

# LA CONEXIÓN MEXICANA



## Escapees RV Club Chapter 8

Member of Escapees Social Network, Inc.

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Fall 2016

**2017 Rally Registration begins September 1st**

Volume XVII



Punta San Felipe Lighthouse near Malecón downtown; tower is 72' high; visible 12 miles at sea!— Photograph © 2016 Lin Hines

### In this issue:

Mission Statement and Editor's Desk.....	Page 2
Chapter 8 Officers.....	Page 3
President's Message & Useful San Felipe Facts.....	Page 4
Important Message from 2017 Wagonmasters.....	Pages 5-7
Detailed 2017 Rally Information.....	Page 8-11
2018 Wagonmasters Report, Chapter Director's Report.....	Page 12
Welcome, New Members, Let's Learn Spanish!.....	Page 13
Message from Secretary, Barb Ely.....	Page 14
News, UltraLight Flights, 2016 San Felipe Photo Album.....	Page 15-17
Rocky Point 360 Article on Chapter 8.....	Pages 18-20
No Bad Days—San Felipe! .....	Page 21



# Chapter 8 Mission Statement

*Chapter 8 was organized in 1985 to:*

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



## *El escritorio del redactor*

**Editor's Desk** by Lin Hines

**We're only 10 days away from the start of Online Registration for the 2017 San Felipe, Baja California! Registration begins September 1. There's more information from 2017 Wagonmasters Cynthia and Jim Ponder inside. Look it over and sign up early. The 2016 Rally filled in less than a week and San Felipe is a very popular and friendly Rally destination that you will definitely enjoy!**



Help 2018 Wagonmasters Ed Overby & Tony Sparks determine the 2018 Rally destination! It needs to be in the west coastal side of mainland Mexico and anywhere in northern Baja California, either coast, be within a 300-400 mile round trip from the border, be safe, be affordable and of course, be fun with lots of activity potential! Tell Ed and Tony your favorite place in that geography and what you do there, RV facilities you like and why this should be the chosen place! Their email addresses are in the article and they're standing by for good ideas!

Dortha and Mark Hall, our Escapees Chapter Directors have an upbeat report on the recent 2016 Escapade in Vermont along with dates for the 2017 Escapade back in Tucson, AZ.

**Rocky Point 360, the Puerto Peñasco online newspaper, ran a great article on our Chapter 8 Rally on February 13, 2016. I didn't have room in the Summer issue but here it is now!**

As always, member's contributions to this newsletter are very welcome. Articles as well as photographs. Please email to [Chap8newsletter@gmail.com](mailto:Chap8newsletter@gmail.com)

**WINTER CHAPTER 8 NEWSLETTER DEADLINE—DECEMBER 10 FIRM!** (Publishing 12/16/16)



***Funcionarios del Capítulo 8  
Chapter Officers***

**President — Orene Brown**

**1st Vice President 2017 Wagonmasters—Jim and Cynthia Ponder**

**\*2017 Assistant Wagonmaster—Ron Sortor**

**2nd Vice President 2018 Wagonmaster—Ed Overby**

**\*2018 Assistant Wagonmaster—Tony Sparks**

**Treasurer—Steve Buffy**

**\*Assistant Treasurer—Nancy Mansor Moran**

**Secretary—Barb Ely**

**Immediate Past President—Peter Arnold**

**Membership—Maryke Hines**

**Webmaster—Lynn Waite**

**Newsletter Editor — Lin Hines**

**\*Newsletter Layout/Graphics—Maryke Hines**

**\*Historian—Ed Overby**

**\* Non-voting Board members**



**Chapter 8 Website: [www.mexicanconnection08.com](http://www.mexicanconnection08.com)**

## Mensaje del Presidente

Hola Chapter 8! I hope you are all having a great summer doing exactly what makes you happy! For many that is traveling in our RV and exploring new places, visiting old favorite spots once again, and spending time with family and friends far and wide. An RV makes visiting so easy on the hosts and the guests!

As usual this summer has sped by. It seems like just a short time ago we were arriving in Maine, this year by air, and now it is just a few weeks until we leave our spring fed lake and head back to Arizona. It is always hard to leave. This little rustic cottage on the edge of the Great North Woods has been in my family since 1947, and with few exceptions, the place I have spent every summer of my life. Our summer has been a mix of relaxing, swimming, relaxing some more, and just enjoying the lake with family and friends.



