

News

from



Annual Report 2008

Volume 16, No. 1

This is what Casa Esperanza is all about

by Johnese Turri, Chair, 2008 Casa Esperanza Board of Directors

Casa Esperanza - New Mexico's home away from home providing a caring community to support and serve families facing cancer. This is what Casa is all about. Being that home away from home for families who are facing one of life's toughest challenges. And for all of us who are involved with Casa, this is why we give of our time, energy and money. We are here because we are passionate about the mission of Casa Esperanza. For me, it has been a truly wonderful year being the board chair and being able to see the difference we make in the lives of the families that stay at Casa.

At a recent evening BBQ, I visited with people from different parts of the state who were staying at Casa, their home away from home for a while. They were all so grateful for having found Casa Esperanza. Every one of them said that having Casa took so much stress off them and their families; that staff and volunteers alike were so friendly and caring; and that this loving environment had made such a difference for them. Our chats usually ended

in tears being wiped away and exchanging a hug or a squeeze of a hand.

All of us at Casa Esperanza want our mission to continue to grow. Our Navigation Program is simply wonderful and is doing so much to support and guide our families through the treatment processes. Our car donation program, "Give Hope a Ride," is greatly expanding and serves not only to raise money to support our programs, but does a terrific job of getting our name out into the community as well.

We are really working hard to expand Casa's lodging capability. And that is where you, our supporters, come into play. We are going to need your help to succeed. With this expansion comes a new mission - a mission of raising awareness about Casa Esperanza. Not everyone in this wonderful state is aware that such a place like Casa exists, but with your help we can change that. We want to come to your community and to visit with you and your local organizations in order to get the word out to those 8,000 New Mexicans who will face a new cancer diagnosis



this year. We want to let them know that Casa Esperanza is truly a home away from home for them and for their families during the most difficult of times. You can contact either Eileen Cook at (505)277-9880 or myself at (505)250-7150.

Thank you!

Casa Esperanza - New Mexico's home away from home providing a caring community to support and serve families facing cancer.

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DIRECTOR'S PAGE*by Eileen Cook*

As I write to you today, the country is scrambling to make sense of the latest disaster on Wall Street. I am sure that it is difficult for you to sort this all out and determine exactly what all this means to you and your pocket-book. I know it is difficult for me. And it is certainly difficult for the families who stay at Casa Esperanza. They have enough uncertainty and economic challenges in their lives without the added burden of an uncertain national economy. Let me assure you right now, it is extremely tough to make real plans about where and how to get treated and where to stay and what to eat and how to pay for it all.

But even in these difficult times, we are blessed with wonderful financial support from our friends – from both private individuals and foundations and public corporations. With your help we continue to provide a caring community to support and serve families from New Mexico and the region who deal daily with cancer and all the fallout that accompanies it – emotional, physical, economical and spiritual.

One casualty of these times is that we find that this is not the best economic climate in which to forge ahead with plans for expansion. No, we aren't shelving the project – not at all. We

are just slowing it down a bit, so we won't have a shovel in the ground next Spring as we had hoped. We need to wait for a better economic environment. So, we'll wait. A bit. I'm not known to be the most patient person.

My impatience stems from a keen eagerness to see Casa's new wing open its doors to families who will need a place to stay for longer than the usual six weeks or so. I am impatient to serve the many families who will be traveling to UNM's remarkable new Cancer Center facility for treatment options heretofore unavailable to them in New Mexico. I am impatient to provide sixteen amazing mini-apartments which will be equipped to the point that families can isolate themselves from the general population at the hospital and at Casa if their care so dictates. I am impatient to provide a new Patient Navigation & Education Conference Center to help families navigate through the maze of overwhelming details of living with cancer.

You will note that our new reply envelope lists "Building Fund" as a donation option, and I ask that you remember Casa Esperanza and the families who depend on us as you make your charitable gift plans for 2009.



