

Protected and respected

Rights of children and adolescents have constitutional rank and laws

SIX YEARS DISTRESSING THE PEOPLE OF PROPATRIA

Dancing to the rhythm of Gerdalis

This community leader has turned her passion into her job. Now she brings joy and health to everybody



She walks as if she were on the dance floor, from one place to another, always moving around. She likes it that way, or at least that's the style she has adopted.

It couldn't be different, Gerdalis Valladares has been the coordinator of the Municipal Institute of Aerobics Sports, and Recreation (Impere Spanish Acronym) along six years. She makes 280 people to dance every day.

Gerdalis has a large repertoire. It goes from Arab dancing, aero-dancing (a mixture of aerobics and dancing), combat fitness (Tae Bo, a mixture of taekwondo, boxing and rapid pace), to dancing therapy, and muscular endurance exercises.

Gerdalis' dance lessons have become very popular. More than 70 people attend her morning classes from 9 to 11 and in the afternoon from 4 to 6. They usually go from Monday to Friday in the Sports Center Mariano Montilla on the 8th Street of Propatria.

Born to dance

From the very moment Gerdalis stood on her feet in the cradle, she is dancing. She never missed the school choreographies. She never attended an academy but she says "I feel dancing running through my veins, I love it. When I dance I'm tireless."

Yazmira's classes are a must-see. She cheers people up, inciting them to move and dance. Once you see it, you understand why people go there: they are motivated and inspired by the energy she transmits.

Though her schedule is full, having to split her time between the dancing therapies for the Imdere workers and the Banvene and Fundarte students, Yazmira believes there is nothing better than doing what you really love.



Defeating the monster

Besides working for the health of her students, Gerdalis is a hard social worker too, leaving positive and tangible results for those she helps.

For example, eight years ago, the Sports Center Mariano Montilla was not what it is today, but an abandoned place suitable for the likes of offenders. The place was so lost to crime that the neighbors used to call it "the green monster" ("el monstruo verde" in Spanish.) They never dare to even look at it.

Gerdalis tells how the support of the Bolivarian government helped the community to rescue the Sports Center after months of struggle. Some of members of the community had to sleep on the site in order to force the bad guys to leave the area. And they finally made it.

No Stress

Once the Sports Center was back on the hands of the community, the structure was restored, and special equipment for exercise was brought in. Different sports instructors were brought; soon the facilities were scheduled with several disciplines like soccer, boxing, volleyball and aerobics.

Yazmira is proud of her achievements and ready to keep on working for her people, putting her knowledge and abilities at the service of her community.

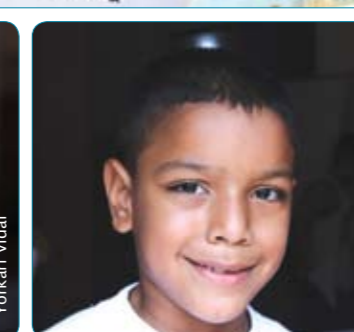
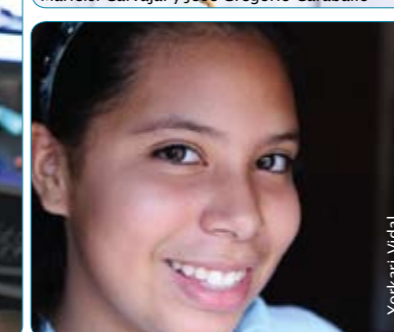
With Dancing Therapy people get to exercise, but they also "get rid of stress and meet new people", says Gerdalis. But she also warns "Those who come here stay here; because they fall in love with the environment, the classes, and the people. And they fall in love with their teacher, of course." ♦

Luis Eloy Pacheco

THE WORK OF THE SOWERS OF THE HOMETLAND STARTS SPROUTING

Kids are changing their neighborhood

150 children from Petare teach values to their fellows and adults



For over one year, the kids from the slum Antonio Jose de Sucre in Petare have spent their weekend sharing experiences, knowledge and learning how to become the new men and women the new developing society requires.

They are part of Los Semilleros de la Patria (the Sowers of the Homeland). This program is developed by Mission Children of the Barrio and its main goal is to make children and adolescents to reinforce their values of common welfare, social duty, justice, dignity, ecological conscience, peace, solidarity, and love for the homeland and humanity.

The most important aspect of the program is that the kids cover every corner of their communities every weekend teaching others what they every weekend. This way, they become reproducers of knowledge within their communities, and also, transform their surroundings.

