

Escapees Chapter 8 RV Club

LA CONEXIÓN **MEXICANA**



Spring 2012

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Number 1

In this issue:

Message from the President	2
Wagonmaster 2013 Report	3
Elected and Appointed Board Members.	5
Thank you from Marlene & Frank Hinman.	5
Message from Susie & Denny Orr	5
Hola from Membership	6
2012 Puerto Peñasco Charity Committee Report	7
Photo collages of Charity work	9
Letters from Rally Attendees	
Genny Edge.	12
Kyra Bronson.	12
Sharon Duncan	13
Jan & Ed Biller	14
Carnaval Photos from Lin & Maryke Hines	15



MENSAJE de los PRESIDENTE

Message from President Dannie Dolan

Our Rally to Puerto Peñasco was a great trip. Organ Pipe National Monument was a great place to hold our pre-Rally. We had plenty of hiking trails and some wonderful views of the area, and a meal of Indian Tacos.

In Puerto Peñasco we enjoyed city tours, fishing trips, trips to Bird Island, El Pinacate tours, a sunset cruise and some great catered meals.

We collected \$5,000.00 to be used for helping the people in Mexico. The Charity committee did a great job in finding the places that could use it the most. Thank you to all the people who donated items and to all the people who sent money with their applications. Thanks to Don Hankins and Charlie Boles for doing a great job as auctioneers. They helped raise a lot of money at the auction, and thank you to all the people that bid on items at the silent auction.

The people that attended the Rally, left with a new place to come in Mexico and some great memories and some new friends.

Next year will be a great trip going to San Felipe on the California Baja side. Our Wagonmaster, Charlie Boles, is checking things out and will be able to let us know about the details in this newsletter.

We have added some new faces to the open board positions. We want to thank them for volunteering. The Mexican Connection will not survive unless people volunteer to do the work. Our Chapter is about helping people understand what it takes to go into Mexico and helping people after we get there. We still have a couple open positions that need to be filled. One is Wagonmaster for 2014 and another one is Wagonmaster for 2015. If we do not get help in these positions Chapter 8 will fade away. So please think about how you can help the Mexican Connection keep going to Mexico with some great Rallies.

Thank you to our VCR's, Frank and Marlene Hinman, who came and helped us with the rally. Thank you to Randy, my brother, for the great job he did with his parking crew to get us set up at Playa de Oro with only minor hitches. Thank you to the other volunteers for passing out drinks at our meals, putting out pastries and fruit in the mornings. They helped to made it a good time for all.

Wishing you the best in all your travels and hope to see everyone next year at the rally in San Felipe.

Thank You Everyone Dannie & Beverly Dolan



Wagonmaster 2013 Report

By: Charlie and Dawn Boles

ESCAPEES CHAPTER 8, MEXICAN CONNECTION

SAN FELIPE BOUND

FEB 1 -14 , 2013

Pete's Camp
Boondocking
Campsites on Sea
of Cortez

Restaurant, Bar, Dump, Water, Ramadas, Tiolets, \$2 Showers

120 MILES SOUTH OF OUR BORDER LIES PARADISE

The front door to the Sea of Cortez the remote desert city of San Felipe, Baja, Mexico



The 2013 San Felipe rally will be held during Carnival (Mexican Mardi Gras). Sun, Sand, Sea shells, Fishing, Kayaking, Off Road Adventures , Golf, The Valley Of the Giant Cardon Cactus, Puertecetus Hot Springs, Ultralight Aircraft Rides and walks on the tidal flats. San Felipe's Malecon is a treasure and its restaurants are a gourmets delight .

