



El Sol Shines

"Working Together for a Better Community"



November/December 2010

Volume 2, Issue 9

There is much to be thankful for at El Sol

A crowd of 250 Jupiter residents enjoyed El Sol's third annual Thanksgiving Day celebration, including a scrumptious traditional turkey dinner, music and entertainment, plus announcement of a major donation by the family of the late Eileen Harden, founder of the ESL program at El Sol.

Eileen's son Bradley announced the gift of \$10,000 in memory of his mother, who was killed in a traffic accident in 2008. He said the family's wish is that the funds go toward El Sol's education program, especially providing awards to outstanding graduates of various educational programs. In announcing the donation, Bradley, a doctoral graduate student at Johns Hopkins University, spoke of his mother's devotion to El Sol and to education. El Sol President Jill Hanson thanked Bradley for the family's memorial gift and recalled Eileen's commitment to the ESL program and how she brought Bradley to volunteer at past Thanksgiving celebrations.

As in past years, a large cadre of volunteers, including five members of Girl Scout Troop 20030, took time away from their own holiday celebrations to help serve a dinner of turkey, mashed potatoes, gravy, green beans, pumpkin bread and homemade tortillas, plus assorted pies and beverages. Alex Fuentes, volunteer coordinator of the Thanksgiving celebration, said, "Everything was perfect. We had the best set of volunteers ever and had a little food left over," which was served to El Sol workers the following day.

The dinner was the third Thanksgiving meal Alex has coordinated at El Sol. Children from St. Peter Catholic Church entertained diners with a Thanksgiving pageant before the meal. Everyone also joined in singing several songs, including "America the Beautiful" that concluded the program.



Jupiter residents and El Sol supporters share a meal at the third annual Thanksgiving Day celebration last month. Above, children from St. Peter Catholic Church presented a Thanksgiving pageant before the feast. At left and below, a large group of volunteers helped to prepare and serve food.

Holiday shopping with GoodSearch benefits El Sol

Holiday shopping online this year? Using GoodSearch to find that perfect gift could mean donation dollars for El Sol.

Starting your online shopping with GoodSearch.com gets you coupons, deals and discounts, and as a double bonus, a portion of your money spent goes to El Sol.

Simply go to www.goodsearch.com and designate your chosen charity as "El Sol, Jupiter's Neighborhood Resource Center."

Then check out the deals and donations: Bed Bath & Beyond will donate 1-2% of your purchases to El Sol; BestBuy.com will donate up to 3%. JCPenney offers free shipping and will donate 2%.



An atypical day is typical at the place of miracles

As I began to write this letter, volunteers were in El Sol's kitchen preparing Thanksgiving dinner for our El Sol community. *The Palm Beach Post* editorialized on Thanksgiving morning about how the "people of El Sol" have worked so hard over the past four years to make El Sol a shining beacon to the nation, an exemplar.

Sister Marta created a beautiful celebration for all who came to eat and to serve dinner. How could you not be moved, when volunteers, workers and families together acted out the first Thanksgiving, sang "America the Beautiful," and gave thanks for all the good in the world?

Bradley Harden, the son of Eileen, our wonderful volunteer who passed away so tragically, announced a gift in her honor; a gift that will enable us to enrich our educational programs. Tears were in many eyes, as Sister Marta asked volunteers and immigrants to greet each other, much like pilgrims and Indians had greeted each other almost 400 years ago.

Usually, there are no "typical" days at El Sol. So much happens there. But I remember a day that epitomizes El Sol – about both what we bring to our community, and about the community we, "the people of El Sol," have created here.

That day, the volunteer "art ladies" – Connie, Bobbie and

Felicitas – were making butterflies with the workers; the butterflies were given away for a donation at Art Fest.

Howard, our volunteer "jack of all trades," was high on a ladder, along with some worker-volunteers, painting our stage a wonderful new peachy color, to be a backdrop for our artists' paintings, which would be hung on our new "art system" donated by Andi and John Cleveland.



All was peaceful, purposeful.

