



2020 NEWSLETTER



WINTER NEEDS

- WINTER WEATHER CLOTHING
- ASSISTANCE WITH HEATING BILLS
- FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR WINTER BREAK ACTIVITIES
- NONPERISHABLE FOOD ITEMS
- VOLUNTEERS DURING WINTER BREAK
- VOLUNTEER ASSISTANCE WITH INDOOR/ OUTDOOR CHRISTMAS DÉCOR
- VOLUNTEER TUTORS

WINTER IS MY FAVORITE SEASON.
I LOVE PLAYING IN THE SNOW.
AND I LOVE CHRISTMAS.
WAKING UP IN THE MORNING & GETTING
SO HAPPY BECAUSE YOU GOT
EXACTLY WHAT YOU ASKED FOR.
—MIA, AGE 6

WINTER

AMY KINDRICK,
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Anyone who knows me well knows that winter is my very favorite season. Whether you are surrounded by snow or not, winter has something almost magical to offer. The chill in the air brings people together, we long for warm fires, hot cocoa and holiday parties and it seems time moves a just little bit slower than usual.

The thing I love most about winter is the anticipation of the holiday season, picking out the perfect gifts, celebrating with loved ones, big family meals, warmth, love, connection and Christmas Carols, lots of Christmas Carols.

At El Ranchito de los Niños, when the first cold day blows through you can feel the magic in the air. The kids listen with wonder as they hear the story of the birth of Jesus for the first time or the tenth. They watch the lights get strung on the house, eyes wide, to make sure everything is just right. Our new kids often wonder, “will there even be a Christmas?” and our other kids assure them that it might be the best one ever. Through all of the preparations and festivities, the kids are on their best behavior to impress Santa Claus, no doubt!

The holiday season can be bittersweet for our kids. Like most kids, they look forward to all of the traditional things from building snowmen and decorating the tree to singing carols and writing letters to Santa, but it can also be a very painful reminder of their past. For that reason, we strive to make the holidays extra special, so that they can replace painful times with joyous memories that they will carry with them long after they leave.

There is so much joy in seeing the kids all bundled up in coats and gloves running through the snow, but there is nothing like seeing the magic of Christmas through a child’s eyes on Christmas morning as we celebrate the birth of Jesus.

Thomas Wentworth Higginson questioned “How many lessons of faith and beauty we should lose, if there was no winter in our year?” And it’s this faith and beauty that I’ve come to love fiercely. Winter is, and always will be, my favorite season.

HIGHLIGHTS OF OUR WINTER

- THE BIGGEST HIGHLIGHT OF WINTER IS CHRISTMAS. THE CHILDREN’S FAVORITE MEMORIES ARE LEAVING HOT COCOA FOR SANTA, A HUGE CHRISTMAS TREE AND MAKING GINGERBREAD HOUSES WITH THE AMAZING VOLUNTEERS.
- THE SNOW THAT CAME MAGICALLY ON THANKSGIVING MORNING IS A FOND MEMORY FOR EACH OF THE KIDS FROM THIS PAST WINTER AS THEY ALL MADE SNOW ANGELS, HAD SNOWBALL FIGHTS AND CHERISHED THE BEST PART OF WINTER.

SPRING

KATHY MECHENBIER, BOARD PRESIDENT

Nothing is as beautiful as spring. Spring is a symbol of new life and new beginnings. It is a time in our lives of rebirth and renewal. It is a time to appreciate the many blessings that each new Spring brings. Flowers blooming, birds singing, baby animals, toads, and if we are lucky, a rain shower.

Everyone looks forward to Spring, especially the children at El Ranchito. It opens up slowly at our home. The days get longer, the winds get warmer and everything becomes green again. The garden is planted with little hands and the excitement begins when there is the first sight of life. The grass gets cut for the first time and the smell permeates the air. Nothing beats the smell of freshly cut grass.

Spring is a time of change. It is about opportunity and strengthening the belief in ourselves to overcome obstacles. The greatest of these obstacles is our own fear, which prevents us from taking risks and trying new things. Our children most of all have many fears, past traumas and past family history to overcome. It is our responsibility at El Ranchito to provide opportunities for the children to overcome their fears and grow intellectually, physically and spiritually. Spring is the time for new beginnings and hope for each child.

With the arrival of Spring, I know great things are ahead. It is a time of new possibilities. Some will learn to ride a bike, the older kids will learn to run the lawn mower and others will plant their first seed. The children at our home look forward to Spring as much as I do. Their days are filled with long walks, hard work and watching baby animals grow around them. It is through these life experiences that they will come to grow and overcome the obstacles of their past. A new life is born each spring. It is you that provides the opportunity for these new beginnings.