San Felipe Official Website <http://sanfelipe.com.mx/>

Blueroadrunner <http://www.blueroadrunner.com/aboutsf.htm>

PBS Video: "Crossing South", San Felipe and Tecate <http://video.kpbs.org/video/2193971862>

Pete's Camp <http://petescamp.com/camping-info/>

Eldorado Ranch <http://www.eldoradoranch.com>

Wikipedia http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/San_Felipe,_Baja_California

SAN FELIPE



The Malecon



Looking North
To San Felipe

Funcionarios de Capítulo 8

Chapter 8 Elected Officers

President

Dannie Dolan

Dolanwagonmaster2012@yahoo.com

1st Vice President

Charlie & Dawn Boles

wagonmaster2013@gmail.com

2nd Vice President

3rd Vice President

Secretary

Joy Melton

rvjmelton@aol.com

Treasurer

Steve Bufty

stevebufty@yahoo.com

Immediate Past President

Cynthia Ponder

pondermexico@gmail.com

Appointed Officers

Membership Chairman

Kyra Bronson

kyrabonson@yahoo.com

Co-Webmaster

Don Busick

don9773@sbcglobal.net

Co-Webmaster

Gerald Arends

arendsgl@gmail.com

Historian

Dona Martinsen

dnd2mex@gmail.com

Newsletter Editor

Jan Biller

chapter8.newsletter@yahoo.com

Marlene and I enjoyed the Chapters hospitality and appreciated the opportunity to participate in the activities of Chapter 8 at a level not usually done by VCRs. We thank ya'll for the fine time and the excellent Mexican experience.

SKP HUGS,
VCR Frank & Marlene Hinman #70866



Hi Folks ,

The Quartzsite Happy Hour and @ rallies were a blast! The AZ winter at North Ranch has been mild and enjoyable. It is just about time to get ready for spring travels and adventures. We will be going to the WARE Rally in Lodi, CA April 15,. At the same time SKP ACRE will be in full swing in Marion, NC. Both rallies will be terrific - fun packed rallies - and "Yes, you're welcome at either rally".

Staying close to home --- there is always an Escapees Rally nearby. Check the magazine and then the websites for dates and locations. Enjoy your seasons of travel.....

SKP Hugs Susie & Denny Orr

Hola from Membership



Hello from your new Membership Coordinator!

As a new member of Mexican Connection Chapter 8, I so was impressed with the dedication and organization of the chapter volunteers, and I had learned so much on the Puerto Peñasco Rally that I wanted to give back, so I volunteered for the membership position. I'm honored to be filling this role for the chapter.

Since our chapter only has one official meeting per year at the rally, we now have a Facebook group page to help us keep in touch throughout the year. If you are on Facebook, please join the group at <http://www.facebook.com/groups/114696398659373/>. This is a 'closed' group to protect our members' privacy. I encourage all members to post your Mexico pictures, adventure recaps, questions, etc on the group Facebook page.

Is your membership current? PayPal makes it easy to pay your dues, which are only \$6.00 per year. All memberships expire on April 30th of each year. Some of you have paid several years in advance, and others have set up recurring payment through PayPal. For the rest of you, dues are due April 1st. Please use <http://www.mc8renew.com/> to pay via PayPal, or complete the form below. If you have any questions about your membership, please send me an email. kyrabronson@yahoo.com.

Please remember to forward your Chapter 8 Newsletter to all your friends and family who might be interested in joining our chapter.

ESCAPEES CHAPTER 8 MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Annual Membership period is from May 1st to April 30st

This chapter was organized in 1985 for the purpose of:

- Introducing Escapee Chapter 8 Mexican Connection members to RV travel in Mexico, its scenery, traditions, food, culture and folklore
- Traveling south of the border and giving back more than the enriching experiences we gain, through charity donations and business patronization
- Enabling Chapter 8 members to feel comfortable to return to Mexico for future rallies, as well as their own road trip adventures.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION BY CHECK

You must be an ESCAPEE Member to join. SKP # _____

Name(s): _____

Mailing Address: _____

PRIMARY PHONE NUMBER _____ Email Address _____

Annual Membership to Join/Renew \$6.00

Make checks payable on a US Bank to "Mexican Connection Chapter 8".

