

# NEWS

*from*



Spring 2002

Volume 9, Number 2

***This issue honors the many dedicated volunteers who give their time and their hearts to Casa Esperanza.***



Members of the United Church of Christ SW Conference arrived at Casa Esperanza for a day of service to our house. These delightful young people came from throughout New Mexico, Arizona and El Paso, Texas, as part of the 19<sup>th</sup> Annual Thanksgiving Alive Retreat. And they did indeed make the house "alive" with their infectious humor and energy.



Volunteers from Intel - a few of the 50 volunteers from several companies that selected Casa Esperanza as their project for the United Way's "Make a Difference Day - 2001." This just proves that making microchips is not the only forte of these able-bodied souls.



NM Attorneys at work! In honor of the 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Leadership Institute of the New Mexico State Bar, twenty Albuquerque attorneys volunteered to paint our front offices. These are men and women of many talents!

Several members of the UCC SW Conference retreat attendees tackle the courtyard and pond.



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### Reach us at:

CASA ESPERANZA, PO BOX 40472

ALBUQUERQUE, NM 87196-0472

505-277-9880 Fax: 505-277-9876

EMAIL: info@casaesperanzanm.org

WEBSITE: WWW.CASAESPERANZANM.ORG

### Our Mission

Casa Esperanza provides affordable housing for families facing cancer.

## Director's Page

by Eileen Cook

### About Our Good Friends

Casa Esperanza celebrated its tenth anniversary in February, and it's been a remarkably full ten years. During that time, Casa Esperanza has been home to more than 13,000 families from throughout New Mexico and the Southwest, and I am thankful for your help in making sure that Casa remains available to each of those families. Your generous commitments of your time and yourselves have made and continue to make this home an extraordinary reality for the many who need it.

This year we hosted volunteers from Intel, Honeywell, United Church of Christ, NM State Bar Association, Pi Kappa Alpha, Duke City Civitan Club, Northside Civitan Club, Sierra Vista Civitan Club, Silver Bullets Civitan Club, the Albuquerque Civitan Club PA, the Cosmopolitan Woman's Club of Albuquerque, the Del Norte ROTC, Lovelace HMO Enrollment Group, UNM Spring Storm, and the National Honor Society from St. Pius. Whew! Later this year we are expecting numerous volunteers from Texas, Louisiana and Arizona who are part of the United Methodist Church's Volunteers in Mission program. In addition, our regular house and office volunteers make our normal workdays go more smoothly - volunteers like Tanya Metzger, who spends her evenings at the front desk, Lee Beckley, who has provided clerical and statistical assistance since 1994, Kay Burford, who volunteers each Monday for the Guest Ser-

vices Team, and sisters April and Yolanda Espinosa from South Valley Academy, who tackle whatever jobs need doing. These individuals and groups work hard to keep this house up and running, looking beautiful and well kept, and we simply could not do it without them.

### It's Been Tough ...

It's been a tough six months and, like the rest of the country, we feel like we are finally emerging from a fog of bewilderment and confusion. Life is finally beginning to take on a feeling of normalcy after September 11<sup>th</sup>, if truly life can ever be normal for our families. But even in them I am sensing an optimism - a hope that not only their world but also the world at large will be healed.

And you can help foster that hope. You can ensure that a very small piece of that world is kept whole and financially healthy and available to those who need us so desperately in troubled times. Every gift will touch each family at Casa Esperanza and will do so much to provide a refuge - a safe, clean and welcoming place - for each and every person who passes through our doors. Please remember Casa Esperanza as you make plans for your charitable gifts this year, as well as in your estate planning. I wish I could adequately tell you just how much your generosity means to us and to our families.

(see page 5)

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Proud member of the National Association of Hospital Hospitality Houses, a professional organization that promotes and assists not-for-profit programs that provide lodging and supportive services in a caring environment for families accompanying for ill loved ones away from home. To learn more about NAHHH and other special places such as Casa Esperanza visit [www.nahhh.org](http://www.nahhh.org).

Member of the 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.

## PAM & MIKE REID *by Jeanne Messer*

Mike and Pam Reid had me charmed before I met them. They have been coming to see us for some months now, always with broad smiles and enormous warmth. Though I work in a back office, they were impossible to miss, easily recognized as “really good people.” They seemed to me to be dancing whenever they arrived at Casa Esperanza, eyes shining with pleasure.

It’s not easy for a family to cope with cancer treatment. Pam has had extensive major surgery and is just past the half-way point with chemotherapy. As Mike pointed out, it’s not just Pam who has cancer, “We do. We go to the doctor together, we go to chemo together, we make decisions together, we pray together.”

