

Beste allemaal,

Uiteraard om te beginnen nog eens: **Feliz año nuevo!**

Onderstaand de eerste Nieuwsbrief van Cindy Fair als director van La Esperanza.

Verder houden we het deze maand even kort:

- Op 17 en 18 december namen we deel aan een geweldige Kerstmarkt van ORO in Deurne waar we ongeveer € 500 gedoneerd kregen voor voedselpakketten en schoolspullen voor Nicaragua.

We zijn er weer heel erg blij mee en hebben zo veel families daar in Nicaragua een mooie Kerst kunnen bezorgen.



- Het tweede schooljaar van het Peellandcollege in Deurne was heel actief voor ons in december met Kerstacties en we zagen de scholieren zelf actief bezig zijn op 21 december.

Later deze maand gaan we horen wat de opbrengst van deze actie is geweest...

Een ontzettend dankjewel alvast aan deze twee activiteiten en degene die het mogelijk hebben gemaakt.

Tenslotte (beter laat dan nooit): bijgaand onze privacy verklaring zoals die ook op de website te zien is.

Maak er een prachtig 2019 van en natuurlijk bedankt weer voor alle steun!

Hartelijke groeten,

Ton/Sandra/Tommie/Milie

Holiday greetings dear friends of La Esperanza Granada!

This newsletter is a little early as we wanted to take a moment to wish everyone well in the holiday season.

As this is my first newsletter as Director of the organization let me start by introducing myself. I have been in Granada off and on since 2006 and returned in August to be here full time after a number of international assignments.

I have had a rewarding career in managing international human development projects and although Pauline is leaving me some very large shoes to fill and I will miss her terribly, I will do my best to provide support to La Esperanza Granada.

I am very excited about the challenges and opportunities that this new phase in my life gives me. I am also honestly concerned about the reality that we currently have in Nicaragua as it affects La Esperanza significantly.

For those of you who have known the organization for a while you are aware that over the past few years we moved from working extensively in government schools to a model where La Esperanza owned and operated community education learning centers are our central point for providing educational support to children in marginalized communities in Granada.

Prior to the crisis in Nicaragua, we had an average of about 30 international volunteers each month, some staying for long periods and others for just a few weeks. All of them were the backbone for our work in the Learning Centers.

Our sponsored University students (and a special thanks to those of you who support this important program) as part of their agreement with La Esperanza provide support to the Centers.

Since the crisis, the number of international volunteers has dramatically reduced. We have had weeks with no international volunteers.

The good news is that this has provided a great opportunity for our local University students to increase their scope of contribution in the Centers.

In fact, they are now the leaders of and main support in the learning centers and together with national volunteers have really stepped up and not just done fantastic work but also shown great dedication and skills. We are very pleased with their engagement, commitment and attitudes.

The bad news is that the international volunteers previously contributed their unique educational abilities, personal commitment and international solidarity to our programs and we have missed their contribution to the program.

The international volunteers are a very important component of the work of La Esperanza and we hope that during 2019 the situation improves and we can again count on volunteers to support our work.

It was my great pleasure to attend the graduation ceremony at Nueva Esperanza this month (thanks to all of you who sponsored the graduates through their high school). The

ceremony was very moving and we now have support for four of the sixteen graduates to continue their dreams and attend university.

We are also resuming computer classes with the donation from Een Aarde and Nica Friends for a minivan to transport computers to the centers.

As Pauline mentioned in her last newsletter, our priority needs are to be able to continue funding local volunteers in the learning centers to meet the needs of the children (\$25 per volunteer per week to supply a food package) and sponsors both for young people to attend high school (\$185 per year for five years) and for those who are graduating high school, a scholarship for university (\$1460 per year for five years).

With the uncertainties in our operating environment we will continue to be creative to assure we are able to support the educational needs of the students with us and are very proud that even during these difficult times we have an average of 100 children coming to each of our learning centers every day.

We also have 26 sponsored university students and 135 high school students. These contributions are critical to keep adolescents in school and provide them with educational opportunities that will give them and their family a better future. Thanks again for all of your support and contribution to the organization.

So far this month we have received wonderful donations from Christian Meissner \$137, MJ Reale \$200, Linda Heatherly \$100, Martha Bowers \$100, Feliz Madrugada \$25, Asa Soderquist \$150, Martin Geissenhaner \$183, John Greenham \$100, Pembroke School \$362, Gregory sparks \$50 and *Nica friends who provided extra donations from their Christmas bazaar including meals for 70 families*, and Nicaragua forum for their donations and Lucas Flock continues his fundraising initiative in Germany. Lucas' link is (<https://betterplace.org/QGG198>).

Thank you also to everyone sending in the sponsorship fees for high school and university students. It has been very emotional to me as well as the students and their families to see this overwhelming support.

Our volunteers (including one returned volunteer and two online) are: Sara Sweitzer, Andrea Margarita Mendoza, Luz Elieth Palacios, Josserey Auxiliadora Mendoza, Kenia Victoria Medina, Alessandro Perez, Maria de los Angeles Duarte, Justo Pastor Gonzalez, Luis Felipe Calero, Luz Angelica Garcia, Ruth Montenegro, Jesfrin Alexandra Castillo, Martha del Carmen Flores, Ilena Liseth Flores, Enmanuel Salvador Jimenez, Karen del socorro Guzman, Ariana Auxiliadora Gago, Heidy Isamara Castro, Maria Auxiliadora Lopez Maltez, Mabel Carolina Vargas Gonzalez, Peggy Atoche, Lucas Flock.

And some great photos can be seen here, put together by Juan Carlos and Luis: https://www.flickr.com/photos/la_esperanza_granada/albums/72157703492973711

We wish you all the very best in the holiday season and a peaceful 2019!

With best regards from all the team at La Esperanza Granada.

Cindy Fair