



Santa Claus is Alive and Well on the Streets of Bogota

IT was Christmas, 1973, when teenager Jaime Jaramillo first became involved with Colombia's abandoned children. The son of a wealthy businessman, Jaime was taking a stroll in downtown Bogota on the day that he was to witness an event that was to change his life forever.

A bunch of street children were playing in the streets as a fancy car passed by. From the car window, a pretty doll's box was thrown and one of the children, a little 7-year-old girl, ran to catch the colourful box. Tragically, a large truck turned the corner and hit the child. She died instantly — all for an empty

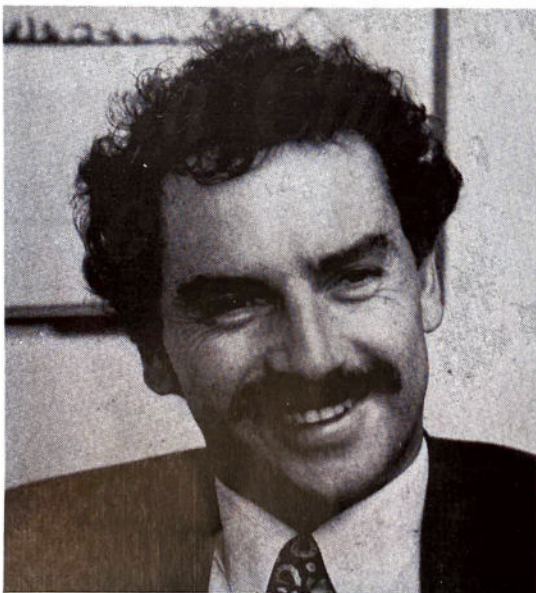
box. Jaime was horrified by what he saw and at that moment he knew what he was born to do—to help Colombia's abandoned children. That Christmas, Santa Claus of the Street Children was born.

Jaime bought a Santa suit and sacks of presents and spent that Christmas on the streets giving out presents. More importantly, this was to be the beginning of Jaime's life-long relationship with many of Bogota's 5,000 homeless children.

Jaime's efforts did not cease once Christmas was over. Every December Jaime does become Santa Claus to the children of the

streets (and later to the children of the sewers) bringing with him presents and an abundance of "love".

During the "off" season, Jaime is like a plain-clothed Santa bringing with him food, medication and clothes into the sewers and onto the streets. Little did Jaime realize at the tender age of 17 what an enormous impact the events of Christmas of '73 would have. Twenty-one years on Jaime has over 1,500 children in his care and his relentless crusade, campaigning for the plight of so-called "disposables" continues. Surely Santa Claus really does exist?



Jaime Jaramillo, 21 years on.



*Streets of Bogota, December.
Jaime on his annual Christmas rounds.*

NEWS FROM COLOMBIA

VOLUNTEER Vincent Dixon from Kilkenny has just returned from a stay at the Foundation in Bogota and Manizales. It is two years since Vincent's last visit. The following is his update on the children there:

“Although the number of children at the Foundation has not changed much in the last year, I believe that their quality of life has improved enormously. This is mainly due to the progress that has been made in the rehabilitation, social and education programmes. This is quite apparent as the children show far more concentration and seem a lot more settled.

In Manizales all the children go to state schools. This year in Cajica twenty-four children sat the state exams and all of them received their certificate. The children's day is very organised from the time they get up at 5.30 a.m. until bedtime. They have some free time but not so much as to get bored and there are lots of recreational activities.

The psychologists and social workers at the various centres note a detailed evaluation of each child on a daily, weekly and monthly basis. These evaluations cover the child's social skills, physical health, deportment, rehabilitation. Each of the subjects studied at school are also evaluated. As it

is a very thorough evaluation it creates a complete picture of the child's progress and should there be a problem, it helps identify it quickly. Every evening the children are also asked to evaluate their day, and their comments are noted.

I stayed for a few days with the children at Manizales and slept at the Foundation. This allowed me to really see how the children interact. It was very heartening to see that in general they are very happy and they all get along well. I saw no bullying at all, which surprised me, as one might expect to see some where a large number of children live together. The children support each other and very clearly respect each other's feelings. They are very proud of each other's progress and love to learn whether it be a few words of English or about Ireland. (They like U2!).

I left Colombia very pleased that I had been able to share in the children's obvious happiness.

My overall feeling is that the Foundation in Colombia has made great progress in the last two years and really deserves our full support.”



