

Escapees Chapter 8 RV Club
LA CONEXIÓN
MEXICANA



Spring 2008

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MENSAJE de los PRESIDENTES

Message from the Co-Presidents, Lin & Maryke Hines

They said “it couldn’t be done!” Well, we took the challenge and pulled it off, bringing 50 (actually 49) rigs from San Diego down Baja’s Highway 1 (and only!) through 6 very different stopovers ending in the friendly town of Mulegé and the beautiful Bahía Concepción. Everyone survived and we believe they all had a good time. Oh, sure, the highway is a little narrow, the electricity is a little low (when it exists!), some campgrounds left a little to be desired, but the welcoming people of Baja, the amazing scenery including the mountains, the rock gardens, the friendly gray whale mothers and babies, the Pacific and the Sea of Cortes and the food and cerveza quickly made up for any negatives.

We really appreciate the way the whole group pulled together and helped us make this rally a success. There were a lot of highlights starting with the Baja desert that had exploded into a carpet of flowers after an unusually wet February. The boojums and ocotillos were bursting with green leaves and flowers--it was amazing!

We all enjoyed fish tacos, the beauty of Estero Beach resort in Ensenada, camping at the beach in San Quentín, enjoying our margarita parties with chips and salsa too, touring the impressive ESSA salt works in Guerrero Negro with giant machinery scooping up and moving salt, and the hike in the rock gardens of Cataviña. Seeing the native cacti up close was enjoyed by everyone. The dinner at Rancho Santa Ines prepared and served by the entire family at sunset was really memorable! Many people enjoyed the side trip to the old El Marmol onyx mine. Everywhere on the trip we ate well and often and usually had excellent entertainment with mariachis twice, a solo guitarist, and a super female vocalist singing wonderful Mexican ballads in Mulegé.

And then the whales of Laguna San Ignacio - ask Past Presidente Pedro, how it feels to kiss a baby whale 9 times!! We had never seen so many “friendlies” around our pangas as this time! We all made it down the “Grade from Hell” just before Santa Rosalia, and yes, the roads were just wide enough for a wide body class A to pass a double tanker truck in a curve, although some had their doubts! We saw lots of our people in Santa Rosalia checking out the iron church and buying out the El Boleo bakery! We held our annual Chapter election and all the board and officers stayed on for another year! Our only missing candidate is a 3rd VP who would be the 2011 Wagonmaster. There must be someone out there that has a favorite place in Mexico and would like to take the group there in 2011 with plenty of help and encouragement from the experienced members. Please contact us if you’re interested. After the Final Fiesta dinner with superb entertainment in Mulegé, many of us moved to the beautiful beaches just a few miles further south and found room in spite of the Semana Santa (Easter Week) invasion of Mexican vacationers. Others stayed for a while in the now empty campground in Mulegé and several started the trip north in small groups. It’s been great reading all the enthusiastic email reports and blogs from the trip on the Mexican Connection Yahoo group.

Some big thank you’s---to the Parkers, who, under the terrific leadership of Spook, managed to do the impossible at several places and get us all parked, waiting and working for long hours until all our 10 groups arrived. Again Spook put his other hat on as auctioneer and managed to stuff the coffers of the Charity Committee with more dollars and pesos, and also a substantial donation was given to CARE! Our Charity Committee, lead by Gloria Goss, found very worthy places to leave all the school supplies, children’s clothing, laptops and the “adult diapers” (for the old people’s home in Santa Rosalía), and the several checks we left made a very positive impression of our group of RVing “gringos.” Many rally participants went on the 5 Charity Committee tours of prospective recipient organizations this year and we all came away with a great feeling that the charity part of Chapter 8’s mission may sometimes equal the satisfaction of our group travel in Mexico!

Continued on page 2

Here come’s our move to an all electronic newsletter! Read page 4

Many others helped make this rally a success: our Assistant Wagonmasters and Ensenada hosts Roger and Anne Wilson, all 10 Group Leaders including the Wascally Rabbits and Kickin' Chickens, who led their 5 rig groups without any major problems, the Margarita crew led by Rich Peterson, the participants with Satellite Internet who opened up their connection to all of us, all the Chapter Officers, Board members and Committee Chairs and all the rally participants that helped out when asked. As true SKP's we helped each other with mechanical problems, flat tires, etc. and we want to say a very special thanks to Charlie and Pete (or should I say "Chacho" and "Pedro") for patching the catastrophic leak in our fresh water tank; it's still holding!!