They have been together for the better part of twenty years. Mike ran a U.S. government liquor store on a military base in England for 16 years. Pam, grieving for a lost marriage, joined the civil service and got herself an overseas post—and there they met. Mike supported her through her grief—which he had also faced—and a few years later they were married. Mike has two sons, Pam two daughters, and between them, 20 years later, they have 16 grandchildren.

When they returned to the U.S., it was to New Mexico, where both Pam and her daughters were born. They settled in Aztec, where they now own a

Pearle Vision store, and have worked hard together to establish their business and home.

It was Pearl Harbor Day, last December, when the Reids got the news: Pam had ovarian cancer. Pam says it felt surreal, like a dream, listening to the doc-



tor. It was hard to believe. But it was true, and surgery revealed even more cancer that had to be removed, along with half of her stomach; the doctor says he removed about 12 pounds of Pam. This has been a very difficult year for Pam and for her husband and family.

So where are those extraordinary smiles coming from?

Sitting down with them this morning, I asked Pam and Mike to tell me about themselves. Pam answered first: “Our first priority is love of the Lord,” she said. She described the leap of faith required to “let go and let God,” pointing out that too many cooks spoil the stew

and explaining that her task is to keep out of the Divine kitchen.

Our residents and readers come from many faiths, and it is clear that Pam has a truly deep faith that supports her. Leaving the doctor’s office on Pearl Harbor Day, she remembered a Bible verse, “All things work for the good to those that love God and are called according to his purpose” (Romans 8:28). For the next three days, that same verse appeared coincidentally time after time in different contexts, and formed the basis of the pastor’s sermon at church that Sunday. Pam’s is a rock-like faith that enables her to describe this difficult year with humor, as “a speed bump on the highway to heaven.”

Mike’s faith is newer to him, not even a year, but it is the center of his life. He sincerely believes that cancer can be overcome “if the Lord is your primary care physician.”

Listening to the two of them, I came to feel that the dance I saw in them from the beginning is their vital and willing dance with life and all the love life can hold. Talking about Casa Esperanza, Pam said that meeting other families helps take her out of her own problems as she comes to care for others.

Both Pam and Mike expressed a lot of gratitude for Casa Esperanza as their temporary home. “Everyone here has been compassionate and caring. We have felt loved here, and familiar loving faces make all the difference in the world.”

# The 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Event!



Golf Committee member and ace golfer Midge Cron follows through on a crucial putt. Midge and her foursome placed lowest score in women's division at last year's tournament.

Believe it or not, it's that time again! The Fifth Annual Michelle "Mike" Moore Golf Classic is scheduled for June 15<sup>th</sup> at Isleta Eagle Golf Course. In addition to terrific golf, the event will feature a scrumptious luncheon under tent at the course, where Terry McDermott of Intel will emcee the sponsor recognition, tournament awards and live auction for vacation get-a-ways.

The *Michelle "Mike" Moore Memorial Golf Classic* was established in loving memory of Michelle (Mike) Moore who died on August 21, 1997, after a valiant battle with cancer.

In its first four years, the *Michelle "Mike" Moore Memorial Golf Classic* has raised \$170,000 in support of Casa Esperanza. This year, the tournament's fifth, a dedicated committee of friends, volunteers and professionals are once again working to raise a significant amount to insure that our home remains operational.

You can help! We invite you to participate in this spirited tournament, and we are offering a variety of sponsorship opportunities along with exciting golf and social activities. A hole in one could win you a 2002 PT Cruiser from Auge's Dodge-Chrysler-Jeep in Belen! To sign up, check out the enclosed form. For more information, contact Fred Moore at 864-7015 or Eileen Cook, 277-9880.

Thanks to our major sponsors:



Here we go! Players prepare to depart for the shotgun start at the 2001 Michelle "Mike" Moore Memorial Golf Classic. More than 160 players participated.

Directors Page, Continued

## Celebrating 10 Years!

There's something about a major anniversary that hurls you into thoughts of the future – in this case, what is in store for Casa Esperanza during our next decade? And, believe me, our 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration provided many opportunities to think such thoughts.

As we gathered with friends we have come to cherish during these ten years – some who were there before the beginning to see the idea of our home become a reality, and some who have only recently discovered us and the importance of Casa's mission – we were challenged to think large.