Then a man and woman came in – a bit crazy. He's known for his picketing against the Jupiter police. They'd been here before. Our associate director, Dora, came out to see what was going on. It seemed the woman was unable even to open her mouth, and showing other signs of some recent affliction. When the man tried to pull the woman out the door, Dora got worried, and called the police.

In the meantime, Andi walked in, and took in what was going on, with the eyes of the trained social worker that she is. As all waited for the EMTs, Andi talked with the woman, who said she would talk to a doctor, but only if he was Catholic. Just at that moment, a doctor walked in, looking for workers. Somehow, Andi convinced him to talk with this woman, and to be a "Catholic" doctor for that moment.

Finally the woman was transported to Jupiter Medical Center, who then called our nurse volunteer, Diane Williams, to find out if she knew who could sign a medical release. You see, Jupiter Medical Center now counts on El Sol to help them out on all kinds of cases.

This day was typical if only for being atypical. Every day in El Sol, there is a new challenge to overcome, a worker to help, a crisis to resolve. Every day, El Sol is the place of Milagros, of miracles. You need a doctor; a doctor walks in. But mostly, it is "the people of El Sol" who make the miracles happen.

You will probably be receiving soon an appeal letter from El Sol. I know that most of you already give so much, but as we look forward to our fifth anniversary in 2011, I ask you to look deep into yourself and see if you could do just a little more for El Sol. And I thank you from the bottom of my heart for all that you do all year round for El Sol.

With best wishes for a joyous holiday season,

Jill Hanson

Mission Statement of El Sol

El Sol's vision is for a premier day-labor center providing skilled, dependable workers to employers. We are also committed to promoting strong economically and ethnically diverse communities in which all people can achieve their highest potential.

El Sol seeks to improve the quality of life for all residents of the Town of Jupiter through:

- * Organizing and supervising Jupiter's day-labor hiring in a controlled and sanitary atmosphere;
- * Educating Jupiter's day-laborers and contractors about their rights and responsibilities;
- * Assisting Jupiter's immigrant population to become an active and integrated part of the larger Jupiter community;
- * Building bridges and communication among the different ethnic, cultural and religious groups in Jupiter;
- * Providing occupational training, language and literacy instruction, counseling, health education, legal and other services to individuals in need.



Worker expresses appreciation through poetry

Ramon Barreno's story is an inspiration. Barreno, a native of Guatemala, started working from an early age and could not attend formal school.



Since coming to Jupiter, Ramon has taken advantage of El Sol's adult literacy and English classes. Not only did Ramon learn how to read and write in English, but also learned how to read and write in Spanish. He is now in the process of perfecting his English. Ramon expressed his thanks to El Sol in a poem he wrote:

Appreciation

By Ramon Barreno

I am Ramon Barreno

I am Guatemalan and I came to the United States

Searching for a better life for my family

Although leaving them caused me pain

Into this sacrifice I put all my love.

When I first came

They asked me my name

And timidly I said I did not understand.

My life was my school

Without walls or chalkboard.

This is my first school

With excellent teachers

And here I am learning

To read and write English

And I want to thank

All people who have helped me.

I will always keep them in my thoughts

And I want to say thank you very much

From the bottom of my heart.

Art Fest 2010 a success for painters, vendors

El Sol's Art Fest 2010 was one of the best shows ever, with sales that generated \$5,300 in proceeds that were divided among El Sol and participating artisans. The third annual festival was also better organized, according to Andi Cleveland, who was co-chair of the event with Betzy Rega.

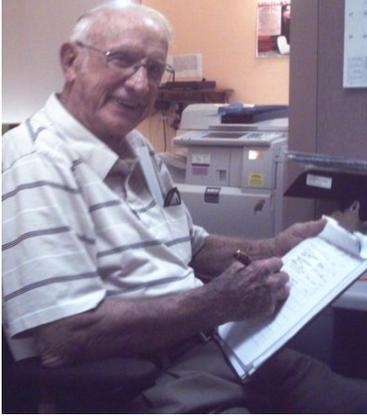
A dozen vendors participated. The show featured original paintings by Hispanic artists and a variety of handicrafts and apparel, including handmade accessories from Guatemala, ceramics, jewelry, drawings and note cards. Food catered by Los Burritos of Lake Park and a bake sale that included numerous blueberry pies baked by the Tuesday El Sol kitchen crew also proved popular with patrons.

