
ACTIVITIES '15

JUN 26 – AUG 03



RE-CREATION
UNLIMITED

Hello! Olá!

We are João Sequeira and Ana Grave, husband and wife since 2010, both from Portugal. We have been working for the last seven years as an Architect and freelance Graphic Designer. Volunteering has always been in our “wish list” but it wasn’t until this year that we had the opportunity to stop working at the same time. When we heard about Re-Creation Unlimited and their partnership with the Idaho State Parks, we decided to apply. Our journey started with a training week at Priest Lake State Park. Heyburn State Park was waiting for us to show us its beauty and teach us so many good lessons that we need the rest of our lives to disclose all of them!



EVENTS AT HEYBURN STATE PARK

Working with Heyburn State Park, the Park Store, and Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation.



Re-Creation Unlimited is a coordinated group of volunteer professionals donating their vacation to make the campers' experience more fun! ~ www.re-creationonline.org ~

Week 1

26-29 June

Our first week at Heyburn State Park started with a welcoming tour around the Park with Beth, a Park Ranger, showing and explaining to us the different uses and areas.

Our first activity was a Canoe Ride where we had the opportunity to interact with 15 people. We met a retired teacher who not only enjoyed being with us but volunteered to help with our activities. We also met a couple that, even though they did not participate, thanked us for the great job we were doing for all the campers.

We highlight the two activities that had the best turnout: At Children's Church we had 21 people and the Bible we drew was offered to Nicole, a girl who had been camping here last year (2014) with her grandmother who said: "She likes the programs very much. Last year we had lots of fun together. We went to all the activities."

At the Saturday's Evening Program we had 46 people participating. During the Pictionary Game, if someone drew

a bonus card, we would show a Health and Lifestyle video from the series "Facts with Hope". At the end of the Program, people said they had enjoyed the game and some kids came back to thank us.

It was an encouraging beginning!



Week 2

02-06 July

Our second week at the Park was very different from the first one. We prepared different programs on the 4th of July topic and we also tried a new activity - Beach Games (survival style).

“America’s Icon: The Bald Eagle” and “America’s Icon: The Stars and Stripes” were the two most popular programs during the week, with 35 and 36 participants. People enjoyed these evening programs and thanked us for the work we are doing here.

The second most popular activity was the “Beach Games” with 32 people playing and watching. John, one of the volunteers of the Park, helped us tirelessly, driving us (and all the balls, ropes, boards, papers, ...) to the beach, helping prepare the different stations of the Game and advertising it to the people on the beach. Some families told John that this was the first time their children had played a game like this and they had enjoyed it very much.

It was a very good week!



Week 3

09-13 July

Our third week at Heyburn State Park was marked by the first rainy days of our stay.

“Paddle and Walk” turned out to be a very interesting activity because it was the first time we had more opportunities to talk to people and meet them in a more personal way. One of the campers remembered Ruben Dias, a Portuguese RU volunteer who served here at Heyburn in 2010 - and that was a good memory for him! People thanked us for the activity and a lady said “It was very nice talking to you!”. We felt that this activity strengthened our relationship with the campers and we could confirm it some days later, when passing by their sites - they would greet us before we greeted them.

On the “Hike Indian Cliffs Trail” activity, although we had only 3 people, this very small group turned out to be the perfect size for the group. Migala, who had come to the “Paddle and Walk” the day before, invited Rosa and didn’t give up on her. From what we understood after walking the first third of the way,

Rosa hadn’t hiked like this for 10 years and she was almost sure she wouldn’t make it. We slowed down the pace and stopped several times (which took us twice as long) but Rosa got to the top and made it to the end of the trail - it had been worthwhile!

“Heyburn St Pk Treasures: 365 Days” was the most popular activity of the week, with 48 people attending. The songs, to start the program, are always welcome by the public and everyone moves, sings and claps their hands. We showed a video about the Park and some of the Rangers. We felt that people were happy and thankful for the program.

Although it rained all night from Friday to Saturday, and the Holiday feeling had decreased among campers, we still had a sunny Sunday afternoon and 22 people played and watched the Beach Games at Rocky Point.



Week 4

16-20 July

In our fourth week at the Park we had different families coming to several activities - something that had rarely happened before. "Your activities made our holidays better" said Jack, grandma and grandpa - three of our most enthusiastic participants.