Mail application and check to:

Kyra Bronson
143 Rainbow Dr. #4376
Livingston, TX 77399

Membership questions? E-mail the Membership Chairmen at KyraBronson@yahoo.com

2012 Puerto Peñasco Charity Committee Report

By Lin & Maryke Hines



2012 RALLY ATTENDEES' AMAZING GENEROSITY MUCH APPRECIATED!

Our 2012 Ch. 8 Rally to Puerto Peñasco participants contributed over \$5000 US as well as amazing quantities of in-kind goods that were distributed to great appreciation in Puerto Peñasco! The Charity Committee thanks everyone for their interest and great support of Chapter 8's traditional Charity efforts in Mexico! The 2012 Charity funds came from 3 sources: Charity \$ carried over from 2011 and \$ contributed with 2012 Rally registrations, a hugely successful Live Auction (\$2342) and a good Silent Auction (\$700). As RVers, Escapees and North Americans, we will all be positively remembered in Puerto Peñasco for years to come!

The 2012 Charity Committee consisted of Lin and Maryke Hines as co-chairs, Treasurer's Rep--Donna Patton, President—Cynthia Ponder, President's Rep—Jan Biller, Genny Edge, Jane Gerber and Sharon Duncan. We started with a small list of worthy organizations from the Wagonmaster, Danny Dolan plus Internet research and soon discovered that even though tourism in Puerto Peñasco is down, it still is a well-to-do town with a lot of North American residents and local businesses that try to support their charitable groups. Some charities have lots of support including donor networks in Phoenix and Tucson that come down regularly while others have little or no support and needed help badly. The Committee visited six institutions and prioritized their needs vs their current support levels. Two of those six stood out as far needier than the others as the Committee's recommendations reflected. Following is a summary of each of the organizations that were considered and the Charity Committee's U.S. dollar recommendations and final dollars approved at the General Meeting.

1. ESPERANZA PARA LOS NINOS

This is a boarding school for children unable to live with their parents because of alcohol or drug problems, divorce, sickness or poverty at home. It is NOT an orphanage. Esperanza is a private non-profit visibly well supported by businesses and people in Peñasco, plus a network of contributors in the U.S. (Tucson), who make monthly trips to make repairs, bring food, clothing and supplies. The 36 children, of different ages, come from as far as Hermosillo, Caborca, Ensenada and are bussed daily to local public schools here in Peñasco. The Director and his wife seem very sincere in their work, but are honest to say their only day to day need is food supplies, especially fresh food.

The Charity Committee recommends purchase of a Bodega Aurrera (Walmart) gift card for \$250 to present to them for the purchase of fresh food. This is a valuable institution, but not as needy as others.

On 2/20/2012 Randy Dolan drove Lin and Maryke to Esperanza and we presented Guillermo Zapata, the Director, the \$250 gift card.

2. CASA HOGAR JOSE DAVALOS VALDIVIA

This is an old age home run by Franciscan nuns with no Government funding and the residents, except 4, are unable to pay anything for their care. There are 48 residents with the youngest in their 80's and the oldest is 98. Most have no families. Many are in wheelchairs or have other degenerative diseases. They come from all over Northern Sonora and Baja. This home is spotless, very colorful and the residents are very well cared for. The most desperate need here and their request is to pay their electric bill which is 7900 pesos (approx. \$630) for January 2012. On 2/17 we brought them several boxes and bags with adult clothing, personal care items etc. which was very much appreciated.

The Charity Committee recommends a cash payment of \$1000 (12,200 pesos equivalent) to CFE (the Federal Government electricity provider) to pay their January bill and a big part of the February bill.

On 2/22/2012 Ruben Rodriguez, Casa Hogar Presidente drove Lin and Maryke to the CFE office to pay the bill with 12,200 pesos. That paid the January 7901 peso bill and gave a credit of 4300 pesos on the next bill. Ruben and the nuns are very happy and relieved.

