



What a wonderful and exciting day it was!! Even though it happened a little after the usual Christmas event, it was definitely a day for CELEBRATION! For the 4th year in a row, the Coronado Social Association (CSA) distributed Christmas Baskets to a record number of local San Carlos families with handicapped children and adults. The air of excitement and anticipation was evident as the families gathered at the home of Senora Maribel on the road to El Nance on Saturday, January 9, 2011. Although the program was scheduled to begin at 1:00, by noon many people had already arrived and waited patiently for the party to begin. They came by bus, taxi, private cars, and foot...and many of them had traveled a very long distance to get there. Promptly at 1:00, Santa's sleighs, driven by Louise, Rene, and Leslie, arrived laden down with the 60 bags literally packed full of non-perishable foods and goodies for the families. After a short presentation by Senora Maribel thanking the CSA for their contributions and a prayer from the local minister, the fun and excitement began as the bags were distributed to the waiting families. Just take a look at the faces in the pictures below and you see how grateful the families were for their gifts.

Certainly, as it is every year, one of the highlights of the afternoon was that each child who attended received a plush stuffed toy distributed by our own Molly who did a terrific job choosing just the right toy that would put the biggest smile on each one's face. And, an additional bonus this year: Louise Belisle gave each of the participants a copy of his or her photo from last year! What a joy for the child as well as the family! We take photos for granted; many of them do not have photos of their children.

A huge THANK YOU goes out to Senora Maribel, a well-known personality in the Sal Carlos area, who has opened her home and arranged for these families to attend the 'fiesta' for the last few years. And she has always welcomed and appreciated CSA's participation. In addition to arranging the party and the transportation for many of the families, she provided each family with a personal package of treats and fruits to take home.

Every year the CSA table at the Annual Arts and Crafts Fair is dedicated to raising funds for the Christmas Baskets. This year we had an extraordinary contribution of baked goods for the bake sale which was organized and expertly marketed by Maureen Osmand; a table full of our CSA Pelicans and Christmas Wreaths organized and produced by Bonnie Geise and friends; a Raffle of outstanding gifts from local businesses, and an extremely successful Silent Auction. In addition, a big THANK YOU goes out to all of those community members who made generous personal financial donations as well as extremely generous donations of supplies for the

Baskets..... You all made it possible to put smiles on the faces of these families!

You may also remember that one of the CSA projects in early 2010 was to acquire a wheelchair for a younger boy whom we had met last December at the Christmas party. With the very generous help of Mike and Shirley Maduro, we were able to deliver the wheelchair and make the young man's life and his family's life so much easier and enjoyable. He was at the party, and having a ball.

Please don't leave this page without taking a look at the pictures below! Many thanks to Rene Schafer and Margaret Green for recording this event for our readers.

{gallery}christmas_basket_jan2011{/gallery}