



Friends of Santa Maria Orphanage Newsletter



Volume 2019 | Issue 1 | Olon, Ecuador

Welcome!

The Friends of Santa Maria Orphanage (FOSMO) welcomes you to our inaugural newsletter! We are very excited to be able to share all the exciting news and events happening at the Santa Maria de la Esperanza Orphanage, located in Olon, Ecuador.

FOSMO is a US nonprofit organization whose mission is to assist in providing for the needs of the children and the facilities of the Santa Maria de la Esperanza Orphanage .

FOSMO, through fund raising, charitable giving, and hosting events, is focused to improve the health and welfare of the orphans and the physical conditions of the orphanage.

We are a group of expats and Ecuadorianos who volunteer to support and enrich the lives of the 70+ children and their caregivers who call the orphanage home. We couldn't provide the support without help from our coastal friends as well as friends and family all over the world.

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The office renovation is complete! Plus, a message from our FOSMO treasurer.

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Meet a special FOSMO friend and member of the board, Annie Rikel. AND....find out about a big surprise for the students and staff!

Office Renovation Project

FOSMO recently completed a renovation of the offices used for counselling and legal services as well as the administrative areas of the orphanage.

Through meetings with the staff, FOSMO learned that the bathroom facilities were sorely lacking and there was no air flow through the offices. Hot summer days were almost unbearable.

FOSMO assisted in opening the offices up to provide more space, installing fans, painting, and updating the area to make the offices a more inviting space for the children as they enter the orphanage for the first time.

Now family counselling sessions are more comfortable, and the office staff has a place to be proud of!

We hope to be able to replace the roof and some termite infested railings in the future.

Two precious baby formula recipients.



Office Entrances

Mid-Year Financial Update

At the start of the second year of FOSMO, there was almost \$12K in the coffers from the fall fundraiser and the many generous donors. Right away, the board set up a budget for this year and began projects identified by the Orphanage as key priorities. Some of these include:

- Renovation of 3 key offices
- Back to School office equipment
- Baby formula
- Special needs transportation

We are about to start a major roofing project budgeted at \$4300 and slated to be completed in September. This year, FOSMO plans to spend about \$30K to benefit the kids.

In terms of raising money for the year, a raffle netted \$1200 and donors have given almost \$6K, many as recurring donations. The big fall fundraiser is the key to success for the year. With your help, each of the 80 children will receive school supplies, personal hygiene items, clothes, treats and a great backpack for Christmas. If the fundraiser meets budget, \$7500 will be available to spend on projects or programs Isabel identifies before the end of the year.

If you have questions about the budget or any financial issues, please contact me. At the end of the year, we will publish our Form 990 and a year-end report for all the donors. Without your trust and support, FOSMO would not exist. We truly appreciate the many kind and generous supporters! -Kaye Gosline, FOSMO Treasurer



Annie Rikel and husband Gary Varney

FOSMO Friend: Annie Rikel

My husband, Gary Varney, and I were able to retire to the Olón area in July 2015. Within two months we began construction on our house and settled in the following year. To complete our family in Ecuador we were adopted by a street dog and rescued two kittens.

We had our first tour of the orphanage in December 2016. We were both so impressed with the children and the level of care they receive. It was only a matter of time to get more involved. I became a FOSMO board member the beginning of 2018.

My husband and I love it here so much we feel like we won the lottery, with a lifestyle that completely suits us, casual and friendly. We are avid beachcombers, searching for shards and pieces of ancient pottery dotting the beach among the variety of shells and rocks.

My one desire when moving here was to be involved with music. I helped form an all-women's band, playing together weekly for over two years now. I was thrilled that there were musical instruments and volunteer music teachers working with the children at the orphanage. What an opportunity for these children to learn to play an instrument. The joy on their faces as they perform is heart opening. Seeing these children smiling is our happiest moment here, living in Olón. -Annie Rikel, FOSMO Board Member

50/50 Raffle Surprise!

FOSMO held its first-ever 50/50 raffle this spring! Due to its HUGE success, FOSMO was able to purchase \$2000 worth of administrative and homework equipment for the offices at the orphanage. Now, the staff does not have to take a taxi to the local cyber café to print, laminate, or bind homework. This saves the orphanage lots of time and money to complete 60+ homework assignments each week!



Our little helper unpacking computers, printers, and so much more!

FOSMO CONNECTIONS

Please feel free to contact FOSMO with any questions, concerns, donations, or even if you would like a tour of the orphanage. A FOSMO board member would be happy to show you around.

Keep up to date with FOSMO!

E-Mail : fosmomail@gmail.com

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