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Shanna's Blog

Shanna from South Jordan, Utah - (November 10, 2008)

"Decisions and Priorities"

The term is going by quickly, and my midterms are finally done! After many sleepless nights, and hours upon hours studying I hope for a normal week. My body feels like a zombie after the week's worth of not getting more than 5 hours of sleep. You may wonder what has caused me to be this way, but it has been none other than poor time management.

I have determined that at school it's all about priorities. Procrastination comes from an assignment not being priority over another one. Last week for example I had two midterms, one on Thursday and one on Friday. Due to other events on the week studying for Thursdays test didn't take priority until Wednesday night of course, and studying for Friday night's test became a midnight cram Thursday. I could have tried to study earlier, but there were other assignments due. So how does one organize all these endless priorities? Easier said than done – time management.

People say I do too much with a double major in Psychology and Animal Sciences, a minor in Spanish, and in the Honors College. I do not feel overworked just that I haven't had an amazing study schedule yet. It's hard for sure working with so many different departments, but in the end it's worth it.

 Erik from England

Because I'm from Utah many people ask me, well why did you come to Oregon? Inspiration I suppose, but truly something about this place felt right. I was looking online for schools that fit my criteria, and believe me a double major in Psychology and Zoology is hard to find. I wanted to study animal behaviorism, but of course there was no major for that. Then, I looked at where I would be willing to live, and according to my mother I would probably like Oregon with its wide variety of terrain from mountains to desert to coast.

From a previous experience in Florida I decided I needed to tour the campus beforehand to know for sure. I booked a flight and flew out by myself in September. Those five days were incredible. I met some guy named Nico from England (Left at the MU Quad) on the bus from Portland that was going to start at OSU. He was really funny and we ended up staying at the same hotel. We walked around campus, and I was astonished at how pretty it was. It had a very eastern style to it for me, and later learned on our tour that it was designed by the same guy who did Central Park. While walking around I felt like this definitely was a place I could feel comfortable studying and living in for a long time.

 Corvallis Artwork

I went to a movie theater that was really small showing some Woody Allen movie and met another guy named Erik. He showed me around town and I found that in many alleyways of downtown Corvallis they display

A rectangular box with a black border. In the top-left corner, there is a small icon of a document with a picture and the text "Corvallis Artwork". The rest of the box is empty.

artwork (shown at right). It just so happened to be that he was a Psychology student and taught the Research Methods class. He later showed me the Psychology department, and I was excited about it. For most schools a Zoology department is very small, and the Psychology department is huge, but here at OSU it is the opposite. I was happy about that, and especially when I finally returned to go to school here that I found that there is a

major in Animal Sciences with an option in Animal Behavior. OSU was perfect for what I needed.

So that is why I'm here. I live in the Azalea Co-op which I learned when I visited that it was the cheapest form of University Housing, so right up my alley. There are 55 girls in one giant house and I don't think I've made so many friends so quickly in my life! It's been a wonderful experience, and we've all become one big family.

Right now I'm working on organizing my time better, and getting things done. Things are not too difficult, but there is room for improvement. School is hard, but learning is worth it. One thing at a time, and everything gets done. It's just another day at OSU working on priorities.

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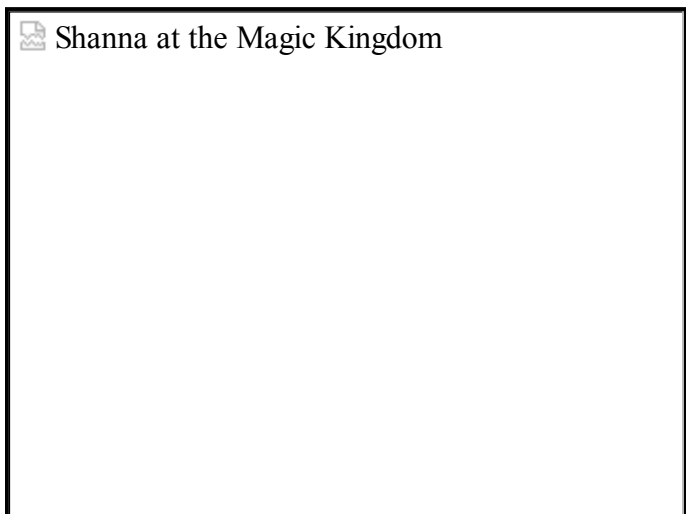
Shanna's Blog

Shanna from South Jordan, Utah - (November 17, 2008)

"A Transfer Mess"

It has been one crazy time getting back into school. Registration for next term began November 9th. Since I am a part of the Honors College as a Junior I was able to register for classes November 12th. It was an adventure trying to speak to all four colleges; Animal Sciences, Psychology, Spanish, and Honors Colleges. I had to verify with every advisor my class schedule. Everything worked out in the end.