You may remember Juan from our Christmas Card. At that time Juan was living in the full-time care of the Foundation. He is now a five-day boarder, staying with his parents at weekends.

PROGRESS . . .



Milton, born in a sewer and rescued by Jaime at the age of one.



Milton today.

NEWS FROM HOME

FOREIGN COIN APPEAL!

BRENDAN FLYNN, the brain behind the very successful ongoing 5p Appeal and now the pioneer of our equally successful foreign coin appeal, sends you this message:

"As some of you are aware, I recently launched an appeal for foreign coins (old or new) and I must tell you that I have been overwhelmed by your wonderful response. Our huge collection jar in the Ulster Bank, College Green, Dublin, has been emptied twice since August. It will remain in Ulster Bank indefinitely. I have really appreciated and enjoyed your phone calls and going out on my collection round. To date I have received over 20,000 coins and I have eight coin dealers in the U.K. waiting to bid for them. Should you, by any chance, have a few notes or coins tucked away in a drawer or box, please contact me and I will arrange a collection date.

Meanwhile, I have collected almost £6,000 worth of 5p's thanks to your great support. Please keep them coming in!

My goal is to raise £10,000 for the children, so I'm over the half way mark. I intend going to Colombia in early 1995 to meet the children and to present Jaime with a large cheque.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere thanks for your valuable support.

BRENDAN FLYNN (01) 6609818



A bicycle made for two! Some participants in the Dublin to Kilkenny Cycle.

DUBLIN TO KILKENNY CYCLE

Children of the Andes ran its first sponsored charity cycle on the 17 September. The event was a great success, raising in excess of £6,000 between 30 cyclists. Thankfully, we had no injuries and a fun day was had by all. Thanks to *Mars, Volvic, Coke, Cola, Fyffes* and *Superquinn*, participants were well looked after and it was a cost-free event.

From the very positive feedback that we have received we intend to make the cycle an annual event and we are confident that next summer we will double our number of cyclists.

Jaime Due to Visit Ireland

JAIME JARAMILLO is due in Ireland in February 1995. Jaime will be appearing on "Anderson On The Box" (BBC1). It is our intention to launch the charity in Northern Ireland via the TV show.

Jaime will also be giving interviews to the *Sunday Independent*, *The Irish Catholic* and the *Belfast Telegraph*.

As 1994 has proved to be the most difficult year for the charity we are hoping that Jaime's visit will give us a much-needed boost.

MINI-MARATHON '94



Congratulations and very many thanks to those who ran for the charity in the Women's Marathon in June. We very much appreciated the support and the publicity created.

Christmas Cards and Calendars

This year we have put together a beautiful black and white calendar as well as Christmas cards with similar pictures. Each of the seven page calendars shows a picture of a child rescued by Jaime and tells the happy ending to that child's story. We think that the calendar makes for a lovely present and it also explains the work and positive effect of Children of The Andes charity.

CALENDARS £5.00 plus 50p P&P

Having sold 10,000 Christmas cards last year we have taken a big step this year having 15,000 cards printed. We hope that you can help us by either selling or buying some cards. Not only do we gain from the profit made on the sale of the cards but equally important from the publicity the cards create. It is a simple way of highlighting the plight of the children.

A PACK OF 10 CARDS WITH 2 DESIGNS COSTS £3.99 (incl. postage)

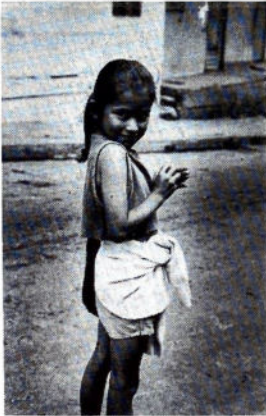
For your convenience, and to enable us to deal with your order promptly, please fill in the form below and return it to our PO BOX together with a cheque or Postal Order made payable to the charity.

PLEASE MARK YOUR ENVELOPE "CHRISTMAS CARD" OR "CALENDAR ORDER"

On behalf of Jaime and the children I would like to wish you all a VERY HAPPY CHRISTMAS AND PEACEFUL NEW YEAR.

Christine Thornton

CHRISTINE THORNTON
Irish Representative



MAY

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JUNE

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1995 Calendar

Children of the Andes

would like to acknowledge with sincere thanks The People Newspaper Group who very kindly sponsored the printing of this Newsletter.

NAME

ADDRESS

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ITEM

TOTAL

DATE