

# Casa De Luz

2022 Newsletter

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## A Message from the President

By Jack Nooren

Some amazing things are happening at Casa de Luz. We currently have 53 residents from all over the world. We recently had an influx of many LGBTQ Russian refugees, and we hosted a wedding for two of them: Sergei & Sergei. As the number of refugees at our home are consistently growing even though many are crossing weekly, we were in dire need of a bigger kitchen. Two weeks ago, we started construction on an outdoor kitchen. That will help us serve our houseguest better than our old kitchen. We also built a gazebo, so our guests are sheltered from the sun and rain and removed a section of concrete from a parking lot to start an organic garden.

All these projects take lots of resources. We are dealing with a significant shortfall and are hopeful that over the Christmas season we will find some generous donors that will help us replenish our savings so we can continue with our mission.

Anyone who contributes to Casa de Luz is also welcomed to come visit check out our program in our brand-new home. We are very proud of everything we've been able to accomplish and are very grateful to all our donors. Without your help we would not exist. Sending you peace and wishing you a happy holiday.

### WHAT'S IN THIS ISSUE

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SPECIAL THANK YOUS AND  
HOW TO GET INVOLVED!

[HTTP://WWW.CASADELUZ.COM](http://www.casadeluz.com)  
[CASADELUZSDCA@GMAIL.COM](mailto:CASADELUZSDCA@GMAIL.COM)



## Ribbon Cutting

On August 17th 2022, we saw the official grand opening of our new 23 bedroom and 6 bath building. Accompanied by board members Jack Nooren, Washington Nabong, and Naya Marie Velazco were journalist and photographer Big Mike Phillips, Casa Collectiva director Irving Mondragón and Theresa Picos who managed World Central Kitchen. We are happy to be at a place to call our own and through the generosity of donors like you and especially through the initial donation of Jack Nooren, we are in a safe, clean, and spacious home.

## Sponsor a Room and Light Up a LGBTQ Refugee's Life!



The rooms need names! Help us with our Adopt-A-Room fundraising. Foundation partners and donors tour our program on a regular basis. By sponsoring a room, you are showing the community and our guests that you are personally committed to providing support for Casa de Luz to our brothers and sisters! Visit the website or contact us for more details!

## WEDDING SEASON

### Sergei & Sergei



While Russia is at war with Ukraine and denying rights to our LGBTQ community, we are celebrating the love of two Russian men, who fled their nation so they could be together.

On October 18th, we hosted the wedding between two of our refugees, Sergei & Sergei, two gay men seeking asylum 🕊️ Because they are unable to marry in Russia, they waited until they arrived at Casa de Luz. We are excited to celebrate LOVE in our new location and we wish them forever love and peace. Love wins!!!!

### Mick & Aaron

Board member Mick Frasca recently got married on September 17<sup>th</sup>, 2022 and to celebrate the joyous occasion, he spread the love by asking his guests to donate to Casa De Luz! The two said I do in sunny San Diego, CA amongst the love of family and friends who continued that loving sentiment by charitably donating to Casa.



## Pool Party Success!



Thank you to all who attended our second annual Casa de Luz Pride Pool Party fundraiser. Special thanks to our cabana sponsors, Armstrong & Associates, Manspa, Rich's San Diego, Sandy Bloomberg with Suja and Rowdy; our table sponsors Adam Clark, Alexander Salazar, and Tan Carlin; belly table sponsors Dr. Michael Albo, Markus Zaugg with Studio Europa, Dr. Gaynier with Upgrade Chiropractic, Patrick Mercer, and Mistr; ticket handler and wardrobe expertise Sir & Sons; the members of the board, their friends, and their family in helping set up and tear down; and last but not least, Jack Nooren for the beautiful venue, the logistics, and everything in between!

## Crest Café's 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Divines Casa de Luz with a Donation!

Crest Café, located at 425 Robinson Ave, San Diego, CA 92103 in the gayborhood of Hillcrest, celebrated its 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary on September 27<sup>th</sup> 2022. The iconic restaurant previously featured on Diners, Drive-Ins, and Dives shared its success by donating 20% of its anniversary week's sales to Casa!



## We are Graced by Nicole Murray Ramirez's Presence and a Donation by the International Imperial Court Council



On November 22, 2022, we were generously given a large donation by the International Imperial Court Council presented by the Queen Mother of the Americas' Nicole Murray Ramirez.

# Support Us!

We thank you if you've supported us in the past, but we continue to seek your support for our ongoing operations, and if you haven't had the chance to help us out yet, there are plenty of ways to get involved! We always accept donations through PayPal giving (search "casa de luz sd"), PayPal, Venmo (@Casa-deLuz-2), or checks sent to us.

We are also currently doing a sponsor a room and Light Up An LGBTQ+ Refugee's Life. More details can be emailed to you directly, or if you want, check out our website under the "support us" section for more details!

Join us on Thursday December 15, 2022, from 4-7pm at Casa de Luz. We will be serving a dinner with international dishes at 5:30pm with champagne. This meeting is open to the public that wants to support us as well as board members as well as all the refugees. Please reach out to us for more details!

Additionally, for those seeking to visit the location, reach out to a one of us to make it happen and you will see all the heart and good that is involved in the cause.

Once again, we thank you for everything you do to help support a worthy cause, whether through directly or even just passing on the news of our mission statement and good work!

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President:  
Jack Nooren

Secretary:  
Benny Cartwright

Treasurer:  
Tan Carlin

Members:  
Michael Albo  
Markus Zaugg  
Byron Ross  
J. Alex Tiscareno  
Ed Parsley  
Washington Nabong  
Mick Frasca  
Naya Marie Velazco  
Sabrina Prijatel  
Enrique Medina

**CASA DE LUZ SD** is a 501(c)3 (EIN #:86-2469077) sister organization of Casa de Luz TJ a collective house open to LGBTQ+ refugees who left their home country in search of a better life. Casa de Luz SD raises money for Casa de Luz TJ so they can offer a safe haven for people who lived in fear of persecution because of their sexual orientation or gender identification.

Trans, lesbian, gay & bisexual people are fleeing from all over the world to escape "epidemic levels of violence" and threats by criminal gangs and security forces. Over 2,900 were killed in the past 5 years just in Central America.

These are the most vulnerable refugees entering the US.