

LA CONEXIÓN MEXICANA



Escapees RV Club Chapter 8
Member of *Escapees Social Network, Inc.*

Spring 2016 **2016 Puerto Peñasco Rally Wrapup Special Edition** *Volume XXXVII No 1*



Puerto Peñasco Sunset — photo by Jan Biller

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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

Many thanks to Shelly Dominek for doing a great job in her years as Editor of your Chapter 8 Newsletter! Now it's my turn as Editor! As many of you know, my wife Maryke and I have been a member of Chapter 8 for 15 years and have attended 14 Rallies including being Wagonmaster and President twice.

I love writing, Baja and mainland Mexico travel plus photography is my lifelong hobby as well as our former business. Maryke, in addition to being Chapter 8 Membership Chair, will be doing the newsletter layout and graphic design in Microsoft Publisher. You'll notice a few changes and a few new columns as we go along, hopefully all positive! We'd love to hear from you with ideas and your Mexico story, email me @ <Chap8newsletter@gmail.com>



Next Issue Chapter 8 Newsletter Publishing Date and Copy Deadline

The Summer issue will come out mid-June with copy deadline May 28.

Peso Exchange Rate The rate as of 4/7 is 17.63 pesos to the US \$. Remember you might get close at a Mexican ATM, but a bank or Casa de Cambio in Mexico or Southern California is likely to give you ½ to a full peso less. Use an ATM if possible!

Baja Norte Fuel Prices Magna \$2.49 Diesel \$3.06





Funcionarios del Capitulo 8

- President — Orene Brown** orenebrown1@gmail.com
- 1st Vice President 2017 Wagonmasters—Jim and Cynthia Ponder**
2017wagonmasters@gmail.com
- *2017 Assistant Wagonmaster—Ron Sortor** ron3es@gmail.com
- 2nd Vice President 2018 Wagonmaster—Ed Overby** esoverby@gmail.com
- *2018 Assistant Wagonmaster—Tony Sparks** deedokls@gmail.com
- Treasurer—Steve Bufty** stevebufty@yahoo.com
- *Assistant Treasurer—Nancy Mansor Moran** nancynew@outlook.com
- Secretary—Barb Ely** barbwely@gmail.com
- Immediate Past President—Peter Arnold** pmarno@gmail.com
- Membership—Maryke Hines** maryke2@earthlink.net
- Webmaster—Lynn Waite** lwaite@hotmail.com
- Newsletter Editor — Lin Hines** Chap8newsletter@gmail.com
- Historian—Ed Overby** esoverby@gmail.com



** Non-voting Board members*

Chapter 8 Website: www.mexicanconnection08.com

Mensaje del Presidente



Appreciating our Wagonmasters -- Larry and Orene Brown! by Joyce Cook

*The "Mexican Connection" has been a success,
Our Thanks to the Browns we would Like to
express!.*

*'Cause Larry and Orene have gotten no rest,
With them as our Leaders, we've been truly
Blessed.*

*But all of this pressure's left them on the brink,
Of both going crazy and driven to drink!*

*Now shots of tequila should help them to cope,
That our gift is useful is what we do hope.*

*So thanks once again, such a great time we've
had,*

We hope they'll remember Angelina and Brad!

FROM THE PREZ!

Here we are in the 32 year of Chapter 8! That is a lot of rally miles, venues, participants, volunteers and charity work!

At our General membership meeting on February 15th in Puerto Penasco we focused on our most crucial of tasks – gathering a full slate of officers for the coming year and beyond. Long time Chapter 8 member, Past President and Past Wagon Master, Ed Biller dedicated a great deal of time and energy during the rally in the effort to bring new people to leadership positions and continue to invigorate our Chapter with fresh ideas and energy. He was very successful! Thank you Ed!

The 2016 elected officers are: Past President, Peter Arnold; President, Orene Clarke Brown; First Vice President/2017 Wagon Masters, Jim & Cynthia Ponder; Second Vice President/2018 Wagon Master, Ed Overby; Treasurer, Steve Bufty; Secretary, Barb Ely; Historian, Ed Overby; Webmaster, Lynn Waite; Newsletter Editor, Lin Hines; and Membership Chair, Maryke Hines.

Also elected were Ron Sortor, Asst. 2017 Wagon Master; Tony Sparks, Asst. 2018 Wagon Master; and Nancy Mansor, Asst Treasurer.

I look forward to working with you all, and to the 2017 Rally in San Felipe, Baja California!

Happy travels, and we hope to see you down the road,

Orene Clarke Brown, President



2016 Rally On The Beach Puerto Peñasco, Son., MX

Orene and Larry Brown

The 2016 Rally on the Beach is now part of our Chapter history, but the glow lives on!



