



YAV's Come to Live and Work In Solidarity

2008-09

YAV's

Back Row

L-R: Kerr &

Sinklier

Front

Row L-R:

McKnelly,

Comell,

Rains &

Hassel-

barth



September 2008 has brought many things to the office of the Red Uniendo Manos Peru, including growth of Fair Trade, DVD presentations on the pollution in La Oroya and on the Ica/Huancavelica water rights issue, the revitalization of La Retama and the return of Young Adult Volunteers (YAV's) commissioned by the PC(USA) to serve for one year in Perú. Lynn Hasselbarth, Alex Cornell, Leslie McKnelly, Sean Kerr, Michael Sinklier and Katie Rains will live and work in solidarity with 7 of the 14 organizations of the Red Uniendo Manos Peru network. While Hasselbarth and Kerr will be living in Huánuco and Huancayo respectively, the other four YAV's are finding their homes and their way around Lima.

The first two weeks of September the YAV's spent in training. The six volunteers were exposed to city life in Lima by visiting el Parque de

Aguas, the Plaza de Armas, and the Cruz de San Cristobal. Spending time in the classroom, the group received a history and idiomatic Spanish class where they learned about the ancient Incan's beliefs, the Conquistadors, the atrocities that occurred during the years of violence from 1980-2000, and how this past has combined to form the diverse culture in present day Perú.

On the 15th of September, the volunteers spent their first day at their worksites; settling in, learning more about the specific programs with which they will work, and finding themselves at the beginning of a year sure to be filled with adventures, surprises, frustration and hope. Look for more specific info about our new YAV's in upcoming issues of La Retama.

- by Katie Rains

African Peruvian Women Hold a Vigil for the Victims of the 2007 Earthquake

On August 15, 2007 an earthquake of magnitude 7.9 on the Richter scale shook the regions of Pisco, Ica, Cañete y Chincha causing the destruction of numerous homes as well as the deaths of more than 500 people. It was felt with greatest force in the city of Chincha and its surrounding districts where almost all the homes throughout the rural area fell to the ground. That was the case in the districts of Grocio Prado and San Benito where nearly 95% of the homes were destroyed.

One year after the devastating earthquake that levelled the southern coast of Peru, CEDEMUNEP (Center for Black Peruvian Women) carried out a VIGIL OF SOLIDARITY. The ceremony took place on August 12, 2008, in the Campo de Marte area of Lima, Peru. Candles were lit and people recounted their experiences in the earthquake. CEDEMUNEP is a member of

the Joining Hands Network Peru and the Collective for Dialogue of African Peruvian Women.

Present at the vigil was a delegation of youth from the group "LOS JOVOS" from San Benito who demanded that the central government pledge to help in the reconstruction of the south. After one year, the sentiment of the people is almost entirely the same. The vigil was a way of expressing solidarity with the victims of the earthquake, and both a way of expressing their opposition to the slow response of the government, and accompanying them in their rightful demands of the Central, Regional, and Local Governments to immediately aid in reconstruction.

Written by Nelson Figueroa, Director of El Dia del Pueblo
Translated by Michael Sinklier, current YAV at El Dia del Pueblo

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6 YAV's Commissioned for 1 year of service in Peru
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Huancavelica: Water Rights and A Book Building

Updated! **J.H. Web Site:** <http://www.manosperu.org> **Fair Trade Web Site:** <http://www.fairtradeperu.com>

La Oroya Web Site: <http://www.savelaoroya.org> **Partners for Just Trade:** <http://www.partnersforjusttrade.com>



Heads UP!

Fair Trade artisans are happily busy all year round, filling orders for their Peruvian crafts.

However, orders always skyrocket during the Holiday season. Be sure to check out **Partners for Just Trade** soon to place your Christmas order!



News From La Oroya...

First off, we have a new website... www.savelaoroya.org ...check us out!

In the past month, Ira Rennert, owner of the Doe Run smelting plant that has been polluting the lives of La Oroyans since 1997 was just named the 56th wealthiest man in the United States by Forbes magazine.

Also, CNN is coming back to Peru for their second season of Planet In Peril. On Dec. 11th at 9pm, the continuing contamination in La Oroya will be showcased. Remember to watch!

CNN: A Planet In Peril, Battle Lines showing December 11, 9 PM (EST)

Building a Book Building

When 2006-07 YAV David Andrews came to live and work in Huancavelica, Peru, he didn't necessarily have a "job", but found he was able to help ASJANTS (Association of Youth, Kids and Working Children) build bookshelves to house donated books. Granted, there was one question looming, "Where are we going to put the bookshelves once they are finished?"

And with one question, the search began for a suitable place to house the bookshelves and their books. The originally desired location fell through, and it took months to find the location where the building now stands; right next door. The rights to the lot adjacent to the original location were acquired and countless man hours ensued until construction began in July of 2007.

The structure's bookish beginnings have remained in tact, though the need for a youth center has expanded it. The first floor will house a deli where a gov't program will help subsidize food costs. The second floor will be the library along with some computers where local kids will be able to study. When construction finishes, the third floor will be a dormitory.

Though great triumph has been felt at every stage of construction, the end is still far off. No wires for electricity or pipes for plumbing have been laid. This must be finished prior to starting any interior work. If you, or your congregation, feels pulled to help this community continue to build a place for its children to eat, study and at times sleep, please contact Katie Rains at katierainsperu@gmail.com, and she will help you contact ASJANTS.

Los Aguas de Arriba: Ica/Huancavelica Water Rights

The Ica province of Peru is an incredibly fruitful area exporting thousands of dollars worth of asparagus, artichokes and wine every year. This farmland is filled with crop and water is plentiful as there are two natural glacial watersheds crossing the farmlands to the coast.

Between the glaciers high in the Andes and the coastal province of Ica lies the province of Huancavelica. There you will find Alpaca farms in abundance. With one major difference, most people don't have enough water for themselves let alone their herds and many have deserted the area.

In the logical world of physics, this doesn't make sense. We all know that water flows down hill and if the people of Ica have water from the glacial run off, so should the people of Huancavelica, since the water would essentially run through Huancavelica before reaching Ica. And for thousands of years, this was a very true reality and the people of both regions had enough. However, in 1945, the Regional Government of Ica along with the National Government installed a cement walled canal that runs from a lagoon

in Huancavelica called Choclococha to the farm lands of Ica.

With ever quickening melting glacial sources due to global warming, the area has been hurt immensely. Though parts are surviving as they still have the lagoon being filled by glacial runoff, there are some areas that have been cut off completely because the cement canal does not allow for water seepage into the soil as it moves towards Ica.

Currently, the governments have plans to change this as well. A second canal named Ingahuasi is in the works. This canal would gather the glacial runoff much closer to the source and run directly to Choclococha. Since this would also be made of concrete, the other half of the valley would dry up because, again, no water would seep into the soil.

It is vital that both Ica and Huancavelica work together to address the water issues so that residents of both areas have what they need.

The Joining Hands Network in Peru has recently finished a documentary of the water rights issues in these areas and it is being used to raise awareness of future canal plans in Huancavelica. A showing is scheduled at the University in Huancavelica on October 15th.

These water issues are also the reason that the Youth Congress is going to be held in Huancavelica this January. Around 55 youth from Bolivia, Peru, Canada and the US will gather in solidarity to share their cultures and environmental concerns. More to come on the congress...

"It is important that these two states work together to find a solution for the entire river valley. The national government should be concerned for Alpaca farmers and Agro-industry alike."

-Jacob Goad

The current status of the book building in Santa Ana.

