

LA CONEXIÓN MEXICANA

ESCAPEES RV CLUB CHAPTER 8

Summer 2020

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Website: www.mexicanconnection08.com

Facebook: www.facebook.com/groups/EscapeesMexicanConnection

2021 Wagonmaster email: 2021wagonmaster@gmail.com

(Cover story on Page 12)



Chapter 8 Officers elected February 26, 2020:

President – Kassandra Dennis
Immediate Past President – Ed Dennis
First Vice President / Wagonmaster – Phylana Ladd
Second Vice President - Open
Secretary – Dory Johnson
Treasurer – Steve Bufty
Assistant Treasurer – Ron Wroblewski
Membership – Herb Baldwin
Webmaster – Bill Johnson
Historian – Herb Baldwin
Newsletter Editor – Cece Wroblewski

The purpose of Chapter 8 is 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.

Refer to the Chapter 8 website for the Chapter Standing Rules and Bylaws.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE by Cassandra Dennis



Mexican Connection - Disconnection - 2021 Rally Postponed

Sadly, the Covid-19 pandemic has changed the lives of everyone on both sides of the border... and in an abundance of caution for all concerned, the Chapter 8 Executive Board has decided to postpone the February 2021 rally to February 2022. The 2022 rally will include all the same events and locations planned by the Wagonmaster for the 2021 rally.

Recently, a resurgence of the pandemic has extended the official border closures of Canada and Mexico. Also, the Executive Board has concerns about potential issues that may lead to future border closings.

Creating a Mexican Connection Rally requires lots of planning, scouting trips by our Wagonmasters to Mexico to check roads, find new adventures and pay cash deposits for group rates at campgrounds, special events and meals. Chapter 8 has excellent rapport with the management of the three main rally venues chosen by the Wagonmaster. To secure lower group rate reservations, Chapter 8 must make significant cash advances... which are not always fully refundable. Those who have travelled with Chapter 8 experience more of the "real Mexico" for far less than commercial tours since we are a non-profit organization of the Escapees RV Club.

In addition, the Escapees RV Club recently has provided its Chapters with necessary Escapees Covid-19 Social Distancing protocol and Special Release of Liability Forms to be signed by all who attend events during this pandemic. To further complicate things there are also early expenses for attendees such as the requirement for each rig to have CB radios to provide better communication between rigs when travelling in remote areas, adding insurance coverage for travelling in Mexico and the mandatory Mexican liability insurance.

Therefore, postponing the 2021 rally to a time when pandemic issues would be resolved was the safest and most economically practical course for all concerned.

It is the primary purpose of Chapter 8 to introduce new people to RV travel in Mexico... and we have created a way to fulfill that obligation for 2022 with an expansion of a trip that was designed a few years ago. Many of the folks who have taken that first timers Mexican Connection Caravan enjoyed it immensely. Many of you new to Chapter 8 are also very excited to join us on our next rally.

The interest for the 2021 rally was very high and we look forward to seeing all of you at our Chapter 8 **Mexican Reconnection Rally 2022**.

Kassandra

Kassandra Dennis, President
Escapees RV Club, Chapter 8
The Mexican Connection

Message from 2021 Wagonmaster by Phylana Ladd

Hola Senoras y Senors! Are you ready?!
It's time to announce the... 2022 Rally!



❤️ 2022 Baja - Making the Mexican Connection ❤️

Dates of the Rally*:

Feb. 3, 2022 – Feb. 19, 2022

Locations:

Potrero County Park, Potrero, California, USA

Zoológico Parque del Niño Jersey,
Valle de Guadalupe, Baja California, MX

La Jolla Beach Camp
Punta Banda, Baja California, MX

Add-on Trips:

Guerrero Negro (Whale Watching)

Playa Santispac

San Felipe

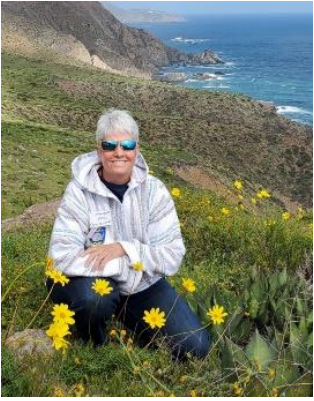
Possibly others...

Pricing* for the Rally: \$739 per rig (2 people), and \$629 per rig (solo)
Registration TBD

*Dates & Pricing may change

. If you have any questions about the Rally, please feel free to contact me via 2021wagonmaster@gmail.com.

A Word from the Wagonmaster...



Hello everyone! I hope this finds you all well, healthy, and happy! I had so hoped that we'd be announcing our 2021 Rally in this newsletter, but due to the Covid-19 virus, the Board has decided that it would be best to cancel the 2021 Rally. However, we will just plan on moving everything we had planned for 2021 to 2022! I have volunteered to continue as the Wagonmaster, and Shari Nova will also continue as the Assistant Wagonmaster.

This year when I came on the 2020 Adventure Rally it was my first time traveling with a group, and it was my first time taking my RV into Mexico. And I must say, I absolutely fell in love with both the folks on the Rally and Baja Mexico! Thanks to Chapter 8, I now feel very comfortable traveling in Baja, and I can't wait to go back! I hope that each of you will have an opportunity to join us for the 2022 Rally! It may very well change your life, as it has mine.

Introducing the Assistant Wagonmaster...