We had a great group of 60 rigs and 119 people gather at Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument in Ajo, AZ for the Pre Rally activities Feb 3-6. Thirty-three rigs were new to travel with Chapter 8. It was very clear right from the beginning that we had a very enthusiastic and energetic group for our rally!



On Saturday Feb. 6th we traveled in small groups to our Rally destination of The Reef RV Park on Sandy Beach in Puerto Peñasco.

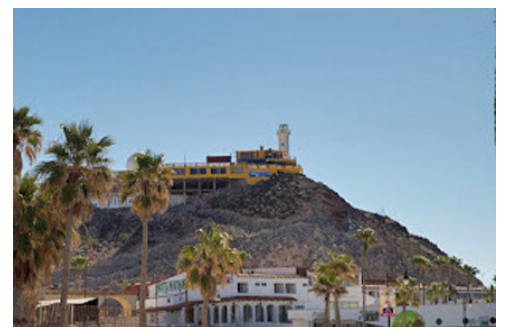
While it had been quite chilly while we were at Organ Pipe, our arrival in Puerto Peñasco landed us in sunny and warm sunshine on the Sea of Cortez.



On our first day we had a Welcome Fiesta at Wrecked at the Reef Bar on the beach next to our park. Free margaritas and some tasty entrees made for a festive get acquainted time for all.



Sunday, Monday and Tuesday we had a sellout for city tours with Russ Black – and the reports from the many participating was that it was a great orientation to the Puerto Peñasco area.



Also on Tuesday was a Four Wheeler trip in the nearby desert led by Chapter 8 member Frank Jenia.



People visited an Oyster farm and enjoyed the oysters. Others admired the huge Fin whale skeleton at the CEDO research center.



On Wednesday the 10th most of our party went on the Whale Watching Cruise aboard the Catamaran Eco Fun 1. More free Margaritas, dancing and merriment, and we even saw whales! *Humpbacks*—>

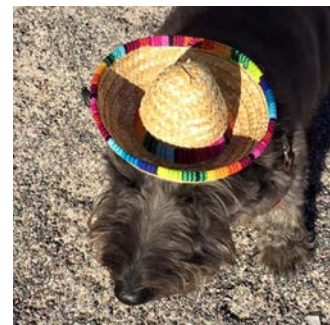




Thursday was our annual Charity Auction; (Charity Chair Margaret Jenia) beginning with a Silent Auction at 11, followed by a rousing live Auction masterfully handled by auctioneer Bill Dominek. Bill also handled the 50/50 raffle to benefit our Charity Fund.



Friday was MARDI GRAS, brought to you by your party planner, Shelly Dominek. Gus Brown, RV Park Manager, blocked off the streets around the Wagon Master's rig, and we had tables and chairs lent to us from Tecate Brewing. We had beads, masks, karaoke, a photo "booth", 2 food wagons from town with Sonoran hot dogs and tacos. We also had Margaritas for a \$1 donation to the Charity Fund. Daisy Cartwright even led some impromptu line dancing! And who knew that Ed Biller, Steve Bufty, Tony Sparks, Bill Dominek and Earl Dawley were such enthusiastic karaoke singers!



Saturday was more sedate, with a tagalong trip touring El Pinacate, a UNESCO World Heritage Site.



The Ch.8 Summer newsletter will have a story about El Pinacate!



Our General Membership Meeting for election of officers for the coming year was held at 4:30PM on Sunday, before the Farewell Dinner at Mare Blu Ristorante.

During Dinner we were serenaded by a Mariachi Band. —->



This is a rally powered by volunteers with dedication to our chapter, great energy, a can do attitude, and who infuse a sense of fun into whatever they take on! We are extremely grateful for the friendship and assistance from so many Chapter 8 members

Thank you: **Shelly Dominek**, our Newsletter Editor, for taking on the T shirt and knapsack project, and the Mardi Gras party planning; **Bill Dominek** for agreeing to be not only the Parking Chair but also head Charity Auctioneer; **Rod Garges** for volunteering to create our Rally Directory; **Frank Jenia** for arranging our Whale Watching Cruise, and for leading our 4 Wheeler and El Pinacate trips; **Margaret Jenia** for chairing the Charity Committee – one of the primary foci of our annual rally; **Lynn Waite**, our webmaster, for all his help in publicizing the rally and getting registration material on line; **Steve Bufty**, our Chapter Treasurer for his budget guidance and incredible patience; Past Presidents and Wagon Master’s **Lin and Maryke Hines** for creating and sharing a very helpful “Wagon Master’s Primer” and being a resource for us; and last but not least, to **Alan and Ellie Dotson** and **Joe and Nikki Wright** for making planning runs to Puerto Peñasco with us and offering help and encouragement in this planning process.