As we leave here we will be looking forward to seeing many of you again in 2017 in Yuma for the San Felipe pre-rally, and enjoying lovely San Felipe with The Mexican Connection. Enjoy the rest of the summer wherever you may be, travel well and make new memories as you go! See you down the road!

*Orene Clarke Brown*, President

### Useful Facts about San Felipe

- San Felipe is located on the Sea of Cortes/Gulf of California 190 Km south of the U.S. border
- The tides here vary as much as 7m or 25'; at low tide, over 1 Km of ocean bottom is exposed!
- The population of San Felipe is close to 20,000 plus up to 5000 visitors in the spring season.
- The town of San Felipe was founded in 1916 as a fishing port. It incorporated in 1926.
- Spanish explorers in 1536 gave the original name of Santa Catalina to the small settlement.
- The bay was named "San Felipe de Jesus" by Spanish Padre Ferdinand Konscak in 1746.
- In 1794 Lt. Gov. of the Californias Arrillaga established the land route from Mexicali to San Felipe.
- The population in 1920 was 100 permanent residents. In 1940 population increased to 287.
- Paving of the Mexicali-San Felipe Highway was completed in 1951.
- In the 1970s construction was in high gear—government offices, hotels, airport, sewage system, gas stations, many restaurants and bars and the malecón.
- Both the Baja 250 and the San Felipe 250 offroad races run in this area.
- San Felipe's first golf course opened in 2005.
- San Felipe has a small but lively Carnival celebration just before Lent begins.
- San Felipe's employment today is based on tourism, shrimping and fishing.
- San Felipe's climate in spring is very pleasant at about 75 degrees F.
- There is a Bodega Aurrera Superstore owned by Walmart downtown—groceries and much more!
- A Calimax Supermercado is adjacent to Bodega Aurrera with grocery, bakery, meat, produce & more.
- Rancho Market is a small modern grocery/general store within a mile of Pete's Camp
- There are several local bakeries, produce, fruit and seafood shops downtown on side streets.
- English is spoken in many shops, grocery stores & restaurants. US \$ accepted in many places here.
- Credit cards are accepted at grocery stores & large restaurants. Check the current exchange rate!



**—Important Message from the 2017 Wagonmasters Jim & Cynthia Ponder—**

Hola Amigos,

We had a wonderful time at the Escapade and enjoyed meeting many new friends and others we had traveled with before. George and Sue Young were great support on the Row as representatives of Chapter 8. We were all very busy telling people about traveling in Mexico in General and to San Felipe next year especially. Cynthia's mom, Betty Winn who went to El Fuerte in 2006 with Chapter 8 attended her first Escapade and spent many hours on the Row and helping with the Social as well.

The best news was that there were so many 1<sup>st</sup> timers at the Escapade that they outnumbered the old timers and many want to join us in our Mexico travels in the future.

The flyer we used at Escapade is on the next page . We are adding some additional information on the upcoming 2017 Rally so you will all be ready to register on Sept. 1, 2016.

**WE ARE ASKING YOU TO MEASURE YOUR COACH FOR HEIGHT AND WIDTH WITH THE SLIDES OUT PRECISELY.** We will be assigning parking places based on these factors at both camping locations in order to bring as many rigs as possible to the event. **Please make these measurements prior to Sept. 1 as they will be required on your registration form.**

**Registration form is fillable—you can fill it out on your computer without printing it first . Registrations may be submitted online AFTER 12:01 AM September 1. Earlier registrations will be returned to you. Payment will be by PayPal only. There is a button on the form which will take you directly there. Please pay before you submit your form.**

**We will accept the first 60 correctly submitted Rally Registration forms which have paid.**

# THE MEXICAN CONNECTION CHAPTER 8 2017 RALLY

## **SAN FELIPE in BAJA CALIFORNIA**

Feb. 6-20, 2017

Pre-Rally begins in Yuma County Fairgrounds  
Leave for Mexico on Thursday Feb. 9

Open to 60 Rigs

Register beginning on Sept.1, 2016 online at [www.mexicanconnection08.com](http://www.mexicanconnection08.com)

Pay via PayPal & email form to [wagonmasters2017@gmail.com](mailto:wagonmasters2017@gmail.com)

