



Spring Update –April 2009–

**Guatemala Friends Scholarship/Loan Program (Progresa)**

email: [progresas3@gmail.com](mailto:progresas3@gmail.com) website: [www.guatemalafriends.org](http://www.guatemalafriends.org)

## VISITORS IN PARRAMOS

*By Martha Dugan*

Parramos is usually a quiet little town but we have been lucky to have several different visitors in the past month. First, Rolene Walker, the San Francisco Quaker who is walking from California to Chile in order to bring attention to the environment, spent several nights living at our office while she and her walking companion, Darcy Stanley walked to Guatemala City. Later she and Darcy took two days off from their walking and teaching schedule in order to spend some time with Martha in Antigua and meet for worship with Guatemala Friends Meeting. To learn more about Rolene's calling go to her website [www.walkwithearth.org](http://www.walkwithearth.org). Darcy also has a website which is linked to the main site.

Less than a week later, Saskia Schuitemaker arrived from New Zealand. Saskia is a Dutch born New Zealand Quaker who used to live in Guatemala during the 1980s. She has received funding from several sources including her yearly meeting which will allow her to work with us as a volunteer for the next six months. Her background in community psychology is a perfect fit for helping us to further develop the community service projects which our students perform. In order to get the ball rolling, she is helping us to focus this year's student conference on community service. We hope to include one or more trainers along with several student and non-student speakers who are already involved in community service. We are hoping that our speakers will inform and inspire the rest of the group with examples of the types of community projects they could take part in.



Rolene, Darcy and Martha at our office.

During the final week in February we held our annual tour. The group was small but they had a wonderful time and were deeply moved by their meetings with current and past students. One current student, Alejandro Chan, who is studying Political Science left an especially favorable impression with the way he is using the marimba to bring young people together in his community. One tour participant called him "the Obama of Guatemala".



Participants of our 2009 tour during the boat trip in Lake Atitlan.

## TEACHING ENGLISH TOUR IS A GO

*By Martha Dugan*

I am thrilled to announce that the first ever Progresa Work Tour will take place this coming December 10<sup>th</sup> thru the 18<sup>th</sup> 2009. The tour participants will be working one on one with Progresa students who want to learn English. Both the volunteers and the students will be housed for the week at the Belen Convent in Antigua. Most of the rooms in this wonderful old convent are located around an historic patio garden. In addition the convent grounds include a large and serene garden with many nooks and crannies where the volunteers and their students will be able to find privacy for their lessons.

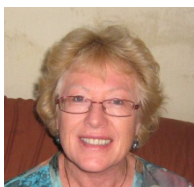
This location is superior to the retreat center I mentioned last year for several reasons. First of all we will be able to offer double rooms instead of dormitory rooms. For a small extra fee we may even be able to offer single rooms. Secondly the convent's location in beautiful Antigua means that we will be able to arrange a variety of short excursions for you and your student to local markets, monuments, churches and museums. Finally the convent serves delicious family style meals.

I know because for many years the Guatemala Friends Meeting used the convent for our annual retreat.

The price of the TEACHING ENGLISH TOUR will be exactly the same as the price of our other tour, only \$800 for eight nights lodging and all meals plus an additional \$50 which will go directly to the scholarship fund to support a student in 2010. Your fees will cover not only your expenses but those of the student you work with. If you arrive in Guatemala just before the work tour and/or leave immediately afterwards we will also pay for your airport pick up to and from Antigua. If you plan to come earlier or stay later we will be happy to help you arrange to attend language school, book a hotel or visit other parts of the country.

Don't feel you have to speak Spanish or have experience teaching English in order to participate. In response to my first article written last Spring I heard from several Friends who not only want to do this, **THEY ARE EXPERIENCED PROFESSIONALS** in the field of Teaching English as a Second Language. They are willing to volunteer their skills to help us put together a simple packet of beginning English exercises. All of our students will be beginners. Some will be able to read and write a little English but almost none will be able to speak it. What you will need is lots of good will and patience as students learn to speak by listening to you and repeating simple phrases again and again.

