

■ Veninos Registered Charity No. 1099517

Veninos Newsletter Autumn 2005 Issue No. ? ■

# Brave Lisa goes the distance

**Lands End to John O'Groats (LEJOG) is rather a long way. As the crow flies, it is a fair distance and even driving takes a while.**

So who would consider walking the entire journey?

After four exhausting months intrepid Veninos Vice-Chair Lisa Tylee walked the amazing 1,300 miles and raised more than £10,000 for Veniños - Children In Need.

"I saw some incredibly beautiful areas," says Lisa. "My favourites were the North Cornish coast (despite the steepness), the Pennine Way, Yorkshire (despite temperatures of up to 30 degrees) and the West Highland Way in Scotland (despite the rain...)"

The 'great trek' began on Saturday April 16 when, complete with backpack, walking pole, map and pioneering spirit, she left the Lands End Hotel.

By August 23, walking in all weathers and over all terrains, Lisa had completed the incredible journey - rallied by supporters and friends en route.



Below: Proud Lisa (centre right) with Veninos staff and supporters at the end of her amazing journey.

"When things were tough and I was knackered," Lisa adds, "it was the people that helped me to just laugh it off and keep on plodding."

On her few rest days, Lisa gave talks and spoke to local press. To date she has raised £10,750, with monies still coming in.

She also kept an online diary

including some fabulous photos of her journey. This is now a book priced 10 with proceeds going to Veniños. And there is still time to make a contribution.

Send cheques (donations or book orders), made payable to Veniños (LEJOG), to: Veninos, Suite 104, 105 London Street, Reading, Berkshire. RG1 4QD.

## A word from the Chair ...

Thanks to the generosity of you, our supporters, and the dedication of my fellow trustees (all of whom, remember, are volunteers), Veniños - Children In Need has donated funds to eight different non-government organisations in Venezuela, over the last 12 months.

Your money has supported a range of different projects, from helping the Asociacion Muchachos De La Calle Mobile Medical Unit back on the road, to building a new nursery school and playground in Punto Fijo, Falcon.

This is an amazing achievement, and one that you should all be proud of.

Funds have been raised, both in the UK and internationally, by the young and old alike. Just some of the events have been marathons and fun runs, bike rides, 5-a-side football, concerts, ceilidhs, salsa, a cookery demonstration and mufti days at schools.

First prize for distance covered, funds raised, endurance and maintenance of a good sense of humour must go to Veniños trustee, Lisa Tylee (opposite) for her amazing 1,300-mile trek. Thank you to Lisa and those people who supported her along the way.

I hope you like the new look Veniños newsletter. Please return the tear-off strip so we have your current contact information.

Jane Blake chairperson

## Wear your wristband with pride

Charity wristbands in Veniños colours are now on sale (priced just £1 available from [info@veniños.org](mailto:info@veniños.org)). If you can help us sell wristbands through

schools as a fundraiser or at school, fairs, clubs, offices please let us know. They make great party bag/Christmas stocking fillers too!





## El Saman proves their team spirit

*Thanks to your support, the El Saman sports programme has gone from strength to strength.*

*Enrolment of boys from shanty towns across Caracas has risen by more than 30 per cent (from 55 to 80). Aged from 8-18, they play in different leagues and tournaments.*

*"More people here are beginning to see the great benefit sport can have in engaging disenfranchised young people away from the streets," says El Saman worker Gustavo \*\*\*\*\**

*"The young boys are spending their time in a positive team environment that is far safer than gang membership."*

*Funds from Veniños cover operational expenses and El Saman is attracting corporate sponsorship for sports uniforms and transport.*

*The programme is expanding to include girls to play volleyball. This is one of only a handful of programmes meeting the needs of girls living in shanty towns.*

### SITUATIONS VACANT.....

**TRANSLATORS** - Can you translate for the website or newsletter? We want translators so don't overload just a few people. Please email [jane.blake@veninos.org](mailto:jane.blake@veninos.org)

**COMPUTER GRAPHICS** - Do you enjoy being creative on the computer? We need help with publicity material for events.

**COOKS/CHEFS** - Can you make jams or hold a bake sale for Veniños? Chefs - Our first Cookery Demonstration was a great success. Could you help us too? We have a template flyer prepared, all you need access to a suitable-sized kitchen. E.mail: [clare.carden@veninos.org](mailto:clare.carden@veninos.org) for jams & preserves. [jane.blake@veninos.org](mailto:jane.blake@veninos.org) for cookery demonstrations.

**NEED INCOME?** - Looking for some extra income ..... choose your own hours AND raise funds for Veniños? Email Jane Blake or Clare Carden to find out how.



