



El Sol Shines

"Working Together for a Better Community"



July 2009

Volume 1, Issue 4

El Sol Worker 'Can See Clearly Now'

"I can see clearly" may be the lines to a very popular song, but to Jesus M. Camposeco, this is how he can see now: clearly and not through the fog of cataracts.

Jesus, 39, remembers that around the age of 8, his parents noticed that he could not see well. In school, he could not see the blackboard or read or keep up with the other kids, so his parents took him out of school when he was in the third grade. Since then he has been struggling to see and gazing through a haze.

Now, thanks to the efforts of some dedicated volunteers and eye specialists, Jesus has been given the gift of sight. Many El Sol workers like him who also have poor vision have been helped through eye examinations and reading glasses. Others with more serious eye problems have been referred to doctors and have received free prescription eyeglasses through the "Gift of Sight" program sponsored by LensCrafters.

Jesus was a special case. He needed a more extensive exam which Jupiter optometrist Dr. Joel Hirsch provided at no charge. He found Jesus to be afflicted with dense cataracts in both eyes, which could not be helped with glasses. Dr. Hirsch recommended Dr. Alan Aker of the Aker Kasten Eye Center in Boca Raton. Dr. Aker said he would perform the surgery if the patient was referred by Caridad, a non-profit agency in Boynton Beach.

At the Caridad Clinic, ophthalmologist Dr. Feldgoise and his assistant, Daisy Fuentes, conducted further tests and referred Jesus to the Aker Kasten Eye Center. Then it was up to Jesus to decide if he really wanted the surgery. There was a chance the surgery would not work because Jesus had had cataracts since he was a child.

"We made sure that we did not get his hopes up, but we did not want to deny him the chance to see well," said Diane Williams, who helped Jesus with every step of the process.

Jesus was determined that he was going to see better and opted to take advantage of the opportunity of a lifetime by going ahead with the eye surgery.

Jesus Camposeco and Diane Williams, El Sol Health Committee chair.

... Continued on page 5



President's message

Dear Friends of El Sol,

This month, we celebrated Independence Day, our nation's birthday, the day our founding fathers declared that people have the right to overthrow tyrants. At El Sol, we celebrated by teaching a "Know Your Rights" workshop and also by reviewing with the assembled workers the meaning of July 4th and the magnificent Declaration of Independence.

The Declaration lists the colonists' grievances against the King, the reasons why they say they have no alternative but to rebel. You may remember that they complained of his imposing taxes, or his denial of the right to trial by jury. But did you know that the colonists also complained that the King had obstructed laws permitting foreigners to be naturalized, and had refused to pass laws encouraging migration of foreigners?

In this day, too, we have a problem with our immigration laws: Although we have known for many years that there is a problem, our federal government has failed to act, obstructing laws permitting foreigners to be naturalized, refusing to pass laws to allow the migration of foreigners.

Some accuse those of us who support El Sol of aiding and abetting illegality, by helping to provide services to our immigrant population without asking if they are "legal" or not (personally, I have a real problem calling some people illegal – no human being is illegal).

I look around at what we have in El Sol, and I see great benefits to our community and our country. I see immigrants who are like so many who have come before them – here not by choice, but by duress, for the most part skilled, talented, hard-working, ambitious, family-oriented people, who have already given so much to our community and who could give so much more, if they were able to "come out of the shadows."

A 2007 report from the White House Council of Economic Advisors concludes that immigration increases the U.S. Gross Domestic Product by about \$37 billion a year. Immigrants increase the size of the total labor force, complement native-born workers in terms of skills and education, and stimulate capital investment by adding workers to the labor pool. Contrary to what the protestors say, immigrant workers do not compete with the majority of native-born workers, because immigrants tend to have different education levels and work in different occupations.

If you look around El Sol and around Jupiter, you'll see contributions of these workers – documented or not.

- the art works that hang on our walls
- the literacy classes, started by our own workers, teaching their fellow workers how to read and write in Spanish, so they can learn how to read and write and speak in English
- service projects – El Sol workers have put in more than 400 hours just in the past few months as volunteers for Habitat for Humanity and other community service projects in Jupiter.

For me, just the opportunity to talk with someone who has come here from a small town in the mountains in Guatemala, who maybe spoke only a Mayan language before he came here, to learn about his language, his music, his art, his culture, enriches me and I think enriches Jupiter and enriches America.

Fundraising Committee Seeks More Members

The El Sol Fundraising Committee is in need of additional members who are interested in helping with this very important committee. Persons with experience in finance, fundraising or development activities are especially welcome. Interested persons should contact Terry McFarland at 744-8138 or (610) 213-1367 or at tjemcfarland@hotmail.com.

If only Congress would only listen to the "silent majority" who favor immigration reform (68% of voters in a 2009 poll said they believe the undocumented should be required to register, to meet certain conditions, and then be allowed to apply for citizenship)!

