

Report No. 3 from Alto Cayma - 4 Mar 18

Visit from a Champion

On Monday we received a visit from René Maqui and his sons, Amir and Jairo. René is the founder of Teatro Angeles, a youth drama group which uses drama to teach valuable life lessons to young people. We have had them perform a number of times at our Acercándonos meetings. The purpose of this week's visit, however, was for 11-year old Amir to show off the medals



(5 gold and 2 silver) that he had won in the recent Transandean Swimming Tournament held in Puno, Peru, with competitors from Peru, Chile, Bolivia and Argentina. We helped make Amir's participation possible, and he certainly came through for us. He always dedicates his victories to his late mother, who died of cancer last year. Amir is also studying English, so I've got my eye on him for the University of Michigan swim team in 2025 - Go Blue!

Staff Birthdays

We celebrated 4 staff birthdays in just one week. First we were catching up on birthdays we missed in Jan and Feb, with Sabina, Genoveva



and Tula. (Look how earnestly Tula is making her wish. It must have been a doozy!) Then, later in the week, we had another celebration for Luz' birthday



(in center, on left). It looks like all we do is sit around and eat cake, but that's not true. We only eat cake for birthdays. The rest of the time we sit around and eat cookies.



Madame Librarian

Monday afternoon, Lia dropped by to show us her newly-earned degree in Initial Education from the Pedagogic Institute of Arequipa. Lia is



the young woman who ran our library last year. We don't know yet if she'll have time to work with us this year as well. If not, we'll miss her, but we understand that folks need to move on as they progress in their careers.

Letters

We're already starting to get letters from the "ahijados" (sponsees) back to their "padrinos" (sponsors). However, **if you are a sponsor and you haven't written to your sponsoree**, you can still do so now. Just send me your letter by e-mail, and I'll get it translated and delivered.

A Pioneering Family

On Wednesday, we were visited by the Soto Astacie siblings - Luisa, Sabina and Inocencio. When they were kids, their father was killed in a transportation accident (bus going over an embankment). Oldest daughter Luisa was badly injured in that same accident, and wound up losing one leg. These 3 were then the first kids to be admitted to Father Frank's Aldea (orphanage) when he first opened it well over 10 years ago. We used to visit



them often at the Aldea (Inocencio and Sabina on the right in this photo), until one by one they "aged out" of the orphanage and established their life outside. Today Luisa (on the left in this photo) is the head of the family.



Sabina works for us as Lidia's (far right) assistant, and the purpose of this week's visit was to enroll Inocencio, who just graduated from high school, in our Bridge to Opportunity program. He would like to enter the National University to study Law.

Bed Project

The project to provide people with decent beds to sleep in continues.



On Thursday, we delivered a bed to a girl named Raquel. It was a little



precarious getting the bed down to her room, but it was well worth the effort.



We even got to meet the Pink Panther in the process.



Cooking Classes

This year, for the first time, we'll be offering cooking classes in Mujeres con Esperanza as well as down the hill in our original location. On Thursday, we took the teacher, Sra. Laura (on the left in this photo), up to see our new



kitchen in Mujeres con Esperanza for the first time. She was very pleased with the equipment and furnishings that Victor and his wife, Rosario (on the right), had picked out. She'll be teaching the Basic class in Mujeres con Esperanza on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, and the Advanced class in our original center down the hill on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

While we were up in Mujeres con Esperanza, Victor supervised the tank-cleaning crew getting us ready to receive and store potable water for use



in the classes.

Combined Event in Mujeres con Esperanza

On Thursday afternoons, we usually run a sequence of 1-hour events up in Mujeres con Esperanza - an elderly meeting, a Kids' Club, and an English class. Things are just getting back to normal now in Alto Cayma, as families come back from vacation travels (summer is just ending in the southern hemisphere), so this Thursday was the first day to hold these events this year. However, rather than hold separate events, John decided to mash them all together into one big party, and 100 kids and 20 adults showed up.



It was as big a group as our biggest room could handle. There were games for



the kids, of course, and games for the adolescents, interspersed with brief



sharings of the Word. With so many kids in the room, the elderly mostly just



observed this time.



The ladies made sure our guests were well fed. When so many kids showed up, they had to run out to buy cookies to supplement the popcorn



they had made.

Meanwhile, there was lots of activity going on outside the building as well as inside. This gentleman passed by, giving us a good idea of what it's



like not having running water in your house, but rather having to take buckets to a public water tap and haul your day's ration of water back to your house.

Also, we saw some kids demonstrating what the erosion-control



spillway we had constructed across the road from our building was really for.

And finally, when all the people had left, Victor asked the tank-



cleaning crew to lower the tanks off the roof and store them inside the



building so that no one would steal them overnight.

Acercádonos Children's Meeting

At our monthly meeting on Saturday afternoon, we welcomed 7 new



kids into the program. Victor gave a talk on security, which is always a



timely topic down here. We gave special recognition to 3 of our kids who had



finished the recent school year No. 1 in their classes.

After the meeting, the mothers of the new kids went to our office for a briefing by Briza, our Social Worker, on how the program works, and what is



expected of them as we act in partnership with them for the betterment of their children.

Dorian's Wedding

Dorian Ccolque was the first one of our Salir Adelante students to graduate from the National University, and that has already been 8 years ago. (My, how time flies!) On Saturday, Dorian and his wife, Edeliz, had their



church wedding. (They had had a civil ceremony some years ago.) This is a common sequence of events here in Peru. A civil wedding is cheap, and then they slowly save up their money for a later church wedding with all the trimmings.

And that's all the news this week from Alto Cayma, where if it hasn't happened yet, it's probably just about to.

"Love God, Serve Neighbor/Serving Alto Cayma",

Jim