

*Escapes Chapter 8 RV Club*

# LA CONEXIÓN MEXICANA



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**Ed and Jan Biller digging for claims on the beach in El Pabellón**



## MENSAJE DE LOS PRESIDENTES

The 2014 Chapter 8 Baja Rally is now history! 46 RVs participated in the 2014 Rally, which began at the San Diego

Metro KOA in Chula Vista, CA on February 2, 2014 with Registration, 1-1/2 days of instruction including Maryke's Spanish class, Driving in a Group, Road Log reviews, assignment to a travel group, our Southern Baja slide show and much more. We had a good hamburger barbeque the last night that was rather sacrilegiously called "The Last Supper!" And thanks again to the Dominek's for organizing the barbeque and the numerous other volunteers that set up and served everyone!



The 2014 Rally had two major problems occur about a month before the start. The scenic 4-lane cuota (toll) road from Tijuana to Ensenada suffered catastrophic earthquake damage in late December about 20 miles north of Ensenada when a large section of road fell into the Pacific Ocean, forcing a long detour on the old 2 lane libre (free) road, through the mountains. Fortunately about half the distance of the libre road had recently been repaved.

The Wagonmasters (us) and the Parking Chair (Randy Dolan) did a re-scouting trip of the entire 200 mile route and found that the detour was slow but definitely doable! We also found 7 detours on the main Highway 1 near San Vicente where the road or bridges were being rebuilt.

The second problem was that the southbound Mexican border entry station was moved in December over a mile west of the old border and the immigration. Banjercito offices also moved So the plan to take the Tijuana Trolley from the KOA to the border to get Mexican visas wouldn't work.

We called our friends at Discover Baja Travel Club in San Diego for help. They offered the Rally a one year group membership, which would allow any of our group



to get prepaid Mexican visas from Discover Baja either by mail well in advance or in person at their offices.

That worked great for at least 30+ people plus Discover Baja always offers competitive prices on Mexican vehicle insurance—win-win for everyone!

The prepaid visas only required a 5 minute stop at the Mexican border to get the visas stamped so each group stopped briefly with very little drama! Whew--problems solved!

So on February 5, 46 rigs crossed into Mexico painlessly and made it to our first stop, Estero Beach Resort and RV Park just south of Ensenada!

Randy Dolan and his hardworking parking crew did a superb job getting everyone into their assigned spaces in the RV Park.



We spent a pleasant week in Ensenada starting the first night with a Welcome Mexican banquet with a great troupe of 8 mariachis in traditional dress entertaining with all the classic well-known Mexican songs getting us all into the spirit of Mexico!

We had 2 excellent bus tours with a superb guide and driver—the first, a City Tour that showed us all the sights of Ensenada including the famous Riviera del Pacifico ex-1930s grand casino and now a beautiful convention center, Los Globos public market and the piece de resistance, the downtown Fish Market and a wonderful lunch of Ensenada's signature fish or shrimp tacos—yum!

Another day, we had a very informative tour of the terrific Estero Beach Museum and it's exhibits called "20 Centuries of Mexican Culture" with an excellent guide.

Our final bus tour was to La Bufadora, the famous blow-hole south of Ensenada, along with souvenir shopping, a great lunch and a stop at the churro stands for dessert! On the way back, the whole group visited an orphanage, which was one of our Charity candidates and really enjoyed meeting the children and even playing games with them.



Riviera del Pacifico



Group at the "Three Heads Plaza"



Enjoying Fish Tacos at Fish Market



2014 Chapter 8 Rally at La Bufadora, Ensenada, Baja California

Charity has always been one of Chapter 8's most important missions. A big highlight of our 2014 Charity was the amazing donation organized by Stan Auringer, a retired Durango, CO fireman, of 30 full fire turnout suits worth \$30,000 US donated by the Durango Fire Department.

This equipment went to the small towns of El Porvenir, near Ensenada and to Camalu, north of San Quintín. Mayors and top officials turned out in both towns to acknowledge the acquisition of this lifesaving equipment. Stan is writing a separate story with photos.

