

## Report No. 3 from Alto Cayma - 24 Mar 19

### A Return Visitor

Mercedes Aragon arrived in Arequipa on Monday. She's the lady who has been translating our letters for the past year and a half. In January and February, she was with me in North Carolina giving a presentation, based on



insights she's gained from the letters going back and forth between "ahijados" (sponsees) and "padrinos" (sponsors), to Rotary Clubs in our District.

She spent the week dividing her time between her family downtown and us up in Alto Cayma. Even though she had been here on 3 earlier



occasions, those had all been very quick visits. This time I invited her to spend more time and see for herself what the "ahijados" are writing about in their letters concerning their home conditions and the things our programs are doing for them. Thus she participated with us for 3-1/2 days, and the stories below reveal what she experienced during this visit.

### **Creaciones Angel Cards**

As a result of my mention of the Creaciones Angel handmade cards in last week's report, we received a card order from a reader in Minnesota. If anyone else is interested in ordering some cards, please see the information that was given in last week's report, or just write to me.

### **Geniuses**

Gregorio and his colleagues from Humanistas Sin Fronteras (Humanitarians Without Borders), the group of psychologists who are doing a lot of work with us just now, have detected two geniuses among the young people with whom we are in contact. I don't usually think in terms of looking for geniuses among the population here, but I don't know why not. After all,

some years ago we came upon Juan Quispe, who not only achieved the highest score among all the students competing for entrance to the National



University to study Medicine, but achieved the highest score of the 5,000 or so students testing for admission in all fields. Gregorio is going to propose a program to help develop gifted young people like these. It will be very interesting to see what he comes up with.

### **Arequipa Ciudad Blanca Rotary Club**

On Wednesday night, we attended the weekly meeting of the Arequipa Ciudad Blanca Rotary Club so that Mercedes could share her presentation



with them, as she had with the Rotarians in North Carolina. The presentation had a great impact on them, as they could almost "feel" the emotions conveyed going both ways in the unique relationships of our program sponsorships.

### **Thursday Afternoon in Mujeres con Esperanza**

Thursday afternoons up in Mujeres con Esperanza are a flurry of activity. Here are all the things that Mercedes, our visitor, was exposed to.

**Elderly Meeting** - The weekly meeting with our elderly group was conducted by Victor, with participation by Mercedes. We have a small but



dedicated group of elderly who faithfully attend these meetings every week. Paradoxically, people like these who come to us for nonmaterial things are the first ones we want to reward with material benefits, as described below.

**Blanket Deliveries** - Thanks to the generosity of donors to our Blanket Program, we had blankets to distribute to the elderly, and we visited the homes of our elderly group in Mujeres con Esperanza to see who needed



them. (Remember, we are headed into Fall now in the southern hemisphere, and the coldest days are yet to come.)

The woman in this photo lost one leg in an accident years ago, so she



spends her time in bed and can't really exercise to warm up. These blankets will be a godsend to her.

We always find interesting things when we go on these home visits. In one house, for example, we found this nice pile of fresh alfalfa laid up against



the couple's "wardrobe" (the bags in the background). Outside were the

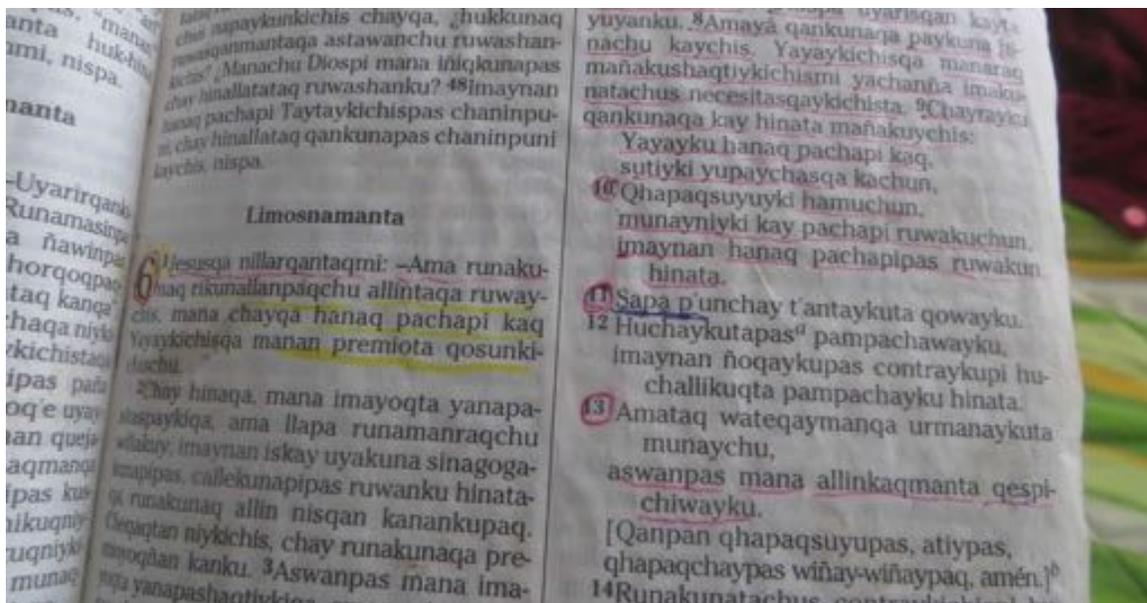


intended recipients of the alfalfa, and by the time it's gone, so will they be.