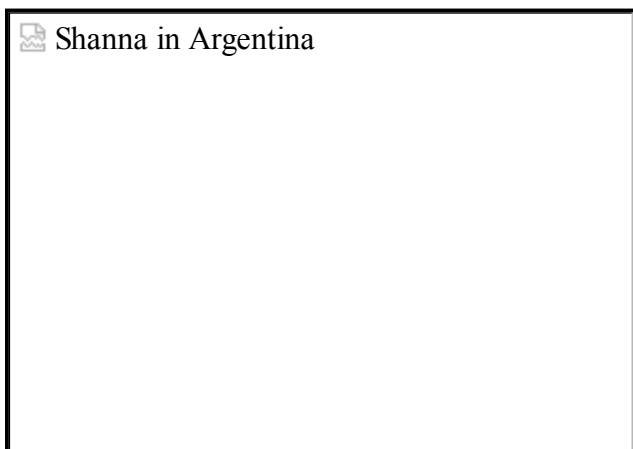
This has been an exciting return to college, but it has been a stressful one too. Registering for classes is no easy process. I knew coming to OSU would be worth it even if I had to get loans, but I did not expect anything like what happened.



After high school in 2004 I went to Weber State Univ. in Utah where I took an internship to work at Walt Disney World for Spring Semester. My plan at the time was to study Animal Behaviorism at Florida State University. Out of state tuition was so costly so I planned to live there for a year and make \$7,000 which is the requirement for claiming yourself as an independent resident. After 6 months at Walt Disney World I quit, and moved in with my aunt in Fort Myers. (To the left: my sister and I at Magic Kingdom when she came to visit me) After a year I prepared to go to Florida Gulf Coast University there where my uncle worked to save money. I was shocked to find not only I needed to fulfill a lot more

general education classes than I had thought, but in the end my residency requirements were not accepted. The best option was to go back home and take summer classes at the Community College in Utah.

Upon my return, I made the decision to serve a full-time mission for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day



Saints. I spent a year working to pay for it, and then the next 18 months I was in Neuquen, Argentina preaching the gospel of Christ. (To the left is me in Villa Regina, Argentina). The point of this is to help you understand that now, only 3 months after my mission, school is a huge struggle. When I moved to Oregon I had to register the week before classes. Obviously I was in Argentina prior to that so there weren't many options. My jaw dropped to find that my two years worth of classes that I had taken previously barely counted for a year's worth here. My goal of graduating within 2 years flew out the window. Since I had many Core classes I



needed to fulfill I was able to find some classes that would apply.

It has been crazy getting used to the school atmosphere. I have not studied like this since that fall semester in 2004 after high school. I definitely don't recommend wasting time on getting your education. Transferring credits has not been easy either. For my major Graduate school is a must if I want to be an animal behaviorist. What that means is that I have an easy 6 years or more left of school for me to be close to getting my PHD. Is it worth it? Definitely. When you find something you are so passionate about it, why not just go for it? The knowledge I gain is worth the money.

So far it has been extremely difficult getting adjusted to the difficulty level of classes and getting study schedules. However now at the end of the term I am learning how to study better, and organize my time. I just have to get my priorities in order and remember that hanging out with friends may only make me more stressed as I struggle to finish my homework later. The beginning of the term is crucial to make good habits that will last you throughout.

Also, I have benefited a lot by taking classes that are correlated. I am taking three to four classes that all discuss some of the same topics. It has been wonderful because I stay interested in the class and can comment about things that I discussed in other classes as well. I recently wrote a Philosophy paper where I ended up using my Anthropology book as a source that I cited.

Well this term is beginning to end, and next term is just a little while away. There is plenty to do still, and I am already looking forward to a vacation. Thanksgiving is not so far away!