Cam and Debbie came to two different activities. Whenever they found us around the park, they would stop and chat. It's very interesting getting to know people from different states or countries, like this couple from Calgary, Canada.

Lillie and Caydan were very shy when they first talked to us on Thursday evening. On Friday, they came to the three activities we had: Scavenger Hunt, Junior Rangers and the evening program. On Saturday morning they arrived way before the starting time. Mylee, Caydan's little sister, came along. When we told the kids we would offer a Bible, Lillie asked "What's a Bible?". We drew a Bible and she won it. She was very surprised. They were about to leave the Campground. Mylee came to us and hugged us. Lillie did the same.

"The kids love your programs. You're a blessing - I hope you know it" said a mom. At the "Who said you can't draw?" activity, Josh, an 8 year-old boy who had carefully followed our suggestions on how to draw the porcupine he had chosen added: "You're a good person".

After the last activity of the week, a couple stopped by and asked us some questions about the programs we were doing. We told them we prepare different activities: sports, evening programs, children's church & chapel, junior rangers, ... Jim was a Christian Pastor about to retire, who had previously studied Botany. His wife commented: "You could do this". "Why not?" he answered. They were happy to talk to us for a while and invited us to meet their son and daughter-in-law at their site.



Week 5

23-27 July

In our fifth week at Heyburn State Park, although we felt very tired and Ana felt sick, the right people helped us in the right moment.

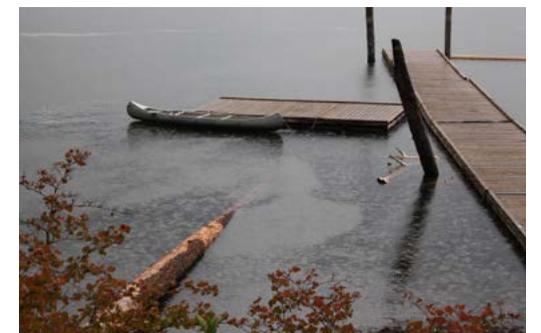
On Saturday evening, Ana was not feeling ok to present the Program and we found out that the microphone was broken. Susie, a bible worker from Plummer, whom we had met before, came to the Park with her family and some friends. She came at the right moment to help us - having time to prepare! - and telling the story to the kids. We felt blessed by having the help we needed when we most needed it.

On Thursday evening, we showed a movie about Water Safety and asked the public to write down 3 lessons they had learned. There was only one rule: "Avoid the obvious lessons - be creative!". We had many different and very creative answers. The public's memory and creativity was well used.

In our first week at Heyburn State Park, we planned a Volleyball Tourney at Hawley's Landing Campground but no one signed up. We decided to try

Beach Games at Rocky Point Beach the week after. We had a very good turnout with 5 teams playing. We decided to keep the Beach Games at Rocky Point every Sunday afternoon. This past Sunday was very windy and cold. We went to the beach in the morning to see if there were people around. The beach was empty and we considered cancelling the games. Despite that, we decided to keep the Beach Games and change them. We played the Portuguese version of the Dodgeball Game (a more friendly version - from what we understood). Some minutes before the starting time, the empty beach became a full beach - and almost everyone was there for the Games. Kids and adults played twice, in mixed teams. The same team won but they decided to share their prizes with the losing team.

Two big families came back the next day for the two activities of the day and we had the opportunity to talk to them more personally. During the Biking & Canoeing activity it started raining but the Doors family did not give up and won a deserved Little Debbie's umbrella.



Week 6

30 July - 03 August

Our sixth week at Heyburn State Park was less hectic than last week. Like in our first and second week, the weather was very hot and sultry and people seemed to prefer other activities (maybe sleeping!) because the Park was very silent.

Nonetheless, we had a nice surprise on Sunday afternoon with 8 teams signing up for the Beach Games and around 60 people watching and playing. They all seemed to be having fun and the atmosphere was very playful - mainly thanks to Calvin.

