

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER

For Projects Abroad South Africa



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International Literacy Day: 8 September



Literacy Project Volunteer Antoine Cremel reads with Grade 3 learner Christly.

Literacy is a vital part of any society that wishes to provide a good future for its children. Every child is entitled to exercise their right to an education as stated in our Bill of Rights, as part of the constitution; sadly not everyone receives the necessary level of education that this bill protects.

The level of education in schools based in poorer communities is known to be much lower than those in the more privileged communities. These schools face a number of issues such as text book shortage and overcrowding of learners in a single classroom. This overall affects the literacy rate amongst learners as students who are struggling do not get the extra time needed for them to catch up with the rest of their class mates.

As we celebrate World Literature Day on the 8th of September, we will also be celebrating the great volunteer work done by our volunteers at our Literacy Teaching Project. The Projects Abroad Literacy Project that forms part of our Teaching Project is making great progress in trying to breach the literacy gap at one of our placement schools, Zerilda Primary School. Volunteers who are placed at the school assist teachers by giving extra reading and writing lessons to learners who are struggling in those areas.

Antoine Cremel, 19-years-old from France, who participated in this project, could already see great improvement in a short space of time with the children that he was working with. In less than two weeks at the school he had managed to help a Grade 3 learner, Christly, improve her reading. Antoine was touched by Christly's eagerness to learn and he began to make sure that he dedicated himself and practiced reading and writing with Christly as often as he could.

When he met Christly, she was unable to read out three and four letter words. She used to struggle interpreting and using words in the correct context. She now, with the help of her teacher and extra lessons taken with Antoine, understands the way that letters change and merge to form new words.

Volunteers at the Literacy Project track the progress of the learners they work with through progress reports which they update after each session. As of June this year they began to keep individual reports, whereas prior to this they only wrote summaries of their session, with a few suggestions.

Now each child has a detailed progress report that helps the new volunteer's pickup from where the previous one left off. Each report is also created for each grade as based on the national curriculum, which means that once a learner has completed their extra lessons they end up on the same level as other students in their grade.

Teachers at Zerilda Primary School are equally proud and happy at the amazing results that the project has produced with the learners. Berenice Peterse, a Grade 3 teacher at the school shared the experiences she had with a learner before and after the child took part in the extra literacy classes. She says that students who were once scared and shy to read out loud in front of their classmates have now gained the confidence and now even volunteer to read to the class.

It is great stories and feedback like this that keeps the school staff and volunteers motivated to helping the children reach the necessary reading and writing levels that will one day enable them to create a better future for themselves.

Roxane Gray: Journalism Project



Roxane Gray next to a statue of Nelson Mandela

Roxane Gray had only great things to say about the Journalism Project which she joined at Projects Abroad. The 19-year-old student from France worked as one of the volunteer contributors for the Cape Chameleon, which is a print and online magazine that is published by Project Abroad Cape Town.

Through this project, Roxane was able to explore all the interesting sights and places that Cape Town had to offer, whilst learning about what it takes to be a journalist. She was always given the freedom to come up with her own story ideas and that helped her write about things that were meaningful to her experience as a volunteer. "I discovered a lot of beautiful places in the city and this inspired me with my story ideas for the project," she says. She also liked the fact that she could be independent when out searching for new stories, she could write about whatever she wanted but still had the guidance of the magazine editor, Rebecca Saraceno. This is how Roxane learnt how to construct emails for interview requests, and also how to prepare and conduct the interviews that she worked on.

It's clear from the way her face lights up when she talks about her project that she truly loved everything she did. "The project is cool as everything we write goes up on the blog and website, and it has so many different things that anyone who reads it will find something interesting for themselves," she says with a big smile.

A day in the life of a journalism volunteer is never the same, with them conducting interviews and researching new topics to write about, they always find themselves immersed in the current activities happening in Cape Town. From food markets to museums, there is always a new activity that constantly keeps them abreast of South African life. One of her favourite places that she visited was the Parliamentary House; here Roxanne was given a tour of the different parliamentary buildings and got an idea of what goes on in Parliament.

It was upon her visit to the District Six Museum that Roxane learnt a little more about South Africa's history. She, with much sentiment, recalls visiting the museum and learning about "The pigeon man", who in the 1960's had his family removed from the then District Six community along with his racing pigeons because of the forced removals that were happening at that time. "They were telling us about this man's story and I was so touched and got emotional listening to it," she recalls.