Jill Hanson

Artist at Work

Pedro Chavajay works on a mural he's painting for a Jupiter family. The mural, for the family's 15-year-old daughter's bedroom wall, may lead to other potential clients for Chavajay, whose artwork hangs in El Sol. His paintings will be among the artists' work at El Sol's Art Fest, scheduled for Nov. 1.



Computers Donated to Schools, Church in Guatemala



El Sol shipped out 22 computers this month to help two schools and a youth group in Guatemala.



El Sol's workers informed the center that computers are virtually inaccessible in their hometowns. Even educational institutions often do not have computers for teachers and students. El Sol recently received a donation of computers, which were sent to help some of those villages.

Ten computers were sent to a school in Tzibaj and 10 computers were sent to a school in Taj-Buxup. Both villages are located in Huehuetenango, the northwestern mountainous region of Guatemala. In addition, two computers were sent to a church that helps coordinate activities for youth and the community in Tonicapán, also a rural area of Guatemala.

By actively participating in community service programs and giving back to the community, El Sol is continuously working toward social change. Many of the workers that come from the recipient communities have expressed deep appreciation. They explain that students, youth and children would not otherwise have the opportunity to learn and access computers.

El Sol thanks the Consul of Guatemala, Food for the Poor, and Orden de Malta for their support in making this possible.

Wish List of Critical Needs

El Sol happily accepts contributions and donations. Here are some of the more critical needs.

- * Adult bicycles & bicycle helmets
- * Hard hats, ball caps & work gloves
- * Landscaping & construction tools
- * Spanish/English dictionaries
- * Computers
- * Copy paper & copy machine
- * Pencils, pens & highlighters
- * Desk with drawer locks
- * File cabinet with lock
- * Art supplies, including markers, tape, glue & buttons
- * Food, coffee, sugar & Cremora
- * Paper cups, 9-inch plates, forks, knives & spoons
- * Sponsor printing of newsletter

Volunteers of the Month for June

Andi Cleveland

&

Betzy Rega

“The Sunshine Twins”



Betzy Rega



Andi Cleveland

Andi and Betzy are another blessing, who just happened to be in the right places at the right times for El Sol.

Betzy and Andi have stepped into two big roles at El Sol – they've taken on leadership of the kitchen teams, and also lead Sunshine Artworks, El Sol's first subsidiary organization, dedicated to nurturing and marketing our El Sol artists. If there is a day that one or both of them are not here at El Sol, it's unusual.

Betzy Rega

Betzy came to the U.S. from Guatemala when she was 4 years old. She has a lot of New York in her, having lived in Brooklyn, Queens and Staten Island. Now she lives with her son, Michael, in Jupiter Farms.

Betzy heard about El Sol from the supervisor on her home construction, who told her how to hire workers from the guys on Center Street. (The supervisor ironically is one of the protestors who now picket near El Sol.) Betzy was so irritated by the protestors at the Jupiter Jubilee that it spurred her to become an El Sol volunteer.

Betzy's mom still lives in New York, but owns a home in Guatemala, near Puerto Barrios, on the Atlantic coast, where Betzy likes to visit.

She started out working in the kitchen on Fridays. Now she is probably here more than she is not here. She cooks sauces and casseroles at home and brings them in to El Sol; she cleans the fridge; she takes the artists to shows; and she encourages them.

Betzy says, "I almost forgot that I was good at certain things, and El Sol has allowed and encouraged me to use all my talents."

Betzy makes her living as a massage therapist, but when does she have time to do it?

Andi Cleveland

Andi comes to Jupiter from Elvis country; she and her husband moved here from Tennessee when he came to work for Scripps. But she was raised all around the U.S.: in Ohio, New Hampshire and North Carolina, where her family still has a beach house.

She loved what she found here at El Sol. It reminded her of projects she had worked on back in Tennessee. Andi has a master's degree in social work, and has worked on a number of innovative projects that she developed from the ground up.

When she came to El Sol, she first became involved in working on our Art Fest. She has a daughter who is an artist, and Andi has always been involved in the arts.

She started working with Betzy and Carol Cohen to help the artists with learning crafts, help the women learn to do jewelry and bead work, and then to help plan the art fest, a major undertaking.

Andi has an amazingly cool head, as well as a strong heart, so when others tend to go off on the frustrations that can arise in a mostly volunteer organization (e.g., why don't people just look around, instead of saying, there are no more napkins in the kitchen?), Andi just sweetly thinks of a new way to do it, so the job gets done.

Andi and Betzy, along with Lee McCarthy, recently became the first directors of Sunshine Artworks, a newly created not-for-profit organization that is a subsidiary of El Sol, dedicated to assisting the artists of our community in marketing their art works, and eventually becoming self-sufficient.