Eileen Cook, (Casa Esperanza CEO); Tilly Shaw, (Clovis Board of Realtors) and Mary Ann Howard (CE Board of Advisors) at the Annual Clovis Board of Realtors Golf Tournament benefiting Casa Esperanza.

Before and After Cancer

by Sarah Trujillo, Guest Services Team

Sandra McMurtry was born in Phoenix, Arizona. She has lived in Niland and Rancho Cucamonga, California, and has resided in Las Cruces for the past four years.

Sandy began staying at Casa Esperanza in May of 2008, after she was diagnosed with Stage III ovarian cancer at the age of sixty two. It truly was a shock to her and to her family, she said. Her family stayed strong and stuck by her side during this difficult time. "If I didn't have my family, my pastor Carol, my church family, and my strong faith in God I wouldn't have been able to accept what I had been told," she said.

Sandy is the only girl in her family, and as a kid she was always known as a tomboy because she hung out with

her brothers and all the other neighbor boys. She has two boys of her own, Brian and Jason, who live in California. She has a wonderful husband, Russell, who has been by her side the whole way through. "Before I was diagnosed, my husband and I would travel the states, exercise, and play many different sports," she said. But that has changed due to her diagnosis. She enjoyed going out on walks and playing sports like golf, racquetball and bowling in which she played on two different leagues.

As a young girl, Sandy lived with her parents, who were farmers. When Sandy and her brothers wanted to make extra money, she and her family would travel North to the fields where they would pick grapes off the vines throughout the entire acreage. She and her brothers liked to make the job more interesting by making games out of it. It challenged them and allowed them to enjoy their work.

As a child, as well as an adult, Sandy has always had one special friend, Gail, whom she has always kept in touch with over the years.

Sandy had a great job at the San Antonio Community Hospital in Upland, California, where she worked as a receptionist in the home healthcare department and in the medical records department. She also worked as a manicurist, a job which she loved very much because she was able to socialize with others, which she enjoys. Before Sandy was diagnosed, she was

a caregiver for her mother after she became ill. She was also a caregiver for two others-her stepbrother, Freddie, who was diagnosed with colon cancer and for a friend who was legally blind.

Sandy is now finished with all of her treatments-six weeks of radiation, a little over three months of chemo, a few surgeries, and a stent insertion among other procedures. Sandy is relieved to be finished with her treatments. "It was hard to accept this into my life, but I have always tried to keep a positive attitude," she said, "and when I would start feeling down I would grab my cleaning supplies and start cleaning my home to help relieve my stress. I enjoy cleaning very much and it is like a form of relaxation for me."

Periodically she returns to Albuquerque for lab work, pet scans, CT scans and check ups. Lord willing, all of her results will come back okay. Soon she will only be coming back once a year for checkups.

"Thank you to everyone who has been so helpful during these difficult times," she said-to her neighbors, who have been so kind to look after her house during her trips up to Albuquerque; "to all of the doctors at the Cancer Center and in Las Cruces; and and most of all a thank you to all the staff at Casa Esperanza for always being so kind and providing a 'home away from home.' Thank you Patient Navigation, and Cathy Moore for always being there to help when I had a lot on my mind. God bless you all."



Sandy & Russell McMurtry during a recent stay at Casa Esperanza

Memorials & Honorariums

July 1, 2007 - June 30, 2008

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Thank you to all of our generous donors. Because of limited space, we are simply not able to list every-one who supports Casa Esperanza. Please know that your gift is the key to our success.



Save the Date!

CASA ESPERANZA
HOPE Chest
Auction

Please join us Saturday, March 14, 2009
 Embassy Suites
 Lomas at I-25 Albuquerque

5:30pm-7:30pm Silent Auction featuring artwork by Hope Chest Artists past and present

7:00pm-8:30pm Live Auction featuring fantastic Hope Chests large and small

Heavy Hor d'ouvres and desserts will be served throughout the evening
 No Host Bar, Fine Wines & Martini Luge will be available

\$60 per person
 Watch for registration materials in the mail and on Casa Esperanza website
www.casaesperanzanm.org

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July 1, 2007 - June 30, 2008

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Imagine cancer....Patient Navigation Program

by Stacie Soto, Patient Navigation Director

Imagine telling your doctor for a year that you had a pain in your breast, but the doctor told you that nothing was wrong. After a year, imagine then finding out that you have Stage IV Breast Cancer and that you have to go to Albuquerque for treatment, away from your home, family and friends. This is Cassandra Baker's story, but it could happen to anybody.

