

*Le*

# *Saint-Louisien*

*Projects Abroad Senegal Newsletter*



## Letter from the Editor

Hi Everyone!

A lot of our summer volunteers have left, but September has still been full of celebration, with the end of Ramadan and also the Magal des 2 Rakkas, which saw over a million Mouride pilgrims come to Saint-Louis. September also marks the end of Habib's time with us at Projects Abroad, one of our volunteer coordinators. We're all sad to see him leave Saint-Louis, but it's nice to know there's a friendly, familiar face in Dakar when we take trips down to the capital!

A huge thanks to everyone who contributed to the newsletter this month! Special thanks go to:

- Tayib Fall, one of our volunteer coordinators, for writing about the Magal des 2 Rakkas.
- Charley Du, Maria Racero, Chloé Fouques, Katie Pons, Vicky Liu & Noelle Markle for contributing to Habib's send off!
- Adrienne Larson for her photo of the month submission!

I'd like to invite you to find our Official Facebook Group by searching *Projects Abroad Senegal – The Official Group*. Also if you would like, add me as a friend so we can be in touch before, during and after your trip to Senegal! My Facebook name is Erica Projects-Abroad. Or if you are a Twitter fan, you can also follow the latest news here; our name is *Proj\_AbroadSN*.



Best wishes from Senegal!

**Erica Frerking**  
**Social Manager**



# Volunteer Activities

## Football Match: Senegal vs. DRC

Saturday, September 2 was the African Cup of Nations qualifying match between the national teams of Senegal and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Two of us staff members decided to take a trip down to Dakar to see the match, and we were joined by two other volunteers. We took a bus filled with devoted football fans from Saint-Louis to Dakar, which left at 4 am and arrived around 9.



After relaxing and taking a long nap, to recuperate from the drive, we made our way to the stadium in the afternoon, got tickets, and claimed seats inside, ready for the game to start. It was explained to us that the current trainer of

the DRC team used to be the trainer for Senegal, and so this match was important and poignant.

Senegal played well though, scoring 2 goals and not letting any in! Both goals were scored by Moussa Sow, a native of Dakar, and the stadium went nuts with excitement! Certain musical spectators had brought along drums which they entertained the crowd with throughout the match, and the atmosphere was extremely jovial.

When the game ended, we boarded our bus to make our way back to Saint-Louis, arriving just in time for the morning prayer. The trip was long and a bit tiring, but worth every minute!



## Culture

### *Korité: Celebrating the end of Ramadan*

Ramadan is the sacred month in Islam when it was believed that the first verses of the Koran were presented to the Prophet Muhammed by God. During this month, Muslims abstain from eating, drinking, smoking and sex during daylight hours to teach them patience, spirituality, humility, and submissiveness to God. Volunteers who spent the month of August here in Senegal got to see how life changed.

People now woke up around 5:00 or 5:30 to eat breakfast and drink a lot of water, preparing their fast for the coming day. When the sun set around 19:30, people broke their fast with dates, bread and coffee. After praying, families sat down to eat dinner.

Korité happened Wednesday, Aug 31 and signaled the end of Ramadan. The men went to the mosque in the morning to pray while the woman stayed at home preparing the "Ngalakh," a dish of millet with rasins covered in a sauce of baobab juice, peanut butter, chocolate spread, coconut, sugar, vainilla sugar, orange essence, and a bit of mustard.



After eating the Ngalakh, lunch starts to be prepared. This meal consists of vermicelle with mutton in an onion sauce! After lunch, tea and juice may be served. People wait until the evening to wear their nice, new clothes and make the rounds to their neighbors to pardon each other for the sins or injustices they may have done without knowing to each other.



So, from our office:  
Déwélnati---Fékédéwel  
Balma ak---Balnala



## Magal des Deux Rakkas

*Tayib Fall, Volunteer Coordinator*

On September 5th the "2 rakkas" annual pilgrimage was celebrated in Saint Louis, Senegal. Thousands of Mourids came from all corners of Senegal



to accomplish the "takussan" prayer in the center of the city, at La Place Faidherbe. The prayer symbolizes an unprecedented act of courage by Cheikh Ahmadou Bamba on the same day 116 years ago. Bamba, who was considered as a threat to the colonial administration and an obstacle to their colonial goals, refused to

acknowledge the French authority and prayed in the Governor's office. Every

year, Mourids from all over come to Saint-Louis to commemorate this defiant and courageous act. Bamba was later deported to Gabon for seven years in an attempt to rid Senegal of his strong anti-colonial influence. Bamba founded the Mourid Sufi brotherhood and established the city of Touba, which is now the second largest city in Senegal.



## Staff Update

*Habib's Depart*

Habib Diaw came from Dakar to Saint-Louis 3 months ago to start working with Projects Abroad as a volunteer coordinator for the busy summer months, but now that September has rolled around he's headed back to Dakar. Habib makes quite an impression on anyone he meets with his permanent smile, unparalleled generosity, and enthusiasm for life. Below, volunteers submitted photos, stories and thank yous to give him a proper send-off!