For this first work tour I envision limiting the group to no more than 10 to 15 volunteers and 10 to 15 students. I have already made a first down payment to the Convento Belen and I will need to pay them more before I leave in June. For that reason, it is essential that we receive your down payment of \$200. before May 15<sup>th</sup> of this year. Checks should be made out to Lester Lacelle at 29770 Sherwood Road, Willits, CA 95490. Please enclose a note with your address, e-mail, and phone number so that we can follow up. For more information about the tour e-mail Martha Dugan at [mardugan@earthlink.net](mailto:mardugan@earthlink.net).



### **GREETINGS FROM SASKIA**

*By Saskia Schuitemaker*

Warmest Greetings to you all - friends and supporters, and potential supporters of PROGRESA! I am delighted to be involved with the project and to be working with the team here in Parramos, Guatemala in a very "hands on" and meaningful way which uses some of my skills in community development.

My name is Saskia Schuitemaker. I lived in Guatemala for eight years from 1980 to 1988, during which time I attended my first meetings of Guatemala Friends with Tom and Trudy Hunt and Jean and Peter Wright. In 1988 I moved back to New Zealand with my two young children. My connection with Quakers strengthened so that in 1994 I became a member of Aotearoa New Zealand Yearly Meeting.

Now my children are adults and I am free of family responsibilities, so I am able to pursue the service work as a Peacebuilder and Community Psychologist that I feel spiritually called to do. I was thrilled to find that PROGRESA needed someone to further develop their Community Service Programme with students, and that my skills and experience matched their needs so that I am able to respond to this calling. Working here will enable me to give back to a country and its people that I have a strong connection with, and that I love. I am inspired by PROGRESA's achievements in terms of life changing outcomes for students and their families who are most in need. I hope that my contributing to the team here will assist PROGRESA to extend the reach of their benefits for students and their communities. The aim is to foster students' community development and leadership skills and to benefit their communities through their community service projects. I will be here for a minimum of six months.



Our administrative committee celebrating Saskia's birthday last March.

I have been supported financially by Aotearoa New Zealand Yearly Meeting through QPSANZ (Quaker Peace and Service) and by two Monthly Meetings including my own. QPSANZ has provided money for the Scholarship Programme since 1991 and has donated about \$14,000 U.S. Through my advocacy I also aim to strengthen funding support, so that PROGRESA continues to make such excellent use of money to greatly benefit those who need it most.

PROGRESA'S MISSION STATEMENT:

"To provide access to in-country educational and community development opportunities in order to bring choice into the lives of poor Guatemalans and enable them to participate in their country's growth and development"

## TWO NEW STUDENTS

By Miguel Costop



**Pascual Ramirez Morales** is a 24 year old student from a village of San Idelfonso Ixtahuacan, Huehuetenango. He is studying law and this year began his second year of at least six years of classes. (Plus additional time for internships and exams) In spite of his youth he already has a family of his own and a son which may explain his high level of maturity. He is the fourth child of a family of eight and is the only one who has managed to graduate from high school with a primary school teaching degree. He has a job as a primary school teacher and because of this he is practically the only one of his siblings who is helping to support his parents. Due to his example, another brother, who is also married has begun his studies to become a teacher and hopes to graduate this year.

Because he is one of only a few professionals in his aldea, Pascual collaborates with several different development groups in his community. Currently he is coordinator of the community's health commission and has instituted a community wide waste program which includes the installment of trash barrels, as well as a recycling and incineration program. He and his committee are also pressuring the Minister of Health to bring a nurse and composting toilets to the community. In addition he works with the Community Coordinating Council which is responsible for the major decisions made in his small rural village.

