



Christmas Newsletter - December 2022

Aloha and blessings of deep gratitude to all our dear friends and ohana, our extended family and supporters. We hope this letter finds you all in good health, surrounded by those you love.

The outstanding blessing of this year was that we were able to return to Nicaragua after two years of absence due to COVID restrictions. Even during that time, we kept in contact with our partners in Villanueva to facilitate the donation of bikes to students in secondary school who travel long distances to class, of travel funds to cancer patients, and of fruits to children where farmers lost their crops due to two hurricanes during the growing season.



Donated bikes help foster good attendance.



The annual luncheon for cancer patients in our travel grant program which helps patients get to their urban treatment centers.



I was the only representative of the Somos Ohana Nicaragua board who could travel to Nicaragua between July 30 and August 14. Accompanying me were our son John, his daughter Rhys, our daughter-in-law Adrianna and our grandson Dominic.

Part of the two weeks in Villanueva were dedicated to visiting families who had children with special needs, including a little boy who had cardiac surgery at the Military Hospital in Managua (and is doing well!). As we do annually, we invited the children to two days of camp at a nearby ranch. The children and families enjoyed their morning of games, gifts, camaraderie and a yummy and healthy lunch, topped off with ice cream.



Donated, handmade toys were given and enjoyed at the day camp.



Sign-language teacher Juan Ramón Gómez (L) and deaf adults, veterans of earlier day camps over the years.



We also visited the two secondary schools we built in Rincón de García and La Carreta where the dedicated teachers work closely with us to identify kids needing bikes and graduating students to recommend for scholarships.

While Dominic and I visited families and the schools, Adrianna and Rhys were busy teaching women who had requested sewing classes. On 5 electric machines that we donated to Villanueva this trip, 20 women and 1 man learned new skills to help support their families, and we are delighted that they are continuing to sew and share those skills on the machines now at the La Carreta school.



Graduates and proud families, Instituto José Dolores Estrada, Rincón de García, December 2022.



Adri Flavin & student in the skirt she learned to make.



Initial classes held in Villanueva.



Classes continue in La Carreta.



Three of our university scholarship students have graduated this year. Karelin Estrada Escalante received her diploma as a social worker from the Nat'l. Autonomous Univ. of Nicaragua.



Community women access the machines at the secondary school.



John Flavin, Ahzzatf Salazar and Dominic Flavin work on the tables.



Meanwhile, John Flavin and his local helpers built 2 tables for the sewing classes ongoing at the La Carreta school.

During our search for children with special needs, we discovered another elementary school in the village of Mata de Caña that was built by other visitor-donors after Hurricane Mitch.

The many harsh weather ravages of excessive heat and rainfall have left it in great need of costly repairs. Our board has voted to provide money, and community members will supply some of the labor for these repairs.

We will be very grateful for any monetary assistance you can give us for this project.



Painting of the building at Mata de Caña has started.



Hand-washing at the old sink.



Non-working latrine to be replaced.



Cement walkways will soon cut down on the mud tracked into class.



What's left of a white board in a classroom at Mata de Caña



Screening will cover these windows and keep out trash, leaves and bugs.

Somos Ohana Nicaragua

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With deep gratitude for your faithful love and kindness during these many years.

Feliz Navidad, y Próspero Año Nuevo!

Charlotte (Maura) Flavin and the Board of Directors of Somos Ohana Nicaragua.

**Mele Stokesberry
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Barbara Lee**

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