



## Youth For Understanding South Africa NEWSLETTER AUGUST 2010

Dear YFU members and friends,  
in South Africa and all over the world,

*Ayoba*, South Africa! Our new inbound students have arrived in South Africa! A very warm welcome to all of them!

It was the time of the year when we welcomed our new arrivals on 6 August 2010. YFU SA staff members and volunteers were very busy finalising the placements of the 35 high school and 4 volunteer inbounds with their host families, schools, and volunteer projects as well as organising

their arrival and first orientation with YFU South Africa.

### **YFU News:**

Earlier in the year, YFU SA established its first Junior Volunteer Council (JVC). We are very proud of this achievement and look forward to their contributions to the greater good and growth of YFU SA in future.

YFU volunteers from around the world are connected to YFU South Africa. Read about former Cape Town based intern Abby and her YFU involvement in the USA. And Mia,

YFU volunteer in Germany, looks back on her months' internship with YFU South Africa.

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### **YFU**

## Make the change last!

FROM THE DESK OF THE PE REGIONAL HEAD

Don't just make a change... make it last! We all have areas in our lives we would like to see improvement and in fact, we often resolve to do things differently. But how often are we able to bring about permanent change?

Change is something I have experienced over the last 4 years of my YFU involvement. Personally, I have had to change my thinking about international cultures... stepping out of my South African cocoon and into the global arena. My journey with YFU started off as "I'll give it a try for one year" ...well the rest is history!

The journey has been incredible but not without a few challenges may I add. For many on exchange, it is an intense time of immense growth. To many students, a personal goal is to discover themselves, who they really are, and what they need to change about themselves. Personal challenges.

### YFU

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*Regional Head Iris enjoying the PE coast*

The challenge is to make the change last! I've been very Blessed to be part of their journey. Seeing them arrive, young, some more secure than others, language barriers, then the ultimate culture shock... all so intense. The journey of seeing them develop and grow is like a butterfly, spreading it's wings and after a few unsure flapping of wings and fluttering around, eventually builds enough strength in them to fly around, discovering the beauty of the world around them. What an awesome sight!

It is for this reason that saying goodbye is such an emotional event. Saying good bye to your child is never easy. But alas, all's not loss as soon the joy and exhilaration of welcoming new faces to Africa fills one with renewed excitement!

To the PE students of 2010, I cannot wait to continue the journey with you. You are a lovely bunch of young people and I know that the personal goals you have set for yourselves are achievable and in true African Spirit, we will journey with you.

To all the interns I've had the pleasure of working with, I personally thank you for all your support during your internship here in Port Elizabeth and for your continued support, postcards, e-mails, personal visits and call. I hope that in a year or two from now, we will have a huge reunion! Marit, Benjamin, Seth, Quinten, Louise, Gesa, Laura, Alex and Mia, we have an event to plan...



*Re-Entry 2010: Iris with YFU students and volunteers*



Post-Arrival Orientation 2010

Not forgetting the junior volunteers, Keegan, Alia, Lizelle and Tara. I'm looking forward to great things coming from your camp as you journey with the students and planning amazing events for our enjoyment throughout the year.

In the real Spirit of *UBUNTU*

Best wishes

Iris Goeda  
Regional Head YFU Port Elizabeth

## YFU

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# SAFARI PROGRAMME

DISCOVER THE WORLD WITH YFU SA

This 6-week Safari Programme offers a unique opportunity to explore the sights, sounds and people of this fascinating country!

This winter, Melanie Michotte and Manon Peltraut, two girls from France enjoyed their stay in South Africa.

They experienced every day life by staying with host families in Pretoria and attending three different schools in the first two weeks. The following weeks, Maline and Manon visited sights around Pretoria and experienced the African Wilderness in the world famous Kruger National Park where they enjoyed the beautiful landscapes of Mpumalanga Province!

Built on the educational principles of YFU intercultural exchanges, this programme is designed to give participants the widest possible exposure to the cultural diversity of South Africa.

## Week 1

After arriving in South Africa, Melanie and Manon received a one-day orientation before spending the first days in their host family and attending a normal government school for five days.

## Week 2

Maline and Manon experienced life and culture in a South African township by attending a school there for three days. For a contrast two days in a private school are to follow. Weekend is family time!

## Week 3

Time for culture! Maline and Manon visited the Voortrekker Monument, the Union Buildings and Freedom Park representing different periods and aspects of South African history. Then they visited the Sterkfontein Caves and the interactive visitor centre at the Cradle of Humankind, a world-heritage site. They enjoyed themselves at an African cultural village and a flea market with traditional crafts! And the zoo in Pretoria was waiting for them too.



Week 4

This week was all reserved to meet the Big Five (the elephant, leopard, lion, rhino and buffalo) and have other adventures in the Kruger National Park!

