



El Ranchito de los Niños

Keeping Brothers and Sisters Together

SUMMER 2019



KIDS SAY THE DARNDDEST THINGS

Birthdays are momentous at El Ranchito. We make sure that each is unique for the child ensuring that they know how special and loved they are. The entire day is about them. The house is decorated, the birthday kid picks their favorite dinner and their birthday party is the theme of their choice. Some of our birthday themes this year have been cowgirl, Batman, football, the Hulk and Donkey Kong. Our most creative was our youngest boy turning 5. When asked what he wanted for his birthday, he replied, "A rainbow caterpillar on a castle with flowers. And I want a 'twaberry cake'".

One night during the Christmas season, Charlie was getting ready for bed. After all the discussions about the true meaning of Christmas and the stories of the birth of Christ, Charlie was deep in thought while crawling into bed. After being tucked in, he finally asked, "When Jesus comes this Christmas, will he come in my tummy or your tummy?"

HIGHLIGHTS OF OUR YEAR

- Two of our boys received their First Holy Communion this spring. We celebrated this milestone in their faith.
- Our youngest started Preschool this winter. She wears her little backpack with such pride each day to school. She also graduated into a "big girl" bed, a very proud and exciting time.
- One of our girls rode a horse for the first time on her 10th birthday. She celebrated this special day with a horseback ride around the yard.
- All the kids have been busy throughout the year excelling in many extracurricular activities, including basketball, soccer, baseball, piano and 4-H.
- The summer plans have begun! It's a busy time with all the kids home – many camps, sports, family days and recreational activities are already in the works.
- In 2018 we received grants from General Mills Foundation, Notah Begay III Foundation, the Rotary del Sol Foundation and Facebook. Each has helped in numerous ways from upgrading technology to improving our children's education to providing healthy meals for our family.

MEET OUR VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR: MAC MCLOUGHLIN

Mac McLoughlin was born and reared in the Midwest as one of seven children raised by a single mom in St. Louis.

Mac currently dedicates his time to keeping El Ranchito's vehicles safe and worthy of transporting los niños. Mac has a volunteering heart, also serving as the Ronald McDonald House Charities house mechanic. He fills his spare time with drag racing and coin collecting, and enjoying life with Peggy, his wife of 30 years. His son, Nathaniel, is a Captain with United Express.

MEET OUR PHILANTHROPIST OF THE YEAR: HENRY SMITH

Born and raised in Pagosa Springs, CO, Henry Smith now lives with his wife, Jacquie, in Bosque Farms. He has been in the heavy highway and civil construction industry since 1990, in both Colorado and New Mexico, and is a partner in Mountain States Constructors.

Henry has been an avid supporter of El Ranchito, giving generously throughout the year of both time and money, as well as being a great advocate for developing other donors through Charity Cruise. He serves on the El Ranchito Program Committee, as well as strives to provide an opportunity for the children to grow in their faith.

FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD, KATHY MECHENBIER

I am often asked how long it has been since El Ranchito was built and how many kids have lived here throughout the years. It takes some time to remember all the children, but brings back wonderful memories.

The home was built way back in 2000. Our aging home is in constant need of upgrades and repairs. The floor has seen formula and food spilled on it, puppies trained on it, toys driven on it, and children running on it. If the walls could talk, they would declare they have been bumped, kicked and stuck with many tacks to display beautiful art work. Many children covered the walls with their art and did not need a tack. For these reasons, they have needed to be patched and repainted frequently.

Over 40 children have passed through our doors; some have stayed less than a year, others more than 10. Building the house was a huge undertaking. Designing it to look and function as a home was the main goal, building it to withstand the numerous children and animals over a long period of time was the difficulty. We needed to build a fort with the welcoming, comfy feeling of a home.

From the comfy couch where the kids gather for story time or movie night to the giant dining room table where they share meals, do homework and create one of a kind art work and projects, the furniture is heavily used and well loved.

I can still remember when I was growing up my mom had a small loveseat in our living room. We took every holiday photo sitting in that loveseat. Later after I had my own kids, when we visited my mom, she sat in her loveseat holding my girls. We continued to take family photos around that piece of furniture as my kids grew up; I can still see my mom sitting in her beloved loveseat. The fabric was worn, but that piece of furniture was so special to my mom, and to me. This reminds me how important something as simple as a piece of furniture can be in creating childhood memories. And while this is true, it should also be said that furniture doesn't last forever and needs to be replaced, especially when you are raising lots of children and animals.