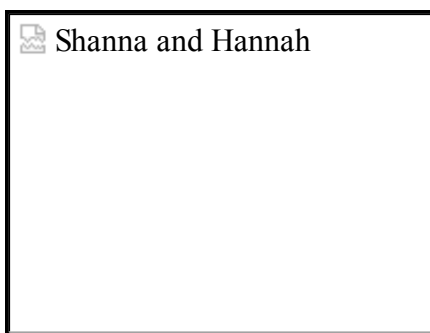
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Shanna's Blog

Shanna from South Jordan, Utah - (November 24, 2008)

"Why Co-ops are Awesome!"

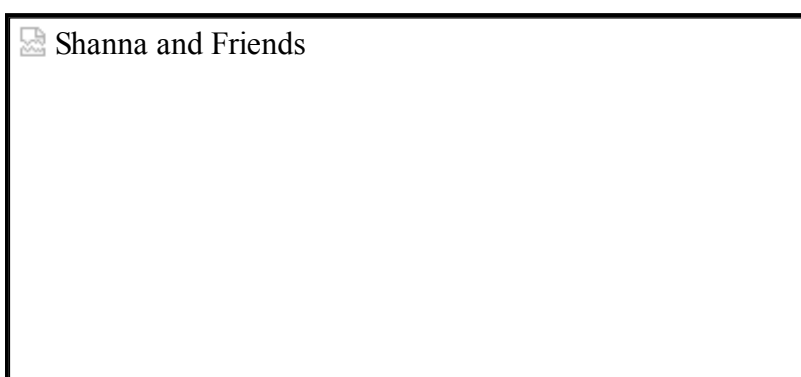
I remember 2 years ago visiting OSU and my tour guide was a member of the Azalea House. She had such enthusiasm for the co-ops and everything it provided. At the time all I cared about was the price, but the more she showed me around I kept thinking "Why doesn't everyone want to live in the co-ops?" So when it came time for applying it was easy that I wanted to live in Azalea.




Since I have been here I can't imagine living anywhere else. We have so many great opportunities. We have a personal (British) chef that cooks lunch and dinner during the week, we have two washers and dryers, and much more which is all included. Typically there are two social activities during the week which may be anything from bowling to board games to movies. Our house becomes one big family. I now have made so many friends and we all like to hang out and do stuff together. Every Monday we have a house dinner where there is a theme. One week the theme was "twins." My roommate Hannah and I (shown to the left) were excited because people always say we look a lot a like.

We even had the same shoes. It's always a lot of fun.

Recently we had an awesome house dance. We had planned this for weeks. It is a formal dance, and although it's not required, most invite someone to the dance. It is tradition that we have to ask our dates in a creative way. We had a lot of fun with this. I asked my friend next door in Avery Lodge to go to the dance with me. We had a bucket with flour and a little poem saying he needed to sift through the flour to find out who was asking him to the dance. Inside we had thrown in about a hundred tiny papers with words on them like "No, Maybe, Keep trying," etc. Of course the name wasn't in there so he spent hours in his bedroom trying to find the paper only to find that there was nothing there!! Luckily I arranged for someone to drop off a flower with a note saying "Sorry, wrong flower" with my name attached. He then began planning his revenge. He responded a week later with a box covered in tape that when I pierced it a fountain of vinegar and baking soda spouted. When it died down I opened the box to reveal a plastic container with the message "Yes" inside it. It was quite creative, but I was already prepared for something dirty so it didn't startle me at all.



Saturday night we had the dance and it was a blast!! That week the old members at Azalea House had been decorating the downstairs. The decorations were revealed the night of with a spectacular display of fairy tale themed rooms. Before the dance we got all dressed up (To the left is Stephanie's friend, Stephanie, and me). I was late to get ready because I helped a

 Shanna and Friends

few girls get their hair done and underestimated how much time was left. It worked out though, because we had to wait for my date as well. One of the girls that lives here is a DJ as well so we had a great song list as well that consisted of a lot of recommendations of other house

members. We had so much fun, and many woke up the next day with sore legs from dancing the whole night. This morning we had to clean up all the decorations, and believe me, staples are not easy to get out of the ceiling. Nevertheless it was all worth it. This is just one of the many reasons that co-ops are awesome.

