

# LA CONEXIÓN MEXICANA

*Escapees Chapter 8 RV Club*

*Winter 2009 - Volume XXVII - Number 4*



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# President's Message

## Cynthia Ponder, Chapter 8 President

Hola,

We are getting ready for our newest adventure in February to Bahia de Kino, if you haven't found out all the details and signed up yet, just keep on reading this newsletter.

We always hold the annual meeting for Chapter 8 at the end of the rally in Mexico. This year we will have no new business other than the election of officers. Approving rally expenses will be a part of our Treasurer's report. Charity expenses will be presented on several occasions for approval so we can follow the decisions of the group in disbursing funds and materials as we meet the needs around us in Mexico.

Our slate of officers for the upcoming year will be as follows:

President: Ed Biller

Secretary: George Young

Treasurer: Earl Reese

Wagon Master and 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President: Jim and Cynthia Ponder

Wagon Master for 2012 and 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President:  
**Position Open**

The following are appointed positions but we like the membership to approve these as well.

Newsletter Editor: Barbara Ellis

Membership Chairperson: Pete Petrie

Historian: **Position Open**

Web Master: Don Busick

We would welcome any additional nominations from the membership. The two most important positions are 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Vice President who would serve as Wagon Masters in 2012 and 2013, respectively. The extra year to prepare is truly helpful and we would highly recommend it to anyone who is considering this position.

Our pledge as current Wagon Masters and future Wagon Master in this upcoming year is to work with anyone who is elected to this position to make their job as easy as possible and to support them as much as they require to make the upcoming rallies fun for all, including them.

There is a great Wagon Masters manual which Ed and Jan and Jim and I will be adding to in the upcoming two years so you will not have to reinvent the process. The job is to just find a place in Mexico you would like to go see or one you would like to share with others and plan the logistics of getting there.

The job of historian is keeping records of all the written documents we have, every year and souvenirs from the rallies that are particularly pertinent. It would be ideal if we could find someone who can convert all of our records to an electronic format so they are easier to keep and



Photo by Jan Biller

*Chapter 8 President Cynthia Ponder gives assistance at the CRREDA playground in Benjamin Hill, Sonora (Feb. 2009).*

the paper records could be more easily kept in long term storage, but this is not a requirement for the position. Perhaps two people could take on this job together to make this happen.

If you have any other new business issues please email me as soon as possible for presentation to the board of directors prior to the annual meeting.



Photo by Jan Biller

*Chapter 8's 2009 Rally arriving in Benjamin Hill. The town provided us a beautifully prepared place to park overnight – their soccer field.*

If you are interested in any of the other positions or have questions of any kind please contact me at [pondermexico@gmail.com](mailto:pondermexico@gmail.com). Jim and I will be in Mexico for the next two months so if a reply takes a day or two please be patient with us as we explore options for the 2011 rally.

Safe Travels to all, Happy Holidays and a Wonderful New Year!

## 2010 Rally to Bahia de Kino Ed & Jan Biller '10 Wagon Masters

Mexican Connection 2010 Rally  
Pre-rally in Tucson, AZ February 14-16, 2010  
**Rally in Bahia de Kino, Mexico February 17-26, 2010**

The Chapter has been taking registrations since October 1, 2009. We are filling up, but have space for more Escapees who want to caravan to Mexico. It is hoped that we will have at least 50 rigs for this rally. Our pre-rally will help prepare you for this trip. The preparation is especially useful if you have never been to Mexico.

Some participants have already been contacted to help with certain volunteer activities that will make this rally a success. Other notification of who we need for volunteers will take place soon via email. We appreciate any and all who have stepped forward to help.

Preliminary agenda information will be available Dec. 1 and sent via email.

We hope to provide activities and service projects all along the way, starting in Tucson, then continuing to Benjamin Hill, Mexico, and ending up in Bahia de Kino. Join us for tours, golf, beach combing, great views, restaurants, souvenirs, etc.

For additional information, please see the Chapter 8 Website at:  
<http://mexicanconnection08.com/>

Contact Ed and Jan Biller (SKP# 102953), the Wagon Masters for the trip  
[wagonmaster2010@yahoo.com](mailto:wagonmaster2010@yahoo.com)



Photo by Jan Biller

*One of the great beaches at Bahia de Kino.*

# 2010 Rally to Bahia de Kino

## Ed Biller & Marcy Davidson

### Mexican Connection Chapter 8 to Visit Benjamin Hill, Mexico - 2010 Rally

By Biller, E; Davidson, M.

