

Ubuntu



Photo of Nelson Mandela from his prison cell on Robben Island, read (page 4)

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Thank you to volunteers for their generous donations

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New Staff Update

We would like to extend a warm welcome to Alexandre Rochard, our new member of staff! Alexandre will be taking over the Desk Officer position.



Alex, is born and raised in Senegal, West Africa. He has traveled across the world and has lived in Florida, USA for some time. He enjoys the ocean, surfing, traveling, and speaking different languages.

He speaks French, German, English fluently. Coming from a European background he has also spent much time in Europe. Alex has studied international business and political science!



My name is Aaron Baxter and I have recently been employed as a Project Manager for Projects Abroad. I am originally from the UK and moved to South Africa in 2003.



I completed a degree in Marketing and Public Relations and did my Honors in Project Management. I am extremely energetic, enthusiastic and highly ethical individual. I am a people's person by nature, and count my strong creative and leadership ability as my biggest strengths.

It has been an honour to join the team at Projects Abroad and be part of an organisation like this and I'm looking forward to meeting all the staff, new volunteers.

Aaron



Dr. Peter Slowe pays a visit to the mother city

This month the staff was inspired and graced by the visit of Dr Peter Slowe, founder and director of Projects Abroad. His visit to Cape Town was his first to our Projects Abroad Office in South Africa. Dr Slowe came to southern Africa to check on the progress of our projects, with the relentless world cup quickly on its way. He graced us with his wisdom and impressive good ideas for the road ahead. Thanks Dr. Slowe, it was a pleasure for all of us!!! Until next time!



A LONG WALK TO FREEDOM

20 years since President Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela walked out of prison



Prisoner number :

46664



20 years after the release of Nelson Mandela. Also known as Madiba to the people of South Africa. We celebrated today the power of freedom, the power to let good rise over evil. A special day of celebration for the man that was able to bring freedom back to the Republic Of South Africa. The spirit of Ubuntu!

" I stand before you not as a prophet but as a humble servant of you, the people" - Nelson Mandela



The month of LOVE or is it. . . ?

Valentine's day at Kirstenbosch : There is undoubtedly a growing-up anti-valentine's day-attitude amongst many people all over the world: some just feel depressed being single on Valentine's day while others pretend that such festivities are just commercial days that only benefit shopkeepers. However, there is still a big majority of people who are willing to enjoy this romantic day, and amongst these people are the women of Saint Anne's shelter, in Cape town.

Some volunteers from the Projects Abroad Human Rights Office, who are used to doing weekly workshops with the women of Saint Anne's, came up with the great idea of organising a special event for them on Valentine's Day. Their Valentine's Day occurred on Friday, 12th February, at Kirstenbosch botanical garden, and was quite a success!

After a one-hour hike, the eight women from the shelter and four volunteers from the office arrived at the Botanical Gardens. Three male volunteers had prepared food and gifts, and were waiting for the women to sit on the grass, relax and just enjoy their day-as princesses. The women were actually not really keen on taking such a long walk on this relaxing and warm day, but their reluctance about the morning hike might have contributed much more than expected to the success of the day. They were surprised when they arrived in the Garden, their smiles were so sincere and their look full of a shy and delicious excitement; they looked like children not expecting any present for Christmas and randomly coming across a huge stack of toys under the Christmas tree. I could not withhold myself from smiling, watching them in silence, trying to guess what could cross their minds at that very moment and thinking about how sometimes simple things can make one really happy, even just for a day

The women first received their gifts: a bag filled up with many different things that are appreciated by any woman, of any age, in any time: magazines, body care products, make-up, chocolates ... and a big wooden spoon that had been given by the media 24 association and which pulled the trigger to amused comments and laughs.

"Oh! A spoon! Wow! For my kitchen!" ironies one of the more talkative and less shy woman of the group. General laugh. "...or to beat the children!" adds another one, to whom the PAHRO Social Justice Supervisor quickly answered "Oh no! Please no.", making sure this was a joke and that we were not contributing to parental mis-behaviour by trying to please a few women on Valentine's Day!

One of the ladies made a small speech to thank us on the behalf of the whole group, and the day went on.