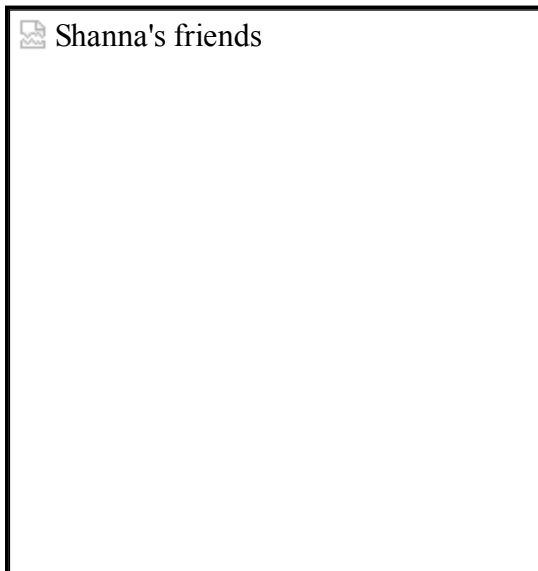
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Shanna's Blog

Shanna from South Jordan, Utah - (December 1, 2008)

"Thanksgiving in Portland"

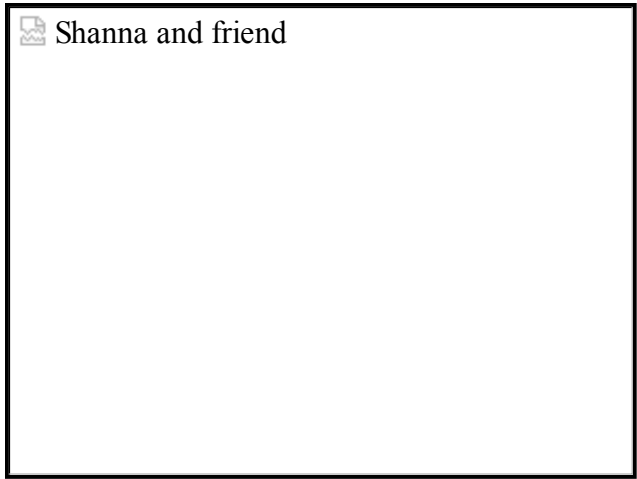
Thanksgiving is such a wonderful time of year. Although we rarely associate it so much as a time to give thanks, rather than a gigantic turkey dinner, spending time with family is always great. It also is a great perk that we get school off. Last year I spent Thanksgiving in Argentina where I was unable to communicate with my family let alone in a culture that does not celebrate the "dia de gracias." Turkey is hard to find, and I can't imagine yams with marshmallows on them. Marshmallows are extremely difficult to explain by the way to anyone who's never had them, and has only seen them in movies.



This year I spent Thanksgiving with a friend and her family in Portland. Due to financial reasons I was unable to afford a plane home, but I was excited to see Portland for the first time outside the airport. We arrived the day before, and my friend Valerie took her sister out on her first date for her 16th birthday. It was quite the event because she dressed up like a man, and I used eyeliner to give her a goatee (Valerie and her sister are shown at left). Her sister was disgusted as she went to the restaurant with her "psychotic" sister dressed up like a man. I thought it was hilarious.

The next day we went to her uncle's for Thanksgiving which is a huge University of Oregon fan. Luckily we had a great picture of a duck on a noose that we saw while on the road. Now that the Civil War is over it's a good thing he's too far to gloat. The dinner was great however, and everyone ate to their

fill. It's odd not being with your own family for Thanksgiving, but it's good to be with friends nevertheless. We laughed later about how Valerie's uncle tried to hook me up with her son who is currently on his mission in Argentina. Her uncle speaks Spanish as well so I was glad I was able to practice a bit.



After all the pie, long hours of Mario Kart, and movies Thanksgiving came to an end. The next big question was how early would we start the Black Friday shopping spree? Luckily not too early, and our shopping was done quickly, and we were able to spend some time doing other things like making a delicious red velvet cake. It seemed I would have no time to see Portland, but luckily just before we left Valerie and I took the bus downtown. We didn't have lots of time, but we passed the library, Powell's, and Voodoo Doughnuts – a must see if you're not from Portland. I think my favorite place was definitely Powell's. I love to read so it was great to see a store that takes up a whole block on it's own with over four floors of books! It's a place I think I

could spend way too much time in looking around.