I'd like to take this opportunity to introduce our fabulous Assistant Wagonmaster, Shari Nova. Like me, this year's 2020 Baja Adventure Rally, was also Shari's first time traveling with Chapter 8. We are both looking forward to bringing you a fabulous 2022 Baja - Making the Mexican Connection Rally! I am so very grateful that she agreed to become, and stay on, as the Assistant Wagonmaster!

Hola Amigos y Amigas, me llamo Shari Nova.



Hi Everyone,

It's been a few months (or years??) since I returned from Baja, but the excitement and novelty of the 2020 Baja Adventure Rally still lingers. My fascination with Mexico started several years ago when I took a few Spanish classes at our local college in Glenwood Springs, CO. I was hoping to visit Mexico and wanted to be able to ask basic questions and learn enough to get by. Later on, I volunteered with a non-profit organization tutoring Spanish speakers, helping them learn English. That work touched my heart and renewed my desire to visit our neighbors to the south, learn their traditions and embrace the culture.

Life marched on, and in the winter of 2019, I ran into a nomad friend who had been to San Felipe with the Escapees Mexican Connection. She raved about how fun and easy it was for a solo lady to go with such a caring group. I was sold, so I joined the Facebook group and awaited my turn to venture south with my RV and new-to-me friends. Maybe I should have been more nervous (ignorance is bliss?) but I trusted those who have been involved with the organization to help me make the trip safely. My trust was well-placed. Everyone, first-timers and repeat travelers alike, went out of their way to make me feel included and welcome.

A few days into our magical journey, I remember being overcome with joy and respect for our hosts, the country we were visiting and the people I was with. I commented to Phylana that I'd love to help with the next event. (Honestly, neither wine nor margaritas were involved!). I wasn't sure at what level I could be of service; I just knew I wanted to continue the tradition and mission of the Escapees Chapter 8 Mexican Connection, and here I am today your Assistant Wagonmaster.

Now it's my turn, and I couldn't be happier! I invite you to join us in 2022. The Rally venues are the same as 2020, but the experiences will be unique. Our Wagonmaster, Phylana, has added some new activities to the mix, but retains the tried and true connections we have with our friends in the Valle de Guadalupe, Ensenada, and La Jolla. You will have an opportunity to taste some of Mexico's best foods and wines, learn about animal care at the Zoo, and relax on the beach at La Jolla. More importantly, if Phylana and I, and our wonderful group of volunteers have it their way, you will not only have a great time, you will be confident to return on your own. With your involvement, we can make 2022 one to remember!

Special Thanks to the Chapter 8 Team!!

I also want to give a Shout Out to the wonderful team that supports both Shari and I in all of the many, many details and tasks that are required to make a Rally happen!

Billy Johnson, who does such a fantastic job with not only the Facebook page, but also the mexicanconnection08.com website, AND the emails we all receive from the Chapter. He was also a tremendous help to me as I developed and sent out the Survey.

Cece Wroblewski is our Newsletter Editor, and that's a never-ending job! She did a super job with our Spring Newsletter, and I can't wait to see our Summer Newsletter!

Herb Baldwin, who serves as both our Historian and Membership Board member, and has also taken the lead in writing articles representing our Chapter in the Escapees Magazine. That is a huge responsibility, and I am very grateful for his expertise and willingness to take on such a task.

Dory Johnson, our Secretary, does a superb job of ensuring that all of the Board communications and activities are accurately and thoroughly recorded and reported on. No small feat, I might say!

Steve Buffy, Treasurer - thank you for all of your much-needed guidance and input. This Chapter 8 rookie is still learning!!

Ron Wroblewski, Assistant Treasurer ... this is all your and Cece's fault!! Thank you for sharing your wonderful stories about traveling with Chapter 8 and encouraging me to join you!! And thank you for your always thoughtful questions and feedback!

Shari Nova, Assistant Wagonmaster – what can I say besides, thank you for everything!

Last, but not least, Kassandra and Ed Dennis, President(s) and Past Wagonmasters. A very special thanks to you both for all of your enthusiasm, love for Chapter 8, and willingness to pass the torch and help us newbies "get it right"! Thank you!

I also want to thank Paul and Vicki Kinard for agreeing to be group leaders again, and Jim McEver and Connie Farley for being our Parking Committee Chairs again! Both of these roles are critical to the success of the Rally, and I can't thank you enough for committing to our 2022 Baja – Making the Mexican Connection Rally!!

A Little About the Rally...

The locations of the Rally were specifically chosen as they provide, we believe, the best opportunity to safely and gently introduce new members to authentic Mexico. These locations also provide us with an abundance of opportunities for everything from fantastic wine tours to city tours to just "chillin' on the beach". Even those who have traveled to these locations before greatly enjoy going back and seeing old friends.

For those who've never been able to make the Rally before, from the Park in Potrero, to the Border Crossing at Tecate, to the "Zoo", and finally to La Jolla Beach Camp, you will have the opportunity to meet and mingle with



Zoo Manager and Zookeepers

some of the kindest, most generous and loving, authentic Mexican people. You will also have ample opportunities to enjoy the Mexican culture, traditions, beauty, and food. Additionally, you will begin to learn how to travel in Mexico with your RV. We've also built plenty of free time into our itinerary for you to just relax and do nothing, if you so choose.



Folklorico Dancers

Here are just a few of the pictures from the 2020 Rally. Check out our [Mexican Connection Website](#) for many more!



La Jolla Beach Camp



Charity



La Bufadora



Campo Rene Beach



Playa Santispac

From our Rally attendees...