After being diagnosed with cancer by her Primary Care Physician in February of 2007, and after seeing a surgeon back home who wanted to perform a mastectomy, Cassandra and her husband, Ervin Baker, traveled from Fort Defiance, Arizona to the UNM Cancer Center per her request for a referral. At the UNM Cancer Center, Cassandra met with empathic and outstanding physicians and healthcare providers who decided that she did not need surgery. Instead, Cassandra began a one-year clinical trial that was unsuccessful in treating her cancer. She later began chemotherapy in April of 2008 in an attempt to battle her stubborn illness, in addition to other complications stemming from her pre-existing Diabetes. Due to her medical conditions, Cassandra has also been forced to rely on a wheelchair or walker for mobility.



Cassandra Baker enjoying the comfort of CE's welcoming lobby

Not only has it been an emotional hardship for the Bakers to travel to Albuquerque once a month for a week and sometimes more often for treatment and appointments, it has also been a significant financial and physical hardship. Ervin quit his full-time job in order to care for Cassandra both at home in Arizona and in Albuquerque. Because of the multiple challenges that the Bakers were confronted with, social workers at UNM Cancer Center referred them to Casa Esperanza and the Patient Navigation Program for lodging, support, and assistance. At Casa Esperanza, we were able lighten their burden by providing emotional support and assisting with basic needs including food, lodging, over-the-counter medications, personal care items, and

gas vouchers. We also provided practical assistance to the Bakers related to job and housing searches, applications for assistance, and referrals for community resources.

The Bakers eventually decided that they wanted to relocate to Albuquerque, so we applied and received emergency funding through a community program that allowed for the family to relocate and secure an apartment in town. The funding also helped them pay for furniture and household items in order to create a comfortable and safe environment for their new home. This positive outcome was due to a combination of multiple community resources that were pulled together on their behalf in order for them adapt and become self-sufficient in their new community. Cassandra and Ervin are still able to travel home about once per month to see family and friends in Arizona, but they are grateful to be close to the UNM Cancer Center.

The Bakers are not alone in their struggle. Everyday, we see families walk through our doors with similar life challenges. We attempt to empower and support families in navigating systems and link them to available resources that can reduce their cancer burden. The Bakers' success story was made possible through all of the community support our program has received, and such support will allow us to continue to travel on this journey with other cancer patients and families. On behalf of the Cassandra and Ervin Baker, Casa Esperanza, the Patient Navigation Program, and all of the patients and families we serve—Thank You!!

A Christmas Challenge by Sara Padilla, a member of the Arroyo Family

My grandmother, Alice Hernández Arroyo, was diagnosed with breast cancer in 1970, about the time mammography was invented and a few years before it became a standard practice. My grandmother quickly exhausted her treatment options in Albuquerque, so she traveled to California to undergo an experimental therapy. While there, she lived with my great-aunt Soledad (Aunt Chole), in a camper in the hospital parking lot. Back then, cancer treatment was less sophisticated, and though she pursued every option available, Grandma Alice died in 1974, three months after my birth. Though I never really knew her, I think about my Grandma Alice often. My Aunt Chole also died of breast cancer when I was five years old. Since then, many family members have received a cancer diagnosis - my fraternal grandmother, my twin sister, and our mother, Kathy, among them.