So my holiday weekend came to an end, and a sad one with the Beavers losing the Civil War game. Now it's back to final projects and papers for my classes. I can only regret not doing any homework over the weekend, but I can't say it's a surprise. A time machine could be a serious advantage at this point, but we can't say our teachers didn't warn us to start early on projects for the final weeks. Well the assignments are due, and I can only hope that the time goes slow before the projects are due, and quickly after. I'm already counting the days till winter break where I can actually go home to Utah and see SNOW for Christmas.

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Shanna's Blog

Shanna from South Jordan, Utah - (December 8, 2008)

"Time Management Brings Christmas Cheer"

Now that finals are starting there is one key to studying and doing everything well, and that is time management. So this week has been rather crazy for me as I have been running around getting errands done, working, studying, and fulfilling promises. Literally I had every hour planned out and was physically running from place to place at times. I had two large papers to do, and to my surprise I finished with ease and did not go to bed past 1 a.m. a single day this week. Miracles can happen.

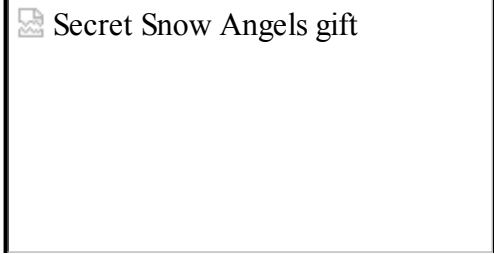
I started the week by running to do errands before I had to work. Finally I bought the much needed printer ink as well as stamps. I don't recommend holding off on those types of things. After class I had to run home and finish an article for the Barometer the next day, and then I ran to a meeting, with just enough time to finish my paper due the next day afterwards. Tuesday was worse as in between classes I had several obligations to fulfill because I had promised people I would help. I found that you should only commit to something when you have clearly thought out what you need to do. Wednesday was just as crazy, and I had to finish a very long book review due Thursday. I went to the library, listened to music, and got to work. Surprisingly I finished in just a few hours and was able to go to bed early!! Finally the rest of the week seemed to calm down as it was the last day of classes. I felt glad I made it through the week till I realized I still have finals to attack next week.



Azalea Winter
Wonderland

Something that has helped me to be cheerful this week has been the spread of Christmas cheer. At Azalea we have done Secret Snow Angels where someone buys small gifts from Monday to Friday for you based off a survey we did about things we like. My Secret Snow Angel left me little notes to cheer me on throughout that week that made me grin. I think my personal favorite was my small stuffed tiger that appeared (shown at left). A friend of mine named it Rafiki which I decided to stick with. It has been really nice to receive an extra something every day, and it certainly got me in the Holiday spirit.

Also this weekend at Azalea we worked on a special breakfast for the older house members. We spent Friday night decorating our Winter Wonderland, and Saturday morning cooking. It was a lot of fun. I helped staple material to the ceiling which was a tricky business. For one corner we couldn't fit the ladder behind the Christmas tree. I convinced my friend Stephanie to stand on my shoulders to staple it. The first time she was scared to death and nearly fell only to find the staple gun was out of staples. Being the trooper that she is we tried a second time with other people standing by just in case, and this time was a success. It looked amazing when we had finished though with the North Pole with snowflakes hanging down, and Santa's workshop. We had made French Toast, bacon, fruit, cinnamon rolls, chocolate covered pretzels, sugar cookies, hot chocolate, and apple cider. It turned out wonderful and Santa even showed to fulfill our



Secret Snow Angels gift

Christmas wishes. It was a wonderful ending to a crazy week.
Now I just have to focus on using the same time management skills
to study for Finals!!



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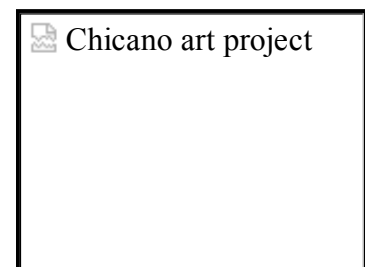
Shanna's Blog

Shanna from South Jordan, Utah - (December 15, 2008)

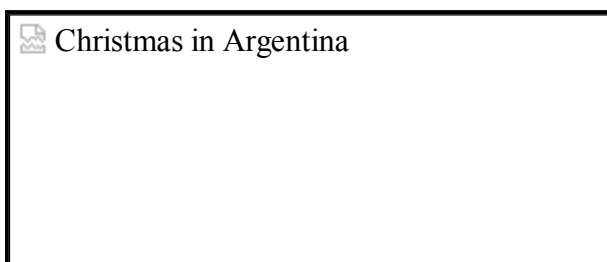
"Finals Relief"

