side of my neck and with her lips, like gentle little kisses, she tried to remove it. When that failed, she began checking my scalp for nits. Luckily she didn't find any. Finally she crawled on to my chest (all 15 pounds of her) and took a nap. She had been taken as an infant to be a pet, but ended up chained around the waist to a pole.

Roxie will most likely always carry the discoloration around her waist where the chain restricted not only her movement, but also the blood and nerve supply to her legs. While I was at CARE, she walked with a limp that was exaggerated if she carried anything, such as a one-year old baboon. As she slept in my arms, I must admit, I teared up a little bit because within 30 minutes of meeting me, she felt safe and comfortable enough to sleep in my presence. I was humbled and honored.

I was at CARE for four weeks. I quickly learned to tell when something was up by the behavior of the baboons. Generally within the enclosure, it was controlled chaos, like a perpetual motion machine with lots of activity and noise. When something was out of place, all the baboons would go quiet and gather at one side of the fence to see what was going on. If one of the baboons gave a warning bark, they would all lift off the ground simultaneously and head for the highest thing in the pen. Being 5'8", it was usually me. Before they would lift off, it was not uncommon to eliminate everything they could (read bodily fluids) to lighten their load. One day I looked down and my pants below the knees were covered with magenta colored poo. Then I remembered, I had chopped up beets for their breakfast that morning.

Dirty yes, but I have never had so much fun in my life. I can't wait to go back.

Life at Care

I was housed with my fellow volunteers in two different dorms and our shifts began daily somewhere between 7:00 and 8:00 am. We were back in our dorms queuing up for showers and dinner around 5:00 pm. When the sun goes down, the baboons sleep. We learned it was just as well if we also bedded down as quickly as possible, because when the sun peeked out the next day, the wild baboon troop that roamed the compound would act as our alarm clock, bouncing on the metal roof of our dorm between 5:15 and 6:00 am.

The dorms were simple with two to three beds with mattresses, mosquito netting, (which was not needed as I was there in the winter month of August), and a simple chest of drawers. All the major buildings and enclosures had screened porches and electrified wire surrounding the perimeter. The month before I arrived, elephants had traveled up the Oliphant River and “sat” on one of the enclosures trying to get to the food. Luckily, all the occupants were recovered and moved to another enclosure. A generous former volunteer paid to have the wire system put around all the buildings to prevent a similar situation.

Because CARE has been functioning for many years, there was a supply of clothes, toiletries and some shoes left behind by previous volunteers. I found that working with the baboons was hard on clothes. After a few days, I pulled seven shirts, two pairs of pants and some flip flops from the supply and used them for my entire stay. Volunteers have laundry done once a week. Yet with my ‘borrowed clothes’, I never needed to unpack my own. I just did some hand laundry every night. Our dorm had an enclosed and covered clothesline so that our laundry remained in place.

Meals were included with our lodging and shopping was done on a weekly basis for communal groceries for the volunteers. From the supplies volunteers would make their own breakfast and lunch. For dinner there was a rotating roster of cooking and clean-up duties. Because we were away from town, in a remote area of South Africa, a varied selection of foodstuffs was not always available. I have decided

that the next time I travel as a volunteer, I will try and arrive with recipes to make tasty dishes with a base of rice, noodles and eggs. Those ingredients are always in ready supply.

Many volunteers chose to augment the food that was supplied. We would make a wish list and send it with our money to the store with the weekly shopper. Most of us augmented with snacks, beer and five-liter jugs of water. The bore water at CARE was potable, but it did take a while to get accustomed to the taste.

As much fun as it was to have magenta-colored poo on my pants, I will never forget my experience one morning as I brushed my teeth in the upstairs bathroom. The screen porch did not enclose the outer wall of the bathroom, so the wild baboon troops could get very close. I bent down to spit out the toothpaste and as I raised my head, I saw a baboon eye peering at me, not five inches away, through the two-inch gap in the board. I am not sure who was more surprised to make eye contact; the baboon or me!

Update: As of December 2008, Roxie is a healthy four-year old with no noticeable limp.

Center for Animal Rehabilitation & Education

Jane's Selected Feature

C.A.R.E. (Centre for Animal Rehabilitation and Education) is a specialized primate rehabilitation facility in South Africa that takes care of orphaned baboons. Many arrive as young babies - traumatized or injured - and each animal is given time to recover and heal. With the assistance of a dedicated team, supported by volunteers, they are introduced to other baboons, eventually finding new friends and allies among the other baboons. These troops grow up together until they reach adulthood, developing bonds and establishing rank and status within their group. C.A.R.E. then finds protected, natural areas where the group can be released back to the wild.

C.A.R.E. is funded by private and corporate donations along with support from various animal protection groups and volunteers. With 500 animals to feed, medicate and care for, the process is often difficult, but no animal is turned away.

Animal-loving volunteers who are able to live in bush conditions for a minimum of four weeks are welcome to apply to join the C.A.R.E. team. See www.primarecare.org.za for details

Jeremy Douglas ➔

Jeremy, originally from London, Canada, lived in the Marshall Islands as a volunteer elementary school teaching during the 2005-06 school year. He was on an outer island called Arno, which has no running water or electricity. After leaving the Marshall Islands, Jeremy moved to London, UK, to complete a master's degree in Cultural Studies at Goldsmiths, University of London. He then worked in fundraising at a UK children's charity called Action for Children.

Jeremy continues to live in London and is currently the Fundraising Manager for the BBC World Service Trust - the independent international development charity set up by the BBC. He has one other published article – an academic paper on surveillance and citizenship: <http://www.surveillance-and-society.org/ojs/index.php/journal/issue/view/Relaunch/showToc>



A Post-Decision Narrative

It's 7:30am. I'm awake. I didn't need the alarm today. I didn't need the alarm yesterday. I haven't needed the alarm in a long time. It's easy to get up at 7:30am when you sleep for ten hours every night. Instant oatmeal for breakfast – yeah, that sounds good. And instant coffee – always a coffee. Soon it will be time for school. I hope the students listen today.

I hear people outside talking about me. I don't understand everything they're saying. In fact, I understand very little of what they're saying, but I know it's about me. Seems like they're always talking about me. It was novel at first. And understandable. I was the new émigré, and an interesting topic for discussion, no doubt. But after eight months? Come on, enough is enough – let me just be another face in the community. I don't want to stand out anymore.

Time for school. I have finally found the semblance of an effective teaching plan and routine. However, I am the student of trial and error experiences more than I am the teacher of concrete and flowing ideas and concepts. Despite people's reactions, I am nothing special – I have just come to do my inexperienced best at teaching English to elementary school children. Ultimately, I will not single-handedly save

the childrens' futures and raze the plagues of inadequate education. I may take a step in that direction, but it's a long-term goal that needs commitment from the community, other teachers and the Ministry of Education.

My one-minute commute to school commences amidst the aromas of cooking pancakes and rice, mixed with the smoky smell of burning coconut husks. People are coming and going down the only dirt road, preparing for what may result in a day of *copra* making and general chores. But no matter what work may be done today, the ambiance will be dominated by the central theme of outer island life here in the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI): food. *Mōñā* (*mung-i*) is easily the most discussed topic (even more so than me!) and – literally – the life blood of the community.

I finally reach the school – the only area not among the sanctuary of coconut trees. There is even a makeshift baseball field, albeit a small one. I turn the key to open the rusty lock on my classroom door, and the eager children (most of whom are not even in my class the first period) rush through the open door like water breaching a levee. I open the windows, write the date on the board, ring the bell, and thus begins another day.

I am not sure exactly why I decided to come to the RMI. Perhaps Sartre was right: we are never really sure why we make the decisions we do, but only create a post-decision narrative, or story. In either case, I was unsatisfied with my job in Canada, I wanted to live abroad for a while, I wanted to be in a warm climate, I didn't want to (rather, *couldn't*) spend a lot of money while abroad, and I wanted to visit somewhere esoteric. But the RMI is one of dozens of such places, so why here? Perhaps it was a chance click of the mouse – a click that led me to the World Teach website and opened my eyes to the RMI program. Alas, a perfect opportunity. I applied. I was accepted. I had a plan - albeit a haphazard one – for the next year.

What to expect? Coconut trees, pristine beaches, brilliant turquoise and blue waters, amazing weather all year long – your typical

archetypical tropical climate. And I have not been disappointed. There is a factor – the most significant factor – that I neglected to include: the culture. I've been immersed in other cultures before, so I thought, this transition won't be difficult at all. I didn't give it a second thought. However, my experiences in Western Europe are a far cry from a long-term cultural immersion on an outer island with no electricity or running water. Even the orientation during my first month in the RMI didn't prepare me for such a different experience. Orientation provided me with some basic language and teaching instruction, as well as some cultural tidbits. If the year keeps up like this, I thought, this is going to be every bit of the cakewalk I imagined it would be. But cakewalk it was not.

During my first week of orientation, a former volunteer described life in the RMI as being similar to “being on heroin – incredible highs and really bad lows”. A good analogy - not to the experience of being on heroin, but of living in the RMI! During my correspondence with other volunteers one friend wrote me saying she was “on a rollercoaster of emotions”. Another good metaphor. My initial reaction to seeing where I would be living for nearly a year: incredible low. Playing volleyball and basketball with people in the community: incredible high. Frustration with my teaching abilities and my students' behavior: incredible low. Learning how to husk coconuts and cook local foods: incredible high. And so on.

The most difficult aspect of living here has not been the language, the teaching, the culture, the food, or the lack of technology. Undoubtedly it has been my lack of family, friends (from back home) and a social life – things I now quite clearly realize I took for granted. No electricity, no plumbing, language difficulties – one adapts. No family, no friends – that's a lot more difficult. On the other hand, I have made friends here with other volunteers and with Marshallese people. I will do my best to keep in touch with these people down the road.

Throughout my year here I have been receiving letters from people

back home and from other volunteers. These letters form two distinct streams of conversation. The other volunteers already know and can usually relate to the things I'm experiencing, whereas people from home have no idea – and I'm not sure I can adequately describe life here to them. Maybe my communications have been saying things I did not intend them to say, since I frequently receive questions and remarks like, "Are you happy there?", "Are you sure this was a good idea?", and "Just three more months to get through!". The latter remark sounds as though this were a prison sentence that is to be endured and not enjoyed. In response to these types of inquiries, I usually write that this is an experience I wouldn't trade for anything. It doesn't matter whether I enjoyed it or not because it has opened my eyes to so many things – things that are beyond and more important than personal comfort. Things like traditional lifestyles, life without modern conveniences, the problems faced by developing countries, the challenge of teaching, the cultural-political relationships between the RMI and the US and the RMI and Asia, and so much more. It is all a learning experience – one I was not expecting, but one for which I am grateful.

Before arriving in the RMI, and even at the beginning of my time here, I remember thinking, "A year...what's a year? That's nothing." How quickly the notion of 'a year' took on an entirely new significance. A year of eating rice, pancakes, donuts, and canned meat; a year of these impossible students; a year of isolation. This isn't a year I'm dealing with, but an eternity. At least, those were my thoughts at the beginning of my time on the outer island of Arno – certainly the most difficult in the adjustment phase. Soon afterwards I stopped counting the days and started making the best of my experience. Too often I've been guilty of a "the grass is greener..." mentality by constantly thinking about where I'll go and what I'll be doing in the future. That thinking is one of the things that drove me here in the first place. Is the world passing me by while I am stuck in time on this remote atoll? (Indeed it feels like time has stopped here – neither the

people nor the weather give any impression of change.) As I receive mail from home about all the changes taking place, I can't help but wonder. Yet, it is nice to escape the bombardment of news and information that invades the lives of North Americans. It is nice to be in a place that feels so disparate from any other place on earth. It is nice to not worry about what a friend of mine refers to as "the world" – meaning anywhere outside of the RMI and also implying that the RMI is not part of the world.

Before coming to the RMI, I was told by a former volunteer that "you can put as much or as little into the experience as you want." This has rung true on every level, including teaching, the host family arrangement, cultural inclusion, and relationships with other volunteers and Marshallese people. As the cliché goes, you get out of it what you put into it. The year begins as a *tabula rasa*; the questions are, How are you going to create your experience? Will it be minimal effort teaching? Or, will you put more than expected into it by doing extracurricular activities and community involvement? I'd like to think that my time in the RMI has been richly coloured by my integration and involvement in a unique and wonderful culture in the middle of the Pacific Ocean. It has been, in a word, unforgettable.

BBC World Service Trust

Jeremy's Selected Feature

The BBC World Service Trust (BBC WST) is the international development charity set-up by the BBC. It provides the information needed by poor, marginalized and often illiterate populations to survive and thrive. In developing countries, many people are needlessly poor, sick and disempowered. Capturing people's attention in order to give them the information they need is not easy. That is why the BBC WST takes a creative approach - creating entertaining programmes on TV, radio, online, mobiles and through village outreach.

For example, in Darfur the BBC WST are delivering lifeline information services to some 6.5 million people, including two million living in the region's camps for people displaced by the conflict. Radio has become one of the only ways of communicating vital information to people in the war-torn region. *Salaam ila Darfur* (Peace to Darfur) is a daily, 30 minute radio programme about humanitarian issues, broadcasting information about basic sanitation, health care, HIV/AIDS, nutrition and emotional support. According to UNICEF: "the number of people being immunized on our National Immunization Days has doubled since *Salaam ila Darfur* went on air."

The BBC WST also supports free speech and quality journalism. Good journalism protects human rights, challenges corruption and gives marginalized people a voice. Working in over 40 countries, there is some remarkable work being produced across the world.

The work of the BBC WST focuses on five thematic areas: Health, Governance and Human Rights, Livelihoods, Humanitarian and Environment. There are very few organizations like the BBC WST, dedicated to providing critical information on such a large scale .

Adrian D. Fenderson DDS →

Adrian grew up in California, attending Bakersfield College and UCLA before entering UCSF School of Dentistry. Upon graduation, he spent one year of his Army duty in Vietnam. While there he provided free dentistry to the local villagers. After returning to the US and establishing his practice, he joined Los Médicos Voladores (LMV) to recapture the joy and adventure of his Vietnam compassion missions. Within weeks he made his first of over 50 trips. He continues to travel to Mexico, El Salvador, Guatemala, and India providing free dental care. He is now the Public Relations Officer of LMV 501C Corporation. Known locally as a humanitarian, he also participates annually in Smiles for Life which raises funds for children's charities by whitening teeth. His busy practice provides cosmetic and restorative care for people of all ages. He lives in Napa, California with his wife.

Adrian may be contacted through his web site www.napadentist.com.



Soaring in Sacrifice

The excitement of the hustling crowd of volunteers came to an abrupt halt after an ominous phone call warned that one of our planes – with six members on board – may have had a bad landing near the airport. Returning from a three-day mission in a small village in Baja, the passengers were to join the other arrivals in Ensenada, Mexico at the first annual meeting of the *Los Médicos Voladores* – LMV's or "Flying Doctors." Saturday was to be a day of seminars and sharing of our common bond for the more than 50 attendees who had volunteered their services under the direction of the 26-year-old LMV organization.

The club leaders, who had been scurrying back and forth from the quaint, mission-style motel to the venue at the mayor's office building, suddenly refocused their activities. Everyone fell into a state of subdued shock. We ran around hugging each other, praying it was just a hard landing and that, somehow, all aboard were safe. Deep concern creased the face of one of the clubs' presidents, Monti. He rounded up several pilots, flagged a taxi and rushed to the airport in order to assess the situation and be of whatever assistance was possible. Those who stayed at the motel paced around consoling each other, waiting for any

news from the airport that was more than a 15 minute drive away.

The missing plane was a twin-engine craft, flown by veteran member Marv. Marv, a highly competent pilot and physician, was a long-time personal friend and one of the most compassionate people I've ever met. I'd flown with him many times. Just a week earlier, he had asked me to talk to the dentist on his team, Michael, who was on his first trip. I coached Michael on what to bring and how to plan for a rewarding and fun trip. Michael had originally planned to bring his wife – also a dentist – along. However, she cancelled a few days prior to the trip after learning she was pregnant. In her place, Michael brought his assistant, Evette, also on her first trip. Another passenger on the plane was our translator, Ellen, a long time veteran of LMV. The manifest included my dear friend, Edith, an 84-year-old, elegant, retired general practitioner devoted to women's health. Marv also had Deborah, the person responsible for bringing LMV to her hometown of San Ignacio, on board.

As the minutes ticked by, I struggled to maintain a positive attitude and told everyone all would be well. While awaiting further news, I moved away from the others, sat by myself, reflecting on my 20 years as a volunteer LMV dentist.

I learned about LMV's existence at a dental meeting and joined in a heartbeat. I immediately started planning to go on the next scheduled trip. The LMV mission statement rekindled memories of my many volunteer trips as a dentist stationed in Vietnam. Several days a month, I would join a team of volunteers including nurses, physicians and Red Cross personnel on missions of mercy. We would take the Med-Evac helicopters to small, remote villages and set up primitive clinics in order to aid the orphans and the needy. The teary-eyed thanks and Velcro hugs we received from so many children and appreciative natives gave me highs and warm feelings that became very addictive. When I heard about LMV, it had been eight years since I'd experienced those feelings from which I was still suffering withdrawal symptoms. It was time to get my "fix" and renew that incredible sense of intense satisfaction. Just

four weeks later, I was off to Mexico for the start of what would average out to roughly three missions a year for the next 20 years.

Los Médicos Voladores was founded in 1974 to provide free health services and education to the people of Northern Mexico. The organization sends medical teams on four-day trips every month. These teams typically include a pilot, interpreter, medical professional (usually MD, dentist or optometrist) and possibly a co-pilot or general volunteer. The areas we serviced were often so poor and underdeveloped that there was no dentist within a day's drive. When I first joined LMV some towns we served had no telephones. We simply announced our arrival by flying circles low over the town before landing our small planes on the community's dirt strip. Then, someone would drive around town with a loudspeaker so that people would know we were there to help. The next day, before we even opened our clinic, the villagers would be lined up at the door.

On every trip, I get hugs and sincere thanks that fill my heart to the brim. On my first trip, the town elementary school teacher came in with a broken off front tooth. She was a pretty young lady who, for five years, had had a spoiled smile. I repaired the tooth and filled in the gap. After looking in the mirror, she wept with joy. She hugged me, kissed me on the cheek, blessed me with the sign of the cross and said that I was surely an angel from Heaven.

For years my daughter, Tiffany, saw the sparkle in my eye when I returned from these trips and begged to go. When she turned 14, Tiffany took Spanish in high school and learned to dental assist. She has come with me once a year for the past seven years. Since dental assisting is not her chosen career, I ask before each trip why she continues to volunteer for these missions. She simply shrugs and says, "I do it for numerous reasons, but – most of all – I just love helping people and seeing their grateful smiles."

One of my favorite stories is from my pilot friend, Don. On one trip, he assisted the team optometrist in fitting a pair of glasses on an elderly lady. On a walk around the village afterward, Don saw her in church,

crying. He had an interpreter ask why she was in such distress. The lady told him she was crying for joy as it had been 20 years since she had been able to read the Bible herself.

My reverie ended abruptly when I heard the Ensenada reception desk phone ring. The clerk handed the phone to Kathleen, our trip co-coordinator. Moments later, she went white. The plane had crashed short of the runway and all six of our friends were dead! Shock, disbelief and emotional turmoil swept over the members. The chairman of the club, Tom, returned from the crash site, gathered us around and outlined a course of action needed. Despite the incredible grief, we all decided to continue the seminar and dedicate it to the memory of our comrades. Committees were formed to deal with the necessary duties in this type of tragedy. The Mexican officials turned their offices over to us and we carried on.

There is always risk in flying small airplanes to remote areas of Mexico. There is risk in driving there as well. Every last member agreed that these risks were worth the tremendous rewards and the good that we do in Mexico. Ironically, the wrenching sense of loss that the death of our comrades had produced empowered us to greater achievements over the next few months. Our club grew by leaps and bounds; our relationship with the Mexican government became even more productive.

We all have our own reasons for serving as volunteers. Our friends had now given their lives for their reasons. They may have done it just to be philanthropic or, like me, they may have given of themselves for selfish reasons. I do it for the adventure of setting up a modern dental clinic in remote places that sometimes have dirt floors and no electricity. I do it for the warm and wonderful feeling of satisfaction and happiness that engulfs me for months after my Flying Doctor trips. I do it because I love it – and I always will!

LVM – Central America

Adrian's Selected Feature

Los Médicos Voladores, which was founded in 1975, originally limited its activities to Northern Mexico because that area is easily accessed by the Northern California members with a half day small plane flight.

Through his travels, LMV founder, Milt Camp, discovered a great need for medical and dental care in many remote villages throughout the Central American countries. Those country's governments were open and actually excited to accept the help of American humanitarian efforts.

Following a successful trial trip with LMV volunteers in 2001, Milt began the LMV Central American Chapter. Now, in week long missions, volunteers fly commercially to a major city and use local transportation to where native contacts often help set up the clinics. A favorite trip is into the mountains of Guatemala to villages near the town of Quetzltenango, also known as Xela (Shay-la). There the weather is cool, the people are warm and welcoming. A local famous orthopedic surgeon and her students at nearby medical school also participate. Since 2002 there have been dozens of trips to Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador and Nicaragua where over 8000 patients have been seen. LMV invites all doctors, nurses, assistants, other health professionals, interpreters and educators to join us.

Read more about volunteering with Los Médicos Voladores – see page 336

Colleena McHugh →

Colleena McHugh is a retired RDA living in the San Francisco Bay Area. She and her husband, Mike, own Bay Area Distributing Company, an independent wholesale automotive warehouse business. In her spare time, Colleena skis, fences, autocrosses her Miata, writes a monthly column in the Sports Car of America's motorsports magazine, The Wheel, teaches a computer class at the Belmont Senior Center, races sailboats in and around the bay, and is a board member of the South Bay chapter of Los Médicos Voladores. She has been on 8 LMV missions, including 3 to the Cochella Valley Health Clinic in Oasis, just southeast of Palm Springs, California.



Villa Hidalgo

After 20 crazy years of marriage, business and family, time had changed me in ways I didn't even notice. One day I woke up and realized I had lost touch with who I used to be, in the pursuit of who I had become. I'm a California girl now, but I was born in Phoenix, and even though I live in the San Francisco Bay Area, I still have cactus in my heart. I miss the colorful Arizona sunsets, the dry, sandy soil of the Sonoran Desert, the pastel hues of the hills, craggy mountains and the scent of sage on the wind. Although I now run my own business, I wasn't *always* a boss. I was a dental assistant before I got married, and now missed helping people, working with my hands...and the scrubs! I decided that I missed it enough to do something about it.

Thank goodness for the Internet! I got online and searched "volunteer dentistry." A cornucopia of opportunities popped up. After reviewing dozens of options, I decided that a secular, international travel organization would best suit me, so I chose Los Médicos Voladores (Spanish for The Flying Doctors). I called Clem Schrick, D.D.S., trip coordinator for the South Bay chapter, and he told me that there was a dental trip leaving for Villa Hidalgo, Sonora, Mexico in *two days*, and there was room on the plane for an assistant! At first I

panicked. Then I thought, “Well, you *wanted* an adventure!” Dr. Schrick encouraged me to attend the monthly members meeting the next night, so I could meet everyone and have my questions answered. I went to the meeting at Good Samaritan Hospital in San Jose, and met my pilot Bob Lamkin, Liz Schrick, RDA, and Anita Wolf, the R.N. who would be joining us on the trip. Liz explained that I would be flying in a private plane to a dirt runway in the middle of the desert to set up a dental clinic, assist for one and a half days, rest one evening and fly home the next day. I was a bit apprehensive, but thought, “This sounds exciting, difficult, satisfying and certainly something I hadn't done before.” Before the evening was over, I couldn't wait to go!

I didn't have to. The next morning, I was standing next to Bob's shiny, 4 seat, V-tail Bonanza. I'd never been on a small plane and had no idea what to expect, but when I drove my car up to the plane, threw my ten pounds of luggage inside and climbed into my seat, I decided it was my new favorite way to travel! The plane roared to life and we sped into the air. Heading south, Bob pointed out acres of grape vines and the San Andreas Fault line for a wonderful private tour of the California landscape! We landed in Los Angeles, picking up interpreter Steve Walder, the man who, for the next four days, would help us navigate the language barrier through borders, patients, menus and accommodations. We took off into the LAX airspace maze, our heads bobbing as we spotted planes below us, above us, in front, and behind us. With the skill of a fighter pilot, Bob dodged and weaved the small plane through the obstacles and soon we were free of the LA basin. As we climbed, the plane got colder and colder. Then as we traveled south and the temperature warmed Bob pointed down at the small, blue canal indicating the US and Mexico border.

We landed in Mexicali and four federales skittered towards us. “You can get out, but keep one hand on the plane,” explained Bob, and we stood playing airplane tag in 93° heat. The federales, familiar with LMV, were kind and friendly, and we breezed through customs and work visa applications. While Bob filed flight plans, Steve, Anita and I

went to the restaurant and had lunch. The specials of the day? Beef tongue and skate - we had the chicken! An hour later, we took off into clear, warm skies and an easy two and a half hour flight to a small valley in the Sonoran desert. We knew we were close when we flew past the huge 6,200 ft. mountain in the Sierra Madre Occidental, containing La Caridad, the third largest copper mine in the world, and where the village men work. Villa Hidalgo is nestled in a valley at the foot of a 2,274 ft. mountain and connected to the rest of the world by a road so long and windy, that from the air, it doesn't even seem passable by donkey! We spied our 1,500 meter runway and we sped down to check the dirt strip for rocks and burros! The runway was perfect. Bob smiled as he noted the addition of a wind sock. We then flew low over the town to let them know we were there, and shot back to the airstrip to put down. The plane slid easily along the groomed surface, coming to rest next to the other LMV plane carrying the Schrick's and the dental equipment. Two trucks appeared from the dust, and the Chief of Police and one of the organizers, Jay Greer, popped out to help us load our gear. I said, in English, to the chief, "The pilot appreciated the new wind sock. How many planes do you see here each year?" The man smiled and replied, "You."

We piled into the trucks and headed into town. As we bounced along the dirt road, the sights and sounds of this old village (founded by a Jesuit missionary in 1644) were as foreign to me as the language. There were roosters in the road, friendly dogs sleeping in the sun, and a sense of the desert that was invigorating. Every structure, old and new, was built out of the same handmade, adobe bricks that have been used in Mexico for centuries. It was impossible to tell their age.

We arrived at the modern-looking medical clinic, where we were to work for the next two days. Mexico has a sponsorship program where, in exchange for a medical student's expenses, the graduate must give the state a year of service. These young people are housed in a small, three or four room building, usually outfitted with a bedroom, bathroom, an OBGYN chair and not much else. When we pop into town,

the “passante” (Spanish for passerby, indicating their temporary status, I suppose) makes the clinic available and we set up the rooms to suit our needs. We brought everything we needed (about 200 lbs. of dental equipment) and set up operatories; a restorative room, an extraction room, a waiting room and a sterilization room. We made these spaces as professional as possible, but things like lamps and head pillows had to be fashioned out of flashlights and paper towel rolls! Thank goodness for the pilots, as their ‘MacGyver’ talents came in handy setting up the compressors and portable dental units. We finally started calling them “Los Vaqueros Voladores” (the Flying Cowboys) for their resourceful and ingenious problem solving techniques!

Once the equipment was installed, Liz and I set up our rooms. Since I hadn’t *touched* a dental instrument in 20 years, I tried to remember each item’s use. I had no idea *what* to do with the new restoration materials (plastic fillings were cutting edge technology the last time I assisted), so Liz worked the restoration room. I took care of the surgical unit. I kept reminding Dr. Schrick that it had been ages since I had assisted and not to expect too much, but he was reassuring and supportive. We got the clinic set up in a few hours and were taken to dinner and our hotel. Jay and his wife, Queta, took the Schricks and Anita home with them and the other pilot, Sam Bishop, Steve, and I stayed at the hotel. The Hotel Moreno was a small affair, clean, tidy, with tile floors, and offered to us gratis, by El Presidente Emanuel Ramirez, who invited us. The “mayor figure” of a few surrounding towns, this large, John Wayne of a man, was a kind, swaggering cowboy, with a reassuring smile and a genuine fondness for his people. He joined us for dinner, chatted with us through interpreter Steve, and hugged us all in gratitude when we left.

The next morning, we got to the clinic at 8 am to find 35 people had been waiting to get their appointment numbers since 5! Liz grabbed the first patient and the interpreter. I stood in my operatory studying the instruments and trying to remember procedures. I needed a patient, so I went out to the hall and surveyed the six rickety chairs between the

rooms. I stood for a moment in my scrubs, gown, gloves and glasses anxiously observing our guests. Most were older, weather-beaten folks, and many seemed quite ill, with uncontrolled diseases like diabetes and high blood pressure. Strong people who looked like they had endured great hardship, they sat quietly, motionless and in their eyes I sensed resignation and hopelessness. I smiled, and with the word “Uno” started my first day back on the job. Dr. Schrick ran in and out of operatories all day, and I did pretty well, remembering a lot about which tool was used for which procedure. But at one point, after about the fifth time I’d handed him the wrong instrument, he exclaimed, “*What are you doing?*”

“I don’t know, I told you that,” I exclaimed, and we laughed until we cried. Before long it all started coming back to me. Not that much had changed since I had assisted in 1983. The physiology, medications and contraindications, sterile techniques, instruments, and procedures all popped back into mind as needed and the rhythm of the work set in. Even the translator, Steve, who was also on his first trip, settled into step with us and we all worked well together.

The patients presented with typical dental problems, but there were a few exceptions. Poor diet can cause many health problems and poor dental hygiene can exacerbate these. Along with the usual cavities, we saw many gum problems, broken teeth and enamel damaged by the acid from sucking on limes, a common practice here. One woman, about thirty years old, came in with tetracycline stains on her teeth. She never smiled and when she spoke, held her hand in front of her face, shielding her mouth. The stains were deep, dark, horizontal stripes that she had lived with her whole life. Tetracycline was used to combat bacterial infections in children from the 1950’s until about 1980. The antibiotic becomes calcified in developing permanent teeth. Stains are embedded in the tooth’s enamel and inner layers. Due to these complications, doctors no longer prescribe it to young children or expectant mothers. I had never seen this before and was intrigued when the doctor suggested we not only address her cavities, but the staining as well. We applied

composite veneers to the front of her teeth and, since they were a bit crooked, shaped them nicely, and voila - a perfect smile. We didn't try to explain it to her ahead of time, but when we finished, I handed her a small mirror and waited for her response. She peered into the small oval, then at us, then back into the glass, and a smile that I'm sure was foreign to her face, enveloped her so completely, it lifted her from her seat. Gripping the mirror and smiling, tears streamed down her face as she hugged each one of us.

The rest of the morning went well. Although I don't speak the language, even *I* could count to 15 in Spanish...then I got to patient 16. I stood in the doorway, six people staring at me and said, under my breath, "How do you say 16?" From the corner of the room a man replied "Dieciseis". I shot him a smile and said, "Are you *kidding* me? You sat there watching me struggle all day with my high school Spanish and you didn't say anything?"

"You were doing ok," he laughed, shrugging his shoulders.

I grabbed him and for the rest of the afternoon, he worked tirelessly beside us, translating, running out for provisions and working as hard as we did for his friends and neighbors. The patients smiled and teased me as I tried out new words. I eventually learned to say, "Please", "Thank you" and "You're welcome" in Spanish. But, I could never remember which was which, so I'd just spit out "Graciasporfavordenada" whenever anyone hugged me! Everyone hugged us, patted us and thanked us all day long. An elderly pair of twin sisters even returned with warm cookies! We munched on them at the front desk as Anita worked with Queta on patient hygiene and records. At the end of the day everyone was exhausted.

Dinner was at the same café and Presidente Ramirez joined us again. The cook stood outside at a large BBQ, grilling chicken, beef and pork strips. Then using a slice of tree for a cutting board, he chopped it all up and folded it into tortillas. "Lemons" were used to season the soft tacos, although they were small and green. I asked if the larger yellow version was available as well, and was told, "Si, they are also called

lemons.”

The next day we saw the children. The only high school is in Grenada, about an hour away, so the students are bussed there every Monday, returning every Friday. Their families must pay for their annual room and board (about \$400), so many children do not attend. The few we saw this trip were incredible, not one squirm or tear, although most had gaping holes in many teeth. Soda drinking is prevalent here and Mexico seems to have a particularly sweet version (I couldn't drink it). Parents haven't yet learned about the hazards of laying a baby down with sugary bottles and every child's smile told the story. We toiled over these waifs, stoic beyond compare, their big eyes watching our every move as we drilled, filled and sealed. The children timidly accepted the toys we brought, while we lectured the parents on proper diet and brushing.

We worked until one in the afternoon, then tore down the clinic and packed away everything we'd brought, less a few cotton rolls and Novocain vials. After these missions, members usually fly off to some lovely spot for R&R (rest and relaxation), sometimes whale watching in Baja, beach lounging in San Carlos Bay or resting poolside at a resort condo in Rocky Point, on the Sea of Cortez. However on this trip, we decided to stay in Villa Hidalgo. The Greers have a modest, cinder block Spanish-style house in town, much like the one my family had in Phoenix but Queta and Jay have an antique horse-drawn carriage in the living room! I was so shocked I didn't think to ask them how they got it in there. By horse?

They also have a guest house just outside of town, where Bob had been staying. “You have to take the freeway to get there,” explained Queta, pointing to the only 100 yard stretch of concrete in the village. We drove through town slowing for horses and burros in the road. Queta explained that they were “extras”. “What does that mean, extras?” I inquired. She said they belonged to the Indians (Opata and Apache) who live in the foothills, and that they escape every so often and come into town. The Indians eventually come and get them, but

until then, they live like wild deer and wander the town like stray dogs. The Greer's hacienda was a one bedroom, ranch-style home with a large veranda that overlooked a milpa, or field, where their cattle and horses grazed. Villa Hidalgo is an agriculture and cattle ranching village, and the Río Bavispe tributary of the Río Yaqui (Yaqui River), offers catfish and mojarra fishing, as well as irrigation for their crops. After settling into our new accommodations, we sat in the yard and enjoyed a cool breeze. Sam played his harmonica and we all sang songs while an incredible desert sunset wished us adios.

Another great breakfast of Beef Machaca (spiced, dried beef and scrambled eggs) and we were off to the airstrip. Mayor Ramirez and his secretary, Ramon Coronado, accompanied us to the runway Sunday morning. They hugged each one of us. As we said our goodbyes, Mayor Ramirez handed us a tortilla folded into a plastic bag about a foot square. When we got in the air, I opened mine, and unfolded a tasty flour tortilla, almost three feet across! I spent the flight nibbling my reward, recalling the Mayor's affection, and reflecting on the gratitude of the people in the village. These people had very little, but because I wanted an adventure, they took me in and gave me the experience of a lifetime. In exchange, I took a dormant skill, resurrected it after 20 years and changed their lives forever ... and they changed mine.

Los Médicos Voladores

Colleena's Selected Feature

If you are looking to make a difference, for an enhancement to an already fulfilling life or for an exciting, challenging and exotic travel experience, then LMV is for you! LMV is a volunteer-based nonprofit organization that helps improve the health and well-being of the people of Mexico and Central America. Since 1975, LMV medical professionals and pilots have made monthly trips to care for the people of ten villages in the deserts and valleys of Baja and Sonora. LMV has three chapters in California, including Gold Country (Auburn), South Bay (San Jose), High Sierra (Truckee) and one in Reno (NV). The San Jose based International Chapter provides services to Central and South America. For more information on trips or chapter meetings, please visit our web site: www.flyingdocs.org.

Read more about volunteering with Los Médicos Voladores – see page 336

Diana McPhee →

Diana is an Australian veterinarian who, having dutifully moved into fulltime private practice after graduating from the University of Queensland, quickly decided that this was not the life for her. She has subsequently found animals to treat in various locations all over the world - England & Wales, Kathmandu in Nepal (the Kathmandu Animal Treatment Centre – thoroughly recommended), Phuket in Thailand (Phuket Animal Welfare Society –also thoroughly recommended), Yap in Micronesia, Thessaloniki in Greece and, of course at Help In Suffering in Jaipur and Kalimpong India (highly recommended - read on!). In between wandering around the world she has raced bicycles, competed in triathlons, completed a Graduate Diploma of Arts in writing and editing and produced a little girl. She now lives back home in Australia treating wildlife, speying cats and dogs for the RSPCA, and trying to find some spare time to write about her adventures. Or, better still, find the time to have another! Contact her at:

dianamcphee@yahoo.com.



Full Man Dancing

I arrived in India not long after their one billionth citizen. She was born to a mother whose exhausted and bewildered face peered from newspapers across the world. I had flown from London and my exhausted and bewildered face peered from a shiny, clean, quiet aeroplane into a turmoil of brown skins, beseeching hands and inexplicable babble.

Enough already.



Jaipur was more of the same. People, people, people. Hot, too - paralyzingly hot (ever tried working in 45°C/113°F?) - chaotic, dirty, vibrant, seething with life; everything India is supposed to be. It was those oceans of humanity however, that overwhelmed me. The press of flesh is inescapable in India and privacy is a ridiculous luxury. The male population is interminably curious and I invariably provoked unashamed, if not open-mouthed, stares. "Hello. Where you from?" was the standard greeting from every passerby. In Jaipur I lived well away from the tourist precinct and the locals were fascinated by me. This was something I had to learn not to resent. They stared at me - modestly

attired in local *salwar kameez* and studiously minding my own business - with no concept of their own absurdity. During the monsoon I watched an old man pedal past with a shiny purple shopping bag fixed proudly above his ears in the manner of a chef's cap while another rode past carefully holding an umbrella aloft – an umbrella long since shredded to ribs and tufts of fabric. A youngster on a scooter was so riveted he ran straight into the back of a Tata truck as he craned to follow my every move. My delicate Western sensibilities were appalled at the crotch shuffling and nose blurting that was standard behaviour from the man on the street. But eventually, you perfect the distant stare.



No one at the Help In Suffering animal shelter was like this. The kennel men, their wives, my fellow vets and other unidentified staff were all unfailingly pleasant, courteous and helpful. And, I could not understand a word. English may be the official language of India but that doesn't mean most of the locals actually speak it. Not in a form I could understand anyway. "Hinglish" was closer to the official language of the shelter, and I wasn't even having much success mastering that. The rough edges and peculiar grammar that Hindi lent to their English left me floundering. The names of everyone to whom I was introduced looped unfamiliar and unrecognised inside my ears, so it was ages before I could capture even my workmates - Babu-Lal, Ramswaroop, Devi Shankar among others - from the babble in my head and pin them to an identity.



I was the sole volunteer veterinarian at Help In Suffering that summer. Being jettisoned from the gleaming corridors of Australian and British veterinary hospitals to the heat and chaos of an Indian animal shelter took some adjusting. I thought I was offering myself for the benefit of the street dogs and the sacred cows. It was a

powerful and persuasive vision whilst trapped amongst the pampered pooches of the idle Australian rich.



I did see cows, too many cows over the year. I couldn't say how sacred they actually were. Most were well beyond my meagre help, sustained, as many of these city-dwelling beasts were, on a diet of plastic bags and pieces of rubbish. I treated street dogs in abundance too, most of whom I desexed, vaccinated, ear notched and collared. I did an incredible number of bitch speys during my year in India, unaided by most of those "necessities" of home such as endotracheal tubes, gaseous anaesthesia and machines that go "beep". However even straightforward bitch speys acquired Indian idiosyncrasies. First I had to accept that I could – and would - spey a bitch through her flank. At home only cats are ever speyed through their sides; dogs are always operated on their midline. I was also a little taken aback at being obliged to accept the services of a surgical assistant for such a routine procedure – a surgical assistant who doubled as a kennel hand and a dog catcher and a cleaner and a cowhand and a general odd jobs man. Our staff, however, were not to be underestimated. Can *you* place a butterfly catheter in a dog's leg with a blindfold over your eyes? My veterinary science degree left me no match for our barely literate kennel men!

Of course, I also provided veterinary advice for owned animals as well. The litany of woes I was obliged to deal with never ceased to horrify me. A small fluffy dog wearing a collar encrusted with diamantes (or maybe diamonds) arrived in the bosom of his sari-clad owner one morning. He had advanced cancer of the mouth and sinuses - his swollen nose parted from his mouth by a putrid cavern. The flies were incorrigible and that acrid, throat-catching smell of blown flesh should have warned me to expect the couple of maggots that fell out on inspection. The pristine owner was sobbing and clutching the dog to her breast, insistent that he had been sick for,

“Oh, only just this thing, today, just this day”. I considered warning her about the perils of maggots in her cleavage but happily the translation defeated me. The dog was listless and long past any help I could offer. Next, a goat with lips so caked with scabs and sores that a maggot crawled out of one of those crevices too. I had been warned about the “maggot-fest” heralded by the monsoon, but nothing prepared me. I held my breath, drew up a generous amount of insecticide and reminded myself, again, that there were only 307 days left before I would leave. Impossible, sometimes, to bring myself to agree with the “*India is grate*” emblazoned across the back of the auto-rickshaw from which several excitable men were now unfolding a skeletal calf. My next hapless patient. I flinched at the dangling hoof and wondered how many more maggots I could inspect today. It would be nice to feel I was winning occasionally.



I was not the only vet. Of the four of us, Saidou and I shared the volunteers’ quarters and Sunil and Devi Shankar lived locally. Saidou was at the shelter under duress from a mysterious patron who resolutely refused to fund him to anywhere he actually wanted to work, like the U.K. or America. No reality I recounted could deflect him from his reveries of England as the golden land of wealth and opportunity. If I was a curiosity in Jaipur, Saidou was a complete anomaly. He was long, loose-jointed and shiny black. He was from Burkino Faso – in the western armpit of Africa – and spoke four languages, Burkino Fasan, French, Russian and English in exponentially decreasing order of ease. I spoke English and only English. Saidou’s struggle with English did not deter him from great rambling excursions that swelled to fill the scorching hours after lunch when even thinking about work was too much. I was regaled with magnificently embroidered tales from his childhood that I struggled to interpret as he wrapped his tongue around unwieldy English words as if each were a large ball reluctant to emerge from his mouth. Frequently he would be rendered agonisingly silent by

a hesitation of memory, clutching his forehead and grimacing in an effort to expel another phrase of ping-pong balls. The delight with which he pounced on my solitary French phrase (the inane “*Voulez-vous coucher avec moi ce soir?*”) crumpled to resignation when I returned a helpless shrug to a volley of his eager French. I imagine he was as lonely as I was, caught amongst strangers doing strange things in strange languages.



Saidou did not like India or Indians. He had no patience for their slippery promises and vague answers. “Hoor-rab-bull! They lie, lie, lie all the time!” he exploded to me after a particularly exasperating foray into the market one evening. Where he withdrew in disgust, I searched desperately for acceptance and approval. I talked, laughed, dutifully parroted Hindi words back to the vast amusement of the kennel men and craved easy conversation, confidences and my friends. I had chosen to be here, yet was counting the days to my return home. Conversation with anyone required a fierce effort of concentration. I was the only native English speaker at the shelter for months and the only time in the day I could relax and communicate at ease was writing emails home. I was always tired, always straining to understand or, increasingly, resigning to ignorance. I missed my family, missed my friends and even missed the disastrous relationship I had come to India to escape.



I spent solitary hours watching the wives, aunties, sisters, daughters and grandmothers next door, amazed at the number of people a couple of shanties the size of our dog kennels – certainly no more glamorous and probably less weatherproof – could house. Theirs were days of ceaseless activity. Cooking, chatting, sweeping, giggling, stitching, whispering, forever weaving webs of companionship and contentment I

could not penetrate. Despite the endless work and poverty, they seemed always immaculate, always gorgeous – what else to expect of a nation that produces an endless string of Miss Worlds – and they were always smiling. I yearned to be woven into their cocoon. Several lived only a plaster layer away from me but I knew nothing of them. We exchanged *namastes* and uncertain smiles but could not talk. Theirs was the villagers' mix of rural Hindi and local Marwari dialect. As one of their husbands explained dismissively in answer to my queries, they would not talk to me anyway. "No, no", he had protested in reply to my incredulous disappointment, "they are for you working, not for you talking."

He was right. Manju cooked for me, Raju cleaned and Mrs Driver ji spent hours picking at the garden beds. That was my 'volunteer's package'. I worked with their husbands. I was part of the men's world. Most of the wives were village girls shifted to Jaipur with their husbands to attend to every menial aspect of their husbands' lives. Husbands are, after all, the gods of their wives. Yet their wives were so comfortable, so composed, so *happy*. I giggled and fooled with their children on long quiet afternoons, distributing sweet biscuits to eager little hands, drawing pictures, making paper dolls, but the women remained aloof, watchful and carefully distant. I could never elicit a spark of spontaneous response.



At least they had come to my party. I had been in India almost two months and the men had been extracting promises for what they called a 'full man dancing' party from me for weeks. Indians need little excuse for a party. While the onset of the annual monsoon was an adequate pretext, the fact that *three* staff wives had produced baby boys in the last week meant celebrations were compulsory. Monsoon season is, apparently, a fruitful time for more than just the foliage (and maggots).

It became 'my' party when I offered my volunteers' premises and a handful of rupees. As darkness leaked into the bruised and grumbling

skies to end another cloying day, the courtyard was transformed into a wailing cacophony of music and fire. The men gathered noisily and self-importantly in chairs around the bonfire, shouting Hindi ribaldries and encouragement to each other and giggling as they passed around bottles of “special Pepsi” – Pepsi fortified with local rotgut whiskey. Braver wives scuttled past, straight into the kitchen, with heads down and faces swathed in saris. Saidou had closed himself into the office, defying disturbance. I began to appreciate why as I fended off ever more insistent demands to join the ‘full man dancing’. One or more men would hurl themselves into the centre of the gathering and thrust and fling themselves around in abandon to the banshee of Hindi music. The rest hooted and clapped and sang in unanimous and unselfconscious approval. I hovered uncertainly on the edges of the flickering light, adamantly resisting all invitations and too shy to impose myself on the women. I smiled forlornly as the little huddle of girls in my kitchen exploded in giggles and wished I were checking for e-mails from home instead.



The little girls, Minou and Neelam, were spinning and reeling in hysterical imitation of their brothers outside when Neelam caught me watching from the outer. “Diana ji!” she squealed and dragged me inside. The lumpy sedan behind the door was already overflowing with women, but all grinned and wriggled closer to make room for me. I was perplexed as to why no one was occupying the chairs on the other side of the room, which offered an unimpeded view of the performance outside. I mimed a grand gesture of relaxing over the larger space. Raju and a couple of unknown faces shrank backwards, pulling sari ends over eyes and pushing the door closed. Woe betide a neighbour may glance in and glimpse a bare face. Our shelter families still strictly observe purdah. Women must not show their faces to any man outside their family. The poorer castes of India still cling tenaciously to archaic tradition. A dependable footing, perhaps, in a fracturing, fast-changing

society. It suddenly occurred to me that Raju does not sweep the verandas with her sari pulled firmly over her face every day because she is concerned about getting dust up her nose.



I burrowed onto the tiny offering of couch, almost disappearing beneath a kaleidoscope of saris, and breathed sandalwood and masala and warm, working women. I laughed at the burst of incomprehensible questions from all around me and mimed a grotesque shrug, "I don't understand! Very good party! Party, *bahut aachaa!!*"

My rudimentary Hinglish faltered in my hour of greatest need. The girls were delighted nonetheless and clapped and laughed, smoothing my scarecrow hair and cooing over my utterly prosaic Australian earrings. I was quietly incredulous. Perhaps the aloofness was not impenetrable, after all. An endless patter of exclamations and conversation rattled over me, which I punctuated with useless exclamations, "So beautiful!", "Good party!", "Full man dancing!"

The children, Minou and Neelam were almost helpless with giggling and excitement yet collected themselves with whoops of glee as I struggled upright and offered to dance. I did my goofy best to imitate their sure-footed coquetry and pelvic hitches, but I had never been a dancer and India was never going to change that. The whole jumble of women was soon collapsing in gales of amusement. I rushed outside to collect refreshments as escape and returned with plates of sticky, jelebi and burfee. The women picked unconvincingly, giggling and whispering without respite, patting me, smiling at me, talking at me. I was exhausting myself, first straining to interpret - or rather imagine - what they were saying, then devising a reply I could conceivably mangle into Hindi and then delivering it. I'm sure they didn't understand a thing.

I didn't.

Until Manju – regal, reserved Manju – cleared her throat and announced, "Diana ji, you very nice".

Suddenly I didn't want to go home. "*India is grate.*"

Help in Suffering

Diana's Selected Feature

Help in Suffering (HIS) is a busy animal shelter based in Jaipur, Rajasthan in India. It was founded by an English woman, Crystal Rogers, in 1980. All animals including: dogs, camels, buffalo, donkeys, goats, elephants, cows and more are welcome and cared for by HIS. The shelter has built an international reputation with its successful animal health programme, including the ABC (animal birth control) programme for street dogs – spay/neuter, vaccinating and treating large numbers of local “community” dogs. As a result there has been no instance of human rabies in Jaipur for the last eight years. Before HIS's ABC programme rabies was rife. In addition, the general health of Jaipur's street dogs has improved significantly.

Over the years many vets, and others, have worked as volunteers for HIS. All have enjoyed the experience, and remain as friends of HIS. We see this as a center for international goodwill where the interests of both animals and humans are addressed. The shelter is a small oasis of trees and peace amongst the chaos of the city of Jaipur outside. Visitors and volunteers are welcome: www.his-india.org.au

Read more about volunteering with Help in Suffering – see page 314

Liz Curtis ➔

Liz is a Boston-based photographer, writer and social worker, as well as an avid traveler. Liz received her Master's Degree in Social Work at Columbia University, studied photography at Boston University's Center for Digital Imaging Arts and, after realizing that she had spent 28 years making little to no money, decided to continue this trend with a stint in Romania followed by an internship with famed National Geographic photographer Steve McCurry. Liz would now like to be paid.

With an Irish father and Armenian mother, Liz enjoys pubs and can survive harsh winters. Despite being bitten by a stray, possibly rabid mountain dog in Peru, allowing a drunk Canadian to cut her a mullet in Thailand, and finding herself in a Turkish Bath with two elderly, topless women eager to bathe her using only Brillo pads, Liz continues to travel, write and photograph her adventures.

www.lcurtisphotos.com



Notes from a Frozen Tundra

The following travelogue was adapted from emails written during a two week volunteer project photographing life at an orphanage in the village of Valea Screzii, Romania.

No Heat, No Meat

December 5, 2007

To volunteer at an orphanage in a remote Romanian mountain village in the middle of winter one has to possess certain characteristics, the most obvious of which is a complete and utter lack of sense. And, so it begins.

Romania is trying to kill me. This was apparent from the moment I stepped out of the airport and into the deathbed on wheels that was to transport me to Valea Screzii. On the drive from the airport to the orphanage we broke down not once but three times, each requiring my cheerful Romanian escorts to run alongside our barely moving vehicle, desperately spurring it back to life with only their bare hands and goodwill. Come to think of it, the car wouldn't start, even in the airport parking lot, which - let's be honest - is never a sign of good things to

come. This setback didn't perturb anyone but me. My new companions happily sang religious hymns acapella throughout the journey, the singing only pausing briefly as each new piece of engine hit the ground behind us.

Onto more pressing concerns: December is Vegan Month. Though perhaps not a technical term, it is an accurate one. Not eating meat is a Romanian version of religious fasting and my version of personal torture. If there is one thing I enjoy it's a nice plate of bacon; and that is nowhere to be found. Also nowhere to be found: heat and hot water. I do have a tiny space heater in my room that keeps sending off sparks and threatening to explode. I also have my own shower, the joy of which is slightly tarnished by the fact that it spouts exclusively ice water all over the floor. That is prone to happen without heat and a shower curtain. Still, I must say, I'm fond of my room. For one, it contains a gilded tiara and a stuffed dolphin, as well as assorted religious paraphernalia. So now I have an idea how the Orthodox mountain people like their home decor, which is handy. I was told there are 23 churches in Valea Screzii for what cannot be more than 30 families. This strikes me as overkill. I feel like they could have gotten away with, say, 18 churches and been okay. Maybe put their energies into something else.

Nicola, the orphanage director, is British. She runs the orphanage with her husband Adrian, a good-natured Romanian bear of a man who Nicola loved enough to relocate with him to the bleak tundra that is rural Romania. Which is to say, she loves him quite a bit. Nicola tells me that there is a *lot* of inbreeding in the village, because, well, you can only stretch 30 families so far.

The orphans themselves seem to be doing surprisingly well. They come from all over the country, and by and large, seem to be in good shape, as far as Romanian orphans go. My preconception of Romanian orphans, it turns out, was dated. Funny that. During the rule of Nicolae

Ceacesceau Romanian families, many very poor to begin with, were pressured to have five children - the goal being to increase the size of Romania's population, thus turning the country into a world power. But, the actual result was the massive abandonment of children to institutionalized care. So close, Nicolae, so close. With this recent history in mind, I had anticipated photographing severely neglected children, their stunted bodies covered in a paste of muck and despair. All of my photos, I supposed, would be in black and white, reflecting the colorless world of the orphan. The slideshow presentation would feature music by *Radiohead*. People would weep in the audience: Oh the suffering! Turns out I was being perhaps a tad dramatic on this front: the kids, though poor, were not extras from *Oliver*. All of normal size, they listen to Britney Spears (which is depressing in its own way), love soccer, and play *Jenga*. They also enjoy puppet shows, even the teenagers, and singing church songs. So, they are not *quite* like the youth from the States. Still, the pictures in my camera bare little resemblance to the pictures in my mind. And thank God for that.



The Glowing Cross

December 7, 2007

In the past two days a ton has happened. And by "a ton" I mean next to nothing. Yesterday though, I visited a high school with some kids from the orphanage. For reasons unclear, the students were required to wait outside in the freezing cold for two hours before class. This perturbed me greatly, not from a social justice standpoint but because I was cold. Mind numbingly cold. This delay did not seem to distress the students in any way. Once we were let inside it was immediately apparent to me (as it would be to anyone with eyes) that we were in the middle of a full-blown construction site: shattered glass, power tools strewn about, construction workers outnumbering teachers. The number of lawsuits this would have incited in the U.S. would rival the number of churches

in the village.

After school, I stopped at an Internet cafe to find that it had been converted into a pitch black gaming hall filled with yelling teenage boys playing what I can only assume was Mortal Combat. Did I mention it was pitch black? Everyone was shooting their guns in unison and having a nice time killing each other. Eventually I realized that I myself was not a teenage boy and left to catch a bus back home (as my home is now apparently a Romanian orphanage). A bus approached, but for some reason I did not get on. My mind does not function appropriately here. I didn't board the bus because the man in front of me didn't. Mind you, I had no reason whatsoever to think that the man in front of me was going to Valea Screzii. In fact, hardly anyone in the world would choose to go there. So I let the bus carry on without me, to find that I faced another two hour wait. When in Rome . . . back to Mortal Kombat!

When I finally managed to board an oversized van two hours later I began to get nervous. The van headed into the middle of nowhere carrying not a single villager I was expecting to see. As I couldn't communicate my concerns, I did what any good traveler would do - put on my iPod and hoped for the best. As we got deeper and deeper into the mountains my anxiety was growing. I knew that if I were dropped off in the wrong spot I would die. Not everyone would die if dropped off on the wrong mountainside, but I would. I have the survival skills of a preemie. And then, suddenly, I saw a glowing beacon in the distance. A sign from God? Perhaps. It was a giant, glowing neon cross off in the hills! The same giant neon cross that I see from my bedroom window each night!

As my village is the only village in the Romanian mountainside whose natural beauty is tarnished by neon, I knew I was in luck. Since arriving in Romania it had struck me as odd that Valea Screzii - which has no heat, little running water, nothing really - would have a huge neon cross marking it. But Romanians are nothing if not tourist friendly. They

must have known instinctively that I would perish without neon guiding me home. Plus, sometimes 23 churches just aren't enough to say "We are religious people! We love the Lord!" Sometimes only neon shouts that.

Yesterday was St. Nicholas Day, and I went to church for four hours. Yes, four hours. The entire service consisted of chanting in low tones. I was told that the village was blessing things, and I thought to myself, "I bet they could bless everything in one hour if they were more efficient." But I didn't share this thought with the stern looking women flanking me. St. Nicholas Day was great for the kids who all were given gifts. As noted previously, Romanian orphans do better than you might think.

Lots of people celebrated their "name day" yesterday as well - it's treated just like a birthday party, with cake and everything. Here, I believe, you are celebrated if your name sounds anything like the person being honored (in this case St. Nicholas). So, in America, if your name was Marty or Martha, you would get a cake on Martin Luther King Day. Not bad. Just one more reason to consider relocation to Romania. Did I say "one more reason?" I think I meant "one reason and one reason only".



Gypsy Village

(Alternatively titled: Mel Gibson, Dead or Alive?)

December 10, 2007

Last night I had a small adventure with another volunteer, Brian. I have only two English speaking volunteer friends in the village, Brian and Amanda. Brian is from Maine. He is twenty-three and reports having held the following jobs: cook, deacon, musician, writer, artist, politician, sharp-shooter, laborer and "clinical psychologist." Busy, that Brian. He

claims to have studied for four years at the Kinsey Institute. Brian dresses all in black and has a propensity to tell Romanians ridiculously untrue "facts" about America (i.e. that female cage-fighting is HUGE on the East Coast). Brian always walks three to four paces behind me so I have to turn around when I want to speak to him. I actually like this about him. Amanda, for her part, has left to do some acid in a yurt, which I think is like a teepee, but I can't be sure. Amanda is from Australia and is very spiritual. She is also a big drinker and tells good stories and she lent me her laptop with Season Two of Grey's Anatomy, so she's okay in my book. As I mentioned, Amanda is off doing acid in a yurt. I am pretty sure she'll be enlightened when I see her tomorrow.

Anyway, after having spent the day in "town", Brian and I tried to catch a van back to our village late last night, but it was filled to capacity. We had a nice offer to get a ride in the trunk of a car but passed. While trying to formulate a plan a jolly bearded man named Christy approached us. Christy fancied himself a singer. It was his chanting that I had the pleasure of listening to in church. Lovely vocals. So Christy tells us that he has a plan and wants us to follow him to another van that will supposedly get us closer to our destination. All this movement was exciting and distracted me from the fact that this van wasn't actually headed our way, but rather straight to the middle of nowhere, where it abandoned us in a fog so thick that identifying our own hands, let alone helpful landmarks, was a struggle. It was so foggy that we could not see our glowing neon cross in the distance. Well damn. Christy seemed vaguely concerned about this, but proceeded to spend a good deal of time explaining to us that starting next year Romanians will no longer be able to simply slaughter pigs with knives. Yes, I hate to be the one to tell you, but slaughterhouse regulations are changing. Romanians will now be required to use tranquilizers first. This is NOT going over well. Christy also proceeded to tell me that Mel Gibson died. I do not believe this to be true. In fact, I would be shocked if it was true and didn't make the Yahoo! headlines. Please inform me, someone,

if this is true. If so I will come home immediately.

Eventually, Christy, Brian and I were picked up by a stranger who took us to a road that we sensed *might* lead us toward the village, or to our imminent deaths - one or the other. We finally reached our front porch (unbeknownst to us) and the fog was so dense that we continued to call out into the night, asking for directions home from nobody in particular. It is mid-morning as I type this and I am carrying a flashlight, because not once have I made it home without fear of being left to die in some dark abyss.

This weekend I visited a Gypsy village with the aim of distributing useful items to the Gypsies, who are poor even by Romanian standards. Earlier in the week I had an encounter with a young Gypsy girl who repeatedly told me that I had “no intelligencia”. This was said as she tried to talk to me; I shrugged not understanding. Then she pointed to her own head and told me I was an idiot. That was nice. Adrian spearheaded the weekend trip to see the Gypsies, giving only the following instructions: “Get in the car IMMEDIATELY when told to!” and “Whatever happens in the village, DON'T PANIC!!” Well now, that builds confidence.

Apparently the Gypsies sometimes become agitated when there are not enough donations to go around, at which point our lives are in jeopardy. Also – and this is no small side note - according to Adrian, deadly wolf attacks are not unheard of after dark in this region. And as we didn't reach the Gypsy village until the sun was low in the hills, this was of some concern.

To reach the village Adrian drove his wreck of a car through a river and up the steepest, muddiest embankment imaginable. Let me be clear. This was a journey more suited for ambitious rafters than drivers.

It was completely ridiculous that you would even attempt driving this

route - and it's not like we were working with an SUV or Range Rover. Miraculously our car made it, the wolves stayed home and peace reigned in the village. God must have known we came from the land of the neon cross and blessed us.



The Sun Has Set

December 15, 2007

The sun has set on my time in Valea Screzii. Not that the sun ever rose while I was here, technically speaking.

As a parting gift, I just had my official volunteer "excursion" - a day aimed entirely at entertaining Brian and me, although I didn't realize this until well into the afternoon. Nicola, Adrian, Brian and I piled into our wreck of a car and headed out into the Romanian hills to see a series of castles. As in all of our interactions, Nicola and Adrian played the role of mom and dad (although Adrian is twenty-six) while Brian and I impersonated teenagers. Brian, per usual, was dressed all in black, including black sunglasses and hat. He stared forlornly out the window for the entirety of the trip, except when he broke his stare to tell Nicola and Adrian one of his completely false tidbits about life in America ("Of course we all wear cowboy hats!"). I had my headphones on and was, for all intents and purposes, sixteen. Nicola bought my snacks all day, took me on bathroom breaks, etc. I have somehow become the junior member of a very strange family indeed. This was like one of those family vacations that nobody in the family is remotely interested in, but you press on in the name of "fun!" It was basically a Griswald family vacation set in Romania.

After driving for three hours we found that our first castle was closed. That was fine because the second castle on the list was Dracula's castle, which, let's be honest, when touring Romanian castles is all

anyone cares to see. That being said, I saw no signs of Dracula in his castle whatsoever, except in the gift shops which sold an assortment of vampire-themed goods as well as blond wigs. (I don't know why blond wigs.) The castle also featured a very old- school haunted house with no special effects whatsoever, but which did feature three teenage boys jumping out and grabbing you as you walked down a dark hallway. This country is just nonstop with the thrills!