Mom is seriously flamboyant and obsessed with Christmas - her way of maintaining family unity. Every year we make dozens of cookies, deck the halls, and fret endlessly over gifts for family and friends. Although I don't share her fanaticism for *All Things Christmas*, the year my mom fell sick I thought a lot about how much Christmas means to her. Watching my mom carry on through the Christmas season despite her chemo fatigue, I wondered how we might honor both her and her mother and the holiday in a fashion that would ease her yuletide anxiety. After conversations with family, I found that redefining our holiday traditions was something many of them were interested in doing. So we discussed raising money for charity instead of buying each other presents. It's a conversation we forgot quickly, though. My mom's recovery took precedence over holiday plans.

The Christmas revolution stayed at the back of my mind until last spring, when I met a representative of Casa Esperanza at a women's health fair. Casa Esperanza is not an obvious organization for my family to give to - none of us have ever stayed there. There are other organizations more closely focused on breast cancer, but I liked that Casa Esperanza is part of the community I grew up in (actually two communities: Albuquerque and families living with cancer). I liked that its mission is giving comfort to cancer sufferers and easing the burden on their families. I liked that, thanks to Casa Esperanza, people who travel to Albuquerque for chemotherapy don't have to live in campers, as my grandmother did in California. I began to formulate a plan.

Last year I wrote up a letter to the family and explained a little about Casa Esperanza, printed it out on Christmassy paper, and sent it out after Thanksgiving. I reminded them of the talks we'd had on past Christmases - *Let's not give each other gifts, and instead give the money we'd spend to this really great, really worthy organization, Casa Esperanza.* Our gifts to each other would be the gift of time, the gift of supporting a mutually esteemed organization.

So, a couple of days before Christmas, I decorated a box to collect donations, and made a few dozen extra cookies just to work off my nerves. Upon arriving for holiday celebrations at Aunt Sylvia's, I left the box on a table near the tree. From the moment I walked away, family members began to thank me for organizing our group donation. After a night of good food and good company, I took the box home, unopened. The next day I counted up what we had given -



Sara's older sisters, Uncle Andrew and Grandmother Alice Hernández Arroyo in the 1970's.

over \$1500! After a few additional donations over the next few days, our total came up to over \$1600.

I took the box to Casa Esperanza and filled out a form for a group donation. Easy as pie, and to my delight, I found that our gift would be rewarded with a memorial patio brick in honor of my Grandma.

We plan to repeat our fundraiser this Christmas and will build on our success. My Aunt Sylvia is taking charge this year and has expanded the challenge from straight donation to a broader plan to collect and donate the whole year's loose pocket change. I'd like to issue a challenge to all who are reading this as well: Think about changing how you celebrate the holidays - think about giving to Casa Esperanza. By eliminating traditional gift giving, making holiday season less stressful, and coming together to support a cause we all believe in, perhaps we can give comfort to the sick by spreading the enduring love of a woman who died over thirty years ago. I welcome all supporters of Casa Esperanza to emulate, or even better, to outdo us!

Vehicle Donation Program

“GIVE HOPE A RIDE” HOLDS ITS FIRST PUBLIC AUCTION

by Sandy Breeding, Vehicle Donation Program Coordinator



It's been two and one half years now of creating, molding and recreating Casa's Vehicle Donation Program. And the fruition of our largest goal, to hold public auctions to sell our donated vehicles, came true on Saturday, Sept. 6, 2008.

Everyone involved in this group project was unsure what to expect. Would anyone show up? And if so, how many should we plan for? Would we sell a few or all of the cars? Had we thought of all the angles involved in registering our bidders, running the actual auction, processing all those sales?

At the end of that very busy day, we were thrilled as our hopes for a fantastic turnout and the sales were realized. We registered 111 bidders and sold 85 donated cars!! What a huge success for all the work and time put in by Macy Towing and our Casa employees!! Macy's auctioneer schooling served him well as he "called" a great auction!

Now that we are confident of success, there will be many more auctions to come. By donating your vehicle to Casa Esperanza you can be a part of helping this exciting program, which is doing so much to financially support our home and the many programs we now offer our residents.

