

Report No. 5 from Alto Cayma - 2 Sep 18

Computer Classes

The week we were gone to the Inca Trail, our staff took a week of computer classes to improve their efficiency. They weren't too happy about



having to do this in the beginning, but by the end of the week they were getting quite enthusiastic.

Elderly Meeting in Mujeres con Esperanza

With John gone to the Inca Trail, Briza took charge of the weekly meeting of the elderly in Mujeres con Esperanza and had them do a coloring



project. The elderly enjoyed this activity, and were very pleased with their



results. This is something they never get to do, and I suppose that many of them never even did it when they were children.

Return to Alto Cayma

I returned from Cuzco on Monday, and we spent a good part of the week making preparations for our next group of visitors, who were due to arrive on Saturday. We were also preparing to launch the next phase of construction at our service center up the hill in Mujeres con Esperanza. Both of these activities are described in further detail below.

Humanistas Sin Fronteras ("Humanitarians Without Borders")

On Tuesday, Briza , Victor and I went to visit a potential new strategic partner organization for our work in Alto Cayma. The group is called Humanistas Sin Fronteras, and it's made up of psychology students who are



about to graduate from the university. These students have taken it upon themselves to dedicate their professional lives, from the very beginning, to serving the poor, and as such, they are looking to work with organizations like our Association Serving Alto Cayma in order to gain access to the population with which they want to work. We have just begun discussions, but all 3 of us were very well impressed with this group and see great possibilities for working in partnership with them. They showed us their service center, and we're considering helping them furnish part of it.



A Happy Anniversary

The constitution for our Association Serving Alto Cayma was approved by the Peruvian government on 29 Aug 08, so Wednesday marked the 10th anniversary of our founding. (We had started our programs 4 years prior to that date, but had operated them informally until they grew to a significant size, at which point we felt the need to formalize our operation.)

We held a social gathering for our team at lunchtime on Wednesday to mark this special occasion. They asked me to pose with the sign and the cake.



I hoped that meant that the whole cake was for me, but no, I had to share it



with the entire team.

Youth Library

I dropped in on the Youth Library on Wednesday afternoon. Gisela Llallacache, who is studying Education with the help of our Salir Adelante



educational sponsorship program, was in charge that day, and I was pleased to find the library filled with enthusiastic young kids learning about the joys of reading.

Another Anniversary

Friday marked the one year anniversary of Victor's sinus operation, for those who remember that trying experience. Unable to breathe properly, Victor had been a whipped puppy for months prior to the operation, and he also had a long and difficult recover afterwards. Now he's long since returned to being his old, energetic self, and it's hard to even remember how he was before, but this photo from our archives helps bring back old memories.



Kaizen Consulting Group

I may have mentioned in an earlier report that we are having our entire organization reviewed by the Kaizen Consulting Group to determine our degree of competence for the work of the mission we have undertaken. On Friday, I was the first one out of the chute to be interviewed. The rest of the team will follow, assuming that Kaizen doesn't recommend shutting down the whole operation just based on their interview with me. :-)

Construction in Mujeres con Esperanza

We're getting ready to start a new phase of construction at our service center in Mujeres con Esperanza. We're going to put a second story on our building, and build a security wall around the portion of our property that's not occupied by the building. We're going to contract with Jesús, the builder who did such a good job for us on the building we've occupied for the past 3 years, but this time Victor is negotiating terms and conditions which will give us even better control of the project. As you can see in this picture, Victor seems to be happier about this than does Jesús.



Tornado Warning

On Saturday morning, Chris Connelly ("the White Tornado") touched down at the Arequipa airport, coming on his annual visit. He was supposed to



be accompanied by Ron Shook and Jill Sturm, 2 first-time visitors, but they missed their connections in Miami and didn't arrive until 24 hours later, having had to spend Friday night in Miami and Saturday night in Lima.

Acercádonos Children's Meeting

At our monthly meeting of the children in our Acercádonos sponsorship program on Saturday, we inducted 2 new "ahijados" (sponsees)



who have been sponsored by members of the Inca Trail hiking team that was here a couple of weeks ago.

We were also treated to recitations of original poetry written by 4 of our children - Kassandra Farfan, Ana Llamoca, Ronald Salazar and Juan



Elias Velasquez. They stood up in front of some 200 people and bravely recited their poems from memory, complete with gestures. We were very



proud of them. Afterwards, they were given prizes by us and by Miguel, the



young man from Poesía Sin Filtros ("Poetry Without Filters") who had coached them.

At the end of the meeting, Chris Connelly made an appearance which



was received with great enthusiasm by the children who are among the 40



"ahijados" that he, his friends and his family members are sponsoring in our various programs.

Hike to Town

Ron & Jill arrived Sunday morning, 24 hours behind schedule, and we



launched almost immediately on our traditional Sunday hike to town, where



Ron was eager to try the traditional local delicacy, deep-fried (whole) "cuy",



which was translated on the menu as "smashed guinea pig" - yum yum!

The Great Race

Sunday was also the day of the annual race to the top of the El Misti volcano. Starting from the Plaza de Armas, it's 17.7 km (about 11 miles) to the base of El Misti, and then there's a vertical climb of 11,500 feet (the equivalent of over 2 miles straight up) to reach the summit at 19,100 feet. For some reason, only 138 competitors chose to undertake this pleasant ramble, and the winner set a new record with the astounding time of 3:44:30. It's too bad that these 3 competitors were late to the starting line, however, because they look like they could have given the winner a run for his money.



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

Jim