We hope by now everyone has arrived back safely in the States and hope to see you soon at the Escapade in Gillette, WY, or next year's rally in Guaymas, Sonora, which after the hilarious preview performance by the 2009 Wagonmasters, Claudia and Brian Ellis, is bound to become another successful Chapter 8 Rally.

Catavina Rock Gardens

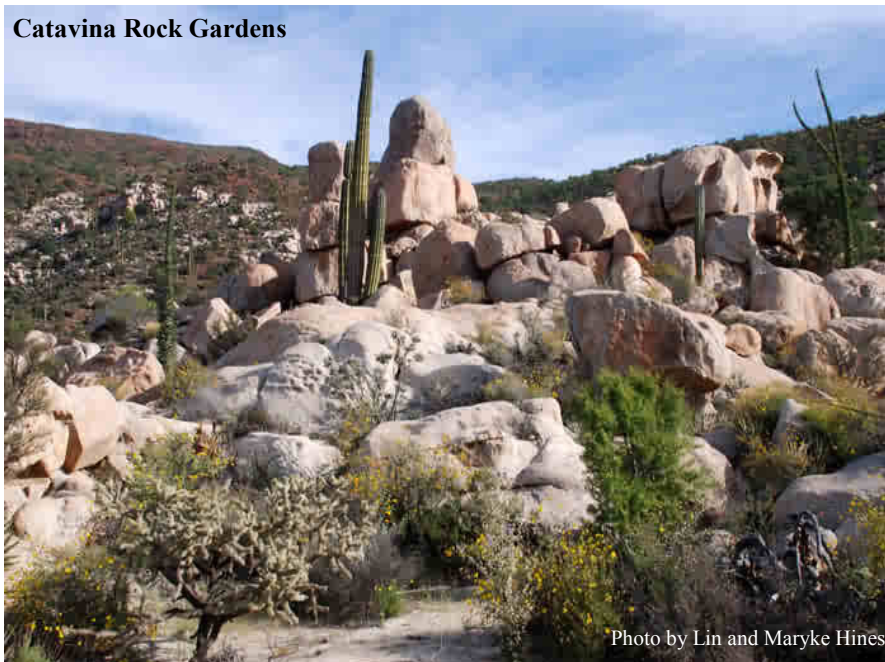


Photo by Lin and Maryke Hines

Hi Folks - It is only February, but time to plan summer adventures. We hope you'll be heading west to Gillette, Wy for Escapees 30th Birthday Escapade Celebration - June 28 to July 4. Check the Escapees magazine and website for details and extra adventures.

Some chapters are caravanning to Gillette. What a neat way to have fun - see the country and enjoy SKP friends. Has your chapter thought about this? Might be lots of fun!! We THANK everyone who attended our 2nd Escapees Happy Hour in Quartzsite, AZ. In spite of the COLD and WIND we'll count it as a great success. And following the Happy Hour many chapters and C-BOFs had well attended rallies in Q area. And from Florida to Texas - many Escapees enjoyed rallies and luncheons this winter. See you at Escapade --- SKP Hugs Susie & Denny Orr

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MENSAJE del los PRESIDENTES PRIMEROS
Message from the First Vice Presidents, Bryan & Claudia Ellis

Top 10 Things We Learned in Baja by Kelly Anne on Land, Destination unknown

1. Communication is key to a good time. Bring a CB that both receives and transmits and read the bulletin board daily.
2. There really is a phenomenon known as the green flash - we saw one at sunset in Ensenada!
3. Volunteers make this chapter run - from parking committee, mixing margaritas to being wagonmaster at a rally. But year round we need people who'll give our great webmaster help so he can have some time off and especially a charity committee chairperson for next year's rally so we can continue helping those in need.
4. I shouldn't have eaten the cole slaw - like the Energizer Bunny - we keep going and going...
5. In Mexico whether using a public baño or the luxurious one in your RV if you didn't consume it don't flush it down the toilet. Thanks Tom!
6. Spook can and will auction off anything very successfully to raise money for charity.
7. If it absolutely, positively has to be there - mail it from the U.S. before you enter Mexico.
8. The wagonmasters have worked diligently to make the rally an enjoyable event. At Escapade when they're trying to get the crowd's attention they count down from 10, 9, 8... When the showers aren't hot as advertised, or you don't get to kiss a whale once, no less 9 times; practice the same philosophy.
9. Baja beige washes off you and your rig.....eventually
10. Low tech and low key works. We're "La Bamba" at both. We promise you a fun rally next year in Guaymas.