Visit our "Give Hope a Ride" website anytime to find out about auction dates and see vehicles we are selling. Go to www.givehopearide.com to find current information and share it with your family and friends!



Macy FitsEmons works the microphone at the first public auction for our "Give Hope A Ride" program.

If you have a vehicle you are considering donating, do it now before the end of the year to get your tax deduction for your 2008 taxes!

We continue to be grateful to all our vehicle donors and now those who support Casa Esperanza through our Auction sales.

****Next Auction tentatively scheduled for November 22. Check out www.givehopearide.com for information.****



Please join us Saturday, June 6, 2009
Tierra Del Sol Golf Club in Belen
for the

12th Annual Michelle "Mike" Moore
Memorial Golf Classic
benefiting Casa Esperanza

Shot Gun Start at 8:30am

\$95 per person
Includes: golf registration, continental
breakfast, 18 holes of golf, cart, ditty
bag and buffet lunch.

Watch for registration materials in the
mail and on Casa Esperanza website
[Www.casaesperanzanm.org](http://www.casaesperanzanm.org)

Save the Date!



CASA ESPERANZA, INC.

Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2008

Revenues

Grants	136,250
NM Dept of Health	126,400
Program Income	252,483
Contributions & Support	72,504
Foundation Support	70,432
Event Income	20,351
Interest Income	3,182
Other Income	3,120
In-kind Income	46,038
Total Support & Revenue	\$730,760

Expenses

Program	516,956
General Administrative	148,354
Fundraising	10,922
Total Expenses before Depr	676,232
Change in Net Assets before Depr	\$54,528
Depreciation Expense	70,633
Increase (Decrease) in Net Assets	-\$16,105

ENDOWMENT FOUNDATION

Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2008

Revenues

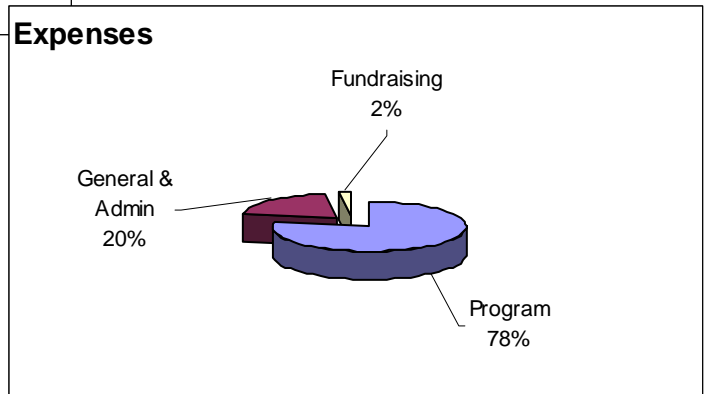
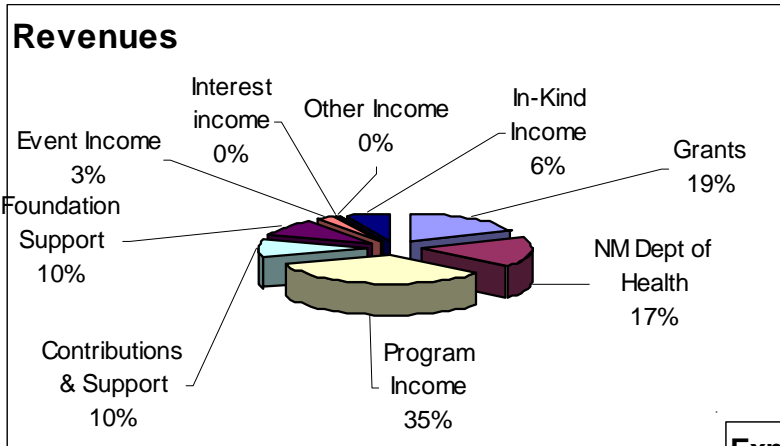
Car Donation Program	491,907
Event Income	105,746
Contributions & Support	3,718
Investment Return	-10,769
In-Kind Income	65,638
Total Revenue	\$656,240