As a result of all this experience Pascual is very aware of the importance of education. As he himself expresses it in one of his letters: "This is a time of much self development and growth in responsibility for me...I feel very ready to study and know that I can succeed; my desire to do it is very strong." As in many other cases in spite of his having great potential, Pascual's economic situation has impeded his ability to

move forward in his development. Last year he decided to try studying at the university. Even though he satisfactorily passed his courses Pascual realized that he would not be able to continue alone. When he learned about our program, he decided to ask us for help and it was easy for us to accept him. We are confident that once more we are helping to develop a leader who can make a difference in his community.

**Elena Reanda Queju's** life has been very difficult but is also inspiring. She is 21 years old and comes from San Pedro La Laguna, Solola, on the shores of Lake Atitlan. Her mother was born in San Pedro and her father came from a small community on the south coast of Guatemala.



When Elena was only a year old her mother abandoned the family to live with another man. Her father was left with the responsibility of raising Elena and her two older sisters which he did working as a day laborer, a job which provided only the most basic necessities. The situation was especially difficult because the father didn't own any property and the house where they were living belonged to the mother's family. Eventually they had to leave and rent another house.

In spite of this the father did everything possible to help his daughters to complete primary school. The girls helped too by making and selling Guatemalan weavings. Still it was only possible to finish Primaria (primary school) and then the girls had to leave school in order to work in the fields and to continue making weavings. Sadly in 2006 the father died and the three daughters were left as orphans without even a place to live. In the end they were forced to go to Guatemala City to seek work as domestic servants, each girl having to fend for herself.

During this time Elena realized the importance of continuing her education and decided to take courses at night. Last year, at the age of 20, she succeeded in finishing Basico (middle school) which she managed to do on her own. Never the less she wanted to continue in Diversificado (high school) in order to improve her opportunities. The problem was that in order to study for a career she would have to leave work because most of the classes met during the day. Upon hearing about our program she applied, and even though she is not the best student we have had, her determination and struggle to get ahead convinced us that we should accept her.



Now she has begun her first year as a specialist in accounting and with the help of one of her sisters. Our program is helping her to fulfill one of her dreams that had seemed impossible. On graduating she hopes to find work that will allow her to help her sisters and others who, like herself have been left alone in the world struggling for survival.

## VISITS TO EX-STUDENTS

*By Meme Romero*

**Javier Lux** comes from Los Trigales, an aldea of the town of Cunen, which is located on the slopes of the Cuchumatanes, the highest mountains in Central America. The majority of the inhabitants of Cunen work in agriculture and unfortunately have had to depend on emigration to the coffee and sugar cane plantations of the Pacific Coast in order to survive.

Javier, who is now a teacher in Cunen, was a student in our program from 2001 to 2006. His family is very poor and after we visited them it was clear that without the help of Progreso he could not have continued studying. His father barely speaks Spanish but from what we could understand he is extremely proud of his son's success and grateful to us for helping him.

In order to get where he is, Javier has had to struggle and sacrifice. He has now succeeded in finishing all his course work for his legal degree and is working on his thesis. He has plans to take his legal exams in 2009. In our experience most of the students in law need years to finish all the requirements for graduation because of all the costs and complicated tasks they must fulfill after completing their course work. We are impressed with Javier's determination to finish it all this year and graduate in 2009.



Javier, on the right, with his father and two siblings.

Meanwhile, he is working for the Minister for Education as a Technical Coordinator and says that he is responsible for 300 teachers. According to him this has been a huge responsibility and a challenge but the salary is not very high. Still, he says, it has been an opportunity to identify with and work in his own community. When we met him, he was very enthusiastic about his work and optimistic about his plans for the future. Those plans include working in the court system and becoming the best lawyer in his village.

**Micaela Ernesta Tzaj Cotiy** is an ex-student from the town of Nahuala, one of the poorest towns in the Department of Solala. In 2005 she asked the program to help her study at the high school level because her family was unable to financially assist her in her dream of becoming a teacher. In 2007



she obtained her degree as a teacher but like almost all of our recent graduates had a hard time finding work. Her first job was as a poll taker for an organization called INCAP (a nutrition research program which has operated in Guatemala for many years) but that job lasted only one month. She later got the opportunity to work for PRONADE in a school named Patz'ij Balam Abaj, which is located near her home. (PRONADE is a special program for rural schools which gives power to the local community to hire and fire teachers but unfortunately it doesn't pay very well) Finally, she says, she is expecting to receive a position as a teacher for the Ministry of Education in 2009.

