

May 5, 2017



Rotary Club of Anchorage East

JUAN DIONISIO MORALES GONZALEZ is a 20-year old man who fell out of a tree while picking mangos when he was 13 and has been a paraplegic since then. Juan lives in Los Silos, Aldea 1, in the Municipality of San Antonio in the Department of Suchitepequez.

There are four people living in Juan's house, his father and mother and an 18-year old brother. The father is 52 and the mother is 47.

Juan and his brother completed 5th grade of *primaria*. The father completed 3rd grade. The mother did not go to school.

The father and the brother are agricultural day laborers.

Juan seems somewhat intelligent but depressed. He talked to me but mostly with his head down. When asked what he did with his time he said: "Casi nada" (almost nothing). I asked him if he could go to school now that he has a PET, but he said he had to cross a river to get to school. His mother added that there is something of a bridge over the river, but you have to go up and down steps.

A man from the Municipality brought Juan and his mother to the PET distribution. He and I talked to Juan about the importance of trying to get some schooling, and maybe even going to a specialized program for people with handicaps, since he has the intelligence and some schooling already. I told him the story of Silvia from Hope Haven to show him there are possible ways your life can be changed dramatically. The man from the Municipality seemed interested in trying to get Juan some books for now and a scholarship and way to go to school in the next school year.