**BEACHFRONT for 11 nights**  
**DRY-CAMPING/BOONDOCKING. Generators 9am-9pm**

### FUN THINGS TO DO DURING THE RALLY

- Walks on the beach, maps to a shell beach
- Visit from Baja racing cars
- Cooking classes at the campground
- Catered meals & Continental Breakfasts in Mexico
- 4 Wheel Drive trips & maps for private explorations
- Hot Springs in the Surf, day trip to lovely beaches
- Time to Relax, Visit with Friends, Go Dancing
- Shop
- Visit the Giant and Ancient Cactus of Mexico
- Golf, Fishing and Horseback riding available
- Local culture, Local Bands, Local Foods
- Excellent Restaurants
- Charity Activities & Auction for the People of San Felipe & Care

Camping fee	\$ 225.00
Rally fee/2	150.00
Registration/2	60.00
Total for 2 in rig	\$ 435.00
Total for 1 in Rig	\$ 330.00
Extra Person in rig	\$105.00

**Registration fee is  
NON-REFUNDABLE**

Request for Refunds must be sent by Jan.3, 2017 to:  
[wagonmasters2017@gmail.com](mailto:wagonmasters2017@gmail.com)

Showers, Water and RV dumpsite on hill above the beach in campground. A limited number of electric sites are available across the road in a private home development with full hook ups. These will require an extra fee as they are being provided by personal owners (\$60). These sites will be assigned by Wagonmasters

# Mensaje de los Primer Vice Presidentes y organizadores de la 2017 Reunión

## Important Message from Wagonmasters—continued

### What is included in the Rally Cost???

- 4 catered dinners, rally pin, social hours, entertainment and activities at the campground
- Continental Breakfasts in Mexico
- 2 & 4 wheel desert explorations lead by the local Scorpion club
- And More Surprises as we go.

### What is not included in the cost of the Rally???

- Your tourist permit (FMM) approximately \$26/person
- Your personal expenses for extra activities souvenirs, food you buy...
- Your Mexican Vehicle Insurance Policy. **Liability Insurance written by a Mexican Insurance Company is Required by Mexican Law.** Comprehensive and Collision coverage is your choice. See Chapter 8 Website article for recommendations. There are many different ways and places to purchase this insurance. We will send out a note to those who are registered for the Rally with more details



**What if I am not one of the first 60 to register?? Do Not Give Up Hope!** We keep an active waiting list because Life Happens and we often have openings occur prior to the Rally. We will contact everyone and ask if they wish to remain on a waiting list.

Register by filling out registration form online at [mexicanconnection08.com](http://mexicanconnection08.com); hit the **PayPal button** and pay for your Rally; then complete registration by hitting **Submit button** which sends Registration to us at [wagonmasters2017@gmail.com](mailto:wagonmasters2017@gmail.com).



**Parking on beach at Pete's Camp by Palapas**  
*(photo by Charlie Boles)*

# Detailed 2017 San Felipe Rally Information

**Dates and Locations: Feb. 6-20, 2017** The pre-Rally will begin Feb. 6, 2017 at the Yuma, Arizona County Fairgrounds. Please arrive no earlier than 2PM and no later than 4PM.

The Mexican part of our Rally begins Feb. 9th with our drive to San Felipe, Baja California. We will travel 120 miles on good roads in small groups with an experienced Group Leader and Tail-gunner with each group. The Rally will officially end in San Felipe the morning of Feb. 20th.

***PETE'S CAMP in San Felipe will be our home on the beach on the Sea of Cortez!***

**THIS IS A BOONDOCKING, NO HOOKUPS RALLY IN MEXICO. Dry camping! No hookups!** There is a fresh water and dump station available above the beach at the campground. There are small bathrooms on the beach, but newer, larger ones and hot showers are available above the beach as well. There is a small charge for the showers. There is a lovely patio, bar and restaurant in the same location where we can gather. There are large tidal changes here and it is a great place to explore and walk when the tide is out.

**If you must have Electric** for medical reasons or your rig is all electric, we will have 10 full hook up sites in a gated housing development available for rent for the duration of the Rally.



They will cost \$60 more per rig, will not be on the beach, but will have gated 24/7 security. The people who take these sites will also have access to tennis courts, pickleball, and swimming pools and hot tubs at the community center that the rest of us will not have. Please contact the

Wagonmaster before registration to let us know your needs. Transportation will be provided between the electric sites and Pete's Camp at specific times during the day as needed.

**2017 Rally Registration begins Sept. 1, 2016 will be ONLINE ONLY & PAID ONLY BY PAYPAL®.**

Instructions on how to do this plus the Registration Form will be on the Chapter 8 Website. <[www.mexicanconnection08.com](http://www.mexicanconnection08.com)> Sept. 1st, 2016. There is an absolute maximum number of rigs we can bring on this Rally due to parking accommodations. On the Registration Form, we will ask specific questions about the size of your rig to determine the total # of rigs we can have.