3. ESCUELA DE LA MONTANA

Escuela de la Montaña is a Mexican Federal Government school for Handicapped Children, but the Government only provides the building, pays for water and electricity, the teacher's salaries and very sparse breakfast ingredients. They take care of 102 children from 4 years to 22 years with mild to severe mental illness, paralysis, ADD, autism and other handicaps. They teach from preschool until about 5th grade, the intellectual level of the older kids. The older kids also learn how to cook, and help with breakfast (the only meal provided). They make pizza and other special dishes and sell those. They also make beautiful piñatas, which are sold as fundraisers, which is also very good for hand-eye coordination. Kids are picked up early in the morning in the school van and go home around 12:30 PM. The teachers all have teaching credentials, most special education-oriented, plus one school psychologist. Their

needs are great! The kitchen lacks big pots and pans, a large refrigerator, and only a few days of breakfast stuff is in stock. There is only one walker for the children (they need four). The teachers buy almost everything they use in the classroom; they even pay for the school telephone! The entire staff is gentle and loving with the kids and everyone was very welcoming to us. We visited again on 2/17 with a pickup full of Chapter 8's donated kid's clothing, school supplies, toys, books, stuffed animals, toothbrushes and toothpaste and the staff and kids gave our Charity Committee group a very warm welcome and proudly showed off the premises.

The Charity Committee recommends a cash donation of \$1500 US. If approved, 2 or 3 persons from the school would accompany us on Monday 2/20 to Bodega Aurrera and Numeros, a similar store, to buy a refrigerator (approx.\$400), pots and pans, kitchen utensils & teacher and school supplies for the classroom. This is the most deserving institution we found in our search! At the General Meeting, Ch. 8 members moved to increase this donation to \$2000 US because of its more pressing needs, which was approved. On 2/20 Russ Black drove his large van on our "\$2000 shopping spree" for Escuela Montaña with Lin and Maryke, the school Asst. Director, Physical Therapist and Kitchen Supervisor. The Escuela staff had shopping lists and made all the selections for goods they really needed. We bought a nice floor model refrigerator and a blender for the kitchen and 4 CD players for classrooms at Bodega Aurrera. We purchased 2-5 gal buckets of gloss white paint to repaint the kitchen. At El Libro paper store, we got lots of paper products & paints for crafts projects and piñata supplies. At Numeros Dept. Store a huge amount of classroom supplies, coloring books, large jigsaw puzzles glue, kitchen pots & utensils, mops, brooms, Pinesol & much more. We returned to the school with an overflowing van and \$10 which was given with our personal funds to purchase hay for horses that the children ride twice a week for physical therapy! The whole school staff turned out in great excitement to carry everything in and everyone was ecstatic! Russ will check the school's needs occasionally and get them continued help. We all got many hugs when leaving---a wonderful experience!

4. CEDO (Center for Education of Deserts and Oceans)

84 of our Chapter 8 group visited CEDO, on the City Tour with Russ Black. As most of us learned, CEDO is a Mexican non-profit affiliated with the University of Arizona, Tucson operating an interesting education center here in Puerto Peñasco for visitors as well as all the 5th grade students in Puerto Peñasco and San Felipe (on the Baja side of the Sea of Cortez) schools to teach respect for the environment. CEDO also is an active research station studying the overfishing in the Sea of Cortez. They are a lead agency in the recovery program for the endangered *Vaquita Marina* or Gulf of California Harbor Porpoise. This group hosted us on their tour with enthusiasm and deserves our support. This recommendation to support a conservation organization sets a Chapter 8 precedent which we feel is very important--to educate Mexican children in the importance of the oceans, their protection and conservation of the ocean wildlife.

The Charity Committee recommends a \$500 donation for help expand their excellent education program.