■ Children from Casa Hogar Jose Gregorio have a chance to feel part of a family.

## We can't do it without you ...

Thanks to all those of you who have donated to Veniños whether in money, event sponsorship, standing orders, time, expertise or one-off donations throughout this year.

The list of donors is too long to name each individual (what a lovely problem to have!) but we would like to thank just a few by name:

- Mike Gutans for running two half-marathons this year;
- Martin Svangtun for running the London Marathon 2005;
- Dorothy and Ed Payne for running the Big Sur marathon, California;
- Lisa Tylee for walking Lands End to John O'Groats (and her supporters along the way);
- Clara Rodriguez for her amazing concerts;



■ Aberdeen's fundraisers enjoy a Celidh, Latino-style.

- Charlie Hanbury and players for organising the first Veniños 5-a-side football tournament;
- Clare Carden and the Aberdeen supporters for their many events;
- Andrea Landeata, Tony Signorini and Tijana Miletic for the website;
- British Airways and Ginsters, the Cornish Pasty Co.

### Box clever for Veninos?

Can you give a home to a Veniños collection box? How about your local pub, your office or church?

Please email [emily.bacon@veninos.org](mailto:emily.bacon@veninos.org) Sue Daniels, manager of the BP

Sunbury staff shop, put one by the till back in August 2004. Thanks to BP Sunbury staff, it has been filled several times. Our thanks to Sue and to Cinzia DeSantis for the suggestion.

Spare change becomes valuable funding with your help.

## Children learn to trust again

Run by nuns and volunteers, Casa Hogar Jose Gregorio children's home is keeping families together with your help.

In Venezuela, it's common practice in orphanages to separate siblings into single-sex homes at six years old. But Casa Hogar has children from birth to 18 and works to keep them united.

Many of the children have suffered years of abuse and neglect. "Envitably integrating and supporting them is hard," says

Casa Hogar, "but this is a happy and safe place where young ones can learn to trust and heal again.

After years of hard-work the home is effectively self-supporting after building a community school on site. The small school fees cover the costs of running the home. But recent changes in the law mean the home is having to rebuild and expand its accommodation for the children.

Veniños is helping to cover the one-off capital expenditure costs.

# 'Our home is a happy place'

AMBAR is a dynamic project working with sex workers and their children. And with your help, it is transforming the lives of young children.

With basic premises and limited resources, AMBAR runs an outstanding programme of services, like its day-care centre for 70 children of sex workers. These include six babies and toddlers who live at the centre. These children are usually abandoned at birth by mothers who believe their children are HIV+ like themselves.

"Unable to cope and without appropriate medicines, the



mothers abandon them and sadly some have since died leaving the children orphans," explains an AMBAR worker.

The project is in the west of

Caracas, but AMBAR also operates nationally developing support and training networks.

Essential health and STD clinics are provided as well as a low-cost condom bank.

"We charge a token amount but the fact that poor prostitutes pay for condoms proves our education programme is helping to prevent the spread of STDs," says AMBAR. "If the condoms were free it's possible the workers would take but not use them."

Veniños is helping AMBAR



upgrade its premises, but more importantly develop life skills and retraining for sex workers.

AMBAR hopes the sex workers can earn alternative income and eventually make choices for themselves.

"One cannot underestimate the 'ripple' effect of AMBAR's work – not only in improving the lives of those directly affected by prostitution but also touching the culture of the clients of sex workers and their families too."

■ Photos: Left - children enjoy learning. Top - AMBAR provides vital toys for the children.

## Did you know?

An estimated 40% of Venezuela's population is UNDER the age of 17? Almost one third lives in extreme poverty (according to UNICEF, 2003).

## Veniños helps frontline work with research

Veniños is committed to supporting good quality research to aid people working directly with street and shanty town children.

The key to developing effective policy and practice is to understand the root causes of the problem.

Veniños has dedicated funds to FUNDAICI, a leading local NGO in research and training. Veniños is also helping to publish a vital book about 'children at risk' in Venezuela which gives an overview of the situation, its causes and the triggers.

"Experienced researchers must be able to communicate their knowledge and understanding to practitioners, those dealing with a constant barrage of day-to-day issues and don't have time to step back and evaluate their work or its root problems," says Veniños.

The book will be a resource for those working frontline with vulnerable and abused children.

# Camuri Grande learns to help itself

Camuri Grande, in La Guaira, Vargas state, was one of the worst affected areas by landslides of 1999.

Tens of thousands of people were killed and communities destroyed and buried in mud.

Camuri Grande was temporarily isolated and badly damaged but the community is beginning to grow again. Veniños, together with another non-government organisation (NGO), is helping to rebuild the infrastructure of schools, hospitals and community centres.