A highlight of the event was presentation of a \$100 cash prize to Kelly Napoli, 15, whose color pencil design was selected as the Art Fest commemorative poster in a contest among area high school students.

Kelly, a sophomore at Jupiter High School, accepted her prize as her mother, Eileen, and brother, Christopher, looked on.

Volunteer of the Month for October

Howard Whitsett



Howard Whitsett

When Howard Whitsett was a young man just out of high school and looking for a job, his favorite response to interviewers who asked what he could do was: "I can do anything."

Since then Howard, 79, has proven that he indeed can do most anything. He's demonstrated that during his short tenure at El Sol, which is why he is being honored as Volunteer of the Month for October.

As El Sol's maintenance coordinator and all-round handyman, he has used skills that have been honed over a lifetime to repair, spruce up and enhance the El Sol Center in many ways.

He refurbished the closet that will serve as storage for a food pantry opening next year, and spent many hours supervising the construction of the labor coordinator's new workstation. More recently he completed the construction of the new wet mop shed outside the kitchen.

Howard checks his Maintenance Request Log almost daily and if something is broken, he fixes it, says Volunteer Coordinator Sally Isham.

In October he devoted a record 307 hours at El Sol at such tasks as supervising volunteer workers, who painted the interior of the Assembly Hall, cleaning and waxing the stage, and stripping and waxing the hall's floor.

"He's just fabulous," said Sally. "Whatever needs to be done, Howard takes care of it," she said. "El Sol is fortunate to have someone of Howard's dedication and many talents."

For his part, Howard said he's enjoying helping as a volunteer at El Sol. "It gives me a lot of satisfaction; I'm not wasting time doing nothing and I feel I'm doing some community service," he said. Moreover, he wants El Sol to be a showplace for all the people of Jupiter. "I think the little bit I've been able to do has hopefully been an improvement to the place," he said.

An electrical engineer, Howard served as an Army officer from 1949 to 1951 training paratroopers at Fort Campbell, Kentucky, and while doing so made 168 parachute jumps. He later worked for NASA as an engineer on the Saturn 5 program in Huntsville, Alabama, and Cape Canaveral. He also established an engineering firm that was responsible for the design and construction of a fiber-

optic cable system extending from Chicago to New Orleans and along the Atlantic Coast.

A stint as head of security and a troubleshooter for Henry Kissinger (1973-1977) was packed with adventure as he traveled all over Europe, the Pacific, Asia and parts of South America, sometimes on special missions.

In an interview he recalled the time at a hotel in Niger when he tried to make a phone call but was told the switchboard was not working. Howard asked to look at it and found that a fuse had blown. So he took a stick of chewing gum and made a fuse from the tinfoil wrapper and soon had the phones up and running again.

"They treated me like a hero for awhile," Howard recalled with a smile.

Howard's distinguished professional career includes serving as director of Environmental Services and supervisor of facilities for two non-profit organizations in Miami. He retired in 2009 after working 15 years for Wackenhut Corp. in Palm Beach Gardens as building director responsible for all maintenance and physical plant facilities for the four-story, 94,000-square-foot building.

Congratulations to Howard Whitsett for his well deserved honor as Volunteer of the Month.

Congrats, grads!



A total of 106 students were recognized for advancing through ESL, Basic Education, and computer classes at El Sol recently.

Sixty-one students advanced a level in ESL classes, and 14 students were promoted in Basic Education classes. Thirty-one students graduated from computer skills classes.

Volunteers from Florida Atlantic University and Palm Beach State College, and other community members teach classes at El Sol.

Classes are made possible by the Million Dollar Round Table Foundation, Admiral's Cove Cares, and the Lupo-Ricci Charitable Trust.

The 37 volunteer teachers are overseen by El Sol Education Coordinator Reca Fernandez and computer instructor Idania Venereo

Worker of the Month for October

Julio Cristal

When Julio Cristal came to the United States from his native Guatemala four years ago, he did not know any English but today he is able to converse with confidence. His devotion to learning English and working on numerous community service projects earned him Worker of the Month honors for October.