No Idle Time

Mirielsi Carvajal is ten years old and has devoted every weekend of the last year to the activities with the ecological, sport, educative and recreational activities together with the sower team. "We join the activity we feel comfortable with, and then we train the children."

She explains that they do many activities including cleaning public places, sowing plants, spreading recycling, health and environmental

campaigns. She laughs when she admits having joined the squads because of the fun side of it. Later on, she started calling the children to join the program every weekend.

Sowing values, harvesting conscience

Jose Gregorio Caraballo (14) joined the group first as an opportunity to practice his favorite sport, but he was soon drawn to other activities related to his community.

Marielsi and him started performing cleaning activities and recycling campaigns in the Roman Cardenas School. "We try to create conscience in the people with our messages about the importance of not dropping garbage, teaching how to separate garbage in the containers, and talking about recycling."

During the electric power saving campaign, they went door by door telling neighbors how to save power in their houses in different ways.

"During Last year's carnivals we built a giant light bulb float made of recycled material; we won the first prize," says a Marielsi proudly.

The kids share their knowledge with the help of adult trainers. When they talk to children they try to convince them to join the group so that they know what a Sower is, and how they can help the community. ♦

Luis Eloy Pacheco

Marisol Sánchez, Member of the Communal Council Antonio Jose de Sucre : "its amazing to see the impact of the children's role in changing the conscience of the community."

Yorkari Vidal, 13 years old: "I feel very well because these activities entertain us and also make us better people. Teachers teach us a lot and keep us out the streets, doing good things for everybody."

Eloy Bravo, 7 years old: "Here we learn how to make friends and how to give and get love, that's why I feel so happy sharing everything with my partners."

Marielsi and José Gregorio, They would like that all Venezuelan kids join the group and start doing things like sports, and study more, so that they draw away from idleness and become useful.

LOPNA'S 11 ANNIVERSARY

"Now we are recognized as subjects of law"

There are 11 Communal Centers for Comprehensive Protection that are part of the nation-wide system that looks after the rights of thousands of boys, girls, and adolescents throughout the nation



There's nothing more moving than the cry of a mother. For those of us who were there, our hearts were shaken when we witnessed the overwhelmed eyes of a woman letting intense and deeply felt tears to fall.

Many moms couldn't hold the tears when they watched the mini play by the kids and teachers from the Communal Center for Comprehensive Protection (CCPI in Spanish acronym). The play portrayed how the rights of some boys, girls and adolescents are violated in the country.

The moment that snatched tears from many moms present in the audience was when a doctor (played by Eloina Gonzalez, teacher at the day care center) announces a worried mother (played by Winny Baez, care taker of the center) that her small child had died because the medical treatment was not applied on time. Many in

the audience cried for real when the character cried hugging her dead child. But after a few seconds the girl comes back to life smiling and producing applause from the audience.

The mini play, of collective origin, portrayed in a clear and moving way how the rights to health and life of children and adolescents could get violated. The law that protects them, The Law for the Protection of Children and Adolescents (LOPNA Spanish acronym) celebrates its 11th anniversary.

A happy birthday

The celebration of the 11th anniversary of the LOPNA was marked by laughter, hugs, and the hustle and bustle. In the midst of a colorful environment, members of the Developing Commune La Bombilla de Punta a Punta gather

together for a common goal: celebrate the welfare of the children and adolescents of their community.

The playground located on the third floor of the CCPI was scenario chosen by teachers, coordinators, and representatives to celebrate the special date. Grillito Cri Cri is an open space for organized communities; in there, members of 19 Communal Councils provide comprehensive protection to children and adolescents in vulnerability situation. The National Independent Council for the Rights of Children and Adolescents provides assistance to the communities in this respect.

Friendship, fraternity and respect

Every morning at 6:00 AM parents walk 84 children to the orange house. The ages of the kids

range from just a few months to 12 years old. In there, 23 people from the different communities within the Developing Commune receives the children from Mondays to Fridays and provide them with comprehensive care, medical services, educational and pedagogical support, balance nutrition, and recreation.

Nelly Maria Vargas has been working in the center for 5 months, providing day care to children up to 2 years old. She explains how she's currently working with 13 kids in different areas such as motor, and listening skills, basic concepts of music, and reinforces values of friendship, fraternity and respect.

"Never before had I seen something like this. I saw it far away, as if you are told "I'm going to marry you" but you never believe it's going to happen. But a year went by and suddenly we had it", says Nelly.

These centers are meant for the participation of the members of the communities. The communal councils take care of the management, turning them into engines and strengthening elements for the families. Their development aims at the protection of children and adolescents established by LOPNA.