Cuesta del Infierno



Photo by Lin and Maryke Hines

Electronic Newsletters, here we come! By your editor, Thomas Korsmo

At the General Membership meeting during our 2008 Rally, the motion was made and passed that we transition our newsletter to electronic distribution. This means that we will discontinue mailing hard copies of our newsletter and sending individual e-mails with attachments.

In order to implement this directive, I intend to publish, e-mail, print, and mail this spring and the Summer (July) newsletter as usual. In addition, we will put the Summer newsletter on our website. The Summer newsletter will have the 2009 Rally information and registration forms. The Fall (September) newsletter will totally transition to our website as the source of our newsletter.

Here's how this will work. After I have compiled the newsletter, I will submit the newsletter document to our Webmaster, Don Busick, in .pdf format. He will put it on the Ch8 website (mexicanconnection08.com) under password protection. I will notify every Ch8 member with an e-mail address that the newsletter is available and give you the password so that you can access that document. Using Adobe reader, you can read and print the newsletter. Adobe Reader is a software program that you can download for free from the Adobe website.

Older issues of the newsletter will be archived on the website without password protection.

For you to get the newsletter, you must have access to the internet. For those of you without a computer, the internet is readily available from many public sources without cost; i.e. local libraries, state and regional welcome centers, and some travel centers. It would help if you had an e-mail account so that I can send you the password but there are other ways to receive that. A Ch8 friend with e-mail would be one way. It will be important for you to let us know immediately when you acquire an e-address or if you change your current one.

This electronic distribution of the newsletter will save our chapter a lot of money and I, as editor, will be able to expand the newsletter beyond our current 10 printed pages limitation. There will be a lot more pictures and interesting articles that we can all enjoy.

Happiness is having a large, loving, caring, close-knit family in another city.

MENSAJE del los ORGANIZADORES de la CARIDAD **Message from the Charity Chairmen, Charlie and Gloria Goss**

A great big thank you and hugs to everyone for their support of the Charity Committee. Together we made a difference and left a positive image of "Americanos" in all the places we visited. Your Charity Committee members were President Pete Petrie, Treasurer GeorgeYoung, members Anne Wilson and Bob Kominski, and yours truly as Chairmen. A special thank you to Roger McFillen, aka "Spook", for his help and for being the best auctioneer ever. Through his efforts we had 3 very fun and successful auctions and raised \$1307.00. We were allocated \$7000.00 to distribute, \$3000.00 of which was carried over from last year's rally and \$4,000.00 from registrations and 2 auctions. An additional \$907.00 was raised at a 3rd auction for CARE. The Committee recommended and received approval to distribute the funds as follows: "Foundation for His Ministries", an Orphanage/School/Clinic in Vicente Guerrero: \$500.00. Albergue Escolar, a boarding school for underprivileged children from the outlying ranches in San Ignacio: \$1500.00 for installation of air conditioners. Escuela Primaria in San Ignacio for classroom repairs: \$1000.00. Asilo de los Ancianos an old age home for needy elders with no family or other means of support in Santa Rosalia: \$2500.00 The Rotary Club in Mulege for the replacement of youth sports equipment lost in a previous year's flood and for maintenance of the town's Fire Engine and Ambulance: \$1000.00. To CARE we designated \$1407.00.

As a group we delivered over 75 suit cases full of donated clothing from a warehouse in Chula Vista to "Foundation for His Ministries" in Vicente Guerrero. We donated 53 jars of peanut butter, lots of school supplies, toys, children's clothing, a couple of computers and 30 assorted packages of adult diapers.

The Committee and several members (everyone was invited) were given tours of the facilities we helped and our reward was in the smiles and hugs we received from the beautiful children at the schools and orphanage. If anyone is interested in a volunteer job with this Chapter, we highly recommend the Charity Committee, the rewards are awesome and you get to make lots of people happy. Muchas gracias!

Some Musings about Charity

The Charity committee DOES THING RIGHT!

Roger Mcfillen, Past Charity committee Chairman & believer that we make a BIG difference in children's lives in MEXICO.