Julio, 20, came to the U.S. when he was 16 and lives in Jupiter with a sister and brother who preceded him. He comes to El Sol daily in the hope of finding work. When asked what he likes about El Sol, he replied, "everything."

When he is not working Julio can usually be found in an English or computer class. He also has taken various job training classes and volunteered for community service work with Habitat for Humanity and other service projects. His employment experience includes landscaping and pressure cleaning jobs, plus other miscellaneous work.



Julio being congratulated by volunteer Sylvia White

Julio's favorite leisure activity is playing basketball, which he does Tuesday evenings at the West Jupiter Community Center. His selection as Worker of the Month entitles him to preference for jobs for three days.

Congratulations to Julio for his well-deserved honor and whose achievements serve as a model for others to emulate.

El Sol workers take on two major volunteer efforts

A Jupiter family will be moving into their new home just in time for Christmas, thanks to a group of El Sol workers who volunteered recently to help complete installation of roof shingles and do final touch up painting of the three-bedroom home built by Habitat for Humanity in West Jupiter.

El Sol workers also volunteered to paint a home on Cree Street in Jupiter River Estates that brought tears to the eyes of the owner, Joy Brenner, when she came home after the work was finished.

"You had to see it to believe it," said Joanna Aiken, of the Solid Waste Authority, who supervised the project.

Thirteen El Sol workers participated, applying a new coat of mossy green paint, plus white trim in just two hours, Ms. Aiken said.



El Sol workers lay roof shingles (top, right) and paint (above) in two community service projects recently.

The Paint Your Heart Out and Rebuilding Together of the Palm Beaches organizations co-sponsored the painting with the Town of Jupiter.

The Habitat for Humanity home that El Sol workers helped complete will be dedicated December



16 and officially turned over to owners Florsine and Thomas Powell, who are parents of a son in college. Their new home is one of 27 affordable homes developed by Habitat for Humanity agency in Kennedy Estates in West Jupiter.

"They will be in just in time for Christmas," Roland Boucher, job site supervisor for Habitat for Humanity, said of the Powells. He said the El Sol volunteers did excellent work and that Habitat is appreciative of their efforts in helping to build numerous homes in the development over the past couple of years.

Three El Sol workers have earned credits and qualified for purchase of affordable homes in their native country of Guatemala by performing volunteer work on the Habitat for Humanity homes in Jupiter.



El Sol

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Follow us on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/ELSolJupiter>



Friend us on Facebook by searching for El Sol, Jupiter's Neighborhood Resource Center

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

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Dr. Charles Thompson (left) and Roger Buckwalter



Jill Hanson and Jim Kuretski



Mary Kay Thomas (from left), Lori Schirle, Cresy Cruz and Maureen Bosco



Waiters for the evening (from left) Gabino Leon, Sebastiana Paxtor, Ines Perez and Edmundo Rodriguez



Committee members (from left) Bobbie Young, Lynn Hays, Roger Buckwalter, Sheila Hirsch and Abby Blake

El Sol gets decked out for film showing

Freshly painted and decked out with beautiful art work for the next day's Art Fest, El Sol was glowing on Saturday, Nov. 6, for a special showing of "Brother Towns/Pueblos Hermanos."

Dr. Charles Thompson, the director and producer of this film, made a special trip to El Sol to introduce the film and answer questions. Dr. Thompson, a professor of cultural anthropology at Duke University in Durham, N.C., created this stirring film about two towns linked by immigration and families: Jacaltenango, Guatemala, and Jupiter, Florida. The film explores why the immigrants came to Jupiter to seek a different life, examines the work of El Sol, and objectively presents the related issues.

Anyone interested in viewing the film may purchase a copy of the DVD by contacting El Sol.

Many community and religious leaders attended the showing and reception, which was hosted by The Most Rev. Gerald M. Barbarito, Bishop of the Catholic Diocese of Palm Beach; Jupiter Town Councilor Jim Kuretski; and Mrs. Connie Frankino, in conjunction with the sponsorship of the The Lupo-Ricci Charitable Trust.

Attendees were able to tour El Sol and learn about the many exciting programs going on as well as see for themselves the recent facility improvements.