Tom and Damaris Bartlett "My wife Damaris and I joined the Mexican Connection in 2019 and were so impressed and enjoyed the adventure so much that we signed up again in 2020... It was a wonderful experience and we recommend signing up for the 2021 Mexican connection to all those that want a safe, educational adventure in Baja, Mexico."

Cece Wroblewski - "This Baja adventure is worth a repeat! We have gone twice and each time we've become more self-assured and more adventurous. ... It's not Cancun, it's the real Mexico. Join us in 2021."

Ron Wroblewski - "This coming February will be my 3rd trip to the Baja with Escapees Chapter 8. Why do I continue to go? ...I have met many wonderful RVers on these trips that I want to see and participate with again. ... And the assistance through works of charity we do for the disadvantaged in Mexico is so appreciated. ... I hope to meet many new to Mexico RVers on our trip in February 2021. Will you be one of them?"

Phylana Ladd - "This was my first trip into MX with my RV, and I must say, I completely fell in love with all things Baja! I can't wait to go back! I hear the crystal clear waters calling my name!"

Final Thoughts...

As I mentioned above, with the COVID-19 virus, social unrest, and just general uncertainty all around us, I want to let you know that we are still very much planning on the trip to Mexico, we'll just have to wait until 2022. Of course, one of our main objectives is to ensure the safety of our members, therefore we will continue to keep a close eye on the situation in both the US and Mexico. Additionally, we will continue to work with our friends in Mexico to ensure that when it's time, we'll be able to travel safely, and have places to go when we get there.

For now though, ❤️ 2022 Baja - Making the Mexican Connection ❤️ is a GO!

For those who may be interested in any of the Add-On Trips, we didn't forget you! Please see the other article in this Summer Newsletter about those trips. And for those members who won't be traveling further into Baja, no worries, there are usually several members who go back to the States right after the Rally ends in Ensenada. So, you'll be able to travel back to the border together – if you wish. But, it's also a great way to test out your new skills of traveling in Mexico and make the short trip back to Tecate on your own; it's only 70 miles! No need to make any decisions either way until the end of the Rally.

Keep an eye out on your inbox and on the Facebook page and website for ongoing updates and additional information!

We do so hope to see you for the 2022 Rally!

Phylana Ladd
2021/2022 Wagonmaster
2021wagonmaster@gmail.com

Shari Nova
2021/2022 Assistant Wagonmaster
AsstWagonmaster@gmail.com

Why a Zoo, you may ask...

When I signed up last year for the 2020 Baja Adventure Rally, I have to admit, I wondered about “going to a zoo”, as I'm not actually a big fan of zoos. I love animals, even the creepy, crawly ones, but zoos, meh. BUT I am so incredibly glad that Zoológico Parque del Niño Jersey was our first stop in Mexico!!

I have traveled in other countries, was stationed in Japan for two years, and have learned that every country has its own way about it. Baja, like all the others, has its own way, too. I expected to like Baja, I had no idea that I would love Baja! And it all started at the Zoo.

My first thought when we walked through the gates, was “Wow! What a beautiful Zoo!” But I quickly learned that Zoológico Parque del Niño Jersey is so much more than a “zoo”. It's an educational center, a giant playground, a place for family gatherings, an animal rehabilitation/rescue center, and it's filled with “zookeepers” who don't just “feed and water” the animals. It feels much more like an animal sanctuary than a zoo. They have dedicated their lives to ensuring the animals in their care are healthy, happy, enriched, and living as close to a natural life as can be provided in a controlled environment. During much of the Covid pandemic contingencies, many of the Zookeepers have actually stayed at the Zoo 24/7 just to ensure the animals still receive all the care and enrichment they need. Especially since overnight, their world changed, too.

Speaking of the zookeepers, here are just a few of them.



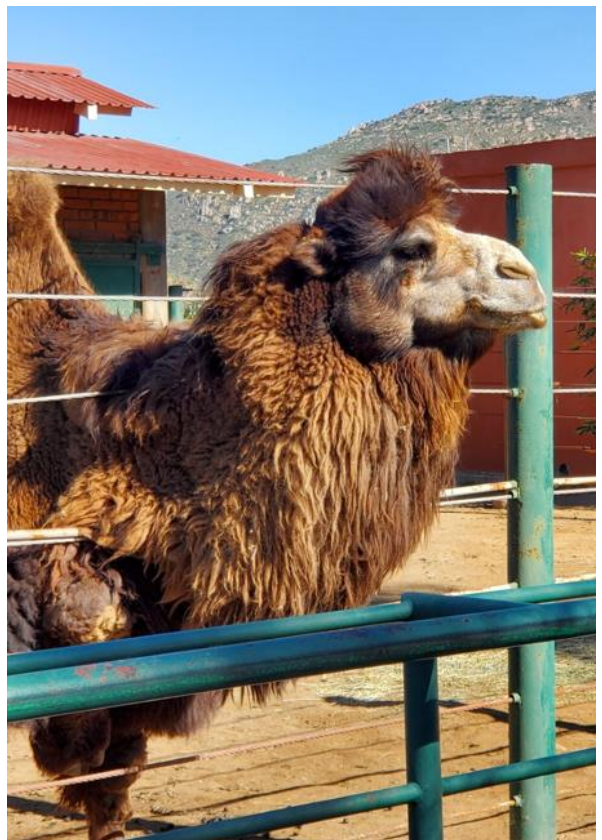
Left to Right: Carlos, Antonio, Stephanie, Ms. Perlita and her husband Mario, and Arturo.