"Six years on it is easy to forget that this was the worst disaster in Latin America for a century, coming as it did just a few days before 2000 began," says a Veniños spokesperson.

"Rebuilding is a slow and painful process especially as so many lives were lost and because the traditional economies of weekend tourism and fishing were effectively destroyed."

Camuri Grande has high unemployment and a desperate need to re-skill most of its people. So this project takes the leases of destroyed and desolate properties and, in return for longer leases, is repairing them to house essential services. Already there's a youth and community centre, a pre-school, a ludoteca (community play area), a canteen and a shop.



■ Camuri Grande rebuilds itself after the mud slides of 1999.

And with NGO Venezuela Sin Limites, Veniños funds computer training for local young people.

"It is a high quality, sought-after training that gives the graduates direct access to the employment market in an area where the skills base is missing," says Veniños.

For more information visit [www.veniños.org](http://www.veniños.org)

# News In Brief ...

■ 2006 will be the year when Veniños launches into the USA. To do this successfully we need your help to build our database over there. If you have family and/or friends, business contacts in North America please encourage them to register with us at [www.veninos.org](http://www.veninos.org)

■ NEW YORK.. NEW YORK .... this will be the venue for the Veniños USA launch Charity Ball in the Autumn of 2006. Planning has already started. Please make a note in your 2006 diaries when you get them ... we will let you have further details very soon.

■ Huge thanks to Dorothy Payne, Anne Deehan and Ed Thaw, all of whom have retired as Veniños trustees over the last 12 months. They contributed an enormous amount of hard work. Thank you too for your continued support. We are delighted to welcome as Trustees, Alexa Connolly and Emily Bacon.

■ The Veniños website ([www.veninos.org](http://www.veninos.org)) was launched,



■ Veninos supporters and staff \*\*\*\*\*at the \*\*\*\* fun-run

in English, in November 2004, and went bilingual in March 2005 (although not all is available in Spanish yet).

Our plan is to update the site monthly but recent technical problems have made this difficult. We hope that by the time you read this newsletter, updating will be back on track.

See the website for events in your area, and how you can get involved.

■ Going to Venezuela or returning to the UK? Please let us know if you are travelling. Often we need either to send things to, or receive things from Venezuela. Call 077906 901796 (voicemail).

# Can you help us?

I want to help Veniños with (please tick as many boxes as you like);

- Donating my expertise (e.g. cooking, marketing, administration etc);
- The production of the newsletter;
- The website;;
- Translation;
- Local fundraising;
- School liaison;
- Holding a sale for Veniños in

my home/school;

- Computer skills to produce publicity for fundraisers;
  - Distribution of the newsletter;
  - Please send me copies of this newsletter for my friends;
  - A Veniños collection box;
  - Introducing Veniños to my company's charitable fund;
- To ensure you are contacted please, complete and send the form below. Thank you.

## Contact details

It is important that information on our database is current, primarily so we can keep you updated on Veniños and local events.

We also don't want to waste vital funds on mailings to incorrect addresses.

If your address, email or phone has changed in the last two years, please complete and return the tear-off slip or email your new details.

Write to Shaun Tully at [shaun.tully@veninos.org](mailto:shaun.tully@veninos.org) Do the same if, for some reason, you would like your details removed from our database. Complete even if you are not making a donation.

Name:

Address:

Post/Zipcode

Country

Tel. No.

Fax. No.

Email

## Making a Veniños Donation?

Yes, I would like to donate to Veniños – Venezuelan Children In Need.

4QD, England.

OR

My donation is (tick as appropriate):

To the manager of:

- £10
- £50
- £100
- £250
- Other .....

bank/building society

Branch address & postcode

Branch sort code

Account No.

Please make cheques payable to Veniños and send together with the completed Contact Form opposite to: Veniños - Children In Need, Suite 104, 105 London Street, Reading, Berkshire, RG1

Please pay Veniños - Children In Need

£..... each month.

Signed

Date

Please tick if you want acknowledgement of your donation. (If left blank we will assume none is required).

Please tick if you do NOT wish to be included on Veniños mailing list.

If you want to increase your donation to Veniños through Gift Aid. Please sign here.

Gift Aid form already signed.

I am a UK taxpayer and wish Veniños - Venezuelan Children In Need (Reg. Charity No. 1099517) to be able to reclaim on this and all subsequent gifts.

Signed:

Date:

If you are interested in donating to Veniños - Children In Need through a legacy, please contact [info@veninos.org](mailto:info@veninos.org)

*Data Protection: Your details will remain confidential and will not be shared with any other parties.*