

*Le*

# *Saint-Louisien*

*Projects Abroad Senegal Newsletter*



## Letter from the Editor

Hi Everyone!

Our 2012 has gotten off to a great start, with lots of new arrivals! Our office is now bustling with lots of new faces! It's nice to meet these enthusiastic volunteers from all over the world! We've had some changes, new babies and marriages, and the start of our 2012 campaign too! Read all about it below!

A huge thanks to everyone who contributed to the newsletter this month! Special thanks go to:

- Simon Playford-Wall for his contribution about his Christmas day in Senegal!
- Lara Pedulla for her contribution to our 2012 campaign!
- Daniel Bourdain for the photo of Jamilatou Baldé, his new host sister!
- Felix Heller for her photo of the month submission!



I'd like to invite you to find our Official Facebook Group by searching *Projects Abroad Senegal – The Official Group*. Also if you would like, add me as a friend so we can be in touch before, during and after your trip to Senegal! My Facebook name is Erica Projects-Abroad. Or if you are a Twitter fan, you can also follow the latest news here; our name is *Proj\_AbroadSN*.

Best wishes from Senegal!

**Erica Frerking**  
**Social Manager**



# Volunteer Activities

## Volunteer Story

English Volunteer **Simon Playford-Wall** writes about his Christmas in Senegal!

### *Christmas in Senegal*

Every Christmas Day, my family and I go for a long dog walk in-between opening our stockings and having lunch. As I live in England, these walks are always cold, often wet and never much fun (at least compared to the rest of the day's activities). So it was quite fitting that on Christmas Day here in Saint-Louis, myself and three other volunteers decided to go for a walk. Unfortunately we didn't have a Christmas dinner to work up an appetite for, only Thieboudienne.

We decided to walk north from Langue de Barbarie along the Atlantic coast, in the hope of finding a remote beach where we could relax and sunbathe. This walk was very different to my traditional Christmas Day stroll. It was blisteringly hot and with every laboured stride along the sand the sea became more and more inviting. We stopped at a group of trees situated just after the Mauritanian border to sit in the shade and have some water. I looked up at the sky and saw a cloud shaped like a Christmas tree which gave me an idea; we stopped further along the beach and drew our very own giant tree in the sand. Luckily, I was accompanied by the angelic Johnny, another volunteer, who took his place at the top of the tree to complete the perfect festive picture.

It was starting to feel more like Christmas, but something didn't feel quite right – I was on a walk, it was Christmas day, I'd decorated a tree (albeit with a Scottish boy) but I wasn't soaked through to the bone by the English rain! I soon corrected this abnormal feeling by running into the clear blue Atlantic Ocean. However, it's safe to say that swimming off the Mauritanian coast in 30 degree heat beats trudging around the sodden south-east English countryside. As I got out of the sea, the sun was hiding behind a cloud, a strong coastal breeze swept past and I shivered. I was wet, on a walk and for a second I was cold, it felt just like Christmas.

After our swim in the sea, we decided it was time to start heading back towards Senegal before we reached the village in the distance where there



would no doubt be a man with an AK-47 demanding to see our passports. By this stage, 2 hours of walking on the sand had taken its toll on our calves, so we opted to walk back on the harder ground alongside the Senegal River. We had hoped that on the journey back we would spot an array of African wildlife along the riverbanks, maybe a hippo or something else exotic. Unfortunately, we only saw crabs and herons on this occasion; maybe the hippos take Christmas off.

That evening I spoke to my family on Skype, they told me about their day, of the presents, the food and of the cold and wet walk. I may not have had any presents or a Christmas Dinner, but for the first time in my life I had enjoyed my walk on Christmas Day. I am sure that next year when I hear the squelching of my wellington boots as I plod through fields and hopelessly clamber over styles; I will wish that I was back in sunny Senegal.