Reference: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Benjam%C3%ADn\\_Hill,\\_Sonora](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Benjam%C3%ADn_Hill,_Sonora)

Benjamin Hill is a municipal seat (since 1952) of the state of Sonora, Mexico. The town is one of the smallest in the state of Sonora, with a population of around 5285 (census of 2005). The town is 2797 feet elevation but the land around the town is desert. It is flat with no permanent streams or rivers. Average annual temperature is 73F with summer average of 89F and winter average of 57F.

In 1939 the area was a ranch called San Fernando. The federal government chose the site for the Ferrocarril Sud-Pacífico railroad which was finished in 1948. The railroad had a repair facility in Benjamin Hill, which is why there is a locomotive park in the town. The town derived its name from Benjamin Hill, the Sinaloan military leader whom President Venustiano Carranza appointed Governor of Sonora in 1914.



Photo by Jan Biller

*School children gather around to greet us and to practice their English.*



Photo by Jan Biller

*Some of the new government housing in Benjamin Hill.*

Along with the railroad, agricultural activity of wheat and corn, cattle raising, and some industrial production along Highway 15 have been important. The professional truckers driving Highway 15 sometimes boondock behind the Pemex. But since the downturn of the economy in the area, all these activities have suffered in the recent past. In fact, last year the mayor stated that the three biggest employers, the railroad, a medical equipment manufacturer, and a tile manufacturing company are closing.

But these are all the reasons why we are returning to Benjamin Hill at the 2010 Rally. We have many friends there from the past year. There is also a very important charity need that Chapter 8 will be able to fill again this year.

From some of the participants last year, we heard the following comments:

“Benjamin Hill is a poor little town but they gave us everything they could.”

“We really enjoyed having the townspeople come to the soccer field and meet with us - usually you only get to talk with shopkeepers.”

“It was like we were a parade - people lined the streets to greet us as we pulled in.”

“We’ve only been on 3 rallies but we never had that experience on the ones we went on.”

From the mayor of Benjamin Hill: "We are a small town. We have lost our 3 biggest employers...For a very long time we have not had a reason to celebrate and have a fiesta, but your group reminded us we are a town and gave us a reason to come together to have a party. Any member of Mexican Connection passing through Benjamin Hill is welcome to spend the night on the soccer field".

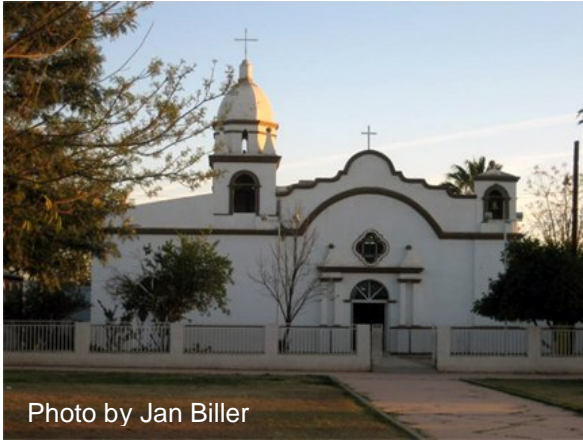


Photo by Jan Biller

*Benjamin Hill church.*

There was quite a lot of excitement among the kids who showed up at the soccer field while we were camped there in 2009. The kids and some older folks, although shy, were inquisitive and wanted to see our rigs and talk to us about them. Many spoke a little English, but some were still quite gregarious. Our interaction with them helped make a more relaxed, friendly atmosphere. We certainly want to be able to repeat that part of the experience at this year's rally.

Benjamin Hill has one of the best school systems in Sonora and they are very proud of their students. Because of the closing of the factories, it has become very difficult for

families to send their children to school with the needed supplies, hence Chapter 8's plea for school supplies and backpacks. In our pre-planning for this rally, it was brought to our attention that the recreation programs provided through the school system were in dire need of sports equipment. As you have probably read in other correspondence, Chapter 8 put out a call for sports equipment as part of our in-kind donations for the 2010 rally. The priest gives out school supplies to the neediest families, and he was very appreciative of the donation of school supplies and clothes which we left with him last year.