After two weeks photographing life in a Romanian orphanage, I must say that the country is still largely a mystery to me. Last night I was informed that Valea Screzii attracts visitors seeking wives. In fact, not long ago a woman brought her thirty year-old son to the village in search of a wife. I really can't imagine why anyone would choose our village to seek a wife. Although, I'm told it's because we house impoverished, unwed mothers alongside the orphans. Somehow I can't see this sweetening the pot for American bachelors.

I also learned that on their wedding day, Romanian brides are often "stolen" from the reception in the name of "fun", but that periodically this turns into a village "pillaging" of the new bride. Romania seldom gets featured in Modern Bride Magazine.

After leaving Valea Screzii I wanted to spend a few days in the booming metropolis of Bucharest. The place has its perks. For one, I have never seen so many waiters, ever. Each time I entered a restaurant (and I use the term lightly) I was surrounded by an entire team of servers, at least seven to ten of them, ready and waiting to bring me things. Now, this does not necessarily mean that the service was good or that the things they brought me were appealing, but it's hard not to be impressed by the sheer volume of eager bodies alone.

However, Romania conspired to drive me insane with false leads regarding their restaurants. Signs left and right promised me food but lead me to nothing. And by nothing I mean I would enter an

establishment, follow signs promising sustenance, only to be led down dark stairwells to basements and back alleys. To stray cats, even. It's like the country was playing a joke on me. Yesterday I finally ate lunch in what cannot properly be called a restaurant at all. It was more like a cross between a cafe, library, nightclub and finally a furniture showroom. This last part really confused me; a whole section of the place was a mock kitchen display. Nobody was eating or working there - it was simply there to be admired, I suppose. The bathroom smelled of citrus though, so that I liked. I took full advantage of the food on offer, ordering first a whole quiche and Coke and then moving on, in very unorthodox fashion, to penne arrabiata and tea. Just to keep things fresh.

A young man named Andrei graciously offered to host me in Bucharest. On our first night together he took me for dinner. Before his girlfriend Alexandra arrived the two of us had an hour to chat. And by "chat" I mean I had an hour to listen to Andrei give an extremely involved oral history lesson on Eastern Europe. I have never witnessed such a thing outside a lecture hall. Andrei provided me, for 45 minutes straight, with historical dates, names of kings and battles and treaties dating back to ancient times. Romanians are apparently not familiar with small talk. The other 15 minutes of our time together was spent with Andrei detailing the new Romanian slaughterhouse regulations. As you might recall, I was already given a very thorough introduction to this by Christy, the chanting villager. Andrei confirmed that Romanians are not at all happy with the changing regulations, but that it makes no difference because nobody is going to follow them anyway. Then, he made a little squeal of delight typically reserved for school girls as he confided just how much he loves the current practice of slitting a pig's throat. Given all this slaughterhouse talk it was disconcerting to find myself at a restaurant featuring the following house specialties: Transylvanian Pork Stew with Polenta, and, no joke, "Pig Killing Feast," which I was heartily encouraged to try.

The Romanians, it turns out, are a very generous people. Andrei and Alexandra not only housed me for two days but would not allow me to pay for anything during my stay. It didn't matter how hard I tried, they just kept telling me to pay them "when I come back". Which should be in about, well, when slaughtered pigs fly.



Parting Thoughts

December 17, 2008

I can't believe I'm saying this, but I enjoyed my trip. Yes it was cold and miserable, and grey, and a month of fasting, in unsanitary and isolated conditions. Despite all that, looking back on the past few weeks I have to admit that I enjoyed myself. That being said, I cannot in good conscience recommend Romania as a travel destination to anyone, ever. Unless you typically vacation somewhere along the Jersey turnpike I can assure you it will be a step down.

Still, the country has its charms. Romanians are excited by small things, which I like. I have had a handful of people, for example, grab my luggage tag, read my name and address aloud, and then laugh and laugh with glee. "Wow!" they say. I am not sure what pleases them about this, but I am happy that they are happy.

One thing that I have noticed about Romanians is the complete and total inability to accept that you don't speak their language. Don't, in fact, understand a single word they are saying. Never have I encountered such conversational perseverance where none is warranted. Romanians, without fail, strike up full-blown conversations with you, despite the fact that you know not what they say. And when this barrier becomes evident they don't even think about giving up. No, they press on. And on. And on. You get the feeling that they really want to KNOW you, and not just on a casual level. It is so strange. I don't

know what to make of it. You can easily become engaged in a ten minute, one-sided 'conversation' in which your role is to stand there and shrug your shoulders again and again. Friendly? Insane?

The other thing I've noticed is that everyone in Romania appears to be at least 10-20 years older than they actually are. I have been erroneously treating people like elders to be revered who are my age or younger. Life in the mountains hardens the face.

Soon I will be back in Boston. As I depart, the one piece of advice I would like to offer to Romania is this: invest in shower curtains. They are cheap, they are practical and they make life much, much nicer for everyone. Most Romanians seem to have the shower curtain clips already in place. So really, just go the extra mile and fasten the curtain. And one piece of advice to share with Westerners who may wish to travel to this region: When a burly Romanian man driving a beat-up car through a river tells you to "RUN!" from a Gypsy village, you should probably do it.

La No Che Orphans & Youth Camp

Liz's Selected Feature

La No Che Orphans & Youth Camp Trust (La No Che) in Tanzania is a Charity Organization established in May 2003 by Johnson MaCRobert. La No Che was established as a Non Governmental Organization (NGO) and was registered as a Charity on July 3rd 2008.

The aim of La No Che is to provide a safe and secure home for the children of Tanzania who have been orphaned by diseases such as AIDS, Malaria and Tuberculosis. Their aim is to provide the orphans basic needs, while ensuring that the orphan receives the physical and emotional care a child requires.

La No Che aims to expand its role within the community of Kibaha and help address the wider problem of HIV/AIDS. The director firmly believes that to find a long-term solution to the problem of orphans within Tanzania, we need to work at addressing the problem of HIV/AIDS in Tanzania, as we go forward hand in hand.

La No Che was setup within the Coast Region of Tanzania, which is approximately 50km from Dar es Salaam. The orphanage is run by our director Mr. Johnson MaCRobert. La No Che also employs Gideon Gypson as a handyman to help take care of the property and Elizabeth Ndomba (Matron) to care for the orphans psychological well being.

Read more about volunteering with La No Che Orphans & Youth Camp Trust – see page 332

Sarah E. Hayes →

Sarah E. Hayes spent 1998 teaching English as a Second Language to first through sixth grade students in Costa Rica for WorldTeach. She returned to the United States to teach third and fourth grade Special Education in southern Louisiana with Teach For America from 1999-2001. Ms. Hayes became a Foreign Service Officer for the U.S. Department of State in 2001; she has worked at the U.S. Embassy in Luanda, Angola, as well as U.S. Consulates in Sao Paulo and Recife, Brazil, where she met her husband. They currently work together at the U.S. Embassy in Ankara, Turkey.



High Hopes in Lowlands

I spent the last year teaching in a dilapidated three-room school in the Caribbean lowlands of Costa Rica. We didn't have textbooks. Sometimes we had no electricity, sometimes no water. Some days the sun on the tin roof made the classrooms so stiflingly hot that we were all in a stupor; even the hyperactive kids were mellow. Sweating . . . sitting . . . still. Other days it was so humid that working at the board was nearly impossible since the condensation absorbed the chalk within minutes.

While in Costa Rica, I would recount stories about my little school and my wonderful, wacky students to the folks back home, and they just didn't get it. How could I be happy? I lived so far outside of the culture in which I had been raised and I worked with kids who were considered marginal, to say the least. It was unlikely many would complete high school, much less go on to college. And I was serving that sentence voluntarily.

Nowadays, I seldom try to explain myself. But I will give it one more shot. I went to Costa Rica because I saw it as a photo opportunity; a chance to spend an entire year on one assignment. I went there to improve my portfolio, and ended up falling in love with

my students, my family, my two-horse town, my three room school, and the powerful, shaping force that education can be. In the end, I did not take as many photos as I thought I would, and loads of those taken were of my students. Instead, I happily spent hours making flashcards, planning games and dreaming with my kids.

This is not to say that every day was wonderful. Certainly there were moments when my state of mind was closer to a zombie-fleeing scream than a happy hum. Sometimes I felt a sense of desperation, realizing the odds my kids were up against. But on the good days . . . I have a collection of mental pictures from the good days. One is of cocky but self-conscious Flaco leading the fourth grade boys in his own rap version of "The Number Rock." Another is of my second graders teaching me Spanish folk songs so I could translate them; yet another is of laughing with my sixth grade girls who thought I was crazy because I had left the United States at all.

WorldTeach

Sarah's Selected Feature

As a WorldTeach volunteer teacher, you will witness firsthand the challenges and rewards of education in a developing country. You will share the skills and knowledge gained through your education and life experience with students who have not had the same advantages and you will make a concrete and lasting difference in their lives.

You will gain cultural understanding and the ability to work independently in a new environment. You will have a role in the community and an opportunity to learn about the local culture and contribute to community life and development. And you will develop key skills--including teaching, language, cross-cultural communication, and leadership--that will be useful in **any** career.

WorldTeach provides opportunities for volunteers to teach in developing countries, making a meaningful contribution to schools and communities that are in great need of teachers. Most volunteers teach English and students range in age depending on the placement. In some countries, volunteers may also teach math, science, computer skills or HIV/AIDS awareness.

Volunteers work as full-time teachers, as employees of their host school or sponsoring institution in their placement country. Most volunteers live with a host family or on the school campus, and participate fully in the life of their host community. WorldTeach year programs are 10-12 months in length and the summer programs are about two months in length. There are programs in a variety of countries around the world. <http://worldteach.org>.

Nicole Farkouh ➔

Nicole's love affair with water buffalo began during study-abroad in Madurai, India. After leaving Smith College with a BA in Cultural Anthropology Nicole joined Teach for America, New Orleans, teaching students with emotional/behavioral disabilities. Her education work also took her to Mexico and Massachusetts as a teacher, administrator, and consultant. Along the way she picked up a Master of Education from the University of New Orleans and Master of Public Policy from the Goldman School of Public Policy, UC Berkeley, and certification as a community mediator.

Nicole cumulatively spent 13 months in Nepal during 2007, 2008, & 2009 working on Uterine Prolapse and other Human Right's issues, and is passionate about helping the international community re-define maternal health to include all aspects of "health" and not just issues which contribute to mortality.

Her ultimately favorite pastime, when not hiking, rollerblading, or chatting with friends is Salsa dancing.



Weeping Buffalo

I had yet to see a cow or buffalo give birth during my stay in Nepal, though all my friends knew I had been trying. So when I arrived in my good friend Parmila's village of Harridya, one of the first things she told me was that their buffalo had just given birth a day before. There was a new baby for me to meet. I, of course, grabbed my camera and started clicking away, taking pics of the mama and beautiful blue-eyed baby.

However, this exciting introduction quickly turned to crisis. It became apparent that the mamma buffalo was sick and that she was not able to nurse her new little one. Suddenly the typical calm of the house was replaced by an undercurrent of franticness as the family ran around, ignoring the monsoon torrent. They did everything they could to get the mother's milk to come in and help her heal so she could start nursing. Baths were given to lower her temperature. She was tempted with special foods. She was even walked in circles in the buffalo shed while prayers were chanted – nothing worked. Then the local Dhami or traditional healer was called as well as a veterinarian.

The family paced as each healer spent hours unsuccessfully conjuring his own version of magic. Not only would it be an incredibly sad event for the family to lose the baby and/or mother, but it also had

major economic implications. The mother buffalo was a significant source of food and wealth for Parmila's parents. She had been a major financial investment as well as received countless resources of time and energy over years of tender care.

From all around the prognosis was bad. Parmila's parents did not feel they could find enough milk to nurse the baby on their own, and even if they did, the baby was so young it would not have the ability to digest fat yet. It needed its own mother's milk first (akin to colostrums at that early stage).

Of course, I was at my wit's end trying to understand what was going on without adding any additional tension to the situation. After another 24 hours or so (including an all night vigil) there was nothing more to be done. It was determined that both mother and baby would be lost.

I left Harridya with a resigned and heavy heart, grateful for the excuse of scheduling that required my departure. As I returned to Kathmandu, I felt a bit childish about praying for the buffalos, nevertheless the prayers continued.

Then the miracle happened.

A few days later, I received a text from Parmila. "Good news! Both amma (mother) and baby buf. ok!"

I did a little dance of joy and called her to confirm it was true. I never got a chance to go back to Harridya. But I've continued to request regular updates, and so far, everyone is stable and happy. Yet another profound lesson for me about the mysterious workings of the world - without any lingering scars.

Global Citizens Network

Nicole's Selected Feature

Global Citizens Network (GCN) offers an alternative to mass tourism for its trip participants who seek travel with purpose, as well as an alternative means to small -scale economic development for the host communities where we partner. Through grassroots community-based tourism, GCN projects are locally conceived and globally achieved. GCN commits to projects until complete. GCN brings awareness of other cultures and often more sustainable ways of living to trip participants.

HOW IS GCN UNIQUE?

- ❖ Age-diverse (individuals, families, baby boomers welcome – something for everyone)
- ❖ Small teams
- ❖ Authentic, respectful relations with host community
- ❖ Partners – mutually beneficial relationship
- ❖ Cross-cultural exchange (not just SERVICE PROJECT), project is the vehicle to cross-cultural understanding.

MISSION: Global Citizens Network recognizes the interdependence of people around the world, and that social and economic injustice, racial and ethnic inequality, and ecological loss affect all people. But through cooperative effort, individuals of all cultures can experience and enhance their ability to make a difference in their community and their world. To foster that cooperation, Global Citizens Network sends short-term teams of volunteers to communities in other cultures where participants immerse themselves in the culture and daily life of the community.

Read more about volunteering with Global Citizens Network – see page 300

Janet Rabin ➔

Janet's love of Slavic and Balkan culture was sparked by a summer school Russian class she took in elementary school. Her work with Women in Black combined several of her interests: the women's peace movement, education and human rights advocacy in post-conflict zones, and post-communist transitions.

A Masters student at Georgetown University concentrating in international development, Janet's work and studies have thus far focused on forced migration and refugee resettlement. She did her undergraduate degree in international relations and French at Mount Holyoke College and spent a month studying at the Central Institute for Higher Tibetan studies in Sarnath, India. After living and working for a year in Edmonton, Canada, Janet returned to her hometown of Tucson, Arizona to work as a Community Outreach Coordinator at the International Rescue Committee. During her time there she had the opportunity to work with refugees from Bosnia, Russia, Somalia, Sudan, Liberia and Iraq.



Srebrenica

Friday, July 11th was the day I had been anticipating and dreading since I found out I would be spending this summer in the Balkans: the anniversary of the genocide at Srebrenica thirteen years ago. I knew how important it would be to see the memorial service, and how much it would mean to be there with the Women in Black. But I also knew that this was an experience nothing in my life had prepared me for. As multiple survivors of war and trauma have told me, it is a blessing to not be able to truly comprehend what they went through. Yet this is why I came here: to better my understanding of the types of conflicts which give rise to the most awful terms in our modern lexicon of violence: crimes against humanity, refugees, internally displaced persons and ethnic cleansing.

Although I had researched the Srebrenica Genocide before, my true mental introduction to July 11th began last month when I visited the Women of Srebrenica Citizen's Association in Tuzla. After joining them in their monthly march demanding justice for those killed in the massacre, members of Women in Black and I went back to their office for coffee and conversation. I came into the room, took in the scene of friendly faces, cigarette smoke and coffee, and then froze. The walls

were covered with the pictures of their missing men. Hundreds and hundreds of faces - stern, playful, young, old – these women were surrounded daily by these images of their lost husbands, sons, brothers, fathers. The feeling of that moment, the juxtaposition of the warmth of the people I meet here and the cold, unimaginable events of the past, stayed with me and was especially present when I returned to Bosnia this month. After the commemoration in Srebrenica, I also visited Sarajevo and Mostar, two other places that have become emblematic of the horrors of the Bosnian War.

Again and again during my time in Bosnia I was confronted with a thought so commonplace that it sounds trite; how could this happen in such a beautiful place? As dreadful as it may be to say, there are places where it is easier to imagine horrible things happening: blasted desert landscapes ravaged by drought, poverty-stricken small towns with boarded-up windows, garbage-strewn streets of crowded slums . . . However the hills of Bosnia seem not only lovely but peaceful. Though evidence to the contrary was all around me. I could not escape this misplaced feeling of serenity. I felt it when I looked at the rose garden of the Women of Srebrenica Citizen's Association, when I saw the striking skyline of Sarajevo at sunset, when I admired the lush green hills around Srebrenica . . . But when I saw the 300+ green coffins - smaller than normal because there are usually no more than a few bones left to be buried - when I saw a video at the memorial center (located in the former barracks of the UN Soldiers who were charged with enforcing the "Safe Area" of Srebrenica) of bedraggled prisoners being tormented by Bosnian Serb troops, I knew that the hills all around me had been turned into hell that day.

As I stood silently at the commemoration, during the speeches, during the prayers, I imagined what it would have been like to be those men and boys thirteen years ago. It was 90+ degrees in the midday sun, and I was hot and thirsty and exhausted. I had a water bottle. I could take breaks and sit down, and I knew that that night I would be in a safe, cool bed. The men who tried to escape the massacre through the

forest were running with no shoes, no food, - how hot, how hungry, how ill, exhausted and terrified did they feel? And for most of them, the ordeal ended with a bullet in the head, if they were lucky, worse if they weren't. There is no way to understand this.

As I was trying to reconcile images in my mind, small things brought me back to the present: everyone was sweating and getting sunburned in the heat, and shade was a scarce commodity. The Women in Black were indeed wearing black, despite the weather, to symbolize mourning. At one point, as we were entering the second hour of standing in a line holding our banner, one of the women from Srebrenica came by and cooled us with a wet cloth. This simple, wordless gesture of basic compassion by a stranger reassured me. It may not be possible to understand why or how some people are able to commit these kinds of crimes; it may be, on the other hand, painfully understandable why others allow it to happen. But these evils do not erase a world where kindness exists. They do not change the order of the universe and take away the familiar beauty of the hills or a garden or a stranger's hospitality. I cannot escape the fact that Srebrenica happened and that atrocities are still happening in the world today. Nonetheless, I remain thankful for the people I have met here - Serb, Bosnian, Croatian, Albanian and everything in between - and for the work they are doing. They are evidence of the good that has continued on past that day 13 years ago, past many other days of war and suffering. In the face of one of the world's greatest attempts to destroy and debase humanity, they are evidence of the good that survived.

The Advocacy Project

Janet's Selected Feature

The Advocacy Project's mission is to produce social change by helping advocates for marginalized communities become catalysts for social justice and claim their rights.

AP began using information in support of community-based advocates in 1999, when we profiled survivors from Hurricane Mitch in Honduras and Muslim refugees seeking to return to their homes in Bosnia. In the years since, we have worked with more than 50 disempowered communities around the world.

AP does this by partnering with community-based human rights groups that represent these communities. We believe strongly that social change is best achieved by those who are most directly affected. Through AP's fellowship program, graduate students from North America and Europe, known as Peace Fellows, volunteer to work in the field with these advocates to strengthen their voices and develop effective advocacy tools.

AP begins by telling the stories of partner organizations and the stakeholders they serve in a compelling manner – the first requirement of advocacy. This involves video and photo profiling, as well as blogging and podcasts. We then help them to develop information tools, such as issue bulletins, press releases and newsletters, for use in campaigns. Finally, we support campaigns with fundraising and outreach. By the end of this process, partners should be making inroads into the cause of disempowerment. This, to AP, is the start of social change.

Learn more at advocacynet.org.

Nola Lee Kelsey →

Over the past two decades zoologist Nola L. Kelsey has worked as a Dog Caregiver for Best Friends Animal Society (Nat Geo Channel's 'Dogtown'), a Reptile Keeper, Marine Park Trainer, Penguin Handler and a Wildlife Rehabilitator. She's also a self-confessed serial volunteer for global animal rescue organizations.

As she has meandered the globe, her humor articles have appeared in a diversity of publications from *Reptiles Magazine* to *The Bangkok Post*. Needless to say, Kelsey has been bitten by just about everything – twice! The final culprit was the publishing bug. (This distant relative of the travel bug actually pumps ink into your veins while sucking your wallet dry.)

In addition to being the creator and content editor of the very book you hold in your hands, Kelsey has penned a myriad of titles from the scathingly wicked satires, *Dogs: Funny Side Up!* and *Bitch Unleashed: The Harsh Realities of Goin' Country*, to the educational, children's read-aloud, *Let's Go Visit Best Friends Animal Sanctuary*.

In order to fervently insure her own mental instability, Kelsey is also the Managing Editor of Dog's Eye View Media. Readers may learn more about her personal books and witness firsthand a total inability to keep ones website updated by visiting www.NolaKelsey.com.



When Dogs Choose You

Some lines were meant to be crossed, some dog breeds were not. Jake obviously knew this. He grinned menacingly as I left Best Friends' "Little Lebanon" compound on that frigid January eve.

Obviously, Jake was up to no good. I liked that about him. It was the first time the Best Friends staff had assigned me a dog to take on a sleepover evaluation. While I appreciated Jake's twisted sense of humor, he'd gone a bit too far.

Selected from the rows of German Shepherds, Lab mixes and a myriad of over-grown Hines 57s was my charge, Flipper. Jake told me to take Flipper. Two other Caregivers, Kerstin and Don, were normally eerily reserved. Yet both snickered and grinned from ear to ear at Jake's maniacal suggestion.

Flipper could only be described as a pint-sized, pasty-faced, West Highland Terrier, designer Poodle, cotton ball mix overstuffed with teeth and attitude.

Three months earlier the good folks at Best Friends Animal Society had evacuated nearly 300 cats and dogs from Beirut, Lebanon during the fall of 2006 conflict between Israel and Hezbollah. They were some of the most awesome refugees I'd ever seen, not like the dogs I worked

with in Thailand.

Thailand's strays tend to be the purest of mutts. Most contain only a slightly recognizable vestige of some extremely fertile Welsh Corgi. I am convinced this one potent animal belonged to some 17th century British Expat who let it run amuck, humping everything that moved, as he ventured around Asia for the Dutch West India Trading Company.

The Lebanon Dogs were handsome, many of them purebreds. Most had the potential to be spectacular pets, despite having the tenacity to survive on the streets of a war zone. Unlike America's coddled canines, conflict and missiles plucked the weak and dimwitted from their gene pool long ago. I suppose it's not surprising then that Flipper was 80 lbs. of 'tenacity' in a 20 lb. body.



Fashion conscious, designer mutt breeders actually have a name for Flipper's probable cross – Westiepoo. I also had a name for this affront to nature – Absurd-a-Poo. There's no apology. I've just always treasured big dogs!

Thailand's street dogs and America's deaf dogs; Dalmatians, Aussies and Bullies of more substantial size have always been my game. I'd gone so far as turning off Westminster when the Toy Class entered the ring, tossing popcorn at the TV screen and shouting, "Old lady dogs, yuck!" Big dogs are just in my blood.

At the time, I thought the Little Lebanon Caregivers had not understood that I had a background with, and preference for, cantankerous canines. Better still, why would someone who worked with mountain lions and alligators be assigned Flipper? Now I realize the staff's actions were motivated by a keen instinct for self preservation. Even though they were some of the best Animal Keepers I would ever work with, not one wanted to crate Flip at night if it could be avoided. Never mind being the poor sap who opened the violently convulsing crate in the morning. Cantankerous? Yes! Tragically, workman's comp can only cover so much.

Yes, indeed. The Caregivers of Little Lebanon thought they were oh so clever sending Flipper home with me. After the first night with him, I read them like a book. Not only were they practicing a good defense, they actually saw Flipper as a good match for me. In their eyes, I was just some crazy-ass volunteer who strolled along quietly when she was forced to return from a walk with the jaws of Cleo, a shepherd mix, attached rather firmly to her lower arm.

Plus, the gal had no dogs of her own. I'd just returned from Asia, where apparently I had a target painted on my forehead – shaped like a terrier. "There's no chance I'll adopt this dog," I warned. Even Flipper ignored me.

Once in my arms he'd call off any covert attacks he was plotting against neighboring dog runs and attach himself to me like a barnacle in a grey whale's belly button. True, Flipper did need someone with no other dogs. Why? Judging by his dog aggression, I'd say it was because Flip was 20 lbs of pure piss and vinegar on a good day.

I knew I was being subtly tag-teamed. My imagination jumped in on the game. On occasion I thought I heard Flipper whispering, "You're a zoologist. Overcoming my ravenous bite history will make me an interesting behavioral study."

Other times I had nightmares about the Caregivers' ulterior motives. "Get that yipping, dog aggressive, food aggressive, crate aggressive, barrier aggressive, cat aggressive, toilet paper aggressive gremlin out of our canyon. We're running low on band aids." A cold chill went up my spine with this description. Oh crap! Could Flipper be my soul mate?



Full days and long nights took over. The Lebanon Dogs were being prepped for a big adoption fair in Phoenix. I took dogs on outings, dogs on overnights, and dogs on drives. Observations of behavior, writing reports for their adoption files, and vacuuming my Jeep filled every free moment. But, something else began to happen. Every second night Flipper came home with me. First he was suggested then, to my dismay,

he was requested. Had I gone mad?

Okay, so he was kind of cute. And around me he became fiendishly overflowing with exuberant kisses. As a rule he'd only successfully "break skin" once or twice a day. Even his obsessive unrolling of my toilet paper had a certain charm. Worst of all, his perfectly round brown eyes had an innocence about them. Wait! No! I would not let the maniacal little creature and his care giving conspirators lull me into their trap.

As I worked around Little Lebanon, Flipper would lay it on thick, shaking in his run and crying as I walked past with other dogs. He achieved an odd behavioral balance. Flipper could elicit pity from me one second and the next moment launch an aggressive assault through the fence at whatever poor dog I was walking. If I dared to pick him up, the barnacle effect resumed. Justifying my cold-heartedness became a full time job.

"He's rage on a leash," I told Don one moment. Next I'd insist, "I'm too young for that Old Lady Dog." I'd also achieved an odd balance. "Which is it?" The caregivers drilled. "Is he too difficult for you to handle or too much of a lap dog?"

Trapped! I'd been trapped.

Now all I could do was laugh nervously when the subject of adopting Flipper came up. Then, when no one was looking, I'd scamper off to the outhouse to hide. When Don nicknamed me something rhyming with Flippers Witch, I laughed even more. "Now where is that toilet paper?" Alas, had Flipper eaten it?

No doubt, I was still laughing as I filled out the adoption application. Perhaps I had gone mad. Denial is a hardy foe. Or perhaps it was time for an Old Lady Dog. It just happened to be my ?? birthday.

The next day showed me the true generosity of the human spirit. I've never had so many caring people offer to fast track paperwork for me. All that morning trainers, managers, adoption counselors, and the like, would stop by Little Lebanon's campfire to chat. I'd glance over to see Don point towards Flipper, then somewhat aggressively point towards

Dogtown's Adoption Headquarters.

Cars peeled out of the gravel parking lot like some dog-hair-infiltrated chase scene from the Dukes of Hazard. For hours, blinding dust choked the air along the three miles of road between Little Lebanon and Adoptions. Gosh, seeing so many helpful folks wanting to send Flipper permanently home with me was enough to make me teary eyed - - and drink in excess!



Eight months later it's all perfectly clear. Letting a dog choose us is one of the best parts about volunteering at a rescue. I joined the staff of Best Friends not long after adopting Flipper. Since then, I've seen families looking to adopt puppies on Monday, leave at week's end proudly loading a senior dog from Old Friends into their station wagon. They couldn't smile any wider. Neither could the dog.

Workshop attendees have arrived by plane only to commandeer rental cars for cross country journeys when they were chosen by a dog with separation anxiety. Doberman mixes charm poodle fans. Even with cats, it happens. Calico aficionados will have a tabby say, "No, I'm the one you want. You may take me home now." Somehow the chosen always know to listen - - even without Jake there to translate.

I believe people often have a predisposed idea of what they want and expect in a pet. When an adult shelter animal comes home, they are instantly hit with a different reality than what they envisioned. Puppies or kittens are sneakier. As they grow their unique personality slowly skews the person's perspective. Could the instant slap of an alternate reality be why some adult dog adoptions fail?

What better way is there to select, or be selected by, a new family member than by volunteering? When potential families work around animals for a time they are naturally drawn to their perfect pet. A fuzzy soul mate. There is no other feeling like looking into your best friend's eyes and knowing you saw their unique beauty and saved them.

Before buying from, and contributing to, the horrid pet store/ puppy

mill cycle, volunteer with animals at a shelter. You'll feel good. Your kids will learn about giving back through your example. And, you'll get a look inside the true hearts of potential pets. Prejudices of age, size, breed, or even initial temperament will be vanquished. You might just be surprised by what chooses you.

Wombat Protection Society of Australia

Nola's Selected Feature

Wombats are the most amazing creatures, they live in beautifully engineered temperature controlled burrows from where they fossick for grass, roots and fungi after dark returning before daybreak. Growing up to 40 kilos in weight from a jelly bean less than a gram when born, the joey makes a perilous journey from mum's cloacca to her pouch where it attaches to a teat and remains safely in her backwards facing pouch until about nine months old. At this time the joey begins to poke its' head out and nibble grass from the safety of the pouch. As it grows it becomes playful, thoroughly enjoying climbing over mum, rolling down hills and galloping around.

If lucky the wombat may live for 10-15 years and if female may produce 3-5 young during its life. Sadly wombats have many problems in Australia and that is why the Wombat Protection Society exists. Farmers still trap and shoot them, cars run over them, their habitat is still being destroyed and a terrible infestation caused by a mite people introduced to Australia creates a condition known as mange which kills them.

The Society works to ameliorate all these problems and looks forward to volunteers joining in this endeavor to save and protect one of the most charismatic and iconic of Australian animals, The rapacious delight of a young wombat at play is something unforgettable. Their interrelationship with the Earth serves as a reminder of how precious they are and how important caring for them is.

A wide range of volunteer skills can be used, from administrative-including publicity and fundraising to field research and monitoring to working on release sites -which may involve building wombatoriums, fencing as well as research assistance in burrow monitoring, wombat sighting and some direct care. Visit: www.wombatprotection.org.au

Learn more about volunteering with Wombat Protection Society of Australia– see page 426

Karly Satkowiak ➔

Karly Satkowiak is a 21 year old senior at Central Michigan University. She will graduate in May with majors in Public Relations and International Relations/Comparative Politics. She is pursuing a career focused on public service. Although Karly has written for newspapers, a magazine and various public relations projects, this is her first attempt at writing for a book. She has decided she likes it.

After reading about the Alternative Breaks program, Karly hopes other college students will choose to sign up or start a program at their university. She also hopes college administrators and faculty see value in programs such as Alternative Breaks that teach active citizenship through experience. She encourages them to act to make certain graduating seniors leave their institutions ready to be active citizens in their communities.



Gifts of Youth

A feeling of nostalgia washed over me. I settled into the driver's seat of one of the minivans my team of volunteers had driven to West Palm Beach, FL., from Mount Pleasant, MI. After four days of volunteering with a sea turtle conservation project in the mornings and spending the afternoons volunteering at John D. MacArthur Beach State Park, our Alternative Beaks group was being chased out of Florida by torrents from a hurricane. Locals weren't worried and encouraged us to weather the storm.

"When's the next time you'll be able to tell people you were in the middle of a hurricane?" they joked. While tempted, we opted to err on the side of caution and head home a few days early, making it back in time to start a new school year on Monday.

With mixed feelings, I took the wheel for one final shift of driving. I had become involved in Alternative Breaks through Central Michigan University's Volunteer Center as an 18 year old freshman. Now, at 21, I was on my last of seven trips.

I found out about Alternative Breaks during the fall of my first year on campus. One of my courses was geared toward orienting freshmen to campus and encouraging their out-of-class involvement. My professor invited speakers from different groups, offices and departments to

speak to the class about what CMU had to offer and what we could contribute to campus life.

Abbey, a junior, came in one day to tell us about CMU's Volunteer Center. She explained how we could visit an online database to find volunteer opportunities in the community and throughout the state and also summarized multiple programs run by the Volunteer Center. It was clear that she believed in the center and what it was trying to accomplish. When she began talking about Alternative Breaks, Abbey *really* came to life. She started speaking faster and loudly, her hand gestures becoming more expressive and her eyes lit with enthusiasm. She shared personal experiences with the program, telling us how she led a team in facilitating a leadership camp for underprivileged children in Nevada. Abbey had also participated on a trip to New York City, where she helped to deliver meals to individuals with HIV and AIDS.

She spoke of good friends, good memories and something she called "active citizenship" — "*Whatever that is,*" I thought to myself — but I was sold. That fall, When winter sign-ups rolled around, I was awake early, eager to sign up for a trip. I logged on to the Volunteer Center website and registered to volunteer at the disaster relief site.

"*Volunteering, traveling, new friends; sounds good to me,*" I thought to myself. Little did I know that this program I had so casually signed up for would shape my undergraduate years and define my vision of where I fit into a global society.



My first volunteer trip took place in December 2005, shortly after Hurricane Katrina wreaked havoc in the southern part of the country. For weeks before the trip, my group met to fundraise, share issue education about disaster relief and complete an orientation. Program leaders encouraged us to move from being "volunteers" to "active citizens". "*There's that phrase again,*" I thought, realizing that I had yet to figure out what that bit of the program actually meant.

Before I knew it, my team was loading up a couple of minivans with

gear for the week, anticipating the drive southward. As we neared Louisiana, I already felt a connection to my fellow participants and my site leaders. Service trips are unique in that you get to know the individuals on your team extremely well in a short amount of time, due to traveling, living and working together for the span of the break. I definitely felt that way, even though most of the other participants were older and had signed up for the trip for more altruistic reasons than I, perhaps, initially had.

Housing for the week was in the basement of a church near Lake Ponchartrain and the bridge that we would use each day to drive into New Orleans. The structure of the church was unaffected by the storm, but the human element was not.

The basement was also home to several aid workers who had been helping in the city since September. We heard stories from an overwhelming number of church members who had lost friends or loved ones during the storm or who, themselves, had lost their homes. Yet, they welcomed us with open arms, seemingly astounded that some college kids from Michigan would be interested in spending their break from school helping them out. Their strength, persistence and heart in the wake of a tragedy was humbling.

The organization we served during the week was Arc of Greater New Orleans, founded in 1953 to provide life-enhancing opportunities for the intellectually disabled. According to the organization's website (<http://www.arcgno.org>), the group began with a small group of parents concerned about the lives of their children who were affected by mental handicaps.

As my Alternative Breaks experiences continued, I would also learn that virtually every organization and social movement begins this way: a small group of citizens identify a need in their communities and then dedicate their lives to fulfilling that need.

Arc of Greater New Orleans, known in its early days as the Association for Retarded Children, first focused on securing additional educational resources and experiences for intellectually disabled

children. Then it evolved into an organization for the entire community, providing such programs as early childhood intervention, family services coordination, respite care, personal care, employment and habilitation, and living assistance. After Katrina, Arc staff members were concerned about locating all of their consumers — the organization's name for its clients — and providing them with immediate assistance, which left Arc's facilities and the property that surrounded them in great need of attention even months after the storm.

Our team's first project was to clean up the tangled mess that was once a garden. Most people think of gardening as simply a hobby, but much more was at stake in the garden in which we were working. Arc's main location had been the site of an organic garden at which the consumers could work. They had been paid using the garden's profits and were now without income and without activities in which to engage during the day.

We set out to restore the once-thriving plot, disassembling the hothouse, emptying and stacking hundreds upon hundreds of pots, removing bricks that had once lined the gardens but were now strewn throughout the yard by the storm, and knocking down a falling fence. As we worked, consumers stopped by to visit, telling us their stories about the garden. They were tickled by the idea that someone was finally doing something about their garden, and they were eager to lend a helping hand where they could. After three days, we had blown through the work Arc administrators had thought would keep us occupied for our entire time there. They then moved us to another location and we completed the same process.

After work each day, we had the opportunity to experience New Orleans, learn about the culture and try to comprehend what had happened during the storm. The pastor from the church at which we were staying took us to the site where the levees had first breached. He showed us the marks where ships had slammed into the sides, as well as what remained of the hardest-hit neighborhoods. We visited the French

Quarter and spoke with members of the community about life in New Orleans before Katrina. They also told what they had experienced during and after the devastating storm and their plans for rebuilding or, in some cases, relocating.

It goes without saying that we left New Orleans feeling good about our decision to come down and do the work we had done. Believe it or not, that feeling of accomplishment was actually the least of what I took away from my first Alternative Break. I enjoyed a weeklong, alcohol- and drug-free trip with peers who saw a bigger picture than I did at the time. They could influence the world around them. I gained a greater understanding of the issue of disaster relief before, during and after the direct, meaningful service I completed. I was accepted into an unfamiliar community: exposed to a population of individuals who had not crossed my mind when I originally watched footage of what had happened in New Orleans post-Katrina.

On that first trip, it was as if I developed an understanding of just how little I actually knew about the social injustices that my country — let alone my global community — faced.



Each volunteer trip I have taken since then has altered my life in a poignant and vital way. Collectively, I have gathered a slew of life lessons, funny and touching memories, educational experiences, and new friends. Each break is also unique in the way it has provided me with opportunities to learn through experience.

Some trips have had serious overtones. In December 2006 I was a participant with a group that volunteered at Crossroads Group Home in South Carolina. It was a home for females age 9 through 21 who had been victims of abuse. Many of the girls were ordered by the courts to live at the facility because they had broken the law in some way before turning 18 and they were required to complete rehabilitation before being allowed to return home.

The members of my group were excited to encourage the girls

through the rehabilitation process and help with whatever we could. We volunteered in their classroom, played outdoors with the girls during recess and after school, and prepared donations that would serve as their Christmas presents. Our presence was welcomed, but the atmosphere around the home was more somber than most places would be around the holidays. As is often the case with a life lesson, no 'issue education' we had completed before the trip had prepared me for this experience. And without the direct experience I received by working with the issue, I never would have learned these girls' reality. Nothing is as clear as it may appear at face value. There are no simple solutions.



Other projects I attended were international. In March 2007 I led a team to Comanesti, Romania to build with Habitat for Humanity. The issue was international, low-income housing, and for many participants it was their first time traveling outside of North America. We were met at the Comanesti airport by an enthusiastic Romanian duo, Adi and Mihaela, employees of Habitat for Humanity. During the week they helped us through a blend of experiencing Romanian culture, acquiring new skills, making a connection with the families for whom we were building homes and soaking up the history of a formerly Communist country.

Time on the worksite was spent trying to prove to Romanian members of the construction team that we could carry our own weight in cement and mix it with the best of them. This was especially true for the women. Constantine, the construction site manager, knew select phrases in English. He teased us mercilessly — but in jest — about our inability to move bricks and water quickly enough, as well as our sad lack of strength to swing the picks.

“Come on,” he would yell with a smile. “Pick it up! Get to work!”

He might have been a jokester on the outside, but his heart was sincere. At the end of our last day on the construction site, he gave a beautiful speech that Mihaela translated. He said that while he may have teased us as we worked, they were all thankful that we helped them progress on their projects more than they could have alone. He stood, beaming, as the other members of the crew presented roses to all of the women on our construction site.



Through my experiences as an Alternative Breaks participant — and eventually in my time serving as a site leader and board member — I have become enamored with the idea of active citizenship. When I think to a time when I did not give the concept a second thought, I have to laugh. Active citizenship now characterizes my present and future, making my domestic and global community a priority in my life decisions.

As I made that final drive back to Mount Pleasant from Florida, I reflected on all that these opportunities have meant in my life. These are but a few examples of the effects that such programs have had thousands of students who choose to attend service-orientated trips offered by colleges all across the country.

For me, volunteer trips have been testaments to the beautiful similarities and differences of humanity. They have been the means by which I have witnessed and learned the realities of social injustice. They have also been the greatest example of the capacity we, as global citizens, have for compassion and transformation.

CMU's Alternative Breaks

Karly's Selected Feature

Central Michigan University's Alternative Breaks is a service trip program that, since 1994, has provided CMU students with opportunities to travel domestically or abroad to experience intense service projects that address community needs. Teams led by trained CMU student site leaders are placed into diverse communities to engage in public service and social issue-based education during winter, spring and summer breaks, as well as on weekends. Students not only serve as on-site leaders during the trips, but they also run the entire program with guidance from the Volunteer Center coordinator. Students choose the issues to address during the breaks, organize the service projects, secure transportation and housing, seek funding to make trips more affordable for fellow students, and devote many hours to sharing the message of active citizenship and social justice by encouraging their peers to sign up for trips.

Read more about volunteering with Central Michigan University's Alternative Breaks program – see page 256

Daniel L. Moses ✈

Daniel L. Moses is a 2009 WorldTeach volunteer serving in Kayonza, Rwanda. Mr. Moses was born in the Panama Canal Zone before moving first to Woodbridge, Virginia then to Fayetteville, North Carolina. He attended Lyon College in Batesville, Arkansas where he played varsity tennis and graduated with a degree in History and a minor in French. Having been influenced by study abroad experiences in Belgium and Italy, Mr. Moses next pursued a master's degree in International Affairs from George Washington University, graduating in 2004. His work experience includes a stint as a Program Manager at the Institute of International Education and as a Defense Program Analyst at the Battelle Memorial Institute before joining WorldTeach. Daniel blogs regularly on TravelPod, where this story first appeared. Follow along at: <http://www.travelpod.com>.



The Walk to Muhazi

This was the Rwanda that I wanted to see, the Rwanda that I needed to see, and it is this Rwanda, this second country that lies off the main road, that I hope to learn more about. Customarily, at least as much as anything occurring in the span of only four weeks can become ‘custom,’ I turn right when I leave my front gate everyday. I turn right down the dirt road, a wide path really, and find myself after only a few hundred yards staring at the highway, a two lane paved expanse that stretches from Kayonza to Kigali and beyond. I descend down the slope of a slight hill, reaching the center of town, turning right on another highway that stretches between Tanzania in the South and Uganda in the North, and make my way towards school. It is a nice existence. A simple existence, yes, but it has worked for me so far.

This past weekend, though, I stood at my front gate as always, but beside me was my neighbor, a transplanted Ugandan named Edison. He smiled brightly, the skin of his face appearing even darker against the brightness of his gleaming teeth. He is 23, smart, naïve and kind almost to a fault. Within a few days of meeting me, as we were walking along the path towards town, he asked me to never leave. He was imploring me to stay in Africa, to remain his friend, and that he

would have his uncle find me a job and an apartment. I don't know why this caused me to say I had a girlfriend. He clearly wasn't coming on to me. He just liked knowing someone from America, and that this person cared to spend time with him. Indeed, I care to spend a lot of time with him for he has become in a short time, my best friend here.

The previous evening, as we were returning from visiting the house of an old lady who had lost her family in the genocide (a place rightfully devoid of any lingering cheerful spirit, with a broken woman for whom Edison buys food), I mentioned the summer home of Rwanda's president, Paul Kagame, was supposedly somewhere just north of us on the shores of Lake Muhazi. Edison knew it, and offered to take me there the next morning. I readily agreed.

So we stood in front of my gate, ready to go. Edison began to walk, and turned left. LEFT! I followed with a smile. To be fair, I had ventured a little way up this path before, where I found a school and a soccer field, but had never gone further. We walked past the school, and the church which was its epicenter, and on into the rows of banana trees beyond. Periodically we'd see a house - mud walls and tin roof - with some denizen toiling out front. Smoke billowed out from within, corn cobs were scattered about, bent and bedraggled women worked while children carried jerry cans of water to and fro.

The road is made of a clay-like dirt. We trod heavily as the sun beamed down upon my pale skin. In town, children run towards me screaming "MUZUNGU!" or yelling out their few words of French or English that they learned somewhere in their young lives. Here, as we walked back into acres of leafy green plants hanging limply over our heads, the children slunk away, frightened of the sight of a white person. Here they are often told by their parents that white people are devils or ghosts. This is not meant maliciously, but rather as a tale to pass the time. The whites are people who have been punished, and their skin is white like ash because they have been horribly burned. The braver of the rabble may call out to me, words muttered in

Kinyarwanda, but when I turn to them, they cower and slink behind hedges out of my gaze.

Edison did not know the way as he had proclaimed the day before, but there was only one fat lane ahead, with skinnier versions jutting off at random intervals. We stayed to the larger route. I would occasionally see a sight that attracted my eye and my camera was stealthily brought out for a quick shot: a man with a sweaty brow pushing a bicycle with clusters of bananas slung across the seat; a mud brick church with half its walls eroded away, yet the cries of “hallelujah” roared thunderously out; a stream of long horned cattle walking menacingly towards us; a child clutching a heavy machete.

Edison stopped to ask an occasional passerby if we were headed in the right direction. They nodded and waved their hands towards the path. When we reached a fork in the road, we approached a man with a high hairline and a mouth clinging to no more than half a dozen stubbornly anchored teeth. Edison, having only moved here from Uganda less than a year earlier, still struggled with the language, although it is relatively close to his native Ugandan tongue. He sputtered out his question. The man looked wearily at me, then back to Edison. I was drawn to his eyes, a solid yellow field around dark irises, indicating a series of bouts with malaria in his forlorn existence. He looked 70. I guessed he might be 50.

He then spoke up in a string of remarkable English. “You cannot go there, and I cannot tell you the way. It is forbidden. Why do you want to bother him?” We didn’t want to bother anyone. Edison told him, in fact, that he had visited once before with his uncle. “Then if you have been there before, why do you ask me the way?” It had been an official visit, and he had gone by car via the main road. “Yes, you have gone the wrong way, that’s true. It is shorter that way perhaps, but for this way, I cannot help you.” We nodded in unison, and pushed on, choosing left.

After some minutes, we decided to moderate our intentions. It was hot, we had already walked several kilometers, and it would be enough to reach Muhazi, just the shores of Lake Muhazi. We entered a cluster

of homes further along. Edison asked again for directions, this time to the lake. A discussion ensued. Three others were brought into the conversation as they happened along the path. One man, pushing a large can of water in a wooden wheelbarrow, agreed to not only tell us the way, but to take us there in person.

He was an old man, but wore his age well. He did not stoop and his gait was long and swift. I was obsessed with his hat, which read Alta Genetics Corp USA, and his jacket which said something similar but had been faded by the sun from a perhaps once bright pink into unintelligible words on a light red background. Edison and I had been sauntering along the trail, but the man, named Thomas, set off as if shot from a cannon. I struggled, at first, to keep up.

Edison, translating periodically, told me that the man said the lake was not far at all. In fact, it probably was just a couple of kilometers after all was said and done. However given the pace we walked under the hot sun, it felt much further. Eventually Thomas broke off the main path and took a small trail that began dropping straight downhill. Within a few minutes, I saw a finger of lake stretching out before me. I can't say my breath was taken away, as I needed it too much to keep up, but nearly. I was truly stunned by the beauty of the scene before me. The lake was onyx against a lush green background. The hills dropped off steeply, maybe 300-400 meters down to the glistening water below. I took a picture as we walked, not wanting to fall too far behind.

Soon we reached the bottom. Several children were splashing about in the water. They were stunned by my presence, of course, and stopped to stare. I returned their gaze. Thomas' smile was broad as he reached his arm out over the water, spreading his fingers as if to say, I told you so. He then pointed down at the water, and by the lilt of his voice I knew he was asking a question. Edison chimed in faithfully:

"He says he can now get you a fish, if you want."

"A fish?"

"Yes, he will get you a fish."

“Um, okay, how in the world would he do that?”

“With a stick.”

“I’m having visions of Tom Hanks here, you know.”

“Tom who?”

“Nevermind. Tell him no thanks, but the offer is very kind.”

In hindsight, I should’ve taken him up on the fish offer, but in real time it just seemed so impossible that I passed. Next time perhaps.

We soon left, and began our ascent, which was thankfully less swift than our descent. Halfway up the hill, Thomas became very animated and stopped and turned towards me. He stuck out a bony index finger and began gesturing back towards the lake, words spraying out in a flurry of Kinyarwanda. He was giving me a warning, and his words were shot out like spears, aimed for the heart. He told me never to return to this place at night, for a ghost stalks around here, and it could be very dangerous if I were to meet him. I held back a laugh and looked at Edison, who I thought would surely share my incredulity. In fact, the opposite was true.

Edison, do you believe him? “Of course.” But ghosts, really? “Yes. My father met a ghost once. He was driving a soda truck, with Coca-Cola going from Uganda to Kenya. He stopped to pick up a lady, and when she got in, she had the legs of a cow! He asked her, ‘why do you have the legs of a cow?’ But she did not respond.” Okay. What happened after that? “She got out.” Yeah, that makes sense.

Edison and I, after some discussion, agreed to come back and see the ghost for ourselves one night in the months ahead. He said we could meet the ghost and not be afraid of anything as long as we didn’t talk about it for four days afterward. I asked if he meant just with each other or anybody, my mouth turned up in a wry smile. He responded forcefully, “Not with anyone!”

Even after our having declined the offer of a fish, and nearly laughing at the ghost story, Thomas brought us to his house on the way back up the hill. It was a modest establishment to say the least, a small mud hut with dirt floors. His wife came out, a child at her side and

another on her back. Thomas said he had one more son who was playing somewhere in the neighborhood. There was a pile of corn cobs in the yard, but no other adornment. The wife appeared to be at least 20 years younger than her husband. He didn't offer us anything, which is strange for this culture, but probably because he had nothing to offer. I sputtered out words of broken Kinyarwanda, thank you, nice to meet you, goodbye, and soon we left and were headed back home, back down the same worn path flanked by banana trees.

The return took over an hour. I arrived home dehydrated and sunburned. I had intended to visit the school that afternoon, but put it off for another day. I was tired. Too tired to eat or even sleep. I showered, thanking the heavens (or the utility company) that the water was working. I sat down on a chair in the shade of my porch. The sun was starting to descend in the sky behind me. Finally, I knew that I had done something worth doing in this place and the only thing I had really done was turn left. Sometimes, it seems, that's enough.

Fondation HBS - Hôpital Bon Samaritain

Daniel's Selected Feature

Hôpital Bon Samaritain (HBS), a full service hospital with outreach programs, is situated in the river valley of Limbé, Haiti. Haiti occupies the western half of the tropical island of Hispaniola. Since 1953, HBS provides health care services for the greater population of the Limbé Valley located in the Département du Nord. HSB is a project of Foundation HBS a Haitian non-profit organization and is sponsored in part by HBS Foundation, Inc, a non-profit, 501c3, Florida, USA registered organization

Currently 6000 outpatients are being consulted and treated monthly in the outpatient clinic. Nurse practitioners help alongside doctors to screen, diagnose and treat patients. Emergency cases are admitted day or night with a doctor on call at all times. Special separate clinics are held for diabetic, tuberculosis and chronic heart failure patients coming in for routine review.

HBS encourages persons from different countries and from all age groups and walks of life to come and donate a portion of their life, use their skills and experience the joy of sharing with another culture and society. HBS needs medical professionals such as general doctors, surgeons, anesthesiologists, PA's, physical therapists, nurses, midwives, lab technicians, and pharmacists on a regular basis. General support staff, such as administrative personnel, computer technicians, and maintenance personnel are also sought. Whether you are a student, a professional or retired, and you feel that you would like to join the HBS staff in helping to make a difference in the life of the Haitians in the Limbe Valley, please do not hesitate to contact us.

If you are interested in volunteering, please visit our website:
www.hbslimbe.org

K. Angel Horne →

K. Angel Horne is an on-the-go-green-girl and lover of books, music, nature and words. She is an air spirit and often gets carried away on the wind, especially to visit her many far-off friends. When she's at home in San Antonio, Texas she stays busy cooking delicious vegan meals, cuddling with her three crazy kitties, and doing yoga. She tried to run away with the circus, but they wouldn't take her, so she went and got a communication arts degree instead. She hopes to stay in non-profit, doing the work that needs to be done for this earth and all its creatures. Advocating for animal rights and environmental justice has led her to amazing people and organizations such as Farm Sanctuary and Greenpeace. She also has wonderful people at home and without them wouldn't be the caring, quirky person she is today.

Veg out with K. Angel at: www.farmfreshfem.blogspot.com.



Finding Sanctuary

As a college senior majoring in journalism at a Catholic university, I was disillusioned by more than just the poor grammar and immaturity of my peers. I felt feverish just anticipating another sweltering Texas summer, and the idea of reporting to our local paper's newsroom for my required internship was nausea inducing.

Having been mostly disappointed with my university classes, I *needed* my internship to be meaningful, educational, and an experience that would prepare me for my future. When in June I received an email from Farm Sanctuary's communications director informing me that I was selected to be a volunteer intern for August, I felt like running to New York to hug her. Of course, by the time I got to the end of my block, I remembered I was a sprinter and *not* cut out for long-distance; short of breath but ecstatic, I booked a flight.

Though the internship was a perfect opportunity for a young vegan-activist-writer such as myself, getting to the sanctuary required sacrifices. I had never left my cats or boyfriend for more than a week or two and feared creating abandonment issues (with the cats—the boyfriend is OK with his guitars, “The Colbert Report,” and a refrigerator stocked with Tofurkey and salsa). At the time, I had been working for the same organization for nearly three years, helping young

adults from difficult backgrounds prepare for independent living. The directors wouldn't grant a 30-day leave, so in order to go to Farm Sanctuary, I would have to resign. Leaving behind my stable income and the residents, who had already been left by so many people in their lives, was a heavy decision. Ultimately, I knew I needed to challenge myself by leaving and learning new ways to build a better, more compassionate future.

I have always loved packing, mainly because I love traveling and the two are kind of like soymilk and cookies (the latter pretty much warrants the former). This being said, I never so much as drive the hour and 15 minutes to Austin from San Antonio without a change of shoes and clothes, an extra canteen, a lint roller and a magazine in the trunk of my car. Between my own compulsiveness and my overprotective and wonderfully worrisome parents, it's no wonder that with two carry-on bags plus a yoga mat slung over my shoulder, my checked-in luggage necessitated the newly instated \$50 over-limit fee. Still, I have no regrets about toting my own pillow and sheets (this city girl needs her jersey knits), a miniature cutting board and paring knife and my New York City Ballet workout DVDs. I showed tremendous self-restraint by not packing a water purification system (namely because the one I had at home was attached to the kitchen sink).

My third flight (thank you Expedia) on the way to New York was delayed, so I called to inform Don, the internship coordinator, that I was running late and to ask (again) how we would be able to find each other at the Elmira airport when I arrived. He chuckled and reassured me that he would be the only one there with a shaved head and red goatee. In comparison to the jets I was accustomed to, the last airplane I boarded looked like my Beetle would next to a Hummer. I had never seen a flight attendant strap herself into a drop-down seat or heard the engine so prominently from the inside of a plane. When we landed and I stepped out onto a short stairway *outside* of the airport, I felt I had surely gone out the wrong door or got off too soon. (I had only ever seen people do this in the movies). Later, as I described the affair to my

father, an Air Force retiree, he laughed and told me I had my first ride on a “puddle jumper.” The mini-plane and Don’s chuckling made sense in the context of the convenience store-sized airport. Finding me would be like finding a haystack in a needle factory.

After almost an hour in the van with Don and Chelsea, another intern fresh off the bus from Canada, we turned onto the dirt road that lead to Vegan House, our home for the next month. The interns’ quarters are so named because while at Farm Sanctuary, everyone is required to lead a vegan (totally vegetarian, free of animal products such as eggs and dairy) lifestyle in respect for the animals who reside at the Shelter and the mission of the organization. Most of the animal residents were “farmed” or came from terrible conditions where they were treated as commodities rather than sentient beings. Showing respect to the animals at the Farm was not at a problem at all for the residents of Vegan House; it’s why we were there in the first place. Showing respect to each other with eight people in a house with three bedrooms and one bathroom would be considerably more challenging.

It wasn’t nearly as disorienting as I had imagined waking up with roosters crowing from the backyard (literally). The sound of chickens pecking, clucking and chatting and the sight of the tiny yellow rooster, Pedro, chasing the full-sized roosters and hens around the yard made me giddy without end. During orientation, I had a hard time keeping a straight face with farm sounds abounding from across the road where the sheep and pigs lived and played. I felt like I had “city girl” written on my forehead in red marker. But I was listening. As we did a round of self-introductions, I realized I was not alone in leaving my job, my boyfriend, my cats and my security at the gate to pursue my passion. Everyone ultimately seemed to be there pitching in to figure it all out.

After orientation, Don gave us a tour of the offices, which I would call home Monday through Friday; the People Barn, home to the education department; and the Shelter, officially home of cows, goats, sheep, pigs, chickens, turkeys, ducks, geese, rabbits and cats. It was amazing meeting the animals and some had very interesting ways of

greeting us. I was welcomed by a brazen cow named Moo who snuck up behind me and licked my arm. (Yes, cows *can* “sneak up” more easily than you would expect.) There must be some kind of anti-allergen in cow saliva, because I am usually allergic to grass and in spite of being “ick,” the green slime Moo left on my arm surprisingly did not itch. I didn’t mention how many herbal teas, nasal sprays and vitamins I packed, since I am pretty much allergic to everything. That being said, I was also surprised when a sheep came over and very gently leaned against my leg. I was wearing shorts and have always been allergic to wool (which is fine by me as wool is a product of cruelty and I would never buy, wear, or condone it). After cuddling with my new friend for a while, I walked away feeling warm and fuzzy rather than swollen and itchy.

I could have spent the whole weekend hanging out with the animal residents, but the commencement of my internship coincided with a very exciting event – the annual Farm Sanctuary Country Hoe Down. Over the course of the weekend I divided my time between manual labor, food service, and joining in on the fun. Hippies, hipsters, and herbivores piled into the People Barn for guest speakers on social justice, nutrition, art and activism. (Most memorably Josh Hooten of Herbivore Magazine who showed up in a “hot cop” costume and kept the laughter flowing with his arresting sense of humor.) The pinnacle of the Hoe Down weekend had to be the barn dance, complete with freestyle hula-hooping, rhythm-less dancing and bonfire-circling. The music was horrendous, but watching the organization’s president and co-founder, Gene Baur, kick off his sandals and “get piggy with it” (farm humor) in the true Hollywood hillbilly fashion was pure gold.



Divided between the Education, Campaigns, Communications and Shelter departments, my housemates and I found the shower schedule to be less tricky since we were all on different work schedules. Samantha, my cool, *easy-going* roommate was in the Campaigns

department, so we were on the same “8-5” schedule for weekdays and had desks about 10 feet apart in the office. We would take lunch on the lawn and talk about our ongoing heartbreaking projects. Hers were PowerPoint presentations on cruelty in the factory farming industry while I researched and wrote about the cases of abuse and frantic flights to freedom that brought the animal residents to Farm Sanctuary. Still, it wasn’t all a sob-fest in the office. I always got the latest scoop on vegan celeb gossip from our department’s media watcher, spent time digging up fun farm facts for the 2009 calendar (did you know that both male and female goats have beards? They’re very progressive in the gender equality department), and regularly swapped sentiments with Samantha, like this one:



(Full disclosure: instead of taking the three steps necessary to deliver this doodle to Samantha’s desk, I actually scanned it into my computer and emailed it.)

Piglet-sitting, FYI, is like babysitting – we would be terrible vegans if we actually sat on piglets. In July 2008, Farm Sanctuary was part of one of the biggest farm animal rescue efforts in North American history. As the Midwest flooded, many farmers abandoned their property, porcine inhabitants included. The “merciful” ones let the pigs loose before leaving, but in a terrible showcase of cruelty, many animals were left trapped in their crates, sentenced to certain death as Iowa was consumed by floodwaters. Farm Sanctuary was able to rescue 69 pigs and many were still recovering at the Shelter during August. Among them were some truly amazing mother pigs. In spite of the peril, Nikki birthed her babies on the levee and kept them safe until the rescuers came.

Rosebud and Mabel both delivered their piglets prematurely at the Shelter and staff and volunteers were working around the clock to keep them safe and healthy. Many of the interns volunteered to relieve the Shelter staff for a few hours in the evenings. We would put on sterilized (oversized) scrubs, plop down in the hay and contemplate the Tao of piglets.

With those petite, perfect, pink little preemies it was easy to catch piglet fever. Samantha was totally baby crazy, cooing about their perfect little ears and noses and sighing that she missed the smell of piglets on nights when she wasn’t on duty. My heart went out to the mama pigs with their swollen nipples, flopped over on their sides with only minutes to rest between little piglet feeding frenzies. I misted them with a water bottle and rubbed their bellies (pigs love belly rubs), thanking them for reminding what exhausting work having children can be.

Back at Vegan House, some of us struck a wonderful balance between spending time on our own (I liked long hikes through the hilly state park surrounding Farm Sanctuary) and enjoying each other’s company. Samantha, Chelsea and I would take turns making dinner or all cook together and then watch “Gilmore Girls” on DVD or have a picnic on the lawn. Sometimes Karen, our artsy housemate who went camping with her boyfriend most weekends, would join us for a walk or meal. As the

month progressed, however, it was clear that the vegan honeymoon was over. One of our roommates drove me crazy with her incessant sloppiness.

Pigs are totally misjudged; they are very conscious of where they make a mess versus where they lie down. My roommate was definitely not a pig. The dirty clothes all over the floor were bad enough as I had to climb on my dresser and lunge for my bunk to avoid stepping on them. What was worse was the “nesting,” literally. She brought in all kinds of feathers from outside and strung them up around the frame of the bed. Was it cutesy in a hippie way? Sure. Sanitary? Absolutely not! I felt like I was sleeping in a salmonella chamber. Still, the clothes and feathers I dealt with (grumpily); and Samantha really wasn’t a complainer. Everything was tolerable until the “hook up.”

From when we first met, the male intern and I had bad chemistry. Maybe it was the pseudo intellectual rambling or the never-ending stream of comments about my being from Texas. It probably didn’t help that when he came back from camping as I had just settled into the house, the first thing I asked him may have been, “Can you do your chore now?” (But seriously, the floors weren’t getting any cleaner). So when he hooked up with the roommate, things got worse for everyone but them. People were locked out of their rooms for ridiculously long periods. People walked in on things they never wanted to see. I, for one, found it terribly trying to retire to a bunk where the feathers under my head were no longer my biggest discomfort. The rest of the house’s residents found themselves spending extended amounts of time out on the grounds and taking extra long walks.

