

The Inn of Southern Arizona Fall Newsletter



Introducing our New Board Chair!

A Little About John Gardner



John grew up in Columbus, Ohio, far from the vibrant Frontera that would eventually give his life a new purpose. Moving to Tucson in 2011 for work, he immediately fell in love with the community and, as an adult, finished his bachelor's degree in Spanish and Communication at the University of Arizona.

After reading "The Devil's Highway" by Carlos Alberto Urrea, John became interested in the situation at the border, so when his Spanish professor suggested he volunteer with The Inn2, he jumped at the chance. In October, 2018, he made up a third of the "Saturday Night Crew" that included newly elected vice chair, Linda Myers, and her husband, Art. Hearing the stories of the guests, seeing their smiles when they encountered kindnesses they hadn't experienced in a long time, and especially, while coloring and teaching English to the kids, John found he was incredibly fulfilled.

Early in 2021, John joined the Inn board and was elected as board secretary; he has been pivotal in creating employee and staff protocols and documents.

Aside from his non-profit work with the Inn and the local NPR affiliate in Tucson, John is a social media manager for a communications company, overseeing teams in Arizona and Mexico City.

He and his partner, Lucas, an immigration attorney, enjoy traveling and experiencing new cultures, Tucson's under-appreciated craft beer and restaurant scene, studying languages, enjoying the beauty of the Southwest, and hanging out with their two hounds and small flock of pet chickens.

Humbled by this new opportunity, John hopes to continue the Inn's legacy of love for our neighbors with the support of his friend, mentor, and former Chair, Diane Everhart.

John welcomes any questions or comments at: jgardner@theinnofsa.org

Words From Outgoing Chair Diane



To our steadfast and valued volunteers, donors, and friend,
For the past two years, I have been your board chair for The Inn of Southern Arizona (The Inn). I'd like to personally thank each of you for supporting The Inn with your time, donations, and prayers. During my time as chair, we have officially become a non-profit, 501(c)(3), and have secured a few grants to supplement your generous donations. Perhaps more importantly, we have weathered the changes needed to navigate COVID, and been able to serve greater numbers of guests in a non-congregant setting while providing a safe, warm, and caring environment.
As I pass the position of board chair to John Gardner, I would like to express deep gratitude for the opportunity to help guide and support The Inn. Please continue to support The Inn as you have in its valuable mission.

