

1 November 2011

RECIFE



It must be heading towards Christmas 'cos the supermarkets are full of Christmas offers ...and Christmas trees! Doesn't seem like it tho'!
Can't believe it's the end of October already (I know I always say this!) and therefore time to write to you all again!

Here in Brasil, we've just had the day of the child, which basically is a bank holiday celebrating the lives of kids, lots of parties, cake and pressies!

Vale was no exception!

We didn't just have one day, we had a whole week of different activities! The first was a fancy-dress party on the Tuesday. We decorated the refetorio with balloons galore and I and another of the teachers decorated one of the classrooms to be a dance zone! We even hung from the ceiling loads of flashing cars, rabbits, hearts etc (the type you can buy at a funfare on a neckchain!) and changed the lightbulbs to a funky ice blue. The entry ticket was one of those plastic glow in the dark wrist bands!



The first day of use of the new floats

Prayer Points:

Thanks:

- That God has blessed the first year of Vineyard em Ação incredibly
- For an awesome team that are Vineyard em Ação
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Requests:

- Strengthening of my voice again and general improvement in health!
- For wisdom and guidance for Nane and I regarding where to lead Vineyard em Ação as we enter our second year
- For wisdom regarding what to do about my visa situation

Someone had also lent a smoke machine and a big speaker! The music seriously boomed out! It was the highlight of the party!

It also was a great way to loose calories, in a hot, unventilated space full of kids all jumping about! I was the bouncer on the door and distributor of wristbands, but I was allowed in to jump around every now and then! Didn't last very long each time due to the heat and smoke, but was fun!

They had other parties too and the week culminated in swimming day on Friday, for everyone!! I literally was the lifeguard this day! With a maximum of 42 kids in the pool at any one time, teaching was out of the question! I just had the challenge of ensuring no-one drowned, but one I successfully completed still with all kids accounted for! I got pushed into the pool at one point (even tho' they knew I couldn't enter due to my bad chest!) I really didn't mind 'cos Val had done an awesome job of cleaning the pool and the water was so inviting! I also prefer being IN the pool with the kids and they prefer it too! Hence why I got pushed in!

Talking of swimming I'm well made up, 'cos one of the 8 year olds (Vitor) has really been trying to learn to swim. Two weeks ago he was nearly there, just with the spaghetti float in front of him, but this last week he swum all by himself the width of the pool repeatedly! The grin on his face, his excitement and the tears of his Mum (who's our cook, when she saw) was worth everything! Not to mention my grin too! I'll take a photo of him actually swimming without the floats for next time! Last Friday as well 3 of the older boys finally mastered diving, entering the pool hands first and not belly first! It all seems to be clicking at the mo'! There are at least 10 kids who are now nearly swimming by themselves, or now swimming with the floats who before didn't have the confidence to enter the big pool! It's just fab to see!

If you remember, I've been trying to find flat floats to help the older kids in particular to swim better, for a long time! Well I finally found them and thanks to a donation I bought 10! The kids think they are awesome! They use them not just to aid swimming (I was right, they really are helping!) but to surf and walk on water, to name but two!

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Vitor - the week before!

I love swimming days! Although last week the kids were unable to use the pool thanks to some folks from the community above Vale who scaled the wall and repeatedly used the pool, threw things in the pool and other things too ...the water was the green of my "prayer points"! We didn't have the money to buy the cleaning products needed to clean it as Val had already used them up to prepared for Tuesdays swimming day!

The kids were gutted, but we explained why and hoped they went back and told everyone in the community (this usually happens, if there's a piece of scandal the kids in the afternoon already know when they arrive, 'cos the kids from the morning have already told them!) so as to hopefully prevent this from happening again, but I'm sure it will as this isn't the first time, just the worst!

Am just grateful that this time nothing happened to the pool pump!
Thankyou God!

At the Roda, Alpha ended in the middle of October, so Saturday the 22nd was wierd in that it was the first Saturday since returning here, that I didn't need to clock watch to go do set up and preparation from 2pm! So Carol (the Alpha co-ordinator) and I went to the beach for the morning! Was so nice! Don't remember the last time that I went to the beach!

Vineyard em Ação this month celebrated it's first anniversary! It's amazing to think that this time last year just 6 of us went out one Monday evening and now we have a regular crew of 16 going out, sometimes with more!

God is awesome! He's provided incredibly for this work during the year and we have had some amazing stories of lives changed, but want to see more lives transformed by the love of God and see people released from their addictions! We are looking to develop and shake-up the street work, so prayers for wisdom for Nane and I would be appreciated, as we only want to do things that are in the will of God and we want to hear his voice!

I've now been in my flat here for a month and I now have a fridge! So have been able to host and feed folks when they visit!

Am also getting grips with the water! Altho' in my last newsletter I mentioned I didn't have any water in the taps coming from the street, this actually lasted for a week! The local water company were doing maintenance works and decided to turn off the water, but didn't warn anyone in advance!

Now everyday when I turn the tap on and water comes out I thank God for running water! Sometimes the water pressure is very weak and have had other days without water too, but its life! I think I successfully filled up the water box as a back up, should this happen again! Tho' seeing as it's on the roof and I have no real way of knowing, I guess I'll just find out the next time this happens! I also have a bucket full of water ready incase of emergency, so I could at least take a shower!

Last weekend I was asked to help answer an SOS call from another project that I have links to, at an evangelistic camp that they were hosting for 100 teenagers aged 16 and above, as the chef had pulled out with one week's notice! So I along with Sonia (our soup chef and Nane's Mum) and 2 other folk from church spent the weekend in the kitchen. We cooked for around 150 people in total! I was auxillary chef! The amount of rice and vegetables in itself was impressive! Also at the moment I don't want to have to cut up another hotdog sausage (all 15kgs) or charque (a type of meat) for a good

while! It was really hard work, not to mention extremely hot and we didn't stop the whole weekend until we left at 18:30 Sunday night, having also cleaned the place from top to bottom ready for the school the next day! But it was fun, most of the time!

Until next time...

Lots of love

Ali x

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The boys playing in the square



Rosana&I
(fancy-dress at Vale)