

Report No. 9 from Alto Cayma - 30 Sep 18

A Slow Week

It's been a slow week, as far as events in the work of our Association are concerned, so I'll use this opportunity to fill in with a little local color.

Elections, Peruvian Style

Right now we're in the midst of election fever. Elections at the Municipal and Regional level are held every 4 years in Peru, and a week from today is Election Day.

There is a proliferation of candidates and political parties contending for every office, such as the 10 or so who are running just for the office of Mayor of Cayma, under whose jurisdiction we fall. With so many candidates, no one has megabucks to spend on advertising, so rather than TV ads, the candidates rent space on virtually every rooftop to place their campaign signs



and flags. These signs convey valuable information, such as:

"Vote for me, 'cause I've got the best 'stache!"



or, "Vote for me, 'cause I've got the funkier threads!"



Apparently even Ted Cruz is hedging his bets by running for office in Arequipa, in case the citizens of Texas don't re-elect him to the U.S. Senate.



Each party has its own symbol (like our elephant and donkey), which is very important, because on the ballot in Peru, the party symbol appears beside the name of each candidate, and one votes for the candidate by putting an "X" over the symbol beside his or her name. Voting is mandatory in Peru,



and this system enables even the illiterate voters to vote for the party of their choice.

The symbol each party selects is intended to convey something about them. For example, the lightbulb represents better ideas.



The tree represents growth and prosperity.



The shovel represents hard work and civic projects.



This party presumably concerns itself with the welfare of mothers and children.



And this party stands for.....baby chicks kicking soccer balls?



Whatever the symbolism, Juan Carlos Linares, the candidate for Mayor of Cayma from the baby chick party, has a huge supporter and tireless campaigner in the person of Jesús, our builder. When we asked him why



he supports Linares, Jesús cited Linares' honesty, values and work ethic. Only later did he admit that Linares' election would also mean that he, Jesús, would receive all the municipal construction projects he can handle.

Construction in Mujeres con Esperanza

And speaking of construction projects, the bricks were really flying at our construction site in Mujeres con Esperanza this week. Jesús had a small army working for him all over the site. The columns and walls are up for the



first floor bathrooms and storeroom, and the roof is almost ready to pour. The



security wall around the remainder of the side yard is up, awaiting the



hanging of the big vehicle access door. Now that the wall is up, we can more



easily judge how much additional height will be required on the uphill side to provide adequate security (always a primary concern with Victor).

The rebar cages are all in place for the columns of the second floor, and the walls are starting to go up. Jesús expects to be pouring the roof for the



second floor in about 3-4 weeks. The phase of the work we're in now always seems to go so fast, but then the finishing seems to take forever. Fortunately, the exciting part will continue for the rest of my present stay here.

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

Jim