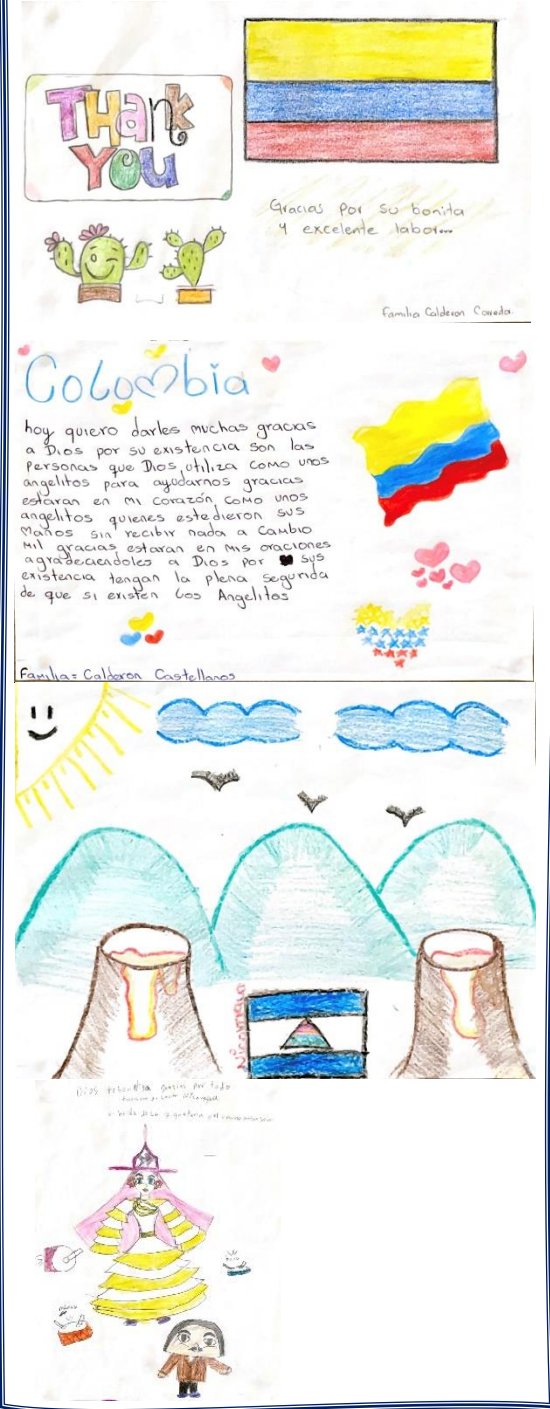
Sincerely,
Diane Everhart

A Message from Our Director



First, I would like to extend a huge THANK YOU to all volunteers, donors and board members who have stayed committed and flexible through times of change. Only with this support have we been able to receive and support over 23,000 individuals seeking asylum since opening our doors in December of 2016. The Inn of Southern Arizona is now officially a sub-awardee of Pima County and has moved to a new hotel location, operating 40 rooms. This has afforded more opportunities for support and better access to FEMA funding. When families and guests arrive, they are provided hygiene kits, snack bags, and room assignments. When families and guests arrive, they are provided hygiene kits and a welcome snack bag, we then assign rooms. Guests can come to our office for other needed items such as clothing and items for their children. This is a wonderful time for volunteers to provide support and have time with the guests. Meals are delivered to guest's rooms three times daily. Please reach out if you have any questions about volunteering. We would love to get you connected! In one shift at The Inn, you have the opportunity to make a huge impact proving radical hospitality and welcome to asylum seekers.

I would like to share some notes and drawings that have been left for us as families departed...



Welcoming New Staff!

Border Referral Specialist:



Hello, my name is Mariana Marchu, the new Border Referral Specialist at the Inn of Southern Arizona. I am originally from Mexicali, Mexico. I have been living here in Tucson since August 2019. I am a dog mom to my fur baby Andy. Working at The Inn has fulfilled my desire to help others. It allows me to combine my professional skills and my personal interests. I became interested in immigration after my own personal experience as an immigrant.

My passion to help others became my mission and career.

Beloved In the Desert Volunteer:



Hi there, my name is Jeremy Wickboldt. I am the newest long-term volunteer here at the Inn. I am part of the Beloved in the Desert episcopal service corps program run through the local church, Saint Philips in the Hills. I moved here in July after recently graduating from the University of Portland with a degree in Marketing and am still getting used to the heat. I grew up in California making me a massive golf nut that has poured too much time and money into it, (Not that my game reflects any of that). I am excited to serve my ten months here with the Inn of Southern Arizona as I learn more about the issues concerning the border.

I am not related to that bee.

What an Experience!

A volunteer's story by Linda Myers

Last Spring, I volunteered twelve times as an airport driver for The Inn of Southern Arizona. When I got a call that a family needed a ride from The Inn to the airport, I drove from my house to The Inn to pick up the family. I took them to the airport, helped them get boarding passes, took them through security and, sometimes, waited at the gate until they boarded their plane. I used Google Translate to supplement my very limited Spanish. People always thanked me as though I was the person responsible for their upcoming new lives. All I'd done was give them a ride.

One day I picked up Priscilla and her husband and son. They were from Brazil, so they spoke Portuguese. I made a hasty language change on Google Translate. Not too far off from Spanish, I thought. But it was awkward going. I tried to speak slow and simple Spanish instead. Fortunately, Priscilla could usually understand me, or she spoke slow Portuguese back to me. When we got to the gate, we had some time to wait, and Priscilla told her story as we sat side by side with our masks on. She said her mom had died nine years ago, and they had left the rest of their family behind to come to the US. Tears filled her eyes as she grieved the losses even as she hoped for better times ahead. I said, "I do not have your sadness, but my heart hears your heart." She rested her head on my shoulder.

When it was time for the family to board, Priscilla asked me to give her my email address and phone number so she could let me know when they arrived safely at their destination. I did. I said, "I am Airport Linda". And she said, "I am Airport Priscilla." Her husband took a picture of us.

A couple of weeks ago I got a text message with the picture of us. Her message said, "Hi, Linda. I am Airport Priscilla. Do you remember? We are safe here now." I said, "Of course I remember you!"



In Memoriam

A Tribute to a Beloved Friend



Chef Roy, our amazing maker of delicious food for the Inn passed away suddenly on July 29th and we are heartbroken. Roy was generous beyond words, always ready to jump in at a moment's notice to help anyone in need. He made sure that the food he prepared was familiar to our family's countries of origin, providing that extra layer of care and comfort. And when we began to receive families from very different parts of the world, he was immediately finding recipes to make them feel at home as well.