## More 2017 San Felipe Rally details--

- We will have 3 catered dinners during the Rally and 1 during the pre-Rally. One of our dinners will be during our Silent and Live Auction for Charity. We ask folks to donate items they would be willing to bid on, sometimes the bidding gets very fierce. It will be a really fun event and raise as much money as possible for the people of the San Felipe area who have needs not met by others and for Escapees Care in Livingston, TX.
- Every morning from 6:30 to 9AM coffee and tea and a light continental breakfast of fruit and pastries will be provided so you won't have to run your generator early in the morning and wake your neighbors.
- There will be Palapas (covered canopies) on the beach with tables and chairs for social gatherings, potlucks, and general good times.
- The Palapas will be a gathering place for Happy Hour around the 3 to 4 PM time depending on the day's plans. Most will be a BYODrinks and snacks, but the Chapter will host a couple of Margarita parties and those interested can have some potlucks, if we aren't all busy eating at all the great places around us!
- San Felipe offers many opportunities for exploring on your own and in small groups as well as in our large group. We will supply directions to attractions in the area such as: to a beach to gather shells, to an area of hot springs south of San Felipe where the water is so hot you have to time your visit to include the incoming tide to help



cool it off, and directions to the Valley of the Giant Cardón Cactus.



- We have arranged for local residents to lead 2 and 4 wheel drives in the desert to some fun places so bring your toys and desert buggies. We have also arranged for some Baja 250 racers to bring their off road race cars to Pete's Camp and explain why it is so much fun to race in the Baja desert.

- We have invited Mexican ladies to do cooking classes for us at Pete's Camp so we can learn how

they create some of the great food we will be enjoying eating in Mexico.

- Oh, don't let me forget there will be musicians and folkloric dancers at some of our dinners!
- There is a horse center close to the mountains about 15-20 minutes away so we could arrange individual or small group trail rides in the desert
- Saturday mornings there is a great flea market-farmers market held close by. It opens early at 7:30 AM and we still found things at 10 but it was the end of March. The produce, meats and pastries were locally produced and wonderful, the treasures were fun, and bargains on new items were even available.

## **Even More 2017 San Felipe Rally Details—**

- Golfers bring your clubs there is a golf course with grass right next door and it is open to the public. Golf carts are available for rent.
- Fishing can be arranged in the Sea of Cortez.
- There is a laundromat and small but complete grocery about a mile from Pete’s Camp. There is a larger supermercado and many other businesses in downtown San Felipe.
- Interested in Chapter 8’s Charity efforts? We will ask you to bring charity items like blankets, kid’s and baby clothing, school supplies, personal hygiene products, etc. Indicate on your Registration Form that you are interested in helping the Charity Committee.
- There is always shopping and looking at a home so you can move to San Felipe, or just hanging out on the beach with new friends. Bring a jacket in case the wind is blowing and otherwise get ready for a fun-filled, busy as you want to be, Rally.

Both camping locations are 5-6 miles from the center of San Felipe where parking is limited, so we encourage carpooling with your friends. Taxis may come to Pete's Camp to pick you up, but are slow and not always reliable. Taxis are available in town to bring you back to Pete’s Camp but are limited in number. We want you to be aware that although there are restaurants and shops closer to the Campground , you may want to bring your toad or tow vehicle to provide more freedom for activities if independence and time factors are important to you.

**Contact Jim and Cynthia for Questions, Concerns and Suggestions!**

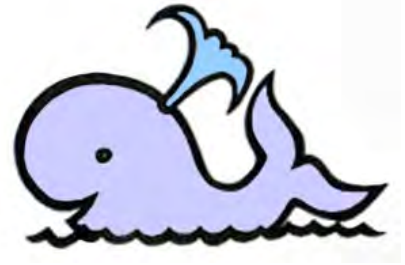
**<[WAGONMASTERS2017@GMAIL.COM](mailto:WAGONMASTERS2017@GMAIL.COM)>**



Photos in this article by Jim Ponder and Lin Hines

## >OPTIONAL POST 2017 RALLY TOUR<

Dependent on completion of Hwy 5 to Hwy. 1 near the west coast we have planned an *optional* 3 day 2night rally to Guerrero Negro on the Pacific coast. Scammon's Lagoon, a gray whale birthing lagoon, is an excellent place to see the friendly gray whales, tour the world's largest salt mine, seeing interesting birds and plants along the way.