C.R.R.E.D.A. (rehabilitation center) took the money we donated, put gas in their truck and drove to Sam's Club in Hermosillo to buy a much-needed washing machine to replace theirs which could no longer be repaired. Father Quinones was able to feed many people thanks to our club.

Our group's interaction with the locals, the wonderful fiesta they put on for us, the baseball game at the ball field, the grandfather who was so proud of his grandson being able to go to school and to learn English, the welcoming committee from the Senior Citizen Center who came to the field and each of them shook each of our hands in appreciation for coming to their town, our group dancing with the locals, their delight in seeing our appreciation for all of their hard work and for giving them a reason to celebrate, all of these are memories tucked away in our hearts. Those of us lucky enough to have gone to Benjamin Hill in 2009 are indebted to Claudia Ellis (and her humble first assistant Brian) for uncovering this experience.

We look for a repeat experience in 2010 and we hope all will rally around our charity goals in Benjamin Hill.



*Photos above show some of the fiesta performers. (All photos by Jan Biller)*

# A Letter from Escapees Chapter & BOF Coordinators Susie & Denny Orr

We know for many of the northern chapters the rally season is over until the spring, but for the southern chapters/c-bofs the season is just beginning. And for those traveling south the season just continues as you wander for the winter. We know you'll have fun wherever you go. Do take time to stop at other group events – both rallies and luncheons. You'll be surprised who you meet along the way. It is always terrific to see familiar faces – friends from long ago – a familiar face from not sure where – and to receive lots of SKP Hugs as you reminisce good times. But also look for that NEW FACE – someone you may not have met yet – someone who doesn't appear warm and welcoming, but is new to the group. This person may just be a bit shy in the new group and just waiting for a warm invitation to join the fun. This person may really need a SKP Hugs and Escapee friendship more than you know. So at any rally or luncheon, do take time to make a new friend. Include that new person in your circle; invite them to share their story. And this new person may just be your next best friend. Many SKP Friends and Many Hugs to each of you ---- Susie & Denny Orr, Chapter & BOF Coordinators



*More photos from around Benjamin Hill (Photos by Jan Biller)*

## CHAPTER 8 COMMUNICATIONS

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

Voice Mail: Dial 888-757-7701 extension 8008

News Group: To subscribe, send a blank e-mail to [Mexican\\_Connection-subscribe@yahoo.com](mailto:Mexican_Connection-subscribe@yahoo.com)

All Address Changes: [PetrieAE@earthlink.net](mailto:PetrieAE@earthlink.net)

All submissions to the editor:  
[ch8newsletter@gmail.com](mailto:ch8newsletter@gmail.com)

### NOTAS de la REDACTOR

Notes from the editor:



Anyone wanting to include an article or picture for consideration in a future newsletter should send the editor an email with the input as an attached file about two weeks before the end of the quarter, which is the publication date for the newsletters. Word documents are best as that can easily be edited and formatted. However, you may choose to simply type your article in the body of an email (with no formatting please) if you have trouble attaching a document to your emails. Photos should have people and places identified. Also include the name of the photographer.

Muchas Gracias!

Barbara Ellis, [ch8newsletter@gmail.com](mailto:ch8newsletter@gmail.com)

## Funcionarios de Capitulo 8

### \*Chapter 8 Elected Officers\*

#### President

Cynthia Ponder #70507

#### 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President

Ed & Jan Biller # 102953

#### 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President

Jim Ponder #70303

#### Secretary

Earl Reese # 85963

#### Treasurer

George Young #87456

#### Immediate Past Presidents

Lin & Maryke Hines #70910

### \* Appointed Officers at Large \*

#### Membership Chairman

Pete Petrie #58590

#### Historian

Bob Kominski #74642

#### Webmaster &

#### News Group Manager

Don Busick #21725

#### Newsletter Editor &

#### Voicemail Administrator

Barb Ellis #93736

*Officers' email addresses are  
hyperlinked on the Chapter 8 website*



Photo by Jan Biller

*Warm greetings from Benjamin Hill school children on the morning of our departure (Feb. 2009).*