Please enjoy the following pictures as I share just a tiny part of my visit and being a Zookeeper for a Day!



Walter, the Emu, named by our very own, Ron Wroblewski, and the Zookeeper, Stephanie. Walter loves being sprayed by water! Stephanie knows what every single animal enjoys and needs to live a full and enriched life in the zoo.

Such a handsome fella! This guy is a very tall two-humped camel, who loves attention!



Buba, the tiny water buffalo! Buba was abandoned by her mother at birth, but aside from being extremely small, she is very healthy. The Zoo veterinarians keep a close eye on her, and all the animals in the Zoo. Buba, LOVES being taken on walks, and being petted by all who see her.



As part of the daily interaction with the Zoo attendees, Ms. Perlita holds Blondie, the golden boa constrictor, while this young fella enjoys ice cream and pets a huge snake!



Blondie, just hanging out on Jim McEver's back. Look at how gorgeous she is!



Carlo and Blondie, as you can see, they have a very good relationship! Sue Morgan waits her turn to hold Blondie.



Carlos, teaching how to trim the iguana's claws. The participants on the Be a Zookeeper for a Day tour are then given an opportunity to trim his claws. All the while, Carlos is keeping a close eye on his reptilian charge to ensure no harm comes to him, or the participants



Carlotta – confiscated as a 4-6 week old by the Mexican authorities; she was taken out of a crate at an airport where she hadn't had anything to eat or drink for well over 24 hours. She was turned over to the manager of Zoológico Parque del Niño Jersey, Ms. Perlita, who immediately began life saving measures to bring Carlotta back to health! Today she is a thriving, rambunctious, healthy cub, thanks to the staff at Zoológico Parque del Niño Jersey!



Stephanie, the Zoo's Enrichment Manager for all of the animals, is working with Carlotta to challenge her and provide enrichment that will simulate what she would experience in the wild.



Be A Zookeeper for a Day!!! This little fella LOVES to sing La Cucaracha, and he loves necklaces!



In four days, we became as familia. Carlos, the herpetologist, and Stephanie, the Enrichment Manager. THIS is why we all loved going to the “Zoo”!

I can't wait to see YOUR faces as you fall in love with the Zoológico Parque del Niño Jersey!



Phylana Ladd
2021/2022 Wagonmaster
2021wagonmaster@gmail.com

Cover Picture – Off-Roading Trip

One morning a group of off-roading enthusiasts took off for the hills and beach for some fun and games in their 4-wheel drive vehicles. Some of the drivers and passengers, led by a local guide, are shown in the cover photo. Here are a few more pictures of the magnificent scenery they drove through.



Now...About Those Add-On Trips!!! By Wagonmaster Phylana Ladd

As you may remember, the goals for Chapter 8 include introducing new members to Mexico, and helping them feel comfortable exploring Mexico on their own once the Rally has ended. For many reasons, these past few years we have been staying in the Baja, Mexico region, and the 2022 trip will be the same. That said, Baja is absolutely brimming with beauty not found elsewhere, and it's waiting on YOU to discover it!

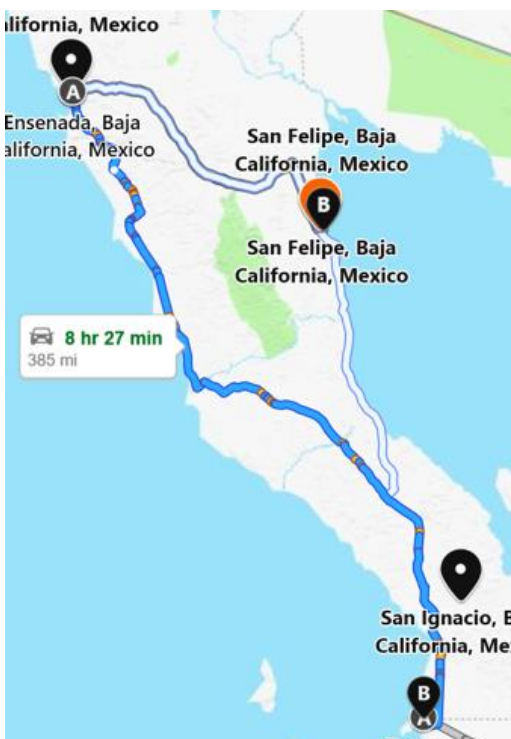
The add-on trips are not part of the Rally, but generally speaking, most everyone will continue on to at least one other destination before returning to the US. The add-on trips will be led by team member volunteers who've made the trip at least once before, so you don't have to worry about how and where to go! Also, no need to worry about making camping or other reservations prior to arrival at any of the add-on trip campgrounds, for whale watching, etc., we're in Baja during their "off season".

In fact, no need to worry about making any decisions right now at all! There will be ample time towards the end of the Rally to learn more about each trip, and join up with other travelers, if you so desire. And, who knows, you may want to do them all! I did!



Guerrero Negro – Whale Watching and Salt Mining

Following the 2022 Rally, we expect that we'll have members who will want to go south to Guerrero Negro, which is located approximately 400 miles south of Ensenada, for the whale watching, which is AMAZING! But, it's the journey to Guerrero Negro where you'll begin to see a whole new aspect of Baja. From nearly empty beach camps, to an abandoned geodesic dome, to a campground where horses roam free, to cave drawings, the trip from Ensenada to Guerrero Negro is stunning! This is when you'll definitely want to become familiar with the "Traveler's Guide to Camping Mexico's Baja: Explore Baja and Puerto Peñasco with Your RV or Tent" book that you will receive during the Rally.