We depart Feb. 20th and return Feb. 22 to San Felipe in bus or cars. Those who take their rigs have the choice of going further south or north on Mexico Hwy 1 after this rally. There are two ways to go on this tour. One is in your own rig, or tow vehicle. The second is to take a bus and leave your rig and toad in San Felipe. The cost will be \$200/per person with Bus or Car transportation and Hotel Room and \$150/per Person if you take your rig.

The trip includes dinner on the night of arrival, 2 nights of hotel or RV accommodations. We have reserved 15 hotel rooms which will each sleep 2. Tours will be on the 21st to see the whales and salt mine. We are asking for indications of interest on the Rally Registration Form but NO MONEY until the PRE-RALLY. We will be taking the drive across Hwy 5 in December to determine if this post rally will be held. Highway construction was underway all this year but must be completed to a degree that Rigs and Buses can transverse the road safely before we will offer it. So if interested and do not want to drive your own vehicle, this might be something to check "yes interested" on the Rally Registration form. See slide show posted on Escapees Chapter 8 Facebook Page for pictures of this route taken in February 2016.

**Fall Mexican Holidays**—Sept. 16 Independence Day, Nov. 1—All Saints Day, Nov. 2—All Souls Day, Nov. 21 — Revolution Day, Dec. 12— Virgin of Guadalupe Day, Dec. 24— Noche Buena, Dec. 25— ¡Feliz Navidad!



### **Electric in Mexico**

RV electric sites may have plugs for 50 amp, 30 amp, or 20 amp. But the electrical grid in Mexico frequently runs at a higher voltage than in the US, so we highly recommend that you bring and use a surge protector and a long electric cord to help lower the voltage a little if

needed. We had to use a long extension cord because our coach has a Surge Guard which turns off power to the coach if the voltage is too high. But it does help to protect your coach. Always check the polarity and voltage of the plugs before you attach your cord. This is a good habit anyplace you park as we have found problems in the US and Canada as well. *Cynthia Ponder*

*Mensaje de los Segundos Co-Vicepresidentes  
y organizadores de la 2018 Reunión  
2018 Wagonmasters want your Help!*

As Tony and I begin the early stages of planning for the 2018 Rally, we once again ask for feedback/suggestions from the members on where you would like the 2018 Rally to be held. As stated in Summer Newsletter, we are considering Ensenada on the Pacific coast of Baja or San Carlos/Guaymas in Sonora on the mainland. We'd like to hear what you think of these locations, or if you have suggestions for other locations to be considered please let us know.

There is a lot of work that goes into making the all the arrangements for the Rally. The sooner we can get some idea of where the Rally will be held, the sooner we can determine what we will need to do after the 2017 Rally in San Felipe.

This is your Rally and we'd like to have your suggestions about where we should go. Please email us, Ed Overby, [esoverby@gmail.com](mailto:esoverby@gmail.com) & Tony Sparks, [escapingtoo@gmail.com](mailto:escapingtoo@gmail.com).

*Thanks, Ed and Tony  
(2WildnCrazyGuys)*



*Mensaje de los Directores de los Capítulos de los Escapees  
Escapees RV Club Chapter/BOF Directors*



**2016 Escapade Report**—There were 693 registered rigs. There were 55 walk-ins registered for a total of 748 Escapade registrants! We had an estimated total of 1395 attendees. Additionally, there were numerous daily walk-ins on Community Day! Estimate of first-timers is closer to 60% this year of attendees. And, 46 of our Chapters/BOF's, and Co-Op Parks had representation on the ROW.!

\$2716.14 was donated to "Donuts for CARE"! Alliant Credit Union bought a \$1550 donut! Total CARE \$\$ from Chili Cook-Off = \$6,000.89 and Alliant Credit Union gave back their \$175 first prize award for a grand total of

\$8,892.03 for CARE!!

There were 85 seminars and workshops presented during Escapade!

**Escapade 2017 - Tucson, AZ March 19-24, 2017** We hope to see you there!

**Mark & Dortha Hall, <[chapterdirectors@escapees.com](mailto:chapterdirectors@escapees.com)> Escapees Chapter/BOF Directors**

## Miembros del Capítulo

### **From Membership Chair Maryke Hines:**

As of August 19, 2016 the Chapter has 119 paid-up members. The new membership form on the website is working out very well and so are the payments through PayPal®. The choice to pay by check is not available anymore, which makes it a lot easier and faster for the Membership Chair and the Treasurer.