## Donation

### *Lara Pedulla Donates to our 2012 Campaign*

Past Italian volunteer Lara Pedulla, who worked at one of our Talibé centers last January, returned to Senegal this year with lots of goodies in tow:



two bags filled with toothbrushes, toothpaste and mouthwash. Oral hygiene workshops followed the donation, as the Talibé children at both centers were given all the tools necessary to learn about and

improve their oral health.

This donation falls right in step with the campaign that will start this month in our Talibé centers. Read about the campaign under the Project Update section!



## Events

### Christmas Eve

The volunteers got together on Christmas eve, December 24th, to celebrate the holiday together! In the morning they gathered at Keur Dada, a beautiful hotel at the north end of the city right on the river where they had a delicious and filling breakfast! Some decided to stay and spend the sunny day there at the pool!



In the evening we all met on the boat Bou el Mogdad where we exchanged our Secret Santa gifts to the music of a Christmasy Jazz concert that was taking place! The boat was decorated with Christmas lights and it was beautiful to see the Faidherbe bridge light up in the



background!

Secret Santa was a success--volunteers received Africa pants, bags, perfume, and Fanny's gift was brought from Switzerland by a new volunteer: a bell and Swiss chocolate! We were all happy about the chocolate and Fanny's adoption of Senegalese terenga (hospitality aka sharing!!)



After the concert was finished, we moved onto La Maison Rose for dinner! It was nice to be together and though there might have been no snow or Christmas tree, there was that festive, loving, sharing Christmas spirit!



# Project Update

## 2012 Campaign

### *Campaign in Senegal*

Starting this month in both of our Talibé centers, we have put a campaign in place which aims to do four main things:

- 1: Build three washrooms in three Daraas.
- 2: Provide Talibé children with soap, toothpaste, and toothbrushes, and supervise their usage on a daily basis.
- 3: Teach the children about cleanliness, hygiene and health, as well as the modern contemporary world.
- 4: Act as facilitators when Talibé children go back to their home villages.

Volunteers arriving this month and after will have the chance to participate in this wonderful initiative!

# Host Family Update

## *Baby!*

### *One of our Host Families just had a Baby!*

Aissatou Baldé has been a host mother with us for over a year, and her family just grew one person larger with the addition of a little girl, born on Thursday, December 29<sup>th</sup>! A week later, on January 5<sup>th</sup>, the baptism was held where the baby was given her name: Jamilatou!



← Jamilatou right after her birth

Jamilatou with her mother → at the end of January



# Staff Update

## Marriage

### *A Christmas Wedding*

Our Assistant Director, Fina Senghor had different Christmas plans this year. She decided to get MARRIED!! The religious wedding at the mosque took place around 5pm, which was followed by the reception where Fina's friends and some of her family gathered to celebrate by giving presents, taking photos, and, most importantly, sharing stories and sentiments about Fina. It was a really magical night! Definitely a Christmas to remember!



## Culture

### *Fanal Festival*

#### *St Louis Celebrates New Year's Eve*

Every year, Saint Louis rings in the New Year reminiscent of the 18<sup>th</sup> Century, with the Fanal festival. During that time period, métisse woman known as Signares, would dress up and go to midnight mass, their paths lit by lanterns carried by their servants. To commemorate this history of Saint Louis, the city continues to reenact this tradition. The festival debuts every December 31<sup>st</sup> at the stroke of midnight.

Legend says that the city of Saint Louis was founded by Mame Coumba Bang, a mermaid who lives in the river, and this year's performance began with



her, rising out of a shell and giving birth to the different ethnic groups of Senegal—Wolof, Serer and Pulaar. The performance continued with lots of dance, as the history of Saint Louis unfolded before our eyes. Even Mr. Faidherbe, the first governor of the city, was represented and made a short appearance, dancing among the Signares.

After the lively performance, a giant float in the shape of a boat was rolled out, escorted by these beautifully dressed Signares. Every year a float is constructed, filled with lights and paraded through the streets of the city. This year's fanal was cheerful and exciting, and was only enhanced by the impromptu fireworks that decorated the sky, set off by eager spectators. Happy New Year from all of us here in Senegal!