Surprisingly enough, as she was making her way out of the museum and buying some gifts, Roxane had the rare opportunity of meeting the "Pigeon man", whom she couldn't help but embrace with a hug. After receiving a signed book from him, Roxane was inspired by his story and wrote an article about him, titled, 'The man with pigeons'. Having the opportunity to interview people that were present during South Africa's transition into democracy is something that she will never forget. "It's amazing that I get to talk to so many people who were there during Apartheid, because 50 years from now they will no longer be around to share their story; it was a great opportunity."

Roxane recommends the Journalism Project to anyone who wants to experience all the different sides of Cape Town, while learning something new. She says that it's good to learn that there are other ways of living; it's also exciting to discover the history of the place and where people come from as a country. "I can't say that there's one specific culture that I loved about Cape Town, because South Africa isn't just one identity, but there are many different people who are all unique."

When asked what the biggest lesson she learnt was, she said: "It's easy to travel and to know a place, but it's the people that make the experience. Going to a place and getting to know the people is the best experience that one can have."

Building Volunteers: Gerolamo and Federico



Gerolamo and Federico at the Building Project



Federico plays with a child from the crèche.

Federico Maienza (16-years-old) and Gerolamo Grandi (18-years-old) from Italy formed a great friendship when they came to volunteer with Projects Abroad in Cape Town.

The two building volunteers wanted to visit a new place while doing something good for others. Gerolamo was eager to gain a different perspective on life and thought that Cape Town would be the best place for him to experience something new. "I didn't want to come as a tourist, but as a member of the community," he said. When they both started their work at the Building Project that is based in a township called Lavender Hill, the two boys didn't realise the amount of work building required. This was where Federico learnt about the building process and how to use the different building tools.

Their days at the building site were made up of different tasks like mixing cement, and creating foundations for the walls and building the structure. They however, in their free-time, were always in the company of the young children of the crèche that is also based on the building site. The children were always a nice way for the volunteers to relax and recharge during a hard day's work.

Federico admits that the amount of work that they did at the project was hard and got very exhausting, but it was the end result that he always kept in mind whenever he felt discouraged. "It's really nice to see how your hard work pays off in the end. Knowing that all the time that I spent there will help the project to provide a safe place for someone to stay in, always kept me going."

The work that they did at their project has also helped them grow and mature as adults as they were presented with all kinds of responsibilities which were far more than what they were used to at home. They both believe that it is important for people to go out of their own country and see the world. The different experience has taught them a lot, even though it was difficult for them at first. Everyone that they met made them feel at home and now they consider Cape Town to be a home for them too.

Travelling and getting around the city was a bit of a shocker for Gerolamo who was surprised to find that most people use mini-buses to travel from one place to the next. "I liked how Cape Town people were living their life in the city; I was very impressed by how people were moving with these minibuses which from my point of view were crazy things!"

The two boys quickly came to appreciate the various forms of transport and were eventually comfortable enough to even try it out for themselves.

Building Project Manager, Deen Singh, appreciates the hard work and efforts that the boys put into their project. "Federico was an absolutely loving volunteer whom the children loved; he also did a lot of building with an overall good attitude. Gerolamo was also just as dedicated and was especially loved by the children whom he played with a lot." Deen also mentioned that he was looking forward to the boys returning to the project as they had promised that this was one of their many visits to come.

The two Italian students, who come from a completely different world of living, found that volunteering in Cape Town opened them up to new people and experiences that will contribute to their growth into adulthood.