Calvin, a father with four sons, was the first to sign up and encouraged his family to come up with a name for their team. He stopped by, one hour before the games started, to know more about us and introduce himself. During the games, he would make everyone laugh and cheered all the teams up. After the games finished, he came with the whole family to take a picture with us and their prize. On their own initiative, they also helped us with tidying. "It was the first time in a long time that we had our whole family together. Thank you very much." he said with a handshake.

Having 8 teams playing became somewhat difficult to manage and do all the tasks required. Thankfully, we had 2 people helping us - taking pictures and counting the points for the jump rope game. Victoria, 15 years old, did a very good job with our camera - she captured very nice details of faces and emotions of the players.

The game took us a lot of work but it was worthwhile doing it and hearing encouraging feedback. "You did a good job! It was a lot of fun" a player said at the Campground after the games.

On the Scavenger Hunt, kids and parents got involved and played joyfully. A father, playing with her daughter, thanked us saying it had been a lot of fun to learn more about the Park even though he'd had to run a lot. We realised that he wouldn't tell the answers to his daughter - instead, he would help her think. A very good example of good teaching!

On our Friday evening program we showed a 15 minute movie about an Indian man who single-handedly planted a forest in a barren wasteland



for 40 years (this forest is now bigger than Central Park). This movie is narrated by an Indian Photographer whose English is a little hard to understand. We commented to each other that this movie might be difficult for children to understand, because of the Indian accent and subtitles, and wondered what to do to change it.

The following day, an 8 or 9 year old kid to whom we gave a Kids Magazine, told us: "I like your programs. I came yesterday. I liked the video about the Photographer very much." We were glad to hear that because by mentioning the Photographer, the kid actually told us he had understood the video. Also, the lessons that everyone wrote about the movie were very encouraging to us.

Alice, a Native American grandma, who had come to visit his son, came to several programs. On Sunday she wanted to see us because she was flying back to Minnesota the next day. Grandma, son and daughter-in-law came and talked to us for a couple of hours. It was very encouraging to know that she had enjoyed our programs and got to know us.

Week 7

06-10 August

Our seventh week at Heyburn State Park was very different from the other weeks, with very good things and one less good thing - João hurt his knee and we had to go see the doctor.

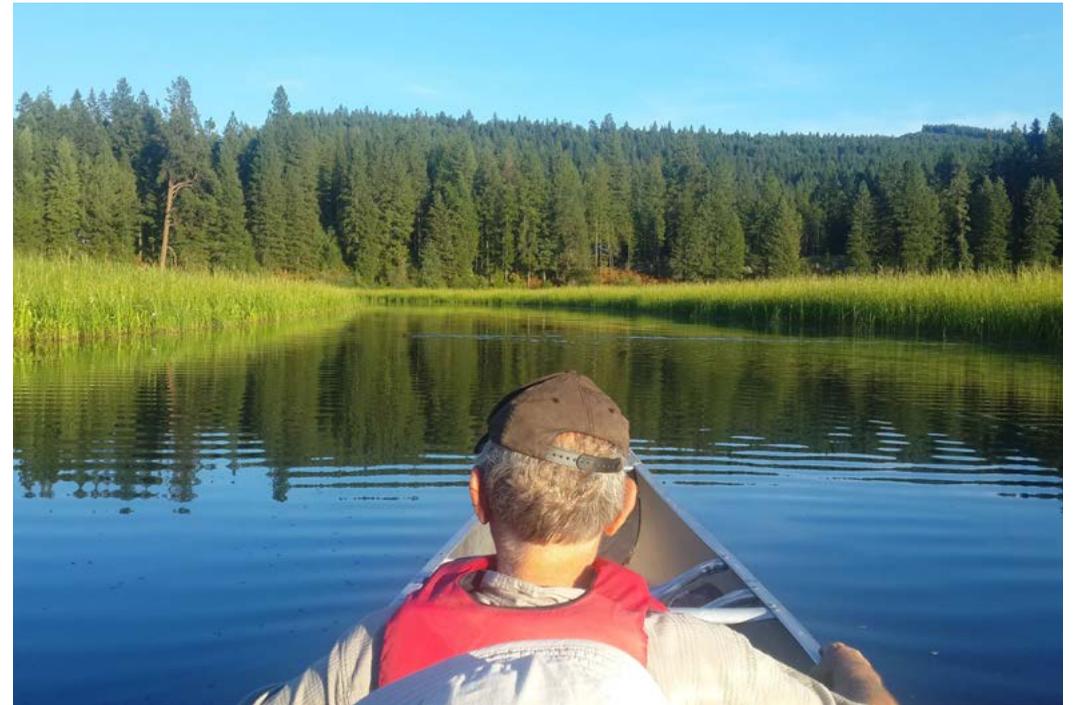
During our time off, we had the opportunity to go to a International Convention held in Spokane. There, we had the chance to talk to one of our sponsors and thank him personally for supporting Re-Creation Unlimited project.