This year's Charity committee lead by Gloria Goss really did themselves proud in the manner in which they conducted the Charity activities. Logistics is always a problem; getting the right stuff into the right hands at the right time. Past history has shown us that we need to change the way we do business delivering the items and checks to the people that need them. Hauling heavy bulky items all the way to the rally site and then having to distribute those items from there has always been a problem. This year's committee solved that by making drop offs along the way, making the best use of everyone's time, effort & space!

The Chapter Standing Rules state that the rally members need to vote to approve what the Charity Committee recommends. In the 9 years I've been a member (3 of those years on the Charity committee) I've never even heard any discussion in the General meeting that questioned the recommendations or motives of the committee. What the committee recommends has been approved by acclamation.

I think it's time to change the Standing Rules to give the committee the latitude it needs to deal with the large volume of goods that our members bring to the rallies for the children & people of Mexico. If you have any suggestions along this line please drop a line to the MC BOARD with your recommendations. Just because "we've always done it that way" does not mean we have to continue along those lines. The time for change is now and this year's committee has shown us all "how it can be done". We should follow the outstanding example they have provided to our chapter!

George Young Treasurer, Chapter 8 SKP #87456

I wanted to report this year's charity activities. Our Charity Committee this year was chaired by our able VCR's Gloria & Charlie Goss. In addition to transporting down numerous bags of donated clothing from an agency in the states, chapter members were again generous in buying and bringing school supplies and needed foods for the children in the areas we supported. (Peanut Butter seems to be very popular, but hard to find in Mexico) Added to this, we handed out cash gifts in the amount of \$6,500- US dollars. To this add a check in the amount of \$2,624- payable to CARE, Inc. This gift to CARE brings Chapter 8's donations over the years to \$12,000-. That is an overall distribution of \$9,124-. A big thank you to all chapter members who opened their hearts and their pocketbooks! Sue and I will miss being with you on the ROW at Escapade this summer. But know the Chapman's will do a great job. Hugs

Susie & Denny Orr

Thank You George for the overview of donations from Chapter #8 --- It is truly incredible the participation and generous donations that come year after year from the Escapees members of Mexican Connection. What a proud heritage and great sense of accomplishment. Thank you all for your generous contributions in goods, money, and time spent sharing the Escapees philosophy of "Caring and Sharing". We will look forward to presenting the chapter additional CARE patches for your banner at Escapade.

Travel safe -- enjoy the memories, and we look forward to meeting you again along the way. Hugs



Folkloric dancers at San Ignacio

Unsung HEROES of the Charity Auction from the Chief Auctioneer, Spook

We need to thank ALL those that contributed items for the Charity auctions. Many items just showed up on the auction display table so I have no idea who donated them. Dale Wilcox, Pete Petrie's cousin, is a LUCAS OIL PRODUCTS distributor in San Diego. He gave us all the LUCAS items: fuel additive, T-shirts, caps and jackets.

Rally members Kevin and Jean O'Cuilinn donated a huge amount of honey filled candy and straws. Kevin and Jean are bee keepers. We did not get anywhere near what that candy was worth! I've seen the straws in shops north of the border and they're 3/\$1. We were getting less than \$5/bag of 40-50 straws. I'd love to do that one over again.

Fran and Clyde Armstrong gave lots of knit golf shirts, golf bag towels and neat water bottles, all monogrammed! Those 45-60\$ shirts went for 10-18\$ and we gave away the towels and water bottles for \$5.

My real heroes were Jim and Kathy Jensen. Kathy helped several times at the auctions. She and Jim donated many bottles of wine, bought Church's BAJA books and then gave them back to be auctioned again! Jim engineered a scheme that produced \$50 for a bottle of TWO BUCK CHUCK! Way to go JIM! The team work that Jim and Kathy displayed throughout the rally is what makes this chapter great and keeps it going.

Our Aussie friends and Tailgunner's Warwick and Robyn Freeman donated many bottles of Yellow Tail Aussie wine and two very delicious Vegamite sandwiches. Some how one of those sandwiches ended up in our rig and never got eaten. I'm not sure just HOW that happened.

Brent and Diane Roulier and the wagonmasters, Lin and Maryke Hines, gave rally caps and T-shirts and several whale watching shirts. Rich Peterson gave 8-10 bottles of premixed margaritas. Robbyn Gibbons gave a Church's book on touring MEXICO that was still in the mailing package unopened!