Communal Property

Henry Jaimes is a student of the fourth year of Social Work at Central University of Venezuela, and he is doing his internship at Grillito Cri Cri. He was the director of the celebration of the 11th years of the Law. At the beginning of the ceremony he said: "Many people believe LOPNA is a kind of police, but I tell them to look at it as a friend who wants everybody to respect each other and guarantees children and adolescents have full rights. The Law also reinforces the value of the family as the core of the society and the sense of co-responsibility within the community." The brief

introduction also exposed the advances made in the area.

Henry and other three classmates work in the center on weekends since last November. "We work with the communal councils. This, for example is a communal property house. Everything we do is their initiative and we work with members of the community, many of them are mothers of several children," he says.

Before the CCPI was established in La Bombilla, members of the 19 communal councils received training by Idenna and the National Institute For Socialist Education and Training. Once that early stage was covered, 23 people were selected to work in the center.

"Each one of them is doing a specific job, learning and improving every day. There are people from various communities such as Colinas, Brisas, Sector II and Cumbre de Bombilla," says Carmen Aponte, main voice of the commune and coordinator at the center. "We started using the knowledge we already had, and then, there was a census done, a social study, and a few surveys by the social worker. After this, we selected the most vulnerable children. By these means, the commune determined that 8 kids didn't have identification yet, and other 10 were not studying. The community together to solve these problems.

The Center started operation on October 2010. Camenchu, (Carmen's nickname) says the learning process by children and adults hasn't stopped since. They have the support of different institutions and the State, and also the community participates.

Sandra Carrera, for example works as coordinator at the center, is the speaker of the Communal Council of La Bombilla III, and she is also a pre-school teacher who trains people in the center. ♦ **Degnys Merlo**



Protective Law

The 1999 Constitution recognized the advancements made during the last 40 years in the areas of the rights for children and adolescents. The Constitution recognized The International Convention for the Rights of Children approved in 1989 sees the primary principles of the Comprehensive Protection Doctrine including the recognition of children and adolescents as subjects of law. It also contemplates the fundamental role of families and the co-responsibility of the State, and society in the comprehensive protection of childhood and adolescents.

LOPNA came to effect on April 1st 2000 and was reformed in 2007. It's based on the Article 78 of the 1999 Constitution. Its main goal is to guarantee the protection and rights that the State, the family and the society should provide to children from the moment of birth.

The Law of Special Procedures for the Family Protection of Children and Adolescents, in effect since 2010 establishes the special administrative procedures to take place in terms of family protection for children and adolescents. Some procedures include: conciliation, mediation, and other popular initiative that solves family controversies, and protects the human rights of children and adolescents. It also promotes peace, and family social and community harmony.

We love everything!

If you want to know what the people at the CCPI think, just take a look at the smiles of the little ones.

"Here I do my homework, watch cartoons, and paint" says 8 year-old Steven. He then adds that what he likes the most is computing.

Joyci, 4 years old says with an angelic smile "I like the break time".

12 year-old Ana Gabriela collaborates with the teacher in attending the little ones. She says she is taught in the center how to study, respect older people, and do homework. "We have the right to learn" says the girl, who loves all activities especially the sports. "I love being on the court, play volleyball, and kickingball."

When children from 2 to 12 years old are asked what do they like about the center, they all say the same: "Everything!"



YAZMIRA AHUMADA LEARNED BY USING THREADS AND PIECES OF CLOTHS

Making up dreams

Working for the welfare of her community is her biggest satisfaction

Perseverance and faith have been the basis of Yazmira Ahumada's struggle for three years. Yazmira (45) has devoted her youth to bring up her children. She has always wanted to be a doctor, but working to keep her family became a priority. She is really proud of her children and the achievement of her dreams.

Yazmira is a go-ahead woman who took opportunity of studying Comprehensive Medicine at Mission Sucre, where she attends the 2dn semester. Her dream of becoming a doctor is no longer her primary goal. She now dreams of helping to solve the problems of her community.

Since three years, Yasmira, along with six other social fighters, is part of the cooperative Una Nueva Alternativa, a textile micro-factory that manufactures cloths as part of a socio-productive project financed by the Mission Madres del Barrio in the Josefa Joaquina Sanchez community.

Dressmaking

When the mission arrived to the 18th street of El Valle parish, Yazmira's life changed for good. "It was a great joy for us. The organized community - through the communal councils- presented our proposal through which we received \$8,138 in order to start our own business," she says enthusiastically.

The textile company started at top speed in 2008. Yazmira says they were just dressmaking beginners at that time, but "after my sister trained us, we become professionals."



