

Projecto Oceano Monthly Report – June 2013

Following the craziness and fun that was Dia da Criança on June 1st, we had a brief respite and then it was back to running around the island helping with various events for the Feira do Oceano that Patrick, a Peace Corps volunteer, was organizing for the weekend of June 7th-9th. As Projecto Oceano, we took responsibility for organising the *Ler e Aprender* sessions (“Read and Learn”) as well as an *Exibição da Fotografia do Oceano* (Ocean Photography Exhibit).

During the *Ler e Aprender* sessions, some of our members and other volunteer students read various ocean-themed books from our library and provided general ocean education to the kids who came to read (things such as what are different sea animals, how to be responsible towards the ocean and why to not throw trash in it, etc.). It was a nice experience and a great way to showcase both our books and our students, as well as do a little outreach!



The Ocean Photography exhibit was also rather nice, with about 10 ocean-themed photos from various members, which we spent several hours framing with cardboard and pretty *capulanas* and then hung up with name tags and a sign on the walls of Ancora d'Ouro, a café on the island. The exhibit stayed up through the weekend and I received many compliments from friends, strangers, etc. who were all very impressed with our member's photographs. In fact, many people even said that they would have purchased some of the photos had they been on sale! It was a great bonding experience for the members and a really nice way to show off their skills and the work of the Project.



Other fun occurrences in the Project this month included a visit from my sister, Caitlin, and my cousin Molly. Caitlin, who is in medical school, brought with her a stethoscope and a blood pressure cuff and we had a demonstration and small lesson from her on how to use each and why they are important, including a little introduction about how the heart functions and pumps blood through your body, etc. The members each got a chance to hear each other's hearts (or their own hearts) and also to take each other's blood pressures. It was nice to get a hands-on presentation and for the members, especially the ones interested in medicine, to learn a little more about these medical tools and why they are important. All the members were so interested in this presentation that we all kept commenting on how it was such a shame to only get the one lesson, highlighting a great need in the project for more visitors with interesting skills to share!



June was otherwise a very busy and happy month for us in the Project. As what often happens when there is much activity, the month flew by and none of us can believe that it is already July. The Members are gearing up for their exams next week and then school holidays, during which some of them will travel and others will stay. They continue to remain focused and dedicated to the Project, participating in and teaching various classes and debates. In fact, just this week they were so engaged in their debate that when the power in the Project went out due to my own forgetfulness in re-filling the pre-paid electricity box, rather than stop the discussion and continue another night, they preferred to pull all the chairs outside and sit in the street under the light from the street lamp to continue debating. They are a very resourceful, interesting, engaging and fun group and as always I enjoy very much getting to know and spend time with them!