Speaking of the Church's, Mike and Terry gave us five of their books on RV'ing Mexico and personally autographed them all plus the Baja books we purchased from Amazon.Com. We got the last 4 copies that they had in their warehouse! Be sure and thank them when you see them in your travels.

Marie Chapman gave a very nice quilted lap robe and hand towels that another SKP member had make especially for our auction. I'm sorry I didn't get her name. Thanks, Marie!

Diane Bye gave a very nice hand made journal to keep trip notes and pictures. Sarah Blackwood helped spice things up at the Catavina auction and had some great ideas on how to get folks into the auction mode! John Green purchased items and then put them back on the table to be auctioned again!

Your generosity is what make these auctions a success. Helping the children of Mexico is the main reason Brenda and I are Mexican Connection members. The auctions raised over \$1,700,42 of that went to Care. This is JUST THE AUCTION. See the Charity committee Chairman's report for the final figures!

I know that many donated items are not recognized here. I apologize for the oversight. I just could not keep track of everything that made its way to the auction table.

Muchas Gracias to ALL who donated and purchased auction items! The children of the Baja are much better off due to your willingness to help make their lives just a little bit better and the SKP members using the CARE facility in Livingston are getting the assistance they need. Thank you all for your efforts in helping the charity committee. I look forward to seeing you again in Guaymas!

Fuel Price Woes – some helpful hints! by Nancy Brinton (Escapes Newsletter)

Our RVs might not move down the road as often as we'd like, but we feel your pain. Here are some hints about maximizing your fuel efficiency and fuel-related web links.

The experts we consulted all agree that getting back to the basics of good vehicle maintenance is key to controlling the gas mileage your RV or tow vehicle achieves.

Tires: Good tread, along with inflation pressure that is appropriate to the vehicle and road conditions, is very important.

Filters: Be vigilant about the cleanliness of your air and fuel filters.

Speed: Slow and steady wins the gas mileage race. Don't rush to get up to speed. Make your cruising speed slower than you might have in the past because 55-60 mph can save you some money. The fueleconomy.gov website says, "... you can assume that each 5 mph you drive over 60 mph is like paying an additional \$0.20 per gallon for gas."

Reduce idling time; idling gets 0 mpg.

Use your cruise control when you can; it's more reliable at maintaining a steady speed than your foot!

Use a cash-back rewards credit card or gas card to purchase fuel. Every little bit helps.

This website, <http://www.fueleconomy.gov/feg/gasprices/states/>, is really handy. Just click on the state you're wondering about and information about fuel prices and trends in that state is readily available.

The gas buddy website, <http://www.gasbuddy.com/>, includes the Canadian provinces.

To minimize your travel time and expenses, use your 2008 Escapes Travel Guide when planning trips. Visit us at any Rainbow Park to enjoy great sites and fellowship at great rates.

ESCAPEES CHAPTER 8 MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Please Fill in Each Item and Print Clearly

Annual Membership period is from April 1 to March 31

You must be an ESCAPEE Member to join. SKP # _____ New Chapter 8 Member? Yes No

NAME(S) _____

MAILING ADDRESS _____

PHONE NUMBER _____

E-MAIL ADDRESS (Print Clearly) _____

Our quarterly newsletter will be posted on the chapter website. You will receive a notice and the access password by e-mail.

IS THIS AN ADDRESS CHANGE FOR CURRENT MEMBER(S)? Mailing Yes No

E-mail Yes No

_____ ANNUAL NEW MEMBER FAMILY MEMBERSHIP \$8.00 Includes one (1) Chapter 8 decal

_____ ANNUAL RENEWAL FAMILY MEMBERSHIP \$6.00

_____ CHAPTER 8 DECAL (3 inch) \$2.00 Each

\$ _____ TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED (US funds only please)

Make checks payable on a US Bank to "Mexican Connection Chapter 8".

Mail application and check to Bill and Cindy Pulsipher, Membership Chairmen, 179 Rainbow DR #7945, Livingston, TX 77399-1079.

Any membership questions? Email cnbp@escapees.com with "CH8 MEMBERSHIP" in the subject line. ¡MUCHAS GRACIAS!

This Membership Application form is now available on our website at mexicanconnection08.com.



MEXICAN CONNECTION COMMUNICATIONS

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Nesting Osprey



Photo by Lin
And Maryke
Hines

Presidente Pedro kissing the baby whale!



Photo by Lin and Maryke Hines



Escapees Chapter 8 RV Club

LA CONEXIÓN MEXICANA

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