The reason I am writing her story is to congratulate her because she is an example of how in spite of many limitations, a poor person from the rural area can succeed in overcoming all of the obstacles and come out ahead. I personally share this joy with her because I got to know her very well during her years as a student and was able to see her growth and learn about her experiences. We also congratulate her for her great sense of responsibility and the way she has worked to repay her loan.

Thanks to our faithful donors who make all this possible! All contributions are made to:  
Redwood Forest Friends Meeting and are mailed to  
Guatemala Scholarship Program,  
PO Box 1831 Santa Rosa, CA 95402

## STUDENT ROSTER 2009

### SECONDARY LEVEL (41 students)

### UNIVERSITY LEVEL (68 students)

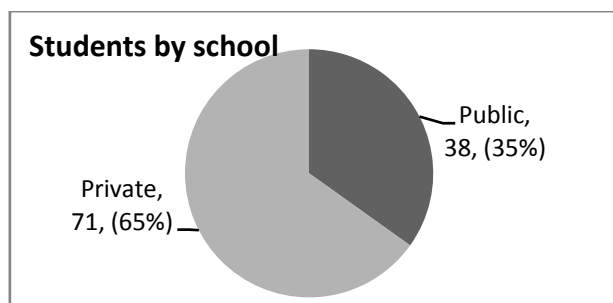
<i>Career / Names</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>Language</i>	<i>Career / Names</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>Language</i>
<b>Physical Education (3 years)</b>			<b>Political Sciences (6 years)</b>		
Juan Carlos Ujpán Juárez	18	Tz'utujil	Alejandro Ramiro Chan Saquic	24	K'iche'
<b>Nursing (Vocational 1 year)</b>			<b>Law (6 years)</b>		
Arturo Francisco Diego Gaspar	19	Q'anjob'al	Amilcar Arnulfo Lucas Morales	22	Mam
<b>Pre-primary Teaching (3 years)</b>			Angelico Leonel Otzoy Sajbochol	33	Kaqchikel
Liz Darleé Pérez Arriola	17	Español	Edgar Benjamín Ramírez Morales	25	Mam
Marcelina Chum Cortez	25	K'iche'	Edras Noe Ajpop Cárdenas	22	Kaqchikel
<b>Primary Teaching (3 years)</b>			Eduardo Jacinto Pablo Francisco	23	Q'anjob'al
Claudia Lorena Ical Xol	21	K'iche'	Ermeregildo Castellanos Caal	28	Q'eqchi'
Isabel Cún Sinto	36	Kaqchikel	Eulalia Nallely Simón López	24	Q'anjob'al
Rubelsi Eduardo Montejo López	18	Popti'	Hector Alejandro Canto Mejía	28	K'iche'
<b>Primary Bilingual Teaching (3 years)</b>			Helen Luisa Montejo Montejo	20	Popti
Albertina Sanic Chipix	23	Kaqchikel	Jairo Benjamín Ajiataz Martínez	27	K'iche'
Ana Elizabeth Sirín Maxía	18	Kaqchikel	José María García Vásquez	27	K'iche'
Antonio Menéndez Francisco	19	Q'anjob'al	Karisol Olimpia Ajanel Abac	24	K'iche'
Berta Alicia Chipix Apén	20	Kaqchikel	María Antonieta Mateo	21	Popti'
Bonifacio Cac Cac	30	Poqomchi'	Pascual Ramírez Morales	24	Mam
Edgar Odilio Caná Cún	20	Kaqchikel	Santos Mendoza Jerónimo	25	Mam
Elías Choc Mucú	25	Q'eqchi'	Santos David Villatoro Villatoro	20	Español