Sights along the way!





There are several campgrounds to choose from in Guerrero Negro, we commonly use Mallarrimo RV Park, which is in town, and Mario's Tours and Restaurant, which is just outside of town. Both campgrounds do offer some amenities.

You can sign up for whale watching and sight-seeing tours at both RV parks when you arrive, no need to prearrange these tours. Also, there are many other guides available throughout the town to choose from. In addition to the whales, there is also an enormous salt mining operation that is fascinating to see! In fact, the salt is one of the reasons the whales go to Guerrero Negro to birth their calves.

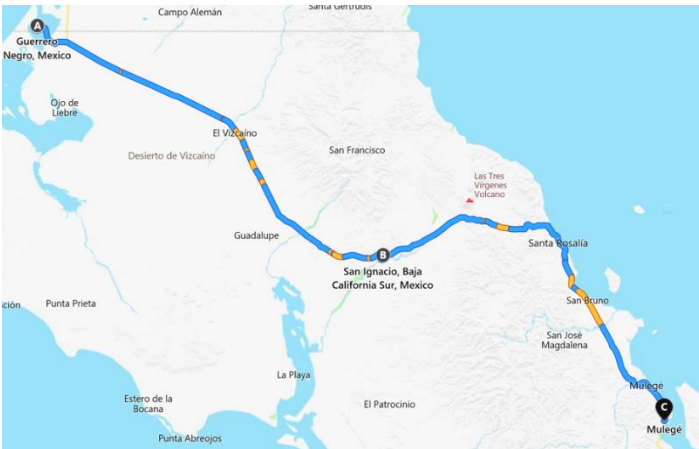


Mario's Restaurant,
Guerrero Negro



Playa Santispac

Another add-on trip is Playa Santispac, which is approximately 194 miles southeast of Guerrero Negro. Most travelers will want to stop for at least one night near San Ignacio, which is home to the very old and beautiful San Ignacio Mission, as well as a lovely little town square surrounded by fun shops, food, and beautiful scenery. Additionally, along the way is Santa Rosalia, which also offers some pretty unique points of interest, such as a church designed by AG Eiffel!



River in San Ignacio



San Ignacio Mission

Santa Rosalia



Santa Rosalia Church designed by AG Eiffel

(Tom & Damaris Bartlett)



Playa Santispac!

Next stop, Playa Santispac! Even in the rain, it's amazing!



Playa Santispac beach front RV parking!

This is boondocking life at its finest! There are two restaurants right on the beach, Armando's and Anna's. Armando's provides live music, food, and drinks. Anna's is known for its amazing baked goods and is also a Mexican diner that offers authentic Mexican meals. Anna's also has WiFi available for purchase. Every morning fresh seafood, homemade breads and desserts, and a variety of fruits and vegetables are brought to the beach by local business owners. And of course, t-shirts, jackets, you name it, they have it, sellers also come to the beach. Fresh water, including reverse osmosis water, is available for delivery, and there's a dump site on location. Fuel, both gas and diesel, is just up the road.



Fast Eddy and the Slow Learners bring the crowds into Armando's monthly! Local musicians perform the rest of the time.

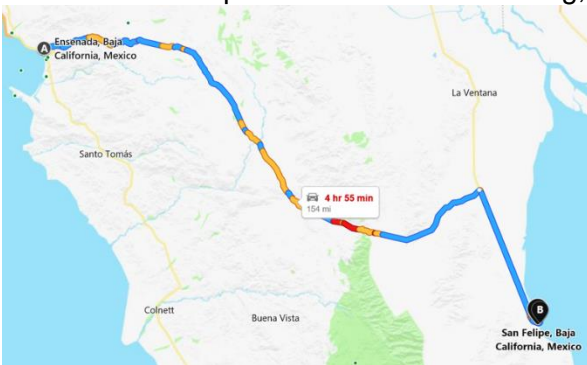


Simply amazing sunsets. I can't wait to go back!

The view looking towards Playa Santispac the south

San Felipe

For those who want a shorter add-on trip, San Felipe is 154 miles from the Ensenada, and only 138 miles to the US. San Felipe offers both boondocking, and full hook-up sites.



If you're looking for a place to hang out on the sand, eat at a variety of restaurants, and shop till you drop, San Felipe is your place! It's a fishing community of approximately 20,000 residents, which is located on the northwest side of the Sea of Cortez. It has a large ex-pat community, and many seasonal visitors from the US and Canada.



Beautiful street art in San Felipe



Eat, drink, and be merry!

I hope you will have the opportunity to join us on at least one of the add-on trips!

Phylana Ladd, 2022 Wagonmaster
2021wagonmaster@gmail.com

Charity...the Heart of Chapter 8 Mexican Connection



In addition to the great fun that we have in Mexico during our rallies, a big part of who we are is experienced through our charitable activities. Over the years Chapter 8 has donated significant amounts of time and money to a multitude of different needy groups in Mexico. At the 2020 Baja Adventure Rally alone we donated close to \$10,000 to seven different organizations, and on top of that we donated several hundred hours of combined volunteer effort at Zoológico Parque del Niño Jersey while being a Zookeeper for a Day, delivering food items to the needy in Punta Banda, and helping with construction, cleaning, and care giving at Casa de Abuelos in Ensenada. And that doesn't include all the time and effort that is required to sort, stage, and prepare for the Auction, which is our biggest fundraiser. The joy in our charitable work though comes from working shoulder to

shoulder with each other and our Mexican friends. It's such a wonderful feeling to revisit the different people and places we've helped over the years.

