

Farewell to the slide

THE PLAY STRUCTURE pictured here was built behind the school 23 years ago. This year we determined it was no longer safe and decided to remove it, but not without celebrating all it had been to the community. The fifth- and sixth-graders led an assembly in which we shared memories of playing together on the slide. We heard more than one story of a broken limb—confirming that the safety decision had been a good call.



Parents and generous donors to Monteverde Friends U.S. helped us raise over \$4,000 to build a new structure. Students began planning by drawing or writing about what they thought should be included in the structure. Parents met to sift through the drawings and find ways to interpret some of the fanciful daydreams of our youngest playground planners. Parent and architect Sabine Hein built a miniature model which graced our office. Under the leadership of Antonio Guindon, another small group of parents began work on the life-size version. When it's all put together it will feature a multi-functional tower, play stations for the children, a platform to accommodate a full class beneath a canvas shade, and a stage for



performances, graduations, etc. We will keep the playhouse, and the existing sandbox will be doubled in size. A little bridge and a new slide will be added. Despite delays due to weather and missing supplies, the new structure—awaiting the arrival of flooring material from Spain—beckons to us from our back play yard.

This structure is a powerful testament to the fact that when kids get to dreaming, parents get to fundraising and organizing, and the entire Monteverde Friends School community follows through on its projects. While we're upgrading our play area, we're also dreaming about putting a roof on our volleyball court. We have already collected a good amount of money and another school is also helping us raise funds. If you'd like to make a contribution, please send it to Monteverde Friends U.S. at the address below.

Annika Fjelstad

Ode to the slide

O slide of metal, wood and tires
With roof to shade us from the clime
Pole to slide down, stairs to climb up —
You hold memories of good times.

O slide, you were the biggest mountain
The people had ever climbed —
You served as a house or shelter
Where there was good food to find.

At the bottom, a lake with croc
Biting children's legs and toes
Or a frozen waterfall
Down which only the brave would go.

This massive frame of rusted green
A giant dinosaur became
Or a dungeon dark and wild where
The robbers were put to shame.

A castle with so many spikes —
The Titanic or Hogwarts you became
With invisible cloaks and wands in hand
To battle lava, fire, and rain.

A forest of deep green mold
Where animals and children play
(If we were having too much fun
And the bathroom was too far away...)

Well let's remember all the trains
Or monkey bars where students swang —
More than twenty years of children's play
From your metal structure rang.

We remember all of you
A place to think, where friendships
formed
And as we say goodbye today
We'll celebrate instead of mourn.

So thank you for all you've given —
Slipping, sliding, smiles, and fun —
We'll miss the good times and the tears —
Your memory will shine with the sun.

— *The students of grades 5 and 6*

Our school is sustained by donations to our scholarship fund. Over one-third of our students are on financial aid. This year we have depleted our fund. With tuition going up for next year, we need to be prepared to support all families at the levels they need in order to continue to attend our school.

Your donations to our scholarship fund allow us to retain quality teachers, as well as to buy books and supplies. Monteverde Friends School is grateful to our broad base of donors who enable us to provide a high quality education to all eligible students regardless of their ability to pay.

If you are in need of a U.S. tax deduction, you can make a donation to Monteverde Friends U.S., and send it to:

**Monteverde Friends U.S.
c/o Clara Rowe
PO Box 993
Amherst, MA 01004**

Checks can also be made out directly to the Monteverde Friends School and delivered here.

YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS TRULY DO MAKE A DIFFERENCE!