On behalf of Chapter 8, Stan, huge thanks for helping the people of Baja!

Our Charity Committee, led by Sue Schaffer and her committee members, spent time finding deserving organizations for Chapter 8's Charity efforts and Sue will report the very generous support of our members at our silent and live auctions and the different organizations we helped.

We had the use of the Estero Beach RV Park Lounge, a fairly large space, for our committee meetings, the Charity auctions, our Ch. 8 Annual Meeting and Election and even in-kind charity item sorting and storage. One very memorable event was a very well attended Mexican cooking class taught by the Estero Beach head chef in Las Terrazas Restaurant.

Groups of 5 prepared and cooked the "Estero Beach Special"--the same menu as our final dinner. Then we were shown how to "plate" the dinners very beautifully. Finally, we all ate our prepared food, to great acclaim!

Our final Ensenada night was the Farewell sit-down dinner with the very tasty Mexican combination plate.



On February 12, we said goodbye to Estero Beach and headed 120 miles south to El Pabellon RV Park right on the Pacific Ocean beach south of San Quintín.

We had a very nice 2 day R&R on the beach with our hostess, the smiling, very friendly campground owner, Maria Gonzales. Sunbathing, fishing, clamming, hot showers were all enjoyed.

From there, groups went south whale watching, down to Cabo San Lucas and many other southern towns, to the beaches of Bahia Concepcion south of Mulege, over to San Felipe and some, back to the border.



People and dogs having fun and relaxing at El Pabellon

Our sincere thanks to all the wonderful volunteers that make these Rallies possible! No one is paid for their efforts.

If you would like to be part of the Chapter 8 leadership team including being a Wagonmaster in the future, please talk to us! The Chapter needs you! We had a very pleasant group of people on the Rally this year and we enjoyed bringing the group to the part of Mexico we love best—Baja! We look forward to many more great Escapees Chapter 8 Rallies in Mexico and hope you will join us!

We will be at the Escapade in Goshen, IN, May 12-17. The Chapter 8 Row Reps will be Lynn and Mickey Waite. Like last year, we will do our seminar "Escape to Mexico" on Thursday 5/8 afternoon and afterwards the famous Chapter 8 "Fiesta" will be in the same room. We will have information and photographs of Bahia Kino, Kino Bay, Chapter 8's 2015 Rally destination. Hope to see a lot of you in Goshen!



***THAT'S ENTERTAINMENT!!***  
**Micky and Randy at their best!**

Lin and Maryke Hines, 2014 Wagonmasters and 2014-15 Co-Presidents  
*All photographs by Lin and Maryke Hines*



**Next Auction item!**



**2015 Ch.8 Rally  
Wagonmasters  
AnneMarie and  
Peter Arnold**

## CEVICHE DE ALMEJAS A LA “EL PABELLON”

The last 2 days of the 2014 Chapter 8 Rally were held at the beach at El Pabellón. It was nice to relax after a week filled with excursions, meetings, dinners and exploring Ensenada. Only about 19 rigs drove the 125 miles to San Quintín, but we all had a great time. Some went fishing and others clamming, but what to do with all these clams??

Fortunately Maria, Pabellón’s owner and her son in law José came to the rescue. First of all Maria, taught us how to open the clams, it wasn’t easy, but fortunately no one lost any fingers.