Our challenge came from our good friend Cheryl Willman, MD and CEO of the UNM Cancer Research & Treatment Center. Dr. Willman spoke to our gathering about CRTC's applica-



**Dr. Cheryl Willman, MD, CEO and Director of the UNM Cancer Research & Treatment Center, at work in her lab. Dr. Willman delivered a stirring and challenging keynote address at the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Reception.**



**The Palo Duro Band from the Palo Duro Senior Center provided the exhilarating and nostalgic entertainment for the day, giving music from the forties and fifties a special emphasis. Here Norma Houston leads the band with a rendition of "Let Me Call You Sweetheart."**

tion to the National Cancer Institutes for UNM to become a Comprehensive Cancer Center, an application process that takes several years and, if successful, could have an incredible impact on New Mexico's cancer community, as well as on Casa Esperanza. UNM CRTC would be able to offer many additional treatment options, making the Center even more available for the 6500 New Mexicans diagnosed with cancer each year.

Dr. Willman recognized Casa Esperanza as an important partner in this process, and stated that in order for us to meet the anticipated need, Casa should consider adding ten or twelve extra units. So, we're on it. We are investigating the possibilities – the where, the how, the how much, etc. – and we are motivated and excited.

So, stay tuned. The next 10 years could indeed be a new and positive chapter in the life of Casa Esperanza, as well as in the lives of New Mexico's cancer community. I guarantee that with your help, it's going to be a great 10 years!

## Ambassadors

Casa Esperanza has many outstanding friends and supporters throughout the state, and I would like to take this opportunity to recognize a few of them. The Board of Directors launched a new program this year as part of our *Su Casa* statewide outreach efforts – the Ambassador Program. These fine folks have committed to carry Casa Esperanza's message and needs to their communities, to represent Casa in their local chambers of commerce and to help to organize fundraising events to benefit our home. There was a training session and rally in February for our charter members, and we plan another for August. Casa Esperanza would like to pay tribute to our good friends and ambassadors: Fred Moore, representing Belen and Valencia County; Tillie Shaw, representing Clovis and Curry County; Toots Green, representing Alamogordo and Otero County; and Barbara Barnes, representing Los Alamos and Los Alamos County. The board and staff have committed to provide our ambassadors with the support they need in order to be successful in their new mission. If you would like more information on the program, or if you would like to consider becoming an ambassador in your community, please call me. I think you'll find it a

very rewarding way to serve those families in your area who must travel to Albuquerque for cancer treatment and who need a caring, secure place to stay.



**Jerry Foropoulos and Joyce Salazar traveled from Los Alamos to join in the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary festivities. Jerry has been a Casa Esperanza supporter since day one!**

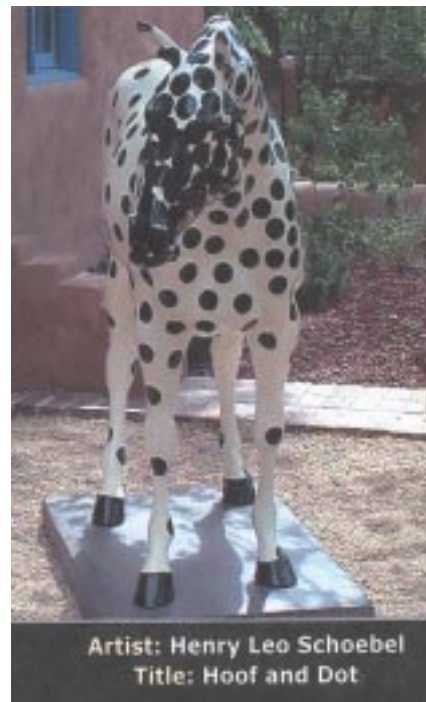
UPDATE UPDATE

As you might remember from our Annual Report last November that Casa Esperanza was selected by HorsePower New Mexico to be a beneficiary of the sale of a pony from The Trail of Painted Ponies event. William Lykins, owner of Chiaroscuro Gallery in Santa Fe, was the sponsor of our pony, "Hoof and Dot" painted by Henry Leo Schoebel. Late in November, Valerie Schumann of St. Joseph, MO purchased our pony. Ms. Schumann wrote to tell us that our pony will reside at the head of her long, curving driveway which is lined with black and white (a little color here and there) old horse-drawn equipment. Schumann also wrote that it is "a great thing that Casa Esperanza does. Cancer is so

UPDATE *by Maryle J. Barber*

scary anyway. To have a place for patients and relatives to stay that isn't some cold impersonal hotel has to be so wonderful."

There were 120 wonderful painted ponies up for auction in 2001, and Casa Esperanza was very lucky that Lykins and Schumann cared enough about us to make a difference in the care we to offer our residents. We have applied to be selected as a beneficiary of a new pony for 2002. If you are interested in knowing more about the painted ponies, how to be part of the auction, how to assist in selecting Casa Esperanza as a beneficiary or just to check out the wonderful art work you can look on line at [www.gopaintedponies](http://www.gopaintedponies).



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