At the Escapade there was a lot of interest in the Chapter at the Row as well as the Seminar and the Fiesta, according to the Row reps George and Sue Young and our 2017 Rally Wagon-masters Jim and Cynthia Ponder. Tell your Friends about the Rally to San Felipe!

On the Rally Registration Form there is a line to renew or pay for membership, so by the time the Rally Registrations come in, we will have a lot more new members.

For information on membership email me at <Ch8membership@gmail.com>

### **Welcome New members!** (joined since April 2016)

William and Norma Emerick  
Mark and Dawn Ewell  
Janet and Frank Butera  
Paul Williams and Jane Ferri  
Alan and Beverly Tackman  
Jose Ferrer and Jessika Cornell  
Mitch Sayegh and Donalee Curry  
Nick and Emily Fisher

John and Linda Eiden  
Willi and Mary Ann Wall  
Rick and Jaynie Cavin  
Joanna Rodensky and Whitby Ellsworth  
George and Sarah Baker  
Mike and Judy Winslett  
Ken Wadland  
Bobb and Kathy Barnes



## ALGUNAS PALABRAS EN ESPANOL

*Professora Maryke Hines says Let's Learn Spanish!*

### *English:*

How much?

See you tomorrow!

Bottle of beer

Tip

### *Español*

¿Cuánto Cuesta?

¡Hasta mañana!

Botella de cerveza

Propina



## ***Message from the Secretary, Barb Ely***

As you read this, the Escapade in Essex Junction, VT has ended, and folks are “on the road again.” Escapades are always fun providing great entertainment and lots of valuable information to those who have been RVing for a bit and newbies. Seeing friends one has not seen for a while is always an added bonus.

What will be just as much fun, or maybe even better, is the Chapter 8, Mexican Connection trip to San Felipe. There will be a smaller group of people than you find at an Escapade, but you may remember more of their names when you leave! Wild entertainment, delicious food, beautiful scenery, a very welcoming local population, sightseeing trips, games, and fun, fun, fun can be expected! One of the best things we do on Chapter 8 trips is donate money, clothes, school supplies, personal hygiene items to local charities. You will get more info on specific donation items in future newsletters. Oh, and don't forget the auction—what a kick! You just can't imagine how recycling a bottle of wine or tequila can, amazingly, increase its value! It's all in good fun and for a good cause. More information will follow on auction items also.

Another way to make this trip a memorable event is to volunteer. Even if this is your first Mexican Connection trip, there is certainly a job that you can do. It's fun, it's educational, you meet a lot of terrific people, and it makes you feel good. I was a bartender at one of the margarita parties last year in Puerto Peñasco—what a delight that was! I also helped with the Charity Committee; that was heart-warming.

Cynthia and Jim Ponder, our Wagonmasters for the 2017 trip to San Felipe were at the Escapade in VT. At the Mexican Connection Happy Hour, their presentation included a slide show and videos; it was excellent and well received. They have put together a wonderful itinerary; it's going to be a great trip you don't want to miss. Hope to see you in San Felipe!

**Just as an aside:** The picture of the bus in the last newsletter which was taped and being prepared for painting in Puerto Peñasco is ours, John/Barb Ely. It's 30 years old, and its new paint job makes it look as if it was just driven off the showroom floor. We were very pleased!

You will see it in San Felipe.

*Barb*



**Newsletter Story Submissions Invited!** We're looking for stories for future issues! Stories or anecdotes related to a Chapter 8 Rally, activities, stores, restaurants you discovered in the host Mexican town, maybe a museum, getting your RV repaired or painted, renting a 4x4 or the great chicken barbeque place! A humorous story would be great and a couple photographs to enliven your story encouraged! Please email your article ideas and stories to Editor Lin Hines <chap8newsletter@gmail.com>



## Escapade 2016

Many thanks to Chapter 8 Row Reps George and Sue Young for a great job manning the Chapter 8 booth, talking to many Escapees visitors about the Chapter, our annual Rally and Mexico RV travel. We'll be looking for a Row Rep for the 2017 Tucson Escapade. Interested?