We also had the chance to help on a Vacation Bible School, run in Plummer at the Community Center. We got to know some native american kids that live in this area. Some of them live in very poor and unstructured families which affects their behaviour. Knowing that and being able to help this VBS was a blessing!

Beth Sinamek, a Park Ranger, talked to us about a presentation on the 50 years of IDPR (Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation) that she wanted to do on Saturday evening. As the subject of our activity was related to her topic, we could easily conciliate

both programs. Although the Park was full, there was a very big group with their own activities and only two families came. Nonetheless, we were very glad to have her and Josh participating in our evening program and teaching us very interesting facts about Heyburn State Park.

We met Isabel at the "Paddle and Walk". "Her name sounds very Portuguese", we said to her mum. "Isabel was named after the Portuguese saint", she explained us. The following day, someone knocked at our door. "Hi, are you having canoe rides today?" They were Isabel's grandparents, and they had come on purpose from Benewah Campground, 6 miles from Hawley's Landing. We offered them a special and longer ride and they talked about Coimbra - saint Isabel's and João's hometown. Even though it was very difficult for João to help them get into the canoe due to their age and weight, they were very thankful for the extra ride and, as they had met Hilde and Leah last year (2014), they encouraged us to talk to more Portuguese friends and invite them to come next year.



Week 8

13-17 August

Our eighth week at the Park was reconforting and encouraging.

On Friday evening, as we were taking our wagon down the road to the Evening Program, a man, riding his bicycle, stopped to ask us for the Campground Hosts. We told him we were the Program Hosts and shared our program for the weekend. Ron told us their Church group (around 75 people) would be at the Campground until Sunday and invited all of them to join us on our Evening Program. The next day, they invited us to join them for lunch. We were very happy with the expression he used to describe our meeting: "This was a Divine Appointment".

On Sunday afternoon, the Beach Games were not so busy as usual but we had two very interesting teams playing - university students from Moscow and little girls with their moms. Although they were very different in age, strength and abilities, we were surprised by the final score: 174 and 182. The boys had won far more points than the girls when the last game - jump rope! - brought the girls to a point that everyone was expecting them to beat the boys! If they had jumped only 9 times more, the little

girls would had beaten the university young men! Everyone was happy to participate. They went away and after a while of talking to each other, the boys came back to thank us and ask some questions: "How did you apply to this volunteering program? Is it a company? How long have you been here?" We told them about Re-Creation Unlimited organization and showed them our sponsors on our t-shirts. They were very interested about the project.

This afternoon ended up with a very encouraging conversation with John Allison, a retired firefighter and Park volunteer. He helped us understand that all the little actions can make a big (good) difference.

The Park Staff Barbecue was another special moment of the week. We dedicated our Monday afternoon preparing our best dishes for the potluck - tofu & mushroom shishkebab - those who tried liked them very much! Nicole, a seasonal workers, could not be there because her kids were sick. She said "I waited for this event the whole season and I missed it." This is how important this event was for the workers. We enjoyed it very much.



Week 9

20-24 August

Our ninth week at Heyburn State Park will be remembered by the question “What brought you here?” and the opportunities we had to share our purpose to volunteer.

“Thank you very much for the games”, a young couple with an 11 month baby that were with a non-denominational Church group, came to talk to us after the games. “What brought you here?” We told them about RU. The mom kept asking questions. “Has this been a good experience for you and your husband as a couple? How long have you been married? Do you go to church in Portugal?” We told her about our Children’s Church and Chapel. “We had our Church service this morning here at the Park”, she added. I told them we had some magazines for kids and she volunteered to come with me. She actually told the kids “This magazine is very good. I used to read it when I was a young teenager.” She paused. “This was definitely a highlight in our weekend.”