Week 5

Time to explore the beauties of Mpumalanga: Maline and Manon took a boat trip in the Blyde River Canyon, spotted the rock formation "Three Rondawels" and were just captivated by the views from God's Window etc. They saw amazing waterfalls and visited a gold mine museum, a silk farm and coffee plantation before returning to Pretoria.

Week 6

Then there was enough time to do some shopping in town, to go for a hike in the Tswaing Crater, to visit some Pretoria museums and to enjoy the final days with the host family.

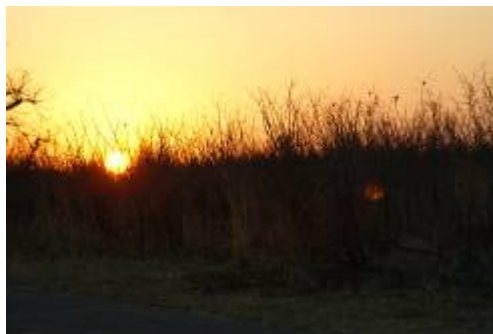
*"During these six weeks in South Africa I've learned a lot of different things like for example another way of life. Here, the people are really friendly and I made a lot of friends!" (Manon, 17, from France)*



## SAFARI PROGRAMME



*Safari in the Kruger Park! Lions aplenty...*



*Sunset in the African bush...*



*Beautiful nature in Mpumalanga Province*



*Getting ready to go on the Safari Jeep!*



*Face to face with African birds of prey*

*"During my six weeks in South Africa I discovered a country I didn't know before. I met a lot of extraordinary people and I saw a lot of beautiful things! Now, I have a family in South Africa too! I really enjoyed my six weeks here, I'll never forget this experience!"*

**(Melanie, 18, from Belgium)**

**Dates:** From mid-July – end August

**Age requirements:** 15-18

**For more info:** Contact your local YFU office.

# WELCOME TO SOUTH AFRICA



*Post-Arrival Orientation in Gauteng*

To all our foreign students (either on the academic or the volunteer YFU programme) from Brazil, Denmark, Germany, Norway, Belgium France, Chile and Switzerland, a very warm welcome to all of you!

Whether you are staying in Mpumalanga, Gauteng, Limpopo, the Free State or in the region of Nelson Mandela Bay in the Eastern Cape, we trust you will have a wonderful and memorable stay with YFU South Africa!

Christoffer Kjaer (picture right) from Denmark had a celebrity welcome at his school,

Potchefstroom Technical High School. His English language teacher introduced him to the school at an assembly. Everybody clapped spontaneously. Afterwards the "celebrity" was surrounded by admirers asking questions. Enjoy your time with us, Christoffer!



*Christoffer Kjaer from Denmark on his first school day*



Two of our German inbound students, Idris Yasini (second from left) and Pablo Bonenberger (third from right) also enjoyed a very warm welcome at Newton Technical High School in Port Elizabeth.

Not being used to wearing school uniform, Idris said: *"You know, wearing a school uniform, I feel like such a gentleman."* During their first week at school, National Director Nina Voges (third from left) and YFU intern Mia (2<sup>nd</sup> from right) dropped by to say hi.

## ARE YOU A SURVIVOR?

### The Post-Arrival Orientation in Port Elizabeth

Are you a true survivor? Are you going to survive a year in the wild South Africa? Nine young exchange students from Brazil, France, Denmark, Norway and Germany had to face these questions at the Post-Arrival Orientation (PAO) in Port Elizabeth (PE) in the beginning of August. They had to prove their skills, knowledge and motivation to make it here in South Africa!



Pablo from Germany and YFU volunteer Nosh



YFU Inbound Students in Port Elizabeth 2010

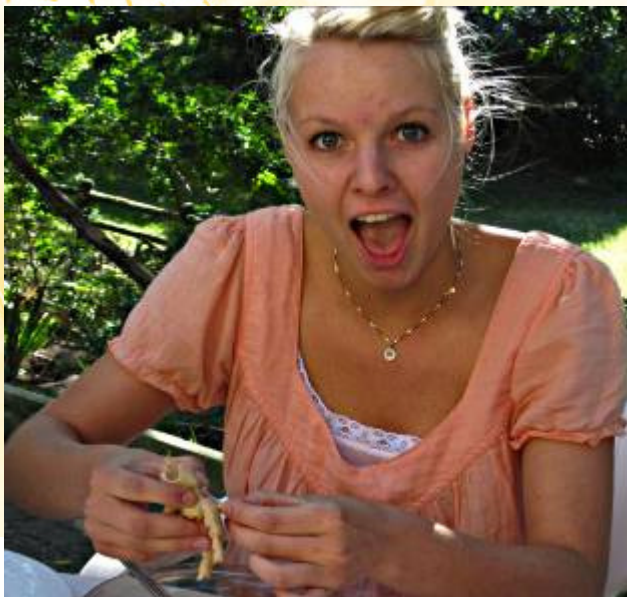
It was a late Friday night, when Ameline from France, Astrid from Norway, Agi (also Astrid) from Denmark, Saba from Brazil, Franziska, Idris, Jette, Pablo and Paulin (all from Germany) eventually arrived at the PE airport. They were quite exhausted after their long flights, but at the same time very excited to finally start their exchange year in South Africa. To welcome them, we gave all of them a crazy huge hug! "South African tradition!", we explained to the puzzled students. Then we took them to Seaview Guest Farm. That night all of them went straight to bed after supper.

