

Easter Term Sponsor Update

Over 6 months into my year overseas now and Guyana continues to impress and surprise me. Living in Kato has become perfectly normal and as you begin to integrate yourself more and more into the village you feel more at home with the people around you. I'm starting to become better friends with community members and meeting new ones which I had not been introduced to before. After living here for so long you become accustomed to the way things work round here and what it is truly like for these people. It is a weird feeling seeing a new person enter the village and rather than thinking that here's another visitor like you, you're intrigued to find out who has come and entered your village and what their business is here. It's moments like that when I'm standing next to the villagers looking onto the new comers that I feel like I'm one of them.

This term has not been as eventful as the previous term as fewer things are new to me but eventful none the less. We made our first trip over into Uiramatu which is a Brazilian border town half inhabited by Brazilians and the other half Amerindians from Guyana. As this is where Kato's supplies come from it is quite built up (for out here) so it was like stepping back into civilisation for a day. Unfortunately as our ride never turned up we had to walk back most of the way which included wading across the Ireng River separating Guyana and Brazil. Other things Lucas and I have got up to are attending our first Kayap which involves a large group of people going to help a family do farm work and then coming back to the house to have stuff your face with good food and drinking buckets of local drinks. We were also placed in charge of running a couple stalls at the school fundraising which included hoopla, shooting bow and arrow and a fishing game, which as it turns out, happens to be the most successful fundraising ever for the school. For the national holiday of Mashramani much of Kato went over to Paramakatoi for the festivities where I was also able to represent Kato at cricket. The trip back to Kato later that night was sketchy to say the least as it had been raining all day so the road was very slippery meaning that our quadbike was slipping and sliding all over the road which turned into a very exciting yet slightly frightening journey.

We kicked off our holiday in Leguan for Phagwah which is an Indian festival where they cover one another paint. All over the island there were groups of people running around throwing paint at each other along with trucks roaming the street painting every person in sight. In the end it led to people coming away with some great tie-dye t-shirts and very colourful hair for the rest of the holiday. From there it was onto the Lethem and Sand Creek Rodeos which were incredible. 1000's flock down to the Rupununi to watch the locals try their luck at eating races, lassoing cattle and braving the back of a bucking bronco. As I knew this would be my only chance I gathered my courage and chucked myself on the back of one of the bulls and held on for dear life... for about 1 second until I was thrown off and the bull came tumbling down on top off me too. If there's any time to practise your forro dancing it's the rodeo party each night after the events have wound down and the music is turned up. Just before the holiday came to an end I made enough time to do some fishing for large

catfish. All hope seemed to be lost until the last throw of the hook when I managed to haul in a mammoth Jau catfish that put a bigger smile on my guide's face than mine.

Only 4 months left before I step back on English soil and although I'm looking forward to that day seeing everybody and everything again that I left behind I know I'm going to dragging part of me away as my roots are now firmly embedded into Kato.