One day Chelsea, Samantha, Karen and I were visiting the cows in the “special needs” herd. The cows were beautiful, sweet creatures, but I have to admit to being intimidated by their size. Especially their heads! It was a terrible fly season and the cows would often swing their heads back to swat at annoying swarms buzzing around their ears and necks. I was secretly terrified of being too close and getting swatted away like a fly. The cows were by no means malevolent – quite the opposite. Moo

and Rose are adult cows who act like big, excited puppies. Chelsea remembered that a friend of hers and former Farm Sanctuary intern had confidentially told her, “You have to shake the apple tree.” So Chelsea, all of 100 pounds in her heaviest work boots, jumped up, grabbed a branch, and gave that tree quite a shaking. I remember everything sounding like a rainstorm – the rustling of the leaves, the crab apples falling rhythmically to the soft ground – and then it was thunder as the cows rushed to claim the sweet prizes like children after the piñata bursts. Chelsea beamed, her pockets full of fruity treasure, as she walked toward the barn where patient Penelope stood with Samantha. (A note to future Farm Sanctuary interns: shaking the apple tree and carrying pockets full of fruit around the animals is generally, well, frowned upon.)

As much as I adored the piglets and enjoyed the cows, whenever anyone asks who my favorite animals were, I have to go with the goats. Playful, unpredictable, and superfluous with personality, those goat guys and girls won my heart. Grooming their coarse fur was an excellent excuse to spend some quality time with them and an afternoon with goats was an afternoon well spent. Though each animal has his or her own personality, some of the most distinct belonged to Simon, Goodwin, and Zoop. Samantha was less partial to Simon, who had a reputation for being selfish and a bit of a bully. Maybe it’s the “The Cure” fan in me (I nicknamed him “Simon Gallop”), but I loved his mischievous smile and inky black coat. Poor little Goodwin is scared of everyone else’s shadow. (He is too tiny to cast much of one on his own.) He hides in his own corner of the goat barn behind an out-of-commission metal gate that leans against the wall where only he can fit. And then, of course, there’s Zoop! She is my favorite tripod in the world and one of the most zealous friends I made at Farm Sanctuary. She loves to give “high five” head butts when someone comes to visit. If you play with the Zoop, you’re going to get the horns!

With workdays in the office, evenings of piglet-sitting and weekends of goat-grooming and turkey-photographing (they invented the strut),

time flew by into the wide open skies of Watkins Glen, New York. In 30 days I grew close to my friends at Vegan House and the staff and made new friends from the Six Circles Farm (who kept us rolling in their number one crop, garlic). I enjoyed amazing fresh, local foods and vegan meals at our “Education Lunches” on Tuesdays and various potlucks along the way. By taking myself out of my everyday routine for one twelfth of a year, I learned more than I ever could have trying to squeeze in some volunteer work on my afternoon off at home (although volunteering in any capacity is rewarding!).

I challenged myself to be better and to take the (farm) road less traveled – and it lead me to Unexpected Road. Really, our neighbors at Vegan House were “Unexpected Farms” and I crossed over Unexpected Road every day. But it’s symbolic too, of course. Chelsea described Farm Sanctuary as a “vegan bubble” where we all lived in an idealistic world where animals were not dismissed as mere commodities, but valued as sentient beings. That was the norm. The real challenge, when it came down to it, was going home and carrying those ideals and that hope into situations where I am often the only vegan in the room.

As I loaded my suitcase into the van, I looked over at Pedro, the tiny rooster. He was smaller than everyone else, yellow when all the others were white, and sang a funny little song instead of a loud “cock-a-doodle-doo!” In spite of all that, he spent his days tirelessly chasing roosters twice his size all around the yard. And at the end of the day, Pedro ruled the roost and sang his little song.

Farm Sanctuary

K. Angel's Selected Feature

Farm Sanctuary is the nation's leading farm animal protection organization. Since incorporating in 1986, Farm Sanctuary has worked to expose and stop cruel practices of the "food animal" industry through research and investigations, legal and institutional reforms, public awareness projects, youth education, and direct rescue and refuge efforts. Farm Sanctuary shelters in Watkins Glen, NY and Orland, CA provide lifelong care for hundreds of rescued animals, who have become ambassadors for farm animals everywhere by educating visitors about the realities of factory farming. Additional information can be found at farmsanctuary.org or by calling 607-583-2225.

Read more about volunteering with Farm Sanctuary – see page 288

Martyn Roberts ✈

Martyn spends most of his life behind a desk, in his home town of Wakefield in the UK, working for the regional government writing policies and strategies on climate change. He occasionally manages to break away and spend his leisure time doing voluntary work on wildlife conservation projects throughout the world. These have taken him to some weird and wonderful places.

It was on an expedition to the remote Altai Mountains of Russia that he came as close as he is likely to encountering a wild Snow Leopard. This life-changing and life-affirming experience is recounted in his contribution to this book.

When not spending hours staring at scat or trying to identify tracks, he can occasionally be found on various ski slopes in Europe, consuming fish curry in his local Indian restaurant, enjoying walks in the nearby countryside or sampling real ale in his favorite pub.



Tracks of Altai

We were at the top of the mountain when the call came through on the radio.

I was in the Altai Republic in Central Asia with Biosphere Expeditions as a member of the first team to take part in a survey of snow leopards in this part of the world. Getting to base camp had been an expedition in itself. Novosibirsk in Kazakhstan [the nearest international airport] had been reached from the UK by a series of complicated flights that had included a nightmare of a transfer between terminals in Moscow.

This had been followed by a two-day drive to the tented base camp 60km from the nearest human habitation. It was getting dark as we arrived. The two person tents we would share were cozy to say the least. Still, after a very welcome night's sleep, we were up early to begin a couple of days training on how to fill in the data sheets, identify tracks and prints and what to do with useful animal droppings amongst other things.

By the end of this time we had also come to grips with the long drop toilets and outdoor cold showers as well as the local cuisine. Fortunately, we had stocked up with large boxes of Moldovan wine and local vodka from the 24-hour supermarket in Novosibirsk.

The next day four of us set off up one of the mountains to do our first surveying with our guide Oleg, ironically named Big Oleg because he was far older yet much smaller than Little Oleg. We spent most of the morning relentlessly climbing endlessly steep mountains with minimal communication from Oleg who only became animated when we stopped to take on water. He bizarrely claimed water would make things worse for us. Being typically British and too polite to question this or tell him he was talking rubbish, we meekly went along with what he said.

By early afternoon we reached what had appeared to be the top, but alas it was another ridge. I was seriously questioning what on earth had motivated me to sign up for this expedition. My 47 year old bones were creaking as I was struggling to breathe. We hadn't seen a thing except spectacular, but desolate, rocky mountains. Our guide was intent on keeping us going as though we were triathlon competitors. We had very little idea of what we were supposed to be doing. Energy and motivation levels were dropping rapidly.

Suddenly everything changed. The radio crackled to life. One of the other groups were nearer than we thought. Though barely able to speak through excitement, they told us that they had just discovered fresh snow leopard tracks! We quickly located them just visible down in the valley bottom and set off down the scree slope, using the technique Oleg demonstrated so that we could do it at speed. How we all got to the bottom safely I'll never know.

On arrival we found the other group silently gazing into a shaded gully filled with snow. A set of very clear paw prints ran from top to bottom. Yuriy, the expedition scientist, confirmed they were snow leopard tracks - a few days to a week old at the most. Staring in awe at them, I was overcome with a feeling of complete exhilaration. One of the rarest big cats in the world had passed through where I was standing. They were here! What we were doing would help them and their habitat to survive.

All the trials and tribulations of the past days fell away as we embarked on our tasks of recording and photographing the critical

evidence we could previously only dream of finding. The long walk back to base camp that night went by in seconds.

Biosphere Expeditions

Martyn's Selected Feature

Biosphere Expeditions is a small non-profit research and conservation organization. This means that we can keep expensive overhead costs to a minimum. In addition, our partners and sponsors are crucial in further reducing overhead and expedition costs. For example, by providing Land Rovers, Motorola radios and satellite phones, and expedition equipment from Cotswold Outdoor and Globetrotter Ausrüstung, we can spend the lion's share of two-thirds or more of your contribution directly on the project at hand. We also do very little advertising and costly marketing, concentrating instead on press, media and research publication work.

Biosphere Expeditions is a conservation organization, not a travel agency. Our team members come from all over the world. Not making travel arrangements for everyone keeps our overheads low, which means more money can go into the projects locally. Quite often our team members add their own itineraries, doing some traveling of their own prior to joining or after leaving. Having an assembly point in-country gives you the freedom to do this. We also have a number of partner travel and flight agencies, in our host countries and internationally, who can help you sort out your travel plans. By booking through them you will support our work, as any commission that we make is ploughed back into our projects. For details and partners see www.biosphere-expeditions.org/supportingbiosphere.

Read more about volunteering with Biosphere Expeditions – see page 236

Jeff Myers ✈

Eliminating the convenience of airplanes, Jeff spent the last six years boarding boats and ships, riding trains, bouncing on buses and cycling around Asia. From crossing the DMZ and discussing marriage with North Koreans to trekking with the Black Hmong in Northwest Vietnam, he's still in love with the land, still obsessed with the food, still cherishing the beauty of tonal languages and still unwilling to embark on a ship sailing home to the U.S. Now writing his debut novel from a shoebox Tokyo apartment, he's staring at the maps on his walls and recalling how to say "goodbye" in a dozen Asian languages. His ship is waiting. Sayonara.

Jeff Myers — travellight@gmail.com



Brave Sea

On a remote island forty-six miles west of mainland Thailand and located along the Malaysian border, the absence of ATMs, paved roads, Internet, a post office and sporadic solar-generated electricity all precipitated to an adventurous castaway escape. On a cloudless morning with the sea looking forever tranquil, I phoned home to reveal my plans.

“What island?” my mom said. “What’s a Sea Gypsy? You’re not coming home, are you?”

Once preserving their nomadic identity by keeping themselves isolated, the Urak Lawoi’s secluded charm has lured entrepreneurs and tourists and subsequently divided Koh Lipe island into a monsoon low-season and a touristy high-season. The NGO-sponsored recycle bins and newly-posted tsunami evacuation signs snuggled amidst boarded up Reggae bars and flooded pathways certified the island’s vulnerability. Eighty tsunami-funded solar panels provided the school and faculty lodging with year-round electricity, But when the sky darkened and the wind strengthened and the rain pounded, the panels failed to absorb enough sunlight, forcing us to teach amongst shadows.

Through my wooden classroom shutters, students watched shirtless fishermen ignite a fire of cardboard, coconut shells and plastic bottles.

As the fire magnified and white smoke whirled, Decha, the twelve-year-old student who suffered permanent head injuries from not just one, but two fallen coconuts undressed his classmates' uniformed blouses and skirts with bewitched eyes. Across his lopsided desk, he sketched a pornographic couple inside a gondola-like longtail boat. Thunder rattled the walls and the door swung open, sweeping my attendance sheets to the floor. Decha dropped his pencil and looked up as the schoolyard coconut tree fractured in half. Palms and coconuts crashed against the puddled badminton court.

I held up the flash card. "How's the weather?" I said.

A fisherman stopped in the doorway, exhibiting his catch of the day in one hand and grasping his two-year-old daughter against his black chest with the other. The boys rushed to the door, laughing and cheering at the size of the fish and before long the Blue Marlin's pointy stout provoked them. In their brown shorts and white collared shirts, they clenched fists and swung invisible swords at each other like a battle royal of swash-buckling heroes. Outside, coconuts rolled across the badminton court and the breeze swept away homework and plastic bags.

"Khru Jeff!" said Keng, the smartest girl in the class, pointing outside. "*Maipenrai!*" No problem!

Every plant and flower hung limp. Puddles hurdled every pathway. Weighted trees that hadn't already split open dripped with water like an upside down well. Every piece of clothing in my bungalow was damp, dirty or both. The wind knocked over spirit houses like mailboxes in a storm, casting the flowers, incense and rice offerings into the weeds. Solitude was the only tangible beauty during the island's monsoon season. Portraits of the King and Queen hanging above the faculty room computers consolidated my commitment to the foundation, to the students and, above all, to the adventure. With ants in my bed and cockroaches waving their antennae behind the mosquito net every night and the floorboards rattling and the rain dropping like bullets against the metal roof—adventure! A tsunami could easily flatten the island and

plunge everyone out to sea. Only the cockroaches would survive intact. Adventure!



Since arriving at the end of the high season two months ago, there wasn't a crevice I hadn't explored nor a prohibited bungalow or bar sign I hadn't peeled away. The island was mine! Well, mine and Casper's. Being the only American volunteer teachers, everyone knew our names. They took us fishing, they cooked for us, they helped improve our Thai. We loved it!

Casper had moved to Thailand a week after graduating college to teach English at Chiang Mai University. However, once he learned about the opportunity on Koh Lipe, he tendered his resignation and bought a hammock. He dreamed with a smile under the stars every night until he began awaking to maddening itching and scratching spells. Swollen, blotched and discolored yellow, his foot had become symbolic of his temporary residency. He never used the hammock again.

"No power! No water!" he said, wiping the soap buds from his ears and massaging his foot with ointment. "It's not even eleven o'clock and it already feels like yesterday. Shouldn't it be raining by now?"

Wearing his yellow polo shirt with the monarchy's emblem sewn to the breast pocket, Khru Pornchai, the vice principal, sat with his feet kicked atop the principal's desk, massaging his goatee as he read last month's sports section. He periodically nodded in agreement as Casper talked about his NGO friend and cursed at his foot. The NGO wanted to schedule a meeting with the principal to educate the Urak Lawoi on the benefits of water treatment and garbage management. With 206 students officially enrolled at Ban Koh Adang School commuting from various islands within the Adang Archipelago. The principal and nearly a half dozen of the eighteen government-salaried teachers regularly went missing. The principal hadn't attended a day of class since fleeing the island in the middle of the night two months ago. Because the

education system for the Urak Lawoi terminates with the graduation of middle school, what the students wanted to be and what nearly all would become were exactly the same—fishermen and housewives. The only student to leave the island and graduate college was now rumored to return and become the school's first Urak Lawoi teacher, but I was afraid it might never happen. Sometimes people fear going home as much as they once feared leaving.

With a sarong wrapped around his waist and a bamboo-rolled cigarette dangling from his lips, the bare-chested art teacher, Khru Phassakorn, stepped into the faculty room. He waved a greasy chainsaw at the elementary students, pushing wheelbarrows and carrying grassy logs and coconut shells.

"Two classes!" he said exhaling a cloud of smoke.

Khru Pornchai clarified his poor English. "He's teaching two classes at the same time. Two more teachers left last night."

"*Amigos!*" said Fortuno, popping his head through the shutters and stroking his unkempt brown and gray beard. "I need power! You know me!"

Along with Casper and I, Fortuno inhabited the small corner of Asia Resort's dilapidated tourist bungalows. While buying large amounts of silver and gold in Northern Thailand's Pai, he heard about a secluded island haven of Sea Gypsies and beatnik backpackers. Convincing the management to be their low season caretaker in exchange for free accommodation, he fabricated a plastic tarp and bamboo workshop beside his bungalow—stockpiling seashells and seeds and making ornaments and necklaces in preparation for the lucrative high season. We shared the darkness together.

"Power!" he said. "Show me power!"

Casper slammed the shutters close, silencing Fortuno and his hopeless babble over power. Khru Phassakorn's second class rushed into the faculty room, holding up their longtail boat paintings. Wielding a chainsaw in front of them, he chuckled as they shuffled backwards out of the faculty room.

Khru Pornchai dropped the sports section between Casper and I. “You like soccer?” he asked.

Upon hearing our sluggish “most Americans don’t watch soccer” reasoning, he shook his head and followed Khru Phassakorn outside. Casper reverted the topic to his seemingly permanent injury. “The water has bacteria, the sand has fleas and there’s probably a million little creatures science hasn’t discovered on this island yet. Fuck it! I’m going back to the doctor!”

The faithful Maaw Sunan worked as a volunteer at the clinic. He didn’t much speak English and didn’t have any prior training as a doctor, nurse or even an orderly, but he had a medical encyclopedia. More important, just like a real doctor, he used words and phrases neither of us understood. “*Dai yahng sia yahng*,” he often told Casper before giving him more ointment and telling him to eat spicy food and pray.



Living between the school and village, a spontaneous gathering of singing, dancing and drumming often occurred in the middle of the day as the Urak Lawoi partied like rock stars until their generators waned and the island went dark by ten o’clock. Built on pillars and fitted with galvanized iron roofs, rainwater collectors supplied drinking and showering reserves while the solar panels and gasoline generators, alongside the fenceless homes powered everything from TVs and DVD players to karaoke machines and stereos—providing an immediate connection to the world beyond Koh Lipe and beyond the Adang Archipelago.

Swinging their silver-buckled leather schoolbags and staring at my battery-drained iPod, students watched me swaying from my porch hammock as they walked home for lunch. “How’s the weather?” I asked, trying to review my failed lesson. Unconfident to speak English in front of their peers and without a word for hello or goodbye in their native language, they just smiled and kept walking—except for one. Decha

sucked the straw of his soda bottle and burped. “Burp! Excuse me,” he said. “I hate my sister! Burp! Excuse me.”

Admiring his effort, but unsure how to highlight his cruel language without discouraging future progress, I debated what to say. However, I abruptly forgot all about it when he looked up at the cell tower’s blinking red lights swinging in the wind, then pointed at my cell phone’s flashing message alert.

“What time is it there?” read my mom’s message. “I dreamed we visited the island, but you said there wasn’t any room. You made us leave! Can you believe it?”

“Burp! Excuse me.”

With “Same Same” printed on the front of his T-shirt and “But Different” on the back, a foreigner and his red-headed girlfriend emerged from the grassy trail connecting the village. Aside from Casper and Fortuno, I hadn’t seen another foreign national in months. All the tourist boats had stopped. All the bungalows were boarded up. How’d they get here? How long were they staying? The man sipped his can of beer. The woman photographed Decha slurping his soda.

“Burp! Excuse me.”

“How’d you find the island?” I said standing up.

He pointed toward Sunlight Beach. “We’re on a fishing trip,” he said. “Man, this is my favorite island! These people are funny!”

“Burp! Excuse me. I hate coconut! Burp! Excuse me.”

“I want to take him home!” burst the woman, snatching Decha’s hand and escorting him to the schoolyard. Just like the high season tourists, they wanted to photograph the students and inspect the classrooms as if the school were a living museum. The Thai teachers only perpetuated this ongoing problem by turning the faculty room into an Internet cafe during the high season and using the income on beer.



“Let’s eat!” called Khru Sumalee from her kitchen window. Married to Khru Phassakorn, the chainsaw wielding art teacher, she taught

mathematics and cooked for most of the teachers. With only mattresses and squat toilets, mine and Casper's bungalows lacked utensils and kitchen appliances, but Khru Sumalee somehow managed to create elaborate dishes from her refrigerator-less kitchen. On the vestibule floor of her tiny stilt house, we huddled around her spicy dishes, preserving the aroma before feasting.

I sat beside the short, balding man who everyone called The Police. Referring to his Sunlight Beach convenience store as the island's police station, I wasn't convinced a steel holding cell was actually behind the potato chip display or if The Police was just another volunteer like the doctor and Casper and I. After all, there wasn't a real doctor on the island, so why should there have been a real police officer?

He filled plates of rice. "Patrolling the schoolyard today?" I asked.

"Just the village," he said shifting his head at the village's increasing music.

"I hate them!" said Khru Phassakorn. "All they do is fish, drink and dance!"

Khru Pornchai poured water glasses, nodding in agreement. As the school's vice principal, he tried being a positive influence to the Urak Lawoi. He scolded children for skipping class and gave daily pep talks during the morning lineups, but his hoarse voice conveyed his tenure on the island. "*Nii sai mai dii*," he said. They have bad manners.

When the high season ended and the boats stopped arriving everyday, fresh vegetables and meat became as scarce as tourists. Our meals thereafter followed a rotation of rice, eggs, curries and fish—fried fish, sautéed fish, grilled fish, raw fish, fish jerky, fish and curry, fish and rice—fish! And yet when I removed the ladle from the yellow curry, I gasped at the sudden variety. Chicken feet!

Placing a platter of sliced durian beside the feet, Khru Sumalee gulped at the warning. "Someone's coming!" she whispered. The two rows of dishes crossed at the middle, forming an X. She believed it was a prophecy.

"Only the storm!" said The Police, forecasting the weather as

confidently as he protected and served the island.

Wearing a checkered shirt that revealed the shiny cross around his neck, Maaw Sunan walked up the steps improvising his lyrics to the village music. “Ha-lle-lu-jah! Ha-lle-lu-jah!”

“Arrest him!” demanded Khru Pornchai.

“He’s the only doctor,” said Khru Phassakorn.

Maaw Sunan plopped on the floor next to Khru Pornchai. “More money is coming!” he said in Thai, referring to Hope of Lipe Church’s expansion. “More money and more help!”

Khru Pornchai switched on the TV. “Do we have power?” I asked. Nobody answered. They listened to the newscaster reporting the displaced Indonesian families, the destroyed houses, the collapsed school, the wet bodies wrapped in plastic. If the earthquake spawned another devastating tsunami what would happen to Koh Lipe this time? How would we escape? At forty-six miles from the mainland, how soon would help arrive?

“Go wait for the tsunami on Pattaya Beach!” said The Police. “If you’re quick, you’ll make it to Mountain Resort.”

“*Fai mee mai?*” I asked Khru Pornchai. Do we have power?

He dipped a sliced cucumber into shrimp paste and wiped the edge of his goatee with sticky fingers. “Jeffy, *phet phet!*” It’s very spicy! He dropped a chicken toe in his mouth, lumped it to the side of his cheek and spoke. “*Dawnee mee nit noi. Eek saawng aathit ja me maak gawnee.*”

“A little power? Two weeks?”

“*Araawy!*” he said, licking his fingers and watching Khru Sumalee drop chicken claws to the crying kittens below. Everyone agreed. “*Araawy maak maak!*” Very delicious!

Casper halted in the doorway, lifting his arms and beaming at the sight of the TV. “Power!”

The Police handed him a plate of rice. Hovering it over the eggs and vegetables, he tried deciding where to begin. Then he removed the curry ladle. Casper jumped back with an expression that suggested he’d rather

munch on his infected foot than sample the chicken-feet laden curry. He scooped scrambled eggs onto his plate, mixed it with the rice and said nothing as he watched TV.

Khru Phassakorn switched to the Germany World Cup highlights and the conversation abruptly shifted into Thai. I dashed down the steps to my bungalow. While my cell phone seemed to have an endless battery, my iPod had set with the sun. I hadn't listened to my music in weeks. From his lean-to, Fortuno watched me trying to charge my iPod before I eventually tossed it into my hammock and walked away. He waved a seashell. "Power, teacher! Power!"



At the same Pattaya Beachfront hammock bar where I captured dozens of sunset photos during my first week on the island, I now sat amongst empty beer and whiskey bottles, rereading *Life of Pi* and monitoring the sea's elevation as if I were on a tsunami stakeout. Hoisting wooden beams and hammering nails into a series of new bungalows, Thai construction workers paused to watch the teenager zipping his motorbike pass the *rattan* fishing cages and tipped longtail boats as he honked at the sea. His T-shirt flapped against his back and his stuffed bra jiggled each time he splashed over bumpy sand puddles. "*Suay maak maak!*" he shouted. You're very handsome!

Two months ago Reggae, incense, drunken stargazing and a congregation of tanned, sarong-clad women had all fulfilled an impossible-to-forget romantic ambiance. I'd met a Urak Lawoi girl on that same beach who told me she wanted to travel. And once the violent winds replaced the quintessential honeymoon skies and towering waves collided against the turquoise water, she kept that promise when she left with a German backpacker—just before the high tide began washing all the trash ashore. Hundreds of plastic water bottles, whiskey and beer bottles, soda and beer cans, nails and rope, wood and glass—all of it mixed with sand and crushed seashells encircling the island. Baby crabs crawled over mountains of lighters and syringes in search of their

escape holes and colorful snails dropped their shells at the horrid sight. The beach no longer resembled the exotic travel magazines at supermarket checkout counters. It's beauty was relative.

When I saw her standing beside the tipped longtail boat in her flannel and fishermen pants and holding a dripping paintbrush, I wished it were another ladyboy or a Urak Lawoi. Unfortunately, when I saw the blonde hair blowing in the wind, I knew it was neither.

"How'd you get here?" I said pacing toward her. "All the bungalows are boarded up! There's nowhere to stay!"

"This is my own boat!" she said in a French accent. She explained how she and her boyfriend navigated their longtail boat to the mainland every month and caught a bus to the Malaysian border to get her tourist stamp refreshed. They'd been following this routine for two years. I'd seen everyone! Why hadn't I seen them?

"We've seen you at the school," she said. People always come, but nobody cares about these people long enough. Everyone leaves! Some problems just keep mounting until they affect everyone involved and nobody knows how to solve them anymore. She pointed at the trash. "This is the problem!"

"We're not just teaching English!" I said. "We're celebrating their nomadic heritage. We're trying to shield them from global influence and foreign investors. We're encouraging them to reclaim their land."

She spread the red paint across the bow of the boat, shaking her head. "They're your Native Americans of the sea!"



I followed the line of trash along the beach until I reached the Jungle Path. Named for its lush, untampered foliage, human vacancy and void of bungalows, restaurants, shops or tsunami evacuation signs, cartographers still hadn't added it to the island map. Flattening grass and weeds with my sandals while listening to the palms flutter in the wind above, Fortuno pedaled his bicycle toward me with his head pointed up at the palms, anticipating dropping coconuts, but never

accounting for protruding rocks. He pulled the weeds out of his beard, laughing. "Just having fun, teacher! You know me!"

I sprinted to Sunset Beach.

Among Koh Lipe's three beaches, Mountain Resort's Sunset Beach provides the highest elevation and unbeatable viewpoint to non-inhabited islands in the Adang Archipelago as well as the soaring Koh Adang. If Koh Adang were an island skyscraper then Koh Lipe would be the renovated coffee shop at street level. It wasn't until I climbed Koh Adang's mountain and looked down at Koh Lipe that its fragile size became apparent. The sea could swallow the island with just a hiccup.

Scavenging the beached trash with hunting eyes, a woman dropped her walking stick and bent over to pick up a Caucasian doll from a bed of broken mirrors. She studied its weathered face and plastic naked body.

"*Rawang na fon ja tok nak*," I said. A storm's coming.

"*Wannii fon mat tok! Mee ngan tang ngan!*" she said retucking the white sarong around her large body and clutching the disfigured doll. It won't storm today. It's a wedding day!



Accompanied by island-shaking music, spicy dishes that'll rip your tongue off and a drink-till-you drop consumption of alcohol, a teenage wedding occurred nearly every week during the monsoon season. With the bride's house decorated in tinsel, the seventeen year-old bride and groom kneeled on the floor in the same white dress and tuxedo worn at last week's wedding and unmistakably the same clothing worn at the wedding two months ago. Wearing a blue soccer jersey and a necklace of Thai banknotes, ranging from twenty to one hundred baht, the *Toh mah*, finalized the vows and observed the dowry presentation. A hulking woman hunched behind the couple raising her knees to her drooping breasts and thrusting her arms back and forth to the window, expelling any existence of evil.

Everyone raised their bottles and cans, cheering the union of Mr. and

Mrs. Hantaley—the honorary surname bestowed to each of Koh Lipe’s six hundred Urak Lawoi. Embracing their island culture and honoring their fearlessness at the sea, Her Majesty the late Queen had given them a fitting name—Hantaley. Brave Sea.

As the bride and groom circled the house and paraded the village, a man held a flowered umbrella above them. Girls in green miniskirts and turquoise tank tops carried the length of the bride’s dress as well as a basket of unwrapped cigarettes. Stopping at each plastic table, the groom presented a cigarette to the men while his bride lit it. The French woman and her Urak Lawoi boyfriend presented the under aged couple with a bottle of *lao khao* and Fortuno congratulated them with seashell necklaces. Each of them received a cigarette lighting for their recognition and contribution.

Khru Sumalee waved from the kitchen window of the bride’s house. She sent my student, Keng, to our table with trays of fried rice and fish. After completing her responsibility, Keng placed her palms together and slightly bowed her head, then pointed at the foreign couple with the camera and proverbial Southeast Asian tourist T-shirt.

“Same Same?”

“But different,” added Casper.

Warding off the presence of evil spirits, Decha and numerous children in white-powdered faces and devil masks fired cap guns, exploded Chinese firecrackers and bobbed their heads like a young Paul McCartney to Crazy Frog’s Beverly Hills Cop remix palpitating from the speakers. Gripping a mixed liter of Coke and Sangsom Whiskey in one hand and keeping balance with the other, their parents would party until fists flew or everyone passed out. The Police and doctor observed the celebration from the village corner.



As darkness swept the island, Khru Phassakorn’s kitchen light blazed like a flare in the dark. I ran across the village to plug in my iPod. The LCD screen glowed. Sonny Rollins blew his tenor saxophone. Power!

Two minutes later it was gone.

Swaying in my hammock, listening to the village drumming and bats flying out of the trees, I never expected to see the light of Khru Phassakorn's bamboo cigarette as he sprinted down the steps of the doctor's stilt house, then huffed up to his house. The TV flickered in the kitchen window. Power!

I tiptoed up to the doctor's porch and felt around the doorframe and shutters until I found the switch. As I turned it, Casper and Fortuno's bungalows dazzled with light. My iPod screen illuminated. Khru Pornchai stood at the bottom of the steps, gripping a plastic bag of beer cans. "*Bpai nai*, Jeffy?" Where are you going?

I darted down the steps, waving goodnight. "*Bpai teo*." Just walking.

From the schoolyard, I watched him climbed the steps to Khru Phassakorn's house and sit with The Police and doctor on the vestibule floor. In front of the glowing TV, they whispered their excitement as Italy scored another goal in the World Cup. In order to stockpile enough power, they'd been whispering for weeks in front of the TV. Maybe Casper and I should have said we liked soccer.

I sat in front of the school, facing Sunlight Beach. Smashing bottles and shouting soon replaced the village drumming. The celebration was over. My phone flashed a new message alert.

"What time is it there?" read my mom's message. "How's the weather?"

I began typing a reply, but stopped when I heard a familiar voice.

"Goodbye," said math teacher Khru Sumalee. "Safest to travel at night."

A fisherman signaled her toward the awaiting long-tail boat. She dropped her backpack inside and climbed aboard as he turned the long propeller shaft and cranked the motor. They bounced in the waves until the darkness enveloped her waving silhouette and only the sound of the motor remained before it happened. Dozens of trawler lights flashed on, followed by dozens and dozens more—the fishing ships ignited the horizon like a soccer stadium parking lot. I dropped to the sand and

closed my eyes. Just like Khru Sumalee, I too would eventually leave on a longtail boat in the middle of the night. Once I got far away from the island (and even further away from the sea) when the rain battered against my umbrella and the wind shook the leaves from the trees, my thoughts would drift back to the Urak Lawoi and Koh Lipe. I'll never return.

Peace Boat

Jeff's Selected Feature

Peace Boat strives to build a culture of peace around the world through the development of a global grassroots network. The organization was founded 25 years ago by several university students in Japan who felt that mainstream media and universities were not sufficiently explaining the strong opposition in Asia to Japan's attempts to downplay its past military aggression toward other countries. To understand the objections of others, the students chartered a boat to travel around Asia and talk to people directly, thereby launching a unique new initiative in people-to-people diplomacy. Today, Peace Boat has consultative status with the UN and organizes four global voyages and one Asian voyage every year to promote cultural understanding, environmental sustainability and human rights. The 600-900 participants on each voyage have the opportunity to learn about various issues firsthand while experiencing some of the most beautiful and interesting ports of the world. Music, art, dance, photography, language and sports are also an integral part of each voyage, as participants have the opportunity to share their skills and interests with one another and create nearly 100 free events and workshops onboard daily. We hope you can join our borderless, "floating community" in the future! Learn more at: <http://www.peaceboat.org>.

Read more about volunteering with Peace Boat – see page 362

Maryann Bylander ✈

Maryann Bylander is a traveler, writer, PhD candidate and Managing Director of Protect the Earth, Protect Yourself (PEPY) in Cambodia. She grew up in Austin, Texas, taught English on a Japanese cruise ship, went back to school to be a sociologist, and has lived in Cambodia for two years. She dreams of being fluent in Khmer, finishing her dissertation, seeing the northern lights and helping PEPY become a Cambodian-led, sustainable organization.



Literacy Camp Reflections

It's the last day of PEPY's first Literacy Camp in Chanleas Dai. As I write, all around me are the sounds and sights of a well-functioning school. Uncrowded classrooms with 10-20 students are learning, laughing, singing, reading, writing, and fully engaged. They are working in small groups, writing stories to share with their parents who come tomorrow to see their work. Teachers are standing at the front of classrooms, leaning over students' shoulders, encouraging young learners, smiling and laughing alongside their young students. A few classes are working outside, playing games or reading story books under shade trees.

The sun is shining through rain clouds, bikes are parked next to the volleyball court, kids are teasing their peers, playing in between classes, roughhousing in gentle ways, and singing the Khmer alphabet as they walk home. The boys are jocular, the girls mostly shy. The bell rings for classes to begin, at break time and when it's time to go home for lunch. The principal is in the classroom observing and the vice principal is working with weak students in the first grade room. Most people would look at Chanleas Dai today and think that it's an average

day. What an outside observer might miss is the significant departure that this scene represents from the typical afternoon at Chanleas Dai.

It's hard to express the accomplishment that I feel being a part of this scene, this camp. Nearly three years ago I came to Chanleas Dai as a first-time volunteer, getting off of a bus with 25 other tourists to spend a week painting walls, teaching English and conducting environmental lessons at a school that our volunteer group had raised the funds to build. The students were shy, but by the end of the week there was a visible change. We felt we had made a connection and a contribution. As many volunteers do, I felt that in one week I had a significant life experience - broadening my understanding of Cambodia, globalization and development. Mostly, I recognize how lucky I was to grow up with the opportunities I had. Like most volunteers, I also left recognizing that what I learned and took away was much greater than what I actually gave back.

Two years ago, I made the leap from participating and leading "voluntours" with PEPY to working for educational development itself in Chanleas Dai. Certainly the latter is harder. It is also overwhelmingly more rewarding. When Daniela (PEPY's Executive Director) and I first talked about a Khmer Literacy Camp in April of this year, my heart skipped a beat. I didn't know anything about Khmer literacy. I'm not a certified educator and there was already a great deal of work that I knew was on my plate over the summer months. She would be in Brazil speaking at a conference just before the camp, so I knew it would be up to me to make the idea succeed or fail. We brainstormed and painted a portrait of something we would have seen in our elementary schools, an opportunity to start a lifelong love of reading and a time for teachers to see how their enthusiasm in teaching can spread to students learning. It seemed like the vision we were talking about would be impossible given the context that we knew.

We knew that teachers only came to school about 50% of the time before our teacher award program this year, and that even when they began to attend more, they were often inactive in the classroom. Many

fourth, fifth and sixth graders still struggled with basic reading and writing, and were too shy to admit they needed to learn to read as a beginner. We had seen the lack of interest and initiative of the school director and many of the teachers he pretended to supervise. Desks sat in rows, the teacher lectured with a pointed stick and a blackboard, even in grade one and two. Efforts to engage students were minimal. The only songs and laughter came from the English classroom.

The picture we painted was an ideal. We talked about a literacy camp that brought 300 students together to focus on learning to read and write for a week, with testing that placed them at appropriate levels and active lesson plans that brought books into the classroom. We talked about hiring fabulous teachers to work alongside the Chanleas Dai team, and a week of teacher training prior to camp to share ideas and bring child-to-child and child-centered methodologies into the classrooms. We talked about material making, students creating their own books and using XO computers to teach Khmer literacy. We talked about a week that students and teachers alike would enjoy, one that might become the standard for teaching during the regular school year. It was a lot of talk.

I honestly thought that it couldn't be done, or at least that *I* couldn't make it happen. Of course, I underestimated the power of the team that PEPY has grown to be. Our passionate Khmer staff has made this happen. I have pretty much sat back, watching as our 'talk' developed into exactly what we pictured, perhaps even more. I wish that words and pictures were enough to truly show the high level of engagement and enthusiasm we have here this week. What I see today literally leaves me awestruck. Not so much for what it is, but for how far it has come. It is about an average school day for most countries in the developed world. Here it feels like magic. Perhaps more than at any other moment I have had here in Cambodia, I am extremely proud to be a part of PEPY.

PEPY

Maryann's Selected Feature

PEPY is a non-governmental organization working in Cambodia to empower people through education.

PEPY's mission *to aid rural communities in improving their own standards of living, with a focus on increased access to quality education*, was inspired by a cycling trip across Cambodia in 2005. Six friends rode from the Thai border to Vietnam through the red dusty back roads of Cambodia to raise funds for educational projects. After visiting schools and orphanages and teaching environmental lessons, funds were raised to build the first PEPY Ride School in rural Chanleas Dai, Cambodia. Since then, PEPY has grown significantly and now offers a range of educational programs and opportunities for the students and members of the Chanleas Dai community.

PEPY's main education programs include Khmer literacy, English language learning and computer skills; additional development projects include teacher training, Child to Child leadership clubs, a bike-earning program for students in rural areas, and a university scholarship program for women. Educational, health, and environmental initiatives are supported primarily through the efforts of PEPY volunteers, funds generated through its partner tour operator, PEPY Tours, and PEPY Supporters.

Every year PEPY takes interns to work in their Siem Reap, Cambodia office. To learn more about PEPY's programs and internships or to become a PEPY Supporter, visit: www.pepyride.org.

Read more about volunteering with PEPY – see page 366

Daniela Ruby Papi →

Daniela Papi is the founder of PEPY, an educational non-profit organization funded through volunteer and adventure tours of Cambodia. PEPY's tagline, "Adventurous Living. Responsible Giving." highlights the dual mission of the organization. PEPY has won the CIMPA Humanitarian Travel Award, the University of Notre Dame's Social Venture Business Plan competition and was a finalist for the Cartier Women's Initiative Awards. Daniela recognizes that volunteer tourism, when not researched or monitored properly, can have negative impacts in the communities it is aiming to support. She speaks regularly on the topic and is working with other PEPY partners to create a "Voluntourism Effective Practices" self-check tool for use within the industry. She is active in the growing volunteer tourism movement, speaking regularly on the subject.

Daniela grew up in New York but has spent the last six years in Asia working in education and tourism. She currently manages PEPY from her Cambodia office in Siem Reap.



The Voluntary Life

A common phrase I have heard when speaking with volunteer tourists is, “Vounteering allows you to do things you would not otherwise do in your ‘real life’”. So, what happens if volunteer tourism becomes your “real life”?

Volunteering helps us contribute to positive changes in society with the biggest change usually being within ourselves. My life changed after my first experience of volunteering abroad with Habitat for Humanity in Nepal. I spent one week helping to build a home with a family in the Kathmandu Valley and another week hiking through the foothills of the Himalayas. After two weeks, I returned to my “real life” already planning my next volunteer vacation.

The experience had ignited something in me which I had previously only felt in small doses. Perhaps it could have been described as a renewed passion for life or a desire to give back to the world. Whatever it was, it was clearly visible through my actions and excitement to all those who knew me. “Why travel any other way?” I wrote in my journal. “You not only get to give back to the places you see, but you also have a chance to meet and interact with people in ways that simply sightseeing does not allow. You are no longer a tourist and guide; shopper and seller, but two people working together on the same project.”

I was hooked. I began to plan my vacations around volunteering. I volunteered again with Habitat for Humanity in Papua, New Guinea and the Philippines, independently in Sri Lanka after the 2005 tsunami and with Bike for Everyone's Earth (BEE) on an environmental education cycling trip through Japan. It took me a while to realize that the experiences I was having were (hopefully) changing the world in small positive ways, but that the real changes I was creating were within myself.

Volunteer trips in impoverished areas continued to be like reality checks on my "real life." I would return home to piles of material goods, which I suddenly realized were unnecessary. I was shocked at the amount of waste created in my daily life. I had a new desire to ride my bike to the store. Yet, within a few weeks of returning from each trip, these feelings would subside and the commercials telling me that I needed the newest gadgets or fashionable accessories would lead me back to the stores in search of something superfluous to add to my closet.

I began to realize how unreal my "real life" was. The hours I spent volunteering and building homes equated to physical contributions: a foundation laid, window frames painted, the walls of a new house visible for all to see. My "real life" seemed to be lacking substance: hours on a computer connecting "virtually" by email with friends I might rarely or never meet in the physical world; jobs which revolved around things I might never see or touch like preparing accounting reports. I began to recognize that all around me the world was pushing me to invest my time and energy to acquire "assets" which involved little human contact. Rarely did I walk over to meet my neighbor, let alone help him work on his home.

I began to seek more opportunities to renew that energy and the desire to give back to the world, improving my own life along the way. After a friend and I organized a bike trip through Cambodia that raised funds to support educational programs, I realized that giving back did not have to be something that I just did while on vacation from my "real

life.”

Volunteering abroad reconnected me to my need to be a part of something bigger than myself. I still have materialistic notions and sometimes spend far too much time deliberating over my outfit in the morning. However by choosing to pursue a career where I feel connected with others, working towards a shared goal of improving the world around us, I have more pressing priorities which help distract me from my own comparatively petty desires.

My vision for our tours is that we are able to connect our guests to the problems, possible solutions, and cultural differences that shake the very foundations upon which their “real lives” are built. I hope we can provide perspective and insight that ignites peoples’ passions in the way I have been inspired. I hope travelers who are passionate about our work will come back and join our team in Cambodia. But my hope is not to reinforce the notion that “those in need” are only in foreign countries. We can improve our own lives by focusing on giving back in our own neighborhoods, perhaps even more so than going abroad. For many, taking a volunteer vacation where you are completely separated from the pulls and pressures of home is a chance to reflect and provide the space and inspiration to begin to make those internal and external improvements.

I have now spent three years living and working in Cambodia running an educational, non-profit organization, as well as an adventure and volunteer tour operation that funds our educational programs and social development partner organizations. I now recognize that no matter what your profession, even if your “real life” revolves around giving back, staying conscious and alert to the changes you want to make in your own life and the world around you requires constant reflection and a steady stream of inspiration. I draw inspiration from working in the rural communities PEPY supports, getting to know our Khmer staff and seeing changes happen little by little as we exert both energy and patience. I still spend way too many hours a day behind a computer in a virtual world that I use to learn,

fundraise and share information. But I am also surrounded by inspiring co-workers who remind me of our interconnectedness; helping, supporting and getting to know each other. This is what keeps our passion for life alive.

PEPY Tours

Daniela's Selected Feature

PEPY Tours organizes volunteer, educational, and adventure travel in Cambodia. Trips combine adventure travel with rural development education and hands-on volunteer projects. Tours range from environmental education bike treks to volunteer projects, such as the construction of rainwater collection units or school building. Participants also visit and learn from several NGOs working towards positive social changes throughout the country, including PEPY Ride, the educational NGO PEPY Tours was created to support.

When you travel with PEPY, you have a chance to “Go where your money goes.”™ PEPY Tours offers a chance to see some of Cambodia’s hidden rural towns and, more importantly, the opportunity to connect with the people and programs they support through their travels with PEPY Tours.

Visit www.pepytours.com to learn more about traveling in Cambodia with PEPY Tours.

Karina Rochelle Kloos ✈

Karina has lived and traveled in nearly 30 countries on five continents and has volunteered and worked with dozens of nonprofit, non-governmental or *For Impact*[™] organizations. Currently, she is volunteering with PEPY, a hybrid educational nonprofit organization and tour company in Cambodia. Her research on Voluntourism Effective Practices is driven by PEPY's aim to continually improve its own tours and volunteer opportunities, sharing those lessons and ideas with others in the growing industry of volunteer travel.

Expanding upon her studies in Business (BA, University of Notre Dame, 2003) and International Relations (MA, American Graduate School of International Relations, Paris, 2006), Karina is continuing her research in the areas of social ventures and international development as a PhD student in Stanford University's department of sociology.



Consider This...

Volunteer tour operators are responsible not only for organizing the details of your accommodation and meals. They must also identify or design volunteer projects suited to your trip that effectively contribute to the long-term improvement of the community where you are volunteering. But what happens when they don't properly vet the organization or project and you find yourself in a sticky situation, ruining your trip and ultimately worsening, rather than improving the communities you were hoping to help? Irresponsibility, mismanagement, ignorance or indifference to responsible volunteer tourism practices can lead to disappointing – sometimes disastrous – results!

So, here are a few things to think about and ask of your volunteer tour operator:

1. Does the tour operator or partnering social development organization have an invested relationship with the community where you will be volunteering? Is the community continuously involved and consulted with project planning and implementation?

2. Are you provided with information and education prior to your volunteer experience about the project you will be working on and how it fits into the mission and long-term goals of the organization and community? Are you given realistic expectations about what you will be able to contribute and accomplish during your short-term volunteer experience?
3. Are you provided with information about the country, including social development issues and cultural sensitivities prior to volunteering? Will there be facilitated discussion about the project, reflecting on both its relation to ongoing development issues in the region and the design and success of your short-term volunteer experience?
4. Do you have specific skills that will contribute to the project? If “unskilled” volunteer projects are being offered, try to assess whether the project is being designed for you – the volunteer tourist – rather than designed for project-specific needs. In any case, consider whether or not your volunteer role takes away from local job opportunities.
5. Is the tour operator supporting the project financially, recognizing that short-term volunteers often require the time and energy of project organizers? If so, does your tour operator provide transparency about which portion of your trip fees are going towards volunteer partners and projects?
6. Does your tour operator promote and exemplify socially and environmentally responsible travel throughout the trip? Some things to look for include: knowledge of local customs and language; supporting local businesses and social ventures; using environmentally sustainable lodging as much as possible; utilizing eco-friendly and local transport, i.e. biodiesel fuelled-transport, bicycles, walking or whatever the locals use; minimizing the use of air conditioning; using filtered, rather than

bottled water; and openly discussing these kinds of issues throughout the trip.

While some projects may benefit greatly from your volunteer efforts, often volunteering provides even greater learning and experiential opportunities for you, the volunteer tourist. Consider that your greatest contribution may be in the form of advocacy, financial support, or longer-term volunteering and may not always require “doing” or “giving” something.

Volunteer Tourism

Effective Practices: Volutourism101.com

Karina's Selected Feature

Volunteer tour operator PEPY Tours is working with a group of operators and industry experts to design a Volunteer Tourism Effective Practices guide to help mitigate the negative effects and maximize the good intentions of volunteer tourism. This self-check industry tool is designed to provide guiding principles and resources for measurement and improvement of volunteer tours. The collaborative discussion and identification of these principles is intended to encourage operators to reflect upon the design and impact of the volunteer component of their tours on social development projects in host communities. It is also intended to help better inform volunteer participants on how to identify responsible tour operators, trips, and volunteer projects.

Join the conversation, learn from the mistakes and successes of others and evaluate your own volunteer tour operations at: www.VolunTourism101.com

Julie Schwietert Collazo

Julie Schwietert Collazo is a bilingual writer and editor who's always interested in stories about overlooked people and places—especially when they're in Latin America. In 2008, she reported about Chinese Cubans in Havana's Chinatown, voluntourism projects in New Orleans, Generation Y in Colombia, workers' and indigenous movements in Mexico City, and environmental issues in Chile. She was one of only a handful of journalists to visit the Joint Detention Facility of the U.S. Armed Forces at Guantanamo Bay in Cuba in 2008, and she is currently working on several pieces about immigrant civilian employees at the detention center. She covered the US election as part of a social and digital media experiment sponsored by National Public Radio. She is the managing editor of Matador Network and she continues, along with her husband, to lay the foundation for Voces de Mompox (Mompox Voices), an after-school program in Colombia.



When Volunteering Isn't Enough: How to Start a Long-Term Project

You've rolled up your sleeves and gotten your hands dirty building homes in impoverished communities on the U.S. Gulf Coast. You've learned about the conservation of historic sites while preserving and repairing centuries-old buildings in Armenia. You've spent your vacation teaching kids English in rural China, translating as part of a team of medical volunteers in Honduras, or contributed to coral reef conservation while deep diving in the Caribbean. And after the experience, you feel transformed. You know the work you did was important. The people, communities, and physical environments that received your service are better for you having been there. And you? You're better, too. You recognize, perhaps in a way you never quite understood before, just how integral service is to the well-lived life. You see now how profoundly you begin to really understand a place once you've lived and worked in it on the ground level, rather than just rushing by in a tour bus or looking at it from a hotel window.

But maybe your voluntourism experience was so significant that it left you wanting more. Your new understanding of the nature of social problems and what kinds of resources and efforts are required to

address them meaningfully and effectively is such that you know this: A voluntourism vacation makes a difference, but it won't solve the problem. You want to do more. And you think you even have a pretty good idea about what needs to be done. The nagging question is then: *How?*



In July 2008, my husband and I spent a month in a small town in Colombia. Geographically isolated, the town, though a UNESCO World Heritage site, seems to be distant in more than miles from Colombia's capital city and its national agenda. It's the kind of place—like most places, really—you can only begin to understand over time. It's only when you've stuck around long enough to talk to local fishermen whose livelihoods have been robbed from them by upstream damming, or with local farmers whose crops have been wiped out the past three years running by manmade flooding upriver, that you begin to understand the problems that keep the economy so depressed here that few kids will ever be able to dream about college, much less pursue a degree.

"What do you want to be when you grow up?" I asked the energetic group of ninth-grade boys who started to hang around with my husband the day after we arrived. They looked at me with confusion. "Do you want to go to college?" I pressed on. It would take a few weeks before I'd learn that the boys, like their peers, didn't have any dreams for the future because they didn't see anyone around them pursuing their dreams. The entire town had become economically and psychologically depressed. Men spent their days swinging back and forth in hammocks, swatting away mosquitoes, or drinking Aguila beer at one of the town's many outdoor bar kiosks. Women competed for a limited number of jobs working as domestics in a handful of upper-class homes, earning less than \$200 a month to support their entire families. Dreams? What dreams? "My brother won a half-scholarship to go to university," Hernando said to me as he looked at the vaguely angry looking young man sitting on a broken chair in the dirt yard. "But there was no way my

parents could come up with the other half. So there he is.”

Over the course of the next week, I spent more time talking with Hernando and his family, and the other boys who had glued themselves to my husband, eager to take him up on his offer to teach them camera and video recording skills. I watched them closely. The boys were smart—the smartest kids I’d ever met anywhere—and they were fast learners. They were creative, funny, polite and full of possibilities they couldn’t even imagine and which their families and their country would be unlikely to help them realize. “Your son is incredibly intelligent,” I said to Hernando’s mother during a visit to their home, which lacks running water and electricity. “Well, he may be smart,” she started, “but he brings home terrible grades. Terrible! And he skips school too much.” I was saddened and disturbed.

“If you knew you could go on to college,” I asked Hernando later that afternoon as we sat beside the Magdalena River looking at some of the amazing photos he’d shot with the digital camera, “would you work harder in school?” He started crying and said yes. “And why do you miss class?” I asked. He was quiet, stirring up dirt with his sandals. Finally, he turned his head away from me and said, “Because I don’t have the right shoes. And the principal sends me home. I can’t tell my parents; they don’t have the money.”

Hernando wasn’t the only one. Half the ninth graders we met lacked the \$5.00 pair of white tennis shoes or the school supplies they needed to be admitted to class daily. They lacked the motivation to do well in class despite innate talent and intelligence because they couldn’t imagine any achievable possibilities for themselves until...



The boys’ photos were so good, their enthusiasm and interest so intense, that we began imagining ways this new found passion could be developed, shared, possibly shaped into something long-lasting. Our visit and the ad hoc after-school program we’d set up in the hostel we were taking care of were meaningful to the kids, but what would happen

once we'd packed up our equipment and headed home to New York? A week before we left the kids and their families began stopping by more often. "You won't forget us, right?" they asked over and over again. "What will we do once you go home? Life will be boring and sad again."

Our presence and our work - showcasing the kids' photos, videos, and stories on our website - had been important for them, and for us. What had meant more to them than anything was receiving email from readers around the world, people who were grateful to learn something about Colombia besides drugs and violence, people who were so moved by the kids' work that they started sending donations of money and supplies. We, for our part, realized how simple it was to make a positive difference in the lives of others, how technologies brought to under-resourced places could become vital tools for allowing people to tell and convey their own stories to the rest of the world. But we also realized that packing up and going home would end something potentially transformative before it had ever really started. And so we began plans for establishing a formal after-school program that will, over time, continue the work we started.



So back to the *how* of setting up an ongoing program based on your voluntourism experiences.

Basic considerations and questions will need to be applied to your project irrespective of the country or culture, though it's important that the answers to these questions always take local needs, abilities and input into account. Understand from the beginning that establishing a long-lasting project—especially if you'll be running it from a distance—is a task that is complex, challenging, and far more involved than a quick immersion voluntourism vacation organized by someone else. It's also important to acknowledge that the super-concentrated rush of joy and satisfaction you get after a voluntourism vacation becomes much more attenuated—and flecked, like real life, with occasional speckles of frustration, disappointment and even anger when you pour your effort

(and, often, your money) into a sustained project.

Now that you've accepted these facts, let's move on to those basic considerations and questions that are relevant to establishing any long-term community building project:

1. Assess local needs and resources while you're on the ground.

As a voluntourist, you're a hands-on participant observer engaged in the life of a community. Use your conversations and all of your senses to assess the local needs—and the resources that are available (human and otherwise) to fulfill them—and gather as much information as possible from the place where you're working before you go home. Key items worth collecting and filing away include maps, contact information for both those who are to be helped and those who are likely to be able to help you out, and notes documenting information about local basics and infrastructure, including transport, currency, banking, wire and post services, and local utilities. If you can complement this information by making a video and/or photographic record of the area, you'll likely find it useful down the road as potential funders demand visual evidence to support your requests.

2. Wait until you're back home to map out your plan and make initial moves.

At the end of a successful voluntourism trip, you're likely to feel so full of positive energy that you want to set down the blueprint for the project you envision while you're still in the area. Resist the urge to do so. Wait until you're back home, where you can reflect not only upon your experiences, but also upon your realistic possibilities to be able to bring a more ambitious project to fruition. At home, you're also likely to be able to take advantage of conveniences and resources like the Internet to do more research about the area and about your plan.

3. Avoid making promises you're not sure you can keep.

If you just can't follow tip #2, then please do yourself and everyone else a favor and avoid—at all costs—making promises about plans that you may not be able to keep. Despite our best intentions, there are numerous obstacles (and we'll talk about those soon!) that may prevent us from making good on our promises. When my husband and I developed the idea that we would start a formal after-school program in Colombia, we mentioned it to locals to get their input. Good intentions, but bad mistake! We were putting the cart before the horse... and lots of folks pinned their hopes on our ability to be able to deliver. Though we hadn't made any formal promises, even talking through ideas casually in areas of need often take on the importance and interpretation of a promise.

4. Identify and evaluate the potential challenges and obstacles.

If you're going to start a long-term project in a community in need, it's unlikely you'll be able to do it without funds. Even if you're bootstrapping your social justice start-up, you'll need money, physical resources, and human hands to help you lay a foundation—literal and otherwise. How are you going to raise the money? What resources and contacts are required to establish a physical project in a place that's far away? How are you going to get money from your own location to reliable, responsible folks on the ground? Who will oversee local operations? How will being charged with responsibilities for your project change the power balance among locals (and not always for the better)? How will you know if you're solving problems and achieving goals, and who will make that assessment? Are you going to set up a formal organization? If so, what legal considerations do you need to take into account?

I can ask these questions because I've had to confront all of them in our journey to set up an after-school program in Colombia. The area where we stayed was rural, largely disconnected from wire and postal

services, making it difficult to send money and even more difficult to send messages. I realized that if we were going to rent what I viewed as a cheap but ideal physical location (a house at just \$230 a month) for the program, we'd also have to establish lights, water and other utilities service. How would we pay for them and how would we make sure the bills were paid on time? We raised some seed money for basic supplies, but had difficulty getting it to Colombia. And we were interested in establishing legal non-profit status, which would help us pursue grants, but many U.S. organizations won't support funding for projects in Colombia due to U.S. laws. The same may be true of countries that have complicated past or current relations with your home country.

5. Ask yourself: Can you keep it going?

Let's say you've addressed all the considerations and questions I've put to you so far and you're confident you have a solid, feasible working plan. Now take one more step back and ask yourself: can you keep it going? One year down the road, two years down the road, 10 years down the road: How can you make this process sustainable? While the work you do will undoubtedly bring benefits to the community where it's based, the trauma of folding can be profound among communities in need, and the stakes are much higher for them than they're likely to be for you. Be honest with yourself about the commitment you're able and willing to make. And if it's not the commitment you first thought it was, don't beat yourself up about it. There are plenty of projects around the world already doing good work that you can support.

If you're ready to move forward, there are dozens of resources out there to draw upon to help you and your project. Some of the most useful are included at the end of this chapter. Congratulations and thank you for the amazing work you've already done—and the work you're about to do! The world needs you.

RESOURCES

Informational Resources

Support Center for Non-Profit Management: This New York City-based organization provides training and consulting services, as well as print and online resources for non-profit development. Their NYC office has a useful library on-site. <http://www.supportctr.org/>

Fundraising Tools

ChipIn: An online fundraising tool that allows you to collect money securely via PayPal. Creates customized widgets you can install on your blog or website to raise money directly. <http://www.chipin.com/>

FirstGiving: Another online fundraising tool. Though it's somewhat similar to ChipIn, FirstGiving offers some unique features, so it's worth checking out both platforms to determine which best fits your needs.

Web Development & Social Media Tools

WordPress: Any organization—even in the planning stages—will benefit from having a blog and/or website to inform potential supporters and beneficiaries of progress as a project develops and to provide a forum for interaction and to generate excitement and interest in the project. WordPress is a free platform with hundreds of ready-made templates you can choose and modify. Though you can really gild the lily with these templates if you're technically proficient, even a web-naïve social entrepreneur is likely to find WordPress user-friendly. You can also upgrade to a self-hosted site (meaning you get a dedicated URL for your organization) for a nominal fee. www.wordpress.com

Facebook: Once you've established your web presence, promote it. Did you know you can establish groups especially for non-profits, organizations, special projects, and unique interests on Facebook? You can also use Facebook to share published articles about your organization, whether they're articles you've written on your own blog or that have been published elsewhere. www.facebook.com

Twitter: Twitter is a micro-blogging platform that allows you to share what you're doing at any given moment in just 140 characters. It's a powerful and easy way to connect with thousands of people you hand-select to follow your updates, and it's a surprisingly effective networking tool. You'll find yourself in good company with social entrepreneurs and activists on Twitter.

www.twitter.com

Volunteer Search and Promotional Tools

Idealist: Founded in 1995, Idealist was one of the first websites to bring people and organizations together to match organizations' needs with volunteers' abilities and interests. At present, more than 80,000 organizations around the world belong to Idealist, and the volunteer number exceeds that of organizations. Establish an organizational profile, use the organization's email blast to let potential volunteers know of organizational opportunities, or browse the blog and the rest of the site for ideas and advice.

MatadorNetwork: The MatadorNetwork is the world's most widely read online travel magazine, committed to community building and sustainability. As part of its community, organizations around the world are invited to register and set up a free profile at www.matadortravel.com. Travelers browse through the organizational profiles to search for volunteer opportunities abroad, and you're likely to get a committed, dedicated volunteer through this network of well-traveled, insightful people. www.matadornetwork.com

Voces de Mompox

Julie's Selected Feature

Voces de Mompox is an organization for ninth grade students in the town of Mompox, Colombia who demonstrate interest and promise in learning multimedia skills to present stories about their lives and about Colombia, which are published online. Students who participate in the after-school program gain tangible skills that make them more competitive candidates to attend college in the future, thereby improving the entire town's economic and social prospects.

We need people to oversee teaching/mentoring of ninth graders in an after-school program, working with them to develop multimedia skills and present their stories online. Eventually, we'll also need people who are able to develop relationships with institutions and organizations in Colombia and abroad to facilitate opportunities for the participants in the program to go on to college and/or to do exchange/study abroad programs.

Volunteers must possess skills in one or more of the following areas: computer, web development, blogging, photography, videography, writing, social and digital media. Must be English and Spanish-speaking.

Read more about volunteering with Voces de Mompox – see page 406

The Voluntary Guidebook



Guidebook Introduction

If there is one prevailing theme to *The Voluntary Traveler* beyond voluntourism it is “in their own words.” You’ve just heard from everyday people as they gave you a taste of their own volunteer adventures.

The guidebook section is similar in that organizations from around the world were given a questionnaire and the opportunity to tell you about their work *in their own words*. We provided no cookie-cutter editing to make a listing fit our aesthetic ambitions or our own personal concept of what we felt they should tell you.

The following charities gave as much (or as little) information as they wished and it was them, not a publishing house, that choose what was important to pass on to you. It is hoped that in this way they revealed a little more about themselves and in turn travelers will get a truer feel for the type of volunteer experience each has to offer.

Some of the organizations are large, some small. Some offer many travel programs; others can only offer a bed and a need. Despite their differences, they also have many commonalties. Whatever group you find is right for you personally to volunteer with; they all offer you the chance to make a difference. They will cause you to change how you see yourself and your place in the world. They will give you a chance to step away from the ordinary and live - extraordinarily. And, in the end, both the volunteer and the charity will grow from the relationship.

Yes, life can be more.

A Pas de Loup

Organization Type: Non profit-making-organization selecting and sending volunteers to environmental organizations.

Website: www.apasdeloup.org

Countries: France, Portugal, Italy, Croatia, Greece, Togo, Israel, Costa Rica, Peru, Honduras, Madagascar.

Volunteer Contact/Email: Anne Renard, info@apasdeloup.org

Phone: +33 (0)4 75 46 80 18

Age Requirements:

Language: French, English, Spanish

Advanced Notice: Application forms should be sent to us at least **1 month** before the beginning of the mission. (However, be careful, it can be required up to 3 months in advance for certain programs).

Cost/Fees Involved: 20 €

Meals/Accommodations: Generally the programs are free but when the budgets are not big enough, a contribution towards the cost of food and/or accommodation can be asked to the participants.