We had many more volunteers step up to help out as activities proceeded – bartending at the Mardi Gras was particularly popular for some reason.



One of the greatest joys for us since joining this Chapter has been the wonderful friendships we have made. On our second trip with the group, in beautiful San Felipe, we were “encouraged” to become more involved – I became secretary and then at the Annual Meeting Larry volunteered us for 2016 Wagon Masters. By getting more deeply involved in the workings of the chapter, our lives were enriched, our friendships deepened, and our commitment to the two fold mission of the Chapter (helping RVers experience and appreciate the beauty and marvelous people of Mexico, & raising money for charitable donations in the town we visit) was solidified.

All in all the 2016rallyonthebeach was a great success. We had fun, made new friends, raised a good sum for local charities as you will see in the Charity Report, and enriched somewhat the coffers of local businesses and beach vendors.

Buenos dias,

Orene and Larry Brown



Photographs in the Rally on the Beach Wrapup by:

Daisy Cartwright, Ed Wells,
Frank Butera, Rick Morgan,
Robert Emmet, Lin Hines and
from the Mexican Connection
Facebook page.

Escapees Chapter 8 The Mexican Connection

Minutes of General Membership Meeting—February 15, 2016 Puerto Peñasco

The Meeting was called to order at 4:45PM by Lin Hines, Acting President. A show of hands was requested of all Chapter members, 1 per rig. The Secretary declared a quorum was present.

The Secretary read the minutes of the General Membership meeting held in Kino Bay in 2015. Mary Chrisenbery moved to accept and Chip Cartwright seconded. The minutes were approved.

Treasurer's report * – Steve Bufty It was moved by Mickey Waite and seconded by Jan Biller to approve. It was approved.

Charity Committee report- Margaret Jenia It was moved by Stan Chrisenbery and seconded by Rod Garges to approve the Report and the allocation of funds. It was approved.

Nomination Chair Report – Ed Biller:

President: It was moved by Larry Brown and seconded by Frank Jenia to nominate Orene Brown as President. It was approved.

Secretary: It was moved by Nancy Mansor and seconded by Ed Overby to nominate Dee Dee Sparks. Dee Dee declined the nomination. Barbara Ely offered herself for nomination. She was nominated by Cathy Henderson and seconded by Larry Brown. It was approved.

Treasurer: Ed Biller nominated and Stan Chrisenbery seconded to re affirm Steve Bufty as Treasurer. It was approved

Asst. Treasurer: Tony Sparks nominated and Donna Patten seconded Nancy Mansor for Asst. Treasurer. It was approved.

Newsletter Editor: It was moved by Maryke Hines and seconded by Donna Patten Lin Hines for Newsletter Editor. It was approved.

Membership Chair: It was moved by Lin Hines and seconded by Mary Chrisenbery Maryke Hines for Membership Chair. It was approved.

Historian: It was moved by Ed Biller and seconded by Tony Sparks Ed Overby for Historian. It was approved.

Webmaster: It was moved by Steve Bufty and seconded by Ed Overby Lynn Waite for Webmaster. It was approved.

2017 Wagon Master: It was moved by Ed Biller and seconded by Charlie Schaffer that Jim and Cynthia Ponder be Wagon Masters for 2017. It was approved. The destination of San Felipe was moved by Ed Biller and seconded by Bob Payne. San Felipe was approved.

Asst Wagon Master 2017: Ron Sortor self-nominated, and Ed Overby seconded. It was approved.

2018 Wagon Master: Tony Sparks nominated Ed Overby, seconded by Ron Sortor. It was approved.

Asst Wagon Master 2018: Tony Sparks volunteered and was approved.

2019 Wagon Master – No nominations

Ed Biller moved to close nominations, Jan Biller seconded.

VCR Report – Lynn Waite extended greetings from Escapees and said he was happy to be here. He reminded the group that Escapees offers a Veteran's discount and Vets should make their status known at dues time.

The 50/50 Raffle – Bill Dominek reported that the raffle had produced \$266 for charity and \$266 for a winner. A name was drawn and the winner was Charlie Schaffer. Charlie immediately returned the cash to the Charity Fund.