HIGHLIGHTS OF OUR SPRING

- EVEN IN THE MIDST OF A PANDEMIC, WE WERE ABLE TO WELCOME TWO SISTERS AGED 4 AND 5 TO THE EL RANCHITO FAMILY. THE GIRLS BROUGHT SUCH HAPPINESS AND INNOCENCE, CREATING SO MUCH JOY FOR OUR KIDS AND STAFF.
- THREE OF OUR CHILDREN WERE BAPTIZED THIS SPRING. WE ALSO HAD THREE CHILDREN RECEIVE THEIR FIRST HOLY COMMUNION. WE ARE HONORED TO HELP THESE CHILDREN GROW IN THEIR FAITH OF GOD.
- WE SURVIVED VIRTUAL EDUCATION AND HOME SCHOOL! IT'S QUITE THE ACCOMPLISHMENT TO HAVE 9 CHILDREN RANGING FROM PRESCHOOL TO 5TH GRADE AT HOME FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE SCHOOL YEAR.

SPRING NEEDS

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| • RAKES | • WARM WEATHER CLOTHING |
| • SHOVELS | • CLEANING SUPPLIES |
| • HOSES | • SPRING CLEANING VOLUNTEERS |
| • ANIMAL FEED | • YARD MAINTENANCE SERVICES/VOLUNTEERS |
| • GARDENING TOOLS | |

FUNNY THINGS KIDS SAY:

AS THE KIDS WERE PLANTING THE GARDEN, THEY BEGAN TALKING ABOUT ALL THE VEGETABLES THEY WOULD HARVEST IN A FEW SHORT MONTHS. CHARLOTTE READ THE OUTSIDE OF THE PACKAGE SHE WAS HOLDING, "SWEET CORN – CANDY CORN VARIETY". SHE LOOKED UP AND ASKED, "WILL WE REALLY GET CANDY CORN FROM THESE SEEDS?"

"IN SPRING, AT THE END OF THE DAY YOU SHOULD SMELL LIKE DIRT."

-MARGARET ATWOOD



SUMMER NEEDS

- WARM WEATHER CLOTHING
- OUTDOOR GAMES
- BACKYARD POOLS/WATER PLAY ITEMS
- ASSISTANCE WITH SUMMER OUTINGS/CAMPS
- ASSISTANCE WITH ELECTRIC BILLS
- FRESH PRODUCE AND MEAT
- GRILL
- PAPER GOODS



FALL NEEDS:

- SCHOOL SUPPLIES
- SCHOOL UNIFORMS AND SHOES
- HALLOWEEN COSTUMES
- COLD WEATHER CLOTHING
- VOLUNTEER TUTORS
- NONPERISHABLE FOOD ITEMS
- PAPER GOODS

"I LIKE FALL. I LIKE HALLOWEEN BECAUSE I LIKE TO DRESS UP. AND THE CANDY, THE CANDY IS GOOD TOO."

— CHARLOTTE, - AGE 11

SUMMER

Water! Water! Water! The hot summer days are filled with water in every shape and form. Water balloons thrown in the backyard, the sprinklers spraying the kids as they dash through and the backyard pool filled to the brim.

Summer is by far one of the kids' favorite seasons. The evenings are spent outside in the yard playing and laughing. With the days getting longer the bedtime gets later and later to squeeze in all we can in the lasting daylight. Summer evenings are one of our favorite times for our family. These extra minutes each day provide us the time to build lasting memories for our children giving them the opportunities to heal from their past.

HIGHLIGHTS OF OUR SUMMER

- THE CHILDREN ENTERED MANY CRAFTS, SEWING PROJECTS AND BAKED GOODS AT THE COUNTY FAIR AND WON AN ARRAY OF RIBBONS. OUR THREE OLDEST TOOK PRIDE IN EACH OF THEIR RABBITS THEY HAD RAISED THROUGH THE SUMMER. EVEN SAMMY, THE DOG, SHOWED ALL HE LEARNED IN DOG OBEDIENCE WITH CHARLOTTE.
- WE HAD OUR FIRST ANNUAL SUMMER FUN DAY AT EL RANCHITO. WE HAD A FABULOUS TIME WITH OUR VOLUNTEERS, FRIENDS, FAMILIES AND SCHOOL COMMUNITY. THE KIDS PLAYED WITH WATER ALL DAY AND WE ENJOYED A BBQ FEAST!
- THE KIDS ENJOYED THEIR FAMILY TRIP TO THE JEMEZ MOUNTAINS WITH ONE OF OUR LONG TIME VOLUNTEERS. THEY WENT HIKING, FISHING AND RELAXED IN THE GREAT OUTDOORS. IT'S A WEEKEND THEY ALWAYS LOOK FORWARD TO.
- THIS SUMMER, OUR KIDS BROUGHT THE EXCITEMENT HOME WITH A DRIVE IN MOVIE. CRAFTING FOR WEEKS, THEY CREATED CARS OUT OF BOXES TO PARK ON THE LAWN AND WATCHED A MOVIE UNDER THE STARS.

