

August 15, 2009

Chapter 8 Charity Kino Bay February 14-26, 2010

Okay, you adventurers! It's time to start to think about all the items you need to bring with you to Mexico for this year -- besides your sense of adventure and a hankering for fun.

As some of you know, while in Mexico we like to give back to the people who so graciously host us in their country. This includes the giving to children of some small gift, like a small toy; a small purse; pencils and erasers (and pencil sharpeners!); small stuffed animals, etc. Nothing elaborate is needed, and it is all appreciated. The beautiful smiles and warm thanks you receive will warm your hearts for a long, long time. Not everyone does this, and it is not "required" but it sure is fun.<br>

On some of our Chapter 8 pre-trip planning meetings, it became evident that a lot of the first-timers did not know that we do charity work while in Mexico, giving away in-kind donations as well as the money that is given at the time of registration or at other gatherings and auctions during the trip. All of these donations go to charities that are selected by the Charity Committee. In the past, Chapter 8 has donated to orphanages, medical clinics, a center to help children born with disabilities, a center for abused women and children, an old folks home, soup kitchens, drug and alcohol treatment centers, equipment for a playground destroyed by hurricanes, mentoring programs, schools -- the list goes on and on.<br>

At all of these charities, we have also left donations: school supplies, back packs, pajamas, robes, slippers, different sizes of clothing and shoes, blankets, pillows, bed linens, towels, personal hygiene items, toothbrushes, toothpaste, Depends, sports equipment, food, computers, etc. (In the past, old cell phones have been brought; due to changing technologies in the two countries, it is better to donate these at home to shelters where they can be used for 911 calls only..)

This year's trip we will do the same types of things. While the charities have not yet been chosen, the needs are still there.. So, we are asking any of those who wish to participate to start thinking of gathering these items and bringing them with you. If you see a sale on school supplies, buy a few dollars' worth; if you go by a thrift store, think about stopping and buying some of these items; if you go by a yard sale, look to see if there is anything there you might bring. Put your thinking caps on and see what you can come up with.

We are going to overnight in Benjamin Hill again this year. To all of you who were not with us last year, this was one of the highlights of the whole 2009 trip. This year, since the town is so gracious in letting us use their soccer field again, we would like to give sports equipment to the schools: soccer balls, baseballs, bats, gloves, basketballs, etc. If you get a chance to pick up some of these items, bring them along.

We don't want to over burden any one person or rig, but it is amazing the amount of in-

kind donations we have had in the past; just a few things brought by each person really adds up!

The other thing to keep in mind are the auctions held during the rally. We take any and all items that can be auctioned off: books, wine, homemade goodies, junk you've picked up along the way and want to pass off to someone else, cd's, maps, secret location of the best and cleanest restrooms in the area, etc. These are fun ways to raise more money and one night is usually set aside for CARE; last year, we raised \$700 at the auction for them.

One thing we are trying to line up this year is to help with a hands-on build in the area; this will be held after the rally, so any of you who would be interested in doing this need to contact our wagon master.

I hope this article has been helpful. Feel free to contact me at [rusmar@air-pipe.com](mailto:rusmar@air-pipe.com) with any questions, comments or suggestions.

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