

## **Report No. 9 from Alto Cayma – 3 Aug 08**

### **Independence Day**

On Monday we had a (Peruvian) Independence Day get-together at our house. This wasn't to grill hamburgers and shoot off fireworks, however, but rather some of the girls from the cardshop coming to help Gloria organize the ton of handicraft tools and materials she sent down in the container shipment last fall. The possibility of creating another workshop from all this is still to be determined, after some higher priority matters get taken care of. Meanwhile, however, Giuliana did prepare a nice lunch for the girls, so it was a bit of a "party" after all.

### **Serving Alto Cayma**

We are in the midst of the Performance Appraisal and payraise season in Serving Alto Cayma. Victor completed 2 years with us on Jul 1, and used part of the first increment of his payraise to spring for capuccino, thus setting a precedent others will no doubt follow. Lidia completed 1 year with us on Aug 1, while Giuliana just started on Jun 1. As I have indicated in past reports, we couldn't be happier with the work of all 3 of these outstanding people. We couldn't operate our programs without them, and they're a lot of fun to be around as well.

Victor has had some hard times this past week. It seems that both of his cars "turned on him" at once. The Tico cab, which he has rented out to a friend, has engine trouble which has put it out of commission. This interrupts Victor's income stream, and puts his friend out of work as well, both of which are of great concern to him. And then his new car decided to have electrical problems at the same time, further exacerbating his economic woes. To put this in the context of our lives, it reminds me of the time I drove my BMW past the parts store and it fell in love.

In response to last week's appeal for laptop computers, we did receive the offer of one unit which will be fully suitable, even though it's older than the 3-year criterion I somewhat arbitrarily imposed. If anyone else has a laptop they could spare, even if it's over 3 years old, please contact us with whatever information you have regarding its technical specifications. We sorely need one more unit.

### **Visitors**

We have a short notice visit taking place right now – Victor and Chabelita, from Lima. Chabelita is the sister of Jorge Guevara, the fellow

who takes care of all our visitors from the States as they transit through Lima, so some of you have possibly met her. She and Victor are always helping us shop for things in Lima (especially papers for the cardshop), and they decided they wanted to see Arequipa and Alto Cayma for themselves. They are the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> members of their family to visit us here, and we're very glad to have them.

### **Acercádonos (“Coming Together”) Sponsorship Program**

We had the monthly meeting with all the “ahijados” (sponsors) yesterday. Victor and Chabelita participated with us, and they were very touched by the warm welcome they received from the people – and that was even before they started passing out candies and stickers to all the “kids” from 7 to 70. This time we had a couple of new features in the agenda, drawing on resources from our other programs. Our health-related lecturette was given by Ezequiel Cutipa, a fourth-year medical student whose studies are being supported under the Salir Adelante program, and this time we had all our announcements of things the people need to know interpreted in Quechua by Marina, one of the girls from the cardshop, for the benefit of the elderly whose Spanish isn't adequate to capture the message. We could tell that Marina was doing a good job, because the people were giving her questions in Quechua (a real vote of confidence) and she was fielding them fluently.

### **Aldea “Sagrada Familia” (The Orphanage)**

Father Frank invited us back to the Aldea this week to take photos of all the kids in their new warmup suits, purchased through the generosity of Sherry Fowler and her church in Charleston, SC. The kids all looked very sharp, and you could see how proud they were of their new “uniforms”.

### **Rotary Projects**

All the paperwork for the Charlotte Rotary Club's Water Project is in the hands of The Rotary Foundation. Now we have to wait for their re-approval of this once-approved project before the money will be released and we can actually begin the work.

We launched another new Rotary project this week. The Southwest Cabarrus Rotary Club in the Charlotte area has provided a fund for the purchase of bicycles for people who are in need of transportation. We chose to give the very first bike to Sr. Martín Barrionuevo, a vigorous and athletic 73-year old who helps us a lot with our Acercádonos meetings. Sr. Martín had a bike in the recent past, but it got so old it sort of disintegrated. Victor and I

took him downtown to select the bike himself, and he couldn't have been more pleased. It's a hot red mountain bike with yellow rims, all picked out by Sr. Martín himself. It's so attractive that keeping it from being stolen is going to be a big challenge.

### **Charlotte Sister Cities**

I was visited this week by a couple of members of the Arequipa Fire Department. As a matter of interest, all firemen in Peru are Volunteer Firemen. The cities do not have municipal Fire Departments. Not surprisingly, the equipment used by these Volunteers is badly outdated, and they are looking for donated equipment, especially vehicles, from Fire Departments in the States. I don't know if the City of Charlotte can help, but I intend to approach the Charlotte Sister Cities committee when I return home in October. As a branch of the municipal government, they might be able to exert some influence, especially since Arequipa is the first of Charlotte's 7 Sister Cities, a relationship with more than 40 years of history behind it.

And that's it for another week here in Alto Cayma, where the sun shines every day and the temperature goes up into the 70's all "winter" long, surely an agreeable place in which to

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

Jim