My dear brother:

I have to write this letter in English because my French skills are neither sufficient for describing how important our friendship has become to me nor colorful enough to recount how close a bond we have formed since we met each other as complete strangers nearly a month ago. I can still clearly recall that four hour taxi ride from the airport to Saint-Louis when you—along with your kindness, your humor and your openheartedness—were my first real impression of Senegal. Because of your presence, I immediately fell in love with the country and its people. Even after our initial introduction, you went above and beyond in your attentiveness and cared for every volunteer. Although I was in Senegal for a mere two weeks, we managed to share our culture, language and love of music. I am so glad that I got to meet you. And Projects Abroad is super lucky to have had you as a member of the team. I hope you will return again to share your love with many volunteers to come.

Tu me manques, mon frère, et j'espère te voir bientôt.



Charley Du

The instant I met Habib I automatically felt comfortable, after the chaos of the Dakar airport it was nice to be greeted by such a friendly and genuinely nice person. The next day in the car ride to Saint Louis, we started talking about Senegal and just life in general and I found him such an easy person to talk to and extremely kind in every way thus we quickly became friends. Being away from home and in a new country is really hard, -adapting to a new culture and to a new language is a really difficult task, especially to do everyday, however having people



like Habib and other projects abroad staff, made it easier and much more enjoyable. The first couple of days were especially hard but having made a friendship with Habib during the car ride, I knew that I wasn't alone and it made me feel more accepted in this new culture. As my weeks in Senegal progressed, my impressions of Habib just got better and better, and I knew that I always had a person, and most importantly a friend, that I could count on. Habib is one of the kindest and most caring people I have ever met, and he made my experience in Senegal 10 times better, with his carefree and sweet attitude. He is truly a gentleman and he embodies the 'Teranga' spirit of Senegal perfectly, there is honestly nothing bad or negative I could say about him since he is truly a wonderful person. Out of the all the people I met in Senegal, Habib is definitely one of the most treasured, Habib tu me manque and thank you for everything you have done for me!

Maria Racero



Habib is without a doubt the sweetest guy I've ever met. From my very first day in Senegal to my last, he made me feel so comfortable. He would go out of his way to help me out and answer all of my questions and he made himself very approachable. He was always kind and upbeat; simply talking to him would brighten my day. Habib is an incredibly special and caring person and it was an honor to get to know him. He truly exemplifies teranga!

Katie Pons





Juste une petite photo de nous 2 pour te redire à quel point tu as été important pour moi pendant ce merveilleux voyage! Dès mon arrivée à l'aéroport de Dakar jusqu'à mon dernier jour à St-Louis...! J'aimerais en dire plus, mais tu sais déjà tout ce que tu as fait pour moi... ❤️

Sois heureux à Dakar ! Fait plein de « business » !  
On se revoit cet été !!!

Namenah, your sister

Habib is actually the best person in the world.

He helped Noelle and I out so much when we were stuck in Dakar and got us a hotel, and made sure everything was okay. He even stayed up all night to hear from us!

Aside from being hilarious and super helpful, he's also a huge sweetheart! Thank you so much Habib, WE LOVE AND MISS YOU!

Vicky Liu & Noelle Markle



# Recipe of the Month

## Bissap

### Ingredients

- 2 to 3 cups of dried, red bissap
- 1 to 2 cups of sugar
- 1 or 2 of the optional flavorings:
  - half teaspoon of vanilla extract
  - quarter teaspoon of banana extract
  - one cup pineapple or orange juice



### Instructions:

- Rinse the dried bissap in cold water
- Heat 2 quarts of water in a saucepan and bring to a boil.
- Remove water from heat and add the bissap leaves, letting them steep for 10 minutes.
- Pour the water from the pot into a pitcher using a strainer to separate the leaves
- Stir in sugar and add optional flavorings.
- Add ice and chill completely before serving!

For a refreshing treat, pour juice into ice cube trays or little plastic cups to make bissap ice!



Bissap juice is extremely popular in Senegal, and recently some of our volunteers have mixed half bissap juice with half mango juice, which is actually a quite refreshing combination. This creation was named after one of our current volunteers, Ryan Winkler, and is actually served under that name at some of the restaurants in Saint Louis!



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Projects Abroad Blog – Senegal

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## Picture of the Month



**Volunteer Adrienne Larson took this picture at the football match between Senegal and the DRC.**

Want to contribute in our newsletter?

Each month we will be featuring a photo from Senegal in the newsletter, elected by our Senegal Office Staff. If you are a former volunteer your photos are also welcome. Show off your best shots!!

Send your pictures to:  
[ericafreerking@projects-abroad.org](mailto:ericafreerking@projects-abroad.org)