Francisca Natalia Quixán Pérez	19	K'iche'	Silvia Patricia Orozco Juárez	32	Español
Jorge Luis Méndez Morales	17	Mam	Velveth Lusmaria Sequen Yucuté	20	Kaqchikel
Juan Chub Caal	21	Q'eqchi'	Wilma Angela Chalí Colaj	21	Kaqchikel
María Sales Morales	19	Mam	<b>Nursing Professional RN (3 years)</b>		
Martha Julia Gabriel Raxcal	23	Kaqchikel	Angela Nathali Morán Chén	19	Q'eqchi'
Romeo Dagoberto Domingo	18	Man	Antonio Santos Pacheco	25	K'iche'
Tereso Sisimit Chutá	21	Kaqchikel	Astrid Graciela García Sí	21	Q'eqchi'
<b>Music Teacher (4 years)</b>			Faustino Túm León	35	K'iche'
María Estefany Muñoz Ajquí	21	Kaqchikel	German Lux Us	37	K'iche'
<b>Agriculture (3 years)</b>			Hector Fernando Xol Tut	24	Q'eqchi'
José Jeovanny Patzán Pérez	17	Kaqchikel	Hermelindo Gudiel García Gomez	19	Mam
Avilio Gregorio Tum	22	K'iche'	Hugo Aroldo Cuc Coc	24	Q'eqchi'
Bruno Recinos Carranza	19	Español	Juan José Bernal de León	31	Ixil
Daniel Aldana Avalos	21	Español	Liliana Yaneth Moscoso Aldana	34	Español
Pablo Vargas Ramirez	19	Popti'	María Magdalena Imul Joj	20	K'iche'
Wilson René Aldana López	17	Español	Marvín Romeo Teni Pop	26	Q'eqchi'
<b>Bookkeeping (3 years)</b>			Raul Cac Mó	29	Q'eqchi'
Armando Morales Pérez	18	Mam	Rubidia Matías Ramírez	29	Mam
Elena Reanda Quejú	22	Tz'utujil	Sara Nohemí Gutierrez Batz	25	K'iche'
Marco Tulio Daniel Pérez Tepáz	19	Kaqchikel	<b>Agronomy (6 years)</b>		
Nohelia Crucidalia Cún Apén	18	Kaqchikel	Oscar Antonio Guerra García	23	Español
<b>Mechanic (3 years)</b>			Angélica Melissa De la Cruz	22	Español
Alberto Alexander Calel Telón	17	Kaqchikel	<b>Engineering (6 years)</b>		
Luis Clemente Gómez López	18	Kaqchikel	Victor Manuel Choy Choc	25	Kaqchikel
<b>Rural Health Technician (2 years)</b>			<b>Medicine (6 years)</b>		
Manuel Constantino Díaz López	22	Popti'	Ana Beatriz Quevedo Galindo	21	Español
Selvin Hernández Jiménez	21	Mam	Ernesto Estrada Atz	33	Kaqchikel
<b>Primary (young students under special memorial fund)</b>			Eulalia Santiago Paiz	32	Popti'
Jasmin Mishel López García	7	Kaqchikel	Wendy Carolina Recinos Lemus	22	español
Baltazar Leobardo López García	24	Kaqchikel	<b>M.A. in Education (6 years)</b>		
Isabel López García	12	Kaqchikel	Benjamín Carlos García Barreno	32	K'iche'
Margarita Stephanye López García	10	Kaqchikel	<b>Secondary Teaching (3.5 years)</b>		
Pedro Daniel López García	13	Kaqchikel	Isaias Coc Poob	22	Q'eqchi'
			Diego Bernabé López Joj	21	K'iche'