The Official Mexican Peso to U.S. Dollar Exchange Rate was **18.05** on 8/16/2016.  
Pemex Magna (Unleaded) \$2.87 US/gal. Pemex Diesel \$2.88 US/gal

**CHAPTER 8 HISTORIAN Ed Overby** is still looking for early Chapter 8 newsletters, Rally materials and Road Logs, photographs etc. The Chapter is at least 32 years old (1985) and some of the documents from the mid-80s onwards must still be out there somewhere. If you have anything from the Chapter's early days, send Ed an email <[esoverby@gmail.com](mailto:esoverby@gmail.com)>

### Escapade 2017-Tucson—March 19-24

Mark your calendars for 2017 Escapade back in Tucson with many exciting things to do and see! This is my old hometown and I love Visiting! They'll be plenty of time between our Chapter 8 Rally in San Felipe in Baja to go down to lots of great places in Baja Sur or move over to the Mexican state of Sonora and explore there before heading to Escapade in Tucson. Look for more information in the Winter 2016 issue!



### 2017 Carnaval in San Felipe!

For any of you staying in San Felipe after the 2017 Rally, San Felipe's Carnaval will be held between 24-28 February 2017. This is usually described as a Mexican "Mardi Gras" with Queens, parades, dances, food and street vendors. Carnaval is celebrated in many Mexican port cities just before the start of Lent.

**New—Mexican Pickup Truck Regulations**—Ed Overby forwarded an email that he received telling about Mexican border authorities, beginning in May 2016, denying vehicle permits on the mainland to 3/4 and 1 ton pickups pulling RVs when the truck is over 7716.7 lbs GVWR. Since travel in Baja does not require a Vehicle Permit (holograma) this should not affect the 2017 Rally to San Felipe but future Wagonmasters need to check this out thoroughly if their Rally will require Vehicle Permits. Check Mexico Mike's website for more information.

### 2017 Rally Charity Chair Appointed

Paul Williams has been appointed by President Orene Brown and Wagonmaster Cynthia Ponder to chair the Charity Committee during the 2017 Rally. Other members will be chosen after Registration. Rally attendees should bring blankets, school supplies, clothing, food donations. Also needed are items to auction off to Rally participants like food, wine, RV stuff, jewelry, tools—anything in good shape that a fellow RVer would pay *Lots of Money* for!! You will hear a lot more about Charity in the Winter Newsletter



# Take an Ultralight flight to really see San Felipe!

Story and photographs by Lin Hines

One of the most exciting things I did on the 2013 Chapter 8 Rally to San Felipe was to take an ultralight flight around the area. Taking off on the flat sandy beach just in front of our RVs at Pete's Camp it was amazing to feel the fast moving air in the open "cockpit" as we arose to about 35 meters altitude and to see the incredible views of Pete's Camp below, El Dorado Ranch nearby and the Cerro El Machoro mountain range as we headed toward downtown San Felipe plus the much more impressive 10,154' San Pedro Martir mountains to the west. Wasn't that expensive for the 15 minute flight and it's a blast! I highly recommend it! Here's a few of the photographs I took that memorable day!





# San Felipe 2016 Photo Album

Photographs by Lin Hines



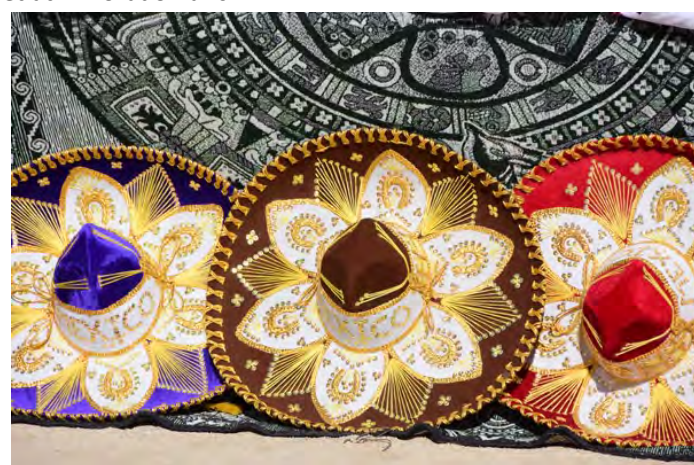
Brown Pelicans on harbor dredge pipe



Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe overlooking Malecón



Saturday Flea market at El Dorado Ranch



## RVers making a Mexican Connection in Rocky Point



Departing from the North and making their way across the Sonoran Desert to enjoy sunny days on Mexican shores, Chapter 8 Mexican Connection members from the Escapees RV Club can be readily spotted in groups this time of year, facing the Sea of Cortez once they've reached their resting grounds. This year, the active adventurers picked Rocky Point for their "Rally on the Beach", hunkering down at The Reef RV Park from Feb. 3rd – 16th.



