

Bandera Azul in Jesus

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Costa Rica has a beautiful nature to offer, which is a very important aspect for economical development and the progression of national tourism. Bandera Azul works voluntarily, moreover they promote competition and organisation of the community for the benefit of present and future generations. The aim of Bandera Azul is to provide an incentive for communities to develop their own organisation. They organise the protection of natural resources as well as they promote better sanitary and public health conditions for example. As the community of Barrio Jesús obtains the recognition of Bandera Azul again this year, we give information about the institution and we inform about what they do to improve everyone's life in this article. We talked to María Isolina Aguilar a member of the committee of Bandera Azul in Barrio Jesús who was accompanied by her daughter and Marta Arguedas Miranda, another member of the committee.



Bandera Azul Ecológica was founded in 1996 and its idea was to evaluate the water quality of the beaches in Costa Rica. Therefore they determined certain microbiologic criteria to rate the beaches and since that, the best beaches obtain the blue flag as a symbol of their good quality. Today, Bandera Azul is an institution that works on a national basis with members, institutions and communities working together in Costa Rica. Furthermore as time passed, they extended their field of duties and at the moment they also monitor health and education. María Isolina Aguilar y Doña Marta are members of the committee in which "everyone is working and no one holds an office". They for example assist or inform at the meetings held once a month. The reason for the effort they put in the committee is that they like to work for the development of the community. The committee of Bandera Azul has existed in Barrio Jesús for many years and the area is getting a lot of benefits out of its work since they make people realize that they can improve the environment. This is the most difficult part of their work as it is impossible to see directly what happens by dumping a bottle on the street. Another difficulty the committee has to overcome is that people cannot meet their

commitments since they also have work to do. "At least we can count on financial help from the Asociación de Desarrollo." Towards them, they still have to improve the water quality in Barrio Jesús as they did not reduce pollution as it was planned. The first thing a person can do for a better environment is to realize that anyone can help. The first step is to know how to recycle garbage (separate glass, tin cans, etc.). If you want to get more information about the committee of Bandera Azul and how you can support this group jesuseño (they always need volunteers) you can write an email to baebojesus@yahoo.com or you can contact them on Facebook which they will have recently. One of the future aims is to have more people to work for their community and to make the people aware of the environment, even though there are people who connect with Bandera Azul and its work. * By Tanja Dragon, Werner Jacobs and Sophie Thielecke Translated by Lena Kessel and Sophie Thielecke