Holidays were especially important to Roy. With the help of his dear husband of 41 years, Pastor Rolly Loomis, one of the Inn's founders and a current board member, they provided feasts for our guests, covering all expenses and making sure not only the food, but the décor and presentation, was perfect.

When Covid began and we had to move out of our congregate setting to a hotel, Roy went into full gear with his team of volunteers, providing over 20,000, individually packaged and labeled meals (and a freezer to store them in), never compromising the high quality and standards he set. Nothing was too good for our guests!

So, as we continue in Roy's passion for walking in solidarity with all of those needing a helping hand, a quote from Pastor Rolly...

"He fed people from all walks of life, encouraging folks to gather at the table to share a meal and be in fellowship together. Roy was full of laughter and joy."

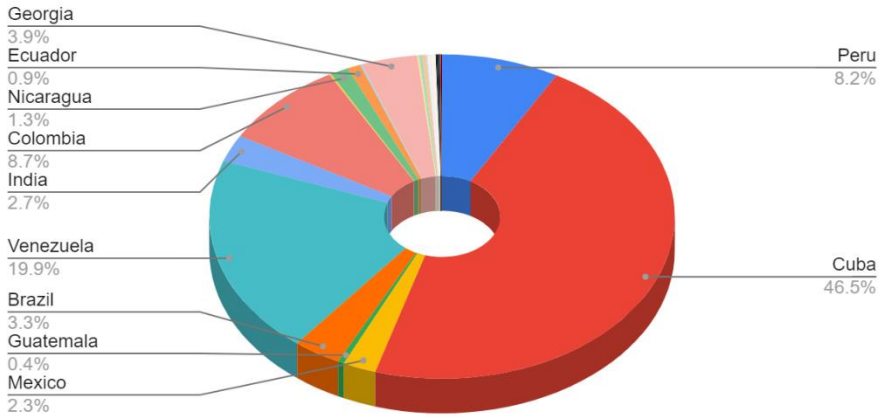


In loving Memory

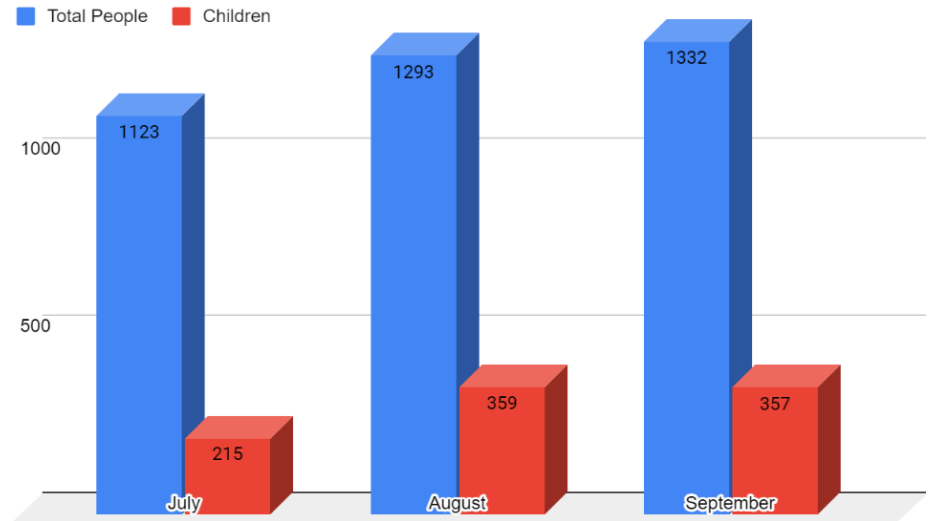
Data Breakdown

A look at where everyone comes from

July, August, and September



Total People and Children



Countries that made up less than 0.4 % of the total and are not labeled includes: Honduras, Romania, Belarus, Nepal, Hati, Gambia, Pakistan, Argentina, Albania, Afghanistan, Senegal, Portugal, Chile, Bolivia, and Panama

Ways to Give

Amazon Wish

List: https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/JLTPU1XKDHNO?ref =wl_sh
[are](#)

Items purchased from this list will be mailed directly to us.

Monetary donations can be made at: <https://dscumc.org/secure/ip-donation/>

For more information, please visit www.theinnofsa.org

Most Needed Items:

- Men's bottoms
 - Joggers
 - Shorts
 - Sweatpants
 - Jeans
 - Khakis
- Backpacks

*Please make sure donated items are not damaged with tears, rips, or stains.

*All donations can be dropped off Monday through Thursday between the hours of 10am to 2pm at First United Methodist Church here in Tucson.

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The Inn (La Posada) of Southern Arizona
PO Box 43332 Tucson 85719

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