On Thursday night we showed the movie Fireproof. “Thank you so much for the good movie. We’re also Christians. God does amazing things!”,

said a father that had come with his family. “Great statement for our country. We should have more people believing!”, said a 75ish year old man before leaving.

Erika’s husband shocked his hand on mine in a thank-you-it-was-fun way and added: “We had fun! Thank you very much. It was the funniest...” and we couldn’t understand what he said next but one thing that’s for sure. They were the funniest group we had in our Evening Programs, both on Friday and Saturday evening. We had a lot of fun with them and that helped us take everything more easily. For the first time, we felt comfortable adapting our program *in loco*, to tell the kids’ story without reading it and the public enjoyed it very much.

Hannah waved and kept walking as if she was going somewhere. I stopped and she stopped and looked at me. “Could you come again next year?” she asked. We talked for a while. “It was very nice to meet you Hannah”, I said before leaving. “See you”, she paused. “See you next year”, she added.



Week 10

27-31 August

Our tenth week at Heyburn State Park was very special. We had three families inviting us for dinner and we felt people's appreciation for our work and friendship over the last weeks.

"I've been to so many Parks and I didn't know we have wild rice and water potatoes here. And it's the first time we have recreation activities. This is awesome. Thank you so much!" For Linda, Interpretation and Re-Creation on the Park made a big difference.

"Hi, good morning! You are our first guest!", João welcomed the boy that had arrived ahead of time. "I love your activities!", Bailey said smiling. This was the second time we heard him saying this. The first time was right before the Evening Program when he, too, arrived ahead of time.

We met Melvin and Suzie at Plummer SDA church and got to know them better throughout the weeks. They came to Idaho as missionaries for the Native American a year ago and they love their mission. They used to harvest wild rice in Minnesota, the place they call home.

Melvin is 100% Ojibwa, Lac la Croix, CA and Suzie is 1/16 Winnebago, NE. We invited them to join us on a Wild Rice Harvest program for the public. They joyfully accepted. Benjamin, an office worker, called me: "Everyone loved the activity - kids and adults! They wanted me to let you know".

"...this Re-Creation thing...", a man's voice was heard "...we thought it was the best thing since..." a woman answered while cycling down the road. We didn't hear what they said next but the man answered enthusiastically "Yeah!".

"I memorized you from the... Young and ... Rockless (he meant Reckless but we all understood) movie yesterday", said Tyrin, a 4 year old boy that came to the Scavenger Hunt. "Yes, it's me. What lessons did you guys learned with the movie?" "Don't drink and drive." said one of them. "US Coast guard..." "Approved", I added. "Always wear a life jacket.", they concluded. The Water Safety movie and game had been effective.



Week 11

03-06 September

Our eleventh and last week at Heyburn State Park is a mix of excitement and sadness. Excitement to go back home and sadness for leaving a place that taught us so many good things. Many special good memories will stay with us forever.

João's leg is not doing very well - he's torn his muscle on the upper leg. Even so, we are grateful that this happened in our last week and not before and that the doctor said he doesn't need to be operated. We thank God for that.

Last week we had the chance to visit Walla Walla University and Milton-Freeway church. "I heard about Re-Creation Unlimited some 30 years ago. Is it still going on?", a 70ish man asked. "Yes! For 35 years!" we replied. What a blessing to be part of a project that reached its 35th anniversary, has blessed so many people and it's still going on!

In our last Evening Program we showed the movie "Forest Man". It was a very inspiring way to finish our evening programs at the Park

and also "begin the year". Everyone was challenged to write down a lesson they had learned and try to be creative, avoiding the obvious lessons!

We had very creative and also very profound lessons. People enjoyed the program and we pray that these encouraging lessons remain in their minds during the whole year!

- Even if no one notices the results of your hard work, keep up the good job until the fruits become visible
- Work the harder and then the smarter way, take advantage of the fruit of your job to enlarge your achievements.

- One single man can make a huge difference - I can make the difference!

It has been raining for a long time and we were thinking of canceling the Beach Games. We wanted to say bye to Melvin, Suzie and their family. We found out that the kids really wanted to come to the Beach Games. We prepared the games for them and played with them. It was a very special way to close our Summer activities!