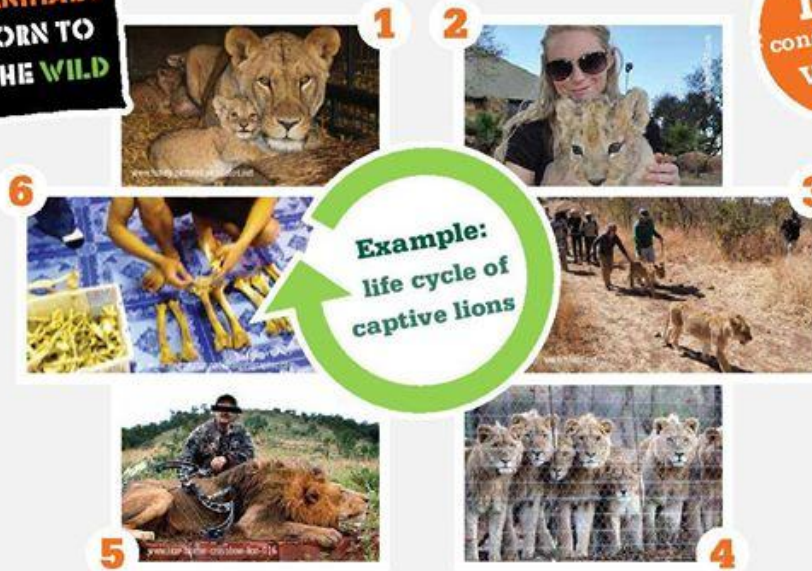
The Truth About Petting Zoo's

NO TO PETTING WILD ANIMALS

Since 2008 the number of farmed lions has risen by 250%. A major cause of this is tourism. These farms are billed as 'conservation projects' where you can pet lions. Don't fool yourself, captive wild animals never return to the wild. First you pet them, then they shoot them, all in the name of MONEY.

**WILD ANIMALS
ARE BORN TO
BE IN THE WILD**

**NO
conservation
value**



1. Birth

- Born in factory farming conditions
- Taken shortly after birth, causing stress & forcing the female to breed again immediately.

2. Cub Handling

- Animal can never go back to a natural life in the wild
- Often beaten and drugged to be submissive so that they are safe to handle!

3. Walking With Young Lions

- Only a pleasure for the guest

4. Growing Up

- Once too big to walk with tourists, they are kept in cages to grow up until they are big enough to be sold to the hunting industry
- Live in sub-standard, miserable conditions without regard for animals welfare

5. Death, The Canned Hunt

- Animal dies a cruel death in order to safeguard the trophy
- No pride in torturing and killing for fun
- It is only about money

6. Bone Trade

- Bones are sold on the Asian market
- No medicinal value
- Profitable business which will stimulate an increase in wild lions being poached

**KEEP WILD ANIMALS
IN THE WILD**

DO NOT SUPPORT: Wild animal petting: lion, leopard, tiger, cheetah, elephant, primates, etc. • Elephant back safari • Circus • Dolphinarium, aquatic show • Performing animals
YOUR SUPPORT WILL PROLONG THEIR MISERY & SIGN THEIR DEATH WARRANT

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Conservation Project
Botswana

in partnership with



EMERGENCY RELIEF DONATIONS



Our volunteers from the Where Rainbows Meet Project would like to ask for your donations towards a community member who has had areas of her home burnt in a fire outbreak. This has resulted in the loss of some of her and her brother's clothing items and utensils. The fire has also damaged the roof and walls of their home.

We would like to call out for any donations of cash (refurbishing damaged areas), old clothes and kitchen utensils, in order to help them to recover and get back on their feet.



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If you are interested in helping the family in any way, please kindly drop off any donations to our Operations office, or contact us for further details.



Editor's Note

With Literacy Day coming up, I couldn't help but begin to think of the many ways that the lack of proper education can affect one's future. The current state of education in our country is not on par with other developing countries. Poverty is one the many reasons that our education system fails to achieve its purpose, which is to provide every child in the country with quality basic education.

Statistics South Africa reported in 2012 that in the Western Cape only 0.2% of persons aged five years and older had received literary classes in their schooling. This more than anything else draws to my attention at the level of education that children are receiving, and how this will ultimately hinder their future studies.



Kay Kekana, Communications Officer

With this as a background, I appreciate the kind of work that our volunteers at our Teaching Project do, as they introduce different ways of teaching and educating learners in order to get them up to date in their syllabus. This is one of the many ways that we as individuals can help protect the futures of our young ones. You can also contribute to this by donating books to your school or library.

Our Surfing Project also did their bit for their community by having a soup kitchen in the Muizenberg beach area. As it was the homeless people who were the most affected by the recent cold front that hit our shores, it was great to see our volunteers eager to help others during this time. Our volunteers walked around the area serving soup, sandwiches and apples to those in the community. It was through this, that I witnessed how anyone and everyone can do something good for others. Regardless of what you have to offer, a single act of kindness goes a long way and is always appreciated.

Thank you to the volunteers from the Surfing, Human Rights and Journalism Projects that came out in the cold weather. Let's continuously spread LOVE, whichever way we can.