On one corner, there are purple, red and white threads, along with many other colors in the shelves where she places her working tools. She makes a pause in our conversation to tell us that the Mission Madres del Barrio has "recognized the cooperative's work in favor of the community. We received the award from President Chávez."

As a detachment act, Yazmira renounced to her monthly payment of nearly BsF 1,000 (\$430) because she is already being paid as a facilitator for the Mission Ribas in the Cultural House Negro Primero. "I can not deny other women the opportunity of moving forward," she says.

Love is paid with love

Yazmira has busy days. When she is not making clothes and school uniforms, she gives classes to children or giving lectures on the prevention of early pregnancy to young girls of the community.

She starts working at 8:00 AM and ends at 3:00 PM. This schedule allows her to pick up one of Ambar (her daughter) at school. Working from her house us a great advantage, she says smiling. "This is the way I can be part of the activities programmed by the Community

Council of Santa Elena. For instance, we've been able to restore most of our houses by bringing Mission Tricolor to the neighborhood."

The afternoon falls. Yazmira looks at her children and says: "They are my biggest inspiration. I want a good quality of life for them and my community." ♦ Daniela Uzcatia



Horizon extends deep in the plains



18,000 vehicles daily are expected to use the highway that crosses the states of Barinas, Cojedes and Portuguesa

With the construction of Jose Antonio Paez highway the road does is not to long and dark for those who travel by the states of Portuguesa, Cojedes, and Barinas. The highways has six connections in the middle of of the savannah, among bushes, cows, and egrets; with a perfect view on the foothills of Los Andes.

Since this work started in 2006, over BsF \$13,947,000 million were invested and over 14,000 jobs were created after concluding the sections of Avispero-Morador (11.1 miles) and La Chorrera- La Catala (8.6 miles). In 2007, this stretch extended up to reach the Morador-Ospino section (6.2 miles)

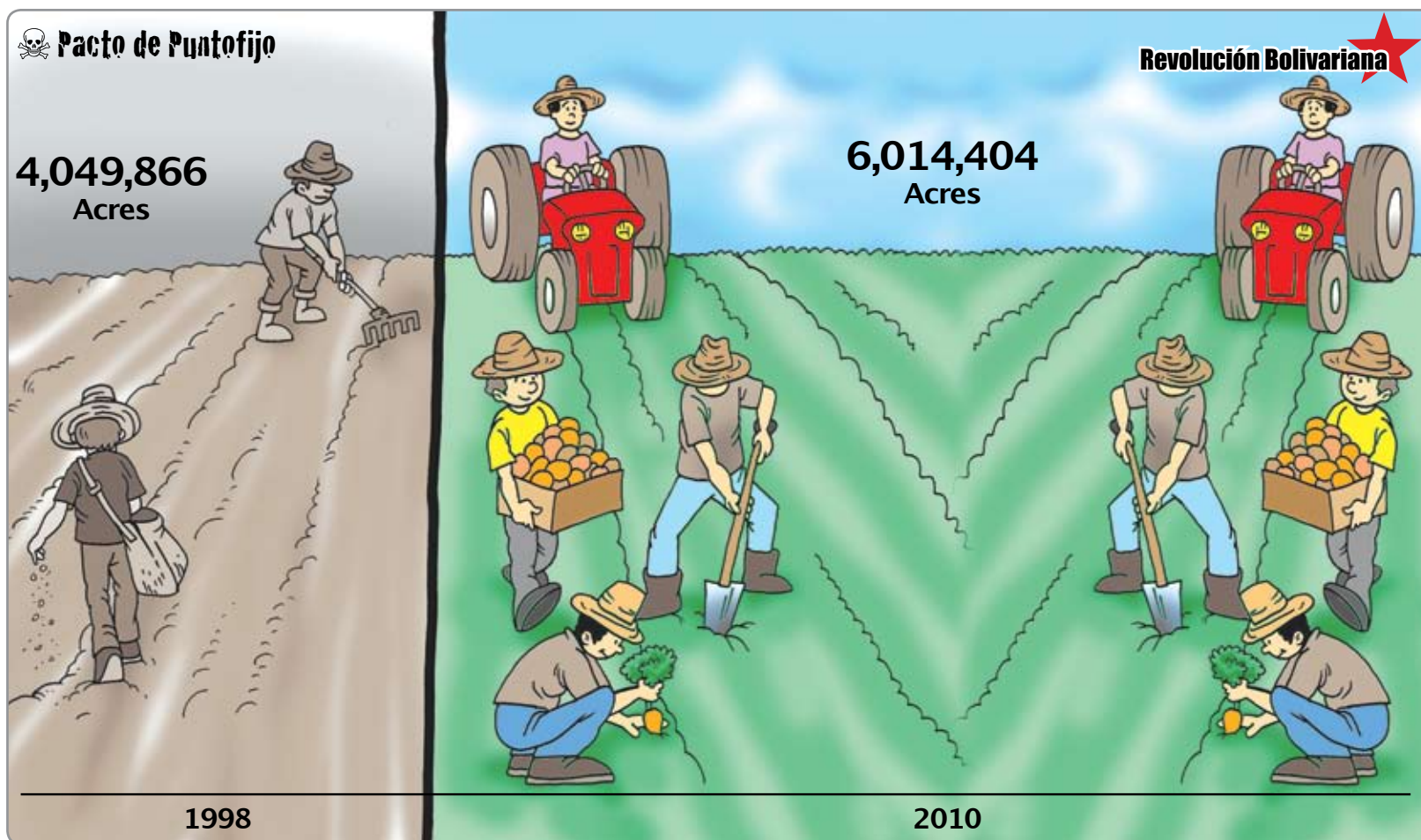
By 2008, the stretch Cojeditos-La Chorrera (7.4 miles) was connected, as well as the section

