



# Chicuchas Wasi

## THE CHILDRENS PROJECT

A Newsletter for the Supporters of Chicuchas Wasi, Cusco, Peru • Winter 2008/2009

### Holiday Greetings to All in Our Chicuchas Wasi Family

By Rae Lewis (Pieraccini), Chicuchas Wasi Founder/Board of Directors

Another year has gone by since celebrating our 20th anniversary. Our **Chicuchas Wasi Alternative School for Girls** is still going strong with 38 little students in our 3 classrooms. We currently have a kindergarten, first grade and remedial class. Our staff includes our director, Ruth Uribe; our



Chicuchas Wasi School Director, Ruth Uribe

teachers, Carla Liset Rojas Arisa and Jovan Ayme Quispe; our kitchen helper, Alicia Ccarhuarupay Huaman; and two volunteers from Italy who will be with us for two months.



Chicuchas Wasi Staff and a Volunteer (center)

The CW family is busy and new things are in store for our little school in Cusco! I have just returned from visiting the school and continue to be amazed by Ruth's direction and the magic she performs. She has succeeded

in changing forever the lives of these little girls. Their parents attend all of our special events to honor the girls and are clearly proud of their daughters. We are too!



**Now for some really special news!** With the help of a very generous anonymous donor, we have purchased land on the



south side of Cusco and will build our first primary school with room for nine classrooms. We should break ground in early 2009! We have proven, year after year, that our school fills a need in this community and now we will be able to expand the services we offer. We are ever so grateful to this new donor who has seen and felt the success of our work and is demonstrating trust in us with this support.

(Holiday Greetings, continued on page 3)

### Supporter Donations Now Make More CW Special Programs Possible

By Terry McDonald, Chicuchas Wasi Board of Directors

The members of the Chicuchas Wasi Board of Directors are very excited about the resources recently donated for the construction our own Chicuchas Wasi school building and we are looking forward to the increased number of classrooms into which we will have room to grow. With this news, the generous donations, large and small, from our long-time supporters take on an entirely new meaning and importance.

Back in 1997, we opened our **Chicuchas Wasi Alternative School for Girls** assisted by a generous Rotary International Grant which first paid for our basic



Class of 1999



Class of 2003

school equipment (desks, tables, books, and supplies) and then, a few years later, paid for our computers and software. For over 10 years we have paid for the school's basic operating expenses with the donations from our supporters; mostly in California and even a few in other locations around the world.

(Special Programs Now Possible, continued on page 3)





**Chicuchas Wasi**  
THE CHILDRENS PROJECT

1987 - 2007

**CELEBRATING 20 Years of Service**

• • • • • February 3, 2008 • • • • •

**Thanks to everyone  
who shared in our Celebration!**



All the tables were set with colorful woven cloths from Peru.

Name tags were distributed and the girls gave out tiny pins of Peru's Andean people in typical costumes.



As we all had something to eat from the wonderful buffet, we were entertained by a Chicuchas Wasi photo slideshow.



Paul served as our bartender providing sodas, wine & beer



So much great food --- including desserts!



CW founder, Rae, told us the story of the organization and the children whom CW helped over the years.



Rosa, one of our first CW kids, spoke of her personal experience with CW in Cusco, her California education by scholarship, and her life today as a Registered Nurse working in California.



In beautiful, traditional costume, Alejandra, Lindsey, and Paula perform for the celebration audience.



(l-r: Karen Amoroso, Mary Salfi, Terry McDonald, Ruth Uribe and Rae Lewis)

Presented by Ruth in appreciation for their 20 years of work as CW's base in California, board directors Karen, Mary, and Terry received custom-engraved frames that were made in Cusco and displayed a photo of the school.

Chicuchas Wasi's 20th Anniversary Celebration would not have been complete without expressing a lot of appreciation to those people who have worked so many years to keep CW alive and strong.

School director, Ruth, and founder, Rae, each received a beautiful crystal mountain plaque from the board of directors in recognition of their years of service.



Later in the program the girls changed costumes and performed another traditional dance from Peru.