On 2/19, Russ Black drove us to CEDO to present the \$500 check to the Asst. Director and the CEDO intern who guided our tours. They were very happy that our group voted to support them and were very appreciative!

5. ST. VINCENT DE PAUL--PUERTO PENASCO

On 2/17 Ken Olson drove Lin and Maryke to the St. Vincent de Paul Thrift Store to donate all the miscellaneous charity items donated that we were unable to use in either the live auction or silent auction or were not useful for the other charities we visited. Besides their thrift store, this organization also provides food boxes to 180 people, operates a soup kitchen for the needy, gives away clothing and household goods to needy people and provides medical assistance and prescriptions for the truly indigent, which the Government does not cover. One of the Directors is a building contractor and he built their building as well as building houses for needy families. They are located in Colonia Nueva on the other side of Hwy. 8 and north of Bodega Aurrera, Peñasco's very poorest part.

The Charity Committee recommends a \$500 cash donation to this worthwhile non-profit.

On 2/19/2012 we brought the \$500 check to this organization which was very happily received by Laura Sanchez Eduardo, Director. We also found & personally purchased 2 children's-sized walkers for \$10 US which we delivered to Escuela de la Montaña and was immediately put in use by a little girl who is paralyzed waist down and has not had a walker before---everyone was thrilled!

6. AMERICAN LEGION POST MX 15--PUERTO PENASCO

The American Legion Post in Peñasco is just 3 blocks from Playa de Oro RV Park. Many of us took advantage of their "free margarita coupons" which they gave to our whole group or had breakfast there. This U.S. Veteran's Group has an active charity program providing meals to needy people. They deliver food to over 20 families each week which they would like to expand and 100% of all donations go to the poor of Puerto Peñasco.

The Charity Committee recommends a \$250 cash donation to help support their worthwhile activities. They gave to us, let's give to them so they can give to those much less fortunate.

On 2/19/2012 we brought the \$250 check to the American Legion which was received with much gratitude!

7. ESCAPEES CARE—LIVINGSTON, TEXAS

It is a Chapter 8 tradition to annually support Escapees CARE in Livingston at each rally in Mexico.

The Charity Committee recommends that CARE receive \$1000 earning another CARE patch on our Chapter 8 flag.

The Ch. 8 Treasurer will forward this \$1000 check to CARE.

8. LION'S CLUB –PUERTO PENASCO—IN-KIND ITEMS ONLY

We contributed a nearly full large paper grocery bag of eyeglasses and one hearing aid, all donated by our Rally attendees to the Lion's Club of Puerto Peñasco. The Lion's Club reconditions the glasses and determines the prescription so they can be given to needy patients. On 2/16 the Committee attempted to find the listed drop-off address for nearly 20 minutes asking several stores and hotels with no results. Russ Black knows the Lion's Club President and will deliver for us.

>>THANKS! The 2012 Charity Committee also thanks the many Ch. 8 folks that assisted the Charity Committee by driving us to visit charity organizations, our super Live Auctioneers Don Hankins and Charlie Boles, runners, recorder Joy Melton and helpers in setting up the auctions, making signs, using the megaphone to alert the campground to our auctions, all our helpers in the Silent Auction and the Chapter 8 Officers especially Danny Dolan, Ed and Jan Biller and Steve Bufty plus Randy Dolan for all their help. Many thanks also to Russ Black, our tour guide, for volunteering his help and his van driving us to charities and hauling goods on the Escuela de la Montaña shopping trip! Service on the Charity Committee

this year was very heartwarming!

Respectfully submitted,
Lin and Maryke Hines --
Co-Chairs --SKP #70910



Look at the difference in the classrooms of the Esperanza Children's Home (left) and the sparse room at the Escuela de la Montaña! (above)



The kids were happy playing with puzzles and we got them more!



This boy in wheelchair loved seeing his picture!



Pantry with breakfast for a few days!



Loading up the in-kind donations for the Escuela de la Montaña!