Worker of the Month for June

Esteban Santis

Esteban Santis, Worker of the Month for June, is from Vestiano, Carranza, a small town in Chiapas, Mexico.

His family is there - his wife, Concepcion Velasco Aguilar, and three children, as well as a new grandchild of less than 1 year. His oldest daughter, Maria Socoro, is married, and has one child. His son, Gilberto, is studying to be an accountant. His youngest, Ana Marcela, is also a student.

Esteban says that he earned the points to become worker of the month not because he wanted the honor, but because he believes it is important to do the things that earn the points. For example, he goes to English classes because he wants to learn the language. He thinks it is important to know English.

He says the same about the community service he has performed. Esteban has worked on the Habitat for Humanity houses in Jupiter, doing roofing and painting work. He feels it is important to give back to the community.

Esteban has been coming to El Sol since it opened in 2006. He was there when the workers used to gather on Center Street. He feels that it is fairer at El Sol, since here there is an order for going out to work, whereas on the street, it was whoever got to the employer the fastest.

Esteban says that "El Sol is good for me" because it is a safe place. For example, if it's raining outside, you are safe inside El Sol's building.

Esteban is always there to help. El Sol President Jill Hanson said, "Esteban is there whenever you need someone to help out, for example, carrying things in the kitchen, helping to clean up in the kitchen. Whenever you are looking for workers to help out, he answers the call."

Esteban's dream is to return to his country in two years. He has never seen his little grandchild.

El Sol is a better place for all workers because we have people like Esteban who help out.



El Sol Worker 'Can See Clearly Now'

(Continued from Page 1)

First Dr. Aker operated on his right eye. The surgery went off without a hitch. A follow-up exam the next day was successful and Jesus was doing just fine, so he underwent surgery on the left eye, with the same good results: no pain or discomfort.

"Jesus felt good!" Williams said. "Moreover, he can now see better than at anytime in his life and can read most of the lines on the eye chart that had only been a blur before the surgery."

Life is much different now for Jesus, who once lacked expression on his face and lacked joy at trying to see someone or something. He now rejoices at the sight of a raccoon crossing the street, and thanks God and all his doctors for giving him a gift that he knows he

could never repay.

Note: El Sol extends its sincere gratitude to all those who donated their services to help give

Jesus the gift of sight. Thanks also to Health Committee Chair Diane Williams and June Brown for arranging Jesus's many medical appointments and helping him every step of the way.

"We did not want to deny him the chance to see well."

- Diane Williams



El Sol

Jupiter Neighborhood
Resource Center

106 Military Trail

Jupiter Fl 33458

Phone (561) 745-9860

Fax (561) 745-9834

www.friendsofelsesol.com

El Sol's Hiring Hall is open

Monday – Saturday

6:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Sunday

7:00 a.m. to 12 noon

Newsletter Print Sponsor

This month's edition of *El Sol Shines* is printed by a generous donation from HAYSMAR, Inc., Research & Analysis Since 1991.

If you would like to sponsor a future newsletter, please contact El Sol at (561) 745-9860 or email diane.fitzpatrick@mac.com.

El Sol Shines is published and distributed via email monthly. To receive the newsletter, send a request to diane.fitzpatrick@mac.com

Editors

Mike Richmond

Diane Laney Fitzpatrick

Contributors

Jill Hanson

Sally Isham

Wilberto Luna

Jocelyn Sabbagh

Dora B. Valdivia

Mary Pat Webster

Diane Williams

Notes from the Pantry

We continue to be blessed on a daily basis with donations of food and supplies, not to mention the creative talents of our dedicated kitchen volunteers.



This month Jupiter First Community Church donated a brand new freezer, which is now hooked up. It seems to have much more capacity than the old chest freezer, not to mention that it is much easier to access food in it.

Through the good services of Bernie Wecht and Louis Andres we were able to build new shelves in the kitchen, which will be much more efficient than the cabinet that was there. Bernie is working on a plan to make the most efficient use of the shelf space, and continues to be our Costco shopper, as well.

The Kitchen Crew

Recipe of the Month

Betty's Simple Marinara Sauce

Mix together:

4-6 large cans of peeled, diced or whole tomatoes

2 Tablespoons each of basil, parsley, marjoram and garlic powder (or 2-6 Tablespoons mixed Italian seasoning)

(If you prefer fresh garlic, put crushed garlic in some oil in the pot and brown slightly; then pour in the tomato sauce)

Cook on simmer for about 2-3 hours.

El Sol by the Numbers

In the 2nd Quarter of 2009 there were...

1,846 jobs filled

1,571 workers registered

2,843 employers registered

\$342,600 value of services and **\$145,795** value of legal services

8,674 meals served

71 persons enrolled in night ESL program

8 grants received, **2** pending

23 workers received free medical screenings and **40** received affordable reading or sunglasses