The next morning revealed the special beauty of the place which the students immediately fell in love with:

*"The next morning we just realized the place we've been brought to: a guest farm next to the ocean! I can't explain this to you cuz it's waaaaay to difficult to find words for it.. There were monkeys jumping around all the time, plants I'd never seen in my life before, biiig spiders, and a blueblue sky! Just as you imagine Africa..."*

(Paulin from Germany)

We were blessed with warm days full of sunshine, green trees and beautiful flowers in the surroundings, cheeky monkeys everywhere who tried to steal our food and whom some students wanted to befriend, and most of all a stunning view over the ocean. (As we were sitting on the veranda to chat at night, we could hear the lions roaring from the lion park close by. This was even more exciting for the students!)



Enjoying chicken feet: Agi from Denmark

We had a busy programme to prepare our students to be survivors. Apart from the usual PAO programme, they had to take a couple of challenges: have a taste of chicken feet and pap, collect wood in the bush, make a proper fire for the traditional *potjiekos* stew, perform the tribal dance of their tribe, cross a dangerous river full of crocodiles and master the egg-and-spoon race – barefoot. In the end, all of them succeeded!

## YFU

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As the orientation weekend came to an end, the students were excited to finally meet their South African family who all gathered the Monday afternoon at Seaview Guest Farm. Being equipped with all the necessary YFU tools and some Afrikaans and Xhosa phrases, we trust that our exchange students will not only survive, but spend a wonderful year in South Africa! Now it is time for them to discover what this country is about! *Wamkelekile* (isiXhosa: “Welcome”) to South Africa!

**Mia**  
YFU intern in Port Elizabeth



Tribe Members: Astrid (Norway) and Pablo (Germany)



Students doing their tribal dance

Shortly after the PAO, Paulin, 17 year old exchange student from Germany, describes his first couple of days with his host family in Uitenhage:

*“In the end I have to say that it's not only AWESOME because of my culture shock and strangeness... Everything is new, you have no working system in your life anymore; you have to build a new one... Things are different down here in Africa, and I've just began to discover that...”*

## PORTRAIT: ABBY HANCOCK

MISS ALASKA 2010, YFU VOLUNTEER AND  
FORMER INTERN WITH YFU SA

When she's not studying journalism at the University of Alaska or working as a producer for a local TV station, Abby Hancock spends her time as an Area Rep helping YFU students and families in Alaska. Slated to compete in the Miss America 2011 Pageant in Las Vegas, Abby has turned her personal international experience into her official platform to promote exchange student programmes and foreign language education throughout Alaska.



*Abby with Nina (national director) during her internship*



## VIVA YFU SOUTH AFRICA!

Viva YFU South Africa! It was a fantastic time! And it went by incredibly quickly! My 4 months of YFU internship in Port Elizabeth are over...

Hard to believe: it is now six years ago when I left South Africa in July 2004 as a 17 year-old exchange student with mixed feelings – being so grateful for my awesome exchange year; happily excited about going home and deeply sorrowful about leaving my South African home in Durban. And now, six years later, I feel exactly the same when I think about leaving Port Elizabeth which has become a second home to me.

I would like express my great appreciation to the Goeda family who has opened their home for me! Thank you so much for being my family!

My time in Port Elizabeth was truly awesome. Not only could I be fully absorbed in one of my favourite activities, doing YFU, but I also had the great chance to get to know another part of the beautiful country of South Africa. I had no clear picture of what the Eastern Cape would be like. But now I have fallen in love with the amazing



*Abigail and Mia at the YFU video shoot in Cape Town*

rocky coast around PE and the wide beaches in town. I have admired the beautiful Amathole Mountains whose tips were covered with snow in July. I enjoyed some good shows at the National Arts Festival in Grahamstown and witnessed the absolute madness of the Eastern Cape Inter-varsity 2010 at NMMU. Of course, I did not skip Addo Elephant Park, the Kirkwood

Festival and Gamtoos Valley. Yah I know, there is still so much more to see...

In terms of my YFU involvement, I could really enjoy a full dose of it: host family recruitment in PE, school promotion visits, outbound interviews and inbound orientations, such as the Re-Entry, the Host Family Orientation and the famous PAO, and much more. A true highlight was the YFU video shoot with enthusiastic Cape Town volunteers at the Waterfront.

What can I say? YFU South Africa, thank you so much for the fantastic time! I will treasure it always. Thanks so much, to Babs, Nina and Iris!



**Mia from Germany**  
Former SA inbound student and now YFU intern

### YFU