Agua Blanca-La Cascada (6.2 miles), inaugurated by President Chávez in 2010. And, the last section of San Rafael de Onoto-Cojeditos (3.10 miles) was finished last October.

Over 4 million vehicles are expected to make use of the highway. This flow will strengthen food distribution, tourism, and housing in the region. It will also work as a link to the economic activities of the communities which will be promoting their social-property enterprises such as stores, hotels, gas stations, and highway security works.

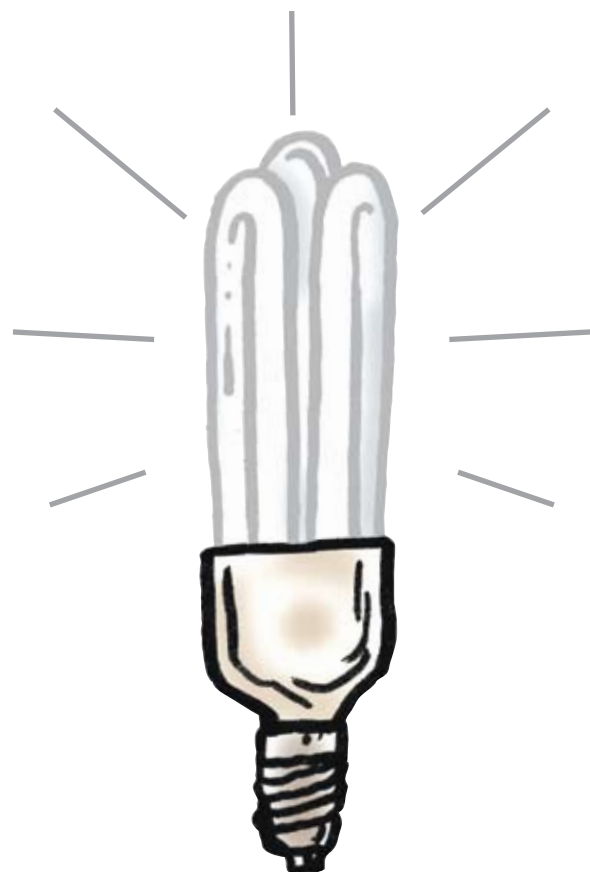
Only one stretch to be finished is La Cascada- San Rafael de Onoto (6.2 miles). Only one stretch to open yourself to development, listening to the local music of wranglers and cowboys.

Harvested Land Increased 48%



Source: Ministry of People's Power for Agriculture and Lands

Replacement of incandescent light bulbs allowed saving of 2,097 MW



- Residential Stage I (Sep 2006 - Feb 2007):**
53,165,181 light bulbs replaced.
Electric Power saving: 1,400 Megawatts (MW)
- Residential Stage II (Mayo 2007- Feb 2008):**
15,364,793 light bulbs replaced.
Electric Power saving: 400 MW
- Sustainability Stage (Abril 2008 - Sep 2008):**
11,300,000 light bulbs Installed .
Goal to achieve (10.006.596) was exceeded by 12.9 %.
Electric Power saving: 297 MW

Over 5 million tons of CO2 saved

Under Sustainability Stage Today:
50 million light bulbs replaced by March 4, 2011



Source: Ministry of People's Power for Electric Energy