The meeting was adjourned at 6pm upon a motion by Donna Patten and seconded by Chip Cartwright. Respectfully submitted,

Orene Clarke Brown, Secretary

**The Treasurer's report will be in the Summer Newsletter (ed.)*

Mensaje de los Primer Vicepresidentes y organizadores de la 2017 Reunión

2017 WAGONMASTERS REPORT



Jim and I want to thank all the Chapter 8 members who voted for us as the 2017 Wagonmasters. And thanks also for voting for our destination choice, San Felipe, Baja California. We went to El Fuerte, Sinaloa in 2006 with Chapter 8 and have loved traveling in Mexico ever since.

We are in San Felipe, Baja California as I write this on our scouting trip along with another couple from that 2006 Rally. We are scouting out some wonderful activities and locations for our 2017 Rally. We expect the Rally to take place during the first 3 weeks of February 2017. Exact dates will be forthcoming as we complete finalizing contracts for the Rally and will be detailed in the next Chapter 8 newsletter.

There will be beachfront camping and we do mean **ON THE BEACH** for all who choose to come along. You need to know that means **NO HOOKUPS**, although water and a dump station are available nearby at the RV Park. You'll be boondocking in a place that sounds, smells and looks like "paradise" every day when you wake up! We are also trying to arrange a few RV hookup sites nearby with an ocean view that will be reserved first for those with medical needs that require electrical power or who are unable to get up the hill at our proposed campground to reach the really nice showers, if needed. These sites will have an extra charge as they are on private lots in the RV park housing community.

Many more details will be in the Summer Chapter 8 newsletter coming out in June and at the 2016 Escapade in Essex, Vermont in July. We will be there to share pictures and ideas about the 2017 Rally at the Chapter 8 Social and on The Row. Registration will begin September 1, 2016.

Looking forward to seeing many of you in July and again next February.

Cynthia and Jim Ponder



San Felipe sunrise, Los Arcos and Hobiecat
Photos by Lin Hines

Informe final del Comité de la Caridad

Final Charity Report by Margaret Jenia, Charity Committee Chair

Escapees Chapter 8 Mexican Connection Charity Committee visited and assisted the following organizations during the week of Feb. 8-15, 2016:

1. Nacimiento Church -New Birth Mexican Mission c/o Patti Jannett feeds 100-150 lunches to the poorest of poor, on Saturdays and offers dental and medical hygiene products. They also have a Holiday Party for the children. Left food and goods for the lunches and funding.
2. San Rafael Community Center c/o Kathleen Duncan —can donate through “Steps of Love.” Helps very needy families with goods and school tutoring/Homework Club. Trying to start a soccer team to interact more with the community and help self worth. Training for adults to acquire jobs and learn English. Offer meals to the needy daily. Left goods and funding.
3. St Jude’s Catholic Church. Medical lab, dental, pharmacy. Priest Santiago Robles Andrade. Left goods and educational supplies for the church to disperse to the needy.
4. Esquela de la Montana, School for disabled children . Left walkers and school supplies.
5. Comunidad de Valores, school for disabled teens and adults. Help for disabled teens and adults training, who make pinatas to sell and earn funds for food for their school. Left funds for food.
6. Casa Hogar – old folks home c/o Patronato Pro Asilo de Ancianos de Puerto Peñasco. Assisted with drive and left cleaning supplies. Contact person Santiago Ruiz
7. George Papanicolau Foundation; offers free PAP smears, breast screening and prostate testing. Left funding to assist this center with cancer screening.
8. Iglesia Apostolica de la En Cristo Jesus A.R. Lunches, tutoring, beds, short term shelter for homeless men. Left household goods, blankets, clothing, shoes, and school supplies.
9. Local schools. Donated used laptop computer and school supplies to local needy elementary school.
10. Red Cross- medical/first aid goods. Left walkers, toilets, over the counter medications, first aid supplies, and blankets.
11. Centro Communication Palabras c/o Cynthia Sandoval. Help with very needy families with goods and tutoring. Supplies meals for the community, vitamins, clothing, household goods, sports opportunities, adult training for self-sufficiency. Helped with funding and goods to help with tutoring and feeding needs.
- 12 Barb’s Dog Rescue- helps dogs in need. Vets, medicine and adoption services provided. Donated cash for dog food.

The committee met and decided on our recommendations for the dispersal of goods and funding after many days of visits to all of the places in this report. Thank you to everyone who was involved in helping with this huge endeavor. It took everyone’s contributions to make it happen.

Thank you to everyone who donated, transported, and organized items for disbursement to the needy of Puerto Peñasco. Also thank you to all who participated in the auctions. We raised \$7,000.00 to disperse to some of the most needy organizations in Puerto Peñasco. We personally visited and helped with the following organizations that received funding and/or goods from Mexican Connection, Chapter 8.