Also, this year, as in year's past, we enjoyed the local community's Folklorico Dancers. These are at-risk





children who range from ages 4 to 18. They spend several evenings each week practicing with the hope of being given the opportunity to participate in competitions and shows like we enjoyed. Chapter 8 helps to pay for some of their costumes. And as you can see from the pictures, they are incredibly elaborate and ornate.

Check out our 2020 Spring Newsletter for more great pictures and stories about our auction and hands-on activities.

The 2022 Baja – Making the Mexican Connection Rally will also be another year of noteworthy charitable activities. Though we don't know yet which groups we'll be helping, you can rest assured that Chapter 8 will continue to lead with our heart as we make the Mexican connection.



Phylana Ladd
2021/2022 Wagonmaster
2021wagonmaster@gmail.com

YOUR
GREATNESS
IS NOT
WHAT YOU
HAVE, IT'S
WHAT YOU
GIVE.

Treasurer's Report April 2020 by Steve Bufty

Donations from Mexican Connection attendees were greatly appreciated by local groups and by the Escapee CARE project. See the thank-you letters sent to our Chapter.



A Thank You from CARE:

Escapees CARE, Inc.
155 Care Center Drive
Livingston, TX 77351



Phone 936-327-4258
FAX 936-327-2388
www.escapeescare.org

April 22, 2020

Ed Dennis
Chapter 8 Mexican Connection
c/o Steve Bufty
169 Rainbow Dr. #6913
Livingston TX 77399 USA

Dear Ed:

This letter is to confirm our receipt of your donation of \$1,000.00 to Escapees CARE, Inc. Your total donations have reached \$ 24,005.01. All donations are greatly appreciated by the participants, caregiver, volunteers and staff here at CARE. We would not be able to provide the services we do without the generosity of donors like you.

When a donor's total donation(s) reaches \$100, they will receive a letter with a CARE pin in recognition of their donation(s). Those whose total donations reaching \$1,000 will receive our larger CARE pin and have their name placed on a plaque and added to our \$1,000+ donor board. As recognition for a donors support and for donations reaching \$5,000+, a special name plaque will also be placed on our Honor Donor Board in our front lobby.

Escapees CARE, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization and no goods or services were provided in exchange for this tax deductible donation(s).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Russ Johnson".

Russ Johnson
Executive Director

P.S.

Please check Escapees CARE, Inc. on Facebook for current and future events at CARE.

And a Thank You from the Zoo:



Ensenada, B.C. April 17, 2020

Dear Steve Bufty
The Mexican Connection Chapter 8. Escapees RV Club

On behalf of Zoológico Parque del Niño Jersey A.C, we are more than thankful for the generous amount of \$2300usd that The Mexican Connection donated to the zoo. Our institution is always excited to extend its arms and welcome past, current and new members year after year. It is an honor to exchange stories and knowledge about wildlife with each and every one of you and we hope to keep on meeting with you all for future years to come.

We appreciate everything that the Mexican Connection does for our community. It is really an honor for us that you choose Valle de Guadalupe as one of your favorite destinations to bring your generosity and help to it's people that are in need.

Right now, during these tough times, the money donated will truly aid us in the care and well being of our animals. Truly, the zoo is not complete without your yearly visits and cooperations. Thank you so much for your care and trust.

Sincerely,

Perla Jimenez de Laborin, on behalf of the entire Zoológico del Niño Jersey A.C. staff.

Directora General
Zoológico del Niño Jersey, A.C.
Perlazoojersey@gmail.com
(664)674 2248

Historian Report by Herb Baldwin

Here is a story from the newsletter 28 years ago:

The Rally in Rhyme by Dee Pittenger

From the April 1992 La Conexion Mexicana

Atencion! Atencion por favor

We're Ron & Dee, number three-four-four-four

With a brief report on the Mexican Connection

We'll try to do it, section by section

We met in Nogales at Resort Mi Casa

Got visas-pesos-insurance, tortillas and salsa

Traveled in convoys and braved Mexican entry

Tried out our Spanish on the Senorita and a sentry

Bought gas an' tried to convert gallons to liters

Gave up since we never even learned yards to meters

Gaped at the cactus, gasped at the view

Arrived at San Carlos – at last – whew!

We were welcomed, hugged and parked in our place

And told to adjust to the Mexican pace

Had an Hour of Friendship and greeted new Skips

Shared some goodies and had a few nips

We went in a boat hoping to catch some fish quick

And some of us learned what it felt like to be sick

The view was spectacular and well worth the trip

Even tho' the boat tended to rock, roll and dip

A trip to Guaymas with a Mexican Connection guide

Was a learning experience and a heck of a bus ride

Meeting teacher Cynthia was inspiring and sweet

Helping with the school was gratifying and neat

Tripping to Alamos was the next scheduled event

We all made it further south without even a dent

We "pigged" out and toured homes and really had fun

Went to the bakery and strolled in the sun

At Copper Canyon, Skip-sharing took on a new meaning

And we bonded while bus and train were careening

All too soon, it was over and time to depart

But the Mexican Connection will remain in our heart



Send me what you have

If you have any documents that you feel should be preserved in our archive, please send them along to me as well at herbsells@gmail.com.

Hola from the webmaster by Bill Johnson

Within just a few hours of sharing the announcement of the 2021 Rally on the Chapter website here are some statistics generated on our webpage driven from this share.

