

2011 Annual Report

While this year has been frustrating regarding the lack of progress on the Children's Home, in other respects we have made considerable advances in attending to the health of Nunoa's people and alpacas. Additionally, in forming tighter relations with the Mayor and personnel in the Town Hall they have shown increased commitment to the project.

Below is a list of accomplishments.

-Team Visits to Nunoa. Teams by veterinary and medical personnel lead by Steve Purdy visited Nunoa in January and August 2011 and January 2012. In total 7 different veterinarians from Argentina, Germany, New Zealand, California, Connecticut, Massachusetts, and Washington State, as well as 10 animal science students have attended to Nunoa herds. Techniques employed include internal parasite analysis, skin disorders, birthing and mortality rates, enterotoxemia vaccinations, sperm counts, ultra sound pregnancy assessment, dental and foot trims, and ear tagging. Principal findings are: 1. Internal parasite levels are not serious enough to justify toxic worming medicine that pollutes water sources; 2. The alpaca specific enterotoxemia vaccine is reducing new born mortality and 3. Small herds are in need of better male breeders if reproduction rate and fiber quality is to improve.

Three physicians from the Boston area accompanied the vet teams and treated over 100 individuals including the delivering of a baby that would have died had an aspirator not been available to revive it. Medicines and equipment were donated to the local hospital.

-Formal Contract. A convenio was signed between the town and the Nunoa Project pledging assistance in project's of mutual interest. The town is providing housing and transportation for the visiting teams. They have requested assistance in designing a new camelid museum and animal diagnostic laboratory. Also they are seeking advice on protecting an impressive pre-Inca archaeological site for which we have identified an archaeologist to assist them. Giesela Marcoppido, an Argentinian veterinarian, presented a seminar to over 60 herders on alpaca care and infectious disease. We suspect that our association with the town helped them receive a large government grant to improve alpaca production in the district.

-Vaccine Distribution. Based on our experience from test trials at the Mamanir Ranch the Town has committed its agricultural agent (a veterinarian) to assist our enterotoxemia vaccination program in the purchase of vaccines and their distribution to small herding communities.

-Health Care Evaluation. Two reports assessed health care delivery in the town of Nunoa and the rural district. Dr. Mark Harding, an expert in international health, reviewed the workings of the principal Health Center in town and its interactions with users. Alyse Whellock, a senior at Princeton, wrote an award winning honor's thesis on access to and the effectiveness of rural clinics scattered around the district.

-Climate Change. In evaluating climate change on pasture quality and herding. Meagan Mazzarino, a doctoral student in Natural Resources Conservation at UMass reviewed over 40 years of precipitation data for the altiplano region as well as stream flow and pasture diversity in the district. She also interviewed pastoralists confirming the increased variability in weather patterns and other natural disruptive events that are compromising herding and farming. Usually cold and wet conditions at the beginning

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2011 spread across the altiplano leading to high mortality rates of newborn alpacas and other stock. Nunoa was particularly affected and made the national news

-Shelters for New Borns. Funds promised by a Northampton, Massachusetts non-profit group(INCA) are being used to purchase portable shelters for newborns alpacas during the rainy season where hypothermia leads to pneumonia and death.

-Housing for Shepard Families. Through lecturing fees Steve independently raised \$4000 to be used to construct small adobe houses for the three herding families on the Mamaniri Ranch. This is the principal location for training and exploring new approaches such as our successful vaccination program. Presently the families live in small stone and mud homes with grass thatched roofs.

-Life Lease on Properties. We have signed a life lease contract with Father Paul Habing on his land holdings in Nunoa. Through his generosity this gives the Nunoa Project use of building site lots in town as well as the Mamaniri Ranch (1000 alpacas, 13,000 acres) for Father Paul's lifetime whereupon these holdings will transfer to the Project. The ranch has some of the finest alpaca stock in the highlands. Herd management techniques developed there are then transferred to smaller community herds where the need is considerable.

-Breeding Stock Improvement. Funds (\$6000 and another \$5000 promised) have been independently raised by Steve Purdy to buy breeding males for three herding communities selected by the mayor. This should improve the stock quality and hence the price gained from fiber sales for these marginal, native groups.

-Bank Account. In order to facilitate the transfer of money to Nunoa a bank account has been set up with the Banco de Credito in Lima, with a branch in the nearby town of Ayaviri. This arrangement works considerably better than our earlier one that entailed going through Father Paul's account. We are also exploring the possibility of transferring funds directly to the Banco de la Nation with its new branch in Nunoa.

-Orphanage Regulations. Looking ahead to the Casa de Ninos (Children's Home) we have looked into the regulations for running an orphanage. These have become considerably stricter since Father Paul set up his home for children from compromised families years ago. We have an excellent advisor in this area, a former mayor of Nunoa who has run a large orphanage on the coast. Here we are exploring possibilities of having something short of a formal orphanage that will still assist poorer children but with less bureaucracy and required staff.

-Building Program. Having acquired building lots, leveled the terrain, and made over 11,000 adobe bricks for construction we engaged two architects - in succession. The first came highly recommended, submitted detailed plans, and gave us a quote that only slightly exceeded our anticipated price of \$50,000. The plans were reviewed by independent engineers and found to be well-done. However, as we moved forward - sending our Board Member Karina Pomroy to Lima to negotiate the contract - the price

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leapt to over a 50% increase. Discouraged that this might be repeated we sought the services of the town engineer who had a construction company and was confident he could keep within our price range through the use of local labor and town equipment. In spite of constant urging he never submitted an estimate and subsequently was fired by the town for undisclosed reasons. Obviously discouraged by the lack of progress and the amount of time we had put into the process, the Board approved at our Annual Meeting the renting a building in town as a 1-2 year interim solution. This would give us a chance to move ahead yet give us time to negotiate the intricacies of running a children's home in small steps. On Steve Purdy's last visit he was asked to inquire into rental options in town. He looked at three places one of which, a 12 room pension, was of particular interest. Two members of the Board, Karina Pomroy and Brooke Thomas, will return to Nunoa in March to review this option and if satisfactory negotiate a contract.

-Donations for 2011. Vicki Flahie is the project's Treasurer. Thanks to the generosity of our membership we raised over \$17,000 last year and spent a little over \$10,000 principally on travel expenses, veterinary supplies and construction preparations. This leaves us with a \$56,579 balance with which to move forward. We are hoping that those of you who have contributed in the past can continue to support our efforts as the assistance programs expand and the Casa de Ninos becomes a reality. Kindly spread the word to relatives and friends who might have an interest in such a worthwhile endeavor.

-Thanks to our Board Members. We are most fortunate to have such a talented and dedicated group of Board Members whose efforts are entirely voluntary. At our Annual Meeting we have added Tom Leatherman to the Board. Tom has decades of experience working in Nunoa and is a professor of Anthropology at UMass. Clearly in initially committing ourselves to establishing a place in the high Andes where disadvantaged children could find refuge and sustenance, and where our expertise might improve the lives and herds of small-scale herders, we hardly anticipated the myriad of problems that lay ahead. Communicating ideas across two continents, in different languages, where phone service and email is problematic, and correspondence clarity and promptness difficult has been - to say the least - challenging. Nevertheless, we are moving ahead with optimism and enthusiasm as we see our efforts coming to fruition.