Your support allows us to create lasting memories and for that, we are grateful.

**A HOUSE IS MADE WITH
WALLS AND BEAMS.
A HOME IS MADE WITH
LOVE AND DREAMS.
—UNKNOWN**



IN THIS HOME...
WE DO SECOND CHANCES.
WE DO REAL.
WE DO MISTAKES.
WE DO I'M SORRY.
WE DO LOUD REALLY WELL.
WE DO HUGS.
**WE DO TOGETHER
BEST OF ALL.**

LOVE BEGINS AT
HOME, AND IT
IS NOT HOW
MUCH WE DO...
BUT HOW MUCH
LOVE WE PUT IN
THAT ACTION,
—MOTHER THERESA



FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, AMY KINDRICK

When people come to tour or visit El Ranchito de los Niños, the most common observation they share with us is how surprised they are that it feels like a “home”. Our response is usually, well, it is a home. No matter what “home” means to you, there is likely something nostalgic about the place we call home. It may be the place you grew up, the meals you enjoyed, gatherings of friends and family, pieces of furniture or decorations that help remind us of precious memories or the place we make our own.

For the kids of El Ranchito, we strive to replace difficult memories of home with joyful and positive memories. Many of our kids have never had a stable home environment prior to living at El Ranchito. One child in particular experienced homelessness and 7 shelters all before the age of 2. Another was passed from relative to relative never developing roots in one place.

Our focus on helping kids develop roots and finding a place they can call home goes back to the beginning when our home was built. The design included an apartment, in the home, for returning kids who have gone away to college, joined the military or got a job upon leaving El Ranchito. This apartment allows kids to come home for holidays, school breaks and vacations to visit their actual brothers and sisters and their El Ranchito family.

As anyone with children can understand, our home and our furniture have seen a fair share of dents, dings, spills and wear and tear. We consistently need to update and replace the well-worn items in our home. We are so very grateful for the generosity of our donors, whether furniture or monetary donations, your gifts continue to make our home feel like one.

Home, truly, is where the heart is and whether our kids are leaving home, coming home or seem to be missing home; we hope the memories created at El Ranchito will remind them of all the good things they have encountered and they will look back with fond memories.

We welcome everyone to come and take a tour and see for yourself how our house is more than a house, it's a home.

HAVING SOMEONE TO LOVE
..... IS FAMILY.

HAVING SOMEWHERE TO GO
..... IS HOME.

HAVING BOTH IS A BLESSING.



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NEW ORLEANS — CHARITY CRUISE XVIII —

Charity Cruise XVIII: New Orleans was a party matching the true style of the Big Easy. It was an evening filled with fun, fabulous New Orleans cuisine and excitement as we gathered to help the children of El Ranchito de los Niños. We deeply thank each of you who made Charity Cruise such a tremendous success.

**MARK YOUR CALENDARS NOW FOR
CHARITY CRUISE XIX ON MARCH 21, 2020
AT ISLETA RESORT & CASINO.**

DUKE IT OUT

9 chefs | 2 courses | 1 reason

Benefiting El Ranchito de los Niños

The Shop's Chef Israel Rivera took the title for Best Chef in the Duke City and Chef Michael Fram from the Standard Diner took Best Pastry Chef. For the People's Choice Award, it was the The Hyatt's Forque Restaurant Chef Adrian Patterson-Comfort and Chef Michael Fram from the Standard Diner. Steel Bender Brewery took home the honor of Best Craft Beer.

We also tasted the creations of Chef Raul Maestas from Ohana Hut, Chef Steve Riley from Hotel Chaco's LVL 5, Chef Stefani Mangrum from La Fonda del Bosque, Chef David Ruiz from Toltec Brewery and Chef Brent Moore from Pueblo Harvest Café and Chef Brandon Garner from Artisan Gourmet. We also enjoyed tasting the craft beer from Toltec Brewing, Palmer Brewing and Cactus Brewing Co.

Join us this year to taste the chefs' creations, vote and see for yourself on September 25th as the chefs return for battle. Experience the excitement of live cooking in the kitchens of Builder Source Appliance Gallery while sampling each restaurant's signature dish, craft beer and wine.

**A limited number of tickets go on sale
August 1. Please call our office at
(505) 565-4470 to purchase.**