We had 200 visitors from 4 countries (US, Mexico, Canada and yes we occasionally get views from the Czech Republic after posting to Xscapers, SKP or Boomers... sometimes Asian countries also).



Pages they viewed:

2021 Rally Announcement	293
Welcome!	10
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CB Radio Systems, a Mexican Connection Essential... Why???	1

This is one of our biggest days of viewing since I added the plug-in on the site that keeps track of these things. I think we can say there was a lot of interest on the Rally Announcement and it encouraged people to go see what was going on.

FACEBOOK PAGE: [Escapee Mexican Connection](#)

WEBSITE: <http://mexicanconnection08.com>

EMAIL: Ch8comms@gmail.com

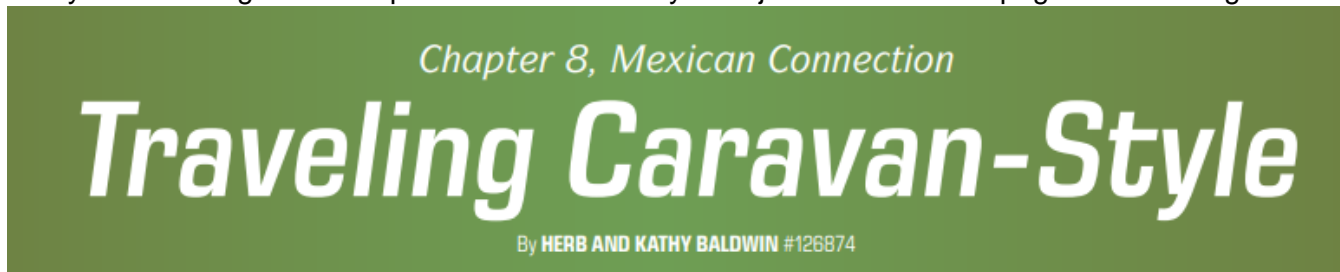
Check out the Photo Gallery on our outstanding Website



News

Chapter 8 in the Escapees Magazine by Herb & Kathy Baldwin

Check out the July 2020 Escapees magazine on the Escapees.com website or in your mailbox. Herb and Kathy turned in a great description of our 2020 Rally in Baja Mexico. Turn to page 54-55 for a good read!



<https://member.escapees.com/members/magazinearchive/2020/4-July-August/July2020.pdf>

Members' Stories from Mexican Connection 2020

First time or Repeat trip – It's worth it! By Connie Farley

Let's not forget what the purpose of Chapter 8 is.

Especially important to my thinking is: "For members to feel comfortable in Mexico."

In the past 3 years, yes, we have repeated the same venues but oh how we have expanded our knowledge of those locations. On a very positive note, I can quite honestly say I have friends in Baja California!

You don't get that by hanging out in the social hot spots and trendy shopping districts of Mexico. The way CH 8 experiences Baja California is by interacting with the welcoming citizens and large expatriate community, especially our friends at the Park Zoologico, and La Jolla, Punta Bunda.

Negotiating our rig beneath the campo arch is like a palm plant high 5 of well done.

Remember life isn't always about me, (even during our current pandemic), but about our ability to make a contribution to others.

After 3 years of the same venues our overnight camps hosts have come not only to smile at our RV peculiarities but to totally appreciate the positive impact we have made on their life. Imagine how we gringos have improved on our image.

IMO, if you wish for a safe visit to a foreign country certainly consider joining CH8. We particularly cater to first-timers - we will make your first visit to Mexico not your last!



Almost Nothing to Report! By Dory Johnson

Not much happening here in Covidlandia. We've been staying in, only venturing out where we feel those around us are being cautious and respectful of distancing and mask wearing.

Thankfully, we have a great mall where we walk 3 miles most days before the stores open. It's a great escape from the Texas heat until the day arrives when we can bask on the temperate Mexican beaches again.

We have also been Working at church unloading 50 lb bags of fresh produce, beans and rice which we split into bags for area families in need. This has been a great mood lifter for us and has helped us build some muscles I had forgotten about in the process.

Finally, we've had some exterior work done at our home. Fresh paint and fence refurbishment.

Looking forward to seeing all the amazing Mexican Connection folks at the next Chapter 8 Rally!

So, really, nothing to report. 😊

Update - Bill and Dory are now proud lease-holders at the Evergreen CoHo SKP park on the Olympic Peninsula in Washington. They will spend summers in this beautiful environment. Even in the short time they have spent there this summer, they have recruited two other residents who are interested in joining Chapter 8 on the next Mexican Connection!



Want to learn Spanish? By Shari Nova

Learn Spanish before our Mexican Connection Rally

¿Sabías? Did you know? You can start learning or practicing your Spanish for free? It's easy, fun and a great way to build confidence before the Baja Mexican Connection Rally.




DUOLINGO.COM

Learn a language for free

Learn languages by playing a game. It's 100% free, fun, and scientifically proven to work.

<https://www.duolingo.com/>

How I spent the quarantine by Mary Campbell

Mary Campbell  I'm new. Spent the spring and summer in Las Cruces New Mexico working on 5 houses for Habitat for Humanity and watching spring come alive. Then the Pandemic hit and we sheltered in place till returning home to Michigan July first.