Minimum Stay: The working time per day depends on each organization but we assure that it is always reasonable. The minimum time to volunteer is 1 week in France, 2 weeks in other European countries and 3 weeks in Middle East, Latina America and Africa.

Maximum Stay: *See above*

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: There are not any special times; volunteers are needed all along the year. However, our main programs take place during the summer period.

Health Requirements: The missions often require a strong physical and mental health.

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations: À Pas de Loup prepares its volunteers before assigning them to a project. As we know well all the areas that are concerned, we give to the volunteers all the recommendations and warnings they need.

Special Skills Required: No special skills but naturalistic knowledge is recommended.

Type of Volunteer Work: Depending on the mission they choose, volunteers can be involved in different kind of activities:

- manual work for natural sites management
- feeding and looking after animals
- monitoring and observing protected species
- collecting scientific data
- welcoming and informing the local population and visitors

About: À Pas de Loup is an independent non-profit-making organization, staffed mainly by volunteers, that aims to make people aware of the importance of safeguarding the environment. It was founded in 1994 and has a current membership of about 600 members.

Our objectives are:

- ✓ To support local organizations in both developing and executing their schemes of nature conservation.
- ✓ To promote and encourage positive actions taken by people to improve his local natural environment.
- ✓ To make people discover the beauty of their environment and their planet.

Our organization positions itself as a link between volunteers and scientists or natural sites managers. In 2009, A Pas de Loup will support the following missions: Bird Migration and Survey projects, Wildlife Health Centers, Sea Turtles Survey project, Natural site maintenance, reforestation and traditional rural activity safeguard.

Moreover A Pas de Loup leads its own programs in France. For example, we have been developing for 10 year an important program to increase discussion and understanding between cattle farmer and ecologists about the burning issue of wolves in our mountains. Volunteer can stay during the summer in the Alps to help a shepherd guarding his sheep and protecting the drove during the nights.

Aang Serian Studio

Organization Type: Music Recording, Media Production, Performing Arts, Drama, Video Editing

Website:

Country: Tanzania

Volunteer Contact/Email: Gemma Enolengila, enolengila@yahoo.co.uk

Phone:

Age Requirements: Usually a minimum of 18 years, although 16-17 year olds may be accepted with parental permission. No upper age limit and mature applicants are welcome, provided that they are in good health.

Language: If you are able to learn some basic Swahili in advance it will be a great help.

Advanced Notice: Please give at least 1 month's advance notice if possible

Cost/Fees Involved: Full program cost (which includes orientation, tour of Arusha town, Class C residence permit, full board accommodation, transport to the school, Swahili tuition, and a donation to the school) is currently 860 USD for 1 month, 1320 USD for 2 months, 1680 USD for 3 months, 1990 USD for 4 months and 2350 USD for 5 months.

Meals/Accommodations: Half board accommodation (dinner and breakfast only), based on simple local-style meals, provided as standard. Extra charge of 35 USD per week for a more varied diet including soup, pasta, etc. Volunteers are required to pay for their own lunch at one of the many inexpensive cafes near the studio.

Minimum Stay: Minimum 1 month, preferably 2 months or more, between 8.30 am and 4pm from Monday to Friday (although there will be some rest time during working hours)

Maximum Stay: Not applicable

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: No specific requirements

Health Requirements: No specific requirements

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations: Volunteers living in Arusha should be alert for pickpockets and should avoid wearing expensive jewellery, watches, etc. The city is generally safe, even for lone female travelers, during the daytime, but we recommend that you take taxis at night rather than walking or using public transport. Single women often receive a lot of male attention (including marriage proposals!) and should be aware that friendly banter can often be misinterpreted as a go-ahead signal.

Special Skills Required: No specific requirements, although those with experience of sound recording or media production are especially welcome.

Type of Volunteer Work: We need people to assist with sound recording, mixing and producing music, training young people to use media equipment, recording video footage and editing movies. We also need assistance with fundraising.

About: Aang Serian Studio was founded in 2002 with the aim of preserving and promoting indigenous knowledge and traditional skills through audio and video recording, and in addition is now involved in empowering talented young musicians in Arusha town to record and publicize their songs. The studio has recorded three albums of indigenous vocal music from different ethnic groups and one compilation album of Swahili hip-hop, and is now working to encourage urban youth to include a cultural dimension in their performances by incorporating traditional rhythms, choruses or themes. Aang Serian has trained rural youth to shoot and edit three short documentary films about their societies (Maasai, Chagga and Rangi) and has also been involved in producing a documentary on the impact of climate change in Maasai communities. Volunteers are particularly needed to assist with project development, fundraising and marketing, but may also have opportunities to help out with training, sound and video recording, editing, production, cover design and the organization of live performances, according to the studio's priorities at the time. All studio volunteers receive a two-day orientation to music in Tanzania, which includes traditional drumming and dance as well as the role of Swahili hip-hop in urban youth culture.

Amaudo UK

Organization Type: Amaudo UK is a small UK based charity which works in partnership with Amaudo Itumbauzo in Nigeria in achieving its goal of implementing accessible affordable and sustainable systems of mental health care in South Eastern Nigeria. Amaudo UK achieves this through raising awareness, recruiting and supporting volunteers to the project, providing resources, co-managing projects and coordinating UK supporters. Amaudo Uk has a close relationship with Amaudo Itumbauzo but they are separate organizations.

Website: www.amaudouk.org

Country: Nigeria

Volunteer Contact/Email: Caroline Todd-Earlam, amaudouk@btconnect.com

Phone:

Age Requirements: No

Language: English

Advanced Notice: At least 2 months before they want to go out.

Cost/Fees Involved: We do not charge a fee, we have 2 types of volunteers: Supported volunteers who receive a small allowance and other support and self supporting volunteers who will need to raise the money to support themselves when they are in Nigeria.

Meals/Accommodations: This is worked into the volunteer's costs.

Minimum Stay: Supported volunteers need to commit at least a year, other volunteers can negotiate depending on need, however everyone is expected to work the same hours as local staff.

Maximum Stay: No

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: None

Health Requirements: Volunteers must have a medical before leaving and understand the precautions they need to take to stay health in Nigeria, including receiving appropriate vaccinations, antimalarial medication etc.

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations: Self supporting volunteers can have a variety of skills and will be accepted if their skills match need. Supported volunteers required are mental health nurses, occupational therapists, physiotherapists, financial administrator accountant. Experience is as important and qualifications.

Special Skills Required: This will be discussed at interview.

Type of Volunteer Work: Supported volunteers need to hold a profession or several years of experience in their field. They must be prepared to manage projects which provide mental health care and support to adults and children who have been homeless or who live in poverty. They must be prepared to embrace cultural norms around mental health care. They must also be aware that South East Nigeria is a predominantly Christian area and the project is run by the Methodist Church, volunteers must be prepared to live within a Christian community.

About: Amaudo Itumbauzo is a mental health provider in Nigeria working towards sustainable systems of healthcare which are affordable and accessible to all. It was established in 1990 in response to increasing numbers of mentally ill men and women roaming the streets in local towns in Abia State. From this community grew new projects which aim to tackle some of the many issues mental health and illness present. It now comprises 6 projects each addressing a very specific area of work.

Amaudo 1

Community centre for the Mentally Ill. Home for up to 65 destitute mentally ill people and a base for their rehabilitation and repatriation.

Community Psychiatric Programme

A network of clinics across 3 states providing accessible, affordable, professional care to mentally ill people in their communities.

Project Comfort

Community based rehabilitation for children with learning disabilities living with their families.

Amaudo 2

Family House for young people with learning disabilities and Co-operative Community Village for stable ex-residents of Amaudo 1.

Human Rights

Addressing attitudes towards those experiencing mental illness through training, awareness raising and challenging beliefs.

Amaudo Itumbauzo works in partnership with Amaudo UK who recruit and support volunteers from their base in the UK.

Amazon Shelter for Animal and Environmental Protection/CRCAS

Organization Type: CRCAS: Center for Rehabilitation and Conservation for Wild Animals (animal rehabilitation and relocation, environmental education).

Website: www.amazonshelter.org

Country: Perú (South America) Rainforest area

Volunteer Contact/Email: Edward Díaz, ediaz@amazonshelter.org

Phone: Puerto Maldonado (Madre de Dios) (511) 993491681 / (511) 990332842 /
Lima: (511) 434-1548

Age Requirements: Over 18 years old.

Language: English and/or Spanish and/or/ Portuguese.

Advanced Notice: One week.

Cost/Fees Involved: 25 dollars per day

Meals/Accommodations: YES we provide accommodation and meals.
Transportation or other expenses are not included.

Minimum Stay: At least 2 weeks, 8 hours per day.

Maximum Stay: Depends on the agreement between the volunteer and the Chief of the Volunteer Program.

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: We always need extra hands. Any time is a good time for helping us.

Health Requirements: We need healthy people, able to deal with humid, warm weather, mosquitoes and must like animals.

VACCINES: against yellow fever. The validity of the vaccine starts 10 days after the shot. You can vaccinate at the international Airport “Jorge Chávez” in Lima, at the medical center, before flying to the forest. It is also possible to be vaccinated at the arrival to the airport of Puerto Maldonado.

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations: CRCAS is close (11.2 km) to the city of Puerto Maldonado, so we go at least once a week to get what we need.
Recommendations

- Water proof shoes and clothes of long sleeve, made of fresh and slight material. Take several change of clothing, because you will probably get wet by the rains.

Amazon Shelter for Animal and Environmental Protection/CRCAS

- Towel, hat and bathing suit and personal hygiene items.
- Advisable the permanent use of repellent to avoid the stings.
- Medicines (if needed).
- Sun block.

Special Skills Required: It is very important that the volunteers like animals and be prepared to deal with the rainforest conditions.

Type of Volunteer Work: We need “many-sided” people, proactive and to be ready to do what is needed to do: to clean, improve or build enclosures, take care or feed the animals, guide people inside the center, repair tools, search in the computer, lab studies, keep daily notes about the animals life and conditions, interact with people from local communities, environmental education, etc.

About: The non-profit organization Amazon Shelter for Animal and Environmental Protection was born because of the need to work against the illegal traffic of wild animal species. Our mission is “*to contribute to educate people so they can understand, respect and conserve Nature*”.

Peru has great animal and plant biodiversity. Deforestation and human intrusion in the rainforest is constantly diminishing both populations. Magali Salinas, animal lover and founder of Amazon Shelter, started helping the local Environmental Police of Lima rescuing, recovering and relocating animals that were violently withdrawn from their natural habitats, specially primates, birds and reptiles. She bought 12 hectares of land in Tambopata and built CRCAS, Center for Rehabilitation and Conservation of Wild Animals.

At CRCAS we receive animals (especially young ones) that have been kept as pets or rescued from illegal traffic working together with INRENA (governmental institution). We work based on the volunteers help who perform several tasks such as: taking care of the animals (food, medicines, special care), cleaning or improving the enclosures, environmental enrichment, tourist guiding, environmental education at the Center for local communities or in the city schools or universities.

Our special project is to make studies about the biology and behavior of the red howler monkey (*Alouatt seniculus*).

American Friends Service Committee (AFSC)

Organization Type: The AFSC carries out service, development, social justice, and peace programs throughout the world.

Website: www.AFSC.org (click on Jobs, and then Volunteer Opportunities for more information) Opportunities also listed on www.VolunteerMatch.org

Countries: The United States, Mexico, China, Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, Uganda

Volunteer Contact/Email: No specific person right now, email Jobs@AFSC.org

Phone:

Age Requirements: Some of the overseas volunteer opportunities are limited to specific age groups, but AFSC periodically has volunteer opportunities for people of all ages. Please visit our website for more details on the various programs.

Language:

Advanced Notice: Overseas volunteer programs are operated on an annual basis and may require substantial advance preparation of up to one year.

Cost/Fees Involved: Costs vary by program and are listed on the webpage for the program.

Meals/Accommodations: Accommodations and costs vary by program and are listed on the webpage for the program.

Minimum Stay: Time commitments vary greatly by program and are listed on the webpage for the program.

Maximum Stay: See above

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations:

Health Requirements: Some AFSC service projects may be operated as work camps providing needed services to rural communities. Some services are educational and others may require physical labor. Participants are responsible for contacting their doctors, or other authorities regarding all recommended shots and other medical advisements. Participants may be required to submit a medical form. Please visit our website for more details on the various programs.

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations:

American Friends Service Committee (AFSC)

Special Skills Required: For overseas opportunities, participants should have a spirit of adventure about living in another culture and the challenges that entails. Some positions require no special skills, but requirements may vary by program. Please visit our website for more details on the various programs.

Type of Work: The AFSC has volunteer opportunities available on a periodic basis, and they are posted regularly on www.VolunteerMatch.org. Our volunteer opportunities change frequently, so check often! In addition to the periodic volunteer opportunities, the AFSC also has Regular Service Opportunities that are operated on an annual basis. The type of work needed varies greatly for each volunteer opportunity, please visit our website for more details on the various programs.

About: The American Friends Service Committee carries out service, development, social justice, and peace programs throughout the world. Founded by Quakers in 1917 to provide conscientious objectors with an opportunity to aid civilian war victims, AFSC's work attracts the support and partnership of people of many races, religions, and cultures.

AFSC's work is based on the Quaker belief in the worth of every person and faith in the power of love to overcome violence and injustice. The organization's mission and achievements won worldwide recognition in 1947 when it accepted the Nobel Peace Prize with the British Friends Service Council on behalf of all Quakers.

AFSC seeks to understand and address the root causes of poverty, injustice, and war. We seek opportunities to help reconcile enemies and to facilitate a peaceful and just resolution of conflict. We work to relieve and prevent suffering through both immediate aid and long-term development and seek to serve the needs of people on all sides of violent strife. We find in our life of service a great adventure. We are committed to this Spirit-led journey, undertaken "to see what love can do," and we are ever renewed by it.

Amigos de las Américas (AMIGOS)

Organization Type: Education, Youth Empowerment, Community Development, Community-based Projects, Cross-cultural Understanding, Health and Environmental Education

Website: <http://www.amigoslink.org>

Countries: Dominican Republic, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay

Volunteer Contact/Email: Daniel Pacheco, info@amigoslink.org

Phone: 713-782-5290 or Toll free 800-231-7796

Age Requirements: To serve as an AMIGOS volunteer in Latin America you must be at least 16 years old by Sept. 1st of the year of your volunteer service and have completed their sophomore year of high school.

Language: Two semesters of Spanish or the equivalent

Advanced Notice: The early bird application deadline is in February, and all Volunteers must apply by the end of March. Priority for destination choice is given to early applicants.

Cost/Fees Involved: The participation fee for 2009 is \$4,400. Fundraising support is available, and you may be eligible for scholarship support.

The Participation Fee includes:

- ✓ Round-trip international airfare from your gateway city
- ✓ Food, lodging, and transportation in Latin America
- ✓ All project related supplies
- ✓ Training materials and workshops
- ✓ Veteran supervisory Project Staff
- ✓ 24-hour emergency On-Call Communications System during the program
- ✓ Supplemental short-term international medical insurance

Meals/Accommodations:

Minimum Stay: Volunteer programs are 6-8 weeks for 40 hours a week average during the summer.

Maximum Stay:

Amigos de las Américas (AMIGOS)

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: Summer only programs.

Health Requirements: Special vaccination requirements apply. Please see the website for the most up-to-date list.

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations:

Special Skills Required: Volunteers must have completed two semesters of high school Spanish or the equivalent.

Type of Volunteer Work:

About: Founded in 1965 in Houston, Amigos de las Américas (AMIGOS) is an international, non-profit organization that provides unparalleled leadership and community service opportunities for young people while concurrently contributing to the well-being of hundreds of communities throughout the Americas. Supported by a strong network of Pan-American chapters, high school and college students from diverse backgrounds work successfully with host communities and partner agencies to address health and education priorities. AMIGOS Volunteers immerse themselves in the lives of their host communities and truly experience collaborative development work. During its 43-year history, more than 20,000 AMIGOS Volunteers have gained a life-long commitment to community service, while strengthening multicultural understanding and friendships in the Americas.

Animal Concerns Research and Education Society

Organization Type: Animal Protection and Wildlife Rescue organization, with a focus on raising awareness and campaigning/advocacy.

Website: www.acres.org.sg

Country: Singapore

Volunteer Contact/Email: Miss Charlene Tan, volunteer@acres.org.sg

Phone: +65 6892 9821

Age Requirements: Volunteers must be aged 18 and over.

Language: Volunteers must be able to speak English.

Advanced Notice: Two weeks.

Cost/Fees Involved: International volunteers are required to pay S\$25 per day. This covers accommodation at the ACRES Wildlife Rescue Centre, training and three meals a day (basic vegetarian food items are provided for volunteers to prepare their own meals).

Meals/Accommodations: We can provide accommodation for up to 10 volunteers at a time. Vegetarian food is provided for volunteers to prepare their own meals. Please note that only vegetarian food is permitted on the premises.

Minimum Stay: Volunteers must commit to at least a one week stay, and volunteer for a minimum of six hours per day.

Maximum Stay: N/A

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: Help is required all year round.

Health Requirements: Volunteers who wish to volunteer with hands-on activities at the ACRES Wildlife Rescue Centre (AWRC) must have up to date tetanus, Hepatitis A and Hepatitis B vaccinations

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations: Singapore experiences a tropical climate, frequently experiencing high daytime temperatures. As the ACRES Wildlife Rescue Centre (AWRC) is an open-air facility, volunteers who want to help at the AWRC are advised to keep their fluid levels high and wear suitable clothing to prevent them from overheating, as well as wearing sunscreen. As there are mosquitoes in this area, we advise all volunteers to wear mosquito repellent, especially in the evenings.

Special Skills Required: A passion to help animals is a must!

Type of Volunteer Work: ACRES needs help with fundraising, delivering education programmes, manning public road shows, general office duties and organizing and running events.

Starting in 2009, volunteers are needed to assist with the running of the ACRES Wildlife Rescue Centre (AWRC), i.e. preparing food for, cleaning enclosures of, feeding and observing rescued wild animals, and general upkeep of the centre (gardening etc.) Volunteers may also assist with giving guided tours and helping to deliver educational programmes to school groups.

About: ACRES aims to create a caring and socially responsible society where animals are treated as sentient beings and where the environment is preserved for future generations.

Education

ACRES believes that education is the key to creating a society filled with empathy and respect for all animals, as well as each other and the environment. We have conducted hundreds of educational road shows and/or talks in Singapore, raising awareness on animal protection issues. Our educational outreach programmes reach over 100,000 children and adults every year.

Creating Positive Change

ACRES conducts research into several animal welfare issues, with the aim of finding achievable solutions. Our approach is Scientific, Creative, Practical and Positive. Our campaigns have led to vast improvements in animal welfare throughout Asia. Our engagements with the government have resulted in tremendous improvements to animal protection laws in Singapore. In addition, our investigations into the illegal wildlife trade in Singapore have led to those who flout wildlife protection laws being brought to task.

Wildlife Rescue

Every year, ACRES rescues and cares for scores of wild animals in need, and operates a 24-Hour Wildlife Rescue Hotline. We do our best, for every single animal, to rehabilitate them and release them back into the wild.

Animal Rescue Kerala

Organization Type: Animal Rescue and implementing the animal Birth control/anti rabies programme

Website: www.animalrescuekerala.org

Country: Kerala, Southern India

Volunteer Contact/Email: Odette Tompkins, odette@animalrescuekerala.org

Phone:

Age Requirements: We suggest a minimum age of 18 years , there is no maximum age limit so long as the volunteer is fit and healthy. The centre is built on a slope and has stairs to climb, so volunteers would need to be able-bodied.

Language: An understanding of English is necessary.

Advanced Notice: It is recommended that volunteers contact us several months before they intend to travel as we only have rooms for 3 volunteers/couples.

Cost/Fees Involved: 100 euros flat fee , no matter what length of stay.

Meals/Accommodations: Accommodation is provided. Each volunteers has his/her own room, bathroom and kitchen facilities are shared. Meals are not provided.

Minimum Stay: We recommend that volunteers stay at least a week and are requested to work at least 4 hours a day , 6 days a week.

Maximum Stay: Not applicable.

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: Volunteers needed throughout the year

Health Requirements: Volunteers will be required to walk dogs , so will need to be fit. We would also recommend that all volunteers have rabies vaccinations before volunteering.

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations: Cool loose clothing is recommended as are comfortable shoes! Ladies can wear shorts whilst working at the centre, but loose skirts are recommended whilst out and about , otherwise you may attract unwanted attention. The electricity is erratic, and also there are no street lights on the approach road to the centre so a torch is a must. Malaria is not a problem locally , however there are lots of mosquitoes so we would recommend that volunteers buy the local repellent cream and burn plug-in repellents at night.

Special Skills Required: Vets and Vet nurses or people with a love of animals, lots of enthusiasm and get-up and go.

Type of Volunteer Work: ARK has one Vet and a Vet nurse so Volunteers Vets/nurses to help with the work-load would be a great help. Other volunteers would be expected to walk dogs , de-tick dogs and puppies whilst at the same time giving them extra love and affection. Any handy-person skills would also be very useful to help with everyday repairs/gardening. We also need people who are willing to give out leaflets/fliers to tourist on the local beaches.

About: Animal Rescue Kerala was set up by my Mum, Avis Lyons as a result of a incident with a puppy which ruined a holiday. Mum decided that she really wanted to do something to help the dogs of Kerala.

Originally ARK was set up to implement the Animal Birth Control/ Anti Rabies programme (ABC/AR) which local authorities are required to do by law in India , but which is not done in Kerala; instead dogs are rounded up and killed in the most barbaric of ways , often having been left in cages without food and water in horrific heat for days before being killed.

ARK has agreements with the nearby local councils that the council will not kill in the area covered by the agreement and ARK is responsible for sterilizing and vaccinating the dogs in that area. It has been proved that the ABC/AR programme is the only humane way of controlling the stray dog population and also reducing the incidence of Rabies, this works because dogs are territorial, so those dogs in an area who have been sterilized and vaccinated will not let other dogs into their territory. ARK has sterilized several thousand dogs in the Kovalam area and as a result the incidence of Rabies in ARK's area is ZERO and has been for several years.

ARK also provides much-needed medical care to sick and injured stray animals as well as to the pets of people on low income.

Animal Welfare Karpathos

Organization Type: Animal welfare

Website: <http://www.animalwelfarekarpathos.org>

Country: Greece

Volunteer Contact/Email: Alf B. Meier, secretary@animalwelfarekarpathos.org

Phone: 0030 697 8040136

Age Requirements: Adults

Language: Mostly we communicate in English, but some basic Greek would be very most helpful. Most of our volunteers come from Germany and Holland.

Advanced Notice: One week, if possible

Cost/Fees Involved: No fees/mandatory donations

Meals/Accommodations: No (occasional group meals are provided, but not as a rule)

Minimum Stay: One day

Maximum Stay: N/A

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: At any time

Health Requirements: N/A



Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations: The Greek island of Karpathos is midpoint between Crete and Rhodes and is accessible by plane or ferry. Karpathos is a windsurfers' paradise, particularly for speedsurfers.

Special Skills Required: We would love to meet vet techs or veterinarians, but most of our volunteers are not trained. Someone with a farm background would be wonderful, because we receive sheep, goats, donkeys and cows. We never have enough helpers to give dogs baths and haircuts or to trim nails.

Type of Volunteer Work: Assist in the clinic. Pick up medications at the pharmacy. - May and September only: Trap cats and dogs for neutering/spaying. Maintain comprehensive record of where they were found. Return them following recovery from OP.

About: Animal Welfare Karpathos was started because the island was full of strays. Volunteer vets come twice a year to neuter/spay. After almost a decade, real progress can be seen in that area.

The vets also take calls for various emergency procedures, including for farm animals. As things have evolved, we're the only place islanders can turn to for help with pets. We give routine shots, microchips and offer birth control shots (in between vet visits).

There are no fees charged. Donations are gladly accepted and oftentimes locals “pay” with a jar of fresh honey or a sack of oranges! We have a charity book. For every copy of *Almost Perfect: Disabled Pets and the People Who Love Them* sold, the publisher (Enspirio House, an imprint of Word Forge Books) makes a donation to Animal Welfare Karpathos. The book is available at [amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com), [amazon.ca](https://www.amazon.ca) and [barnesandnoble.com](https://www.barnesandnoble.com).



The Ark, Friends of Animals, Corfu, Greece

Organization Type: Animal Rescue, mainly dogs and cats, sometimes birds. Helping the injured, unwanted or dumped animals. Also promoting neutering and education.

Website: www.corfuanimalwelfare.com

Country: Greece, Corfu Island

Volunteer Contact/Email: Louisa, info@corfuanimalwelfare.com or vanvuurd@otened.gr

Phone: See website or mobile 0030 6979798202

Age Requirements: n/a

Language: Language is Modern Greek, but English is the international language, At the Ark , French, German or Dutch are also fine.

Advanced Notice: The earlier the better, but potential volunteers can always contact us.

Cost/Fees Involved: No cost for volunteers

Meals/Accommodations: If available accommodations will be provided

Minimum Stay: At least three days, four hours per day.

Maximum Stay:

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: All year around

Health Requirements: None, but volunteers must be willing to get their hands and clothes dirty.

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations: Corfu is a beautiful island with a variety of landscapes, mountains and sandy as well as rocky beaches . Some interesting places to visit. It is also called the Garden/ flower island as it is relatively green, and famous for the millions of huge olive trees, originated out of the Venetian.

Special Skills Required: Volunteers must love dogs and cats and be willing to give these abandoned animals care, fun and love.

Type of Volunteer Work: We can use all kind of people and expertise. ranging from grooming the doggies to giving veterinarian advices, from poop scooping in the olive grove to repairing the fences or building dog houses, etc.

The Ark, Friends of Animals, Corfu, Greece

About: The Ark, was founded in 1997 to help the animals on the island. We concentrate now on helping dogs and cats and sometimes birds, there is a separated Donkey sanctuary on the island. We have limited means financially as “hands on” therefore volunteers are most welcome.

We try to help if animals are injured, lots of car/motorbike accidents with dogs/cats also to give assistance in case of poisoning. Unfortunately lots of animals are poisoned by purpose or eating the poison meant for mice.

We try to rehome, on Corfu or abroad, the unwanted or abandoned dogs, pups, cats. Of those activities we keep records, we need photos of all doggies, so help is welcome here as well. We have limited space for fostering temporarily dogs and some cats. that require quite some work with the animals and maintenance of the facilities. We have a website and information books, help can be given to promote our activities better. We try to neuter mainly bitches and cats and they need care after the operation. We run a charity shop in Corfu town, were volunteers sell secondhand goods and also are present at Carbootsales.



Asociación El Arca de Noe

Organization Type: Promotion of Animal Welfare by organizing: spay/neuter campaigns, adoption campaigns and education with WSPA material. Also active rescues in emergencies only as we have no funding for that. Actual rescues are financed out of pocket by the President of Asociacion El Arca de Noe

Website: www.acradenoecr.com

Country: Costa Rica

Volunteer Contact/Email: Patricia Artimana Mieschert,
arcadenoe.pa@gmail.com

Phone: 00506-2283-29-59 ext. 4 home 00506-2416-46-89

Age Requirements: Over 18

Language: Spanish

Advanced Notice: One month

Cost/Fees Involved: None

Meals/Accommodations: Editors note: Noah's Ark could provide a bed and meals for two people, but keep in mind that the money to do so comes out of the pocket of the President. Please try and volunteer to pay your own expenses and pack food to take to the sanctuary.

Minimum Stay: One week

Maximum Stay: One week

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: All year, but April and May are best.

Health Requirements: Costa Rica asks for Yellow Fever and Tetnus.

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations:

Special Skills Required: Experience working with domestic animals

Type of Volunteer Work: Socializing animals, health checkups (good learning experience for veterinary students), facility maintenance—the sanctuary has dogs, horses, a pig, farm birds and a cool (cabro). Volunteers could also help with a spay/neuter campaign. Contact Arca de Noe (Noah's Ark) in advance to discuss what volunteer work is needed and what you can do.

About: For more details interested volunteers should read our website.

Asociacion Humanitaria San Fransisco De Asis

Organization Type: Animal Rescue Shelter, Volunteer and Educational Centre

Website: www.ahsfa.org

Country: Peru

Volunteer Contact/Email: Rosemary Gordon, Rosagordon@hotmail.com

Phone:

Age Requirements: None

Language: Spanish if possible, if not English is okay.

Advanced Notice: A couple of months

Cost/Fees Involved: *See below*

Meals/Accommodations: Volunteers are requested to pay 60 soles plus/minus per day for accommodations, meals and laundry.

Minimum Stay: Usually a minimum of one week, 8 hours per day

Maximum Stay:

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: Help is needed anytime

Health Requirements: Good to have rabies vaccinations

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations:

Special Skills Required:

Type of Volunteer Work: Vets for spay and neuter

About: We are a small charity dependant on donations from abroad. We work at Spay and neuter of small animals and try to teach local student vets here. We also work in education in schools with children as well as the teachers to teach about animal care. The Shelter is in Colan which is on the North Coast of Peru and we are a 3 minute walk from the beach. We have a "rustic" clinic where we manage to spay around 40 animals per month. Mainly they are from the surrounding, nearby villages. The people in these villages are very poor so we are unable to charge for the surgeries and vet care given.

A.R.C.H.E - Research & Educational Activities for Chelonian Conservation, Onlus

Organization Type: Working with sea turtles, cure centre, educational activities

Website: <http://www.archeturtle.org>

Country: Italy

Volunteer Contact/Email: Carola Vallini:
archeturtle@tiscali.it/archeturtle@archeturtle.org

Phone:

Age Requirements: From 24 up

Language: A basic knowledge of Italian

Advanced Notice: Two months

Cost/Fees Involved: From 200.00 euros /week depending on the period and the kind of project.

Meals/Accommodations: Food and accommodations are included.

Minimum Stay:

Maximum Stay:

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: June and the first two weeks of July

Health Requirements:

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations:

Special Skills Required: No special qualification, except to be able to work in team and love for animals

Type of Volunteer Work: Volunteers will carry on educational activities for tourists on the beaches and collect data on sea turtle accidentally captured from the fishermen. Volunteers will work a minimum of five hours per day and have one days per week off.



A.R.C.H.E - Research & Educational Activities for Chelonian Conservation, Onlus

About: The A.R.C.H.E'. Association - Research and Educational Activities for Chelonian Conservation has been founded on March 2003; it is a Non-profit Organization (Onlus) to pursue aims of environmental and wildlife protection and conservation. In particular it carry out and advances studies, researches, and educational campaigns to protected species and marine habitats with particular attention for sea turtles and their habitat; popularises knowledge and awareness of environmental protection and protected species conservation. President and researchers have decennial experience and they carry out research programme on sea turtle conservation in the world.

Since October 2003 A.R.C.H.E'. has become active in the Educational Division introducing educational and environmental activities on sea turtles, protected species and marine habitats to tourists and children in the schools. A.R.C.H.E'. presents an Italian, Mediterranean and World Symposia and Conferences for scientific results carried out.



Association Togolaise des Volontaires au Travail

Organization Type: Community Mobilisation against STDs/AIDS, Reforestation, School session, Mental Handicapped & Deaf mute Children, Construction, Renovation of schools buildings, Education, Teaching.

Website: www.astovot.org

Country: Togo, West Africa

Volunteer Contact/Email: Sylvestre Aklamanu, Programme coordinator at: astovot@yahoo.com

Phone: +228 935 25 84, +228 944 72 63

Age Requirements: Minimum 18 years old.

Language: French, English and German

Advanced Notice: At any time.

Cost/Fees Involved: For summer camp: 183 euros, Middle and long term volunteering: 290 euros per month.

Meals/Accommodations: The participation fees cover accommodations and meals.

Minimum Stay: 5 hours per day with intercultural exchange in all ASTOVOT projects.

Maximum Stay: *See our website*

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: We need help all the year because we believe in intercultural exchange to promote solidarity, tolerance and peace.

Health Requirements:

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations:

Special Skills Required: *See our website*

Type of Volunteer Work: *See our website*

About: ASTOVOT has an NGO status exists since 1957 and works during summer camps with about 90 foreign volunteers and during the year since 2005 as a long term volunteers host with 20 volunteers. The organization has also a network of local volunteers. The leading staff of ASTOVOT (15 people) and the local active members more than 200 people can lead you in a good family.

Together we can do more for local development: Since 1990, we're working without any financial support for our programme. The participation fees that you pay on arrival serve to finance the project, your food and accommodation and at least the support of the association. We want to tell you that our goal is to create solidarity between people by exchange. We do not receive any public subsidies by the Togolese state or anybody.

For our plan of action, we want to promote local development and reinforcing our capacity building. As regard of our Plan of Action (POA) 2009-2012, ASTOVOT wants to be really present with marginalized local communities on the one hand, promote and strengthen his active members on other hand. For that reason, ASTOVOT need support/accompaniment if you want that our goals give us good outcome.

We also need your help and sponsorship: ASTOVOT has great deal of desire to expand his projects in marginalized area in Plateaux Region and everywhere which the needs are.

Together we can do more for local communities: Please: we are kindly advising all our volunteers that we have many projects to run in the Plateaux Region in Togo in West Africa: Kloto, Agou, Dayes, Amou, Akata, Haho, Wawa, Ogou, Est-Mono.

ASTOVOT activities aim to favour the living conditions of local communities by: promoting a general sense of goodwill among the young participants of the association, meeting the needs of vulnerable local communities, developing the skills of the available human resources by means of training sessions, initiating exchanges with other actors sharing the same vision. In a work-camp international approximately twenty young male and female volunteers, from different countries and backgrounds come together during a specific period. With their knowledge, their time and their energy they work together with the local community to realise a project of general interest as environmental projects, socio educative with children and adolescents, social mobilisation against STDs/VIH/AIDS, renovation and construction of schools and latrines.

In 2007, ASTOVOT had carried out 15 projects and receive about 95 volunteers coming from Europe.

In 2008, ASTOVOT had carried 7 projects and receivie about 35 volunteers from Europe. We are running now a long term and middle voluntarim (LMTV) projects with about 20 volunteers from Germany, Italy, France, England and Belgium.

Organization Type: Arrange placements with a wide range of Wildlife, Conservation, Community and Children based volunteer projects.

Website: www.aviva-sa.com

Country: South Africa

Volunteer Contact/Email: Rholene Coetzee (Applications Manager),
info@aviva-sa.com

Phone: +27 21 557 4312

Age Requirements: Generally, the minimum age is 18 years old on arrival in South Africa. There are exceptions though with volunteers aged 16+ being accepted on some programs. If accompanied by an adult guardian, the Balule Conservation Project also accepts volunteers aged 12+

Language: Volunteers should be able to communicate in English to a reasonable standard.

Advanced Notice: We can accept short notice bookings subject to availability, but we recommend contacting us three months or more before you travel if you want a better chance of securing a specific placement.

Cost/Fees Involved: We have a wide range of projects available and fees for these vary depending on what's included. The volunteer fee covers all accommodation, in-country transfers, meals on most projects, project fees and much more. Latest prices are available on the AVIVA web site.

Meals/Accommodations: All accommodation is provided along with meals on most projects – the cost for these is already included the volunteer fees shown on our web site.

Minimum Stay: The minimum project length is 2 weeks; although some children based projects have a minimum stay of 6 weeks. Please refer to the AVIVA web site for project specific information.

Maximum Stay: Some projects have a maximum stay of 12 weeks, but volunteers can combine any number of different projects, courses and tours to create a much longer stay if they wish.

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: Our projects operate throughout the year – available start dates for all projects are clearly shown on the AVIVA web site.

Health Requirements: Reasonable physical fitness is recommended for all projects.

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations: After arriving in South Africa, many volunteers choose to extend their stay further, with overland tours and Kruger safaris being the most popular add-ons. If you are planning to travel after or between projects, please let us know as we can help with recommendations, bookings and transfers.

Special Skills Required: No previous experience is required as each project includes relevant training and supervision.

Type of Volunteer Work: Help to rehabilitate African wildlife, make a difference to the lives of orphaned children, feed lion cubs, make a contribution to conservation work near Kruger Park, teach underprivileged children how to surf, help to introduce computer literacy and sports skills to rural African schools, assist with environmental education camps on the shores of South Africa's largest freshwater lake, or join an exciting wildlife ranger course and learn about life in the African bush first hand . . .

About: As an established volunteering company based in Cape Town, AVIVA is committed to supporting sustainable community, wildlife and conservation projects while providing volunteers with a life changing volunteering experience in South Africa. We believe that volunteering promotes self-growth, cultural understanding, and provides international volunteers with a unique opportunity to really experience a country first hand.

We only work with grass roots projects that have evolved to meet real needs in the local community - so you can be sure that you will be contributing your time to a worthwhile and rewarding cause, and can make a meaningful contribution to its growth and future well being. It is very important that your presence at a project is beneficial not only for the project, but also for you.

We believe that by working in partnership with projects that are genuinely committed to their cause, we can provide you with a unique travel experience that not only matches, but exceeds your expectations. Your free time is also important which is why we provide a wide range of options and travel ideas that you can add to make your own unique South African experience.

Organization Type: Community Development, Zoological Field Research, Construction, Sustainable Livelihoods, Health and Sanitation, English Teaching, Reforestation

Website: www.madagascar.co.uk

Country: Madagascar

Volunteer Contact/Email: Mark Jacobs, info@azafady.org

Phone: +44 (0) 208 960 6629

Age Requirements: Minimum age 18. No upper age limit.

Language: Fluent English. Malagasy lessons given as part of the program.

Advanced Notice: Minimum of one month required to make necessary preparations (visa etc.) Applications preferred at least 3-6 months in advance.

Cost/Fees Involved: Mandatory donation starting from GBP£595. Volunteers must also cover personal expenses (flights, visa, vaccinations, insurance)

Meals/Accommodations: Volunteers are given three simple, nutritionally balanced meals a day. Camping facilities are provided but volunteers staying more than 3 weeks need to bring their own tent.

Minimum Stay: 2 weeks

Maximum Stay: 10 weeks. Long term specialist placements (minimum 6 months) sometimes available.

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: Medium –term (4-10 weeks) projects depart January, April, July and October. Short-term (2-3 weeks) projects depart throughout the year

Health Requirements: All volunteers must take a suitable malaria prophylaxis and be vaccinated against tetanus. Rabies vaccinations required for work with lemurs. Volunteers should be fit and healthy and prepared for long walks (up to 10km) and physical work in a hot climate (depending on program)

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations: Allow time for independent travel after the project as Madagascar is a vast and beautiful country and there is so much to explore.

Special Skills Required: No previous experience required. All necessary skills are taught on the project.

Type of Volunteer Work: Building schools, wells, and fuel efficient stoves; health and environmental education; sustainable livelihoods initiatives such as community vegetable gardens; English teaching; tree planting; lemur research and conservation.

About: Azafady, a UK registered charity and Malagasy NGO, offers unique and challenging placements in Madagascar - a vibrant country of beautiful scenery, exotic animals and welcoming people. Embark on a Lemur Venture, join Azafady's award winning Pioneer program, or if you can only escape for a few weeks join one of our short-term volunteering schemes. Whether your passion is sustainable development or vital conservation work, Azafady can offer you an unforgettable experience in Madagascar. As a grassroots organization, Azafady works directly with local communities ensuring that our work is requested by, as well as being useful to, the people of Madagascar. Whichever program you choose, you will be benefiting from Azafady's decade of experience of working in Madagascar. Our projects are an invaluable opportunity for you to gain on-the-ground experience that will assist you in pursuing a career in development and/or conservation work. By volunteering with us it could help you to choose a new direction in life or to develop a career path you may already be on. It could be both a personal highlight and a practical stepping stone in a gap year or, for anyone at any time, a great way to go abroad for more than just a holiday.

The Bahamas Humane Society

Organization Type: We are an animal welfare organization, that operates an Animal Shelter and Veterinary Clinic.

Website: www.bahamashumanesociety.com

Countries: Bahamas, on the island of New Providence, Grand Bahama, Eleuthera, Exuma and Abaco.

Volunteer Contact/Email: Mr Percy Grant or Mrs Donna Kiriaze
petinspector@gmail.com or bhscruelty@gmail.com

Phone:

Age Requirements: 18 years and older

Language:

Advanced Notice: One day is fine

Cost/Fees Involved: We don't charge a volunteer fee, but are always willing to accept a donation. US dollars or Bahamain dollars.

Meals/Accommodations: Most persons coming to the Bahamas already have prearrange accommodations and we do not provide meals.

Minimum Time: We consider ne hour minimum time.

Maximum Stay: As long as like what you are doing and we all get along you are welcome as long as you are permitted to stay in the Bahamas.

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: During our peak fundraising months which is February and March we can always use and extra hand if the individual likes selling raffle tickets.

Health Requirements: We require the person to be healthy.

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations: Bring lots of sun screen and like anywhere you travel always be aware of your surroundings.

Special Skills Required: We only need persons who love animals and enjoy working around them and people.

Type of Volunteer Work: People who are willing to get themselves dirty, cleaning, feeding, bathing and walking animals, if one likes to do maintenance, painting, cleaning windows or sweeping down cobwebs. Persons who has fundraising or public relations experience, likes folding bills or copying files.

The Bahamas Humane Society

About: The Bahamas Humane Society was founded in 1924 it is the oldest charity in the Bahamas, we provide a 24hrs emergency ambulance service, free spay and neuter clinic, veterinary clinic, adoption program, educational program, cruelty investigation, boarding kennels and an inspectorate division. We have lobbied for changes in many of our animal related laws, lobbied for better conditions for surrey-horses, we hold free spay clinics on islands that have no veterinarians or animal welfare groups.



Baja Dogs La Paz AZ

Organization Type: Animal Rescue, Education & Promotion of Spay and Neuter

Website: www.bajadogshelplineoflapaz.org

Country: La Paz, Baja California Sur, Mexico

Volunteer Contact/Email: Dhorea Ryon, info@bajadogshelplineoflapaz.org

Phone:

Age Requirements: 18 years or under the supervision of an adult

Language:

Advanced Notice: 2 weeks advance notice required

Cost/Fees Involved: No fee is charged

Meals/Accommodations: At this point we are not able to offer mass accommodations but it may be possible to billet 1 or 2 volunteers for a period no longer than 10 days at a time

Minimum Stay: One week and minimum 5 hours a day.

Maximum Stay: If billeted 10 day maximum; if not unlimited

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: Help is needed year round

Health Requirements: Need to be in good health

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations:

Special Skills Required: No special skills

Type of Volunteer Work: People to walk, brush and socialize our dogs
Veterinarian or Vet techs, Dog trainers, Carpenters or handymen that can aid in kennel repair etc.

About: Baja Dogs was formed after seeing the helpless, abused and neglected street dogs and the need to do something to help them. In 2005 we aided in the spaying and neutering of over 900 dogs for free. Our refuge was opened in 2007. We also have an excellent course which is taught in the local schools. We felt that the only way to stop the over population, the dead pups lying in the street and the mistreatment of these beautiful animals was through a strong education program. Without this our refuge would only be a revolving door. It will take many years to change the mindset of some of the people, but by starting with the young children, we hope one day to make a difference in Mexico. In 2008 we became registered as a US charity. The problem we struggle with daily is funding. Every single cent goes to the care of the animals. If you are unable to come to La Paz to volunteer, we would like to encourage you to do some fundraising for us in your local community. We do not get ANY funding from the government as dogs are not as cherished here as they are in other countries. Please view our website www.bajadogshelplineoflapaz.org If you would like to adopt any of our "*Mexican purebreds with golden hearts*" please contact us. Thank you so much for taking the time to read this.



Bali Animal Welfare Association

Organization Type: Animal Welfare, Veterinary Care, Education, Animal Adoption and Sterilization

Website: www.bawabali.com

Country: Bali, Indonesia

Volunteer Contact/Email: Janice Girardi, bawabali@aol.com

Phone: +62 81 138 9004

Age Requirements: Minimum of 18yrs

Language: Must speak English and an intermediate level of Indonesian would be an advantage.

Advanced Notice: 3 days notice

Cost/Fees Involved: None

Meals/Accommodations: We can assist in booking accommodation; however we do not provide meals or accommodation. Volunteers can easily find accommodation nearby in Ubud. A housing allowance may be considered for certain types of volunteers.

Minimum Stay: We would prefer a minimum of a 1 week commitment for 4 hrs per day.

Maximum Stay: N/A

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: Voluntary assistance is required all year around.

Health Requirements: We recommend all volunteers have current Tetanus and Rabies immunization and let us know beforehand of any health issues.

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations: Must have up to date vaccinations for travel to Southeast Asia. Bali's climate can be hot and muggy and there may be mosquitoes. It is recommended that volunteers read up on travel to Bali so not to experience any culture shock.

Special Skills Required: We need volunteers of all skill levels; however, we especially need experienced Veterinarians, Veterinary Nurses and Fundraisers.

Type of Volunteer Work:

- ✓ General volunteers are needed to clean cages, walk and socialize dogs, hang out laundry, general cleaning.
- ✓ Veterinarians are needed to assist the clinic vets in veterinary treatment, diagnosis, surgery and assist with ongoing educational training.
- ✓ Veterinary Nurses are needed to provide assistance to the vets and provide nursing care to neonates, unwell and healthy puppies and kittens.
- ✓ Fundraisers are needed to write proposals and grants and to assist in local fundraising.

About: Our aim is to improve the welfare and well-being of Bali's animals through the following ways:

1. Spay/neuter street program: We provide a free mobile service to East Bali's villages to sterilize dogs and provide basic veterinary treatment
2. Animal Ambulance: We run Bali's only 24hr, 7 day a week animal ambulance providing emergency veterinary care and rescue across Bali.
3. Education: Six day a week education program in schools to raise awareness of animal welfare, promote animal care and to address the critical need to enhance public awareness and understanding
4. Run a "Not for Profit" clinic: providing a service to Balinese families who are unable to provide basic care or have the funds to spay/neuter their pets
5. Rescue and Adoption program: follow our 3R approach which includes Rescue, Rehabilitate and Re-home our puppies and dogs to screened homes
6. Collaborate and network with other animal welfare organisations
7. Aim to implement Animal Welfare laws in Indonesia. More info is posted on www.bawabali.com

Biosphere Expeditions

Organization Type: Wildlife conservation expeditions / volunteering / voluntourism.

Website: www.biosphere-expeditions.org

Countries: Oman, Honduras (Caribbean), Azores (Portugal), Spain (Pyrenees), Altai Republic (Central Asia), Namibia, Peru, Brazil

Volunteer Contact/Email: Five offices in UK, Germany, France, USA & Australia – see www.biosphere-expeditions.org/offices or email info@biosphere-expeditions.org

Phone: *See website*

Age Requirements: None

Language: English is our main language of communication.

Advanced Notice: Our expeditions and projects often fill up months in advance.

Cost/Fees Involved: Expedition contributions start from £880 for one-week projects and £1130 for two-week expeditions.

Meals/Accommodations: The projects or expeditions all start at an in-country assembly point. You have to get yourself there, but from then on all accommodation, meals, research equipment, training, etc. is provided.

Minimum Stay: One week onwards. We do have taster weekends in the UK, Germany & Australia for those wanting to find out what it's like first.

Maximum Stay: *See above*

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: This varies widely. Exact expedition and project dates are shown on the website.

Health Requirements: None and we actively encourage people with disabilities (see above). Where vaccinations are required, this will be made clear in the pre-departure dossier.

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations: Specific information for each destination is part of the pre-departure dossier.

Special Skills Required: There are no special skills/no age limits whatsoever. If you are disabled please contact us to find out about the suitability of the experience of your choice. If you are healthy and enjoy the outdoors, your fitness level will be sufficient in most cases.

Type of Volunteer Work: Biosphere Expeditions specialises in wildlife conservation volunteer work as an adventure with a purpose for everyone. We bridge the gap between scientists at the forefront of conservation work in need of funds and helpers, and enthusiastic laypeople, who in their holiday time, through their hands-on assistance and with their expedition contribution want to support them.

About: Biosphere Expeditions is an award-winning, non-profit-making organisation offering hands-on conservation volunteer work expeditions as an adventure with a purpose for everyone. We bridge the gap between scientists at the forefront of conservation work in need of funds and helpers, and enthusiastic laypeople, who in their holiday time, through their hands-on assistance and with their expedition contribution want to support them.

On our conservation expeditions you will explore fascinating parts of the world, have fun, a lifetime adventure and a real hands-on experience of working on wildlife conservation volunteering projects. You can join us for anything from a weekend to several months and at least two-thirds of your volunteer holiday contribution will go directly into the conservation project locally, funding it long-term and sustainably.

Safe, fun and open to all. Our three key themes are safety, science and satisfaction, because our core belief is that you will work best when you are safe, well looked after, well rested and having fun. Our volunteer holidays are open to all, there are no special skills (biological or otherwise) required to join as all necessary skills will be taught as part of the expedition, and there are no age limits whatsoever. Our conservation volunteering team members are people from all walks of life, of all ages, looking for an adventure with a purpose. Teams are small and there is a dedicated expedition leader with the teams at all times.

Work with and support local people and wildlife

We always work in close conjunction with local people and scientists, and make sure that the fruits of our conservation projects benefit our local helpers, their society and the environment they live in. Come and join us to make a difference!

Blue Ventures Conservation

Organization Type: Award winning conservation NGO dedicated to promoting marine protection through volunteer research activities.

Website: www.blueventures.org

Countries: Madagascar, Fiji

Volunteer Contact/Email: Kathleen Edie_madagascar@blueventures.org

Phone:

Age Requirements: Minimum age of 18. Maximum age is at the volunteers own discretion!

Language: English is the operational language on both sites although some knowledge of French may help in Madagascar.

Advanced Notice: Typically, due to the amount of time and money volunteers invest in a Blue Ventures expedition, contact is made between a potential volunteer and Blue Ventures some months in advance of the expedition date. Due to the amount of time involved with visa applications, 6 weeks is typically the least amount of notice needed to join an expedition.

Cost/Fees Involved: The volunteer placements are based on locations in Madagascar and Fiji, run and maintained by Blue Ventures. Costs vary and are available from the Blue Ventures website.

Meals/Accommodations: Accommodations and meals are covered in the expedition cost payable to Blue Ventures.

Minimum Stay: Typically 6 weeks but volunteers are welcomed to stay for shorter/longer periods of time.

Maximum Stay: None

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations:

Health Requirements: Good standard of physical fitness required to participate in daily research dives. All volunteers are required to pass a 400 m. Swim test before commencing dive training. Vaccinations are dependent on the expedition site and volunteers should consult a medical professional regarding required vaccinations before departure.

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations:

Special Skills Required: Due to the training received on site, volunteers do not need to be in possession of any special skills before joining an expedition.

Type of Volunteer Work: Environmentally minded individuals with an interest in marine conservation and a desire to see the marine world up close and endeavor to help carry out research that will see it safeguarded for future generations. Volunteers must be willing to work hard and endure sometimes tough conditions in a remote but beautiful areas can interact and integrate with the populations of local villages.

About: Blue Ventures is an award-winning non-profit organization dedicated to working with local communities in the developing world to conserve threatened marine habitats and resources for the betterment of people and nature.

Our teams comprise international and local scientists, educators, coastal managers and volunteers, who work in close partnership with local communities and institutions to carry out a wide range of projects that encompass capacity building, environmental education, ecological and socio-economic research, and the establishment of community-run Marine Protected Areas.

Blue Ventures continues to offer opportunities and field experiences to people wanting to become actively involved in marine conservation, providing training in scientific research, community outreach and on-the-ground conservation.

The focus of our research varies between expeditions depending on seasonal changes affecting the marine life at the heart of our studies. Ongoing research programs are centered on promoting sustainable practices within local fisheries to ensure that local communities are made aware of the scarcity of marine resources in the area and the approaches needed to safeguard them for future generations.

At our long running research site in Andavadoaka, Madagascar and our newly established one on Leleuvia, Fiji, Blue Ventures staff and volunteers are united in working towards the long term goal of establishing a long term, sustainable and robust approach to Marine Conservation that can be adopted the world over.

Volunteering with Blue Ventures is a rewarding experience where your work will form part of a widely acclaimed and acknowledged system that is making a difference to the prosperity and longevity of marine areas and the populations dependent on them in remote coastal communities all over the world.

Bottlenose Dolphin Research Institute

Organization Type: Marine science and education centre for field research, conservation and hands-on courses in dolphins ecology.

Website: <http://www.thebdri.com>

Country: Italy

Volunteer Contact/Email: Chief Biologist Bruno Diaz Lopez, info@thebdri.com

Phone: +39 346 081 5414

Age Requirements: It is open to anyone age 18 and above.

Language: English

Advanced Notice: A potential volunteer should contact us 2 weeks before the volunteering period.

Cost/Fees Involved: Fee amount from 67 € per day. The fee includes accommodation in an apartment, dolphins research training, certificate of attendance, printed material and all associated field and laboratory costs during your stay with us.

Meals/Accommodations: Accommodation in apartment with full kitchen (gas and electricity included) and full set of cooking utensils. Foods are available at the local supermarkets within walking distance at your own expense.

Minimum Stay: Volunteers must commit to at least 6 days period.

Maximum Stay: Three months

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: The project runs weekly from February to November / arrive Monday

Health Requirements: Participants should be comfortable on a boat and working as a team.

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations: Sardinia Island is a marine biologist's paradise and the dolphin behaviour you will witness is unsurpassed. An ancient land with an ancient language, Sardinia is a uniquely fascinating place at the centre of the Mediterranean Sea. Working with us and our staff, you will rotate between tasks on land and sea. You will also have the opportunity to snorkel in the sea-grass beds, walk the beaches of the research area and meet the local people.

Special Skills Required: No specific experience is required to participate as volunteers with the BDRI. Dedicated to those who are interesting in participating in dolphin research and conservation campaigns.

Type of Volunteer Work: Volunteers assist researchers with data collection and recording while on the boat, helping to locate and keep track of dolphins, recording behavioural data, environmental information and recording sounds, video or photos. If you are looking for volunteer opportunity that incorporates boat based field work, marine mammals research, intensive training and mentoring in marine ecology, and encouragement to work hard, have fun, and learn from the dolphins and each other, then consider volunteering with the BDRI.

About: BDRI researchers carry out one of the longest ongoing research projects of a resident dolphin population in the Mediterranean Sea. BDRI is partner to ACCOBAMS, the UNEP's Agreement on the Conservation of Cetaceans in the Black Sea, Mediterranean Sea and Contiguous Atlantic Area. This project's long-term information on identifiable individual dolphins available from 1991 to the present is very important among field studies of dolphin-human interactions, food availability patterns, and how dolphins structure their lives in a changing environment. If the results of our research to date are any indication, then this year's project should be very productive, both in terms of our own enlightenment about the complex biology of these dolphins and in producing information bearing directly on the conservation of this species. Unlike many other research teams our volunteering program offers a wide spectrum of educational tools that go beyond the "average research period". All expeditions are designed to enhance our awareness of dolphins, other marine life and the marine habitat that surrounds us. Our goal is to have each volunteer depart our centre with a greater understanding and appreciation of the marine environment and the wealth of life it supports.

Brethren Volunteer Service

Organization Type: Faith based volunteer organization

Website: www.brethrenvolunteerservice.org

Countries: USA, Belgium, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Brazil, Columbia, Croatia, Dominican Republic, France, Germany, Guatemala, Honduras, Hungary, Ireland, Japan, Mexico, Netherlands, Nigeria, Northern Ireland, Republic of Ireland, Serbia

Volunteer Contact/Email: Sharon Flaten, sflaten_gb@brethren.org or bvs_gb@brethren.org

Phone: 800-323-8039 or 847-742-5100

Age Requirements: Minimum of 18 years of age

Language:

Advanced Notice: Potential volunteers should allow for 3 or 4 months before their chosen orientation for the application process to take place. The application process needs to be completed 6 weeks prior to orientation.

Cost/Fees Involved: \$75 Background Check, Cost of travel to Orientation (Location varies within the states), \$500 for volunteers serving overseas

Meals/Accommodations: Volunteers are provided room and board by the project. BVS recommends a food allowance of \$25-\$50 per volunteer per week depending on the location, project setting and living situation.

Minimum Stay: Volunteers taking an assignment in the US committ themselves to a one year term of service. Volunteers who are assigned to an international placement are committed for a two year term. Older adult volunteers (age 50 and up) serve a minimun of 6 months.

Maximum Stay:

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: Mandatory volunteer orientations take place 4 times a year: January/February, April/May (Older Adult Unit), July/August and September/October.

Health Requirements: Volunteers must be able to work 40 hours per week.

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations:

Special Skills Required:

Type of Volunteer Work: Volunteer work varies depending on the project. Projects include: working with children, youth and young adults, and senior citizens; general community services; the disabled; working on farms; agriculture; hunger and homelessness; prisoners and the prison system; refugees and human rights; peace and justice issues; domestic violence; construction; health care; outdoor ministries; community organizing, development and advocacy; teaching; environmental issues; congregations.

About: BVS was established in 1948 by young people in the Church of the Brethren to provide an intentional avenue for putting faith into action. The program was one of the first faith based volunteer organizations in the country. While it is a ministry of the Church of the Brethren, volunteers do *not* need to be Brethren. Volunteers attend a three week orientation where project placements take place based on the interests of the volunteer and the current need. Work at projects begins immediately after orientation. ALL ARE WELCOME!

WARNING: Potential impact may be both global and personal.



The Bridge Foundation

Organization Type: Disadvantaged youth development

Website: www.thebridgefoundationghana.org

Country: Ghana

Volunteer Contact/Email: Charles Nkrumah, planet35@hotmail.com, tbfgghana@yahoo.com

Phone: +23321229933

Age Requirements: 16+

Language: English

Advanced Notice: 2 months

Cost/Fees Involved: GH¢10 (US\$ 8) per day – living accommodation

Meals/Accommodations: Volunteer accommodation located on TBF premises

Minimum Stay: 3 months

Maximum Stay:

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: Any time

Health Requirements:

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations:

Special Skills Required:

Type of Volunteer Work: Volunteers needed to assist in the impacting of knowledge in math, English and physical education to children in Roman Ridge (Maamobi Junior High School) – Accra Ghana. Volunteers needed with knowledge in sports / physical training, computers and with knowledge of environmental management. Volunteers also needed to assist in the promotion of the organization as well as sharing ideas and helping to acquire funds / equipment and partnerships with other organizations around the globe.



About: The Bridge Foundation (TBF) is a registered humanitarian non-profit organization in Ghana, with the primary objective of promoting human resource development, focusing on assisting disadvantaged and less privileged children/youth in deprived communities through educational, vocational skills training support and sports development, to empower them to assert abilities and capabilities required to improve their livelihood and to grow into responsible adulthood.

Towards the fulfillment of our objective, we have built and established a Youth Sports Development and Resource Center at Roman Ridge, Accra, comprising of a boxing gym, table tennis unit, IT unit and accommodation units. Against this background, the foundation seeks to empower people through partnerships in their communities to increase access, equity and opportunity to development. The Bridge Foundation believes that socio-economic development and poverty reduction requires collaborative efforts between central governments and international and local non-government agencies, thus we often collaborate with other organizations that are fighting for the same or similar cause.



Bulgarian Society for Animal Protection & Preservation

Organization Type: Animal rescue organization, sterilization center and shelter for injured, abused, neglected and homeless dogs and cats.

Website: www.bsapp.org

Country: Bulgaria

Volunteer Contact/Email: Jennifer Kudashov, bsappbg@hotmail.com

Phone:

Age Requirements: Volunteers must be at least 18 years of age.

Language:

Advanced Notice: One week advance notice

Cost/Fees Involved: BSAPP does not charge a fee or require a mandatory donation

Meals/Accommodations: None

Minimum Stay: Volunteers can commit as much time to BSAPP as they are able, but ideally we want volunteers to commit to work at least 2-3 hours per day.

Maximum Stay: None

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: BSAPP needs volunteer help all year round. We need volunteers most during the winter months (November - March) when volunteering rates drop

Health Requirements: Volunteers must be able to handle medium to large size dogs easily; some lifting of heavy objects will be required

Travel Tips, Warnings & Recommendations: Volunteers can work with the dogs and cats by taking them for walks, grooming, feeding, bathing, watering and training them. Volunteers can also clean out cages, do laundry, clean the clinic and other areas of BSAPP's shelter. Additional work includes helping improve the condition of the shelter by building dog runs, dog houses, cat enclosures and other general improvement works. Help in organizing fundraising events and creating promotional materials is also needed.

Special Skills Required: None

Bulgarian Society for Animal Protection & Preservation

Type of Volunteer Work: We need people who are willing to get themselves dirty, cleaning, feeding, bathing and walking animals, if one likes to do maintenance, painting, cleaning windows or sweeping down cobwebs. Persons who has fundraising or public relations experience, likes folding bills or copying files.

About: BSAPP is one of the few animal protection organizations operating in Bulgaria today. Although it was established in 1998 by Dr. Stoyan Stoyanov and has many Bulgarian members, the organization today enjoys wide support by the international community both inside and outside of Bulgaria. Bulgaria has a long history of problems with dog and cat homelessness, neglect and abuse which continues today even after joining the European Union.

The organization's focus is on the rescue of injured, abused, neglected and homeless dogs and cats as well as working to give them a second chance by placing them in loving homes. BSAPP is also a strong supporter of the sterilization of dogs and cats in order to control the population and thus provides low cost, no cost sterilizations at its clinic. BSAPP is working hard to launch one of the first comprehensive education campaigns in Sofia to promote compassion for animals and sterilization.



Care for Dogs

Organization Type: Dog rescue center focusing on decreasing the numbers of stray dogs through spays and adoptions.

Website: www.carefordogs.org

Country: Chiang Mai, Thailand

Volunteer Contact/Email: Karin Hawelka and Amandine Lecesne, contact@carefordogs.org

Phone: 0066 (0)8 47 52 52 55

Age Requirements: There is no minimum age requirement, although please consider that our hundred + dogs could be overwhelming to small children.

Language: Basic English, German, or Thai

Advanced Notice: Please call or e-mail a few days before coming. More advance notice is always appreciated!

Cost/Fees Involved: Donations welcomed and appreciated but not expected.