With ingredients collected from different galleys, we ended up with a delicious Ceviche de Almejas (clams):

### *Ceviche de Almejas*

*25 fresh clams—cleaned (take out membranes and “poop”)*

*1 medium white onion*

*4-5 Tomatoes*

*Cilantro-1/2 cup*

Chop all these ingredients into small pieces

*Ketchup*

*Hot sauce (strength to taste)*

*Squeeze juice of 3-4 fresh limes*

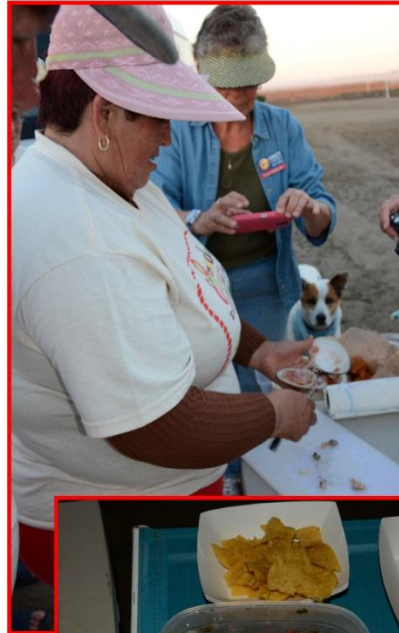
*Clamato*

Mix everything to taste

Eat with crackers or chips

Drink a Margarita or Beer

*“Buen Provecho”*





Larry Brown      Lynn Waite      Peter Arnold  
 Orene Brown      Lin Hines      Shelly Dominek  
 Maryke Hines      Steve Bufty      Charlie Boles      Sue Schaeffer      Ann Marie Arnold

*Funcionarios de Capítulo 8*

\*Chapter 8 Elected Officers\*

President

Lin & Maryke Hines  
[linhines@earthlink.net](mailto:linhines@earthlink.net)

1st Vice President

Ann Marie Arnold  
[amapgm9697@gmail.com](mailto:amapgm9697@gmail.com)

2nd Vice President

Larry Brown  
[lbrown10@hotmail.com](mailto:lbrown10@hotmail.com)

3rd Vice President

Position vacant

Secretary

Orene Clarke Brown  
[orenebrown1@gmail.com](mailto:orenebrown1@gmail.com)

Treasurer  
 Steve Bufty  
[stevebufty@yahoo.com](mailto:stevebufty@yahoo.com)

\*Appointed Officers\*

Membership Chairman

Maryke Hines  
[MexicanConnectionMembership@yahoo.com](mailto:MexicanConnectionMembership@yahoo.com)

Co-Webmaster

Don Busick  
[dong773@sbcglobal.net](mailto:dong773@sbcglobal.net)

Co-Webmaster

Lynn Waite  
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## *Ask Me About Kino Bay*



Greeting from your 2015 Wagon Master Team,

Anne-Marie has been given a tentative release from her neurosurgeon to travel, we have to be back in Texas in 6 weeks. We will now travel to Yuma to pick-up our new (to us) motorhome and return to Texas. After a couple more doctor's visits we hope to pre-run the rally route, anyone want to tag along?

Our Rally Adventure for 2015 will take us to Bahia De Kino, Sonora, MX. (A.K.A.: Kino Bay)

Tentative dates: 2/2/2015 thru 2/18/2015. We will pre-rally at Pima County Fairgrounds east of Tucson, AZ. We will have full hook-ups there. We encourage folks to come in early, we are hoping to have a pot luck Super Bowl Party on 2/1/2015.

During Anne-Marie's recovery from surgery the Schaffer & Boles did wonderful work pre-running and finding sources for charity, food and drink. It takes a lot of folks to make our rally successful **and safe for all**. Can you help? What would you like to do? We are still in early planning stages and need you input.

Team Arnold,

Leading the Way To Kino Bay



## 2016 WAGONMASTER REPORT

Larry and I headed to Puerto Penasco to begin preliminary work for the 2016 rally.

We are so fortunate that Frank Jenia has agreed to Co- Wagonmaster with Larry! Frank is very excited about working with Larry, and both he and Margaret will be working with us over the next couple of weeks in Penasco to get the ball rolling.

Margaret Jenia has also happily volunteered to be the Charity Chair for the 2016 Rally. The charitable mission of Chapter 8 has always been a primary focus of Margaret's participation in The Mexican Connection, and she will bring great heart and judgement to the work.

The Jenias have had a home in Puerto Penasco for many years, and are very knowledgeable about the area assets, and also about the established charities in the greater community. They have been active in Chapter 8 for many years.

