



MCA Newsletter

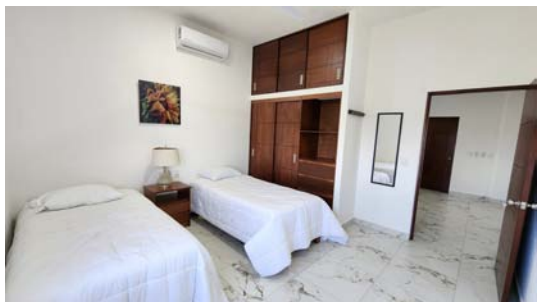
MCA Mexico's Canadian Angels First Year as a Registered Charity!

It was one year ago that we received confirmation of our CRA registered charity status. It has been an extremely busy and rewarding year for all of us! Please meet our MCA board - Stephen Verhoeff, Chris Weening, Jamie Nielsen, Barb Bremner. We have all had long standing relationships with Casa Connor & Pasitos de Luz and are excited about our work as the MCA board of directors. **Our sole focus** is working with Pasitos de Luz at Casa Connor and adding more children who can receive quality care and therapy allowing them to reach their potential & enjoy many successes. MCA provides Canadian tax deductible receipts for donations and we do not charge administrative fees.

We are committed to maintaining a close hands-on relationship including site visits; interacting with the children, director, staff, and families; examining facilities & equipment needs; strengthening donor engagement through communications, visits, volunteering and tours. This connection allows us to have a clearer understanding of the needs of the children and their families and the requirements for offering the best services. In the last few years, the Casa Connor facility has been greatly improved with the addition of the therapy pool completed in late 2020 and the dormitories in 2022. Many of you have been fundamental in their completion. Your contributions have made a significant difference!



Hydrotherapy is a vital addition for pain relief and mobility. The children attend regularly and, on Fridays, families with children on the waitlist are invited to bring their child. The children love the therapeutic qualities of the pool and the freedom of movement without pain.



The dormitories will soon provide accommodation opportunities for volunteers who do their service requirement helping the children at Casa Connor. The rooms may also be available for school or church groups who come from out of state or country to work with the kids.

MCA is thankful for the amazing Casa Connor facilities and equipment as we strive to meet our charitable activities focused on providing essential support for therapy, education and nutrition in a safe, supportive and accepting environment for the children & youth with disabilities to reach their potential.

Mateo Emmanuel and Eliseo



Do you remember Mateo from a previous newsletter? Mateo is blind and was a shy and frightened little boy when he came to Casa Connor at age 3. Mateo's progress has been remarkable, largely thanks to the mentoring given to him by Eliseo, our blind massage therapist. Eliseo has helped Mateo learn to walk with a walking stick and be more confident on his feet and navigate his surroundings. Over the past year, Mateo has also been getting sound therapy to help him identify different sounds - what they are and what they mean. Mateo is now 4 years old and has learned some braille and is actively participating in hydrotherapy.



Mateo received a battery operated keyboard at Christmas that he really enjoys. As a result, he was recently introduced to the piano at Casa Connor. Mateo was shown how to press the keys and his response shows a very calm and slow style. You can almost see him thinking. Here is a short video of Mateo playing notes - both powerful and touching. He has indicated he would like to take lessons. Perhaps he will be a great pianist! https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xGgyAHY_waQ

Eliseo is truly remarkable. In addition to his massage therapist role, there are 4 blind children and 1 partially blind child that he currently works with at Casa Connor helping them to become more independent. Bravo Eliseo!

Fall Fiesta & Matching Campaign

Save the Date!

November 4/2023



Mark your calendars! The annual fall **MEXICAN FIESTA in Calgary** is set to be held on November 4, 2023 with the **MATCHING DONATION CAMPAIGN** once again running at the same time. How can you help with the Fiesta?

- **INVITES:** Start thinking of friends and family members you can invite to attend the Fiesta and ask them to save the date.
- **VOLUNTEERS NEEDED:** Consider volunteering to help with technology, marketing, or decorating. General volunteers are appreciated as well.
- **AUCTION ITEMS:** If you are willing to donate items start thinking about it now. Donations are greatly appreciated.

Let's do all we can, working with Pasitos de Luz, to ensure the kids receive essential services & care at Casa Connor, Puerto Vallarta. We appreciate those who have supported the special needs children in the past and welcome everyone interested in helping to join in the fun! Contact Tanis at thereuters@shaw.ca if you are interested or need further information.

Please check MCA website for updates on the fiesta and matching campaign <https://mcangels.org/events/>

Meet Erica and Lori



Erica and Lori are two volunteers and supporters of MCA. They are committed to helping special needs children and have a soft spot for Casa Connor and the children who attend there. Both of them work with special needs kids at Emily Follensbee School in Calgary. Currently they are helping MCA to access a therapeutic exerciser for Casa Connor. The **Maribelle Exercise Assist System** or MEAS is designed for people with special needs and can be used with young children through to adulthood. They are handmade in Camrose, Alberta and are being used extensively in hospitals, physical therapy offices, schools, as well as home settings to assist individuals with movement disorders including cerebral palsy, hemiplegia, epilepsy, limited motor ability, cerebral cortical atrophy, and other conditions. Erica and Lori work with all the staff of Emily Follensbee School with many hands stepping up to help! From cookie sales to popcorn movie nights, together they raised \$1800 in just three months. Thank you EFS staff!

Erica and Lori are also working on a fun event with proceeds to MCA which, in turn, will all go to the MCA/Pasitos de Luz children who attend at Casa Connor in Mexico. The **Calgary Tower stair climb event will be held November 18**. Please consider **participating in the climb or sponsoring someone** who signs up to do the climb. Our goal is **100** participants. Please check our website for updates <https://mcangels.org/events/>. For more information on either of these projects please reach out to Erica ebrooks151@hotmail.com or Lori at loriclayton403@gmail.com.

Our Thanks and Appreciation

You have all been there for us! We can't express in words how much of a difference you make. Mateo is just one example of so many successes the children demonstrate daily. We invite you to go to Casa Connor and see the impact you have made through your support. If you are interested, please contact a board member to help facilitate a visit and tour or volunteering!

Maintaining a sufficient level of funds for long term planning remains a difficulty for us. We are constantly challenged due to many donations being received late in the year which leaves the upcoming year uncertain until almost year end. Can you make a longer term commitment to help us better plan? Simply contact any board member indicating that you are prepared to make a 5 year commitment of annual donations. It's difficult to add children with uncertainty if there will be funds the next year to keep them. We look forward to partnering with you for the future financial viability of our cause! For more information contact an MCA board member:

Chris - weenings@gmail.com Barb - condo211@yahoo.ca
 Jamie - jamie.home@outlook.com Stephen - stephen.verhoeff@gmail.com

Please know that your donations to MCA mean the world to the children and their families. Please help us change lives <https://mcangels.org/donate/>

Join the Calgary
Tower Stair
Climb Event!
November 18/23