Meals/Accommodations: As a young charity we are not able to provide free accommodation or meals. You could either stay in one of the many guesthouses or hotels in Chiang Mai or do a Village Homestay in our village (Basic accommodations starting at 200 baht per night.) There are also two resorts near our shelter. Meals (vegetarian options available) are available at roadside restaurants or at a nearby resort.

Minimum Stay: No minimum

Maximum Stay: None - the longer the better!

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: We could use the extra helping hands all year long!

Health Requirements:

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations:

Special Skills Required: Individuals with a veterinary medicine background are always encouraged to come and help!

Type of Volunteer Work: We need individuals to help socialize our doggies through grooming/bathing, walking, light training, and playing! We sometimes need help with bandaging, wound repair, administering IV fluids, doing heartworm tests, as well as transporting dogs to and from the vet clinic. On occasion, we also need help going into temples to provide food, vaccinations, and medical support to the dogs located there. Additionally, assistance with fundraising is always appreciated!

About: One of the first things you'll notice about Thailand are the dogs; often hungry, sick, frightened, and lonely, eagerly digging through trash. There are thousands of them, roaming through the streets or dumped at temples - in need of food, medical assistance, shelter, care, and play. But they get none of that. Instead, they get shooed away. At best ignored, at worse killed, poisoned or sometimes eaten. As we petted their bony bodies and fell in love with their hugs, we felt we had to help. Every day we go out and look for dogs that are in need of care. And, everyday, we find them.

You can help make a difference for the homeless dogs in Thailand by joining the volunteer program at Care for Dogs. We run a shelter for approx. 100 puppies and dogs, about 20 minutes outside of Chiang Mai. The shelter is nestled in the middle of a typical Northern Thai landscape, surrounded by beautiful rice paddies with a view of the mountains and the well-known Doi Suthep. This is the place to find beauty and meaning!

Caribbean Conservation Corp

Organization Type: Non-Profit sea turtle research and conservation

Website: www.cccturtle.org

Country: Cost Rica

Volunteer Contact/Email: Dan Evans, resprog@cccturtle.org

Phone: 1-800-678-7853

Age Requirements: The minimum age is 18 without a parent/guardian and 14 is accompanied by a parent/guardian

Language: None, though Spanish is helpful.

Advanced Notice: Minimum of two weeks, but dates fill up quickly.

Cost/Fees Involved: Fee varies based on program, generally either US\$1,399 or \$1,599 for a one week program.

Meals/Accommodations: Yes, included in the program fee, is in-country transportation from the international airport to the research station, and two nights hotel accommodations in San Jose.

Minimum Stay: One week for the Leatherback Program (mid-March—May) and three night (reduced fee) for the Green Turtle Program (late June—October)

Maximum Stay: Generally stays are no longer than four weeks.

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: Seasonal help based on sea turtle nesting seasons. Leatherback programs run mid-March through May, while Green Turtle Programs run late June through October.

Health Requirements: While there are no extreme physical conditions or psychological demands, be sure you are able to walk at least 5 or 7 miles of beach each night for 4 or 5 hours. You must have good night vision. You should be able to carry about a 5 lb pack (backpacks are used to carry the team's field equipment) while walking on sand. Walking on sand is difficult and not recommended for people with heart conditions, prosthetic limbs, or limited mobility. Phobias about being in the dark may pose a problem. Minor injuries or scrapes due to falls or tripping can occur during nighttime work. Please also be aware that there is a good chance of getting sand thrown on you by a turtles flipper, with the possibility of getting it in your eyes. Diabetes without previous experience of physical exertion in a hot climate should speak with a doctor first.

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations: Volunteers need to accurately evaluate their ability to ensure that they can participate fully and effectively. Phobias to snakes, encounters are unlikely, and insects may pose a problem. Those allergic to insect bites, bees or wasps please come prepared with appropriate medication. To avoid dehydration and other heat related you must bring a water bottle during field activities. Diabetes without previous experience of physical exertion in a hot climate should speak with a doctor first.

Special Skills Required: None, only good physical condition

Type of Volunteer Work:

About: Join one of the Caribbean Conservation Corporation's (CCC) Research Participant Volunteer Programs. CCC provides a very unique travel and research programs to give an outstanding opportunity to see the depth of CCC's research and to be a part of it! Participant volunteers have helped CCC's research and conservation efforts in Tortuguero since the early 1950s. You can continue that tradition by assisting CCC's biologists study leatherback sea turtles, green sea turtles, and Tortuguero's bird species. By joining one of CCC's Research Programs, you will not only support our research efforts financially, you will get the chance to work with us and other research participant volunteers in Tortuguero, Costa Rica. Research Participants stay at our facilities on-site at the Phipps Biological Field Station, located in a tropical rainforest setting, and just steps from the black sand beach. You will work hands-on with our research staff on the program of your choice. Please understand that CCC's research programs are scientific research projects, not guided tours or package holidays. Participants will be assisting researchers with scientific field work at a remote field station, and when not working you will have unsupervised free time to relax and enjoy the nature surrounding you.

Caribbean Volunteer Expeditions

Organization Type: We are a non-profit organization with projects in historic preservation, archeology, and cemetery inventories (genealogy).

Website: <http://www.cvexp.org>

Countries: Throughout the Caribbean

Volunteer Contact/Email: Anne Hersh, ahershcv@aol.com

Phone: 607 9632 7856

Age Requirements:

Language:

Advanced Notice: Participant should sign up at least one month before the project date.

Cost/Fees Involved: Our fees include room, board, local transportation, group leader, and administrative fee - usually from \$800 - \$1,200 per week

Meals/Accommodations: We provide room and board.

Minimum Stay: Projects are one week - usually from 4 - 6 hours per day.

Maximum Stay: NA

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: Projects are generally from November through March.

Health Requirements: Generally we are working outside in a tropical climate.

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations:

Special Skills Required: No experience required; however, architects, surveyors, and people with historic preservation skills are most welcome.

Type of Volunteer Work: Work Projects: Measuring, mapping, photographing ruins and buildings, filling out cemetery or historic building survey forms, light carpentry, painting, archeology—digging, sifting, etc.

About: CVE was started in 1991. We recruit volunteers to work with local Caribbean historic preservation agencies (local National Trusts, US Park Service, Heritage Societies etc.) with projects they need help with. We have worked in the Bahamas, US and British Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico, Dominican Republic, Antigua, Anguilla, St Kitts, Nevis, Dominica, St Lucia, St. Vincent, Barbados, Grenada, Trinidad, Tobago, Honduras, Guyana, Surinam, and Aruba.



Cart Horse Protection Association

Organization Type: Animal welfare organization providing services and protection to over 500 working cart horses, which are used to collect scrap metal.

Website:

Country: Cape Town, South Africa

Volunteer Contact/Email: Megan White, chpagm@mweb.co.za

Phone: +27 21 535 3435

Age Requirements: 21 years and older

Language: English

Advanced Notice: One month notice period

Cost/Fees Involved: No

Meals/Accommodations: Accommodation is provided. All other costs pertaining to the volunteer's stay is for the volunteer's own expense.

Minimum Stay: Two weeks, four hours per day.

Maximum Stay: One month

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: Volunteers are needed throughout the year.

Health Requirements: Volunteers must be fit to do physical work, as volunteer duties entail jobs such as mucking out of stables, cleaning of yard etc. Volunteers must have tetanus vaccination.

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations: Volunteers can visit www.tourismcapetown.co.za for safety tips whilst in Cape Town and other relevant information pertaining to visiting and travelling in and around the city

Special Skills Required: Volunteers must have knowledge and experience in working with horses.

Type of Volunteer Work: Volunteers are needed to assist at the Recovery and Rehabilitation Centre. Duties will include feeding, grooming and turning out of horses, mucking out of stables, cleaning and disinfecting of stables and yard, cleaning and disinfecting of equipment, clearing of paddocks, weed pulling, assisting Inspectors when required, cleaning of tack and other duties related to stable yards.

About: The Cart Horse Protection Association (CHPA) aims to protect the working cart horses from abuse and contribute to the upliftment of the carting community living on the Cape Flats.

CHPA provides static and mobile clinic services, support, education and training to under developed communities living on the Cape Flats who use horses and carts to collect scrap metal as a means of generating an income for themselves and their families.

Static and Outreach Clinics provide feed, a professional Ferrier service, harness repairs, basic veterinary care and treatments, free de-worming and tetanus vaccinations and education and hands-on practical training of cart horse owners and drivers, on proper care and health maintenance of their horse.

Patrol and Call Out Response Unit polices the cart horse drivers by conducting road patrols, scrap metal yard inspections and responding to reports of abuse and overloading from members of the public, law enforcement and traffic officials. Penalties for the contravention of the Animal Protection Act by cart horse drivers vary, depending on the severity of the case and the working history of the owner and driver and include verbal and written warnings, confiscation of the harness, confiscation of the horse for rest and rehabilitation and prosecution.

Veterinary and Rehabilitation Unit responds to veterinary emergencies, providing prompt and professional services to sick and injured horses. Common cases seen are motor vehicle accidents, colic, poisoning, dog-attacks, mares foaling down, respiratory infections, dehydration and exhaustion.

Recovery and Rehabilitation Centre is situated on the N2 near Somerset West consists of 26 stables, paddocks with shelters, tack room, feed barn, an indoor arena and accommodation for an on-site manager and grooms. The Centre provides:

A place of safety for working cart horses whose owners and drivers continue to abuse and neglect them, despite our efforts at education and the services offered at the static clinics

Accommodation for sick and injured horses requiring palliative care

A safe haven for working cart horses needing rest and rehabilitation

Maternity care for foaling mares.

Central Michigan University's Alternative Breaks

Organization Type: A student volunteer program of the Central Michigan University Volunteer Center advised by a professional staff coordinator and led by a 17-member student board.

Website: <http://www.volunteer.cmich.edu>

Country: U.S. and abroad

Volunteer Contact/Email: Shawna Ross, coordinator, Central Michigan University Volunteer Center, volunteer.center@cmich.edu

Phone: 989-774-7685

Age Requirements: Must be a Central Michigan University student age 18 or older.

Language: n/a

Advanced Notice: Particularly for Alternative Winter Break, Alternative Spring Break and Alternative Summer Break, there is an application and training/preparation process that begins several months before each trip.

Cost/Fees Involved: Students pay their own way on the trips, although they also conduct fundraisers to help offset the cost.

Meals/Accommodations: The organizations for which we're volunteering typically provide the student volunteers accommodations and some or all meals.

Minimum Stay: It varies; students participating in Alternative Winter Break, Alternative Spring Break and Alternative Summer Break all commit to five days of eight-hour (or more) volunteer shifts. Alternative Weekends, on the other hand, entail a commitment of a couple of days.

Maximum Stay: We send students on weeklong service trips in December, March and May during breaks in Central Michigan University's academic year. We also send students on weekend trips throughout the academic year.

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations:

Health Requirements: Each student should be confident that s/he will be physically and mentally able to perform the tasks anticipated at the site for which s/he is selected.

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations: We send students on weeklong service trips in December, March and May during breaks in our academic year. We also send students on weekend trips throughout the academic year.

Central Michigan University's Alternative Breaks

Special Skills Required: While not necessarily a “skill,” we do strive to ensure that each student volunteer has an interest in the issue being addressed at his or her Alternative Breaks site. We send students to 10 to 12 sites for Alternative Winter Break and 10 to 12 sites for Alternative Spring Break, and our student volunteers select their respective sites based on *issues* in which they are interested (i.e. homelessness, child abuse, education, wildlife conservation, care for the elderly, disaster relief, etc.); the student volunteers do not know *where* they are going or with what organization they’ll be volunteering until they’ve indicated their issue(s) of interest and have been assigned to a site. This ensures a meaningful experience for the volunteers and also prevents volunteers from selecting a site because of its desirable geographic location or passing one over because it is in a less desirable location.

Type of Volunteer Work: Our students perform a wide range of tasks, including animal rescue; home and business construction, remodeling and demolition; disaster site and park cleanup; meal delivery for the homebound; event planning; fundraising; afterschool program administration; classroom assistance; assembling care packages; cooking; cleaning; and more.

About: ABOUT THE PROGRAM: Central Michigan University's Alternative Breaks is a service trip program that, since 1994, has provided CMU students with opportunities to travel domestically or abroad to experience intense service projects that address communities' needs. Teams led by trained CMU student site leaders are placed into diverse communities to engage in public service and social issue-based education during winter, spring and summer breaks, as well as on weekends during the academic year. The program empowers students to become lifelong active citizens who make their communities a priority in life decisions. In 2007, CMU's Alternative Breaks — a program of the university's Volunteer Center — was named National Program of the Year by Break Away, the national alternative breaks organization.

ABOUT THE UNIVERSITY: Central Michigan University has more than 200 academic programs in a variety of disciplines; in addition to its 20,000-student main campus in Mount Pleasant, Mich., the university offers courses in 60 locations and online. CMU has been known by generations of students as a large university with a smaller-college feel and a focus on student engagement and leadership. Providing service for the public good is an institutional priority. To learn more, visit <http://www.cmich.edu>.

Club Du Vieux Manoir

Organization Type: Rescue and restoration work on ancient monuments and sites.

Website: www.clubduvieuxmanoir.asso.fr

Country: France

Volunteer Contact/Email: M. Francois Berte, clubduvieuxmanoir@free.fr

Phone: 00 33 (0)3 44 72 33 98

Age Requirements: 18 years old (14 during summer holiday - Youth Camp)

Language: None

Advanced Notice: At least one month before the time of arrival

Cost/Fees Involved: 14 Euro per day for the first 15 days, then it is free of charge

Meals/Accommodations: Arrangements can be made for accommodations.

Minimum Stay: 15 days

Maximum Stay: Up to 1 year (usually from 15—90 days)

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: Work is possible all year - Easier from April to October

Health Requirements: Vaccinations are mandatory, good general health, activities are inside and/or outside

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations:

Special Skills Required: No special skills. Volunteers must be willing to do different kinds of activities from office work to manual work inside and outside on old monuments.

Type of Volunteer Work: *See Special Skills*

About: Discover France and French culture by coming onto a site!

Since 1952 the Club du Vieux Manoir groups together people who want to spend some of their spare time doing rescue and restoration work on ancient monuments and sites. On these sites two aims are pursued: historic monuments and heritage are brought back to life; participants are offered a leisure activity where they learn how to use their hands and acquire basic techniques.



Cochrane Ecological Institute

Organization Type: Cochrane Ecological Institute - Cochrane Wildlife Reserve Society (CEI) undertakes wildlife rescue, zoological field research, public education, development of non-invasive survey methodology, and breeding endangered species for reintroduction.

Website: www.ceinst.org

Country: Canada

Volunteer Contact/Email: Clio Smeeton, cei@nucleus.com

Phone:

Age Requirements: Must be over 19

Language: English or French

Advanced Notice: At least 3 months, placements are limited.

Cost/Fees Involved: CEI charges \$10.00 per day to cover utilities.

Meals/Accommodations: At the CEI we provide accomodation. If in the field volunteers must provide their own tents, field equipment etc.

Minimum Stay: One month

Maximum Stay: No specific limit. This depends on if we have a long-term or short-term project (see *about organization*, on right)

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: Generally between April & November

Health Requirements: Must be fit, able to lift heavy objects and walk more than 5 Km per day over rough terrain.

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations: Canada is a nice place... so no need for warnings! But there is no public transport of any kind near the CEI and the closest village is 30 Km from the CEI...if you live in North America, having your own car would be useful!

Special Skills Required: No special skills, we can train volunteers. Health insurance and a clean international driving license is mandatory.

Type of Volunteer Work: The work at the CEI is varied and will involve feeding the animals, facility maintenance, assistance with the ecological educational programmes, wildlife record keeping and observation, assistance on wildlife rehabilitation, construction and repair of enclosures, gardening, and involvement in new programmes. Also, the CEI could not operate without the funds raised from our Social Initiative (HappyTails Pet Retreat, www.happytailsretreat.com) so all volunteers will be expected to help out at Happy Tails. We, at the CEI, really *enjoy* having volunteers here, but volunteers are not essential to the operation of the CEI.

About: The CEI really does encourage volunteers and, more importantly Interns, to consider undertaking their own small project while here, on something that they find really interesting. This gives volunteers/interns a focus and a stake in working at the CEI. It is also useful in demonstrating experience and ability for any future employers, as a lot of the stuff that is done at the CEI is cutting edge research it provides the opportunity for producing, at the very minimum a Poster presentation, or a scientific Note, or even a full length Paper. If you are considering looking at this possibility as a feasible thing to do there is a lot at the CEI that can be studied.

On-Going Programs

SWIFT FOX: Currently we have the largest swift fox captive breeding colony in Canada.

WILDLIFE REHABILITATION: The CEI has been undertaking wildlife rehabilitation and release since 1972.

WILDLIFE RESEARCH: This also largely dependent upon having the money to undertake it (gas, vehicle, etc.) But what we have to do is evaluate existing potential release sites for various species and look for new sites.

WHALEFORCE: If you have an opportunity to check out our website and go to the Whaleforce section, you will see that more on that project.

Four New & Upcoming Programs

1) Teaching environmental studies in French, 2) Creating a Unique New Doorway to Culture, Ecology and Art, 3) Bear Program, 4) Establishment of a illustrative garden on native plants.

The Colobus Trust

Organization Type: The Colobus Trust is a not-for-profit organization established in 1997 on the southern coast of Kenya to promote the conservation, preservation and protection of primates, in particular the Angolan Black and White Colobus monkey (*Colobus angolensis palliatus*)

Website: www.colobustrust.org

Country: Kenya

Volunteer Contact/Email: Onemus Macharia or Gwili Gibbon,
volunteers@colobustrust.org

Phone: +2549(0) 720731073, +254 (0)202024139, +254(0) 711479453

Age Requirements: Colobologists program members must be at least 22 years. No upper age limit is set though one needs to bear in mind the physical demands of the work and the heat and humidity. Eco-volunteers program members must be at least 18 years of age.

Language: English (spoken) We have staff who also speak German and French.

Advanced Notice: Long enough to complete the booking process and receive the volunteer: Confirmation of availability of space takes an email. Once date of arrival is confirmed, arrangements are made to collect the volunteer in Mombasa city (airport pick ups, railway station or any bus station)

Cost/Fees Involved: Various programs exist for Colobus Trust volunteers are offered. Please visit our website for details.

Meals/Accommodations: Accommodation, laundry services provided at no extra cost. Meals prepared for free if the volunteers contribute a weekly budget of Ksh 1,500 (about 20 US dollars) per person per week. Fast internet is also available at a cost of Ksh. 1,000 per month.

Minimum Stay: Three weeks

Maximum Stay: One month

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: Help is needed throughout the year.

Health Requirements: Healthy enough to work in the field, sometimes under hot, humid tropical weather conditions. Mandatory vaccinations for travel in Kenya are required, rabies vaccinations are recommended. The coast is a malaria area, so all volunteers should come with impregnated mosquito nets (square/box type for single bed), insect repellent and anti-malarial drugs.

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations: No warnings, only be sensible not to trust everyone on the road and the beach. Like any other part of the world, one has to select the people they approach for help. Policemen and other uniformed persons are likely to help you honestly.

Special Skills Required: Anyone with a passion for wildlife conservation

Type of Volunteer Work: Animal welfare: Cleaning cages for rehabilitation none-human primates, preparation of feeding rations, change of linen, cages enrichment, etc. Primates rescue operations: Capture of injured monkeys for the rehabilitation centre, Car for seek/injured monkeys under the supervision of a veterinarian or trained assistant.

Habitat conservation: Planting of indigenous tree seedlings in local forest patches, working closely with traditional kaya (holy forests) elders. Electrocution management and prevention: Insulation of electric cables under supervision by the Kenya power and lighting company, tree trimming along the power lines. Colobus watches: Monitoring of the colobus troops on the Diani forest. Other animals rescue: Removal of snares from the forests, anti-poaching campaigns, etc.

About: Our Mission Statement is:

To promote, in close co-operation with other organizations and local communities, the conservation, preservation and protection of primates, in particular the Angolan Colobus monkey (*Colobus angolensis palliatus*) and its associated coastal forest habitat in Kenya.

The Trust's Goals are to:

- Conserve and protect the Angolan Colobus and its habitat in Kenya;
- Inspire interest and participation in primate and environmental conservation;
- Promote the welfare of primates and to reduce the impact of human development on the environment in Diani and Kenya;
- Further understanding of the primate species and their conservation;
- Be able to respond and deliver a high quality primate rescue and rehabilitation service; and
- Become a model for other conservation based charities in Kenya to follow and emulate; a considerate employer through training and fair wage structure, to be self-funding, producing high quality valuable work and to be transparent.

Concordia

Organization Type: International short term volunteer projects worldwide including conservation, restoration, archaeology, construction, arts, children's play-schemes and teaching.

Website: www.concordia-iyе.org.uk

Countries: Armenia, Austria, Argentina, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Botswana, Canada, Catalonia-SPAIN, China, Costa Rica, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Ecuador, Egypt, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Greenland, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Kyrgyzstan, Kenya, Korea, Lithuania, Macedonia, Montenegro, Malawi, Malaysia, Mexico, Mongolia, Mozambique, Morocco, Netherlands, Nepal, Nigeria, Peru, Poland, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Slovakia, Spain, Switzerland, Tanzania, Thailand, Togo, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, USA, Vietnam, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Volunteer Contact/Email: Francesco Bonini, info@concordia-iyе.org.uk

Phone: 01273 422218

Age Requirements:

Language: English is used in most projects as official language; a limited number of projects might require a basic knowledge of the local language.

Advanced Notice: Apply as early as possible, in order to have time to prepare.

Cost/Fees Involved: Volunteers pay a registration fee of £150 and fund their own travel and insurance.

Meals/Accommodations: Board and accommodation is free of charge for projects in Europe, North America, Japan and South Korea. For projects in Latin America, Asia, Middle East and Africa volunteer pay an extra on arrival fee of approx. £100 that covers food and accommodation, as well as funding the programme in the country.

Minimum Stay: Projects last on average for 2-4 weeks with specific dates for each project; volunteers must commit to the entire length of the project.

Maximum Stay: *See above*

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: Most projects take place between June and September, although we offer a smaller Winter and Spring Programme.

Health Requirements: Volunteers with special needs or health conditions should inform Concordia in order to provide the most suitable project.

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations:

Special Skills Required: No special skills, just motivation and commitment

Type of Volunteer Work: These are just a few examples of projects:

- Volunteering with refugees
- Setting up a music festival
- Restoring a castle
- Assisting with holidays for people with special needs
- Volunteering at a nature reserve
- Carrying out archaeological work
- Rebuilding a children's playground
- Helping with arts activities
- Promoting organic farming
- Organising activities for street children
- Teaching English

About: Concordia works in close co-operation with over 80 partner organizations worldwide, all independent organizations who share a common involvement in short-term international volunteer projects. Each organization runs a programme of projects in its own country and sends volunteers to participate in projects abroad. Concordia does not organize projects outside the UK but acts as a sending organization for UK volunteers. Likewise, Concordia takes volunteers from our international partners in our national programme in the UK. This system of exchange, which relies on mutual trust, has been established over many years and enables volunteer costs to be kept to a minimum. Concordia is a member of the Alliance of European Voluntary Services and CCIVS www.alliance-network.org www.unesco.org/ccivs. We stand for:

- Worldwide Co-operation and Exchange
- Supporting Local Communities Through Volunteering
- Promoting Cultural Understanding
- International Friendships
- Opportunities for All
- Personal Development
- Group Living
- Global Education

<http://www.concordia-iye.org.uk/about.shtml>

Corfu Donkey Rescue

Organization Type: Animal Rescue/Retirement Shelter for Donkeys

Website: www.corfu-donkeys.com

Country: Corfu, Greece

Volunteer Contact/Email: Judy Quinn, judyquin@otenet.gr

Phone: 0030 694 737 5992, 0030 26610 91943

Age Requirements: Age 17 and over

Language: English is preferred although not vital

Advanced Notice: One days notice is acceptable. If you need help in securing accommodations we suggest giving one month's advance notice.

Cost/Fees Involved: No Fees are charged by CDR however volunteers are expected to pay for their own accommodations and living expenses, food, etc. Accommodation cost is usually €50- €70 per person, per week.

Meals/Accommodations: We can help you secure accommodations, but this is not paid for by CDR, nor are meals.

Minimum Stay: One week, working six days (8 hours per day = 4 hours in the morning and 4 hours in the evening).

Maximum Stay: No maximum time restrictions.

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: All

Health Requirements: Some of the work requires heavy lifting so a certain level of fitness is required, However additional jobs may be given to suit a volunteers abilities.

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations: November through April is our rainy season so suitable warm clothing should be brought (Waterproofs, Wellington boots, etc.)

Special Skills Required: No special skills required

Type of Volunteer Work:

Clean out stables and grazing areas

Feed the animals

Giving there animals their medication

Groom the animals.

Help build and maintain the shelter

About: Corfu Donkey Rescue relies solely on people who will work for nothing except the satisfaction and pleasure of learning, working and knowing you are doing a much needed and worthwhile job. Nobody is paid; we all do it because 'we care'.

Do you need experience? No. The most important requirement is to bring your love for the donkeys, a good spirit and willingness to do all the variety of work necessary to keep them in good shape. First the basic work. It means, starting with giving all the donkeys' water and hay, the extra food and medicine for those who need it. Cleaning the fields; brushing and cleaning feet; walking the donkeys and dogs; looking after the cats, rabbits; taking the tourists around; they like to know the story of the Corfu donkeys and how CDR is helping them recover.

We can help you organize your visit -

We can find you various accommodations according to requirements and your budgets. Scooter, quad or push bike hire is necessary (the shelter is in the countryside) but we can get you competitive rates. You must commit for a minimum number of weeks, days and hours worked to gain from these offers. The work is hard, it is physical. In the summer it is very hot. In January and February it rains a lot. In spring and autumn the weather is easier to work in but it may rain at times – and in Corfu, rain means rain not showers. At Christmas you can sit in the sun in the day but the temperatures go down at night.

When you are not working there is plenty to see and do on the Island. We will always place you in an area where there is a night life, supermarkets open (many places in Corfu are ghost towns in the winter). Of course Corfu Town is a most magical place, winter and summer.

Please visit our website: www.corfu-donkeys.com

Cretan Animal Welfare Group

Organization Type: Animal Welfare Society, working towards a better future for the animals on Crete and beyond. Medium size society, all volunteers, relies on donations. Cretan Animal Welfare Group (Chrysalis: branch for Campaigning & Humane Education)

Website: www.cawg-greece.com, www.chrysalisgreece.com

Country: Greece

Volunteer Contact/Email: Gyner Vlastou or Rebecca Jacobs,
cawg_crete@otenet.gr

Phone: +30 6944 6903 68 (Mon-Fri 9.00-12.00)

Age Requirements: Preferably 20+ yrs, No top limit but must be fit

Language: English

Advanced Notice: 1 month

Cost/Fees Involved: No

Meals/Accommodations: Accommodation depends on the season, May-Oct. free accommodation. Meals not provided.

Minimum Stay: 2 weeks

Maximum Stay: N/A

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: N/A

Health Requirements: Suggest tetanus vaccination up to date. Reasonably fit.

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations: The roads on Crete are not maintained correctly and become dangerous especially in the summer season with the heavy traffic.

Be aware that many bars serve alcohol which is called Whiskey, gin etc. but is a cheap and dangerous substitute. If you are offered cheap alcoholic drinks and think its too good to be true, it probably is.

Malia is notorious for its noisy nightlife during the summer season, anyone who wishes to spend all night clubbing should book a holiday not volunteer.



Special Skills Required: We especially need people with language skills, graphic design, animal behavior studies, building skills and good organizational skills.

Type of Volunteer Work: We need both people for hands on work with animals (outreach programs, catch neuter release and rescue etc) and for office work (fundraising, organizing and education). Repair work is also needed.

About: CAWG was established in 1995 and is a WSPA Member Society that has developed from primarily animal rescue to now working on a variety of animal welfare issues. We believe in working with the local community and authorities, not against them and that public awareness and education provide the only long term solution.

Projects:

Subsidized Neutering for Owned Dogs: Stray dog population control and promotion of responsible pet ownership

Cat Cafes & CNR: Humanely manage stray cat populations and improve the welfare of the individual

Working Equines Outreach: Improve the welfare standards for working equines and provide a service for the local (mainly elderly) owners

Rescue through foster homes: Alleviate the suffering of individual animals and provide them with a better future

Campaigning: Raise public awareness, gather support from the public and lobbying politicians for legislative change

Humane Education: Initiate long term change through teaching respect for all living beings

Critter Care Wildlife Society

Organization Type: Critter Care rehabilitates for release back to the wild native mammal species - everything from squirrels to black bear cubs.

Website: www.crittercarewildlife.org

Country: Canada, British Columbia near Langle

Volunteer Contact/Email: Gail Martin Founder/Executive Director,
crittercare1@shaw.ca

Phone: 1-604-530-2054

Age Requirements: We would like volunteers to be at least 19

Language:

Advanced Notice: A couple of months a head of time

Cost/Fees Involved: None

Meals/Accommodations: We provide room and board but we do not supply lots of meat. Volunteers would have to buy that themselves.

Minimum Stay: We ask for a 6 to 8 week commitment and during baby season they can work 12 - 14 hours a day.

Maximum Stay: There isn't any but once committed we expect volunteers to stick to it as we have to know how many people we have to care for the animals.

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: All year long but from end of March to Oct is baby season and is very busy.

Health Requirements: Must be able to work long hours and lift up to 50 pounds at times and have a tetanus shot

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations: There are no warnings traveling to our area.

Special Skills Required: Anyone who has worked with animals or is good at building etc.

Type of Volunteer Work: There are many jobs working with the animals, cleaning, laundry, painting, building etc.

About: Critter Care is an amazing place one of a kind. I am the founder/executive director and have rehabbed for 27 years. If you have a love for animals you will love this. You get to raise your own babies during baby season. But it is hard work, long hours but rewarding. But I have strict rules that must be followed or you will be sent home.



Cross-Cultural Solutions

Organization Type: International Not-for-profit Volunteer Abroad Organization

Website: www.crossculturalsolutions.org

Countries: *Africa*-Ghana, Morocco, South Africa, and Tanzania; *Asia*-China, India, Thailand; *Eastern Europe*-Russia; *Latin America*-Brazil, Costa Rica, Guatemala, and Peru

Volunteer Contact/Email: Dava Antoniotti, Director of Program
Enrollment, info@crossculturalsolutions.org

Phone: 1-914-632-0022 or 1-800-380-4777 Toll-Free (USA & Canada)

Age Requirements:

Language: Volunteers must speak fluent English. Language instruction is offered as a part of the cultural activities planned by CCS in-country staff.

Advanced Notice: CCS recommends enrolling at least 60 days prior to your start date.

Cost/Fees Involved: All volunteers pay a U.S. tax-deductible program fee to cover the many expenses associated with providing the highest-quality international volunteer experience. This ensures that the local communities and organizations that CCS works with are not financially burdened by hosting volunteers, and enables the CCS staff to provide volunteers with extensive preparation and support. The fees start at \$1,765 (for one week, Insight Abroad program) and cover meals, accommodations, transportation to and from volunteer placements, various cultural activities, and travel medical insurance. The fee is comprehensive and on a sliding scale depending on when you volunteer and the duration of your stay. Many CCS volunteers fundraise and the organization accepts USD and GBP.

Meals/Accommodations: Lodging and all meals are provided at the CCS Home-Base where CCS staff cooks prepare healthy meals that reflect the local cuisine. Unlimited safe drinking water is also provided.

Minimum Stay: Volunteers typically work approximately 3–5 hours a day, five days per week. Programs are offered from 1-12 weeks.

Maximum Stay: Volunteer programs are offered up to 12 weeks

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: Volunteer opportunities are available year-round, and start dates are listed online.

Health Requirements: CCS strives to make volunteering abroad accessible to everyone; there are no health requirements. Several of the CCS Home-Bases are also wheelchair accessible. There are certain health requirements put in place by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) that are country-specific.

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations: CCS staff works with you to help you prepare for your international volunteering experience. The organization offers travel resources, a Placement Guide, fundraising tools, and much more to set expectations and facilitate the experience.

Special Skills Required: No specific skills required to be an international volunteer with CCS, we believe that everyone has something to offer.

Type of Volunteer Work: All CCS volunteer placements are within the areas of caregiving, community development, healthcare, and teaching. All volunteers work side-by-side with local people to help achieve important community objectives through CCS' Partner Programs. These include orphanages and childcare centers, schools, health clinics and hospitals, homes for the elderly, centers for people with disabilities, and other community organizations.

About: CCS is a recognized leader in the field of international volunteering. Over 20,000 people have volunteered with CCS since it was founded in 1995. An international not-for-profit organization with no political or religious affiliations, the organization is guided by its vision of a world where people value cultures different from their own, are aware of global issues, and are empowered to effect positive change.

CCS offers meaningful volunteer work in a short amount of time. Programs offer a comprehensive experience that combines volunteer work with locally-led organizations, free time, and cultural activities, which immerse you in a different culture. Alumni and prospective volunteers enjoy the CCS Community, a social networking site for people interested in international volunteering.

CCS has a worldwide staff of over 300 people, and operates in 12 countries, with administrative offices in the United States, United Kingdom, Canada, and Australia. The organization has Special Consultative Status with the United Nations and is recognized by the International Volunteer Programs Association (IVPA), the UK-based Year Out Group (YOG), and the Better Business Bureau (BBB). CCS has been featured in over 500 media outlets including The New York Times, the Today Show, and The Toronto Star.

Crow Canyon Archaeological Center

Organization Type: Crow Canyon Archaeological Center is an archaeological research and educational center.

Website: www.crowcanyon.org

Country: USA, specifically in the area surrounding Cortez, CO

Volunteer Contact/Email: Clay Patton, CPatton@crowcanyon.org or travel@crowcanyon.org

Phone: 970-564-4360 or 800-422-8975 ext 160

Age Requirements:

Language: English; some staff are conversant in Spanish.

Advanced Notice: Preferred minimum of 45 days in advance of program date.

Cost/Fees Involved: Fee for one week program is \$1,275 (US) with a \$100 tax deductible donation.

Meals/Accommodations: Participants enjoy shared accommodations log cabins fashioned in the style of the Navajo hogan. Please bring your own bedding. All meals are included and our Chef is great!

Minimum Stay: One week programs with arrival on Sunday afternoon and departure Saturday morning. Daily program begins with breakfast at 7:30 a.m. Dinner is served at 5:30 p.m. and there are hour long evening programs most days.

Maximum Stay: Three weeks. Please note that individual weekly charges apply.

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: Weekly segments beginning June 14th, June 21st, June 28th, and again August 23rd, and August 30th. The week of September 27th is set aside for alumni of our programs. There are two weeks specifically for family groups with sessions beginning June 28th and again August 2nd.

Health Requirements: Left up to individual. There is hiking of at least ½ mile to reach excavation sites, lifting buckets of dirt, kneeling on the ground, and working at an elevation of 6,700 feet. Participants work at their own pace.

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations: Participants should take appropriate precautions for our high desert atmosphere.

Crow Canyon Archaeological Center

Special Skills Required: No special skills are required

Type of Volunteer Work: Join our professional researchers in the field and lab and contribute to our understanding of the ancestral Pueblo Indians who inhabited the region more than 700 years ago.

About: The mission of the Crow Canyon Archaeological Center is to advance knowledge of the human experience through archaeological research, education programs, and collaboration with American Indians. Our vision is to expand the sphere in which we operate, both geographically and intellectually, and show how the knowledge gained through archaeology can help build a healthier society.



Dakshinyan

Organization Type: A registered trust which is running two primary level informal schools for tribal children. The main emphasis is education.

Website: www.dakshinayan.org

Country: India

Volunteer Contact/Email: Siddharth Sanyal, dakshinayan@gmail.com, sid@dakshinayan.org, info@dakshinayan.org

Phone: (+91) 9934572399

Age Requirements: 18 to 80 if they are physically fit.

Language: None

Advanced Notice: At least one month

Cost/Fees Involved: US\$ 300

Meals/Accommodations:

Minimum Stay: One month

Maximum Stay: Five to six months (depends on visa)

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: We need volunteers throughout the year.

Health Requirements: Must be physically and mentally prepared to live without running water and electricity

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations: The area is remote. Has no electricity and running water.

Special Skills Required: Tolerance for other cultures and patience. Should be able to teach primary level children but no teaching qualifications required.

Type of Volunteer Work: Volunteers who are willing to teach and also be involved in the projects daily activities and chores -- mostly cooking, cleaning and gardening.

About: Dakshinayan has been working in a remote area of Jharkhand with tribal people. The main emphasis is education and we are running two schools for tribal children. Volunteers live on the campus which is like a commune. Besides teaching, they also participate in daily chores and activities. For more information visit www.dakshinayan.org and www.youtube.com/dakshinayan. Also news of day-to-day happenings is available at www.dakshinayan.blogspot.com



Darjeeling Goodwill Animal Shelter

Organization Type: Animal birth control and anti-rabies vaccination organization, focusing largely on street dogs.

Website: N/A

Country: India

Volunteer Contact/Email: Dr. Yogesh Sharma: yogesh_24sh@yahoo.co.in, or Catrina Vear: catrina_vear@yahoo.com

Phone: +91 92336 20515 or +91 98320 42333 or +91 98004 70466

Age Requirements: N/A

Language: English

Advanced Notice: At least one week, preferably more.

Cost/Fees Involved: Volunteers are responsible for their own transportation fees and other travel expenses to and from their visit to the shelter. They are also responsible for their own travel and medical insurance

Meals/Accommodations: Vegetarian meals and lodging in a clean, comfortable room with attached bathroom provided by DGAS.

Minimum Stay: At least 2 weeks, preferably longer.

Maximum Stay: N/A

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: We need help year-round.

Health Requirements: Current rabies vaccination required. Any region-specific vaccinations recommended by travel departments also suggested.

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations: Warm clothing is recommended year-round because, although it can be warm and pleasant in Darjeeling, the weather is very changeable and unpredictable.

Special Skills Required: Volunteers should be qualified veterinarians, but veterinary technicians may be considered on a case by case basis.

Type of Volunteer Work: Veterinarians needed to help perform spay and neuter operations on street dogs, attend to daily cases, and sometimes to go on anti-rabies vaccination camps in remote villages.

Darjeeling Goodwill Animal Shelter

About: Darjeeling Goodwill Animal Shelter focuses mainly on a two tier program: 1) anti-rabies vaccination and 2) animal birth control of the street dog population. Dogs are caught from the street, vaccinated, spayed or neutered, and released back to their original areas with certain identifying marks such as an ear notch and tattoo number to identify them as safe to the public. DGAS also performs regular anti-rabies vaccination camps both locally and in remote villages, open to owned, street, and community animals that people wish to bring for vaccination.

DGAS is also available for treatment of owned animals, ranging from dogs to goats and cows. Community members can also call the shelter to report suffering animals that may have no owner, so that the animals can be retrieved for either treatment when possible or humane euthanasia. Puppies on the street are often rescued, made healthy, and re-homed. Volunteer veterinarians would be of welcome assistance in any or all of these endeavors. The shelter is located in a quiet village area, about 20 minutes outside of the main town.



Donkey Protection Trust

Organization Type: Education of donkey owners/users. Primary health care for donkeys in urban and rural areas throughout Zimbabwe.

Website: Refer to *spana.org*

Country: Zimbabwe

Volunteer Contact/Email: Ian Redmond, donkey@zol.co.zw

Phone: +263 9 243464

Age Requirements: 18 years up depending on health.

Language: English but any really broad accent might be a problem for some of the local people.

Advanced Notice: One month.

Cost/Fees Involved: No fee charged but volunteers expected to cover cost of food and all personal costs including medical and insurance.

Meals/Accommodations: Accommodation - self catering - provided and meals at no hidden costs.

Minimum Stay: One month.

Maximum Stay: Open to negotiation.

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: All year round with emphasis on period September to December.

Health Requirements: If requires medication must expect to bring own.

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations:

Special Skills Required: Must have attended a recognized 4X4 driving course.

Type of Volunteer Work: Will be travelling with our team wherever required and organizing and assisting in clinics and primary health care activities.

About: The Donkey Protection Trust is the only organization in Zimbabwe serving the needs of over a half a million donkeys and in order to fulfill that need is mostly a mobile service spending usually a week or more at a time in our rural areas concentrating on education and primary health care. Our objectives are to prevent the suffering and sometimes abuse of these hardworking animals. Our work is simple but at times, arduous.



Ecuador Volunteer Foundation

Organization Type: Our Foundation is a non-profit organization legally recognized by the Ecuadorian Government, the only one authorized to select both international and national volunteers. Our organization works with a number of programs focused on various areas: social, educational, ecological, health, and community development. Many of these are located in rural sectors of Ecuador. The projects are broken into two categories which are *Free Projects* and *Low Cost Projects* thus there are a couple alternatives available.

Website: www.ecuadorvolunteer.org

Country: Ecuador

Volunteer Contact/Email: Mary Bonilla (Coordinator),
info@ecuadorvolunteer.org

Phone: 593-2-2557749, 593-2-2226544

Age Requirements: Older than 18 years.

Language: An intermediate knowledge of Spanish, as without it volunteers will not be able to make a significant contribution. Non-Hispanic volunteers will have to pass a Spanish exam on arrival before going into the project.

Advanced Notice: The volunteer should contact us two weeks in advance.

Cost/Fees Involved: We ask for 200 USD fee as inscription fee and at the low cost projects the volunteers should cover with their own accommodation and food during their work time. The accommodation with a host family cost 15 USD per day and includes three meals per day and the laundry service. Volunteers can find hostels in the “Mariscal” area of Quito where you can find rooms from 8 USD per night. It is the tourist district of the city, and it offers various services to foreigners, i.e. internet cafes, travel agencies, restaurants, bars, nightclubs, banks, laundries, etc. The average amount spent on food per day is between 8 to 12 USD

Meals/Accommodations: The accommodation system depends on the type of project the volunteer participates in. The only projects that include free lodging and food are the Free Projects.

Minimum Stay: We ask for minimum 2 weeks at the low cost projects and the minimum required time length is three months for the Free Projects.

Maximum Stay: It is not a maximum determination. It is possible to request a volunteer visa if you want to stay in the project for more than 3 months.

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: Only the projects that work on the Educational area have specific times to work because they are only working during the school year but we have two different calendars from September to June and the other that is mostly in the schools that are located in the coast starts on April to finish the school year on the latest January.

Health Requirements: We strongly recommend volunteers get the Yellow Fever, Hepatitis A & B, Diphtheria, Typhoid vaccines and you must take Malaria pills.

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations: All volunteers should contact us to deliver a document with tips and recommendations on issues before you travel, such as documents to be submitted to the country's income, length of stay in Ecuador, security and budgets. Additionally, volunteers must meet specific aspects of each project, and recommendations on the kind of clothes to be used, health care, vaccines, food, first aid, and policies of each project.

Special Skills Required: Leadership, initiative to solve problems, develop projects, enterprising and capable to handle groups of people who like to live in the countryside, adventure, and above all easily adapted to a new culture.

Type of Volunteer Work: We work with various volunteer projects in different areas around Ecuador. Mainly we need doctors, nurses, psychologists, teachers of English, computer science professors, engineers, environmentalists, project developers, biologists, veterinarians, etc. We look for people who have the capacity to assist in various projects with new sustainable alternatives.

About: Ecuador Volunteer Foundation is a non-profit organization legally recognized by the Government of Ecuador, which was constituted through the ministerial agreement No.0350 on October 10, 2005. Currently it is the only organization authorized to select and supply volunteers to third party organizations providing their services in social, community, educational, healthcare and ecological projects/programs throughout Ecuador.

Due to the socioeconomic needs from which much of the Ecuadorian population suffers (as in other Latin American countries, too) many different areas have found themselves in need of seeking governmental and private help in order to get by. For this reason, ECUADOR VOLUNTEER, through the volunteer work of young people as well as adults around the world, collaborates with different organizations to carry out projects that promote development in the developing sectors.

Organization Type: We organize work camps to teach the children the languages and paint their schools. Sometimes we support them with books if we have the money.

Website: www.elbassma.org

Country: Morocco

Volunteer Contact/Email: Ennajari yassine, info@elbassma.org or ennjariyassin@hotmail.com

Phone: 00212674702088

Age Requirements: Minimum age of 18 years old and maximum 35.

Language: English, French, Spanish

Advanced Notice: 5 min.

Cost/Fees Involved: The price of participation is 160 Euros. This includes accommodation and meals. The price also includes a contribution for materials: material for activities, paint . . . This doesn't include travel insurance. The rest of the money will be used to buy some books for the poor children.

Meals/Accommodations: The fee includes accommodation and meals.

Minimum Stay: The minimum time to volunteer is 2 weeks

Maximum Stay: 4 weeks

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: These projects are in summer because it is the holidays for volunteers and for the children, too.

Health Requirements: Everybody who is strongly motivated and creative.

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations: Errachidia is situated in the South-East of Morocco. The climate in this area is so cold in winter (0°C - 6°C) and it's hot in summer (35°C - 40°C). In the province of Errachidia there are the biggest oases in Africa, "Ziz oasis ".

The way of life in Errachidia is like in other Moroccan cities. You can only see some differences in the woman dresses, for example. Most people here are traditional and you have to respect them. For example, they take off their shoes when they enter a house. An invitation to their homes is the best way to know their food. Moroccan food is very good. Most food must be eaten with hands.

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If you are invited to eat in a house you should accept and eat with the right hand because the left hand is supposed to be used to go to the bathroom. If you want to visit a mosque you must know that you will not be allowed to enter because the entrance is forbidden to non Muslims.

You have to take care if you take photos of people in the street because normally they don't like this. You must ask first. In the other side, if you want to take a photo of a person that has became a friend, in general he or she will be greeted.

Special Skills Required: It's not necessary to have experience in our projects because we there will be a coordinators to show the volunteers how they can do their jobs, and this coordinators will be in the work camp all the time.

Type of Volunteer Work:



About: The association (Elbassma = the smile) was founded with a group of young people to ensure local development for the poor. This neighborhood is among the most neglected areas situated in Errachidia.

Among its objectives is contribution to improve life conditions in this ignored neighborhood is coordination with other local, regional and international organization which have the same targets:

- ✓ Support educational in the region.
- ✓ Support cultural projects in the region.
- ✓ Support the poor children who need these activities in summer.
- ✓ Show our culture and explore other cultures.

All that is really hard to do it without the aid of volunteers especially in a country the poverty is reality for a lot of people in the area.

ELIX – Conservation Volunteers Greece

Organization Type: International actions of voluntary participation with main target the protection of the environment, the preservation of cultural heritage, the promotion of civilization and social service.

Website: www.elix.org.gr

Countries: Greece and all around the world

Volunteer Contact/Email: Mina Ananiadou, incoming@elix.org.gr

Phone: 0030 210 3825506

Age Requirements: In order to take part in a program, you must be older than 17 years old (except if it is a program for teenagers)

Language: Basic knowledge of the English language is essential (except if it is stated that knowledge of another language is necessary)

Advanced Notice: 1-1.5 month earlier

Cost/Fees Involved: The participation fee at the voluntary work programs is 30€ for alliance members. Some special programs (educational, cultural, sport) have a different participation fee, about which you are informed before you sign the participation form.

Meals/Accommodations: Accommodation and food expenses are covered by the hosting organization.

Minimum Stay: Volunteers must commit to at least two weeks work. 5 days per week, for 5-6 hours per day

Maximum Stay:

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: The voluntary work programs are realized throughout the whole year, but especially in the summer.

Health Requirements:

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations:

Special Skills Required: Not any specific requirements

Type of Volunteer Work:

1. Protection of the natural environment, work at protected areas, opening, marking and signaling of footpaths, timberwork, planting of trees, clearing of vegetation.
2. Preservation of cultural heritage, work on traditional buildings, masonry replacement, stone paving and dry stone masonry, care and preservation of files and exhibits, work at cultural centers.
3. Social work, occupation of children at institutions, work at schools and children play areas, support of disabled people.
4. Promotion of culture, participation at festivals, local festivities, cultural events, research groups

About: Since 1987, Non Government Organization ELIX has been cultivating voluntary conscience and promoting voluntary service. ELIX's main target is the contribution in the development of the person and his evolution as citizen of the world through his active participation in public life. ELIX realizes international actions of voluntary participation with main targets the protection of the environment, the preservation of cultural heritage, the promotion of civilization and social service.

In order to realize its actions, the organization cooperates with Local Authority Organizations, Government Bodies, Companies, Institutions as well as local environmental and cultural clubs and associations. ELIX is a member of the international network Alliance of Voluntary Organizations, of the Pan-Hellenic Network of Ecologic Organizations and of the Network Volunteerism and Environment. From the founding of the organization, in 1987, till today 284 voluntary work programs were organized in 104 areas of Greece. 5.200 young people from Greece and abroad participated. While 1.585 young from Greece worked voluntarily in programs abroad.

Farm Sanctuary

Organization Type: Farm animal rescue and vegan advocacy.

Website: www.farmsanctuary.org

Country: USA (New York and California)

Volunteer Contact/Email: Intern Coordinator, intern@farmsanctuary.org

Phone: 607-583-2225

Age Requirements: Minimum 18 years of age

Language:

Advanced Notice: At least 1 month prior to desired start date. Apply by the end of February for Summer months.

Cost/Fees Involved: There is no cost, however there is a \$150US deposit that is refundable upon completion of the internship.

Meals/Accommodations: Shared housing provided on site.

Minimum Stay: 1 month; 8 hours per day, 5 days per week (calendar month; e.g. April 1 - April 30)

Maximum Stay: 3 months

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: Available year-round. Our biggest need for volunteer interns is non-summer months (September-April), especially winter months.

Health Requirements: Most positions do not have any special health requirements.

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations: Winters at our NY Shelter are severe and may produce an extreme and hazardous environment.

Special Skills Required:

- ✓ Ability to work in harsh/all weather conditions
- ✓ Ability to perform strenuous physical labor and lifting
- ✓ Commitment to Farm Sanctuary's goals and programs
- ✓ No previous animal experience necessary

Type of Volunteer Work: General Shelter projects, shelter cleaning, shelter laundry, assisting with animal health checks, animal monitoring projects, assisting with farm errands including vet trips, barn cleaning, grounds maintenance.

About: Farm Sanctuary is the nation's leading farm animal protection organization. Since incorporating in 1986, Farm Sanctuary has worked to expose and stop cruel practices of the "food animal" industry through research and investigations, legal and institutional reforms, public awareness projects, youth education, and direct rescue and refuge efforts. Farm Sanctuary shelters in Watkins Glen, NY and Orland, CA provide lifelong care for hundreds of rescued animals, who have become ambassadors for farm animals everywhere by educating visitors about the realities of factory farming. Additional information can be found at farmsanctuary.org or by calling 607-583-2225.



Friends for Asia

Organization Type: Friends for Asia offers a diverse mix of volunteer opportunities including Teaching, Elephant Park, beautification projects, Caregiving, Single Mother and Orphanage Projects.

Website: www.friendsforasia.org

Country: Chiangmai, Thailand

Volunteer Contact/Email: Todd Cikraji, info@friendsforasia.org

Phone: (+66) 53-240-570

Age Requirements: Most of our projects require volunteers to be over 19 or 20. It depends upon the project.

Language: Must be able to communicate in English. We do teach Thai to volunteers during their Pre-Service Orientation and during their first week of service.

Advanced Notice: A couple of months is best.

Cost/Fees Involved: Most of our projects start at \$695 USD for two weeks and are \$100 for each additional week. Some of the projects are a bit more and some have a minimum of 4 weeks.

Meals/Accommodations: Accommodation is provided in our volunteer house (which doubles as our office and orientation space). Most meals are covered in most projects (but not all).

Minimum Stay: Most of our projects start at a 2 week minimum. Our Single Mother's Home Projects start at a 4 week minimum.

Maximum Stay: 26 weeks (6 months) is the max.

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: For the Teaching Monks Project and International University for Monks Projects, we must work with the Thai school year (mid-May to late September and then late Oct to early March). The HIV Orphanage Project is only available during the Thai summer (mid-March to mid-May) Volunteers are able to start work on the 1st and 3rd Monday of each month.

Health Requirements: A workable knowledge of specialty projects is preferred (knowledge of tools and building for the Building projects, knowledge of gardening for gardening projects and Beautification of Chiang Mai).

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations: None

Special Skills Required: No special skills required for most projects.

Type of Volunteer Work: We currently offer 10 different projects, so I can't really sum them all up in 75 words, as they are quite different. Please view our website for more if on our projects: www.friendsforasia.org

About: The mission for Friends of Asia is twofold. We offer an opportunity for people to contribute, in a meaningful way, to the improvement of standards of living by building capacity in our host agencies and we provide committed volunteers to work on projects developed with host agencies that benefit the people of Thailand.

Friends for Asia is not affiliated with any government or religion. It is a privately operated limited partnership, incorporated in Chiang Mai, Thailand. The director of Friends for Asia is Todd Cikraji, a former U.S. Peace Corps volunteer and long time resident of Thailand. Day to day operations of Friends for Asia are carried out by a small bi-lingual Thai staff.

Friends For Asia operates out of a large teak wood house in a quiet neighborhood in Chiang Mai City. The house serves as office, orientation space and volunteer accommodation.



Fundacion Aldeas de Paz (Peace Villages Foundation)

Organization Type: Youth care & Community, Conservation & sustainable agriculture, Special needs & alternative Education, Indigenous rights & social justice.

Website: <http://www.peacevillages.org>

Country: Venezuela

Volunteer Contact/Email: Mönnighoff, mail@peacevillages.org

Phone: ++58 +289 4160718; ++58 +414 8704895

Age Requirements: 8 years (accompanied) to 100 years

Language: None

Advanced Notice: 4 weeks

Cost/Fees Involved: Mandatory minimum donation Euro 175 per week

Meals/Accommodations: Accommodations and full Board included

Minimum Stay: Volunteers must commit to at least one week work, four hours per day.

Maximum Stay: 1 year

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations:

Health Requirements: None

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations: Use our Pick-up service on arrival at Caracas Airport

Special Skills Required: None

Type of Volunteer Work: Youth, care & community - Enhance the lives of children and teenagers; Medicine & healthcare - The day-to-day running of a hospital; Mobile school - Perfect project for creative and outgoing people; Teaching & tutoring - A great introduction into Venezuelan life; Savannah & Rainforest conservation - Ideal for the hands-on person; Live & Volunteer with Pemon Aborigines; Ecological Building & construction; NGO management & administration - The running of a small NGO; Therapeutic horse riding - For children with special needs . . .

Fundacion Aldeas de Paz (Peace Villages Foundation)

About: The Peace Villages Foundation (PVF) is a sustainable grassroots NGO based in Santa Elena de Uairen, Venezuela, near the borders with Brazil and Guyana in South America. PVF is independent from political, religious or business interests. The Peace Villages Foundation is exclusively financed and operated by volunteers.

OUR MISSION

We support disadvantaged communities and their members in the process of achieving sustainable development, social justice and peace. We promote the "Culture of Peace" through enriching cross-cultural exchange and voluntary community service for people of all ages, races and nationalities. We provide additional opportunities in humanitarian, educational, recreational and environmental fields and assist our beneficiaries to develop their potential and improve their own lives.

OUR VISION

We share the values of peace, justice and tolerance, fundamentally focusing on the preservation of indigenous cultures and the empowerment of young people while valuing local knowledge and working with cultural sensitivity. We assist local people in carrying out the objectives they deem important. Our Volunteer opportunities are truly the microcosm of a world where people join together giving priority to improving life for humanity and promoting a Culture of Peace.

OUR VOLUNTEERS

The Peace Villages Foundation is exclusively financed and operated by volunteers. Volunteering with us is a great opportunity to work side by side with locals, learn new skills, study Spanish and immerse oneself in the Latin and indigenous culture.

Fundación K'aslimaal / Hospitalito Atitlán

Organization Type: A private not for profit Hospital

Website: A private not for profit Hospital

Country: Guatemala

Volunteer Contact/Email: Rebeca Petzey, rebeca.petzey@gmail.com

Phone:

Age Requirements: Non-medical volunteers should be 18 years of age.

Language: Spanish is required for most volunteers – *see special skills*

Advanced Notice: Medical volunteers must complete the application process before arrival, and have read the FAQ on the web site.

Non-medical volunteers should contact Rebeca two weeks in advance of their arrival.

Cost/Fees Involved: Hospitalito asks that all medical volunteers bring items from the “wish list” available on the Hospitalito page of the web site, equivalent to \$100. Non- medical volunteers are asked to make a \$100 donation, \$50 for students.

Meals/Accommodations: HA has a list of possible homes for rent, hotels, cabins and home stays with local families. The charges vary.

Minimum Stay: Most medical volunteers must stay a minimum of one month, with some exceptions. Non- medical volunteers should volunteer at least four working days.

Maximum Stay: None

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: Medical volunteers are especially needed in the months of May, June, July and December.

Health Requirements: There are no requirements for vaccines before entering Guatemala. The Hospitalito is in a malaria free part of the country.

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations: Foreign travel can be risky and we advise all volunteers to read the FAQ on the Pueblo a pueblo web site

Special Skills Required: Spanish required for medical volunteers with some specialists being the exception (surgeons, OB, dermatologists, urologists).

Type of Volunteer Work: Physicians, Nurses, Physicians Assistants, Nurse Practitioners, Nurse Midwives, Radiologists, and Hospital administrators.

We need contractors, engineers, electricians, plumbers, carpenters, cabinetmakers, handy men, and laborers to assist with building the new hospital.

Grant writers, help in generating publicity, written English to Spanish translation and fundraising.

About: A hospital abandoned for 13 years was renovated by a Guatemalan grass roots organization, Fundación K'aslimaal in the Tz'tujil Maya village of Santiago Atitlán on beautiful lake Atitlán in the highlands of Guatemala. Renovation of the 20-bed ward was in process when the facility opened in April, 2005 and began providing the only 24/7 emergency care, surgery, imaging, laboratory and pharmacy in the town of more than 43,000. Six months later, the buildings were in the direct path of the disastrous mudslides caused by Tropical Storm Stan, which buried hundreds of neighbors alive. Hospitalito Atitlán staff, volunteers and donors pulled together and reopened 15-days after the tragedy in a former backpackers hotel and began providing medical services to the people of Atitlán.

With support from donors, land was purchased in a safe area, and K'aslimaal began planning for a permanent hospital designed by US hospital architect David Schele. In October 2007, the first structure, an Ancillary Services building was completed. In November 2008, construction began on the new hospital. Currently HA sees about a thousand patients a month.

Fundacion Mona

Organization Type: We are a primate rescue center. We take care of primates who come from the entertainment business, pets or the circus. They all come from illegal situations, have been abandoned, been isolated and/or treated badly. We offer guided visits. Schools may also come and meet the primates. There are also a few university projects who are doing research here.

Website: www.fundacionmona.org

Country: Spain

Volunteer Contact/Email: Alba Gómara, a.gomara@fundacionmona.org

Phone: 0034 972477618

Age Requirements: Minimum 18- and maximum...(fit enough to resist the physical work).

Language: Preferably Spanish, if not English with some knowledge of Spanish or Catalan.

Advanced Notice: Applicants must send us their C.V, including a letter detailing their motivation, one letter of recommendation, date of birth and updated photo. We do a selection with all the applications we receive during the year. We notify via email the selected candidates 2 months before the period starts.

Cost/Fees Involved: After confirmation, volunteers must give 100 euros deposit, before arrival.

Meals/Accommodations: Volunteers have to find and pay for accommodation, diets and transport.

Minimum Stay: Volunteers must stay a minimum stage of 6 months

Maximum Stay: After 6 months, the possibility to stay longer has to be consider

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: Volunteers are needed all year, but only 2 volunteers positions are required every 6 months. Candidates should ask when are the starting dates.

Health Requirements: Volunteers must be high self motivated, physically and mentally fit, able to follow instructions and able to work with a team and alone, must have initiative and autonomy. Be emotionally mature, energetic, patient and positive. REQUESTED VACCINATIONS TBC Test and Hepatitis A and B (must supply a copy)

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations

Special Skills Required: No special skills, except the ones mentioned above. Volunteers should pass the ethnology course during their stage

Type of Volunteer Work: The volunteer will work as Animal keeper: A keeper's basic role is to clean the primate's rooms and outside enclosures, prepare and give their food, and develop ways of keeping their minds and bodies active (environmental enrichment). Please be aware that the work is hard and it is mostly a routine and in the beginning it can seem monotonous. At first and while you get to know the chimps and them to know you, you may have to help with office work, fundraising or help with one of the many research projects undertaken by Mona.

*Required to work five days a week, beginning at 9am and finishing between 7 and 8pm depending on the season.

About: The Mona Foundation was set up to end the exploitation of primates in captivity. The foundation has established a sanctuary near Girona in Spain, which provides a home where rescued chimpanzees and other primates can live in a semi-natural environment and where people can be inspired to understand and respect wild animals.

Fundacion Spay Panama

Organization Type: High-Volume-Low-Cost spay/neuter center

Website:

Country: Panama

Volunteer Contact/Email: Patricia Chan, doctor@spaypanama.org

Phone: +(507) 6671-0246

Age Requirements:

Language: Some Spanish may help, not a requirement.

Advanced Notice: 4 weeks

Cost/Fees Involved: The trip fee is \$350 (airfare not included). Fee includes meals, airport pickup, local transportation, and accommodations; virtually all of your expenses will be covered in Panama. The trip also includes a visit to the Panama Canal with dinner at a fantastic restaurant overlooking the locks. Other meals on offsite locations will be more basic. We ask that you not consume alcohol while being accommodated by us.

FOR VETERINARIANS: THE TRIP FEE IS WAIVED. We do ask that each veterinarian bring at least 40 packs of suture material suitable for dog or cat spays to add to the "suture pool". Any other donations of supplies are also greatly appreciated.

Meals/Accommodations: See above.

Minimum Stay: One week.

Maximum Stay: One week.

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: Anytime.

Health Requirements: Able to work 12-hr straight in not perfect environment, where individual may have to sleep on a hammock and use a primitive bathroom during offsite blitzes.

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations: Prepare yourself for hard work but we try to make it fun..

Special Skills Required: We need veterinarians and people experienced in dog/cat rescue and trapping and people experienced in generating publicity and fundraising.