Expenses

Program	70,432
General & Administrative	128,070
Fundraising	466,018
Depreciation Expense	850
Total Expenses	\$665,370
Increase (Decrease) in Net Assets	-9,130

Casa Esperanza Endowment Foundation Assets

June 30, 2008	Fair Market Value
Money Market Accounts	32,147
Equity Securities	1,450,947
Total Investments	\$1,483,094
Average Return on Investments = (2)%	



House volunteers have donated 1,922 hours of labor this year. The board has donated 234 hours to Casa Esperanza & the Foundation..

Copies of the full 2008 audit for Casa Esperanza, Inc. and the consolidated audit for Casa Esperanza, Inc and Casa Esperanza Endowment Foundation are available on our website or from the organization office (see page 12 for contact information).

CASA ESPERANZA, INC.
Post Office Box 40472
Albuquerque, NM 87196-0472

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Annual Report 2008

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Our Mission

Casa Esperanza - New Mexico's home away from home providing a caring community to support and serve families facing cancer.

“NEWS from Casa Esperanza” is published two times a year by Casa Esperanza, Inc. in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

- Casa Esperanza (Tax ID #: 85-0356946) is a registered 501(c)(3) not-for-profit corporation. All contributions are tax deductible. Casa Esperanza does not telemarket, participate in door-to-door solicitation or campaign via chain letters or e-mail appeals.
- Casa Esperanza receives a portion of its funding from a contract with the New Mexico Department of Health. Casa Esperanza is a member of the NM Cancer Council which create and implements the Comprehensive Cancer Plan.
- Casa Esperanza is a **Combined Federal Campaign** designated charity. Our CFC # is **60462**.
- Member: National Association of Hospital Hospitality Houses. To learn more about NAHHH and other special places such as Casa Esperanza go to www.nahhh.org.
- Member: Albuquerque Cancer Coalition, an alliance of cancer support agencies, hospital treatment centers and governmental agencies to inform, to educate and to advocate on behalf of NM cancer patients and their families. Their website is www.nmcca.org/acc.
- Affiliate: NM Cancer Care Alliance, providing NM cancer patients with local access to latest experimental treatments available. Their website is www.nmcca.org.
- Member: Chambers of Commerce in Albuquerque, Belen, Clovis, Alamogordo, Los Lunas
- Member: Albuquerque Hispano and the American Indian Chamber.
- Member: Albuquerque Better Business Bureau.

~If you receive more than one newsletter, please share it with someone who will find it interesting and useful.~

Casa Esperanza has a terrific website maintained by Shelly Liebman. Be sure to check it out for the most current and up to date pictures and information on past and upcoming events, how to donate on-line (secure site) and how to become involved at CE. Our website is: www.casaesperanzanm.org

Casa Esperanza Staff

Eileen Cook	CEO
Maryle J. Barber	Development Director
Crystal Bojorquez	Guest Services Team
Monica Bojorquez	VDP Adm. Assistant
Sandy Breeding	Vehicle Donation Pr. Dir.
Christy Casias	Guest Services Team
Jessica Clauson	Bookkeeper
Gina FitsEmons	Administrative Director
Mike Gallegos	Facilities Manager
Anita Harrison	Administrative Assistant
Mary Loyd	Finance Director
Angelica Medina	Gst Serv & Comm Rel Dir
Fernie Medina	VDP Lot Manager
Cathy Moore	PNP Asst. Director
Stacie Soto	Patient Navigation Dir.
Sarah Trujillo	Guest Services Team
Patricia Virgen	Guest Services Team Mgr

Reach us at:

CASA ESPERANZA
PO BOX 40472
ALBUQUERQUE, NM 87196-0472
1005 YALE NE
ALBUQUERQUE, NM 87106
505-277-9880 Fax: 505-277-9876
e-mail: info@casaesperanzanm.org
www.casaesperanzanm.org