

Generation Peace Academy International Service Program Coordinator John Gehring

February 22, 2013



John with GPA participants

John Gehring has been traveling of late as part of his work with the Generation Peace Academy (GPA) where he serves as the international service program coordinator. In December, he traveled to Argentina in order to help set up a series of projects which were in large part put together by UPF Argentina representative, Mr. Miguel Werner.



GPA members and Yoshiko – a visit to Buenos Aires Theater to see Tango

In January, John and his wife, Yoshiko accompanied the 17 GPA volunteers to Argentina on a series of service project that went on for three weeks. Among the tasks that the volunteers invested in was an environmental project done in a park area with the Rotary Club and local conservationists.



Group putting up a Dome in the Native Indian village

A unique experience was gained by all the volunteers when they traveled overnight to Santa Fe, Argentina and did service work and home stay in a Native American village of 43 families. It was while sleeping on the ground, sharing simple meals and the working on the construction of a small community lodge that the deepest sense of gratification came to all those involved.



With native villagers near Santa Fe, Argentina

The villagers were deeply and tearfully moved by the presence of the international volunteers as they had often felt that they were the forgotten people of this great nation of Argentina. Following the work in the village, the volunteers went to work in a large Evangelical Church that made a special outreach to troubled youth. The work service was followed by a period of reflection.

In February, John went to Thailand, Malaysia and the Philippines in an effort to review potential work projects for the Generation Peace Academy. Especially promising was a project in a rural village on the island of Bohol in the Philippines. The volunteers of GPA will construct a Food Center for an elementary school and work with local engineering students from the state university. A project is being planned for March.