The Old Folks Home Jose Davalos and Charity Committee members deliberating on the outside patio



<<Paying the bill at CFE
A very welcome check at CEDO>>

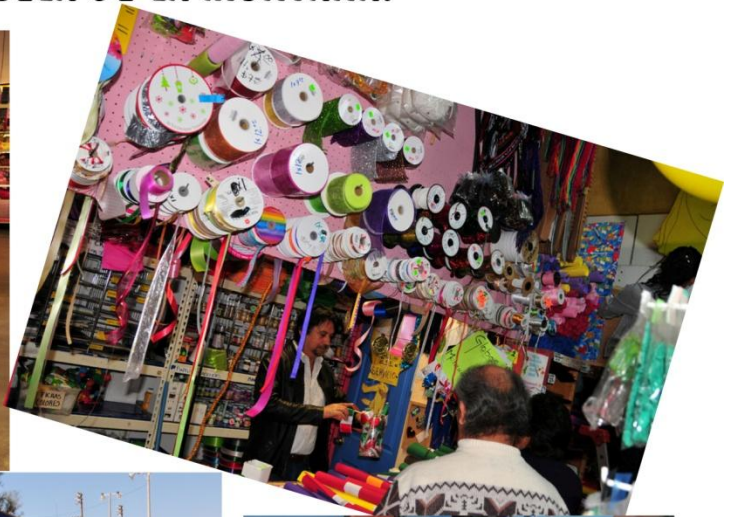


The very popular
Silent and Live Auctions!
"Going once....Going twice...!!!"



Photos by Lin Hines

SHOPPING SPREE FOR ESCUELA DE LA MONTANA!



Loving the NEW refrigerator!



Un hombre fuerte!



A very happy little girl can walk now!



A happy group of teachers and the Charity Committee Co-Chairs



Letters from Rally Attendees

I thoroughly enjoyed the 2012 MC8 rally to Puerto Peñasco. Kudos to all who had a part in planning and leading this fun caravan to the beach of the Sea of Cortez. It was my first experience with Escapees and it was so easy - it was like falling off a log. The most excellent communication and directions by Danny and Beverly Dolan and Ed and Jan Biller led me to Organ Pipe park where I first met other Escapee members. It wasn't long before I had a whole bunch of new friends and a wide choice of activities followed, including time to just vege. It's pretty amazing how there was so much on the slate, and yet no pressure to do anything other than just what I wanted. I most of all enjoyed the work of the charity committee and was grateful to be allowed to go along and help with those very worthy and gratifying efforts. Extra kudos to Maryke and Lin Hines for their tireless work toward seeing that the chapter gave all that we could in a very fun and entertaining way. I'm so glad I got to go! Genny Edge



“Moon over México” by: Genny Edge 2012 Organ

My husband and I have been to Mexico many times. We've flown in, cruised in, and walked in, but we had never driven in. I can't remember now why that felt so daunting, but we were terrified to drive across the border. If only we could find a group to lead us across and show us the ropes... When we saw the description for the Mexican Connection Rally in Escapees Magazine, we signed up right away.

The informational emails we received made it so easy to get our Mexican driving insurance and plan our trip. The pre-rally at Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument allowed us to start to get to know the other members, meet our caravan group, and get our visas. The drive across the border and into Mexico on the first day of the rally was flawless. So easy! We were in the park in Puerto Peñasco, set up, and on the beach by noon.

The Wagonmaster had put together so many optional tours and activities; we couldn't have been bored if we tried. Being full-timers, we don't usually spend such a short time (the rally was 11 days) in new places, but we had other plans back in the states, and had squeezed this trip in. We considered it a reconnaissance trip for us, to see if we wanted to go further into Mexico. We were sad to be leaving on the last day, while watching our new friends make plans for travel to other areas in Mexico. We decided we definitely need to schedule several months for our own Mexico exploration, and thanks to The Mexican Connection, we now have the knowledge and confidence to do it. Vamanos!