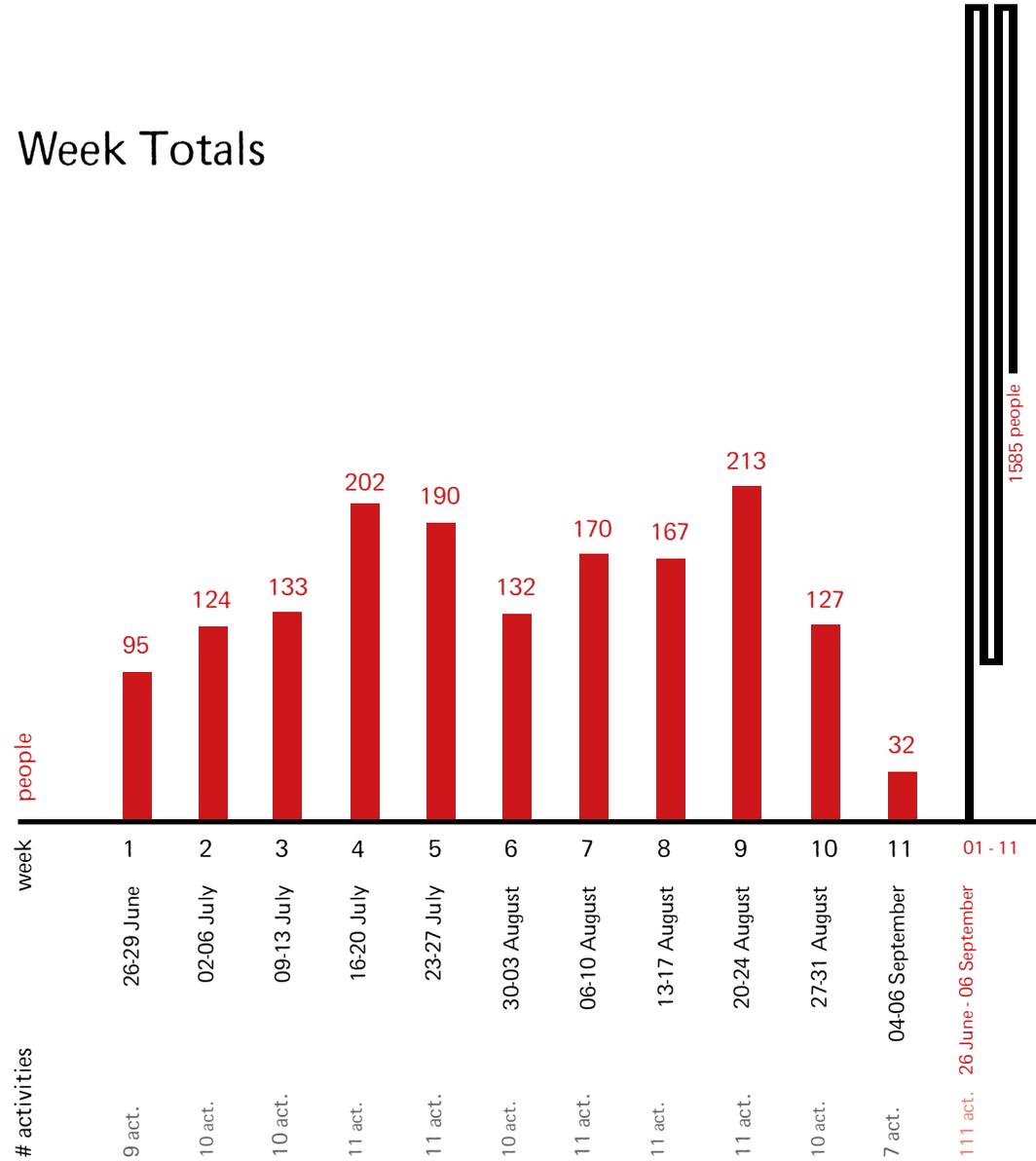


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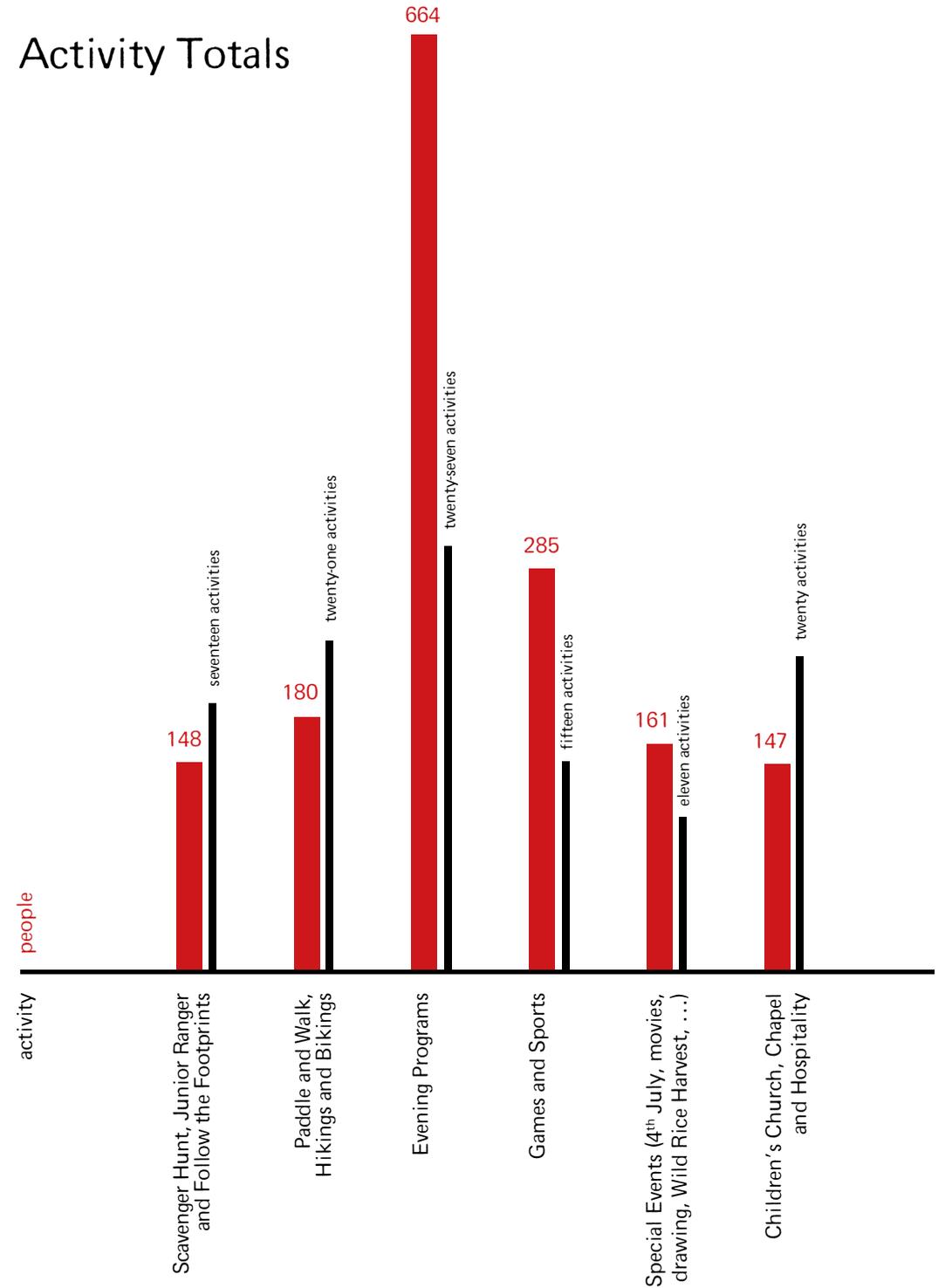
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Week Totals



Activity Totals



Week 12

the rest of our lives

Thank you for making this project possible!

Besides receiving many blessings here, the lessons learned will last for the years to come and that will bring, for sure, even more blessings!

Come visit us in Portugal!

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“There is a time
for everything, and
a season for every
activity under heaven.
[...] God has made
everything beautiful
in its time. He has
also set eternity in the
hearts of men.
[...] There is nothing
better for men than to
be happy and do good
while they live.”

Bible, Ecclesiastes 3:1,11,12

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