# Visiting Chicuchas Wasi

By Molly Goss

On a slightly overcast morning I made my way to the Lavandería Inka in Cuzco, to meet Ruth and visit the school that I had heard so much about from my colleague at Catholic Charities, Mary Salfi. I had been in Cuzco a few days with my family and had been anticipating visiting the school to get away from some of the tourist sites and be able to see some of the realities of this mesmerizing city.

I was able to see the girls in their morning exercises and singing the Peruvian national anthem. They welcomed me like they had known me forever and I think my favorite part of the experience was seeing Ruth and the other teachers' open, playful manner with the students and how that obviously made them feel comfortable and facilitated their learning.

Ruth also talked to me about many of the girls and the fact that they come from homes where domestic violence is quite common. I felt a connection to them because my work at Catholic Charities focuses on domestic



violence and I often see how much it affects the children more than anyone; and how important it is for them to have a safe place, like this school, to build their self-esteem. Ruth and her fellow teachers are doing an amazing job with these girls, and I see the potential for so much more.

I feel privileged to have had the opportunity and thank Mary and Ruth for allowing me to visit the school. ■

## Holiday Greetings

(continued from cover)

Had it not been for the continued support from all of you, our CW Family, we would not have been able to realize this amazing dream. Thank you, one and all, for your loyalty and faith over the past 20 years. I would also like to thank the directors on our board who have been with us from the start. We had a wonderful 20th Anniversary Celebration in February that honored their dedication as well as our success over the years (as seen the Celebration photo spread on page 2).

I would also like to report on some of the boys from our early years. We should all feel very proud to see how these abandoned street children of the 80's have grown up. They have become professional men and loving, wonderful fathers; watching them would warm your hearts. Efrain and

Hipolito are now active members of the CW Board of Directors in Peru.



Efrain, Rae, and Hipolito, November 2008

We wish you all the very best this Holiday Season with your families and friends. Please help us continue our mission of bringing education to the young girls of Cusco with the love and commitment that has been working since 1997. ■

## Special Programs Now Possible

(continued from cover)

Some years have been better than others, and we have always hoped that our CW school would grow to the point where we could offer our students more



Ruth and students - 2006



Learning about personal hygiene - 2006

than the basic education and essential life skills of our current curriculum.

Donations received will now allow us to begin development of a broader scope of opportunities for our CW girls; in their classroom experience as well as regarding their parents' involvement in, and commitment to, their education. Ruth Uribe, our school director, has many excellent plans for new school programs we can begin to offer: field trips, parent classes, and more.

With the new resources being provided for our new school building, basic operating expenses and supplies, we want the members of our CW Family to know how much we need and appreciate their continuing support. Ongoing donations, large and small, will enable Chicuchas Wasi to acquire necessary materials and special supplies needed to expand the educational services offered now and in our new school. ■



Chicuchas Wasi class of 2008

# Chicuchas Wasi

THE CHILDRENS PROJECT

Alternative School for Girls, Cusco, Peru

## NEWSLETTER

Winter 2008/2009

*Look Inside...*

...for the latest news about our girls  
and their school in Cusco, Peru



Chicuchas Wasi Girls • 2008

Chicuchas Wasi

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## Holiday Greetings & Best Wishes for 2009



As you have so often in the past, please remember us this giving season.

With your generous support,  
Chicuchas Wasi will continue to make a REAL difference.

*With thanks and love from the Chicuchas Wasi Family,*

In California - Board of Directors:

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In Cusco, Peru - Board of Directors:

*Efrain Valles Morales*

*Hipolito Suico Canchi*

*Juan Manual Chuquimanjo*

*Rae Lewis* (Pieraccini)

In Cusco, Peru - Staff:

*Ruth Uribe* - Director

*Erik Vera* - Family Counselor/Consultant

*Gloria Socorro* - Teacher

*Carla Liset Rojas Arisa* - Teacher

*Jovana Ayme Quijpe* - Teacher

*Alicia Ccarhuarnpay Huaman* - Cook

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(All graphic design and printing services donated by CW supporters)