

Hear Ye! Hear Ye!

Story written by Heather Coles

In 2014 Anne Marie LaFave visited her friend, Caitlin McGuire, a year long volunteer at WBC. Anne Marie was a graduate student in speech language pathology at Nazareth College at the time. Her passion and interest in human communication, coupled with her academic and clinical background, prompted her idea for the students at WBC to have their hearing screened.



The team: Heather, Anne Marie and Catherine.

Caitlin and Anne Marie finalized plans for conducting hearing screenings throughout the WBC in the month of May 2015. Anne Marie recruited her fellow colleagues, Catherine Beers and Heather Coles (professor at Nazareth College) to assist with this project.

From May 12 to May 20 Madre Miguel, Madre Cindy, and Padre Halligan welcomed the hearing screening team to the WBC. More than 470 WBC students participated in the hearing screenings. The children were very attentive and motivated while playing the "beep game." Dr. Giuliana Hidalgo, Health Director, Caitlin McGuire and Sara Bonilla coordinated the students and facilitated ear cleaning as critical functions of the screening process.



The "Beep Game"

With the support of the WBC and the integrative work of the hearing screening team, students with hearing difficulties were identified for further audiological assessment. Suggestions for classroom modifications and annual ear cleaning were also provided during this project.

All members of the hearing screening team were pleased with the outcome and Anne Marie, Catherine and Heather were all impressed with the WBC and inspired with the mission and accomplishments of the Center. They all look forward to their continued connection with the students, volunteers and staff of the WBC.

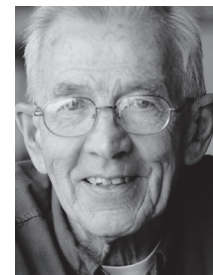


Caitlin and team get the kids ready for the game.

THE SHOESHINE SPECIAL

NEWS FROM THE WORKING BOYS' CENTER • QUITO, ECUADOR • SUMMER 2015

Padre's Message



DEAR FOLKS,

Pax Christi.

We want to share some of our joy that your donations make possible. As we begin our second half-century of operations, we're into all the necessary adaptations

to the changing needs of the poorest people in this very developing country. We keep our sights set on Heaven and also do a polite amount of bowing and scraping around the ever new regulations officialdom provides to direct our education, health care, street cleaning, access to fire exits, etc. A result of relations with government officials is that we have been blessed with some new friends in high places who understand that poor kids, in addition to their rights to education, recreation and health care, need respect for their rights to work, earn and contribute too.

But our main and secure life line to God's providence still runs through our families in their loyal efforts to live the values the Center was founded to promote: loyalty, personal formation, family unity, religious practice, realistic education, work, money management, health care, recreation and decent housing. In all these areas we have programmed benefits and obligations to keep us united, motivated and comfortably close to you, God and to each other. In the centerfold those brave families show how they're winning an independence far greater than that won in the great battle of Pichincha recorded immediately below.

Cheers and God bless.

John J. Halligan, S.J.

John J. Halligan, S.J.

Victory is Ours

It was the 24th of May 2015 and all of the kids in the Working Boys' Center were gathered in the big auditorium on the top floor. The view out the windows is of Mount Pichincha looming in its glory, an emotional sight considering what was taking place up on the stage. The kids were re-enacting the battle that won Ecuador's independence from Spain on that same mountainside on May 24th, 1822. It had been a smashing, well-deserved victory for Ecuador. The kids did it the justice it deserved as a real battle fought when men were men. Nobody sneaked up



"Victory is ours!" shout the Ecuadorians

on anybody. Both sides, with drums beating, marched separate paths up the mountain and went right at it. Our loyal Ecuadorian

boys didn't even think of waiting for the other half of their forces. They knew they were coming right along. But there was a delay and our side almost lost it down to the few famous patriots who stood desperately against the superior Spanish forces. Just then, a shout was heard: "Reinforcements are here!"; and you should have seen our gang chase those brave Spaniards down off the stage into the audience!

Along with a lot of laughs for the gallery, it was a breathtaking show of sheer confidence in the power that comes from each other. We witness that every day in real life in the Center. Not that we're forever fighting over hillsides. But we do struggle mightily every single day to support each other. Attaining the practice of the Center's values is not easy or even possible for one person alone or one family. In our Family of Families, they all learn how they can put out for each other. Each day coming together in the Center is all the reinforcement they need to win.