And if that weren't exciting enough, Shelly Dominek (pot luck and get er done woman extraordinaire) has volunteered to develop and coordinate some "fun in the (RV) Park" activities for the Rally that will help us all get to know each other better, and bring new attendees into the action right from the start. We hope that these play times will make newbies more comfortable in assuming greater roles in the leadership of Chapter 8.

Larry and Orene Brown



# 2014 RALLY PHOTOS

Registration in Chula Vista, CA



Spanish Lessons In Chula Vista, CA



Happy Hour in Chula Vista, CA



Lining up to head south



Tijuana Border Crossing



Estero Beach Campsites



## The Charitable Mission of The Mexican Connection

Chapter 8, The Mexican Connection, has two purposes combined into one annual event, a 7-10 day visit to a Mexican community. The first purpose: to familiarize people with Mexican culture and communities in order to make them more comfortable with Mexican travel. The second and equally important mission is to provide cash and non-cash contributions for local area charities in need of assistance. The Chapter raises cash contributions throughout the year and at the annual rally auctions, raffles, etc. Non-cash donations are contributed by Chapter 8 members in the form of school supplies, clothing, etc.

In 2014 the Mexican Connection visited Ensenada and El Pabellon. Charity Chair Sue Schaffer dedicated herself to identifying charities in these areas with need of assistance. Along with other members of the chapter, visits were made to each charity, and individual staff identified the highest needs. The charity committee then assigned either a cash value to that need, non-cash contribution, or a combination of both.

This year, in addition to the traditional types of charities and contributions, we were fortunate to have the Durango, CO Fire Rescue Department donate approximately \$30,000 worth of firefighting equipment to be distributed to local Mexican Bomberos. (Firemen) This effort was spearheaded by Colorado Firefighter Stan Auringer, who also transported the equipment to Ensenada by trailer. Firefighters in these small Mexican communities have little to work with. From trucks to firefighting outfits, most are donated from the USA. We can be proud that someone's home, someone's life, can be saved because of this donated material. This is only made possible by the generosity and caring of the Durango, Colorado Fire Rescue Department and the good work of Stan Auringer. For their commitment to others we commend them, and offer our sincere gratitude.

There is high need in Mexican Charities and low access to resources. In the case of the several children's orphanages that benefitted from our assistance, there is no government participation in their support. They are on their own to raise much needed funds, and it is often a matter of just "getting by." These institutions are doing a good job caring for children who are orphaned, or abandoned, or abused. We hope that our help will make their job just a little easier.



Camalu Fire Department



Camalu's Fire Department

**DISTRIBUTION OF CHARITY ASSETS for 2014 Rally – (Cash - \$8,000. Non-cash donations)**

1. **Casa Hogar Monte Horeb** (Orphanage for 14 boys) - \$700 for eyeglasses, gas money for transportation to school, etc.
2. **Mision Casa Hogar de Los Ninos Orphanage**, Pastor Tom Shockey ([kidskingdom89@yahoo.com](mailto:kidskingdom89@yahoo.com)) - \$1,200. Treasurer Steve Bufty took staff to Costco and discount meat market food shopping.
3. **Angels on Wheels- \$1,000**. Lin and Maryke Hines took administrator to Costco for Laptop computer, software and printer. This organization buys wheelchairs, walkers, and crutches for disabled people, and runs an adaptive sports program. Non-cash donations of clothing also benefited this organization.
4. **Ensenada Women’s Center (Shelter and work skill training for abused women)** - \$500.
5. **Casa Hogar Pequeno Hermanos Orphanage (47 children)** - \$1,900. They needed a new engine for their van, and money for food. They also have a program that helps educate the children of migrant workers on farms around the orphanage. We also donated school supplies and clothing.
6. **Corazon de Vida-** \$500. Assistance to homeless children found on the streets.
7. **Escuela Primera Santa Maria (School), El Pabellon** - \$500, and a re-purposed computer which will enable them to use a projector and lesson plans provided to them by the government of Mexico.
8. **Cristo por su Mundo Orphanage in Vincente Guerrero** - \$200, baby clothing.
9. **Companeros de Baja Norte (Social Club)** - \$500
10. **Escapees CARE** - \$1,000
11. **Durango, CO Fire Dept.:** Non-cash donations of Fire Equipment valued at \$30,000, distributed to the Bomberos (firemen) in El Porvenir. The El Porvenir Bomberos then shared the excess with a fire department in Camalu.