Type of Volunteer Work: Help with the trap, neuter, release program. ID animals coming in for sterilization, prep animals for operation (shaving, tattoo dog ear, injecting antibiotic and analgesic, cleaning incision area), help carry animals to/from operating tables, cleaning operating tables, post-op animals (deworming, vitamins, vaccination, cleaning ears, notch cat ear, flea/tick medication), cleaning cages, socialize cats for adoption.

About: Spay/Panama was started by a group of volunteers in 2001 to provide affordable spaying and neutering services to low income families, feeders and rescuers. Spay/Panama is a non-governmental organization in the Republic of Panama. Our mission is to put a stop to the misery by controlling the overpopulation of cats and dogs through an intensive sterilization program. Spay/Panama is neither a shelter nor a clinic. We only do sterilizations and promote the adoption of homeless animals. Over 19,100 animals have been sterilized to date.



Global Citizens Network

Organization Type: Global Citizens Network (GCN) offers an alternative to mass tourism for its trip participants who seek travel with purpose, as well as an alternative means to small -scale economic development for the host communities where we partner. We send short-term teams of volunteers to communities in other cultures where participants immerse themselves in the culture and daily life of the community

Projects could include setting up a library, teaching business skills, building a health clinic, or planting trees to reforest a village

Website: www.globalcitizens.org

Countries: Nepal, Thailand, Kenya, Tanzania, Canada, USA (Arizona, Minnesota, Washington, Kentucky), Mexico, Guatemala, Ecuador, Brazil, Peru.

Volunteer Contact/Email: Kari Lewis – Regional Coordinator- Latin America
Amy LeClaire-Sachs – Regional Coordinator – Africa/Asia/North America,
info@globalcitizens.org

Phone: 651.644.0960/1.800.644.9292

Age Requirements: GCN is an age diverse organization. Youth under the age of 18 must be accompanied by an adult

Language:

Advanced Notice: At least one month prior to trip dates to review our orientation materials, get any necessary vaccinations, medications, visas and make flight arrangements

Cost/Fees Involved: Program fees range from \$1100.00USD to \$2590.00USD.

Program fees include: Airport pick-up and in-country transportation, hostel/home stay accommodations, most meals, cultural orientation and training, basic medical/evacuation insurance, contribution to community project, and project administration. **Program fees do not include:** Airfare to/from designated city, immunizations/vaccines, visas or entry/exit taxes, or lodging/transport/meals during free time.

Meals/Accommodations: Yes, at no additional cost.

Minimum Stay: GCN trips are 1-3 weeks in length, depending on the site. Volunteers typically work on projects 4 hours per day.

Maximum Stay: N/A

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: GCN schedules trips throughout the year at the request of the host community. See our website for trip schedule.

Health Requirements: No special health requirements.

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations: Site specific information is available on our website and by contacting the regional coordinators at the GCN office.

Special Skills Required: No special skills are required of our trip participants. Only a desire to learn and experience a new culture, and be flexible!

Type of Volunteer Work:

About: Global Citizens Network (GCN) offers an alternative to mass tourism for its trip participants who seek travel with purpose, as well as an alternative means to small -scale economic development for the host communities where we partner. Through grass-roots community-based tourism, GCN projects are locally conceived and globally achieved. GCN commits to projects until complete. GCN brings awareness of other cultures and often more sustainable ways of living to trip participants.

HOW IS GCN UNIQUE?

- Age-diverse (individuals, families, baby boomers welcome – something for everyone)
- Small teams
- Authentic, respectful relations with host community
- Partners – mutually beneficial relationship
- Cross-cultural exchange (not just SERVICE PROJECT), project is the vehicle to cross-cultural understanding.

MISSION: Global Citizens Network recognizes the interdependence of people around the world, and that social and economic injustice, racial and ethnic inequality, and ecological loss affect all people. But through cooperative effort, individuals of all cultures can experience and enhance their ability to make a difference in their community and their world. To foster that cooperation, Global Citizens Network sends short-term teams of volunteers to communities in other cultures where participants immerse themselves in the culture and daily life of the community.

Global Contact, MS ActionAid Denmark

Organization Type: Global Contact facilitates both volunteer work and education on North-South issues.

Website: www.globalcontact.dk

Countries: Ghana, Kenya, South Africa, South Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, India, Nepal, Vietnam, El Salvador, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Israel/Palestine, Lebanon, Syria, Jordan

Volunteer Contact/Email: Maria Pagel Christensen, globalcontact@ms.dk

Phone: Tel: (+45) 77310022 Fax: (+45) 7731 0121

Age Requirements: 18-26 and 30-75

Language: English

Advanced Notice: Minimum 1 month

Cost/Fees Involved: Cost and fees varies according to program.

Meals/Accommodations: Both are included in all programs.

Minimum Stay: 4 weeks

Maximum Stay: 4 months (extension is possible)

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: All programs have set dates.

Health Requirements: Average good health

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations: All our programs take place in safe areas, but vaccination and other health precautions are necessary.

Special Skills Required: Open mind and initiative

Type of Volunteer Work: Political Work, Teaching, Child Care, Health, Environment, Popular Education.

Global Contact, MS ActionAid Denmark

About: Global Contact is the travel agency of MS ActionAid Denmark who works for just and democratic governance and empowerment of the world's poorest. Global Contact facilitates volunteer programs for people, who wish to be a part of this work while having an experience of a lifetime.

All our programs start with a one month stay at one of our Global Platform Schools that are located in El Salvador, Kenya and India. During this stay you will gain knowledge about North-South issues, learn the local language and basically get a sense of the region, where you are to work as a volunteer for the following three months.

The actual volunteer work range from child care to political work, but it is always rooted in the wish to empower the disempowered in the country. While a volunteer worker you live with a local family and work together with our local partners. This way you are not only contributing to the development of the local community, you will also discover how life as an integral part of this community will contribute to your own development.



Global Routes

Organization Type: Teaching Internships in Village Schools in Asia, Africa and Latin America

Website: www.globalroutes.org

Countries: Belize, China, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Ghana, India, Kenya, Mexico, Nepal, Peru, Tanzania, Thailand, Vietnam

Volunteer Contact/Email: Jason Sarouhan, mail@globalroutes.org

Phone: (413) 585-8895

Age Requirements: Minimum age of 17

Language: Conversational or higher level Spanish to Spanish-speaking destinations (currently Peru and Costa Rica)

Advanced Notice: At least 6 weeks prior to departure date.

Cost/Fees Involved: 3-month group programs \$6250 plus airfare; 2-week to 3-month independent placements \$2000

Meals/Accommodations: Group Programs: All in-country expenses are covered. Independent placements: meals, accommodations and in-country travel to the internship site are covered.

Minimum Stay: 2 week minimum on independent placements; group programs are 12 weeks in length.

Maximum Stay: None.

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: Group programs run Sept-Dec or Feb-May. Independent placements are offered in the winter and spring.

Health Requirements: None.

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations: Only pay for what you need to buy. There are lots of companies and organizations with which you might choose to travel. We offer varying levels of support with associated prices – a fully-fleshed-out group program of a three month duration with lots of support (rather expensive); an independent placement (quite reasonably priced); or the cheapest alternative... network with friends, family and associates, do an internet search and buy yourself a plane ticket.

Special Skills Required: None

Type of Volunteer Work: The main placement Global Routes offers is teaching in village schools. No prior teaching experience is required. Global Routes also can make independent internship placements in medical and environmental settings, as well as teaching.

About: Global Routes offers gap-year and college age students the option of traveling with a group or going on an independent placement. In either case we like to believe we offer a very high level of support before, during and after the experience. Group programs have a dedicated program director who takes volunteers through a depthful, in-country orientation, supports the experience while interns are teaching and living in homes and is available to help with any challenging situation. These group programs offer a good balance between independent living and work and the opportunity to have fun, reflect and process one's experiences with like-minded people.

In the case of independent placements, Global Routes staff provide logistical support and training materials prior to departure, meet volunteers upon arrival in-country, help them through the first several days of transition and are available in case of emergency.



Global Visions International

Organization Type: Wildlife Conservation, Volunteer Travel, Eco-Tourism, Education, Field Research, Sustainable Development, Marine Conservation, Adventure, Wildlife and Marine Training Scheme.

Website: www.gviusa.com

Countries:

N. America: U.S., **S. America:** Argentina, Brazil, Ecuador, Peru, **C. America:** Belize, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, **Africa:** Cameroon, Ghana, Kenya, Madagascar, Mozambique, Namibia, Rwanda, Seychelles, South Africa, Swaziland, Uganda, Zambia **Asia:** India, Indonesia, Laos, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Thailand, **Europe:** United Kingdom, Greece, Italy, Latvia, Spain, **Oceania:** Australia, Vanuatu

Volunteer Contact/Email: For N. America our office is in Boston, MA. Regional Coordinator there can assist with any volunteering inquiries: Info@gviusa.com

Phone: 1-888-653-6028

Age Requirements: To participate in a GVI expedition, project or course, alone, you must be at least 18 years old. We also have Family Volunteering that allows children to participate on shorter projects with the accompaniment of a parent.

Language: No language requirements. Knowing the country language is helpful.

Advanced Notice: Our bookings are on a 'first come first serve' basis. All payments need to be paid in full by 12 weeks before the expeditions.

Cost/Fees Involved: There is a charge for all trips, and it does vary greatly between different kinds of trips. This cost covers all your expenses while volunteering. This cost goes directly to our project partners that rely on the support of our volunteers to continue their efforts.

Meals/Accommodations: This is all included in the original price.

Minimum Stay: GVI offers a wide range of commitments for different projects, from 1 week working on our Community Construction projects in S. America to a 10 week expedition in Africa. GVI also offers 20 week training and internship opportunities, as well as gap year and college accredited opportunities.

Maximum Stay: Our longest organized trip is one year, but we welcome volunteers to continue their efforts for as long as possible if so desired.

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: GVI as a whole, being a worldwide organization, has need for volunteers at all times of the year. However there are certain projects that are seasonal, based on the wildlife they are working with.

Health Requirements: Each applicant must have a medical form signed by a doctor confirming that they are fit to travel. Generally we only ask that volunteers are active and in relatively decent shape. However each program is different. Our teaching projects require little physical exertion, while our Patagonia expeditions deals with a more strenuous schedule. Please check our website for specific requirements on a case by case basis.

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations: All volunteers are required to get travel insurance. Once an application has been filled out, a field regional coordinator will be in contact with you to discuss specific requirements.

Special Skills Required: The only expedition requiring special skills is the advanced diving expedition where applicants must have their Open water diving certification prior to the trip.

Type of Volunteer Work: Data collection both on land and in the marine life, animal behavior observations, education, tracking biodiversity, protecting habitats, construction, assisting in all mater of scientific and conservation research.

About: GVI promotes sustainable development worldwide through responsible volunteering programs. We offer volunteers the chance to participate in projects and expeditions around the world, make a genuine in-country difference, and contribute to work in the field.

GVI has been sending volunteers away for safe, enjoyable and rewarding experiences for over 10 years. We offer projects that make a genuine in-country difference and we pride ourselves on having one of the largest teams of fully trained field staff within the volunteer travel industry. It is these people who ensure your safety, train you on arrival, look after you for the duration of your time in the field and show you parts of the countries and communities the average tourist will never see.

GVI runs volunteer projects and training courses in Africa, Asia, Latin America, and Europe. Our volunteering programs also include expeditions that allow individuals to receive in-depth training and work as an active member of a research team in some of the world's most exciting and remote destination. We have something for everyone, from college students looking for experiences and college credit to retired professionals looking to make a contribution.

Global Volunteer Network

Organization Type: GVN offers international volunteer opportunities in 25 community projects throughout the world, as well as 3 treks.

Website: <http://www.volunteer.org.nz>

Countries: GVN currently has volunteer positions available through our partner organizations in Cambodia, China, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Ghana, Honduras, India, Kenya, Mexico, Nepal, New Zealand, Peru, Philippines, Romania, Rwanda, South Africa, Thailand, Uganda, USA, and Vietnam.

Volunteer Contact/Email: We have a team of people, focusing on different programs. It is best to address questions to info@volunteer.org.nz

Phone: +64 4 569-9080

Age Requirements: The minimum age is 18 years.

Language: Varies – most programs require fluent English, a few require Spanish.

Advanced Notice: Generally require 2-3 months notice.

Cost/Fees Involved: There is an application and a program fee. The Application Fee is US\$350.00 (valid for 5 years and fully refundable if the volunteer decides not to go). The Application Fee includes the following benefits:

- ✓ Personal Staff Support
- ✓ Your India Program Guide
- ✓ Your Fundraising Guide and Software
- ✓ Access to Your Own Online Journal
- ✓ Online Video - Preparing For Your Trip
- ✓ Opportunities for Discounts on Airfares

The program fee covers a range of in-country costs such as meals, accommodation, supervision, orientation, airport pick up etc. What is covered by the program fee, along with the program fee amount varies from program to program.

Meals/Accommodations: The program fee (in-country fee) covers a range of in-country costs such as meals, accommodation, supervision, orientation, airport pick up etc. What is covered by the program fee, along with the program fee amount varies from program to program.

Minimum Stay: Minimum volunteer period varies from program to program – some are 1 week, some 2 weeks, and others require a 4 week minimum.

Maximum Stay: Between 6 months to 52 weeks – depending on program.

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: Help is needed all year round.

Health Requirements: Generally volunteers need to be in good health – some programs have specific requirements, eg Kenya Maasai requires volunteers to be able to walk long distances. Volunteers are strongly recommended to consult with a travel doctor regarding the required vaccinations depending on the country they will be volunteering in.

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations: Volunteers are provided with a comprehensive Resource Guide specifically for the program they will work on.

Special Skills Required: Again – this will vary between programs. Our Health/Medical programs require volunteers to have the relevant skills; some programs require volunteers to speak Spanish, most require fluent English

Type of Volunteer Work: GVN offers a range of programs ranging from humanitarian, educational, environmental/conservation, wildlife, medical/healthcare, maintenance and construction, as well as cultural home stays.

About: The Global Volunteer Network (GVN) offers volunteer service opportunities in community projects throughout the world. We currently provide volunteer programs through our partner organizations in 21 countries. The network continues to expand with new programs currently being researched and assessed.

Our vision is to support the work of local community organizations in developing countries through the placement of international volunteers. We believe that local communities are in the best position to determine their needs, and we provide volunteers to help them achieve their goals.

Volunteering is a great way to contribute to the global community and gain experience, and also fosters personal growth. Whether you would like to take a short volunteer vacation or a prolonged gap year, GVN provides challenging and affordable international programs abroad. We also offer fundraising hikes to allow an active role in raising funds for communities in need. We currently have hikes planned to Mt. Everest Base Camp, Machu Picchu, and Mt. Kilimanjaro.

Great Orangutan Project

Organization Type: Wildlife centre which is rehabilitating Orangutans, zoo, community development

Website: www.orangutanproject.com

Country: Malaysia

Volunteer Contact/Email: Julie Ion, orangutan@w-o-x.com

Phone: +44 0845 371 3070

Age Requirements: 18 plus

Language: English

Advanced Notice: 3 months as the programs sell out fast.

Cost/Fees Involved: Costs range between US\$1499 and 2695 please note roughly 25% of the fee is spent directly on the Orangutans through food and building of structures.

Meals/Accommodations: At the project the volunteers have their own quarters and meals are included.

Minimum Stay: The minimum a volunteer can join our programs for is 2 weeks.

Maximum Stay: None though the volunteer programs are in blocks of 2 or 4 weeks.

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: All year

Health Requirements: The work can sometimes be tiring however a person of moderate fitness would be able to join all our programs.

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations: Make the most of your time when you volunteer. The more you put in the better your experience. Past volunteers are now running their own wildlife centers and charities because of the experience they had with the Great Orangutan Project.

Visit our Facebook group and ask our orangutan volunteer community for tips!

Visit <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=18244811168>

Special Skills Required: Just a love and passion for Orangutans

Type of Volunteer Work: The type of work depends on the project at the time. The Great Orangutan Project is an orangutan conservation project which uses volunteers to fund it so it is important for volunteers to understand they won't always be involved in all duties.

Duties can include

1. Husbandry Duties
2. Feed the orangutans
3. clean the Orangutan Holding area and enclosures
4. Enrichment Duties
5. Rehabilitation and Release Duties
6. visitor interaction (optional)
7. centre interpretation and general maintenance (ad hoc)
8. tribal longhouse teaching activities (optional)
9. helping other animals (ad hoc)
10. volunteer newsletter
11. end of project presentation

About: The Great Orangutan Project (GOP) is a collection of projects designed to save the orangutan and help local communities that **you** can get involved in. You can do this in two ways - by volunteering to work on a GOP project or by holidaying on a GOP ecotour.

All the projects are in Malaysia and Borneo, and **all** of them are made possible by your money. As these projects are run by conservationists from WOX, not big travel operators, you can be sure you will be participating in real projects, that make a real difference.

The GOP's strength lies in its unique collaboration of orangutan conservation organizations or individuals who exchange knowledge, advice and ideas towards orangutan conservation in this part of the world. Each project has the shared vision of increasing the size and health of Bornean orangutan populations, bringing them back from the brink of extinction. By working together in this way we are able to address the issues affecting the plight of the Orangutan and develop solutions for their long-term survival through shared knowledge and community involvement.

Harnas Wildlife Foundation

Organization Type: Animal Rescue and Wildlife Foundation

Website: <http://www.harnas.de>

Country: Namibia

Volunteer Contact/Email: Marika Kotze, bookings@harnas.org

Phone: + 264 (0) 062 568828/568838

Age Requirements: 18 – 45 years or age (We also have an Exclusive Project for elderly /or family involvement – with no age restriction and this programme is scheduled only for certain dates during 2009)

Language: English

Advanced Notice: As soon as possible,

Cost/Fees Involved: N\$ 4500.00 Namibian Dollar per person per week valid for the year 2009

Meals/Accommodations: We provide accommodation, bedding, meals, transport from Windhoek to Harnas and return, Orientation Session, all activities.

Extra fees involved would be the Working Visa which is at the moment N\$ 800.00 for the year 2009- drinks, and personal necessities, as well as travel insurance, flights and extra optional tours and excursions.

Minimum Stay: 2 weeks

Maximum Stay: 3 Months

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: We require volunteer bookings during the whole year, and our project starts on a Friday and end on a Thursday every week.

Health Requirements: Medically Fit and rabies Vaccinations are required

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations: Rabies Vaccinations are required/ Medical Insurance/ Fit

Special Skills Required: A love for Wildlife only

Type of Volunteer Work: Enclosure patrol, food preparation, building cages, walking animals, feeding animals, cleaning enclosures, building enclosures, digging, grooming of animals and having a hands on experience with our animals.

About: Please visit our website to learn more about our organization and volunteer opportunities.



Help in Suffering Animal Shelter

Organization Type: Animal Rescue, street dog neuter/anti-rabies project, camel project to help villagers, elephant project, education project

Website: www.his-india.org.au

Country: India

Volunteer Contact/Email: Jack Reece, hisvet1@helpinsuffering.org

Phone: +91 141 2 760012

Age Requirements: Not important – dedication and enthusiasm are more important

Language: Hindi is widely spoken in Rajasthan, but most Jaipur people can speak English, at least to some degree.

Advanced Notice: We do receive many requests for volunteer work, and we would need to know several months in advance if the volunteer plans to come during the tourist season which is November to February inclusive.

Cost/Fees Involved: \$200 USD

Meals/Accommodations: Yes we provide a private room with attached bathroom and nutritional but simple vegetarian meals

Minimum Stay: Three months

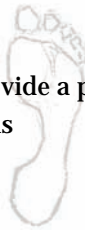
Maximum Stay: No maximum time

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: Any time is welcome

Health Requirements: Must have anti-rabies vaccination and cover up fully to prevent mosquito bites.

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations: Jaipur is now very Westernized with many malls and good shopping. The climate is very hot during May and June. There are wonderful things to see and do. Working with HIS one comes in contact with a side of life which is never seen by tourists.

Special Skills Required: We only need qualified veterinarians.



Help in Suffering Animal Shelter

Type of Volunteer Work: Veterinarians will work in the dispensary, with exotic animals such as camels and elephants (if they wish) and will need to have skills in diagnosis and surgery.

About: Help in Suffering was founded by an English woman in 1980. It is a busy shelter which has an international reputation for its successful programmes, perhaps the most gratifying being the fact that there has been no incidence of human rabies in Jaipur for the last 8 years. Before the HIS ABC (animal birth control) programme started, rabies was rife. It is also extremely satisfying to save the life of a much-loved camel upon whom the village family depends for their income. There are now many pure-bred dogs in Jaipur and good veterinary care for these animals is provided by Help in Suffering shelter.

Over the years many vets have worked as volunteers at HIS. All have enjoyed the experience, and remained as friends of HIS. We see HIS rather much as a centre of international goodwill, where the needs and interests of animals and humans are addressed, and where there is a lot of love, happiness and contentment. The shelter is a small oasis of trees and peacefulness, among the chaos of the city outside.



Himalayan Nature Society

Organization Type: We are not for profit a local voluntary organization registered under the society's registration act 21 of 1860 under Himachal Pradesh Government. We are quite a new group in the field of animal's welfare. We are mainly engaged all sorts of animal's welfare issues i.e. Dog's birth control, rescue, shelter, animal welfare education and founding animal's clubs in schools etc. Also we work for water conservation, environment protection and plantation.

Website: www.hnsindia.org

Country: India

Volunteer Contact/Email: Arvind Sharma, friendsforanimals@gmail.com

Phone: Office-91+1892226763, Cell- 919816220841.

Age Requirements: Not any.

Language:

Advanced Notice: 5 days in advance.

Cost/Fees Involved: We do not charge any fee or mandatory donation from volunteers. Donation is given by their on desire.

Meals/Accommodations: We assist in providing the accommodation and food in local recommended guest houses and hotels. Also volunteer, donor or sponsor can stay and eat with our own houses with staff members as our guest, which is free but with very basic facilities as our own people are using for themselves. Volunteer have to share the cost of buying vegetables or groceries etc.

Minimum Stay: Minimum one week and 5 hours a day.

Maximum Stay: No fixed time limit.

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: Round the year we need the same number of volunteer.

Health Requirements: Volunteer, visitor, sponsor must have anti rabies and anti tetanus vaccination also must be able to cover 3 to 4 kilometer distance in a day while required.

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations: General instruction can be delivered on arrival of volunteers. But still few must have to mention:

1) Stranger must be avoided. 2) Nude bath in rivers or streams is not allowed. 3) Always follow the instruction provided by Himalayan Nature Society. 4) Financial donation to individual staff members or outsiders is prohibited.

Special Skills Required: We need people from all walks of life i.e. Veterinarians, Vet-nurses, Dog catcher or handler, Pharmacist, Computer expert, Photographer, Business Developer(MBA), Hydrologist, Environmentalist, Birdwatcher, Graphic Designer, Web Designer, Rescue expert, animals researcher and Writers etc. Also people in general who loves animals and nature.

Type of Volunteer Work: People to clean cages, socialize animals, feed dogs at streets, help with vehicle and building maintained; we have a special need for Veterinarians and Vet Tech to help with our trap, neuter, release (TNR) program. Also we need office help experienced in generating publicity, fundraising, website update, public relation etc.

About: While founded the Himalayan Nature Society we were only focused about nature conservation but at a gap of 2001,2004 and in 2006 local Government Authorities have organized mass un-humane killings of stray dogs by poisoning, beating with bamboo and iron sticks just to control over population of Stray Dogs.

Then we people came forward and given an alternate of ABC (Animal Birth Control) to our local government for controlling the over population of Stray dogs. With our all hard efforts we are now able to build our own operation theater and kennels to house 14 dogs, which we need to expand in the future to house 50 dogs.

Our activities are been recognized by Animal Welfare Board of India in March 2008.and we became the member of WSPA (World Society for the Protection of Animals) in July 2007.

We are the only animal charity in the entire state of Himachal Pradesh who introduced the animal's charity and humane methods for controlling over population of stray dogs and rescue. So still we are at growing stage and lacking with many sources and facilities to develop and expand our future project for large animal's shelter for disable and retired animals. We are looking for all kind of helping hands i.e. volunteers, donors, sponsors to establish our group as model so the same project can be adapted or replicated in the another parts of the Himachal Pradesh State as animal welfare movement with people's participation.

There is one information i must share with you is that we have newly founded sister concern in US Colorado named Piyarakutta means beloved dog in Hindi website is www.piyarakutta.org. This organization founded to support our dog's cause in Dharamsala India.if someone willing to visit us from US they can have also the information from Debra the founder of Piyarakutta.

India Project for Animals and Nature

Organization Type: Animal Health and Welfare, incl. rescue, veterinary service, Animal Birth Control, Equine Street Clinics, farmer training

Website: www.indiapan.org

Country: India

Volunteer Contact/Email: Nigel Otter (managing trustee) and Ilona Otter (veterinary project consultant), ipanniliris@gmail.com

Phone: +91 (0)423 2526158

Age Requirements: Over 18 years old.

Language: English

Advanced Notice: 2-6 months before for vet training participants and working vets. For general non-vet volunteers a notice of 1-2 weeks is enough.

Cost/Fees Involved: For general non veterinary volunteers Rs. 500/day, e.g. 2 week volunteering Rs. 7000 contribution to the charity. We have a separate volunteering program for recently graduated vets/vet students where the volunteers make a donation of USD 700 to IPAN & are then taught and demonstrated veterinary practice (surgery and rural large animal practice including equines) in groups of two volunteers at a time for three week period. Qualified vets who don't need clinical training but are ready to join the field work & perform surgeries do not need to pay anything for their food and accommodation.

Meals/Accommodations: Accommodations are included in a simple guestroom (shared with other volunteers when needed) that has an attached bathroom and electricity. For vegetarian meals (three meals a day) the cost is Rs. 250/day (USD 6.50) for the general non veterinary volunteers. Volunteers participating the vet training program have their accommodation and meals covered by their contribution of USD700 for three weeks.

Minimum Stay:

- a) for general non-veterinary volunteers the minimum time is one week
- b) for vet training volunteers the standard time is three weeks
- c) qualified veterinarians with adequate working experience to be able to join the field work immediately with the team there is no minimum time and we provide accommodation and meals for free. Here we do expect the vet to stay on the campus and be available for work 24 hours a day.

Maximum Stay: For general volunteers two weeks, vet training participants the standard is three weeks and for the qualified vets the maximum is six months (maximum tourist visa length).

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: All year around

Health Requirements: Rabies vaccinations are recommended for all volunteers. Other vaccinations we request to contact your own doctor for advice.

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations: Weather conditions vary considerably since this is a hill area. Be prepared with long sleeves & with sun screen lotions. Also remember to dress modestly since it is a rural area.

Special Skills Required: As a general non-vet volunteer you have to have experience in being with animals and handling them. As a working vet you have to be able to spay/neuter dogs and cats and treat domestic livestock. Practical experience in treating horses is beneficial.

Type of Volunteer Work:

a) general volunteers; socialize animals, groom horses and dogs, assist vets in their treatments (e.g. holding the animals and/or equipment needed), develop animal welfare program for children, help in generating publicity and fundraising b) vet students interested in animal welfare, mixed animal practice and the development of animal health services in the rural areas of the developing countries c) working vets to help in the ABC program in the Equine Street Clinics, emergency vet service in rural villages and at times teaching the participants of the vet training program

About: Every year volunteer veterinarians and vet students join the IPAN team to help in the work and to learn about animal health and welfare issues in India. The Hill View Farm Animal Refuge run by IPAN is described as one of the finest animal shelters in India, by Amala Akkineni, Hon. Secretary of Blue Cross Hyderabad. This is a place for abandoned and injured animals to recover & retire in a peaceful and caring home. No animal is kept tied or locked up permanently in the Hill View Farm Animal Refuge. Visitors are welcome to visit the Refuge, see the animals and to learn about practical animal welfare work. The Hill View Farm Animal Refuge is situated in the Mavanalla village bordering the Mudumalai Wildlife Sanctuary in the Nilgiris district of Tamil Nadu. This is part of the UN designated Nilgiris Biosphere Reserve, world renowned for its birdlife and flora. The largest remaining elephant population in India lives in this reserve together with a diversity of other fauna like bison, panther, deer & the Nilgiris Langur.

International Animal Rescue Malta

Organization Type: We rescue wildlife especially injured birds.

Website:

Country: Malta

Volunteer Contact/Email: Max Farrugia, iarm093@waldonet.net.mt

Phone: 00356 99471212

Age Requirements: No age limit since they are health.

Language: English is spoken widespread

Advanced Notice: At least three weeks in advance.

Cost/Fees Involved: We do not charge any fees

Meals/Accommodations: Accommodations and meals will be against a charge. No additional fees apply. Volunteers can stay in a flat which we cater for them at a very cheap price when compared with the normal prices.

Minimum Stay: Any amount of days. Our aim is many to teach volunteers what we are going and how to care for the injured birds and animals so there is no time limit.

Maximum Stay: N/A

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: We need help between the last week in March and May and September and October.

Health Requirements: There are hardly any heavy loads to carry or deal with. During the September and October a considerable amount of field work is involved but there is no stress at all involved. This involves the picking of injured animals and birds and also bird guarding from poachers. No rabies vaccinations are needed. We recommend but the tetanus vaccination.

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations: All you need if coming from an EU country or the USA is an ID card or a valid passport. Staying over in Malta does not offer any problems. The hospitality of the inhabitants is the order of the day. The most of the inhabitants can speak English and Italian apart from the local language, but French and German is also spoken.

Special Skills Required: Nursing of animals is an asset but there is no need of any special skills. With regards field work we appreciate if you can recognize wild birds.

Type of Volunteer Work: We need people to clean cages, feed birds and animals, and also help in their rehabilitation. If capable of giving medicines is an asset. Other work involved is vet runs with injured wildlife. WE need helpers we might helps us generate publicity and fundraising.

About: Our Organization was set up way back in 1989. The aim was to care for injured birds which at that time were very rampant. As time passed on, we realized that we could not cope alone especially financially. Caring for injured birds is rather expenses. In 1993, International Animal Rescue UK, which is a big organization which works in various parts of the world decided to appoint us as their representatives and since then we work together. We mainly specializes in caring for wildlife but we also work for strays (mainly cats and dogs) The work involved in this sector is neutering and returned back to their colonies. During the last years we worked hand in hand with the police in Malta and we also donated some equipment to be able to combat poachers. We also co-operate with the Government authorities in this field.

Our group, which have contacts in various European countries is also a member of ENDCAP (the European Federation of associations to help end animals in captivity) PIE (Pets in Europe) and SSN (The special Survivals Network) In the first two groups we also serve in the councils. In this field we work hard to lobby to both local and European authorities to better conditions of the animals.

International Primate Rescue

Organization Type: Primate rescue & rehabilitation from behavioral problems

Website: www.iprescue.org

Country: South Africa

Volunteer Contact/Email: Mrs. Sue Mousley, s.a@iprescue.org or sue@telkomsa.net

Phone: +27 (0) 73 169 6964

Age Requirements: 18 or older

Language: English

Advanced Notice: 1 week

Cost/Fees Involved: UKP 75 per week - self catering

Meals/Accommodations: UKP 75 includes a room in the sanctuary house, plus use of kitchen, bathroom and laundry. Volunteers are responsible for their own meals (purchasing and cooking). Transport into town is provided twice a week for shopping. Additional costs include use of the internet and transport for outings of extra shopping trips.

Minimum Stay: 1 week

Maximum Stay: No maximum time

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: None, the same amount of help is needed all year round

Health Requirements: Tetanus & Hep B injections before working with the primates

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations: Volunteers may take the bus or a flight to Polokwane - or they may request a pick up from the Jhb airport for an additional cost. The sanctuary may relocate to Jhb/Pretoria area during 2009

Special Skills Required: No skills required. On-site training given

Type of Volunteer Work: Below is a list of volunteer duties:

- ✓ Food preparation, feeding the primates, cleaning the enclosures.
- ✓ Medication and supplements of sick and elderly primates.
- ✓ Accompanying primates to the vet.
- ✓ General monitoring of unstable primates
- ✓ Hand rearing
- ✓ Record keeping
- ✓ Updating records on the computer
- ✓ Updating the website
- ✓ Enclosure building and maintenance
- ✓ Introductions and monitoring of two unfamiliar primates
- ✓ Relocating and monitoring of primates to new enclosures at the sanctuary
- ✓ Enrichment – adding new branches and other enrichments items to the enclosures.
- ✓ Fund raising and general admin/office work

About: International Primate Rescue (IPR) was founded in 1996 and is a registered charity in South Africa and the UK. The sanctuary rescues any species of primate from anywhere in the world. Most of the primates received are ex-pets with behavioral problems. Our work is to rehabilitate the primates from any psychological disorders. We do this by socializing them with their own species and providing a very natural habitat for them. The sanctuary currently care for over 80 primates, comprising of Common and Black eared Marmosets, Cotton Top Tamarins, Common and Bolivian Squirrel monkeys and Mona monkeys. The primates are too damaged to be returned to the wild and will remain at the sanctuary for the rest of their lives. The volunteer work is very hands on and would suit those interested in behavioral problems and rehabilitation. International Primate Rescue intends to relocate the sanctuary to the Jhb/Pta area during 2009 and expand by providing facilities for a greater number and larger selection of primates (apes such as Chimpanzees) and some of South Africa's indigenous wild animals.

International Student Volunteers

Organization Type: Non-profit, Social Community Development, Conservation, Construction, Habitat Restoration, Forest Regeneration, Educational Adventure Tour, Volunteer, Education, Adventure Tour, Travel, Scientific Research, Wild Animal Rescue, Children's Educational Programs, Sustainable Development

Website: www.isvonline.org

Countries: Australia, New Zealand, Costa Rica, The Dominican Republic, Thailand, Ecuador, South Africa, Eastern Europe (Croatia, Romania, Bosnia & Herzegovina)

Volunteer Contact/Email: info@isvonline.org

Phone: +1 (714) 779-7392

Age Requirements: Must be at least 18 years of age by the date of departure

Language: None – However participants travelling to Costa Rica, Ecuador or the Dominican Republic may elect to participate in a 5 day in country Spanish Language and dance course prior to commencement of the ISV program to increase their experience.

Advanced Notice: Applicants can apply anytime but should apply as far ahead as possible to secure their place on the program as spaces fill up quickly.

Cost/Fees Involved:

Standard 4 week program Aus/Nz= \$3395 USD

Standard 4 week program (all other countries) = \$3195 USD

Additional 2 week Volunteer Project Aus/Nz = \$1395 USD

Additional 2 week Volunteer Project (all other countries) = \$1295 USD

Additional 2 week Adventure Tour Aus/Nz = \$1495 USD

Additional 2 week Adventure Tour (all other countries) = \$1395 USD

Volunteer Project Only Aus/Nz = \$1895

Volunteer Project Only (all other countries) = \$1795

Meals/Accommodations: All accommodation is covered for the entire program. All meals in the first two weeks are covered and over half of the meals in the second two weeks are covered.

Minimum Stay: Volunteers must commit for a minimum of two weeks.

Maximum Stay: None, volunteers can add on many additional volunteers projects.

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: May through to August.

Health Requirements: Specific health conditions are assessed on a case by case basis.

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations: N/A

Special Skills Required: No prior experience in conservation or community development work is needed to participate.

Type of Volunteer Work: Volunteer projects include Wild Animal Rescue and Endangered species management projects working with spider monkeys, the Andean spectacled bear, orphaned brown bears, sea turtles, humpback whales and even a dolphins research programs off the pacific coast. Children's Education Projects that incorporate taking children out on days programs doing such activities such as clowning, puppetry and dance. Indigenous Community Projects working alongside Maori communities in New Zealand or the Quichua Indians in Ecuador. Community Development and Construction programs. Habitat Restoration and Forest Regeneration in beautiful outdoor locations. Volunteers also do some incredible work in the orphanages and the villages of Eastern Europe.

About: International Student Volunteers is a non-profit organization that has been running student programs since 1983 and has grown to be one of the most popular student summer educational programs in the world. ISV offers real hands on volunteer projects and educational adventure tours countries such as in Australia, New Zealand, Costa Rica, The Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Thailand, Eastern Europe and South Africa.

ISV believes that volunteers make a difference, and our purpose and mission is: “To create an environment conducive to combining education, conservation and recreation, into the most incredible experience of a lifetime while giving back to the local communities in the countries in which we are travelling”.

We have a commitment to providing a volunteer experience that is fun, safe, meaningful, educational and sustainable while at the same time allowing the volunteer to experience the best their host country has to offer through an action packed adventure tour. ISV is unique in that it combines group travel, volunteering and adventure into the adventure of a lifetime. As ISV is a non-profit organization, participants from the USA may also raise funds for their program through tax deductible sponsorship donations from their community.

Iracambi

Organization Type: Brazilian Rainforest Conservation Center

Website: www.iracambi.com

Country: Brazil

Volunteer Contact/Email: Kristin Wilcox, volunteers@iracambi.com

Phone:

Age Requirements: 18 and over

Language: English or Portuguese

Advanced Notice: 1 month

Cost/Fees Involved: R\$1,200 per month

Meals/Accommodations:

Minimum Stay: 1 month minimum stay

Maximum Stay: 6 months

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: We take volunteers year round.

Health Requirements: Volunteers should not have any chronic health issues as we are very isolated.

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations:

Special Skills Required: We are looking for volunteers with a variety of skills and backgrounds

Type of Volunteer Work: We are looking for volunteers to help with reforestation projects, clearing trails, ecotourism, environmental education, marketing, GIS, IT support, web design and fundraising.

About: Iracambi's mission is to work with the community to make conservation of the rainforest more attractive than its destruction. Located in the Serra do Brigadeiro, in the highly endangered Atlantic Forest area of Minas Gerais, where most of the forest is privately owned by smallholders, we face the same challenges as our neighbors: how can we make a sustainable living while conserving our globally important biodiversity? Iracambi has evolved as a result of these challenges. From its original roots as a farm, Iracambi has set up a Research Center, a private forest reserve and an NGO. We work with people from across the country and across the world, searching for solutions to the problems caused by unsustainable land use.



Jerusalem Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals

Organization Type: Animal Rescue

Website: www.jspcashelter.org

Country: Israel

Volunteer Contact/Email: Eve, jspca.jeru@gmail.com

Phone: 02-585-4465

Age Requirements: Must be over 17 to volunteer in the shelter.

Language: Hebrew or English necessary.

Advanced Notice: A volunteer should contact us at least a week ahead of time to set up a schedule and to be placed in a job that suits them.

Cost/Fees Involved: None

Meals/Accommodations: No accommodations available. Volunteer must provide their own transportation.

Minimum Stay: No specific commitment required.

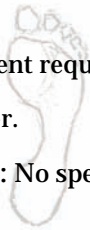
Maximum Stay: The more, the merrier.

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: No specific requirements. Volunteers welcome at all times.

Health Requirements: N/A

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations: In order to volunteer in the shelter you must provide your own transportation as there is no public transportation.

Special Skills Required: Veterinarians, maintenance workers, and handyman very helpful.



Jerusalem Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals

Type of Volunteer Work: There are many different ways a volunteer can help the animals in Jerusalem through our organization. 1. Shelter: Volunteers clean dog yards with 20 dogs, clean free roaming cattery, feed animals, walk dogs in isolation, help with maintenance and upkeep. 2. Clinic: Volunteers clean cages, treatment rooms, do laundry. 3. Booths: Volunteers ask for donations from the public and educate about spay/neuter campaign and pet owner responsibility (Hebrew a must). 4. Fundraising: Volunteers work with our fundraising committee to raise donations from all over the world (no need to be in Israel to help with this!).

About: The Jerusalem Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals is a registered non-profit organization. The Jerusalem Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals was founded during the period of the British Mandate. We are the only animal shelter in Jerusalem serving areas as far away as Gush Etzion, Hebron, Beit Shemesh, even Beit She'an and large portions of the West Bank. We get countless puppies from Arab villages since many pet owners do not spay or neuter and there are stray dogs too numerous to count. The JSPCA is the city's largest animal shelter organization. The Society runs a shelter in the Atarot industrial area of Jerusalem -a shelter which has been in continuous operation since 1970. We never refuse an animal if it is hurt, on the street or in a dangerous situation. Our shelter is a rescue shelter: Most animals that are not adopted live out their natural lives with us. That is why our shelter is generally overcrowded and often filled beyond its capacity. At any given time we house up to 300 dogs and 100 cats. We are hard at work making significant improvements to our shelter. We welcome help in the daily tasks of taking care of the animals but also in the upkeep and improvements we would like to make in the shelter.

Kalimpomg Animal Shelter

Organization Type: Animal Rescue, village treatment and community dogs spay-neuter project

Website: www.his-india.org.au

Country: West Bengal, India, near Darjeeling

Volunteer Contact/Email: Catrina Vear, catrina_vear@yahoo.com

Phone: + 91 98320 42333

Age Requirements: No specific age requirement but volunteer should be fit

Language: Nepali is the dominant language but most people speak English

Advanced Notice: Advance notice of at least a few weeks would be needed

Cost/Fees Involved: No charge

Meals/Accommodations: Accommodation in room with attached bathroom and simple vegetarian meals

Minimum Stay: 2 months

Maximum Stay:

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: We welcome volunteers at any time of the year.

Health Requirements: Anti-rabies vaccination needed, some walking required

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations: There is some political instability in Darjeeling District and strikes and closures are fairly common.

Special Skills Required: We need only veterinarians

Type of Volunteer Work: Veterinarian needs diagnostic skills with dogs and cats in particular. Surgical skills are needed, especially to be able to spay and castrate dogs and cats.

About: The shelter is situated on 5 acres of beautiful land in the outer area of Kalimpong. There are wonderful views of distant Himalayas, and lovely gardens, and village surroundings. The staff are friendly and helpful. As well as a spay-vaccinate campaign, the staff also visit distant villages to carry out spay-vaccination programmes.





La No Che Orphans and Youth Camp Trust

Organization Type: Working with orphans (orphanage Center) and Youth in Tanzania

Website: None

Country: Tanzania

Volunteer Contact/Email: Mr. Johnson Macrobert: Orphanage Director, lanochecamp@yahoo.com, camplanoche@hotmail.com

Phone: +255 715 22 77 98, +255 784 22 77 98, +255 774 22 77 98

Age Requirements: No age limit

Language: Flexible. Any language is welcome! You should be willing to learn and use our local language of Swahili through are kids, while teaching them to speak your language.

Advanced Notice: Flexible. Contact us at anytime.

Cost/Fees Involved: Donation of: US \$250 for two weeks, US \$300 for three weeks, US \$400 for four weeks, US \$1,200 for three Months

Meals/Accommodations: We provide full accommodation plus meal and everything is included from our donation fees. No addition cost.

Minimum Stay: No Minimum or maximum stay. Volunteers are welcome to stay and work with us as long as he/she wants.

Maximum Stay: *See above*

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: Year round placement. Volunteers may join us at anytime.

Health Requirements: Just be physically fit.

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations: Volunteers need to work with us for all the time that they have committed to work and must set an example for the children by obeying the center's rules of behavior.

Special Skills Required: No experience is required, but you must willing to work hard and love children and have fun with them (Orphans).

La No Che Orphans and Youth Camp Trust

Type of Volunteer Work: Volunteers will be working in light construction. La No Che Orphans and Youth Camp will be working with phase III project to build the orphanage center. The volunteer project is organized together with local village members.

Volunteers will be working to finish a water well with drainage, piping, walls, the roof, planting a vegetable garden and fruit orchard. They will also be building a chicken coop.

For those that are interested in working with kids instead of construction volunteers may organize games, teach English and mathematics or just have fun.

About: La No Che Orphans & Youth Camp Trust (La No Che) in Tanzania is a Charity Organization established in May 2003 by Johnson MaCRobert. La No Che was established as a Non Profit Organization (NGO's) and was registered as a Charity on July 3rd 2008.

The aim of La No Che is to provide a safe and secure home for the children of Tanzania who have been orphaned by diseases such as AIDS, Malaria and Tuberculosis. Their aim is to provide the orphans basic needs, while ensuring that the orphan receives the physical and emotional care a child requires.

La No Che aims to expand its role within the community of Kibaha and help address the wider problem of HIV/AIDS. The director firmly believes that to find a long-term solution to the problem of orphans within Tanzania, we need to work at addressing the problem of HIV/AIDS in Tanzania, as we go forward hand in hand.

La No Che was setup within the Coast Region of Tanzania, which is approximately 50km from Dar es Salaam. The orphanage is run by our director Mr. Johnson MaCRobert. La No Che also employs Gideon Gypson as a handyman to help take care of the property and Elizabeth Ndomba (Matron) to care for the orphans psychological well being.

Lega Pro Animale

Organization Type: Spay and Neuter centre for dogs and cats (veterinary clinic with shelter for dogs, cats, other animals)

Website: www.geocities.com/fondazionemondoanimale,
www.fondazionemondoanimale.com, www.legaproanimale.de
web.tiscali.it/legaproanimale

Country: Southern Italy

Volunteer Contact/Email: Dorothea Friz, DVM, legaproanimale@tin.it

Phone: 0039-335-6207996

Age Requirements: Age Requirements: At least 18 years old

Language: Naturally the clinic staff speaks Italian, but even German, English and French is possible

Advanced Notice: Months before, because lots of vet students are doing their internships in our facility

Cost/Fees Involved: None

Meals/Accommodations: We offer free accommodation on site and free lunch during the week. Volunteer has to take care of breakfast and dinner himself

Minimum Stay: At least 2 weeks

Maximum Stay: None

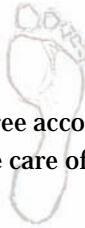
Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: The clinic is closed for holidays from January 6th to 31st. More helpers are needed in spring and summer.

Health Requirements:

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations: Our facility (in the open country) is not reachable by public transport. Our cars are NOT available to volunteers. It might be a problem for some volunteers, because they cannot move around.

Special Skills Required: Must like dogs and cats, no allergies

Type of Volunteer Work: Socialize animals, help during s/n programs (but not necessarily vets nurses needed!), watching traps, cleaning, but even maintenance of the buildings, gardening



About: LEGA PRO ANIMALE was founded by Dorothea Friz, a German vet who is working since over 25 years tireless to eradicate the stray dog and cat problem in Italy through:

- ✓ neutering as many dogs and cats as possible;
- ✓ information and education of the public;
- ✓ training of other vets and people working with animals
- ✓ lobbying and enforcement of animal protection laws.

For more information please visit our web sites:

www.geocities.com/fondazionemondoanimale (English)

www.fondazionemondoanimale.com (English, German, Italian)

www.legaproanimale.de (German)

web.tiscali.it/legaproanimale (Italian)



Los Medicos Voladores

Organization Type: LMV is a volunteer-based nonprofit organization that helps improve the health and well-being of the peoples of Mexico and Central America through the provision of no-cost, high-quality healthcare and health education clinics in rural villages in northern Mexico (northern Sonora and Baja), El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras; and among migrant labor populations in the Coachella Valley of the southwestern United States (southern California).

Website: www.flyingdocs.org

Countries: Northern Mexico, CA, Central American countries

Volunteer Contact/Email: Public Relations: Adrian Fenderson DDS, info@flyingdocs.org, info@.napadentist.com, LJohn63590@aol.com

Phone:

Age Requirements: Over 14 if traveling with a parent or guardian
Preference over 18 but exceptions made.

Language: Spanish is nice but not mandatory

Advanced Notice: Varies, sometimes a week before a trip we are looking for volunteers, Central American trips fill up 2 to 3 months before the trip.

Cost/Fees Involved: Short trips about \$400 4 days, Central American Trips about \$1800 10 days

Meals/Accommodations: Central American Trips some additional costs for some meals, Mexico trips additional costs for meals and lodging 1 to 200 US dollars more

Minimum Stay: No minimum. Just join and go on a trip when you desire

Maximum Stay: None

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: Mexico trips every month on the second weekend after the first Wednesday Chapter Meetings not obligatory but recommended see web site for times. See web site for trip times for Central America.

Health Requirements: Can travel to remote areas in Mexico in small planes. Can travel internationally.

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations: See Web site. Some danger exists in any foreign country.

Special Skills Required: Nurses, Physicians, Dentists, Audiologists, All Eye Doctors, Chiropractors, Physical Therapists, Gynecologists etc. Also, Hygienists, Medical assistance, Pilots, general volunteers, Translators

Type of Volunteer Work: Medical and Dental and associated assistants, Pilots, Translators

About: LMV is a volunteer-based nonprofit organization that helps improve the health and well-being of the peoples of Mexico and Central America through the provision of no-cost, high-quality healthcare and health education clinics in rural villages in northern Mexico (northern Sonora and Baja), El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras; and among migrant labor populations in the Coachella Valley of the southwestern United States (southern California). Since 1975 LMV has offered more than 230 short-term medical, dental, optometry, and other healthcare clinics, treating over 7,000 patients per year.

More than 400 members offer their time and expertise to make our mission a reality. Volunteer pilots fly our teams to Mexico on four- to five-day monthly trips, and provide additional assistance flying teams to our biannual one-day Oasis clinic in the Coachella Valley in tandem with volunteers who drive. LMV volunteers reach Central America clinic locations by commercial airliner and ground transportation for seven- to ten-day trips several times a year, as well.

LMV clinics are open to anyone who can reach the clinic during open hours in the areas we serve. And we help improve villagers' lives not only by treating their immediate health problems, but also by providing lasting tools that empower people to help themselves – including health education, especially for women and children, and clinic equipment for ongoing use by local healthcare professionals. LMV also runs a number of non-clinic projects that strengthen the villages we support through initiatives like education sponsorship, wheeled mobility and other equipment donations, and so on. We are proud to work closely with a broad range of partner organizations, including Rotary, Airline Ambassadors, and local medical and dental schools.

The Miracle Foundation

Organization Type: We are a Non Profit, based in Austin, TX, that provides nearly 500 orphans in India with a home, family environment, nutritional food, proper clothes and an education. Our motto is one orphan at a time, and the number of orphans that we take in increases daily. Our goal is to give as many children the best chance at a successful and prosperous life as possible by providing them with necessities of life.

Website: <http://www.miraclefoundation.org>

Countries: Our head office is located in Austin, Texas. Our four orphanages are located in India.

Volunteer Contact/Email: Jim Genevro: jim@miraclefoundation.org
Barbara Joubert: Barbara@MiracleFoundation.org

Phone: Our office telephone number is (512) 329-8635.

Age Requirements: None

Language: None

Advanced Notice: For volunteering in the Austin email Jim stating interest & possibly schedule volunteering with The Miracle Foundation. For IMPACT travel it's best to let Barbara know 3 months in advance.

Cost/Fees Involved: For volunteering in our head office in Austin there is no fee, we appreciate whoever is willing to donate their time! Traveling to India is different. For our voluntourism IMPACT Travel program we do require basic travel fees. The average base cost of our trips range between \$1,000-\$1,400/person. This base fee will cover all hotel accommodation, all meals during the tour with the group, domestic flights to and from our orphanages, sightseeing tours, all ground transport with the group, airport meet and greet as well as transport to and from domestic airports if traveling with the team. Additional cost will come from personal spending/sightseeing, inoculations (about \$600), Indian visa, passport, and travel insurance.

Meals/Accommodations: Yes, if you stay with the group we provide meals at no additional cost. Accommodation near our orphanages will be included.

Minimum Stay: For our volunteer program in the Austin office we do not have set hours and are willing to accommodate busy schedules. Our voluntourism IMPACT travel tours last 9-20 days, depending on the tour and time of year. We travel three times a year as a group, in March, August, and October.

Maximum Stay: There is no maximum amount of time.

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: The times that are most busy in the office are about 2 months before one of our IMPACT trips, holiday seasons, and the end of the year. As mentioned above, we travel to India three times a year in March, August, and October, and new ambassadors are readily welcomes on these trips!

Health Requirements: None, but inoculations must be taken before traveling.

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations: The key to good health while abroad is found in pre-travel preparation. Vaccinations are available to prevent diseases you may encounter outside the United States. But often, time is required after your vaccinations to develop adequate anti-body response before you reach a country with possible contamination. When possible, we recommend scheduling an appointment with the Travel Clinic at least four weeks prior to your departure.

Special Skills Required: No special skills are required, only those interested in helping out around the orphanages and entertaining the children with various games and activities. Our August trip is our Medical Tour centered around doctors and other people in the health professions who would like to use their specific skills to help those who require it in the orphanages but, anyone is welcome on this trip!

Type of Volunteer Work: The main work that is done around the orphanages is small renovations, cleaning, planting, making crafts and games for the children, working on taking video footage of the children and pictures, and having fun and getting to know the children!

About: The Miracle Foundation was founded in 2000 by Caroline Boudreaux after she visited India with a close friend. She found that there was a dire need for the global community to take action and help the millions of children in India with no home, education, or proper meals throughout the day. She has worked collaboratively with other organizations and alone to reach out to as many children as possible. There are four standing orphanages and about 500 children being taken care of. We have a sponsorship program that allows the children to have individual personal relationships with those generous enough to sponsor a child. Our goal is to help one orphan at a time, and with the help of generous donations and support these children will each be given the change to be the best they can be. More information about The Miracle Foundation can be found at www.miraclefoundation.org.

The Mountain Fund

Organization Type: Nonprofit providing healthcare in developing mountain communities around the world.

Website: <http://www.mountainfund.org>

Countries: USA, Nepal, Peru

Volunteer Contact/Email: Jenn Spradlin, Assistant Director,
jenn@mountainfund.org

Phone: Cell: 505-459-7040

Age Requirements: Over 18

Language: Spanish is helpful for Peru, but not mandatory.

Advanced Notice: 2 weeks

Cost/Fees Involved:

USA Volunteers: Free, Nepal Volunteer Placement Fee: \$200, Peru Volunteer Placement Fee: \$200

Nepal Homestay: \$10 per day (includes housing and 2 meals/day and transport to volunteer job)

Peru Homestay: \$90/week (minimum of 2 weeks; includes housing and 2 meals/day and transport to volunteer job)

Additional \$90 Fee to volunteer at hospitals in Nepal - this is not included in your Placement Fee.

Meals/Accommodations: Both Nepal & Peru include breakfast and dinner; transport to-and-from airport; transport to and from volunteer job; transport arranged for sightseeing.

Minimum Stay: 2 weeks; 4 hours per day.

Maximum Stay: None

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: None

Health Requirements: Healthy and able to assist others within your volunteer duties; walking around town is involved.

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations: Will stay at our housing and have an escort as needed.

Special Skills Required: None; Spanish speaking for Peru is helpful but not mandatory.

Type of Volunteer Work: Volunteers needed in Nepal for Women's Safehouse; medical clinic or orphanage; Volunteers needed in Peru for medical clinic or orphanage.

About: The Mountain Fund's mission is to eliminate poverty, its causes and symptoms, in developing mountain communities around the world. We've been active in Nepal since 2000, and active in Peru since 2002. Our goal is to create healthy, vibrant mountain communities where people have access to healthcare, education and economic opportunity in an environment where human rights are valued and respected. These goals must be undertaken with community buy-in, and respect for, and preservation of underlying cultural practices and norms. In mountain communities the suffering caused by poverty can be overwhelming. The needs far outstrip the local resources. Our approach is to discover those things that can be done today, with very little funding and by local protagonists dedicated to their own communities. The Mountain Fund works hand in hand with local community leaders to identify solvable problems in the community and take action to do those things that can be done now, and at a cost that is affordable.



Native Forest Foundation

Organization Type: Native Plant Conservation, Community Forestry & Ethnobotany

Website: Sorry, No website currently

Country: Sri Lanka

Volunteer Contact/Email: Damitha Rajapakse, damilda@sltnet.lk

Phone: 94-033-2224023 / 94-0777-327988

Age Requirements: Above 21 years up to any age

Language: English

Advanced Notice: At least two weeks

Cost/Fees Involved: It is not customary to ask money for food according to our culture but since we do not have any outside major funding sources, it would be appreciated if volunteers could contribute USD \$ 12 per day for food - Currency Rupees (Us 1= Rs 100 approx)

Meals/Accommodations: Accommodation and meals for USD \$ 12 per day

Minimum Stay: Very flexible on this and could be discussed before arrival but no such commitments, depending on the volunteer requirements, some visit for academic / dissertations /

Maximum Stay: 3 months

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: Yes, since we are involved in plant conservation, preferably during rainy season, April, May, June, September, October, & November

Health Requirements: Not specific

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations:

Special Skills Required: Nature lovers, People with interests in medicinal & native wild fruit plants, anthropology, traditional ecological knowledge, community forestry

Type of Volunteer Work: Work in our ethno-garden, watering, planting, weeding, meeting rural local community for documenting traditional ecological knowledge, outreach planting with Sunday Schools in church parishes, Buddhist monasteries.

About: No further details provided.

The Nature – A Heritage for the Future Association

Organization Type: Animal rescue, dog shelter and cattery, education to preserve the natural environment, to promote and to defend the ecological principles, from the moral, spiritual, scientific and economic point of view; to create the civic conscience for a sustainable development; to respect the animal rights, to protect the animals and to fight against people's cruelty for animals.

Website: www.thenature.ro

Country: Romania

Volunteer Contact/Email: Milobendzchi Carmen, milo@b.astral.ro or Roxi Macoviciuc, roxanamacoviciuc@yahoo.com

Phone:

Age Requirements: At least 16 years. Could be children only if are accompanied by an adult.

Language: English, French

Advanced Notice: Please, at least one week.

Cost/Fees Involved:

Meals/Accommodations: We can provide transport to the shelter, airport.

Minimum Stay: From 2 hours, everything is welcomed

Maximum Stay:

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations:

Health Requirements: If the volunteer wants to help animals, like dogs or cats, should not be allergic to them.

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations:

Special Skills Required:

Type of Volunteer Work: People to socialize animals, wash or clip in summer, feed animals, building maintained, work in construction, paint the kennels, veterinarians, help with TNR, mainly in catching, office help in generating publicity and fundraising, in educational programs.

About: Please see our website to learn more



Nature Corps

Organization Type: Volunteers working together to preserve the National Parks in California, Hawaii and the Western United States

Website: www.thenaturecorps.org

Country: United States

Volunteer Contact/Email: Mark Landon, info@thenaturecorps.org

Phone: (805) 434-0299

Age Requirements: None

Language: English

Advanced Notice: At least 30 days in advance

Cost/Fees Involved: Costs range from \$395 to \$1495 based on park location and accommodations.

Meals/Accommodations: Yes. Tuition covers accommodations, meals and ground transportation.

Minimum Stay: 5 days

Maximum Stay: 8 days

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: Mostly during the summer months

Health Requirements: Depends on outings.

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations:

Special Skills Required: Volunteer opportunities at all levels of experience.

Type of Volunteer Work: Mostly habitat restoration including planting, seed gathering, propagation, nursery work, exotic plant removal

About: We invite you to join us on our volunteer vacations and contribute your personal legacy in our magnificent National Parks. You too can experience the rewards of protecting the endangered rainforests of Hawaii, restoring alpine meadows in Yosemite or protecting ancient groves of giant sequoia-- the largest living organisms on earth.

Led by Nature Corps staff, groups of up to 22 volunteers attend fully catered and professionally guided volunteer vacations designed to help complete critical conservation projects and take volunteers behind the scenes to explore America's magnificent National Parks.

Approximately half of the volunteer vacation is devoted to preserving these national treasures. Throughout the rest of the expedition, our experienced naturalists will lead you on a variety of recreational activities including hiking, fishing, strolling on moonlight nature walks, visiting picturesque meadows or picnicking alongside a stunning glacial lake in the High Sierra.

After a full day in the great outdoors, you will satisfy your appetite on the savory aromas and hearty dishes prepared by our outdoor chef. These exciting volunteer vacations can be part of a memorable experience that you will always cherish.



Ndola SPCA

Organization Type: Animal shelter

Website: Visit Ndola SPCA on Facebook

Country: Zambia

Volunteer Contact/Email: Debbie Vrdoljak, ndolaspca@yahoo.com

Phone:

Age Requirements: 20 yrs and older

Language: English

Advanced Notice: At least 4-6 weeks

Cost/Fees Involved: The volunteer would need to pay for food and accommodation.

Meals/Accommodations: No. Unfortunately we have no accommodation but there are a variety of guest houses B& B's and arrangements can be made.

Minimum Stay: 10 days

Maximum Stay: 1 month initially

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: Anytime.

Health Requirements: Must have general standard of fitness and must have current rabies vaccinations

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations: Malaria is endemic and so prophylactics are recommended. Rabies is also endemic so rabies vaccinations recommended.

Special Skills Required: Not really but anyone who enjoys working with animals. Dog handling skills would be a great asset however.

Type of Volunteer Work: Socializing of animals, feeding, assisting vet, helping with maintenance. Too many possibilities to mention. Everyday can be an adventure!

About: Ndola SPCA has been in existence since the 1950's and has always been managed by volunteers. We have five fulltime employees – Mubita the night guard, Peter and Dorious the kennel men, Beatrice looks after the cooking of the dog food and Florence oversees proceedings. Dr Andrew works from our premises and helps with our animals. We have a small committee of 5 volunteers who help wherever they can. The SPCA has no vehicle.

We exist on a shoestring. Our income is generated from providing boarding for security dogs and boarding for pets of Ndola residents going out of town and dogs in season. We also have some donations from the community. Our facilities are very old and basic. We exist which is important for the animals, in a place where human life is also cheap.

There is scope for all sorts of projects in our community but we are limited mainly due to lack of volunteers. For this reason we have limited our activities to promoting proper pet care, vaccinations and neutering.

OUR MISSION

- To support the animals of Ndola as well as their owners.
- To promote responsible pet ownership in order that all benefit.
- To provide advice on general care and needs.
- Neutering and Vaccination programs.
- Shelter for abandoned and stray animals.
- To try and re-home animals left in our care.
- We also provide boarding facilities for animals whose owners who are away and bitches on heat.
- To support working and farm animals.
- To promote respect for wildlife.

The more volunteers we have the more we can do for the animals and people in our community.