You and They Make an Heroic Fellowship of Generosity

No offense meant to the soldiers who won us independence, but the heroic Ecuadorian families of today viewing Mount Pichincha out the windows of the Working Boys' Center are body and soul beyond any armed warfare heroics. Our brave families in the Center's campaign for liberty struggle mightily every day to tear out of themselves and out of each other the dark splotches of ignorance of the practice of Gospel values. Those values give us our only sight, smell and feel of God in us sharing needs and gifts on our way out of the trap of living selfishly instead of for the salvation of everybody. There's space enough to enjoy some details about a few new and old heroes in the battle



The first Jara Family portrait.

First is the newest family in the Center: Anthony 12, Nathaly 10, Cristian 8. Maria Belen 5, Jostin 3, Mercy 1 and their mother Gloria Jara 26. The picture proves that God keeps making people always more beautiful than the ones already made. Gloria's first baby came when she was thirteen years old. So you know exactly how much Gloria's own parents knew about having and raising kids. The same father of all six kids has shown up occasionally over the many years. Gloria doesn't know if or when or where he might work or hang. (Pause for train of thought identification. - We're not classifying saints from sinners. We're here only to help those heroic enough to struggle out of the trap of the spiritual ignorance mentioned above.) Gloria and her kids rent a shack for fifty dollars a month in Atacucho, a neighborhood up the side of another mountain. The bus costs twenty-five cents, so they walk it. She only makes five dollars a day Monday to Friday cleaning houses. The two boys were making money selling candy but the cops have been told to rescue them from the injustice of children working and earning and helping out. It's a brand new family God blesses the Center with along with Maria's humble courage and your support. A close look at the seven smiles in the picture reveals a future of glorious salvation. They're in the Center now where

everybody's practicing how to love and seek the real good for the other guy. In a small town far from Quito two bus drivers fooling around for the right of passage lost control. One of the results was the Manobanda family had to sell all, uproot and come to Quito in hopes of medical treatment for an 8 year old son who lost a leg. Joel Manobanda stays against the wall in the Working Boys' Center and hops down the stairs faster that the other kids walk



Cristian celebrates Jesus in First communion.

down. In the national game of soccer he's not nearly as fast as the others but he does more than his share of the crashing and tumbling. He marched with our Ecuadorian troops up the side of Mount Pichincha in the reenactment of the great battle. No spectator averted eyes from his to notice his limp and no companion in arms risked a steely elbow in the ribs for any snickering at his gait. Joel doesn't endure nonsense. He's a whole other world away from pretending to be the local tough. But he does scare everybody because he exudes his conviction about the awesome truth of our existence - that life is an opportunity not to try to beat each other out but to share it all for each other's best benefit. See it in his eyes in the picture. We see it everyday in his example of courage and fair play. Far from being a little saint and defiantly close to being his own worst self, Joel is everyman's guide to Heaven. The money for candy in his pocket, his future career with its first million dollar paycheck, the left leg he lost because of adults' bad behavior, the glorious history of his country, the serious difficulties of the poor families in his old neighborhood, everything God providentially pans out - all and every little bit of it belongs to all of us, not some of it to each of us. Any suggestion to Joel and his family that poor people are deprived of the real action would sound to them like pure babble..



Joel marches with the troops.

Unlike Joel Manobanda, Armando Rodriguez is another powerful force among us not lighting up the path for others to follow but providing the need where the other kids shine their light. He is mentally challenged and a bit physically disabled. But this doesn't mean Armando is all take and no give. Rather he is a constant influence as well as model for the teachers and directors to use in showing the other kids how to escape from world population of "just me" to the big world God made and the Devil gets us to mock. At first Armando made it clear that he had no intention of learning to talk, play, be sociable or useful to anyone in any way. His plan with the Devil's help was to get mean even with the lifestyle he didn't



Armando folds towels under Rosa's careful direction.



Joel and some of his many friends.

ask for but got. Our psychologist, Dr. Elizabeth, and her crew of special educators performed the various miracles that have him jabbering to everybody about everything. Rosa Maldonado in the laundry room offered him a job folding towels for fifty cents a day. She also put the bug in his ear that it was gross underpayment and he should force Madre Miguel to the negotiating table. He got a dollar a day out of her by agreeing to maintain a savings account. His parents have more fun and the other kids, enlisted in a Center-wide effort to help members like Armando, have learned all about God's gift to us of people so special precisely because they need so much from us.



Doctor Elizabeth with her best student, Armando