THANKS EVERYONE FOR ALL YOUR HELP!!!!



The pictures above only express a small part of the extraordinary donations of some of the members of the 2014 Mexican Connection rally. Stan Auringer who donated used firefighting gear that was obtained from the Durango Fire Rescue in Durango, Colorado. Because of the United States' OSHA standards, old gear usually is destroyed, but Stan took it upon himself to haul 30 sets of firemen's equipment in a trailer down to Mexico to donate to the people of El Porvehir's fire department.

As you can see by the photos, this was a big deal for this small Mexican community. The local councilman, the mayor of Ensenada and media came out for this event.

The young men have been fighting fires in their regular street clothes. So now, they have the proper equipment to fight fires in their community.

Stan Auringer and Bob Schmitt

For helping out, special thanks to:

Nancy Auringer, Sini Schmitt, Randy Dolan and Charlie Boles



**Sue & Charlie Schaffer**  
**CHARITY COMMITTEE**

We are now in Kino Bay at the resort for 2015 rally. Most sites have 50 amp service, water, electric, and sewer. The Sea of Cortez is across the street with easy access. Good restaurant across the road and others nearby. Beautiful views of sunset at beach in evening.

Thank you everyone for all your help with bringing stuff for the charities. We had lots of school supplies that were so appreciated by the schools in El Pabellon, Casa Hogar Pequenos Hermanos Orphanage (41 children) and Mission Casa Hogar Reino de Los Ninos (48 children). The clothing was given to Angels on Wheels, and three of the orphanages.

We raised \$7,000 to give to local charities. This money was raised through donations, the regular auction, the silent auction, a 50/50 raffle, wine and pop sales during the auction and a jump into the swimming pool by members. Everyone in the club deserves a "Pat on the Back" for such fantastic help for the Mexican Charities.

Thanks again to all those who helped sort donations, run raffles, the raffle winner who then returned the \$220 on an auction item, those who ran the wine and pop sales during the auction, and a big hand to those who jumped into the unheated swimming pool in the cold evening at 9pm. I had so much help !

Thanks and God Bless,  
Sue Schaffer



## **2014 CHARITY REPORT—SAN QUENTIN, B.C. ARE “THE REST OF THE STORY”**

To begin, our computer guru Bill Selph installed the desktop computer donated by Stan and Mary Christenberry working with Stan and made it all work with their digital projector, keyboard, and smartboard. The Directora (also the 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> grade teacher) was beaming! They couldn't thank us enough!

On February 12<sup>th</sup> we made a shopping trip with the 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> grade teacher Mireya and the 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> grade teacher, to spend the \$500US approved at the Annual Meeting. We had already delivered a huge box and bags full of school and art supplies donated by Chapter 8 members to the school to great delight from both teachers and students! We started our shopping at a very well stocked and reasonably priced “office supply” store in San Quintín where the teachers had a field day with 2 shopping carts filled to the brim twice with stuff they needed for the school, and since there was still money left, we also went to an industrial cleaning supply place for more necessary products. Did you know they pack toilet paper rolls in packages of 80 here??