New Escapee and new Chapter 8 members by Betty and Jack LeHew

My husband and I are new Escapees members, we recently retired (early at age 58) and bought a 40 foot 5th wheel to travel full time for 1/2 the year. The other 1/2 the year we have a condo in Cabo San Lucas, that will be ready in Jan or Feb of 2021 (new construction). We would love to attend the rally, but it will depend on our closing date.

I just stumbled on your chapter and I'm curious about your chapter and would love to learn more and maybe become members, if it's right for us.

Our Summer, so far By Ron Wroblewski

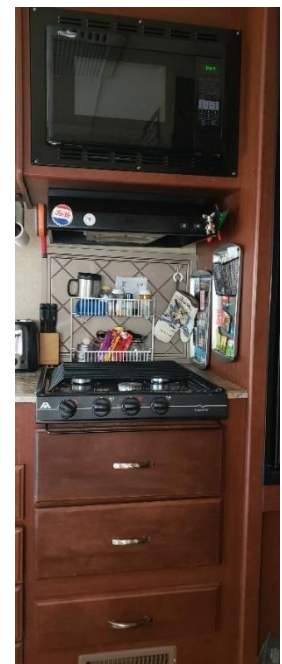
Wow, what a year it has been since our fun-filled trip to Baja Mexico and extension trip to San Felipe in February/March 2020. Although several of our park reservations were either cancelled or cut short we have been on plan for the year. After stopping in Phoenix to visit our daughter we traveled north to visit with Cece's older brother outside Las Vegas.

Then we continued to travel north for a week at Escapees Park of the Sierras where we had made reservations. We plan to have a lot of our own by the end of the year in the Escapees SKP Park in Hondo, Texas.



Shuttered RV parks due to the Covid-19 pandemic helped us to decide to spend the next 8 weeks at Cece's other brother's house in Redding, CA. He has a full hook-up set up next to his garage. Not only were we able to catch up on life, but also to complete some modifications to our RV. We installed a new 3 burner range and then my greatly skilled brother-in-law constructed 2 new drawers where the oven had been. We arrived at Yellowstone RV Park, a mile outside the north entrance of Yellowstone National Park in May. Cece started a workamper job June 1 as a cashier at the General Store in Mammoth. We went on to install a Microwave Convection Oven. Later we upgraded to a new TV. We are now so ready for the next Mexican Connection rally!

So that's our summer. Cece working 4 nine hour days, and me lazing at the Park (grocery shopping, cooking dinner etc). We are still active in virtual Toastmasters and I have found a club here to attend. Montana is a state with low covid cases, people mostly wear the mandated masks and our restaurants are open with separation seating. Weather has been good if you don't mind the high winds every afternoon. Future plans include travel home to Illinois for some family time, time in Glacier Natl Park, and then south for some warm weather. We look forward to the next trip to Baja Mexico with the Chapter 8 Mexican Connection Rally.



Yellowstone Waterfalls by Cece Wroblewski

Ron and I are spending our summer in Yellowstone National Park, well known for the Old Faithful geyser, bison, elk, and wolves, as well as the majestic mountains. But when I have a day off from my workamping job at the Mammoth General Store, my favorite sites to visit are the waterfalls. Talk about experiencing the power of nature!! There are about 290 waterfalls in Yellowstone NP.

A week or two into our summer here at Yellowstone, we visited the 24-mile long Grand Canyon of Yellowstone. Our tour guide was fellow Mexican Connection attendee Shari Nova who has worked at Yellowstone for 3 summers. We were so thrilled to hang out together again. This canyon is bracketed by two beautiful falls – the Upper and Lower falls. We started at the lower falls, made famous by artists like Thomas Moran.



The Lower Falls of the Yellowstone River is the tallest waterfall in the Park at 308 feet which is twice the height of Niagara Falls. At the time of year we were seeing it with all the snow runoff, nearly 63,000 gallons of water per second are going over the edge.

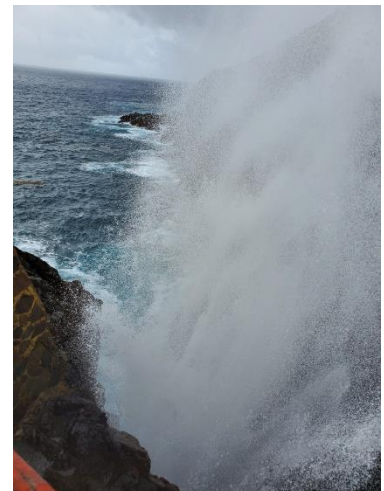
Just upstream the Upper Falls are only 109 feet tall, but it makes up for this in the tremendous roar it makes when you stand on the brink of the waterfall. Beautiful rainbows constantly show in the mist as it hits the river below.



Yellowstone National Park is so full of once-in-a-lifetime sights and sounds and wildlife so be sure and include the myriad waterfalls in your tour.

Our next Mexican Connection rally has no shortage of water either – beaches along the Pacific and on the Sea of Cortez and the La Bufadora blowhole. Looking forward to seeing you all there at the next Mexican Connection rally.

La Bufadora blowhole near Ensenada



Membership Reminder: Chapter 8's **membership fee**

\$10 for 1 year

\$25 for 3 years

\$40 for 5 years

Please renew on the Chapter 8 website's Membership Renewal page –

<http://mexicanconnection08.com/new-renew-membership/>

**Let us read your story in the
Fall 2020 Newsletter!!**

Where has your RV taken you?

**What is your favorite memory from a past Chapter 8 Mexican
Connection Rally?**

Hmmm?



**Send a note and pictures to the newsletter editor
Cece.wroblewski@gmail.com**