Nkombi Volunteers on Mankwe Wildlife Reserve

Organization Type: Zoological Field Research and Cultural centre. Mankwe Wildlife Reserve is a self sustaining reserve in the Northwest Province of South Africa

Website: www.mankwewildlifereserve.net

Country: South Africa

Volunteer Contact/Email: Lynne MacTavish, mankwe@telkomsa.net

Phone: +27834533133

Age Requirements: 18+

Language: English

Advanced Notice: 3 months in advance

Cost/Fees Involve: 2 week programme £795.00, 4 week programme £1395.00, 8 week programme £2000.00, 12 week programme £2800.00

Meals/Accommodations: Transfers to and from Johannesburg Airport, Accommodation in Bush Camp, 3 Meals per day, Guides and Trackers, Onsite transportation, Ecological Research Projects, Day Excursions

Minimum Stay: 2 Weeks

Maximum Stay: 3 Months

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: All year

Health Requirements: Volunteers should be able to walk 5km's per day and be able to climb a tree. Mankwe is in a malaria free region so no preventative medicine is required.

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations: June, July, August are our winter months with minimum temps of below freezing and day time temps of 25degrees Celsius. The remainder months are summer months with minimum temps of 12 degrees Celsius and day time temps of 33 degrees Celsius.

VISA REQUIREMENTS: 3 month tourist visa issued on arrival to UK passport holders. **INSURANCE:** Arrangement of personal travel insurance which also covers emergency evacuation and compensation for unavoidable cancellation or premature termination of your trip. You should also have a credit card facility for at least GBP3000 to cover hospital admission in the case of medical emergency.

Nkombi Volunteers on Mankwe Wildlife Reserve

Special Skills Required: People with an ecology background would be an advantage but training is given on site.

Type of Volunteer Work: Volunteers will be assisting with running a working reserve i.e fire breaks, anti poaching patrols, fence patrols, rhino monitoring , large mammal counts on foot, bird surveys, nocturnal surveys, vulture project, brown hyena project, general maintenance, data recording and administration, guest relations and marketing of reserve. Volunteers will also get involved with cultural projects in the local community.

About: Mankwe Wildlife Reserve is a 4700ha reserve with over 43 species of mammals and 300 different species of birds. The reserve was established 18 years ago. Many different species of animals have been introduced including the endangered white Rhino, these species have thrived at Mankwe and the reserve now has a population of over 2000 large mammals. Due to the introduction of several water points and the careful management of the grasslands the reserve has an abundant biodiversity.

The role of the volunteers will be to assist with the management of the reserve, to ensure that the wildlife is protected and the veld is monitored closely so they can continue to thrive. The volunteers will also be involved with the local community on a cultural level so that the community around also benefits from our conservation efforts. Mankwe is visited by over 200 students annually and is associated with many international conservation organizations. We have long term research projects established which volunteers will be involved in. Our aim is to give volunteers a life changing experience.

Nomad Pure

Organization Type: Construction; teacher training; HIV Clinic; hospital in-patient care; batey- Haitian migrant worker community services.

Website: www.lauriepillow.com, www.myspace.com/deliriodance

Country: Dominican Republic

Volunteer Contact/Email: Laurie Pillow, nomadpure@aol.com

Phone:

Age Requirements: 18 and over. High school student groups can be accommodated with the presence of one adult traveler per five students.

Language: Spanish is helpful, but not required. Charades can be remarkably effective, too.

Advanced Notice: Two weeks allows for best match between traveler and volunteer opportunities. It is recommended that travelers check the Nomad Pure "By Foot or By Burro" schedule: Pre-planned trips for specific projects.

Cost/Fees Involved: Donations encouraged and appreciated, but not mandatory. Once on the ground, most volunteers discover and define issues that are of personal importance to them.

Meals/Accommodations: Total trip cost based on double occupancy includes: casual accommodations abutting a quiet ecological preserve across from the beach; home-style lunch daily. Single occupancy: Additional US\$20/day.

Minimum Stay: At least one week. At least four hours daily.

Maximum Stay: Currently: one month.

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: Generally, no trips during the hurricane season- late August through September. Private groups and professional service trips organized upon request.

Health Requirements:

- ✓ Current tetanus. Full hepatitis series is strongly recommended.
- ✓ Building projects: Be able to perform manual labor in hot, humid weather.
- ✓ Community service: Must be able to walk 2-3 miles off road. Might include climbing steep hills and traversing thigh-high rivers.

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations: Mosquitoes can be fierce. When working in the community, be part of the community. Getting around is a sport, if not entertainment. Have a sense of humor about it all.

Special Skills Required: General trips: No special skills required. Professional Service Trips require professional skill/expertise: e.g. medical/dental requires professional medical personnel; teaching requires teacher certification.

- **Type of Volunteer Work:**
Building/Repairing/Painting: foot bridges, houses, schools, rural clinics, public hospitals.
- Distributing food and clothing to batey, Haitian migrant communities
- Caring for in-patients at HIV clinic and public hospitals: meal distribution and feeding; personal hygiene assistance; children's activities.
- Med. teams needed for MASH units: eye care, women's health and dental.
- Teachers and teaching artists needed to train teacher's aides and pre-school teachers.
- U.S. based help in fundraising & generating publicity for Nomad Pure

About: Got a sense of humor? Of resilient mind and body? Don't mind sharing public transport with livestock? Willing to trade your favorite baseball cap for a crash helmet? Intrigued by how others do it, play it, say it, eat it? Want to make travel meaningful?

Nomad Pure is a voluntourism organization committed to helping poor Dominicans and Haitians walk out of poverty through collective action. Whether we facilitate the creation of rural clinics, train teachers or build houses, NP's service trips focus on completion of short-term projects identified as critical for and sustainable by local communities.

NP founder Laurie Pillow is an internationally-recognized dancer, journalist and arts literacy consultant. Years ago, Pillow relocated to the Dominican Republic to teach marginalized youth. When she integrated folkloric dance into the curriculum, students responded with rare pride. How critical cultural identity is in people's struggle to overcome social injustice and poverty. The lesson: Belief in oneself, not money, builds strength.

In 2007, Pillow launched Nomad Pure. A network of people helping people not by tossing money and walking away, but by discovering each other and realizing that we all have more in common than what separates us.

NP provides travelers the opportunity to engage in profoundly intimate, life-changing volunteer work alongside local Dominican communities while reserving time for insanely authentic (read: *wild*), personally-guided back roads adventures. *Not just adventure travel: a cultural journey.*

Noonkodin Secondary School

Organization Type: Secondary School, Teaching, Knowledge Documentation, Media Production, Herbal Medicine Research, Cultural Research, Drama

Website: www.serianuk.org.uk

Country: Tanzania

Volunteer Contact/Email: Gemma Enolengila, enolengila@yahoo.co.uk

Phone:

Age Requirements: Usually a minimum of 18 years, although 16-17 year olds may be accepted with parental permission. No upper age limit and mature applicants are welcome, provided that they are in good health.

Language: All applicants for teaching positions should be proficient in spoken and written English (minimum IELTS 7.0 for non-native speakers). Manual laborers should be able to communicate adequately in oral English (minimum IELTS 4.0). If you are able to learn some basic Swahili in advance it will be a great help.

Advanced Notice: Please give at least 1 month's advance notice if possible.

Cost/Fees Involved: Full program cost (which includes orientation, tour of Arusha town, Class C residence permit, full board accommodation, transport to the school, Swahili tuition, and a donation to the school) is currently 995 USD for 1 month, 1385 USD for 2 months, 1655 USD for 3 months, 1925 USD for 4 months and 2195 USD for 5 months.

Meals/Accommodations: Full board accommodation, based on simple local-style meals, provided as standard. Extra charge of 35 USD per week for a more varied diet including soup, pasta, etc.

Minimum Stay: Minimum 1 month, preferably 2 months or more, between 8.30 am and 4pm from Monday to Friday (although there will be some rest time during working hours)

Maximum Stay: Not applicable

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: School terms run from mid-January to early June, and mid-July to late November. We particularly welcome volunteers from January to April, and from late August to October, although prospective applicants should bear in mind that March-May is the rainy season.

Health Requirements: May be required to walk 5-6 kilometers to reach nearest public transport.

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations: The school is located in a remote rural area and there are few 'home comforts'. The staff house currently has solar power to provide lighting and cell phone charging facilities, but there is no other electricity supply. There is no running water (which means no showers, although buckets of water can be provided!) and the toilets are pit latrines. Volunteers should be emotionally mature, flexible, and able to handle challenging situations with good humor

Special Skills Required: Previous teaching experience (especially in English as a Second Language) is welcome, although not essential. We particularly need qualified teachers.

Type of Volunteer Work: We need people to teach English as a Second Language, Mathematics, Chemistry, Biology and Physics (all in English medium) to 14-18+ year olds at a rural secondary school. We also welcome volunteers who are able to help out with manual labor, e.g. building classrooms, painting, carpentry, digging pits for water tanks, gardening, farming, etc. We need assistance with fundraising and with administration of summer camp programs.

About: Noonkodin Secondary School was founded in 2004 in the Maasai village of Eluwai. It currently has around 150 students aged between 14 and 25, most of them from Maasai pastoralist families. The school teaches the full Tanzanian national curriculum, but the students also take part in supplementary activities such as research on local culture and herbal medicine, visual arts, drama and music. International volunteers play a vital role in helping the students to learn the English language, through which most other subjects are taught at the secondary level. Mathematics, Chemistry, Biology and Physics are other curriculum areas where volunteers can play an important role in classroom teaching (if they have a formal teaching qualification) or providing tuition for individual students and/or small groups. It is recommended that humanities subjects (Geography, History and Civics) are taught mainly by Tanzanian teachers as they are based on locally specific content, but volunteers may also provide some input. We also welcome volunteers with artistic skills, and those with their own ideas for projects that reinforce curriculum subjects. Volunteers with social science research experience are encouraged to participate in cultural projects, in which students learn from community elders.

Organization Type: Conservation of marine mammals and their natural habitat / Environmental Education / Scientific Field Studies / Lobbying / Campaigning

Website: www.oceancare.org

Countries: Switzerland: For Campaigning and Southern France: Field work in whale research

Volunteer Contact/Email: Lotte Jensen ljensen@oceancare.org (for campaign volunteers), Brigitte Terzer bterzer@oceancare.org (for field work in Southern France)

Phone: +41 (0)44 780 66 88

Age Requirements: Only for field work: Minimum 18 years of age

Language: The language of the field project is German.

Advanced Notice: The dates for the field works are published each year in January. By then we usually already have quite a few people, who declared their interest in advance. OceanCare can offer 6 places in each of the 11 weeks of field work. As there is great demand for this programme, an early contact is recommended.

Cost/Fees Involved: No Fee for campaign volunteering. 1000€ per week for field work in Southern France (covers food/accommodation on board of the research sailing boat)

Meals/Accommodations: Accommodations and meals see above. Additional costs for participation in field work: Travel expenses to Southern France.

Minimum Stay: Minimum 1 week for field work in whale research

Maximum Stay: Most participants in the field work stay for 1-2 weeks

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: The field work runs for eight weeks in June/July and for three weeks in September.

Health Requirements: Participants must be in good physical condition. Major health problems must be declared, as there isn't always a possibility to reach a hospital within 24 hours. If possible, sea sickness should not be a problem.

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations: None

Special Skills Required: Only an interest in marine mammals, oceanic environment and an interest to spend a week in a group aboard a sailing vessel.

Type of Volunteer Work: Participants help OceanCare in the whale research in the «Pelagos Sanctuary» off the southern coast of France. Tasks: Continuous monitoring of the ocean to spot whales and dolphins, gathering of information about sightings, participation in talks about marine ecology held by a scientific specialist aboard, help in cooking, cleaning and sailing.

About: OceanCare is a Swiss non-profit organisation founded in 1989. It has a strong commitment to realistic and cooperative initiatives. The association works at national and international level in the areas of whaling, industrial fishing, environmental changes, seal hunting and dolphin captivity.

Together with tour operators and media partners, OceanCare performs educational work showing the need for respectful treatment of whales and dolphins. OceanCare strives for ending captivity of dolphins and is active in making sure that any touristic encounters with animals in their natural habitat occur in a manner that does not disturb or harm them.

Since 1992, OceanCare has advocated the interests of whales at the International Whaling Commission (IWC) meetings. With its extensive knowledge of the key players and the commission rules, it can precisely judge where and how to optimally use its influence to protect whales.

OceanCare has also been participating in Mediterranean research projects since 1997, in addition to supporting the implementation of measures designed to protect marine mammals. In 2003 it became an official partner of ACCOBAMS, an Agreement on the Conservation of Cetaceans in the Black Sea, the Mediterranean Sea and contiguous Atlantic area. In 2007, the United Nations Environmental Programme and the Convention on Migratory Species (UNEP/CMS) named OceanCare an official supporter of the UN Year of the Dolphin.

In 2002, OceanCare began its campaign to reduce and mitigate noise pollution in the oceans. Active in helping to draw up the successful EU resolution calling for a moratorium on military sonar, it also used its influence to get the Ocean Noise Pollution issue on the agenda of the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea and the UN General Assembly.

Orangutan Foundation

Organization Type: Animal conservation organization, tropical habitat conservation organization

Website: www.orangutan.org.uk

Country: Borneo, Indonesia

Volunteer Contact/Email: Elly Sanderson, info@orangutan.org.uk

Phone: 020 7724 2912

Age Requirements: Open to anyone over 18 years of age

Language: Spoken English or Indonesian

Advanced Notice: Applications are accepted from the point at which dates are confirmed until all spaces are filled. Contact the office for more details.

Cost/Fees Involved: £730 for the 6 week programme. (This does not include flights)

Meals/Accommodations: Food and accommodation during the programme is included within the cost. N.B. Additional snacks/ drinks and additional accommodation at the start and end of the programme are not included.

Minimum Stay: Set 6 week programme starting on fixed dates

Maximum Stay: 6 weeks

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: Dates for 2010 will be confirmed in September 2009. Check our website for future schedule.

Health Requirements: Potential volunteers must be physically fit and capable of hard physical labor in a hot and humid climate. Tasks include chiseling, sawing, hammering, carrying wood, cementing, painting and more.

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations: Volunteers must be prepared for basic conditions in remote locations

Special Skills Required: No special skills required. All applicants should have a passion and commitment for conservation.

Type of Volunteer Work: Flexibility is key. All work is of a manual labor/ construction nature but projects vary from team to team. Past projects have included building guard-posts, accommodation buildings, an Information Centre and an orangutan release site.

About: We established our Volunteer Programme in 2000 and it has proved to be very successful; providing us with a valuable workforce and a base of committed supporters. Past volunteers all agree that taking part was an unforgettable and amazing experience. Most projects are now in the Lamandau Wildlife Reserve, our current government-designated release site for rehabilitated orangutans but situation varies with requirement.

The volunteer programme exists to help with our field operations as and when necessary, and so projects could change at the last minute if the need arises. None of the projects will involve hands-on contact or work directly with the orangutans.

As well as happy, we want you to finish the volunteer programme informed about the threats to orangutans and the work that we are doing to conserve them and their habitat. We want you to go away and be an ambassador for us and, ultimately, the orangutans. We ensure that all volunteers see the origins of the Orangutan Foundation and volunteers also have the opportunity to spend a morning at our Orangutan Care Centre/ Quarantine. You will also pay a visit to Kampung Konservasi, an education programme run by local partner organization Yayorin.



Orangutan Tropical Petland Project

Organization Type: Tropical Forest Research, Zoological Field Research, Conservation Monitoring Research

Website: www.orangutantrop.com

Country: Indonesia

Volunteer Contact/Email: Laura D'Arcy, info@orangutantrop.com

Phone:

Age Requirements: Over 18

Language: English

Advanced Notice: At least three months in advance

Cost/Fees Involved: In the region of £1,500 for seven weeks (see website for up-to-date information)

Meals/Accommodations: All accommodation, meals, field assistants, visas, local transport, airport transfers in Central Kalimantan, visit to nearby orangutan reintroduction centre and Tanjung Puting National Park included. Flights and insurance not included.

Minimum Stay: Five weeks

Maximum Stay: Ten weeks

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: Three core seven week volunteer groups each year; June 25th–August 11th; August 8th- September 24th, October 1st - November 17th

Health Requirements: Volunteers must be physically and mentally fit. Field work requires walking up to 10 km per day in hot, humid, dense rainforest environment.

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations: In addition to the research work, visits will be organized to the nearby Nyaru Menteng Orangutan Reintroduction Centre and Kaja Island where orangutans live and prepare for return to the wild. A four-day trip to the scenic and diverse Tanjung Puting National Park at the end of the project is arranged, where proboscis monkeys and longtailed macaques can be seen along the banks of the River, and many orangutans can be seen at Camp Leakey.

Special Skills Required: No skills required, but we encourage people who have an interest in nature conservation and learning field methods.

Type of Volunteer Work: To help collect research data on projects including monitoring of forest dynamics, surveys of orangutan and gibbon density; studies of butterflies, birds and wild cats (using camera traps); and assessing long-term forest regeneration, succession, and productivity processes. Studies take place both at our main base camp and from remote huts deep in the forest. Volunteers also get to spend a day or two following both orangutans and gibbons with our behavior research team.

About: The Orangutan Tropical Peatland Project works to protect one of the most important areas of tropical rainforest in Borneo - the Sabangau Forest in Central Kalimantan, Indonesia. We monitor the distribution; behavior and ecology of the forest's flagship ape species – the orangutan and agile gibbon - carry out biodiversity and forestry research, provide scientific feedback to conservation managers, and work with our local partners to implement successful conservation programmes.

Our earliest work identified the Sabangau forest as home to the largest orangutan population remaining in Borneo thus bringing the region to the forefront of orangutan conservation efforts and resulting in the forest becoming a National Park in 2004. We work with the Indonesian NGO CIMTROP and University of Palangkaraya, and through this partnership we support local conservation efforts including a Forest Patrol Unit, Fire-fighting Team, and programmes of sustainable development and habitat restoration.

Our research and volunteer program has been running since 2001 and is a focus for local conservation efforts. Volunteer expeditions are small, rigorous and fully-participative, and crucial for us to fulfill our research objectives. Volunteers gain first-hand experience of a tropical forest environment, work alongside enthusiastic Indonesian researchers and receive practical training in field survey skills.

Painted Dog Conservation

Organization Type: Wildlife Conservation combining Community Education and Development Programmes.

Website: www.painteddog.org

Country: Zimbabwe

Volunteer Contact/Email: Peter Blinston, Project Manager, info@painteddog.org

Phone:

Age Requirements: Over 18

Language: Must speak English

Advanced Notice: Minimum 3 months

Cost/Fees Involved: USD \$1,500

Meals/Accommodations: Meals and accommodation included. Transfer cost of USD 80 for collection from Victoria Falls Airport and USD 80 for the transfer back. National Park fees of USD 20 per day (typically 10 – 12 days).

Minimum Stay: Three weeks

Maximum Stay: Three weeks

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: Volunteers arrive on the first Monday of each month. No volunteers in January or December.

Health Requirements: None, though must be reasonably fit and healthy.

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations: Hwange is a malaria region, therefore appropriate medication must be taken. Back pack, water bottle, walking shoes / boots and a hat are essential. Instructions and advice given by PDC staff should be adhered to at all times, we live in an unfenced “big game” area and encounters with potentially dangerous wildlife can and do occur.

Special Skills Required: None.

Type of Volunteer Work: Volunteers will learn about and assist with radio telemetry / daily tracking of packs in an around Hwange National Park, maintenance work, feeding and enrichment programmes. Flexibility and initiative re. Entering data / photographs acquired. Assist at the rehabilitation facility as work can and does arise on a daily basis.

About: Our mission is to protect and increase the range and numbers of painted dogs through hands on conservation, education, community involvement and international support.

Background: Painted Dogs (*Lycaon pictus*) also known as African Wild Dogs, are amongst the rarest of this ravaged continents species. A population of approximately 500,000 that occurred in 39 countries at the turn of the twentieth century has been reduced to a mere 3000 individuals today, representing a 99% decline. Only Tanzania, Zimbabwe, Botswana and South Africa have viable populations.

PDC was originally established as Painted Dog Research in 1992 by Gregory Rasmussen. During the first two years the human-induced carnage from snares, shooting and road kills accounted for 95% of all dog mortalities. Early public presentations showed prejudice and ignorance and it was clear that unless this situation was addressed, the species could become extinct. The initial emphasis was thus to identify the critical issues and develop a pragmatic strategy that would make a substantial, lasting contribution to Painted Dogs, nature conservation and, very importantly, to the lives of the local people.

PDC employs 28 Anti Poaching Scouts, conducts an Education and Community Development Programme, Operates a Rehabilitation Facility and has opened a Visitor Centre. As a result, PDC as a whole is widely regarded as a model for conservation initiatives on a Pan African level.

Peace Boat

Organization Type: NGO that promotes cultural exchange and peace education through 3-month global voyages.

Website: <http://www.peaceboat.org>

Country: Voyages depart from and return to Japan, and volunteer interpreters and language teachers travel with the ship to 20 countries on average.

Volunteer Contact/Email: Send inquiries to “International Coordinator” at participate@peaceboat.gr.jp

Phone: From overseas: 81-3-3363-8047. From within Japan: 03-3363-8047.

Age Requirements: None.

Language: English is required of both English and Spanish teachers. (We promote acceptance of global English, and welcome “Englishes” from around the world, including non-native). Interpreters must be highly skilled in Japanese and either English or Spanish.

Advanced Notice: Four months in advance (Applications must be submitted 3 months before a voyage)

Cost/Fees Involved: Volunteers cover their own flights to and from Japan (if necessary), laundry, Internet and bar expenses onboard

Meals/Accommodations: Peace Boat provides shared cabin accommodations, three meals per day, and covers the minimum \$15,000 voyage fee.

Minimum Stay: Volunteers must commit to a full 3-month voyage in most cases.

Maximum Stay:

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: None

Health Requirements: Volunteers need to be healthy enough to actively teach or interpret onboard our chartered passenger ship for three months. Some ports require proof of yellow fever vaccination.

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations: Some of our voyages travel through the northern hemisphere, some through the southern hemisphere, and some through both. Check our website to see itineraries of upcoming voyages.

Special Skills Required: We need language teachers who have at least 18 months experience teaching English or Spanish, and interpreters who are highly skilled in Japanese and either English or Spanish.

Type of Volunteer Work: Volunteer teachers are needed by our Global English and Español (GET) Program to hold classes onboard for primarily Japanese students who range in age and ability. Volunteer interpreters are needed to facilitate communication for guest speakers from various countries and for our optional programs in ports.

About: Peace Boat strives to build a culture of peace around the world through the development of a global grassroots network. The organization was founded 25 years ago by several university students in Japan who felt the mainstream media and universities were not sufficiently explaining strong opposition in Asia to Japan's attempts to downplay its past military aggression toward other countries. To understand the objections of others, the students chartered a boat to travel around Asia and talk to people directly, thereby launching a unique new initiative in people-to-people diplomacy. Today, Peace Boat has consultative status with the UN and organizes four global voyages and one Asian voyage every year to promote cultural understanding, environmental sustainability, and human rights. The 600-900 participants on each voyage have the opportunity to learn about various issues firsthand while experiencing some of the most beautiful and interesting ports of the world. Music, art, dance, photography, language, and sports are also an integral part of each voyage, as participants have the opportunity to share their skills and interests with one another and create nearly 100 free events and workshops onboard daily. We hope you can join our borderless, "floating community" in the future!

People for Animals, Bangalore

Organization Type: The rescue and rehabilitation of urban Wild life. Operating a recognized rehab shelter with its own hospital, for injured, stressed, displaced avians, reptiles and mammals in Bangalore, India.

Website: www.pfabangalore.org

Country: Bangalore, India

Volunteer Contact/Email: Ranjan Chacko, ranjanchacko@rediffmail.com or via our website

Phone: 009198452-09623 or 00919980339880

Age Requirements: No bar on age

Language:

Advanced Notice: Would like potential volunteers to contact us at least five days in advance.

Cost/Fees Involved: We have membership fee for volunteers INR 2,500

Meals/Accommodations: We do not have accommodation on the campus as of now. Volunteers we have had will find reasonably priced accommodation in the neighborhood. Same with food.

Minimum Stay: We do expect our volunteers to commit at the least four hours a day in a week, for at least a fortnight (14 days).

Maximum Stay: No limits

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: We welcome volunteers all though the year.

Health Requirements: Current inoculations ,like anti rabies would be advised.

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations: Located in rural Bangalore, out of the City but still in the city a bit of both worlds.

Special Skills Required: No, just a passion for animals.

Type of Volunteer Work: To help in the upkeep of our shelter, feeding of the animals, veterinary care, awareness programmes, fundraising, data upkeep...all kinds of everything in short.

What we need now is your helping hands to not only keep this spirit going but to further the mission to the far horizons!

About: People for Animals, Bangalore is amongst the few organizations in India which works for the rescue and rehabilitation of urban wild life. Due to the rapid and rampant concretization of our cities and lands, the delicate balance between man and animal is getting dangerously tipped. PFA, Bangalore has chosen this niche to work in and to make a difference to our world and to the Earth.

In an attempt to achieve our mission, People for Animals, Bangalore uses the following main activities and programme methods:

- ✓ Rescue and rehabilitation of injured urban wildlife and reintroduction into wild
- ✓ Public policy debates through independent research, consultation and administrators
- ✓ Sensitization programmes, for target groups including youth, professionals and administrators
- ✓ Mobilizing the necessary financial, scientific and technical resources.

PFA operates an animal shelter (recognized by the CZA, as a wild life rehabilitation shelter, and is operated in close conjunction with the Karnataka Forest Department) at Kengeri (on Mysore Road) in Bangalore with clinical and recuperative facilities for sick and injured birds, animals and reptiles.

We have trained and dedicated staffs, which man this shelter, and with our ambulances operate a 24 hour help line. We rely on our Volunteers and funds from the Public for our functioning. Till date PFA has not received a single rupee from the Government. PFA Bangalore has also been active in awareness programmes where in schools, clubs and other platforms hold interactive sessions on animals, ecology and how each creature big and small contributes and has its place in nature's scheme of things. Our veterinarians are often called to advice people on the care of animals, hygiene, nutrition and other aspects in animal care and welfare.

PFA, Bangalore has since its inception 11 years ago been run on passion, love, dedication and determination. With more than 5000 of Bangalore's wild animals rehabilitated back into the ecosystem, it is an achievement which would not have been reached without the support and encouragement of compassionate citizens and corporations who have supported us consistently.

PFA, a recognized charitable trust, headed by a board of trustees is run entirely on public donations.

PEPY

Organization Type: Educational development organization funded in part through volunteer adventure tours

Website(s): www.pepyride.org & www.pepytours.com

Country: Cambodia

Volunteer Contact/Email: Daniela Papi, info@pepyride.org

Phone: 1-914-458-4262

Age Requirements: over 18 or accompanied by an older family member

Language: N/A

Advanced Notice: Participants should join a trip at least 6 weeks before trip start date, although some trips fill up so sign up earlier!

Cost/Fees Involved: We charge travelers a fee for our tours and also require a \$500 per week donation minimum, 100% of which goes to non-profit partner organizations. In recognition of the value we gain through traveling, learning from host organizations and communities, and even volunteering, financial support for those organizations is integral to PEPY Tours. We also offer volunteer internship positions for a minimum of 6 months.

Meals/Accommodations: Accommodations and meals are included in the tour price.

Minimum Stay: Most trips are 8 days - 3 weeks. For those looking to intern in our office, we require a 6 month volunteer commitment.

Maximum Stay: N/A

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: N/A

Health Requirements: Must be able to handle physical exercise for 7 hours per day for PEPY Rides (Bike tours of Cambodia). Non-bike tours: must be able to handle hotter climates. All tours require evacuation insurance.

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations: Travelers should be prepared for traveling to a developing country, which includes exposure to poverty and begging and differences in sanitation and dietary norms. Traveling in Cambodia can sometimes be challenging for vegans, so bring extra snacks.

Special Skills Required: Anyone is welcome on our tours! For our office internships we are always looking for people with web and graphic design skills and accounting/auditing skills; specific internship opportunities can be found on the website but please contact us anytime if you are interested in joining the PEPY team!

Type of Volunteer Work: PEPY people want to LEARN! PEPY people understand that we cannot come in for 2 days, 2 weeks, or even 2 months and create a significant positive impact unless committing first to learning. PEPY people have the ability to adjust plans based on assessing the needs of the COMMUNITIES visited, not necessarily the travelers.

About: PEPY originated from a bicycling journey through Cambodia to promote awareness about and raise money for educational initiatives. In 2005, six friends rode from Thailand to Vietnam through the dusty-red back roads of Cambodia and spent five weeks visiting schools and communities. The first "PEPY Ride" raised enough money to fund the construction of The PEPY Ride School in rural Chanleas Dai, which opened on December 31, 2005.

The PEPY Ride was subsequently founded as a non-profit organization to empower rural communities through education. Today, programs include teacher training, Khmer literacy, and a bike-earning program for students. Educational, health, and environmental programs are led by Khmer staff and supported primarily through the efforts of PEPY volunteers and funds generated through PEPY Tours.

PEPY Tours offers a range of adventure, cycling, volunteer, and experiential learning trips to rural Cambodia offering participants the opportunity to "Go Where Your Money Goes."TM By giving short-term visitors a chance to support on-going programs, we are able to extend their impact far beyond the length of their stay.

Projects Abroad

Organization Type: Teaching, Care, Medicine and Healthcare, Conservation, Law and Human Rights, Journalism, Sports, Business and Veterinary Medicine.

Website: www.projects-abroad.co.uk

Countries: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Cambodia, China, Costa Rica, Ethiopia, Fiji, Ghana, India, Jamaica, Mexico, Moldova, Mongolia, Morocco, Nepal, Pakistan, Peru, Romania, Senegal, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Thailand and Togo.

Volunteer Contact/Email: Projects Abroad staff info@projects-abroad.co.uk

Phone: Tel: +44 (0) 1903 708300, Fax: +44 (0) 1903 708309

Age Requirements: All projects are open to volunteers aged 16, with no upper age limit.

Language: Some projects, specifically Medicine or Journalism placements in French or Spanish speaking countries require an intermediate knowledge of that language.

Advanced Notice: We recommend volunteers apply with as much notice as possible, but we can normally arrange projects with a minimum one month's notice

Cost/Fees Involved: The cost of our placements includes your accommodation, food, insurance, airport transfers and 24 hour back up and support from UK and local Projects Abroad staff. Prices vary from project to project.

Meals/Accommodations: Accommodation and meals are included in the programme cost. Additional costs include flights, visas (if applicable), immunizations and spending money.

Minimum Stay: Most projects require a minimum commitment of 4 weeks, although some are available for 2 weeks

Maximum Stay: Up to one year.

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: N/A

Health Requirements: N/A

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations: N/A

Special Skills Required: N/A

Type of Volunteer Work: We welcome any volunteers over the age of 16 to apply to our projects. If you have any specific skills, we will always try and use these to benefit the host community, but enthusiasm and willingness to help are always essential. Volunteers are needed for Teaching, Care work, Animal Care, Conservation, Business, Journalism placements and much more.

About: Until 1997, we were a small organization with just two part-time staff sending university students to teach English in Eastern Europe. But with more and more people taking time out on academic and work-related breaks, and with many developing countries in need of self-funded volunteers, our organized volunteer programmes started to mushroom around the world.

With over 250 trained staff in our destinations, and offering over 100 generic placements and a wide choice within these placements, we are now the UK's leading overseas volunteering and gap-year organization.

We help to create local employment wherever we send volunteers. We employ many people directly and provide plenty of work indirectly through the services we provide for volunteers. We have also devolved various "Head Office" functions, such as management accountancy which is done in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia and Design which is done in Mexico.

Because we work with local colleagues at all levels, our extensive network of local knowledge enables us to channel the skills of our volunteers to places they are really needed.

Volunteers learn from their chosen placements and from the people they meet and vice versa. Mutual learning and mutual respect is what cultural exchange is all about.

Protecting Animal Welfare (P.A.W.)

Organization Type: Animal Rescue

Website: www.pawanimalsanctuarybelize.com

Country: Caye Caulker Island, Belize

Volunteer Contact/Email: Madi Collins, pawanimalsanctuarybelize@yahoo.com

Phone: 621-2299

Age Requirements: Adults

Language: None

Advanced Notice: At least a month

Cost/Fees Involved: \$75.00 US per week which includes accommodations

Meals/Accommodations: No meals

Minimum Stay: Volunteers must commit to at least two weeks work, two hours per day.

Maximum Stay: None

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: None, need people all year round

Health Requirements: None

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations:

Special Skills Required: None

Type of Volunteer Work: Need help with cleaning, feeding animals socialize animals, nursing animals, fixing & maintaining catteries and other things, veterinarians and Vet Tech to help with our trap, neuter, release (TNR) program, & need help with generating publicity, fundraising and finding adoptive homes.

About: PAW Cat Sanctuary & Humane Society is a not for profit registered in Belize to rescue, provide food, shelter, vet care to mostly cats. All cats are sterilized and are free for adoption.





Raleigh

Organization Type: Volunteering abroad, community, environment and adventure projects

Website: www.raleighinternational.org

Countries: Borneo, Costa Rica & Nicaragua and India

Volunteer Contact/Email: Vicky Taylor, info@raleigh.org.uk

Phone:

Age Requirements:

Language: For our Costa Rica & Nicaragua expeditions we do require interpreters as a volunteer manager role, but our volunteers do not need any specific languages.

Advanced Notice: As far in advance as possible to give them maximum time to fundraise

Cost/Fees Involved: The cost varies according to the length of expedition.

Meals/Accommodations: Yes, all meals and accommodation are included in the cost of expedition

Minimum Stay: 4 weeks

Maximum Stay: 10 weeks

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: We run expeditions throughout the year

Health Requirements: Volunteers must have the relevant injections for the country visiting and have a basic level of fitness.

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations:

Special Skills Required: N/A

Type of Volunteer Work: Volunteers don't need any specific skills, just lots of enthusiasm and energy. Volunteer managers will need to fulfill specific job roles but all the skills needed are transferrable. Please see our website for more information on volunteer manager roles.

About: Get out there!

Raleigh is a youth and education charity. Since 1984 we have inspired over 30,000 people from all walks of life, nationalities and ages to get out there and rise to the challenges of life on expedition.

We run programmes in Borneo, Costa Rica & Nicaragua and India. Our expeditions are a challenging, but extremely rewarding combination of sustainable community, environmental and adventure projects. You could be building an eco lodge, working on a rainwater harvesting project or trekking the width of Costa Rica from the Caribbean to the Pacific Coast.

We all have an expedition within us. Find yours at raleighinternational.org



Organization Type: Coral Reef Conservation and Social Development

Website: www.reefdoctor.org

Country: SW Madagascar

Volunteer Contact/Email: Mr. Roderick Stein-Rostaing
volunteer@reefdoctor.org or info@reefdoctor.org

Phone: 00447866250740 or 00442087886908

Age Requirements: 18+

Language: French preferable but not essential

Advanced Notice: Preferable to contact us at least one month before departure date

Cost/Fees Involved: Costs to cover training and program fees; 4 weeks £950, 6 weeks £1400, 8 weeks £1800, 12 weeks £2200

Meals/Accommodations: Program and training fees cover all costs on site for food, water, accommodation, electricity, diving and project activities, medical provision and dive certification and training. Only additional cost on top is for scuba equipment hire of £100 for duration of expedition

Minimum Stay: 3-4 weeks 10 hrs a day

Maximum Stay: 12 weeks

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: All year round

Health Requirements: All volunteers must complete a standard recreational diving medical exam and vaccines. Failure to pass exam or attain all vaccines will mean we cannot accept the person onto the project.

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations: Must have vaccines and personnel travel insurance, volunteers are meet at airport and taken to site

Special Skills Required: No skills required just general enthusiasm for hands on conservation and ability to live/work in tropical environment in simple but comfortable conditions

Type of Volunteer Work: Scuba based monitoring of coral reefs and associated ecosystems to land based activities on our marine management, community education and community development projects working with local fishermen in our fishermen's association to empower them to manage their resources, to working with women on alternative income generation projects and with children on marine and environmental education and alternative opportunities from the public schools to our Kids club and sports association.

About: ReefDoctor conducts coral reef research, implementing marine management principles, conservation, community education and social development work on the 4th most important coral reef system in the world, the 'Toliara coral reef system of SW Madagascar'.

ReefDoctor has opportunities for gap year, graduate and post graduates students and general enthusiastic people to support the project through voluntary staff employment positions and through our 'Volunteer ReefDoctor' Program which is open to 4-8 people aged 18+, for 4, 6, 8 and 12 week expeditions throughout the year starting from only £950 with FREE PADI dive training and certification.

Living next to fishing villages you'll learn marine species identification, underwater survey techniques, be an integral part of important research and conservation projects with the fishing communities and aid in social development projects alongside a team of local and international scientists.

Our unique programme with small volunteer sizes and a staff to volunteer ratio of 2:1, provides intensive training and allows volunteers to participate in all aspects of our work.

PADI dive courses available from Open water to Rescue diver and First Aid courses for all as part of the training for FREE, with hiring of BCD and regulator set from ReefDoctor available. So become a volunteer ReefDoctor and take part in a unique opportunity to experience Madagascar, its people and culture, while contributing to marine conservation and sustainable community development

Royal New Zealand Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals

Organization Type: Animal Welfare

Website: www.rnzspca.org.nz

Country: New Zealand

Volunteer Contact/Email: Madeleine Long/Amy Drury,
madeleinel@rnzspca.org.nz, amyd@rnzspca.org.nz

Phone: 64 9 827 6094

Age Requirements: 18 or older.

Language: English

Advanced Notice:

Cost/Fees Involved: None

Meals/Accommodations: None

Minimum Stay: Varies depending on nature of work.

Maximum Stay: N/A

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: As a charity our branches are always looking for volunteers. Peak times are during the summer months when the animal population rises.

Health Requirements: This varies depending on role.

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations:

Special Skills Required: Depends on the role.

Type of Volunteer Work: People to clean cages; socialize animals, feed cats and dogs, walkers, etc.

Royal New Zealand Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals

About: The SPCA is the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. We work nationally and locally to help animals; to prevent cruelty to them and to educate the public on humane treatment of them. As a voluntary organization, we provide this help to animals and owners 24/7. We receive no government funding and rely on donations, bequests and our own fund-raising efforts. We also rely heavily on volunteers to assist us with our work.

We operate at two levels - nationally and locally. The National Office coordinates the activities of the 48 local branches; handles inspector training; arranges national educational, promotional and fundraising programmes; represents the Society on government committees; handles major prosecutions of national implication; manages all approaches to government for animal welfare legislation and liaises with international welfare groups.

Local SPCA responsibilities include investigating and dealing with complaints of cruelty and neglect; upholding the Animal Welfare Act relating to the treatment of animals and prosecuting where necessary; giving sanctuary to animals in distress; rehoming suitable animals when possible; assisting with public education and promoting responsible pet ownership.

Facilities vary throughout New Zealand from large to small complexes. Even where large, much reliance is placed on the help of voluntary workers.

Rumi Wilco Ecolodge and Nature Reserve

Organization Type: Self-sustainable conservation project, with lodging, trail system for visitors, family operated and travelers' dependent.

Website: www.rumiwilco.com

Country: Ecuador

Volunteer Contact/Email: Alicia C. de Falco and/or Orlando,
rumiwilco@yahoo.com

Phone:

Age Requirements: 18 years' old minimum

Language: We speak Spanish or English, some French and Italian

Advanced Notice: 7 days; better earlier.

Cost/Fees Involved: USD 5.60 p/day if staying in our Adobe Shared Houses.
USD 2.80 p/day if staying (with own camping gear) in our campsite.

Meals/Accommodations: Both types of accommodation are provided with furnished kitchen, outdoors fire-place, bathroom/shower (hot in Adobe Houses), drinking water. Meals are self-prepared.

Note: Volunteers receive a 20% discount to normal rates.

Minimum Stay: One week. Four hours of work/day; weekends free.

Maximum Stay: Three months

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: All year round.

Health Requirements:

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations: Bring enough cash for your Vilcabamba needs. USD 50 or 100 bills cannot easily be accepted here. Also, cashing traveler's checks is better done in advance in Quito or Guayaquil than in Loja province. We accept T-checks for payment with a USD 2 commission per check. Spanish lessons are available in town.

Special Skills Required: No special skills required.

Rumi Wilco Ec lodge and Nature Reserve

Type of Volunteer Work: Trail maintenance; riverbank repair and reinforcement; reforestation with native tree species; organic gardening; basic carpentry; coffee picking/processing; fruit gathering & making marmalades... If scientifically trained: species' identification (especially mammals, reptiles), ecological research, other.

About: Rumi Wilco is a small but quite appealing protected area adjacent to the village's centre. Notable among its forest members is the legendary Wilco tree (*Anadenanthera colubrina*), whose association with native American peoples dates back many thousands of years. Their distribution within Ecuador is restricted almost entirely to the Vilcabamba valley and its environs.

As ex-naturalist guides for the Galapagos' islands, Alicia and Orlando have created this enterprise in order to try and save the biodiversity and natural beauty of a privileged spot on the earth's surface, while providing for their own support. Volunteers here are not numerous at any one time and will feel at ease concerning their work. That is no tight schedules or regimented activities but mood-oriented and flexible. Ours is a rather small but –hopefully- long lasting project in keeping with other similar efforts carried out worldwide by single families like ours.



St. Lucia Animal Protection Society

Organization Type: SLAPS rescues, rehabilitates, and re-homes abandoned and neglected animals; we spay/neuter adult dogs and cats before re-homing.

Website: www.StLuciaAnimals.org

Country: Saint Lucia

Volunteer Contact/Email: Pam Devaux / slaps@candw.lc

Phone: (758) 457-7527

Age Requirements: Over 18

Language: Ability to communicate in English (fluency not essential)

Advanced Notice: Three months

Cost/Fees Involved: None

Meals/Accommodations: We provide accommodation and meals.

Minimum Stay: One week, four hours per day.

Maximum Stay: One Month

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: No special time, but we would not be able to accommodate volunteers at Christmas time.

Health Requirements: Ability to handle large dogs

Travel Tips, Warnings & Recommendations: Will be provided to travelers upon arrival.

Special Skills Required: Veterinary Training

Type of Volunteer Work: Veterinarians and Vet Tech to hold spay/neuter clinics and to help with TNR program; experienced shelter manager to assist with setting up new shelter.

About: The St. Lucia Animal Protection Society (SLAPS) was founded in 1998 by a group of concerned citizens with the stated aim of preventing cruelty to and relieving suffering of animals, as well as providing education on the humane treatment and protection of animals.

While SLAPS is concerned with the welfare of all animals, much of its attention and resources have been focused on the problems surrounding stray dogs and cats throughout the island. Given that the source of the problems is indiscriminate breeding, SLAPS has undertaken to educate the public about the importance of spaying/neutering and has provided free clinics.

SLAPS has a small core of dedicated volunteers, who assume both the management and the hands-on work of the society. With the support of local veterinary establishments, who offer their services, and international animal rights organizations, who lend their expertise and donate both time and supplies, SLAPS is making a difference to the animals of St. Lucia.



Santa Martha Wild Animal Rescue Centre

Organization Type: Wild Animal Rescue Centres with focus on the conservation of the local fauna., also offering volunteer programs with sister projects in the Amazon Region at Tena (El Arca) and at Puyo (Yanacocha).

Website: www.santamartharescue.org

Country: Three locations in Ecuador

Volunteer Contact/Email: Ms. Dalma Zsalako, santamartha@mail.com

Phone: (00593) 090509105

Age Requirements: Minimum 18

Language: Conversational level of English OR Spanish

Advanced Notice: Spaces fill up fast so at least a couple of months is necessary for a successful booking.

Cost/Fees Involved: Weekly contribution is \$120 for Santa Martha Rescue Centre near Quito, \$150 for rescue centres in the Oriente. Food is not included.

Meals/Accommodations: The participation fee includes, accommodations, electricity, gas, water, tools and equipment volunteers use. This money is used to pay for food, medicine, permits, building material etc. for the animals. Whatever we don't spend immediately goes in a saving account for rainy days.

Minimum Stay: We require a minimum 2 weeks of commitment with no maximum time limit. It is also possible to spend 2 weeks in each centre in order to experience working with and learn about a wider range of Ecuadorian habitats and their animals and participate in a more diverse range of activities of conservation.

Maximum Stay:

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: We need help all year round.

Health Requirements: In all centers tetanus vaccination is recommended. For the Orient, please consult your doctor about necessary vaccination. Some level of fitness is necessary for Santa Martha Rescue Centre as it is in the Andes and the altitude there is 3000 m above sea levels.

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations: The projects are unable to insure volunteers so volunteers are responsible to obtain an adequate insurance cover for their travels.

Santa Martha Wild Animal Rescue Centre

Special Skills Required: Our work is very complex and so we need people from all walks of life.

Type of Volunteer Work: Our volunteers can participate in general animal care (cleaning, feeding, assisting the vet), construction and maintenance, fundraising and promotion, public education (incl. teaching English), arts and design (improving the appearance of the project areas, designing posters etc), etc.

About: Santa Martha Rescue Centre is located one hour south of Quito, at an area called the “Avenue of Volcanoes”. It was founded by Johnny and Brenda Córdova who still live on site with their family.

Ecuador is one of the most bio diverse countries in the world and it is possible to buy a huge variety of animals ranging from large cats to monkeys, crocodiles and parrots. It is illegal to keep wild animals as pets though and so they are often confiscated by the police. Many so-called "rescue centres" unfortunately function as a zoo and they continue maltreating the animals. The Santa Martha -El Arca-Yanacocha alliance works closely with the Environmental Police and the Environmental Ministry to rescue, rehabilitate and release these animals back into their natural habitat and to, by providing a good example, influence other zoo/rescue centres to become true refuges to wild animals. However, this work could not be done without the help of volunteers, and so our sheer existence depends on the participation of enthusiastic animal lovers from all over the world.

SMILE Society

Organization Type: Teaching, education, Social Service, orphanage, food distribution, Nursing, medical service etc.

Website: www.smilengo.org

Country: India

Volunteer Contact/Email: Ms.kamala (programme coordinator),
info@smilengo.org

Phone: 0091-9339731462 (office number)

Age Requirements: 16 and above; below 16 yrs. also accepted if comes with parents or teachers.

Language: Not important but basic English would be required.

Advanced Notice: At least 15 days before

Cost/Fees Involved: Admin Fees: Not applicable; Living cost: Euro 100/week (short term 2-3 weeks) and Euro 80/week (long term, 4-24 weeks); Donation: If any volunteers or group wish to raise any fund are most welcomed.

Meals/Accommodations: Living cost is required for 3 times tasty local food and shared accommodation in host family/ guest houses. Meal and food are included.

Minimum Stay: Minimum 2 weeks, 3-4 hour per day (Monday to Friday; weekends free)

Maximum Stay: N/A

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: ANS: SMILE programmes are open throughout the year. 1st & 16th of each month are the expected starting date.

Health Requirements: Not any specific. Requested to consult with doctors for required vaccination details.

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations: Volunteers are requested to visit our website faq section for more details.

Special Skills Required: Volunteer should come with an open and flexible mind.

Type of Volunteer Work:

- Teaching Math/English/Art/Craft/Music/Dance/Yoga to the Street and slum kids.
- Food distribution
- Food preparation assistant
- Washing and cleaning street kids
- Construction, painting type workers

About: ANS: SMILE is a registered NGO from India, working for the poor and needy kids. It is also the member of CCIVS, UNESCO & WANGO. Since 2003 it is working in the field of International Volunteerism and welcoming International volunteers/Interns from around the world.

SMILE has different projects for street, slum and underprivileged kids in India. There are different volunteer opportunities from 2 weeks to 24 weeks are available. All volunteers can have a scope to work with the neediest part of the society. As a volunteer you can gain a lifetime of experience and make yourself get involved with our welfare activities. In SMILE we treat all volunteers/interns as our family member. We received many Students, individuals, groups, seniors, families from all age group in SMILE. Many universities and renowned organizations from around the globe keep sending their students and volunteers as an intern/volunteer with SMILE.

It is a place from where volunteers can get a close idea of Indian culture, tradition, dress code and food habits (all volunteers get equal scopes to exchange their own culture, food habits and traditions with local members). We respect all culture and tradition. It is a great place for any groups or individual volunteers.

Tanzania Animals Protection Organization {TAPO}

Organization Type: Tanzania Animal Rescue, and care, Teaching humane education and donkey welfare, law enforcement, wildlife conservation, spay & neutering

Website: www.tanzania-animals-protection-org.blogspot.com

Country: Tanzania

Volunteer Contact/Email: Yohana Js Kashililah, tap_org@yahoo.com

Phone:

Age Requirements: From 10 years to onwards

Language: Any language

Advanced Notice: One week before

Cost/Fees Involved: We accept any donation

Meals/Accommodations: No we don't provide accommodation, meals

Minimum Stay: From 3 days

Maximum Stay: Depending on program

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: No special time

Health Requirements: Not needed

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations: Avoid aids and malaria

Special Skills Required:

Type of Volunteer Work: We need help cleaning donkey sanctuary, supporting in animal and humane education, help in bird research, veterinary assisting and We need office help experienced in generating publicity and fundraising

About: Our goals:

1. To promote respect and compassion for Animals through our activities, Campaigns, Public and school educational programmed.
2. To develop and deliver practical advises on the prevention and control of noticeable And endemic diseases in Tanzania livestock's and other Animals.
3. To transform the way Animals are treated and perceived by human.
4. To make enforcement of existing Animals laws, and anti- poaching campaigns
5. To promote Humane Education in Schools
6. To build animal homes, shelters.
7. To prevent unwanted and overpopulations Animals and Birds through our Neutering and outreach programmed
8. To see condition in Animal Auction marts, zoos, poultry farms, Animal breeders and People's houses
9. To provide wildlife conservation education in schools.



Tethys Research Institute

Organization Type: Cetacean research and conservation in the Mediterranean Sea.

Website: <http://www.tethys.org>

Countries: Italy, Greece

Volunteer Contact/Email: Miss Adriana Geraci, tethys@tethys.org

Phone: +39 02 72001947

Age Requirements:

Language: English

Advanced Notice: None

Cost/Fees Involved: Costs for volunteering range from 787.00 to 895.00 euro per week in Italy and from 595.00 to 725.00 euro per week in Greece.

Meals/Accommodations: Accommodations are provided on board a 21m sailing boat in Italy and in a comfortable apartment in Greece. Meals are also provided. Additional costs include travel to/from the field bases, alcoholic drinks and restaurants.

Minimum Stay: One week

Maximum Stay: No maximum time

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: April - September

Health Requirements: Volunteers must be able to swim and they should be in good physical condition, able to tolerate hot weather, sun, and long periods on a boat. Anyone in good physical condition, including seniors, is welcome to volunteer. Prospective volunteers with disabilities should contact the organization's office and will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations: Prospective volunteers should contact the Tethys office at the number and email listed above from 9:30am to 1:00pm in the following office days: Monday-Wednesday-Friday (January-March; October-December) and from Monday through Friday (April-September). They will then complete an application form and send the program fee, which will secure the reservation. Interviews are not required to volunteer with Tethys. During each project, researchers give daily lectures on cetaceans and conservation issues. Practical training is also provided during the research project.

Special Skills Required: No experience in the field is required. Volunteers will be trained through specific lectures and work side by side with researchers.

Type of Volunteer Work: Volunteers actively collaborate in the collection of field data on cetaceans, and they are requested to help in all project activities. These may include recording navigation data, plotting sighting positions on a navigation chart, loading data in the computer, collecting ecological and behavioural data, noting photo-identification data, and helping with the identification of individual whales and dolphins. Volunteers and researchers alike take part in cooking and cleaning shifts.

About: Founded in 1986, the Tethys Research Institute is a NGO specialised in cetacean research. Exclusively based on autonomous fundraising, Tethys has generated one of the largest datasets on Mediterranean cetaceans and about 250 scientific contributions. Tethys first conceived and proposed the creation of the Pelagos Sanctuary, based on extensive information collected in the field.

Public awareness and conservation activities, coupled with education and capacity building, find their strength in Tethys' scientific background. The activities conducted by Tethys seek to prevent the decline of marine species and to encourage a sustainable use of the marine environment, particularly where habitat degradation makes it necessary.

Since 1990 the Tethys Research Institute organises every year a series of whale and dolphin field courses dedicated to those who are willing to contribute to research and conservation campaigns. Professional experience by the researchers involved is a "trade mark" of the Tethys courses. These courses represent a unique opportunity of observing marine mammals in their natural environment and discover the fascinating world of cetacean research.

Participants from all nationalities are involved in activities conducted in the field including whale and dolphin sightings, data collection at sea with advanced methodologies, and informal lectures held by Tethys researchers.

The Tree of Life for Animals

Organization Type: Animal shelter and hospital helping India's street animals.

Website: www.tolfa.org.uk

Country: India

Volunteer Contact/Email: Kym Barratt, volunteers@tolfa.org.uk

Phone: Please use email address provided

Age Requirements: Must be at least 18 years of age. There is no upper age limit.

Language: English and/or Hindi

Advanced Notice: Please give at least 4 weeks notice before you plan to come to the shelter so that all arrangements can be made.

Cost/Fees Involved: We require a one-off £100 as a non-refundable deposit to confirm your booking, this will be deducted from the minimum amount required. Your final payment is due 4 weeks before your start date at the hospital. A reminder will be emailed to you.

Minimum Donations:

Off Peak Season: £300 per month (minus £100 one-off deposit)

Peak Season: £500 per month (minus £100 one-off deposit)

Peak season dates include: July - September, Easter (dates will vary each year between March/April - please email for more details.), Pushkar Camel Fair (dates will vary each year between Oct/Nov - please email for more details.). Off-peak season dates include: January, February, May, June, December. Parts of March, April, October and November may be off-peak - please email for more details

Meals/Accommodations: Volunteer accommodation and lunch (while working at the hospital) are covered by the volunteer fee. Also cost of moped hire for travel to the hospital

Minimum Stay: There is no set minimum time but we prefer for volunteers to commit to at least one month so they can really see the results of their work and get the most out of the experience. Working hours are 6 days a week, 9-5pm.

Maximum Stay: No maximum time limit!!

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: Help is required all year round, be aware it gets very hot in summer and very cold in the winter months. Also monsoon season is July-August.

Health Requirements: Reasonable level of fitness is required as conditions can be hard (hot, dusty etc) and the work can be quite physical (walking, lifting dogs etc). Up to date Rabies vaccinations (a course of 3 taken given at least one month before arriving at the shelter) is a must as we do see cases regularly.

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations: You will need to apply for a visa before flying to India. Please note these visas are only valid from 6 months of the date of issue so don't apply for them too early - make sure they cover you for the dates you are due to be in India. Dress Code: India is a very religious country and women MUST cover their shoulders and legs when they are working at the shelter.

Special Skills Required: Ideally we are in need of qualified Vets and Vet Nurses but we are also happy for veterinary students and volunteers who have experience working with animals too, as well as people with a bit of time, compassion and any other skills to contribute.

Type of Volunteer Work: Vets, vet nurses and vet students needed to assist with surgery and animal treatments. Non-vet volunteers to assist with general animal care, feeding, dog-walking, cleaning etc. Anyone with other skills that might be of benefit to the shelter should tell us when applying. All help is appreciated!

About: The Project Raja Volunteer Scheme offers you the experience of a lifetime. Come and join us at the Tree of Life for Animals' Hospital and Shelter in Rajasthan, India.

We are an animal shelter working to improve the lives of animals (and humans) in the local area. Our aims are to create a Rabies free environment through sterilization and vaccination of the enormous stray dog population as well as providing rescue, medical and surgical care for any animal that comes our way. On a daily basis we treat cows, goats, dogs, cats, camels, donkeys, monkeys either at our hospital or on the streets. Our rescue vehicle also allows us to do call outs to emergencies as well as transporting animals back to the hospital and releasing them once they have fully recovered.

By extending the hand of kindness, we hope to be able to show people, both local and visiting that animals are a vital part of our environment that should be valued, protected and cared for.

Tsunami Animal-People Alliance

Organization Type: Spay/Neuter Field Clinic

Website: www.tsunami-animal.org

Country: Sri Lanka

Volunteer Contact/Email: Anne See website under "How to Help - Volunteer Vets & Nurses" or email: info@tsunami-animal.org

Phone:

Age Requirements:

Language: The vets, and many of the other team members, speak English.

Advanced Notice: Several months

Cost/Fees Involved: No cost, but volunteers must cover their own international travel cost to Sri Lanka, and hotel costs before and/or after the volunteer period.

Meals/Accommodations: Volunteers live with our team of ten people in a rented group house in the tsunami zone, and are provided food as part of group meals. This will be foam mattress on the floor type accommodations.

Minimum Stay: Volunteers must commit to at least two weeks with the team in the field in tsunami-impacted areas (our field rotation is usually three weeks in the field, one week off). Volunteers must consider the time to recover from jet lag.

Maximum Stay: NA

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: None

Health Requirements: Must have current pre-exposure rabies vaccinations and all other vaccinations required for Sri Lanka. Must have Medevac insurance.

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations: Volunteers must understand this will be a group living situation and it will be exhausting work, but the adventure of a lifetime. Volunteers must consider the impact of jet lag (Sri Lanka is GMT +5.5) - it will take several days to get in synch. Each volunteer must have Medevac insurance. Volunteers must be flexible and open to understanding developing country realities.

Special Skills Required: Experienced Vets and Vet Nurses/Vet Techs only. This is not an internship opportunity.

Type of Volunteer Work: Our tented field clinic does about 35 spay/neuters per day, about 50% street dogs caught with nets, and 50% owner dogs. Vet and vet nurse volunteers would join our team of ten (which includes three vets) in doing the sterilizations and in bringing new ideas. Volunteers must be "low maintenance."

About: The Tsunami Animal-People Alliance was created as a medium/long term recovery response to the Great Tsunami of Dec 26, 2004. We help the people and the animals in Sri Lanka's tsunami zone by reducing the risk of rabies and dog bites, while improving the welfare of the animals and humanely controlling the animal population. We focus mainly on dogs as the primary vectors of rabies and the most at risk of abuse and cruelty by those fearing rabies, but we do about 5% cats.

We sterilize about 500 dogs per month from our tented clinic that moves from one tsunami zone community to the next. We also conduct an education programme in the areas we work on what we are doing and why, myths and facts about rabies, how to protect yourself from rabies, and responsible pet ownership (about half the animals we sterilize are community dogs /street dogs and half are owned by low income villagers).

Our protocols were originally developed by vets from Australia and New Zealand, and have been refined over time. We accept only experienced vets and vet nurses/techs as volunteers. This is not an intern opportunity, as our volunteers need to bring exposure of new methods and ideas to our team, and be able to fully participate in the surgeries.

Uganda Society for the Protection and Care of Animals

Organization Type: We have a shelter, the Haven, where up to 50 dogs and 20 cats are housed, these animals are rescued, rehabilitated and rehomed. We do spaying and rabies clinics in underprivileged areas, humane education in local schools and work with the government to improve cattle transport.

Website: Currently under construction.

Country: Kampala, Uganda

Volunteer Contact/Email: Katia Ruiz Allard, Katiasteve@yahoo.co.uk

Phone: +256 772 403789

Age Requirements: Minimum age 18

Language: English

Advanced Notice: Ten days due to slow email

Cost/Fees Involved: We propose 50US\$ per week

Meals/Accommodations: We do not provide any accommodation or meals but all are available (campsite/bungalow) at affordable prices near the Haven.

Minimum Stay: Volunteers must commit to at least three days work, four hours per day.

Maximum Stay: The longer the better.

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: All year

Health Requirements: Rabies and tetanus injections

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations: We are in a third world country. Please do not expect the same standards as in Europe or the states.

Special Skills Required: Positive attitude and lots of energy!

Type of Volunteer Work: Veterinary nurse, veterinarians (spaying), walking and socializing dogs, admin, computer, fundraiser, lawyer, accountant, teacher, helping during the free clinics....

Uganda Society for the Protection and Care of Animals

About: Hello, the USPCA is the only org in Uganda dedicated to animal welfare we are a local NGO who struggles each year to make ends meet but have been active for more than ten years and have opened our shelter in 2007. Our USPCA vet Dr. Berna has received an award from the Uganda veterinary association for her work in animal welfare, the first in Uganda! The USPCA treats and spays hundreds of animals each year, teaches schoolchildren and advice communities on animal care. Free clinics (spaying, rabies, deworming) are performed in underprivileged areas. The USPCA also works with the relevant authorities to improve the legislation regarding animal cruelty (cattle transport, humane slaughter).

Volunteers, whether it's a volunteer helping with the admin or walking a dog, are an important part in the life of the USPCA, they help us develop and carry on.

Hope to see you soon!



UNA Exchange

Organization Type: Volunteering, Community Projects, Wales, International Teamwork, European Voluntary Service, Adventure, GAP Year, Archaeological Projects, Construction Projects, Cultural Projects, Educational Projects Environmental Projects, Social Projects

Website: www.unaexchange.org

Countries: Argentina, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia, Botswana, Bulgaria, Canada, Catalonia, China, Costa Rica, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Ecuador, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Korea, Kyrgyzstan, Lesotho, Lithuania, Macedonia, Malawi, Mexico, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Nepal, Netherlands, Nigeria, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Slovakia, Spain, Switzerland, Taiwan, Tanzania, Thailand, Togo, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, USA, Vietnam, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Volunteer Contact/Email: info@unaexchange.org

Phone: UK 029 2022 3088

Age Requirements: Depends on the project. Most projects are 18+ (no age limit except is stated in the project description). Some teenage projects are available.

Language: Depends on the project. Most projects are English language but some projects may require a basic knowledge of e.g. Spanish to attend the project.

Advanced Notice: The earlier the better but we can place volunteers at short notice.

Cost/Fees Involved: Depends on the project and location but anything from £10 to £300. Weekend Wales Project - £10, Short Tem Wales project - £30, Short term volunteering abroad £150 to £175, Long term volunteering abroad £200 to £300

Meals/Accommodations: Depends on the project. All project have food and accommodation provided. Most are at no extra cost but some project require a further payment on arrival similar to the cost of a short term project through UNA Exchange.

Minimum Stay: Depends on the project. 1 weekend, to 12 months.

Maximum Stay: *See above*

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: All year round

Health Requirements: None

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations: None

Special Skills Required: Depends on the project. Most project don't require a special skill, again it will state it in the project description is one is required.

