

Rotary Update #2 September

So I have now gone through my second month here. September was pretty low key in relation to my first month here. I have however done some travelling in the areas near my town. My host family along with my aunt and grandmother went to Nova Esperanca, which is in the state of Parana, to visit my uncle and his family there. It was really beautiful there as they have trees that reminded me a lot of Calgary- about the size and shape of a poplar. They were able to stretch over the roads and make a sort of canopy. While we were there we went to a Japanese garden in a nearby city and then went out to dinner. It was pretty interesting to see how the slight change in climate (Parana is usually colder than Sao Paulo) had changed the landscape of the city. We also went to Presidente Epitacio for an afternoon and sat on the beach which was beautiful.

I have also taken the bus into the neighbouring city Presidente Prudente a few times. They have 7 exchange students living there and when I go we usually all meet up to eat acai and talk. Presidente Prudente is the hub of the area that I am in so there are sometimes exchange students from other cities there too.

Overall, I feel like my Portuguese is still getting better. I speak only Portuguese with my host family and with my friends I asked them to only speak Portuguese with me unless I don't understand a word/phrase. This request is in some ways great and in other ways a massive bummer. On one hand I can't really keep up with group conversations or understand jokes. However, I can confidently get through some conversations and it's a lot easier to learn new words during a conversation when you understand the rest of the words around it. I can usually get through conversations if there is only one or two other people in it and they speak slower than they usually would. I know that around the 3rd or 4th month is when you make a "jump" in your language ability and everything begins to click. I am very much looking forward to that!

My school is doing a Sarau, which is a kind of cultural presentation, where each class does something from a different region of Brazil. My class is doing the Fandango, a type of dance from the Southeast region of Brazil. (Sao Paulo is in the southern region)



Japanese Garden



A big tree in Presidente Prudente



Presidente Epitacio