Wagonmasters Orene & Larry Brown

“We have 60 RVs this year, and 119 people, which is more than the last few years,” explained Wagonmasters Orene & Larry Brown during a recent conversation at Wrecked, which had become the group’s make-shift “hub” that day and was bustling with preparations for both a silent and live auction charity fundraiser. “These 60 spots were filled in just 5 days! With 47 on the waiting list,” Orene detailed, “There are about 65 new people in this group. This says to me that people are not afraid to come to Mexico.” “People were just waiting for registration to open,” Charity Chair Margaret Jenia tells me later, “and the registration that came in from the longest distance was from Iceland where the couple were traveling!”

According to their website, begun initially in 1985 in San Carlos, Sonora, the main goals of the Escapee’s non-profit Chapter 8 Mexican Connection are to:

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



Orene indicates, “a little bit more than 50% of our mission is charity, so every rally we have a Charity Chair.” Jenia, who along with her husband Frank is part of the RV group though have their own “nearly year-round” place right here in Las Conchas, is this year’s Charity Chair. As a whole, the Mexican Connection Chapter 8 has raised between \$4000 – \$8000 USD during their rallies, not to mention in-kind donations. Following careful examination by the Charity Chair of numerous organizations, and visits to churches, food programs, and schools, the Chapter members then meet during the rally to decide exactly where donations will be best distributed. With the auction nearly ready to start behind us, which also represents a good part of the group’s fundraising activities, final numbers regarding donations from this year’s rally weren’t quite ready at the time of our interview. Orene remarks, “With 60 rigs we expect to be closer to the higher number, and a lot of in-kind donations: diapers, cleaning, medical, sports, hygiene, school supplies, housewares, blankets, clothing, lots of stuff...”



Mayor Kiko Munro with Lin & Maryke Hines

In addition to their charitable efforts, the Connection folk know how to explore and have fun! Their week-long activities in Rocky Point have included whale-watching with EcoFun, city tours (in three different groups) with Russ Black of Peñasco Recreation Co., a Jeep trip led by Frank Jenia, golfing, fishing, quads, walking and shopping around the malecon, their own Mardi Gras fiesta [complete with masks and beads – plus “#1” beads for the group’s first-timers], and a Saturday adventure to the Schuk Toak Visitors Center and craters of the Pinacate Biosphere Reserve. Oh, not to mention a number of the Connection members also met Mayor Kiko Munro who attended a Super Bowl function at Wrecked early in the week. The Mayor, regardless to say, eagerly looks forward to the RVers return in the future.

Now in its 31st year, the Mexican Connection Chapter 8 forms part of the over 30 interest groups under the bigger umbrella of the Escapees RV organization, which has a membership of about 42,000 from across the U.S., Canada, and even further abroad. Headquartered in Livingstone, Texas, “Escapees” developed from the original abbreviation of the club’s main concepts Support – Knowledge – and Parking (SKP...go ahead, say it fast) and also, as the organization’s website indicates, “Special Kinds of People who are always ready to help each other.”

Mexican Connection Chapter 8 last visited Rocky Point for their rally in 2012, which was followed by San Felipe (2013), Ensenada (2014), and Kino Bay (2015). “We can only go about 200 miles from the border,” Larry Brown begins to explain, “because there’s no ultra low-sulfur diesel (in Mexico). It’s really a problem – if we could be assured by Pemex that they have low-sulfur diesel we could go further down into Mexico.”

As folk filed in to begin bidding on the silent auction, we started to wrap up our conversation with the Wagonmasters emphasizing, “We were really fortunate that Kelly, at Wrecked at the Reef, donated this place for our auction. It was nice of her to do that. Gus Brown (at The Reef RV Park) has been incredible...INCREDIBLE! We have never been treated so well, anywhere! He’s really been wonderful. The Reef, Wrecked and the restaurant Mare Blu next door have been fabulous.”

“What was the take away for a lot of people, especially the new people as far as Mexico...and Rocky Point in particular?” I ask, “Do you think people will come back?”

“Some are now going to stay for an extra week or two,” chuckles Orene, “and Larry and I will be back for a month in October! A clearly marked visitors center coming into town, with maps and information, would be helpful.” “This (Puerto Peñasco) can also be a starting point for people to launch,” Larry adds.

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Si, Senor! Ya hafta get a “San Felipe—No Bad Days” T-Shirt!!