By Kyra Bronson

BOAT TRIP TO BIRD ISLAND

I was one of the lucky people who went on the second Boat Trip to Bird Island. The weather was fantastic and the seas were calm.

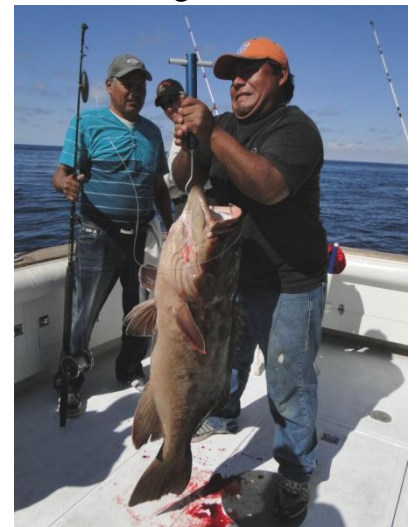
An hour into the trip, we sailed into a pod of over a thousand Dolphins (something that never happens in this area). The sea was a mass of dolphins, jumping, cavorting and creating a mass of white water. Dolphins love to ride the bow waves so there were 15 or so dolphins on both the starboard and port sides of the boat riding along with us. This fantastic experience continued for half an hour.



We continued onto Bird Island that was wonderful in its own right. We circumnavigated the island and then anchored off shore for an hour or so viewing wonderful birds, sea lions and seals. As there were 2 kayaks on board, we were able to paddle around the island. The young seals were fascinated and followed us around and sometimes were brave enough to swim right under our

boats. Some of the old sea lions though did not appreciate us getting too close to the island and swam out to warn us off.

On the way home, the captain offered to take us fishing as an extra. Dannie Dolan who does not like fish, pulled up a line with 6 fish on the various hooks. Then to top everything off, the captain caught a 36 lb. Grouper. He was so proud; he wanted a copy of the video I made of his catch, to use for promotional purposes.



A fantastic day, a fantastic trip!!!!!!

Sharon Duncan

AN ULTRALITE TRIP OVER OUR RV PARK



One of the highlights of my trip to Puerto Peñasco was an Ultra Lite trip I took from Sandy Beach, over all the condos along the beach, continuing over the down town area and onto the skies over our RV park. I wanted to share some of the photos of the RV park. Can you see your rig? Enjoy. Photo on the following page.