We were interested in the book this woman had. It turns out that it



was a Bible in Quechua. I had never seen one before, and this one has



obviously been well studied.

Donations to our Blanket Program are always needed and welcome. Each warm alpaca wool blanket costs just \$10 on the Peruvian economy. If you'd like to contribute, just write a check to Advent Peru Mission Support,

with Blankets on the memo line, and mail it to Susan Hartsell, 2900 South Devon St, Charlotte, NC 28213.

**Maycol** - One year ago today, Maycol, a 12-year old boy in our program, died of leukemia. Mercedes had visited Maycol and his siblings the last time she was here, and this time she visited his little brother and sister.



Maycol was an exceptional boy in many regards, and he is deeply missed.

**Mirella's New Lot** - Mirella is a single mother with a boisterous young boy to raise on her own. Joaquin, her son, spends the week in Father Alex' Aldea (home for children) so that Mirella will be free to work, and then spends the weekend with her. Mirella and her son had no place of their own to live, so the Directors of the Mujeres con Esperanza community decided to sell her an odd lot at a very affordable price. We visited the lot, and Victor



talked about helping Mirella mark its boundaries this weekend. Once the land is leveled a bit, we plan to provide Mirella with a two-room prefabricated house which she and Joaquin can call their own.

**English Classes** - Mercedes had the opportunity to sit in on Carmen's English class for the older kids in Mujeres con Esperanza. As a retired



English teacher herself, Mercedes was able to appreciate the good work that Carmen was doing. Carmen, who is our lawyer, has degrees in Education as well as Law, and is fluent in English, so she agreed to take over the English classes when John went back to the States for 6 months of home leave.

**Hauling Water** - We saw some of the ladies of the neighborhood drawing water from the public water tap to haul back to their houses in big buckets. We went up for a closer inspection, and the ladies good-naturedly invited Mercedes to man the faucet handle for them. We learned that each



household is allowed to draw only 5 buckets a day. That has to suffice for all their needs, from drinking water to bathing to washing dishes and clothes, whatever.

**A Good Samaritan** - Victor spied a woman at the water tap who was deserving of some recognition, so he grabbed her before she could shyly run



away, and brought her over to meet Mercedes. This woman provides a lunch every day to Sr. Tiburcio, a neighbor who is home alone all day and is not able to fend for himself because of his advanced age. Victor never misses a chance to reinforce such charitable conduct on the part of the residents themselves.

So, how was all that for a busy Thursday afternoon?

### **Mercedes Meets Jonathan (Again)**

On Friday morning, Mercedes met with Jonathan, the boy who was the motive for her first visit to Alto Cayma almost 13 years ago. They talked at length about the problems Jonathan is experiencing in the wake of his



father's recent accidental death. After meeting with Mercedes, Jonathan met with Carmen, our new lawyer, to discuss legal options for dealing with those aspects of his problems. This might make a good story to share with all of you someday, after it's all settled, because it's a rather extreme case of how difficult life can be for the people here in Alto Cayma.

### **Mercedes' Presentation**

On Friday morning, Mercedes also shared the presentation she has been giving to Rotary clubs with members of our staff, so that they too could



hear of the insights she has gotten from translating the letters, and how she has used that insight to inspire new interest on the part of the Rotarians who have heard about Alto Cayma from my point of view ad nauseum. Hearing Mercedes' presentation inspired Briza to want to make a video to make the relationship between padrino and ahijado come alive in a different way - an interesting idea.

### **Kaizen Training**

On Saturday, Kaizen conducted 2 training sessions of 4 hours each, with training for the leadership on Analysis of Objectives in the morning, and training for the case worker ladies on Initiative in the afternoon. In between the two sessions, we were all together for a joint luncheon, prepared by our



staff, in the kitchen of our service center where the training was taking place.

I can only imagine what the training of the case worker ladies was like, because no one but those 5 ladies was allowed to be there, but I can tell about the training in the morning session. There were some lecture topics,



but the most interesting were the experiential learning exercises where we learned things like how the mind can control the direction of oscillation of a



pendulum without any apparent involvement of the hand, and how one man, two women and one old goat can lift a 180-lb man using only 2 fingers each,



through simply believing it can be done and working synergistically.

The morning seemed to fly by, and we were all pleased with the results of the training, as we have been with all the services that Kaizen has



provided us thus far. The current training will extend for approximately 10 weeks, so you'll be hearing more about it in future reports.

## **Bridge to Opportunity**

On Saturday afternoon, we had the monthly meeting of the students who are trying to gain entry to the National University, with help from our Bridge to Opportunity program. They were not a very relaxed bunch this



time, because some of them had just taken their entrance exam that morning, and the rest had theirs scheduled for Sunday morning. Results for both groups will be available early next week.

## **Mormon Temple**

We now have a Mormon Temple in Arequipa, and it's right on the way downtown from Alto Cayma. We go right past it every time we walk or drive



downtown. A building all clad in white marble really stands out against the background here.

### **An Odd Pet**

And finally, up in Mujeres con Esperanza, we came across a resident who has a rather unusual pet. Most people feel that a dog or two is sufficient



to provide security, but this fellow apparently felt he needed a dinosaur.

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

Jim