The orphanage in Vicente Guerrero, “Cristo Por Su Mundo” was the same place Chapter 8 during the 2008 Baja Rally had brought 50-60 duffel bags full of clothing and supplies, divided over 48 rigs. It was the only way to bring that much stuff across the border without being noticed! This orphanage is very well funded with their main office in San Clemente, CA, and they have groups of people coming from the US and Canada regularly helping them with construction and repairs, donating in-kind and \$\$\$. The \$200US and bag of baby clothing from Chapter 8 was very well received. We got a tour of their campus which has doubled in size since our 2008 visit! This place has a very complete clinic, better than many rural hospitals. They also have a complete fire department, including ambulance and rescue that services the greater San Quintín area. They also have a workshop where they repair used wheel chairs and make custom-made ones for local handicapped people. We have tried to get them in contact with Griselda the wheel chair lady of the Angels on Wheels in Ensenada, but this unfortunately didn't work out, although we have now a possible contact for rebuilt and used wheel chairs in Southern California, which hopefully can help future Charity Chairs.

The highlight for Charity in this area was the visit to the volunteer fire department in Camalú, north of San Quintín. Rumors spread fast!! The husband of Mireya, the teacher, is a local policeman and he had heard about a group of gringos donating firemen's outfits to the bomberos (firemen) in El Porvenir. He put two and two together and thought that we were probably the same group! We knew from the people who went to El Porvenir that the bomberos there had gotten too many outfits and would be distributing them to other fire departments in the area---and the recipient was Camalú! They too wanted to thank us personally so a group of Chapter 8 members in El Pabellón carpooled to Camalú and visited the small volunteer fire department. They showed us (and put on) the “new” outfits and were so very thankful! A few ladies (probably spouses or mothers) had made a delicious clam & vegetable soup, and drinks, and like in El Porvenir fed us a late lunch! They have 2 fire trucks but one is not working due to an approx. \$80 part that they don't have the money for, and in spite of us offering to pay for it, they didn't want to get the money until they knew exactly how much the part was, and if the part in the local diesel shop was the correct one. They have a group of high school kids who were also present who hold events and solicit at topes in town with donation cans to help support the bomberos here! The local delegado, a position higher than mayor, and the head of a foundation raising money to build a needed hospital here also attended and shook all our hands warmly!

Their other working fire truck was donated by the Edmonton, Alberta Fire Department. That engine now shows an Escapee decal and a Chapter 8 decal on the top of the front windshield at their request! They got this truck with the help of the orphanage in Vicente Guerrero but they are still paying off the \$4500 charges (for customs and other paperwork etc.). We know where there is a need in this area if we go here again with a rally! Escapees Chapter 8 made some very good friends in this area by the generosity of our 2014 Rally members!

Lin and Maryke Hines, 2014 Chapter 8 Ensenada Rally Wagonmasters



The 2014 Rally was enjoyed by everyone,  
.....especially the pets that came along.





## IN MEMORIAM: EARL REESE

It is with a heavy heart that I report the passing of Chapter 8's past secretary, Earl Reese. He was a fantastic contributor to the Chapter's leadership and to the rallies at Guaymas (2009) and Kino Bay (2010).

The entire Reese family is grateful for the continued prayers, love, and support for Earl, Nancy, and the rest of the family since his journey began in October 2011.

Since October 2011 we received many updates on Earl's condition, many from Earl himself. As some of you may remember his email updates started with minusT180 because the Dr. told him he had 6 months. We all cheered when he hit minusT0 and his T days started increasing. We knew he had beat this thing. In his last years he taught us the real value of hope for your current life and the life to come.

On January 7th, Earl learned he had a new brain tumor and surgery was scheduled for the 24th. This same day, Nancy fell, dislocating and breaking both ankles. Eventually Earl transitioned to a local therapy center. However, a blood clot in his left leg was identified in the hospital before he left. The blood clot was monitored, and a week later it was still present. He was given blood thinners but was admitted back to the hospital and it was determined that he had a pulmonary embolism. He passed peacefully on the morning of February 11, 2014.

If you would like to send cards, Nancy's address is: Nancy Reese, Gold Canyon RV and Golf Resort, 7151 E US Hwy 60, Lot 721, Gold Canyon, AZ 85118.

Ed and Jan Biller  
past Wagonmasters 2010 (Kino Bay)