Finals are OVER!! I've determined that there is a great learning experience with preparing for Finals. It was a crazy week as I attempted to study and prepare everything for finals. I had hoped to study more on the weekend, but of course that never happens. I had one test on Monday which I don't know whether to say that was a good thing or bad thing. It was my hardest class, and I had previously failed the mid-term. My only hope of a good grade was to do amazing on the final. I went with a study group the night before, and the next afternoon we studied up until the test. I felt that it was extremely difficult to understand the concepts unless someone went over each question with me. The moment of panic was when I saw the test, and my mind went blank on the first few questions. "Adaptive Management??? What is that??" I thought, I'm sure we studied it, but I didn't understand so it was a shot in the dark. However, I learned something valuable from it all. Apparently I am a very visual learner, and to understand these concepts I should've taken the lectures home and tried to apply them somehow. I never really understood the concepts because I thought they were boring, and I couldn't relate the terms with situations. I wish I didn't have to learn that the hard way, but that's life. Now it's over and there's no sense in worrying about it.

I found that with my other finals I was cramming as much as I could to get everything done. I had a big paper for Philosophy due, and a test in Psychology. I had to do both in the same night so I stayed up till 1 a.m. writing the paper, and then from 1 to 4 a.m. studying for Psychology. After 3 hours of sleep I studied some more and then took the test. I did ok, but I could've done better. Surprisingly I still had plenty of energy for the day after little sleep, and I got some friends to review my paper and fix it before I turned it in. All turned out ok, but it was close. I only had one more final left which was a project on Chicanos. (At the right is a part of my art piece on Chicanos showing the mix of Mexican and American cultures). The problem was that this paper depended on other people. I sent out a list of questions for people to answer to interview them, but only one person got it back to me. So the night before it was due my friend helped me quickly e-mail some people that might be able to answer my questions. I got it done luckily, but it wasn't at all how I wanted it to be. Sometimes things change from your original plan though, and we just have to decide that's not what we really wanted in the first place.




I'm so glad all my finals are over, and now I can go home to Utah to spend the holidays with my family and friends. My last Christmas was in Argentina which as shown to the left our power was out on Christmas Eve. Their Christmas is more like our forth the of July since it's the hottest time of year, and at Midnight is such a



spectacular display of fireworks that it sounds like World War III. Since last Christmas I was in hot Argentina, I am more than excited to be able to spend this time with my family and hopefully with lots of snow!

I've been looking forward to this time for a while. When I got back from Argentina I only had about a month before I

 Christmas in Argentina

moved to Oregon so I didn't get to do much with people. This time I will! I've never been an amazing family oriented person, but sometimes it's nice to go back to the place where everything is familiar, and everybody knows you. Also, because I won't be in school I will have time to go do the fun things. I love Corvallis, but it really needs

an ice skating ring. We have a 7,000 square foot climbing wall, and no skating rink? Well I will definitely try to get all my winter sports in while I'm in Utah. Studying doesn't always allow you time to do the fun stuff. I've definitely learned that the beginning weeks of classes is not a time to slack off. Well it's all part of the College experience. The dread of finals, and the excitement of going home for the holidays.

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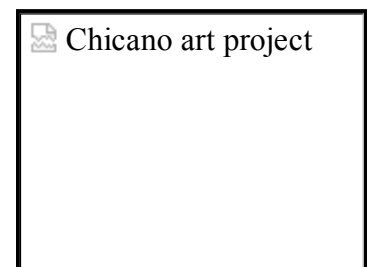
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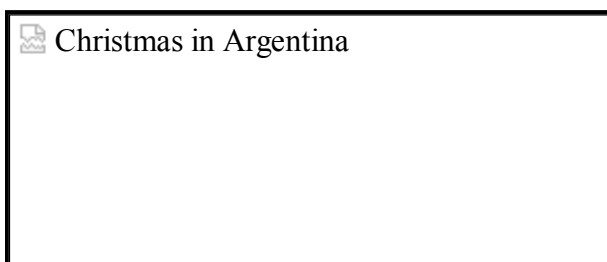
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 **Christmas in Argentina**

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