



PML Summer Update July, 2021

On June 27, about 25 PML supporters came to our **Summer Gathering at Como Park** for a short program, fellowship and refreshments. Presentations by Elizabeth Moreira, our Director, and Sheila Cook Sanchez, our newest board member, touched on:

- updates on the communities of San Carlos and La Gallina
- recent developments in Nicaraguan politics and the pandemic
- daily life in Nicaragua today (Sheila lives in both Nicaragua and Minnesota with her Nicaraguan husband and their son)



Board president Ralph Baumgartner at the check-in table



Longtime members Ruth Olson and Marion McNurlen chat

One exciting news item is the fact that **42 households have participated in a loan program** sponsored by PML to borrow \$50-\$150 each to develop home-based business initiatives to increase family income. **All loans from the first round were paid back on time!** This program has been so successful in La Gallina that a new round of loans is being funded from the revolving fund.

According to Rosa, **“The PML model is successful because through reflection and sharing, participants feel united. They are borrowing from the community, not a faceless institution.**

For them, this is a deep experience, not just a project. The engagement doesn't stop at getting a loan or taking a course. Money generated is more than an income, it represents a life-style change. Residents learn

how to use resources – “Do I buy a TV with my profits or re-invest in the business?” “How much is my product worth after labor and raw materials?”

In San Carlos, the **pizza business organized and run by teens has been a big success**. It has become a local hot spot on weekends. The student workers have bought new chairs and tables with proceeds and hope to use future profits for school expenses. The menu was expanded to include noodles and hot dogs!

Thank you to our PML friends for all the contributions we received at the Summer Gathering. If you were unable to participate, please consider sending a mid-year donation to support the great work of Director of Community Development Rosa and intern Gabriela. **You can send your donations by mail to Project Minnesota/Leon, c/o Deborah Allan, 1575 Merrill St., St Paul, MN 55108 OR you can donate through Network for Good [here](#).**



Board member Jean Lubke and former board president Kara Beckman with friends



Board member Carolyn Liebler hands out the balloon decorations to kids at Como Park after the event