Sharon Duncan

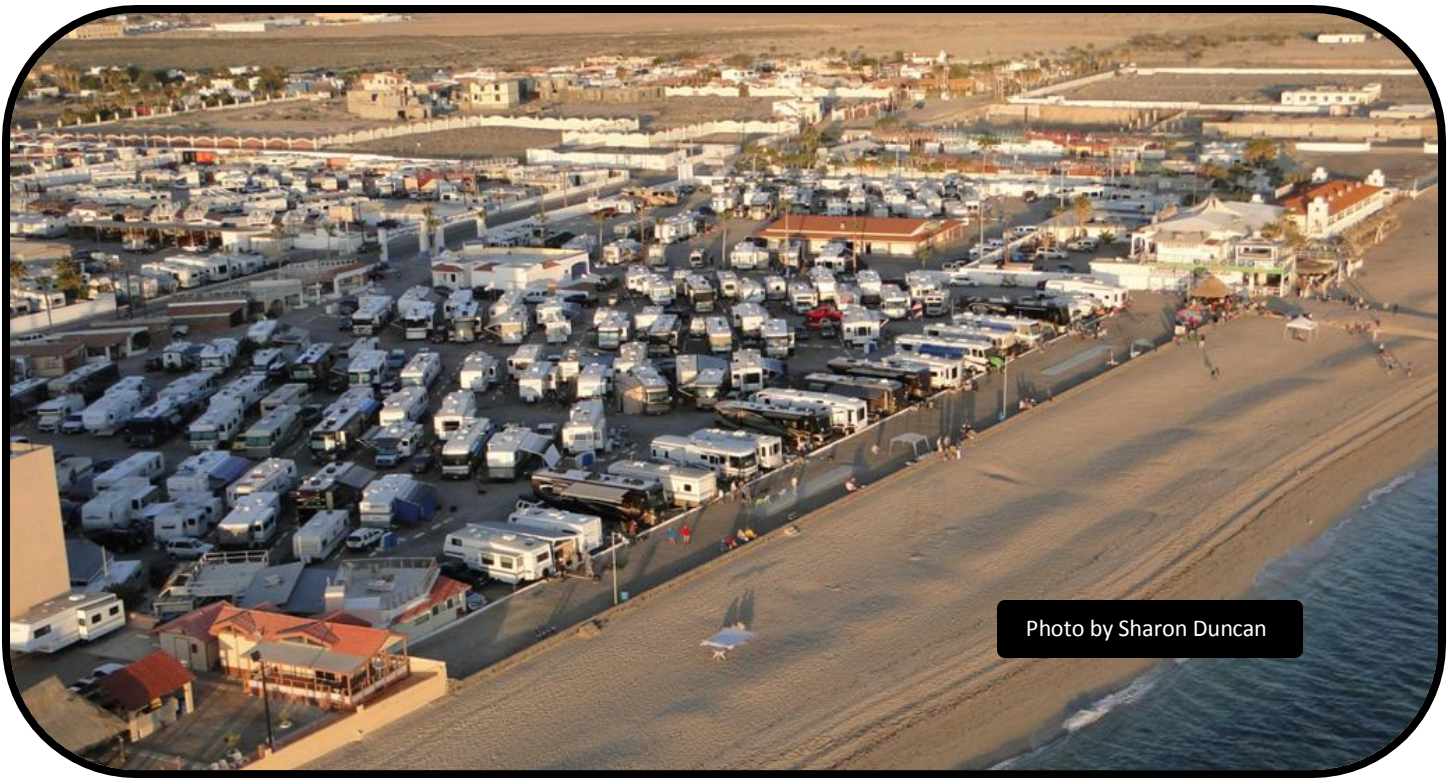
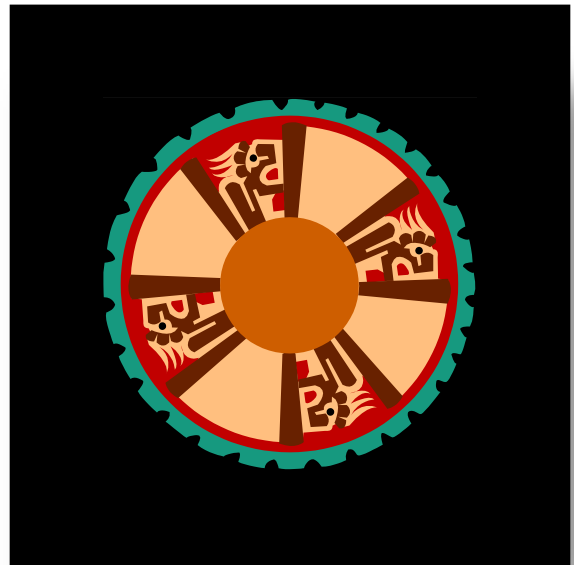


Photo by Sharon Duncan

We want to thank Dannie for a great rally. Thank you for your time and energy to put the rally together and give people a lot of different activities to participate in, for the great catered meals, a chance to meet new friends, and helping a lot of people feel comfortable in Mexico. We had a lot of fun. There was never a lack of things to do. It was very enjoyable to sit on the beach and watch the sun go down each evening. And it all went so fast. Before we knew it the rally was over. Thanks again Dannie.

Jan and Ed Biller



Carnaval Photos in Puerto Penasco

by Lin & Maryke Hines