Type of Volunteer Work:

Archaeology: supporting practical and academic archaeological research, eg. site clearance, cataloguing, recording, etc.

Construction: the building of new community facilities and/or the improvement of historically important structures.

Cultural: creative projects such as supporting festivals/events; community arts activities; music projects; sports activities, etc.

Education: any form of work which is explicitly focused on learning: teaching (usually language/s), whether in a formal or informal setting; activities to raise awareness within a community, eg. on environmental or health issues.

Environmental: practical work to conserve, protect and improve the natural environment: projects with animals, footpath work, tree planting, gardening, clearing & improving landscapes, beach cleaning, etc.

Social: any project where the main purpose is to support a specific group of people, eg. children, young people, elderly people and/or people with disabilities. The work could be anything from running a playscheme to gardening with elderly people.

Other: agricultural work, study projects focused on themes, meditation, yoga, etc.

About: Through a range of volunteering in Wales and the world, UNA Exchange promotes and supports international understanding, cultural exchange and community development whilst at the same time enabling volunteers' personal growth & development. UNA Exchange volunteers always work in partnership with local community groups.

UNA Exchange is a large and dynamic organization, supporting many hundreds of people to gain amazing international experiences each year. The majority of our work is in Wales, but UNA Exchange volunteers travel to more than 50 countries to participate in local development projects alongside local people. We are a registered charity, and are not working for financial profit. Our projects are open to people from all over the UK.

United Animal Nations (UAN)

Organization Type: A nonprofit animal protection organization that brings animals out of crisis and into care

Website: www.uan.org

Countries: United States and Canada

Volunteer Contact/Email: Michael Herrera, info@uan.org

Phone: (916) 429-2457

Age Requirements: Volunteers must be 18 years of age or older

Language: English

Advanced Notice: Once volunteers participate in our training workshop, we contact them if they are needed for a disaster deployment. Volunteers are often needed to travel to a disaster response with only a few days notice.

Cost/Fees Involved: Volunteers with our Emergency Animal Rescue Service pay a small fee to attend our training workshop (\$60 US in 2008). If they deploy to a disaster response, they often are responsible for their own food and/or lodging. We do not charge a fee for disaster responses.

Meals/Accommodations: UAN sometimes provides hotel rooms and/or one meal per day during a disaster response. When this is not possible, volunteers must pay for their own accommodations or camp at the disaster site.

Minimum Stay: We recommend that volunteers who deploy to a disaster response deploy for at least three days to get the most out of the experience. However, there is no minimum requirement.

Maximum Stay: There is no maximum time limit; however we would not encourage a volunteer to stay at a disaster deployment for so long that it becomes physically and/or emotionally taxing.

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: We may be needed to respond to a disaster or criminal seizure at any time of year.

Health Requirements: Volunteers must have a current tetanus vaccination.

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations: We never know where a disaster is going to occur or what the conditions will be like. We encourage volunteers to check road conditions before traveling and to bring clothes that are appropriate to the climate and conditions.

Special Skills Required: People with animal-handling skills are preferred, but we always have a need for people who can complete administrative duties, clean, do clerical work or provide technical support.

Type of Volunteer Work: We typically need people who can work in an animal shelter environment – walking dogs, cuddling cats, cleaning cages, feeding animals, completing paperwork, interacting with the public. Depending on the situation and the condition of the animals, responses can often be emotionally challenging.

About: Founded in 1987, United Animal Nations (UAN) focuses on bringing animals out of crisis and into care through a variety of programs, including emergency animal sheltering and disaster relief services, financial assistance for urgent veterinary care and humane education.

Through its volunteer-driven **Emergency Animal Rescue Service (EARS)**, UAN shelters and cares for animals displaced by natural disasters and other crises, such as criminal seizures and hoarding cases, in the United States and Canada.

Since 1987, UAN has responded to more than 90 emergencies to help animals, including hurricanes, wildfires, floods and criminal seizures of puppy mills. We have more than 4,000 EARS volunteers in the United States and Canada. Many of them say that responding to a disaster or other crisis affecting animals is one of the most rewarding things they have ever done.

United Planet

Organization Type: Education, Environmental awareness, Healthcare, Vocational training/entrepreneurship, Orphan/street children care, Disable care, Elderly care, Woman's empowerment, Micro-empowerment, Construction.

Website: <http://www.unitedplanet.org>

Countries: *Short term locations:* Cambodia, Chile, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Ghana, Guatemala, India, Japan, Jordan, Nepal, Peru, Romania, Tanzania, Tibet, Turkey ***Long term locations:*** Belgium, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Denmark, Ecuador, Finland, France, Germany, Ghana, Honduras, Iceland, India, Italy, Kenya, Mexico, Moldova, Mozambique, Nepal, New Zealand, Nigeria, Russia, South Korea, Sweden, Switzerland, Taiwan, Uganda, United Kingdom

Volunteer Contact/Email: Katherine Osgood, quest@unitedplanet.org

Phone: Tel: 1 617 2267 7763

Age Requirements: Volunteers from 16 to 70 are welcome.

Language: Spanish language skills are required for travel to Latin America except for environmental projects in Costa Rica.

Advanced Notice: We ask our volunteers to apply at least sixty days before the program starts.

Cost/Fees Involved: Volunteer program fees begin at \$1445. Program Fees Include:

- ✓ Preparation & training before departure
- ✓ Food & lodging in-country (what's included may vary by country, call for details)
- ✓ Airport transportation
- ✓ Cultural activities and excursions
- ✓ Emergency medical insurance
- ✓ Ongoing support from Coordinators in each country.

Meals/Accommodations: *See above*

Minimum Stay: 1 week

Maximum Stay: 1 year

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: N/A

Health Requirements: No restrictions. Vaccinations are needed for travel to some countries. Please refer to the Center for Disease Control's website for information on your travel destination.

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations:

Special Skills Required: No special skills required.

Type of Volunteer Work: We offer opportunities suitable for volunteers of all backgrounds. Education volunteers teach English and other subjects in local classrooms. Environmental projects include conservation, recycling, sea turtle protection and eco-tourism. At healthcare projects, medical students and professionals share their skills providing: HIV/AIDS awareness; patient care and vaccinations; dental care in pediatric clinics; psychological treatment for victims of abuse. Vocational training programs seek skilled professionals in agriculture, business and other trades. Construction programs build houses and libraries for community centers.

About: As an international non-profit organization, United Planet (UP) strives to create a world in which all people understand, respect, and support one another. United Planet's global network of leaders and volunteers fosters cross-cultural understanding and addresses shared challenges to unite the world in a community beyond borders.

United Planet's holistic approach integrates international, local, and online initiatives to facilitate ongoing engagement. All United Planet programs create points of access for people of all cultures, nationalities, ages, and socio-economic classes to participate worldwide. Each program feeds into and builds momentum for the other.

You can learn more about United Planet on our website www.unitedplanet.org, or read testimonials from our volunteers on our blog www.unitedplanet.org/blog. You can also join our group on Facebook to become more involved with our work!

Vets Beyond Borders

Organization Type: Coordination of veterinary based animal welfare and public health programs in Asia and the Pacific Region.

Website: www.vetsbeyondborders.org

Countries: India Sri Lanka, Bali (other projects are being developed in the Asia and Pacific region)

Volunteer Contact/Email: Beth McGennissen

Phone:

Age Requirements: None

Language: English

Advanced Notice: At least several months beforehand

Cost/Fees Involved: A fee is not charged. Volunteers must first register with Vets Beyond Borders.

Meals/Accommodations: It depends on the individual project. Generally accommodation and lunch is provided on working days.

Minimum Stay: Volunteers must commit for a minimum of 2 weeks. Working hours are generally 8 hours per day Monday to Friday (it may vary a little with the different projects). Each project has a coordinator who will email you more information.

Maximum Stay: No maximum.

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: Help is needed all year round in the different projects and individual project coordinators will give advice

Health Requirements: Must be vaccinated against rabies

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations:

Special Skills Required: Veterinarians, veterinary nurses, veterinary technicians.

Type of Volunteer Work: VBB projects focus on ABC/AR (animal birth control and anti rabies) and the clinical training of local veterinary personnel. Experienced volunteers are required to assist these projects and to help with the training and the education of local staff.

About: Vets Beyond Borders is an Australian-based, not-for-profit, incorporated organization established by veterinary volunteers in 2003. Vets Beyond Borders co-ordinates and runs veterinary based animal welfare and public health programs in developing communities of the Asia and Pacific region.

Vets Beyond Borders:

- ✓ Works with local governments and organizations to establish effective veterinary based programmes
- ✓ Undertakes the clinical training of local veterinary personnel to build their skills
- ✓ Co-ordinates volunteer veterinarians and veterinary nurses and technicians to work on these programmes
- ✓ Supplies much needed medications and surgical equipment
- ✓ Facilitates the funding of buildings and important infrastructure such as kennels to hospitalize treated animals
- ✓ Contributes to the development of wider programmes to address animal welfare and community health issues

Visakha Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals

Organization Type: Animal care and Wild Life Rehabilitation Centre

Website: www.visakhaspca.org

Country: India

Volunteer Contact/Email: Pradeep Kumar Nath, vspcadeep@yahoo.co.in or info@visakhaspca.org

Phone: +91-891-2716124(off), 2001046(Hosp), +91-98481 85652 (Mob)

Age Requirements: We would be happy to have active and healthy people.

Language: Any language

Advanced Notice: At least Two weeks in advance.

Cost/Fees Involved: \$100 as fee is chargeable.

Meals/Accommodations: Volunteers have to arrange for their accommodation, meals etc. we have no more additional cost. We will assist in arranging their needs.

Minimum Stay: We are asking for two weeks commitment and 8 hours per day. In emergency cases, we would ask their presence at any time of day & night.

Maximum Stay:

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations:

Health Requirements: We don't have any knowledge on expertise in measuring health requirements but we would request the volunteers to cover themselves with vaccinations against anti rabies, hepatitis, malaria.

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations: Our area is a peace loving place and one of the fastest growing tourist centre. Our precaution, prevention, recommendation would be to take advice in case of doubts from the police authorities, from friends and from us.

Special Skills Required: We need special skills as:

1. Qualified Veterinarians
2. Ardent Animal Lovers
3. Seriously committed and dedicated to the cause

Type of Volunteer Work:

- ✓ Experts in Shelter landscaping
- ✓ Experienced Animal helpers in handling and cleaning at both wildlife and domestic for large and small animals.
- ✓ Experts required in animal behavior and volunteers required in professional attitude in public relations, fundraising and promotion of awareness and education campaigns and also most specifically emphasis on animal adoption and rehoming.
- ✓ Expert vets in performance and conducting the flank spay method preparations in TNR program.

About: HISTORY: On the far East Coast of India adulating the Bay of Bengal is the fast growing city of Visakhapatnam. In June 1996 a small group of animal lovers began the Visakha SPCA. Their aim was to make a profound and lasting impact on the lives of myriad suffering animals and to protect the environment against the developing forces. In just these few short years their cutting edge accomplishments for the sake of animals are known throughout the country of India and even worldwide. Visakha SPCA is an associate member of RSPCA and WSPA and recognized by the Animal Welfare Board of India and tax exemption under sec. 80G of I.T. Act

POLICIES: Visakha Society for Prevention of Cruelty to animals strongly advocated that every living species in this planet has a right to live in their habitats and not subject to conditional living. VSPCA believes that it is the imperative, that it is the prior duty and responsibility of the human beings, being more superior and intelligent, to protect all living beings justifiably and legally.

OBJECTIVES: Protection all animals which are an essential part of the environment and society. This Society is not a profit making organization, it is purely for the welfare, prevention of all animals. To undertake the comprehensive act of protection of all kinds of animals. To prevent cruelty and alleviate the suffering of all kinds of animals by humane and innovative awareness programmes. VSPCA intends to educate the masses and build a strong bond between animals and human beings, thereby creating an everlasting relationship and constructing self-respect to the animals and also building a responsibility upon the human being towards the animals, especially, the sick, injured and abandoned ones. To vehemently provide a structure of enforcement of the law in vogue at all levels. To pursue and promote a uniform codified law for the animals.

Voces de Mompox

Organization Type: After-school organization teaching 9th graders how to use multimedia to share their stories with the world.

Website: <http://matadortravel.com/organizations/voces-de-mompox>

Country: Colombia

Volunteer Contact/Email: Julie Schwietert Collazo, writingjulie@gmail.com

Phone:

Age Requirements: 21 and over.

Language: Must be English and Spanish-speaking.

Advanced Notice: One month

Cost/Fees Involved: No costs other than those associated with your travel to/from Colombia and personal expenses.

Meals/Accommodations: We provide accommodations

Minimum Stay: Prefer commitments of six months or longer

Maximum Stay: No maximum time

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: Volunteers will be expected to work at least 5 hours/day, 5 days a week.

Health Requirements: Must take personal responsibility for medical/health status and obtain necessary vaccinations and take usual health precautions.

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations: The town in which the organization is located is isolated, and is not a place that can be gotten to or left easily or without advance planning. The social life is quite limited, especially for younger volunteers. Colombia is considered dangerous by the U.S. State Department; thus, the decision to volunteer here should not be taken lightly.

Special Skills Required: Volunteers must possess skills in one or more of the following areas: computer, web development, blogging, photography, videography, writing, social and digital media. Must be English and Spanish-speaking.

Type of Volunteer Work: We need people to oversee teaching/mentoring of ninth graders in an after-school program, working with them to develop multimedia skills and present their stories online. Eventually, we'll also need people who are able to develop relationships with institutions and organizations in Colombia and abroad to facilitate opportunities for the participants in the program to go on to college and/or to do exchange/study abroad programs.

About: Voces de Mompox is an organization for ninth grade students in the town of Mompox, Colombia who demonstrate interest and promise in learning multimedia skills to present stories about their lives and about Colombia, which are published online. Students who participate in the after-school program gain tangible skills that make them more competitive candidates to attend college in the future, thereby improving the entire town's economic and social prospects.



Volunteer Latin America

Organization Type: Voluntary work facilitator - provide free and low cost volunteering opportunities in Central and South America

Website: www.volunteerlatinamerica.com

Countries: Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, Mexico, Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, French Guiana, Guyana, Paraguay, Peru, Suriname, Uruguay, Venezuela

Volunteer Contact/Email: Stephen Knight, info@volunteerlatinamerica.com

Phone:

Age Requirements: Most projects seek volunteers who are aged 18 or over. There are some projects for volunteers under the age of 18.

Language: Read our website for further guidance.

Advanced Notice: Volunteers should apply for a project as far in advance as possible.

Cost/Fees Involved: Dependent on project. Some require a small financial contribution whereas others provide free board and lodging.

Meals/Accommodations: Each project is different. Some provide accommodation and meals whereas others expect volunteers to find their own accommodation.

Minimum Stay: Each project will require a minimum commitment. This might be a number of weeks or months.

Maximum Stay: *See above*

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: Most projects are available year round.

Health Requirements: Dependent on project

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations:

Special Skills Required: Generally, most projects do not require any specialist qualifications or skills.

Type of Volunteer Work: We offer a vast range of projects in the environmental and humanitarian sectors.

About: Volunteer Latin America is a comprehensive source of free and low cost volunteering opportunities in Central and South America. We offer a customized information service for people of all ages and nationalities on voluntary work opportunities in the environmental and humanitarian sectors. We also provide information on recommended Spanish language schools and offer advice on how to set up your own volunteer placement.



Volunteer Peten

Organization Type: We work daily in an Ecological Park, Community Library, Local Schools and various community projects.

Website: www.volunteerpeten.com

Country: Guatemala

Volunteer Contact/Email: Matthew R. Peters, volunteerpeten@hotmail.com

Phone:

Age Requirements:

Language:

Advanced Notice: 4 weeks in advance

Cost/Fees Involved: Cost for 4 weeks is \$450 per volunteer. 8 weeks is \$800 per volunteer, and 12 weeks is \$1,100.

Meals/Accommodations: The mandatory donation includes accommodations and meals and all activities. Also includes pick up and drop off from nearest airport or bus terminal.

Minimum Stay: 4 weeks

Maximum Stay: None

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations:

Health Requirements: None

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations: Plan ahead...Guatemala can be overwhelming at times.

Special Skills Required: None

Type of Volunteer Work: In our ecological park we need help with trails, gardens, fence work, general maintenance, teaching, reforestation, and animal husbandry. In our library and schools we need help teaching English, arts and crafts, or any other subjects. We are always looking for professional bi-lingual teachers to help in local schools.

About: We are a small 501c3 non-for profit organization located in San Andres, Peten, in northern Guatemala. Our goal is to 1) protect and manage a 150 acre reserve in San Andres, 2) provide environmental education to all the schools in San Andres, 3) to aid and assist small community organizations, schools, and families in San Andres, and 4) to provide quality volunteer opportunities for travelers and students.

Volunteer Projects are divided into major two major programs; 1) Ecological Management and 2) Education.

Ecological Management includes maintaining a 150-acre reserve, trail management, gardening, tree nursery management, medicinal plants, reforestation projects, and ecological restoration projects.

Education includes environmental education, general education in local schools, library management and activities, extracurricular activities, and adult education. We also work on various construction projects throughout the year.

All programs offer a variety of activities every day and throughout the year. Mornings are usually assigned for work and afternoons have scheduled cultural, school, and other various activities.

Volunteers for Intercultural and Definitive Adventures

Organization Type: VIDA Intercultural service learning projects in the areas of Medicine, Veterinary Medicine, and Dentistry.

Website: www.vidavolunteertravel.org

Countries: Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Panama

Volunteer Contact/Email: Sondra Elizondo or Curtis Larsen,
info@vidavolunteertravel.org

Phone: 1-888-365-VIDA (8432)

Age Requirements: Must be at least 18 years of age.

Language: English and/or Spanish

Advanced Notice: Recommended at least 90 days before departure.

Cost/Fees Involved: Varies according to length. 7 days: \$1,295 or 13 days: \$1,695

Meals/Accommodations: We provide all lodging, transportation, and two meals a day average.

Minimum Stay: 1 week trips include 4 hour orientation and 3 days of clinic (8 hours each). 2 week trips include 7 hour orientation and 6 days of clinic (8 hours each).

Maximum Stay: Normally trips are only offered for 1 or 2 weeks, but extended trips could be specially arranged.

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: All our trips coincide with university breaks around the US and Canada between January and September.

Health Requirements: N/A

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations: We are looking for volunteers with a strong interest in learning while they aid the people of Central America.

Special Skills Required: Program directed at university students interested in health fields and health professionals.

Volunteers for Intercultural and Definitive Adventures

Type of Volunteer Work: We are looking for volunteers to actively participate in providing intake, assessment, and primary care in temporary medical clinics. We also need volunteers in dentistry to work with local dentists to provide cleanings, extractions and fillings for underserved populations.

We need volunteers to assist in castration clinics as well as provide check-ups, vaccinations, and other care for large and small animals. We also need inspiring health professionals who are able to teach and work in these areas.

About: VIDA is an exciting, quickly-expanding program that brings people from many different walks of life together to improve the health of impoverished communities in Central America while offering incredible hands-on, learning experiences to the volunteers who participate on our trips. All the people involved, who include students from across the US, Canada, and the UK, local and international health professionals, community leaders, translators, patients, and others, are dedicated to making this possible through fun, educational, and eye-opening adventures for people interested in the health fields.

Along with the clinical work we offer, we also offer cultural immersion that includes Spanish and dance lessons, home stays, and other activities. We also enjoy the natural beauty of the region, including its beaches, rivers, waterfalls, volcanoes, and more.

During the entire experience, our volunteers are under the care of our top-notch, supportive and knowledgeable staff, who look out for the safety, comfort, and happiness of every participant on the trip.

Volunteers for Peace

Organization Type: International Voluntary Service placements (US and abroad)

Website: www.vfp.org

Countries: Global (to many to list)

Volunteer Contact/Email: Amy Bannon, Director & Outgoing Placements
vfp@vfp.org

Phone: 802 259-2759

Age Requirements: Most projects for age 18+. Africa projects for age 20+. There are usually about 250 teen projects each year. There are also some projects that will accept families with younger children.

Language: English is the project language in most projects.

Advanced Notice: We would like at least a months prior notice.

Cost/Fees Involved: Basic VFP placement fee is \$300 for a 2-3 week project in a developed country, including food & accommodation, but excluding transportation. VFP membership of \$30 required. Organizations in developing countries will charge additional fees averaging around \$180.

Meals/Accommodations: In most cases food is included in the cost of the project. Usually volunteers are provided with food that they cook for themselves.

Minimum Stay: 2 weeks, 30 hours week

Maximum Stay: 2 years

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations:

Health Requirements: Usually no special requirements.

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations: Please see the US State Department's Consular Information Sheets

Special Skills Required: Usually no special skills required.

Type of Volunteer Work: There are many types of work available because projects arise from grassroots local community needs. Project types include from construction, renovation, sustainable agriculture to environmental protection, helping the elderly and orphans, to preserving archaeological sites

About: Founded in 1982, VFP is a non-profit membership organization. We do not have any political or religious agenda. We are partner to a large network of similar organizations worldwide. Our goal is to work toward a more peaceful world through the promotion of International Voluntary Service (IVS) projects, historically known as **International Workcamps**, and the exchange of volunteers. Through our international alliances, we work together to help communities meet local needs and some of the goals of the **United Nation's Millennium Declaration**.

Our projects provide intercultural education through community service. We offer placement in over 3000 IVS projects in more than 100 countries each year, including over 40 in the USA. At each project, volunteers from diverse backgrounds, typically from four or more countries, work and live together like a family. The sharing of everyday life, both with the local community and among the international volunteers, is an integral part of the learning and serving experience.



Voluntraveler

Organization Type: Volunteer placement agency

Website: www.voluntraveler.com

Country: Peru

Volunteer Contact/Email: Jason Kucherawy, info@voluntraveler.com

Phone:

Age Requirements: None

Language: Intermediate level Spanish or higher preferred, since volunteers will be required to work independently with the local population

Advanced Notice: Apply at least 30 days prior to departure if your travel plans have already been made, 60 days otherwise.

Cost/Fees Involved: \$499 USD per week up to 8 weeks, \$375/week beyond that.

Meals/Accommodations: All in-house meals and accommodation included. Use of house phone (for local and receiving international calls), computer, and wireless internet access too.

Minimum Stay: 3 week minimum commitment

Maximum Stay: No maximum time

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: None

Health Requirements: No health requirements, but the living conditions are less comfortable than in North America or Europe.

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations: Our volunteers have a great deal of independence and control over their own placement so we require independent and mature volunteers.

Special Skills Required: We really need medical professionals, teachers, and social workers with at least intermediate Spanish language skills, but anyone is welcome to apply.

Type of Volunteer Work: We are looking for medical professionals to assist the overworked local doctors and nurses, teachers to assist in the elementary schools, after school programs and ESL classes, and social workers or people with the right experience to continue programs for children with special needs and provide support for the impoverished community.

About: Voluntraveler is the exclusive volunteer provider for Para el Mundo (PaM) in Mancora, Peru. PaM provides community support, medical services, and education programs in close cooperation with local agencies and organizations. PaM volunteers live in two houses adjacent to the PaM community center and are managed by local Peruvian PaM and Voluntraveler staff. Our volunteers become an important part of the local community and are engaged in activities that make use of their particular skills and training. To learn more about the PaM programs visit www.praelmundo.org.

Voluntraveler is currently seeking to partner with other local grassroots charities providing similar services in developing countries and to build a network of professionals that volunteer.



The Wild Animal Rescue Foundation of Thailand (WARF)

Organization Type: Animal Rescue

Website: www.warthai.org

Country: Thailand

Volunteer Contact/Email: May Korcharernkit, volunteer@warthai.org or may@gibbonproject.org

Phone: +66 835912372

Age Requirements: Minimum 18

Language: English

Advanced Notice: At least 3 weeks in advance.

Cost/Fees Involved: Depends on length of stay. Please visit our website for details: www.warthai.org

Included in the price:

- Transportation to/from project location from/to Phuket bus Terminal or Phuket Airport
- Orientation and training during the first and second week
- Project T-shirts plus a ride to shopping area each week
- All fees for inclusion in the project
- Accommodation at the project site during the contracted stay period
- Supervision

Not included in the price:

- Passport / visa fees
- Food
- Travel expenses within Thailand
- Travel, Cancellation and Health Insurance (all participants must be in possession of proof of cover for all of these)

Meals/Accommodations: Accommodation is provided but not food however kitchen and weekly shopping is provided. Volunteer can go to the restaurant nearby or cook by themselves.

Minimum Stay: Minimum 3 weeks

Maximum Stay: Maximum 24 weeks

The Wild Animal Rescue Foundation of Thailand (WARF)

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: Volunteers are needed all year round especially during August to October

Health Requirements: Must be physically fit, and are required to have had all relevant vaccinations for Hepatitis A & B, Tuberculosis (TB), Diphtheria, Rabies, Pertussis (Whooping Cough), Tetanus and Japanese Encephalitis before entering to project.

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations:

Special Skills Required: No specific experience required but good team work skills are needed.

Type of Volunteer Work:

- 1. Rehabilitation Site:** food preparation, feeding, cage maintenance, cleaning, enrichment, and observation (health check, vaginal check).
- 2. Reintroduction Site:** feeding, mapping and trail maintenance, follow up and data collection.
- 3. Conservation Education and Fund-raising:** give talk to tourists, educating them about the problems gibbons face and selling merchandise.
- 4. Other:** this could be normal office administration task upon situation. It should also be noted that volunteers are not allowed to handle the gibbons.

About: The Wild Animal Rescue Foundation of Thailand (WARF) has been operating in Thailand for over 15 years and is involved in many conservation projects. We deal with all species of native animals such as gibbons and macaques. Occasionally we are also called on to assist with exotic wildlife rescued from smugglers. As well as education and awareness of conservation issues, WARF's other main concern is to draw attention to the illegal wild life trade in endangered species.

Wildlife at Risk

Organization Type: Animal rescue and wildlife conservation in Vietnam.

Website: www.wildlifeatrisk.org

Country: Vietnam

Volunteer Contact/Email: khoi.ngugen@wildlifeatrisk.org,
chris@wildlifeatrisk.org

Phone:

Age Requirements: Over 18 years.

Language: English

Advanced Notice: 2 weeks

Cost/Fees Involved: No fee.

Meals/Accommodations: No accommodation or meals. But we can help volunteers to locate accommodation and food.

Minimum Stay: We need volunteers for our wildlife rescue centers at Chu Chi and Kien Giang Province. Both are reasonably remote locations. Therefore they would serve 5 days per week on location. Towns are about 2 hours away.

Maximum Stay:

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations:

Health Requirements: Must be fit and healthy.

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations: None. It's quite safe for both males and females.

Special Skills Required: No

Type of Volunteer Work: Help clean and care for animals and their living areas.

About: We are a wildlife conservationist organization in Vietnam. See www.wildlifeatrisk.org for details.



Wildlife Rescue and Conservation Association

Organization Type: Wildlife Rescue, Sea turtle conservation, protected areas management, environmental education.

Website: www.arcasguatemala.com

Country: Guatemala

Volunteer Contact/Email: Colum Muccio, arcas@inteln.net.gt

Phone: (502)2478-4096

Age Requirements:

Language: No

Advanced Notice: No

Cost/Fees Involved: We have two payment plans for volunteers: the Plan Mochilero (Backpacker) and Plan Completo. Please see our website for details.

Meals/Accommodations: *See above*

Minimum Stay: No

Maximum Stay: No

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: We have work all the time, but in Hawaii, the sea turtle nesting season is July-December

Health Requirements: No

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations:

Special Skills Required: No

Type of Volunteer Work:

GUATEMALA PETEN - Wild Animal Rescue and Rehabilitation Center. situated on Lake Peten Itza in the northern Peten region of Guatemala, 45 kms from the world famous Mayan archeological site of Tikal.

ARCAS is looking for volunteers to contribute to the conservation of the last 300 scarlet macaws remaining in the Maya Biosphere Reserve. This work entails nest monitoring and environmental education and requires a longer time commitment and some prior experience on the part of the volunteer. Rope climbing and Spanish abilities is also a plus.

Wildlife Rescue and Conservation Association

HAWAII - Our other volunteer program is at our sea turtle, caiman and mangrove conservation project near the town of Hawaii on the Pacific coast of Guatemala where volunteers assist in conducting nightly patrols of area beaches in search of nesting sea turtles, collection and burial of eggs in the hatchery and collection of research data. Volunteers can also take part in the crocodile and iguana captive breeding program, mangrove reforestations, educational activities in area schools and other community projects. The turtle season in Hawaii is from June to December with peak months of August and September for olive ridleys.

About: ARCAS is a Guatemalan nongovernmental, nonprofit organization, legally registered with the Guatemalan government and the IUCN, committed to preserving wildlife and its habitat. It was formed in 1989 by a group of Guatemalan citizens who became concerned as they saw their precious natural heritage, especially their wildlife, rapidly disappearing before their eyes. ARCAS was originally created for a very specific purpose: to build a rescue center to care for and rehabilitate wild animals that were being confiscated on the black market by the Guatemalan government. Since the establishment of the rescue center, ARCAS has branched out into other very necessary activities including environmental education, information-dissemination, ecotourism development, marine turtle conservation, reforestation and habitat preservation. ARCAS carries out projects in three basic areas of Guatemala: the Guatemala City area; the Hawaii area of the southern Pacific coast; and the remote, northern department of Peten.

Since its beginning, ARCAS has been an organization supported and directed by volunteers and financed by donations of foreign and Guatemalan friends. Its objectives are:

- To promote the conservation and investigation of wildlife.
- To rescue, rehabilitate and reintroduce to its natural habitat wildlife confiscated from smugglers operating in the illegal wildlife pet trade.
- To support veterinary medical research for tropical fauna.
- To support the formation and proper management of protected areas.
- To raise awareness in the Guatemalan population and visiting tourists through a program of education and information dissemination on the importance of the conservation of wildlife and other natural resources.
- To promote economic alternatives for rural residents in order to minimize the destruction of the natural resources of Guatemala.

Willing Workers in South Africa

Organization Type: Wide range of community development processes in historically disadvantaged rural communities

Website: www.wwisa.co.za

Country: South Africa

Volunteer Contact/Email: “Rocky” Reeder; “Mac” McKechnie, info@wwisa.co.za

Phone: +27 (0)44 534 8958 (Office Landline) +27 (0)72 270 2114 (Mobile/cell)

Age Requirements: From age 18 to 45

Language:

Advanced Notice: Open but an adequate lead-time works best

Cost/Fees Involved: Yes, prices are all inclusive for serviced, communal accommodations, all meals, free internet, free and discounted visits to selected local tourist attractions, all local transport whilst on assignment plus collection from arrival in and departure from local area.

Meals/Accommodations: *See above*

Minimum Stay: Short-term volunteers must commit to +/- 30 hours of diverse community service per week. Whilst the minimum term is one week, stays of 4 weeks are common with the average stay being +/- 6 weeks

Maximum Stay: *See above*

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: Given the southern hemisphere location and the Dec/Jan year-end summer break, assistance is best between late-Jan and early-Dec

Health Requirements: General daily fitness for youth interaction plus sporting fitness for sports coaching and outdoor activities

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations: Since our new democracy in 1994, South Africa has shown steady growth as an excellent value-for-money world tourism destination. Crime levels – especially in large metropolitan regions – attained deeply worrying levels but the sensible and prudent traveler can enjoy the principal tourism attractions and highlights in comfort. In our rural location on the popular Garden Route, the country’s second most popular tourism region, visitors are able to enjoy their surrounding with a high level of personal comfort and safety.

Special Skills Required: None – will consider and be open to all skills

Type of Volunteer Work: Pre-school youth care; primary education extra-murals, art, music, drama and sport; Adolescent youth activities; Home based care; Nursing; Environmental conservation & education; Horticulture;

About: WWISA is a South African owned and managed volunteer-based community development organization well equipped to share its knowledge of our diverse country and local rural communities with visitors to provide them with an unforgettable residential cross-cultural experience within our spectacularly beautiful Garden Route region.

Volunteers are accommodated at our Rocky Road HQ and home base, a well maintained small-holding encircled by agricultural pastures and indigenous forest, which soon becomes their 'African Home'.

Ongoing activities within the community have borne visible fruit with more youth now embarking on tertiary education programmes and we anticipate the construction and completion of long-awaited additional formal housing, a school hall & library plus a large multi-purpose community centre to further add to the momentum of gains. These facilities will undoubtedly offer increased scope for individual and group development and advancement – where every contribution by a concerned and caring volunteer counts.

Our scenic region offers a wide range of outdoor leisure time activities from hiking to water-sports whilst there is plenty to delight the adrenalin junkies with zip-wires, abseiling and the world's highest bungee to name just a few!

In fact 23% of our volunteers have returned for second or more visits to continue their involvement with and contribution to the local Kurland community they have come to know and love. And, of course, continue their enjoyment of the hospitable, laid-back lifestyle within a secure environment where 'once-in-a-lifetime' has been shown to take on a different meaning!

Wombat Protection Society of Australia

Organization Type: Animal rescue, protection and research and advisory organization.

Website: www.wombatprotection.org.au

Countries: Australia. Please note that wombats are only found in the Eastern states of Australia. However as a lot of our work is web based people wanting to help but living in other countries can also assist us via computer.

Volunteer Contact/Email: Amanda Cox - Public Officer,
research@wombatprotection.org.au

Phone: Prefer email contact

Age Requirements: Open

Language: Some English

Advanced Notice: One month—also see Calendar/Seasonal Considerations

Cost/Fees Involved: None

Meals/Accommodations: Depends on the work being undertaken, some release sites and monitoring sites provide accommodations, most work would involve camping where research or monitoring is undertaken.

Minimum Stay: Open

Maximum Stay: Open

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: The Northern Hairy Nosed wombat in Queensland is critically endangered and a separate volunteer program. A two year waiting period exists and there are seasonal restrictions. However, other wombats are only found in Tasmania, N.S.W., Victoria and small areas of South Australia. Their volunteer period is open.

Health Requirements: Depends on the work being undertaken. Any handling of wombats requires training and a good level of fitness. We have sedentary volunteer positions available.

Special Skills Required: We can use all skills and can also use general assistance.

Travel Tips, Warnings & Recommendations: Wombats are nocturnal and much of the work involved in seeing them is night work.

Type of Work: A wide range of volunteer skills can be used, from administrative-including publicity and fundraising to field research and monitoring to working on release sites -which may involve building wombatoriums, fencing as well as research assistance in burrow monitoring, wombat sighting and some direct care.

About: Wombats are the most amazing creatures, they live in beautifully engineered temperature controlled burrows from where they fossick for grass, roots and fungi after dark returning before daybreak. Growing up to 40 kilos in weight from a jelly bean less than a gram when born, the joey makes a perilous journey from mum's cloacca to her pouch where it attaches to a teat and remains safely in her backwards facing pouch until about nine months old. At this time the joey begins to poke its' head out and nibble grass from the safety of the pouch. As it grows it becomes playful, thoroughly enjoying climbing over mum, rolling down hills and galloping around.

A joey stays with its mum until nearly two years of age by which time it has learnt all about its territory, where burrows and bolt holes are , where water is and where the grass grows and where other wombats live.

If lucky the wombat may live for 10-15 years and if female may produce 3-5 young during its life. Sadly wombats have many problems in Australia and that is why the Wombat Protection Society exists. Farmers still trap and shoot them, cars run over them, their habitat is still being destroyed and a terrible infestation caused by a mite people introduced to Australia creates a condition known as mange which kills them. The Society works to ameliorate all these problems and looks forward to volunteers joining in this endeavor to save and protect one of the most charismatic and iconic of Australian animals, The rapacious delight of a young wombat at play is something unforgettable. Their interrelationship with the Earth serves as a reminder of how precious they are and how important caring for them is.

Organization Type: World Wide Opportunities on Organic Farms. Volunteer help on organic farms, homesteads and other places in exchange for accommodation & meals.

Website: www.woof.ca

Country: Canada

Volunteer Contact/Email: John, woofcan@shaw.ca

Phone:

Age Requirements: 16

Language: Basic conversational English

Advanced Notice: Contact hosts 1 month in advance

Cost/Fees Involved: \$45 US for online access to all the info

Meals/Accommodations: Hosts provide accommodations, meals and an interesting experience for the volunteers efforts of 4-6 hours per day

Minimum Stay: 1 week - 4-6 hours per day

Maximum Stay: Depends on the hosts needs - can be 1-3 months

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: Any season - best early spring to late fall; but winter wwoofing opportunities are also available.

Health Requirements: Must have health insurance, be fit, etc

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations: Tips: try your best; extremely successful program if YOU want it to be; safe for women (65% participants are women)

Special Skills Required: Bring a smile and your motivation to try your best, experience NOT necessary

Type of Volunteer Work: Anything and everything related to farm/garden work and rural lifestyle maintenance

About: WWOOF Canada has been slowly growing over 25 years and is now the leading volunteer organization for organic farming/gardening in Canada with over 3000 participants per year (from 35 different countries) and over 800 hosts Coast to Coast. A wonderful variety of hosts. Read the Comments section on our website at: www.woof.ca. Many peoples' lives have been changed by going 'wwoofing'!



WWOOF USA

Organization Type: World Wide Opportunities on Organic Farms, (WWOF-USA) produces a quarterly directory of organic farmers in the United States who would like to host volunteers on their farm.

Website: www.woofusa.org

Country: WWOOF-USA is part of an international organization. Each country is run independently, and members sign up with the individual country they are interested in. WWOOF-USA has volunteer positions in all 50 states, including Alaska, Hawaii, the US Virgin Islands, and Puerto Rico.

Volunteer Contact/Email: Ryan Leo Goldsmith, info@woofusa.org

Phone: 831-425-FARM (3276)

Age Requirements: 18 or older, or accompanied by guardian.

Language: Vary by farm

Advanced Notice: The more advance notice, the better, as many farms may fill may WWOOF positions. Please call or email farms you are interested in WWOOFing at to check availability.

Cost/Fees Involved: \$25 US dollars for an annual membership with WWOOF-USA. Members receive a printed booklet and online access to the directory of WWOOF host farms.

Meals/Accommodations: Volunteers receive room and board on organic farms in exchange for half a day's labor. Volunteers pay for membership into the WWOOF-USA organization, then no money is exchanged between farmer and volunteer.

Minimum Stay: A weekend

Maximum Stay: A year. Length of stay varies by farm and arrangements are made between farmer and WWOOFer prior to visit.

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: Again, this varies by farm, but there are year-round opportunities available with many US WWOOF farm hosts.

Health Requirements: Varies by farm. Be sure to ask farmers before visit if they have any specific requirements.

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations:

Special Skills Required: Varies by farm, but generally no special skills are required.

Type of Volunteer Work: All sort of opportunities to work on organic farms and gardens. These could included working with vegetables, orchards (fruit and nuts), flowers, wine grapes, medicinal herbs, mushrooms, animal husbandry, ranching, and more.

WWOOFers may also have the opportunity to participate in alternative construction projects such as building straw-bale structures, bee-keeping, land restoration, dairy operations and cheese making, seed saving, wild-crafting, and much more.

About: WWOOF-USA is part of a world-wide effort to link volunteers with organic farmers, promote an educational exchange, and build a global community conscious of ecological farming practices.

The WWOOF program started in the United Kingdom in 1971, by Sue Coppard, a London secretary, under the name 'Working Weekends on Organic Farms'. The intention was to provide people living in London with an opportunity to participate in the organic farming movement occurring in the countryside. Since the establishment of WWOOF in the U.K., the program has expanded to 'World-Wide Opportunities on Organic Farms', and is now in more than 30 countries around the world, with a wide range of farm stay opportunities. WWOOF programs operate independently in each country, so please contact the WWOOF country organization directly for the most accurate information on WWOOFing in that country.

WWOOF-USA produces a quarterly directory of more than 800 organic farmers in the United States who would like to host volunteers on their farm. The WWOOF-USA Directory of Organic Farms list farms located throughout the US, including Hawaii, Alaska, the US Virgin Islands, and Puerto Rico. Some farms request longer stays (1-3 months) while others host volunteers for as short as a few days. The WWOOF-USA Directory of Organic Host Farms contains descriptions of each farm, which include the type of farm, crops grown, personality of the farm family and/or community, and farm projects.

YWF-Kido Foundation

Organization Type: Not for profit organization monitoring nesting activities of critically endangered sea turtles

Website: www.kido-projects.com

Country: Carriacou Island, Grenada

Volunteer Contact/Email: Dr. Marina Fastigi, marina.fastigi@gmail.com

Phone: (473) 443 7936

Age Requirements: 18-50. We accept volunteers under 18 with a waiver signed by their parents.

Language: English

Advanced Notice: One month

Cost/Fees Involved: The cost per volunteer is 15US\$ per day for accommodation, cooking gas and electricity; for a minimum 30 days stay. For periods longer than 3 months, costs are reduced to 10 US\$.

Meals/Accommodations:

1. Accommodation is included in the cost
2. Food is purchased and cooked by volunteers.
3. Any other expenses, such as flights or other transportation costs are covered by the volunteers.
4. Volunteers are required to have their own travel insurance

Minimum Stay: Volunteers must commit to at least one month work, for 5 nights a week, from 8pm to 5am.

Maximum Stay: 6 months

Calendar/Seasonal Considerations: We need volunteers from March to August. We need extra help in May-June.

Health Requirements: Volunteers must be good swimmers, physically fit to walk long distances on soft, sandy beaches and nature trails, working in all weather conditions. They must be flexible to adapt to changing schedules as required & able to adapt to work nights and sleep days. No vaccination required.

Travel Tips, Warnings and Recommendations:

- Volunteers are also required to follow a code of decency and confidentiality about the work they undertake at Kido. We are non-smoking, alcohol and drug-free.

Special Skills Required: No special skills required, but volunteers should have a keen and genuine interest in conservation and ecology and be animal lovers; and be willing to work under instruction as a member of a team.

Type of Volunteer Work: Volunteers will actively participate in monitoring and data-collection of 2 critically endangered Sea Turtle Species, Leatherback and Hawksbill, nesting on 5 different beaches on the Island; helping to reduce illegal poaching activities of turtles and eggs. (From March to August)

- Night patrolling on foot in a Nature Park area, from 8pm to 5am, for 5 nights a week.
- Working with local guides; assisting with tagging post-nesting turtles; carapace measuring and other data collecting; disguising nests against poachers; egg counting and mapping nest location.
- Hatchling monitoring and survival-rate data collection. (Nest excavation)
- Early morning beach patrols either on foot or kayak.
- Living quarters must be maintained clean and in order by volunteers.

About: YWF-Kido Foundation, not-for-profit organization registered in 1995, focus on nature conservation, preservation of endangered species, youth education, training and promotion of socio-economic advancement opportunities at community level.

YWF-Kido Foundation has joined in 2002 the Wider Caribbean Sea Turtle Conservation Network (WIDECAST) to protect sea turtles. Only 1 in 1500 hatchlings make it to egg laying maturity. Two Critically Endangered species, Hawksbill and Leatherback, and occasionally the endangered Green turtles, can be observed nesting at night from March to September, within the High North Nature Park area, in Carriacou. Paid trained local guides and oversea volunteers patrol the beaches at night to protect nesting and hatching turtles, measure and tag post-nesting turtles, mark and camouflage nest location and turtle tracks and collect data.

September through March is the open hunting season for sea turtles in the State of Grenada. During this time YWF-KIDO Foundation purchases live sea turtles from fisherman. The turtles - Green, Hawksbill, and the occasional Loggerhead – are treated for injuries, measured, tagged, then released with the understanding of local fisherman that if caught again the turtles will be recorded and released. Funds for purchasing these amazing creatures comes from private donations (mainly tourists).

Additional Volunteer Organizations

Ape Action Africa

Website: <http://www.apeactionafrica.org>

Country: Cameroon

Description: Want to get hands on and learn how to care for a rescued young ape? As an Ape Action Africa volunteer, your time with them will be tough and demanding but tremendously rewarding. You will spend your days at our centre in Cameroon's Mefou National Park and assist with the day-to-day activities necessary to care for the animals there. They are also looking for short term volunteer vets.

ARCTUROS

Website: <http://www.arcturos.gr/en>

Country: Greece

Description: Conservation of large carnivores (Bear, Lynx, Wolf) in Greece and the Balkans. The activities of ARCTUROS depend highly on volunteers.

Best Friends Animal Society

Website: <http://www.bestfriends.org>

Country: USA

Description: Best Friends operates a 33,000 acre animal sanctuary in southern Utah. It is also the home of Nat Geo Channel's 'Dogtown' series. Volunteers at Best Friends can work with almost every manner of domestic pet, from farm animals to cats and dogs. Located outside Kanab, Utah in the center of the Golden Circle of National Parks, visitors to Best Friends are able to combine a volunteer experience with visits to Zion NP, Grand Canyon NP, Bryce Canyon NP, Lake Powell and more.

Black Hills Wild Horse Sanctuary

Website: <http://www.gwtc.net/~iram>

Country: United States

Description: As a working horse ranch, the sanctuary has a range of volunteer needs from animal care and ranch maintenance to gardening and gift shop work.

Bring the Elephants Home Foundation

Website: <http://www.bring-the-elephant-home.org>

Country: Thailand

Description: The Bring the Elephant Home foundation keeps fighting to get all elephants off the streets by education, promoting animal friendly eco-tourism initiatives, creating habitat for elephants, growing food for elephants, stimulating employment in traditional elephant villages and find solutions to solve human-elephant conflicts. Visit their website to view current volunteer opportunities.

Cardigan Bay Marine Wildlife Centre

Website: <http://www.cbmwc.org/home.asp>

Country: United Kingdom

Description: The Cardigan Bay Marine Wildlife Centre in New Quay, West Wales (UK) is a public information, education and research centre dedicated to raising awareness of the marine environment. They welcome volunteers, students and interns to assist with the ongoing bottlenose dolphin research, education programmes and other projects concerning the marine wildlife of Cardigan Bay.

Child Haven International

Website: <http://www.childhaven.ca>

Countries: India & Nepal

Description: Since 1985 approximately 500 interns have paid their own way to India or Nepal and lived in Child Haven Homes for three months or more. When an intern arrives, there is a big welcome. A tika mark is placed on their forehead. Songs are sung and flowers are given.

Crooked Trails

Website: <http://crookedtrails.com>

Countries: Peru, Ecuador, Thailand, China, India

Description: Crooked Trails was founded on the premise that tourism does not have to threaten the cultures and environments of popular destinations and fragile regions. They only work in communities that have invited them and on community development projects chosen by the people they visit.

Additional Volunteer Organizations

Culinary Corps

Website: <http://culinarycorps.org>

Country: USA – New Orleans & the Gulf Coast of Mississippi

Description: CulinaryCorps designs, organizes and launches volunteer outreach experiences for culinary students and professionals to assist communities through food, cooking, education and exchange.

Ecoteer

Website: <http://www.ecoteer.com>

Country: Global

Description: Ecoteer is a volunteer opportunities/placement agency - offering a directory of affordable volunteer work opportunities, volunteer jobs abroad and working holidays.

Eagles Nest Wildlife Sanctuary

Website: <http://www.wildlife-sanctuary.info>

Country: Queensland, Australia

Description: Eagle's Nest offers a home for injured, sick, orphaned and unreleaseable wildlife. Researchers, scientists and volunteers are always welcome.

Elephant Nature Foundation

Website: <http://www.elephantnaturefoundation.org>

Country: Thailand

Description: Our mission is to increase awareness about the plight of the endangered Asian elephant, educate locals on the humane treatment of their elephants, and provide sanctuary for rescued elephants at our nature park. We currently offer 1-week, 2-week, and 3-week long volunteer stays. Volunteering at Elephant Nature Park is a truly rewarding experience!

Enkosini Eco Experience

Website: <http://www.inkosiniecoexperience.com>

Country: South Africa

Description: Enkosini Eco Experience offers self-funding volunteers a unique opportunity to work at some of Southern Africa's leading wildlife conservation, rehabilitation and research projects.

FairMail

Website: <http://www.fairmail.info>

Country: Peru

Description: Young Peruvian trainee photographers are taught by temporary international volunteers. The photos are used on FairMail cards, taken by these Indian and Peruvian underprivileged teenagers. On the backside of every card you see the face, name and age of the photographer. The teenagers get 50 % of the profits to finance their housing and education. You can get more information on volunteering and shop for FairMail cards on their website.

Friends of Maiti Nepal

Website: <http://www.friendsofmaitinepal.org>

Country: Nepal

Description: Friends of Maiti Nepal is the official US representative of Maiti Nepal (<http://www.maitinepal.org>). It is a non-profit all-volunteer organization dedicated to addressing the human rights crisis of girl sex-trafficking. You can help. When you go trekking in Nepal carry brochures and posters to underserved villages. Friends of Maiti Nepal will provide the literature, and you provide the transportation.

Friends Without a Border

Website: <http://www.fwab.org/>

Country: Cambodia

Description: Friends Without a Border is providing quality medical care, extensive outreach and crucial medical education through Angkor Hospital for Children. Angkor Hospital for Children relies on a steady stream of volunteer health care experts to constantly improve the skill of its own staff and train health professionals from throughout Cambodia.

Health Volunteers Overseas

Website: <http://www.hvouusa.org>

Country: Global

Description: HVO is a network of health care professionals, organizations, corporations and donors united in a common commitment to improving global health through education.

Additional Volunteer Organizations

Honduras Children

Website: <http://www.honduraschildren.org>

Country: Honduras

Description: Honduras Children is a diverse group of volunteers and sponsors collectively working to make life better for children in the La Ceiba area of the north coast of Honduras.

Integrated Social Programs in Indian Child Education

Website: <http://www.ispiice.com>

Country: India

Description: iSPiICE is an organization that builds partnerships between International volunteers and Indian communities. iSPiICE provides full support to volunteers in regards to their induction and basic training. English speaking guides/ interpreters will also be provided for the work placement.

IT Volunteers Worldwide

Website: <http://itvolunteersworldwide.org>

Country: Global

Description: The founder of IT Volunteers Worldwide, Waleed Darab, has hit on the inspired idea of helping techno-savvy volunteers connect with nonprofits and causes around the world, assisting them with their Internet Technology projects. Win Win!

La Sabranenque

Website: <http://www.sabranenque.com>

Country: France

Description: La Sabranenque offers travelers the chance to work on restoration projects around the village of province. You may participate in a summer volunteer programs, a briefer volunteer and visit or a volunteer and hike allowing you the chance to explore province while volunteering part-time.

Mission Finder

Website: <http://www.missionfinder.org>

Country: Global

Description: Mission Finder offers an extensive directory and search engine designed to connect Christians to mission opportunities around the world.

Noistar Thai Animal Rescue Foundation

Website: <http://www.kohtaoanimalclinic.org/>

Country: Thailand

Description: Located on the tiny island of Koh Tao in the Gulf of Thailand, Noistar offers the perfect volunteer getaway for those who love scuba, sun and animals. All volunteers are always welcome and needed. It doesn't matter whether you are a qualified and experienced vet, a nurse or technician, a newly qualified graduate or an animal-lover who just wants to help in any way you can.

One World 365

Website: <http://www.oneworld365.org>

Country: Global

Description: Specializing in travel with a purpose, One World 365 offers a wide selection of volunteer trips, seasonal jobs, summer camps, travel opportunities and more.

Orangutan Health

Website: <http://www.orangutan-health.org>

Country: Indonesia

Description: Research, conservation, education! By volunteering on this project, you will be contributing to the conservation of the orangutan and its unique ecosystem by improving our understanding of both, while helping find new cures for illness in the human and orangutan worlds.

Orca Foundation

Website: <http://www.orcafoundation.com>

Country: South Africa

Description: At ORCA (Ocean Research Conservation Africa) Marine Foundation We call it work; others would say we are just having a good time. But when your work involves enjoying the best that nature has to offer, you can see how we can have so much fun and protect the environment at the same time.

Additional Volunteer Organizations

Quetzaltrekkers

Website: <http://www.quezaltrekkers.com>

Country: Nicaragua and Guatemala

Description: All Quetzaltrekkers guides are volunteers. They hire local labor and profits from their hikes and expeditions go to organizations that support local street kids. If you can't volunteer you can still walk (and trek) with your head held high.

Romanian League in Defense of Animals

Website: <http://www.rola.org>

Country: Romania

Description: ROLA's main work is to protect animals from suffering and cruelty caused by human actions. Volunteer at their shelter during your vacation and you'll benefit from free accommodations and the invaluable gratitude of hundred sheltered dogs - priceless!

Safe Passage

Website: <http://www.safepassage.org>

Country: Guatemala

Description: Safe Passage works with the poorest at-risk children of families working in the Guatemala City garbage dump. Volunteers are a vital and essential part of their program. The qualities and skills that our volunteers share with the children are many: a sense of self-worth and dignity, the motivation and perseverance to overcome a difficult challenge, creativity, confidence, respect for others, the ability to think critically to solve problems, and how to give generously of one's time, energy and talent.

SCAD Bangkok

Website: <http://www.scadbangkok.org>

Country: Thailand

Description: SCAD (Soi Cat and Dog Rescue) strives to improve life for the street (soi) cats and dogs of Thailand's largest city. Their volunteer needs are extensive and include a need for dog trainers, English/Thai translators, window dressers (for their "ReTail" store), event planners and occasionally even electricians, gardeners, builders, plumbers and architects.

United Nation Volunteers

Website: <http://www.unv.org>

Country: Global

Description: The United Nations Volunteers (UNV) programme is the UN organization that contributes to peace and development through volunteerism worldwide. Based in Bonn, Germany, UNV is active in 140 countries. It is represented worldwide through the offices of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

uVolunteer

Website: <http://www.uvolunteer.org/>

Country: Bolivia, Costa Rica & Ecuador

Description: uVolunteer coordinates service orientated vacations for people wishing to volunteer in Latin America, working with NGOs, governments and grass-roots organizations.

Vatsalya

Website: <http://www.vatsalya.org>

Country: India

Description: Our Child Welfare programs, especially our *Children's Village* has unique features that helps visitors and volunteers in their own issues and brings about a positive change in their way of life. Besides our several child welfare activities, our volunteers also join and contribute in our *Community Health and Women's Empower* programs.

Voluntary Service Overseas

Website: <http://www.vso.org.uk>

Country: Global

Description: VSO is the world's leading independent international development organization that works through volunteers to fight poverty in developing countries. They offer long-term opportunities from six months to two years and have a youth program as well.

Additional Volunteer Organizations

Volunteer Action for Peace

Website: <http://www.vap.org.uk>

Country: Global

Description: Volunteer Action for Peace (VAP) is a UK based charity organization which works towards creating and preserving international peace, justice and human solidarity for people and their communities. They also connect with environmental programs. VAP currently operates through a vast network of small partner organizations in more than 80 countries worldwide, resulting in an incredibly vast selection of volunteer program to choose from.

Wild Spirit Wolf Sanctuary

Website: <http://wildspiritwolfsanctuary.org>

Country: United States

Description: Long-term volunteers are individuals committed to spending no less than three months volunteering at Wild Spirit Wolf Sanctuary and are twenty-one years old or older. These volunteers live on the property, are provided with housing and food-allotments. Short-term volunteering encompasses all other areas of volunteering for WSW. See our website for a list of all volunteer opportunities.

Wolong Panda Club

Website: <http://www.pandaclub.cn>

Country: China

Description: Offering opportunities to volunteer as an assistant panda keeper, a clerk for the club or an interpreter/guide for visitors to the panda garden.

Working for Children

Website: <http://www.wfc-kh.org/>

Country: Cambodia

Description: Working for Children (*WFC*) is a registered, non-profit charity committed to assisting orphans, poor and vulnerable children in rural communities in Siem Reap Province. They rely entirely on donations, from passing visitors to the Angkor Wat Temples, a small group of local hotels and guest houses and overseas visitors like you. If you are in Cambodia visiting Siem Reap and Angkor Wat - why not spend a day with them? Volunteering your time provides valuable interaction for these children.

World Teach

Website: <http://worldteach.org>

Country: Global

Description: WorldTeach is a non-profit, non-governmental organization that provides opportunities for individuals to make a meaningful contribution to international education by living and working as volunteer teachers in developing countries.

Yanapuma Foundation

Website: <http://www.yanapuma.org>

Country: Ecuador

Description: Building sustainable community development projects that improve the lives of poor and marginalized indigenous and rural populations throughout Ecuador.

Additional Resources

All for Good

Website: <http://www.allforgood.org>

Country: Global

Description: All for Good is an open source application currently managed by Google that allows you to find and share volunteer activities. All for Good lets you browse activities and find events based on your location or interests.

Bhejane Nature Training

Website: <http://www.bhejanenaturetraining.com>

Country: Northern Zululand & Maputaland areas of KwaZulu Natal, South Africa

Description: Bhejane Nature Training offers a variety of courses, and African Wildlife and Adventure experiences such as Professional Field Guide training and our Ubuntu Wild African nature experiences. Participants choose between recreational, personal development or professional and volunteer programmes. We are a FGASA endorsed Training Provider and Associate Member of the Space for Elephants Foundation.

CouchSurfing

Website: <http://www.couchsurfing.org>

Description: CouchSurfing is a worldwide network connecting travelers to communities and to couches. The unique free accommodation opportunities offered by CouchSurfing can bring the cost of participating in an international volunteer project into something budget travelers can more easily afford, all while providing a cultural experience beyond what any hotel stay could ever provide.

Earth.org

Website: <http://www.earth.org>

Description: Earth.org is a collaboratively written travel guide with a non-profit approach written by you the traveler. Not on the road? Tell other travelers about your own hometown.

Green Volunteers

Website: <http://greenvolunteers.com>

Description: The world guide and information network to voluntary work in nature conservation, Green Volunteers is a simple, but wonderfully drool-worthy site packed full of enough giveback possibilities to keep any green serial volunteer busy for a lifetime. Long-term, short-term, humanitarian, conservation, archaeological, with so much to select from it is easy to be green!

i-to-i

Website: <http://www.i-to-i.com>

Description: i-to-i is said to be the world's leader in meaningful travel experiences, offering adventure minded spirits a wide variety of in volunteer opportunities, gap year Travel and TEFL courses. Their website even offers a fun volunteer test matching would-be volunteers with the type of trip that would suit them best.

Idealist.org

Website: <http://www.idealist.org>

Description: Idealist.org is a project of Action Without Borders, a nonprofit organization. Their website offers the chance to search over 15 thousand volunteer positions by location, keywords, region and more. In addition idealist also connects people with groups, jobs, organizations, events and more.

International Association for Volunteer Efforts

Website: <http://www.iave.org>

Description: IAVE supports the development of strong national and local volunteer centers throughout the world. The organization has grown into a global network of volunteers, volunteer organizations, national representatives and volunteer centers, with members in over 70 countries and in all regions of the world.

Additional Resources

The International Volunteer Programs Association

Website: <http://www.volunteerinternational.org>

Description: (IVPA) is an association of non-governmental organizations involved in international volunteer work and internship exchanges. They serve as a guide to those considering volunteering abroad, assist with the developing of international service opportunities and providing a forum for international volunteer organization representatives to share information and resources.

Lonely Planet

Website: <http://www.lonelyplanet.com>

Description: In addition to being the publisher of the renowned Lonely Planet guide book series for travelers, LP's website has an active online community of forums and blogs, often focused on topics geared towards budget travelers.

MatadorAbroad

Website: <http://matadorabroad.com>

Description: Billed as the world's largest independent travel magazine, Matador includes a network of eight content-specific blogs all interconnected through the Matador Travel Community. As the nexus for the online travel community their Matador Change pages offer a steady flow of articles and information for those striving to be the change they want to see around the world.

StuffYourRucksack.com

Website: <http://www.stuffyourrucksack.com>

Description: Enabling travelers to give practical help to places they visit by bringing things that are really needed. How many times have you been travelling and visited a school, community or local charity that you would love to help? The school needs books, or a map or pencils; an orphanage needs children's clothes or toys. All things that, if only you'd known, you could have stuffed in your rucksack. Use this amazing website to let travelers know what is needed somewhere you have been and to find out what is needed where you are going.

Transitions Abroad

Website: <http://www.transitionsabroad.com>

Description: A comprehensive list of international volunteer travel organization, Transitions Abroad is also a valuable resource for those seeking information on working abroad, studying abroad, cultural travel and international living.

TravelPod

Website: <http://www.travelpod.com>

Description: A free travel blog allowing you the opportunity to tell other travelers about your volunteer experiences and to read about the adventures of like-minded travelers.

Travelanthropist

Website: <http://www.travelanthropist.com>

Description: The Travelanthropist blog focuses on news and trends in volunteerism, volunteer travel and Travel Philanthropy.

UniversalGiving

Website: <http://www.universalgiving.org>

Description: The awe inspiring UniversalGiving site connects people to hundreds of volunteer projects by searching their listings of opportunities via keywords, interests, regions and/or date. In addition to being a fabulous resource for those seeking volunteer projects, the site also connects philanthropist to nearly one thousand organizations and causes where they can make donations with 100% of the proceeds going to the project.

Volunteer South America

Website: <http://www.volunteersouthamerica.net>

Country: Throughout Central and South America

Description: This simple site offers an overwhelming (and fabulous) list of free and low-cost volunteer opportunities in South & Central America. It is all designed for backpackers and independent travelers looking for a real volunteer experience abroad, without paying any middle-man or agency fees.

Voluntourism Gal

Website: <http://voluntourismgal.wordpress.com>

Description: Voluntourism Gal offers notes on the voluntourism industry and is an absolute 'must follow' blog for anyone wanting to dive deeper into the stories, trends, weekly news and the status of volunteer travel.

Additional Resources

Worldwide Helpers

Website: <http://www.worldwidehelpers.org>

Country: Worldwide

Description: A free portal listing positions and volunteer opportunities with minimal or no cost associated with them.

Wanderlust and Lipstick

Website: <http://wanderlustandlipstick.com>

Description: “Your Destination for Woman’s Travel” Founded by renowned travel writer/contemporary wanderer extraordinaire Beth Whitman, Wanderlust and Lipstick provides inspiration, tips and words of wisdom. It makes no difference if you are a single gal about to hit the open road with nothing but a backpack or a Mom heading out with the kids in tow, Wanderlust and Lipstick is an oasis for adventure-minded women longing for the latest in travel-savvy advice.

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