FALL

The crisp air, bright orange pumpkins, the beautiful hues of the fall leaves and apples galore! Fall has so much to offer. It's the Goldilocks of all the seasons: not too hot, not too cold and there is no wind! While as adults we appreciate many things from harvest season to the colorful scenery, most kids love fall for Halloween. This magical day gives the opportunity to be anyone! Kids can be a super hero, a princess, a ballerina, a rock star, a knight in shining armor or even giant dinosaur. Halloween is transformational for our kids as we have many volunteers to jump in to help carve pumpkins, hang spooky decorations and bake delicious cookies with the kids. This day also provides an escape for our kids, putting on a mask allowing them to put the past behind them.

It's important that we help them overcome their past on Halloween by dressing up as the superhero of their own life, but also help them become the champion of their future each and every day.

HIGHLIGHTS OF OUR FALL

- WE WELCOMED TWO NEW KIDS THIS FALL, A BROTHER AND SISTER. THE UNBREAKABLE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE TWO OF THEM IS A TRUE TESTAMENT OF THE BOND BETWEEN SIBLINGS, SOMETHING WE WORK DILIGENTLY TO NURTURE IN OUR HOME.
- FALL MARKS BIRTHDAY SEASON AT EL RANCHITO WITH 5 BIRTHDAYS IN THE MONTH OF NOVEMBER. OUR STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS WORK SO HARD TO CREATE AMAZING PARTIES, CAKES AND DÉCOR. IT TRULY MAKES EACH CHILD FEEL SPECIAL ON THEIR DAY.
- OUR ANNUAL PUMPKIN CARVING IS QUITE THE EVENT. A GROUP OF VOLUNTEERS COMES EVERY YEAR PREPARED WITH STENCILS, CARVING KITS AND PIZZA! IT'S A SPECIAL NIGHT FOR EVERYONE.

A Season OF UNCERTAINTY



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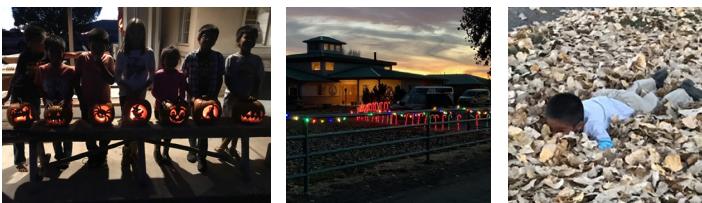
With the COVID-19 pandemic impacting everyday life, ***we want to express our deepest gratitude and thank you from the bottom of our hearts for your continued support and wish you and your family health and peace.*** Like all of you, El Ranchito de los Niños faces new challenges as we adapt to these unprecedented circumstances. We continue to serve our children to the best of our abilities. As always, we're doing everything possible to sustain daily operations and provide excellent care. While a lot of uncertainty remains, we know that we need to quickly adapt to our changing reality. Now, more than ever, our kids need us. And we need you.

In order to ensure the safety of our community and ourselves, we've made necessary modifications to our fundraising efforts. As you may know, El Ranchito de los Niños does not receive any state or federal funding, so we rely on the generosity of donors like you. Unfortunately, current circumstances have led us to cancel all of our 2020 fundraising events so, it is imperative to find ways to raise the necessary funds to compensate for the loss of these events.



THE SEASONS OF EL RANCHITO DE LOS NIÑOS

With the change of each season, we welcome new beginnings, new experiences and new challenges, so we thought we would take you through a year in the life at El Ranchito de los Niños.



"WE CANNOT STOP THE WINTER OR THE SUMMER FROM COMING. WE CANNOT STOP THE SPRING OR THE FALL OR MAKE THEM OTHER THAN THEY ARE. THEY ARE GIFTS FROM THE UNIVERSE THAT WE CANNOT REFUSE. **BUT WE CAN CHOOSE WHAT WE WILL CONTRIBUTE TO LIFE WHEN EACH ARRIVES.**"
— GARY ZUKHAV