Miguel Pérez López	22	K'iche'
Juan Antonio Hernández	21	K'iche'
<b>Career / Names</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Language</b>
Bartolomé Cholotío y Cholotío	32	Tz'ujil
Elías Pop Pop	21	Q'eqchi'
Elvira Ramírez Mejía	22	Mam
Pedro Francisco Nicolás Pedro	21	Q'anjob'al
Andrés Eulogio Cac Muz	27	K'iche'
Cecilia Silvia López Chití	20	K'ich'e
Juan Efraín Tzic Mendoza	43	K'iche'
Juan Francisco Ixim Suc	26	Poqomchi'
Manuel Tzep y Tzep	27	K'iche'
Mónica Azucena Patzán Muñoz	27	Kaqchikel
Victor Manuel Ixim Colorado	37	Poqomchi'
Rosaura Noemí Caal Caal	24	Q'eqchi'
Miguel Lainez Pérez	32	Mam
<b>Psychology (6 years)</b>		
Obden Aroldo Méndez Rámirez	26	Mam
Yuri López Tecú	21	Achi
<b>Biology (6 years)</b>		
Rosa Delfina Sunum Orellana	22	K'iche'
<b>Social Work (6 years)</b>		
Catalina Miza Calí	42	Q'anjob'al
Juana María Cún Sisimit	33	Kaqchikel
María Josefina Tubac Quill	28	Kaqchikel
Rosa Amalia Solomán Pérez	23	Achi
Rosario Vicente Mendoza	28	Tz'utujil

**Some statistics about our 2009 group of students**

<i>Students by level of education and sex</i>						
	University		Secondary		TOTALS	
Women	29	26%	16	15%	45	41%
Men	39	36	25	23%	64	59%
<b>Total</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>62%</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>100%</b>

Ninety eight students (90%) are indigenous and only 11 are non-indigenous (10%). Starting this year, all our students will get part of their help as a scholarship and part as a loan. An exception is made when a sponsor requests that his or her student be given a full scholarship.



**¡ OUR 37 GRADUATES IN 2008 !**

**UNIVERSITY LEVEL (19 Students)**

**Agronomy**

- Romaldo Panjoj Quino
- Celso Teodoro Cún Caná

**Business Administration**

- Catarina Lorenzo Antonio

**Economics**

- Domingo Chicaj Coj
- Juan Octaviano López Castro
- Justo Miguel Zacarías Cabrera
- María Elizabet Hernández y Hernández
- Natanael Urizar Ramón

**Engineering**

- Marco Antonio Rafael Loarca

**Nursing**

- Adela Marisol Co Tot
- Carlos Enrique Butz Caal
- Marta Luvia Col
- Oscar Heriberto Pá Chó
- Paola Madaí Lavagnino del Valle
- Rogelio Gómez Hernández
- Rosalinda García Flores

**Psychology**

- Dora Marina Tepaz Tomas

**Secondary Teaching**

- Benigno Matías Mejía
- Fermina Juárez Reynoso

**SECONDARY LEVEL (18 Students)**

**Agriculture**

- Gabriel Vidal López Díaz
- Roberto Bulux Cojtí

**Bookkeeping**

- María Deyssi Zurelly Jiménez Quisque
- Ruth Gricelda Muñoz Raymundo
- Vinamarby García Ordóñez

**Computers**

- Edwin Estuardo Ralios Quixán
- Mónica Azucena Patzán Muñoz

**Drafting**

- Luis Pedro Díaz

**Education for the home**

- Claudia Susana Siguenza Méndez

**Primary Bilingual Teaching**

- Ana Catarina Sarat Bach
- Braulio Mardoqueo Méndez Juárez
- Elmer Lisardi Montejo Camposeco
- Felix Miguel Chic Joj
- Floralma Quiná Yojero
- Gloria Marina Enriquez Lara
- Juana Sajbochol Apén
- Soila Coc Klahr
- SoteroGerónimo Pérez

**The Guatemalan Scholarship/Loan Program (PROGRESA) focuses on helping rural students attend universities and secondary schools. The program has grown from supporting one student in 1973 to supporting 114 students in 2008. Since its inception the program has provided scholarships and/or loans to over 920 students so that they may continue their education.**