Checks will go to:

Steps of Love c/o San Rafael Community Center for \$2,000
New Birth Mexican Mission c/o Patti Jannett for \$1,500
Partners in Action c/o Cynthia Sandoval for \$2,000
George Papanicolau Foundation for \$500

Cash will go to:

Barb’s Dog Rescue \$500 for an account at dog food store.
Comunidad de Valores \$500 for food for the handicapped persons workshop.

2016 Charity Committee Chair-- Margaret Jenia

2016 Charity Committee Members—Lin Hines, Donna Patten, Barb Ely, Diana Kilby

This email was received from Patti Jannett of the Good News Club after the rally:

I would like to express my sincere gratitude & heartfelt appreciation to each and every one of you. Your generosity will be such a blessing to so many! The toiletries you donated provided 75 small hygiene kits that will be passed out at the medical clinic this Saturday. Last Saturday at the Good News Club, the children enjoyed hot dogs, homemade brownies and an apple! Fresh fruit is something I try to provide and simply can't always do because of the cost. Thank you for making that a reality for many Saturdays in the coming months! I truly enjoyed meeting you and hope to see you again soon in Peñasco! Warm regards, *Patti*



Barb of Barb's Dog Rescue and some of her dogs



Kids working on art projects at the San Rafael Community Center



Visit to the George Papanicolaou Cancer Center



Comunidad de Valores —young handicapped adults making Piñatas.



Baja/Mexico News-----Mama Espinosa dead at 109 years old!

For many of us that have traveled down Highway 1 in Baja California, one of the special places to stop and eat was Mama Espinosa's restaurant, in the small town of El Rosario, which featured big yummy lobster burritos and cold cervezas! Her place was also a small museum of geology and local fossils including giant 3' diameter ammonites and 18" high fossilized horses that her husband discovered and led a National Geographic expedition to find. Way back in the 70's Mama Espinosa directed my family and I in our VW bus out to the area and we found a few smaller fossils shells and ammonites. Our first offroad trip in Baja followed by many more over the years! There's a nice story worth Googling in Western Outdoor News by Gary Graham titled "Vaya con Dios" dated March 24, 2016 with a terrific photo of Mama at her 109 birthday party! Here's the brief story from Discover Baja newsletter from March 15, 2016:



"Ana Grosso Peña, known as "Mama Espinoza," passed away March 12, 2016 at the age of 109. Her famous Mama Espinoza's restaurant in El Rosario has been a favorite of Baja travelers and locals since 1967. She was a beloved figure on the peninsula and we send our condolences to her friends and family."



Escapade 2016—July 24-29 2016 Escapade is in Essex Junction, Vermont near Burlington on the shore of Lake Champlain with lots to do and all of New England to explore. Lots more information at www.escapees.com/escapade. Look for Chapter 8's booth at The Row and be sure to go to and bring your friends to our famous Chapter 8 Social/Fiesta to learn more about the February 2017 Chapter 8 Rally in San Felipe, Baja California!

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 driving to Escapade in Tucson. Look for a lot more information in upcoming issues about our 2017 Rally and 2017 Escapade in Tucson!

Newsletter Story Submissions Invited! We're looking for stories for future issues! Stories or anecdotes related to the 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 in Puerto Penasco! A humorous story would be great and a couple photographs to enliven your story encouraged! email <Chap8newsletter@gmail.com>

From the Chapter Directors—

Hello Chapter 8, As summer quickly approaches, don't forget to come join us in Essex Junction, VT for the 56th ESCAPADE, July 24-29. It is a perfect time to explore New England, catch up with some old friends and meet some new ones.

In the meantime, if you are on the West Coast, don't forget Ware Rally coming up April 10-14 in Yuba City, CA or if you are east of the Mississippi, come join us in Sevierville, TN, April 13-19 for the 2016 SKP ACRE Rally.

As you make your summer travel plans, remember to check out all the Chapter rallies and events. Keep up with all the SKP happenings on the club website.

Wishing you all a safe and fun summer.

Hugs, Mark and Dortha

Chapter/BOF Directors



Miembros del Capítulo

From Membership Chair Maryke Hines:

Chapter 8 has as of this date 172 paid members. I 'm using new group mailing software, MailChimp, so everyone will be emailed a link to the newsletter. In mid-summer, an email will go out to all members with the expiration date of 4/30/2016 or earlier to remind them to renew their membership.

ALGUNAS PALABRAS EN ESPANOL

Let's Learn Spanish!

English:

Good morning

How are you?

Very well

Thank you!



Español

Buenos Días

¿Cómo está Usted?

Muy bien

¡Muchas gracias!