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Valentines adventure continued

....The volunteers had brought a delicious lunch for the women, composed of a starter, a main course and desert. Melon, byriani rice, pasta salad and chocolate cake as well as different drinks were served with care and professionalism by three boys from the office. The women were quite impressed. "How good does it feel to be here, thinking about nothing, just relaxing, eating and served by men!" We all started to laugh, and they started to eat and chat loudly, on a small blanket on the grass, close to a pond. There were also some short moments of complete silence, where each one of them would keep looking at an invisible point so intensively, taken away in her thought, smiling. A time when we could all feel a deep well-being feeling in the air that fulfilled each one of us. "I've been living here for more than ten years, and I never thought of coming here. It is such a wonderful place." Said one of the women, staring at the ducks swimming on the pond. They all agreed in silence. And we all started to chat, laugh, eat again.

After an hour or so, a woman running her own charity association brought other gifts so the Saint Anne's women...and a lot of tears.

She sit amongst all of them, and started a long speech about being optimistic in life, despite how difficult and cruel it can be. She asked the women their background, what had brought them to Saint Anne's, and thus reminded them of things they were struggling to forget during this day. Their day.

"Just look at yourself in the mirror in the morning, you are Miss Universe. You are beautiful. You can achieve anything." The noise of the cutlery stopped. The faces changed.

After reminding the ladies they had a very unfortunate life but that they could still stand for Miss Universe next year, the women gave out the presents, and left.

A few minutes later, we could hear nothing but the loud sobs of a woman, bursting into tears in another's arms. The reminiscence of her past –and even present- life was too much to handle on a day full of hope and ingenuousness. The eyes of all the women were filled up with tears, and they silently tried to hide it from us, clinging on to their dignity as to a last treasure.

I was very upset about all this. A feeling of unfairness overwhelmed me as I watched the "charitable woman" walking away, quite proud of her intervention, her gesture and her generosity. I could picture her going back to her so fantastically normal life, happy about herself, not even noticing she had ruin our work and raise sadness in the women's heart. I could picture her. We all could, as we remained awkwardly sitting next to sobbing women that we had tried to make smile.

"It was a special day for us. We really wanted to escape from our every-day life, from our past, our hurtful memories. I it such a pity." Confesses Carmen, 20 year old, from Saint Anne's shelter. "But it was such a wonderful day", she adds.

And it was indeed. A great success. "Thank you for making me feel special". They left the garden with their big pink bags full of presents, their roses and incredibly big smiles on their faces.

With all the concern, the hope and the love, I wish you a happy Valentine's Day, Ladies.

Marie-Laure Bonifassi

Recipe Of The Month

' Bobotie '

This quintessential Cape Malay dish—lightly curried beef or lamb mince topped with an egg custard—is usually served with turmeric-flavored rice and a dab of fruit chutney.

Ingredients:

- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 2 onions, peeled and sliced
- 2 1/4 pounds minced beef or lamb
- 1 thick slice of white bread
- 1 cup milk
- 1 tablespoon curry powder
- 1 1/2 tablespoons sugar
- 2 teaspoons salt
- Freshly ground pepper (about 1/2 teaspoon)
- 3/4 teaspoon turmeric
- 1 1/2 tablespoons malt vinegar
- 1/2 cup seedless raisins
- 2 tablespoons fruit chutney
- 2 bay or fresh lemon leaves
- 2 medium eggs



Directions:

Preheat oven to 350°F (176°C). Heat oil in pan and sauté onions over medium heat until transparent. Add minced meat and cook until lightly browned and crumbly.

Soak bread in half the milk, squeeze out the excess liquid, and mash with a fork. Pour the squeezed-out milk back into the remaining milk and set aside. Add the mashed bread, curry powder, sugar, salt, pepper, turmeric, vinegar, raisins, and chutney to fried meat and onions and mix. Spoon mixture into a greased baking dish, and place bay or lemon leaves on top. Bake in oven for 50-60 minutes.

Beat eggs with milk and pour over the mixture approximately 25-30 minutes before the end of baking time.

Servings: **Serves six**



Socials for February

Wed 03/02

- Drinks and Food at 'Banana Jams' in Kenilworth

Wed 10/02

- Laserquest, Stadium On Main, Claremont

Mon 15/02

- Oblivion Bar, " Pub Quiz" + Food, Drinks, and Games

Tues 23/02

- Movie boogie nights @ the rooftop of Daddy Longlegs in Longstreet