## Who's Here in January?

January has twenty-two new volunteers coming, bringing the number of volunteers here during this month to thirty-seven!



-  American, 6
-  Canadian, 2
-  Italian, 1
-  French, 7
-  Norwegian, 1
-  English, 9
-  German, 3
-  Australian, 2
-  Dutch, 1
-  Danish, 1
-  Swiss, 4



# Learn Wolof

## Tenses: Present, Past and Future

Spoken by most of the population in Senegal, knowing a bit of Wolof can go a long way!

|   |   |                           |   |   |   |
|---|---|---------------------------|---|---|---|
| <u>Present Tense</u><br>Mangui...<br>Yangui...<br>Mingui...<br>Nungui...<br>Yeena gui...<br>Nungui... | + | <u>Verb</u><br><br>...dem | = | <u>Present Tense</u><br>Mangui dem<br>Yangui dem<br>Mingui dem<br>Nungui dem<br>Yeena gui dem<br>Nungui dem | <u>Present Tense</u><br>I'm going<br>You're going<br>(S)He's going<br>We're going<br>You (all) are going<br>They're going |
|---|---|---------------------------|---|---|---|

|                           |   |  |   |  |  |
|---------------------------|---|--|---|--|--|
| <u>Verb</u><br><br>...dem | + | <u>Past Tense</u><br>...naa<br>...nga<br>...na<br>...nanu<br>...ngeen<br>...nanu | = | <u>Past Tense</u><br>Dem naa<br>Dem nga<br>Dem na<br>Dem nanu<br>Dem ngeen<br>Dem nanu | <u>Past Tense</u><br>I've gone<br>You've gone<br>(S)He's gone<br>We've gone<br>You've (all) gone<br>They've gone |
|---------------------------|---|--|---|--|--|

|   |   |                           |   |   |   |
|---|---|---------------------------|---|---|---|
| <u>Future Tense</u><br>Dinaa...<br>Dinga...<br>Dina...<br>Dinanu...<br>Dingen...<br>Dinanu... | + | <u>Verb</u><br><br>...dem | = | <u>Future Tense</u><br>Dinaa dem<br>Dinga dem<br>Dina dem<br>Dinanu dem<br>Dingen dem<br>Dinanu dem | <u>Future Tense</u><br>I'll go<br>You'll go<br>(S)He'll go<br>We'll go<br>You'll (all) go<br>They'll go |
|---|---|---------------------------|---|---|---|



# Recipe of the Month

## Moukhamsa

The quick and easy, sweet and creamy dinner!

Ingredients:

One package of pasta, usually a small one

Some flour

Sugar

Powdered Milk

Orange essence to taste

To prepare:

Boil pasta in a little water.

Mix enough flour and water to get a cake batter consistency.

When the water with the pasta is almost completely evaporated, add the flour and water mixture and allow to boil for a couple of minutes.

Remove pasta from pot and put into a large bowl.

Add the sugar, powdered milk and orange essence all to taste!



## Stay In Touch With Us!



Projects Abroad Senegal – The Official Group

<http://www.facebook.com/groups/projectsabroad.senegal>



Projects Abroad Blog – Senegal

[http://www.mytripblog.org/mod/blog/group\\_blogs.php?gl=true&group\\_guid=2985](http://www.mytripblog.org/mod/blog/group_blogs.php?gl=true&group_guid=2985)



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## Picture of the Month



**This photo was taken by Felix Heller in Darou, a neighborhood in St Louis.**

Want to contribute in our newsletter?

Each month we will be featuring a photo from Senegal in the newsletter, elected by our Senegal Office Staff. If you are a former volunteer your photos are also welcome. Show off your best shots!!

Send your pictures to:  
[ericafreerking@projects-abroad.org](mailto:ericafreerking@projects-abroad.org)

