

*Friends of  
Ecuador Schools.com*



[Back to FES Homepage](#)

## Reflections & Opportunities

By Nancy Wesorick

As the New Year begins it is time to reflect on what has been accomplished this last year. Friends of Ecuador Schools, Inc has been able to provide school materials to over 30 schools.



*Students at Puni Boacno with supplies*

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Reflections & Opportunities	1
Celebrations	1
Delivering Supplies	2
An Amazing People	3
Thank You	3

Soon we will be opening a library at Chichico Rumi. Children and adults have little access to reading material. Most have never even owned a book. The indigenous culture is mostly verbal. Their language, Quichua (Kichwa), was not even a written language until relatively recently in their history. So we hope to give them an opportunity to discover the world of reading.

## Celebrations

In the last few weeks we have visited many schools and have been treated to many celebrations by the communities including dancing, singing and traditional foods. Ecuadorians especially the indigenous peoples of the Oriente (the east) love to celebrate, usually with dance, song and sometimes much drinking.

The first large celebration was at the community of Sindy where 17 schools gathered to have the government disperse uniforms to all 17 schools, 730 students. The uniforms included dress pants and shirts for the boys and a skirt and top for the girls, sweat shorts and t-shirt and one item of

traditional dress for programs. The children were very well mannered and were able to entertain themselves as they had to wait for two hours for the uniforms to arrive by truck. Jim and I were honored guests along with the Director of Bilingual Education for the program. Each school did traditional dances or sang. No drinking at this school event!



*Sonia Mamallacta, teacher, with students at Centro Shiauanao*

## Delivering Supplies

In December we traveled to 8 schools in three days. The first day was to 4 schools which are southeast further into the rainforest. New this year there was a road so we did not have to walk 4 hours to get there! Three of the schools, Venecia, Los Quijos, and 10 de Mayo were accessed by road which makes it easy to deliver. The last school, Tres de Noviembre, was located across the Puni River and inaccessible from the road. Luckily we found someone who knew the teachers and volunteered to walk across the river and have the teachers come retrieve the materials.

The second day was a trip to Centro Shiguango. This community has really shown great appreciation for FES donations. When we visit they give us a program by the children, many laughs (they are full of fun!), and lots of food. The children and parents make gifts for us and love to have their pictures taken. It makes for a very fun day! Centro Shiguango received many of the clothes and stuffed toys donated by many of you. They loved receiving the clothes as most of them only have one set of clothes. So the addition of more was greeted with huge smiles and appreciation. One of the funniest parts of our visit was each man in the community was allowed to pick one stuffed animal and one item of clothing (they determined this was the most "fair way" distribute the clothing). The men seems to like to



*Centro Shiguango president with stuffed toy*

**DONATE  
NOW**

*Secure donation  
through Network  
for Good*

*Mother at Centro  
Shiguango selecting  
clothes*



*Students & Teacher  
crossing river at Tres  
de Noviembre*

*Find out more on  
the FES website at  
[www.friendsofecuadorschools.com](http://www.friendsofecuadorschools.com)*

most bright colored (neon orange was very popular) and softest toys and then they proceeded to cuddle it before giving the animal to their child.

The third day was off to the south to the Arajuno River and the schools there. First stop was Rumiyacu. Thank goodness this year another new road to avoid a long hike. In the past Jim had hiked for 7 hours round trip to deliver to this school. Those of you that know me understand why I never made the trek! The next school Puni Bocano has 60 students and they are always thrilled to see us with supplies. Until the road was open the communities only access to the nearest town was a 40 minute canoe ride plus an hour more on the bus. The new road has now increased their access to supplies by road. (And we worry about driving across town to go to the store!) After our visit to Puni Bocano we had to hire a canoe to visit Santa Barbara and El Mirador, both very small schools of less than 15 students down river. Canoe is the only way to get there.





*Boys with toys at Centro Shiguango*

## An Amazing People

What was most noticeable for Jim and I is how much harder it is to survive at the small riverside communities. The diet is yucca, plantain and some rice. Access to clean water and more variety of foods is difficult to get. As we were returning to Puni, a young couple with a small baby came with us in the canoe. I thought they would travel to Puni and then walk the road to get the bus. But no, they hop out of the canoe by a cliff and scampered up it like they were mountain goats. This included the mother who had the baby in a cloth sling used to keep babies with them at all times. How would you like to climb a cliff every time you needed supplies or wanted a Coke? The people and children never cease to amaze me how they survive in relatively good humor. I realize how spoiled we are with all our things.



*Traveling on Rio Arajuno to schools*

## Thank You

All the work of FES is made possible through the generosity of our donors. Jim and I would like to thank all of you who donated to help the children of Ecuador. A special thanks to the schools in the ST. Vrain Valley School District in Longmont who have done fundraisers for us. Way to go Altona Middle School National Junior Honor Society, the 6<sup>th</sup> grade class at Heritage Middle School, Karen Clancy-Cribby's travel group at Westview Middle School, and Coal Ridge Middle School. We thank you for your willingness to help others and you need to know that you have made a difference in the lives of many children and their families in Ecuador.

Jim and I love to hear from you so let us know how you are!

*Nancy and Jim*



*Jim & Nancy setting up table to distribute clothes- Centro Shiguango*