

President's Message

The high season is closing and what a busy season this has been!

We have been able to provide for many new projects in addition to our ongoing favorite activities. Our members have been great in donating their time, thereby allowing the office to extend its hours to 4:00 o'clock Monday to Friday without any additional cost. The office and all our club visitors have greatly benefited from the added desk help of the many volunteers like Gloria Munroe, Lynette Fairclough, Jim and Sharron Woods, John Hamlin, Sherry Frish, Terry Horrox and more. The response has been so great that we intend to continue this practice in the next November to April season.

I wish to thank all the members who have donated their expertise, talents and time. They have enabled us to offer a variety of activities to fellow members and clubhouse visitors alike.

My thanks go out to Dan Grippo for his lecture series on so many interesting topics; Mexican politics, religions, history and the impact of the renowned Mexican women on the Mexican culture. To add to his generosity let's not forget his donation of a badly needed CP Monitor!

I wish to give thanks to Murray Beer for sharing his two great loves (not counting Millie) the game of bridge and opera. Many of us started many years ago with very little or no knowledge of bridge but the time spent with Murray has taught us a great appreciation for the game. This year Murray shared with us his love of music and opera by presenting us with The Music of Leonard Bernstein. What a pleasure!

We also enjoyed learning a few more dance moves with the teaching of Jan Early.

Mary Lynn Coulter shared with us her passion for watercolor painting and encouraged us to explore it without fear.

Our thanks go to Mike McGee: our Chairperson-Director of Home Tours and his large group of volunteers that make this major fundraiser a success. Mike worked very hard this year in the face of two large challenges: The economic downturn and the direct competition from another charity group offering the same program as ours on another day bringing confusion to the mind of many tourists.

With new challenges comes new ideas! It spurred the whole team to truly develop better web tools. We had made various attempts before, but we had never taken full advantage of the electronic media to put out our message.

Janie Albright Blank was brought on board in the late summer months and started to develop a new, more user friendly website. As she progressed T.J. Hartung, our Newsletter Editor, got more involved and they worked hand and hand. In January they presented our members at the



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ADMINISTRATOR - Josué Santiago

General Meeting a brand new website that is proving very popular. T. J. is continuing to make improvements to it and keeping the data updated. I encourage you to visit it at: www.ifcvallarta.com.

Janie is also our co-publicist chairperson and with her great reporting talents and Bob Davidson's wonderful photo taking, we have been able to showcase the great work our IFC members accomplish in the community. Janie has also set us up on Facebook!

Part of this great working team is Barbara and Mel Bornstein. Their energy and loyalty to the Club since its inception is remarkable. Barbara with a team of volunteers at hand, got Al Badner to do the flier art work, successfully organized a great St. Valentine's Day dinner and Gala Luncheon Fashion Show. Not to be outdone Mel, with the help of Fred Forbes, made a success of the St. Patrick's Day dinner. Our latest event "The Gala Luncheon Fashion Show" on March 25th was a sold out event. The fashion and lunch were presented in the attractive venue of Coco's Kitchen. Toody Walton presented her "Coleccion La Bohemia" beautifully and the models were great! My thanks to Donna Feldman who hosted it.

A huge thank you goes to Fred Forbes for keeping our

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President's Message (Continued from Page 1)

clubhouse facilities in such great shape and for all the new improvements he came up with.

Added to this is Fred's managing of "The Monday Night Movies", the Friday night cocktail and dinners he organizes that have allowed all of us to connect with each other, from old to new members, to first comers and family visitors. Each of us has found a friendly place to drop in and develop new friendships.

Let's not forget our "out in the field" group, where we also have dedicated volunteers that donate such a great part of their time and energy in response to the needs of the children and their families in need.

Susan Davalos and Patricia Mendez are our Chairpersons for Community Services and Medical, respectively. Mel Bornstein is our Chairperson for Education. What we all do as volunteers at the IFC is to provide the necessary funds that supports many needs that are facing our community, may it be medical, educational or nutritional.

It goes without saying that none of this could be accomplished without a great executive supporting team. So my thanks to the Executive Board that help me keep the ship running smoothly; Bill LeBeau, Vice President- Ira Horowitz, Treasurer- Linda Horowitz, Recording Secretary and Helen Hartung, Corresponding Secretary. Thank you so much.

Like many of you I am heading back north for the summer, but communication is always open, so do drop me a note, call to say Hello, enjoy each day, be happy. Have a great summer, Mandy MacLeay, President



MINI-MOXIE SCOOTER FOR SALE!

Just what you need to cruise around town, this sweet little ride looks sporty and has low mileage – previous owner was a little old lady who didn't even go to church on Sundays!

Disassembles into 3 components in less than a minute.
Heaviest component weighs only 41 pounds.
Fits in the trunk of almost any car.

call Patricia: 329 298 1767 or cell: 322 728 7519

River House

for rent - - - - Boca de tomatlan
2 bedroom 2 bath
minimum 10 days, 30 usd/day
Contact: Pedro Davalos 322-299-5204

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New officers

It is a great pleasure to introduce the new executives of the IFC.. This year you have elected a new Executive Board for a two year term. The Executive Board is:

- ☺ Mandy MacLeay- President
- ☺ Bill LeBeau- VP-Administration
- ☺ Jack Kirkpatrick- VP-Membership Development
- ☺ Fred Forbes- VP-Management Facilities
- ☺ Michael Montagano- Treasurer
- ☺ Lynette Fairclough- Recording Secretary
- ☺ Eric Davies- Corresponding Secretary.

The officers and committee members will be happy to answer any of your inquiries.

WHO WE ARE

The International Friendship Club was founded in 1987. Today there are members from the USA, Canada, Mexico, Europe and many other countries. The Club is a volunteer organization operated totally without personal gain and has been granted Registered Charitable Status by the Mexican Government. The club is operated on a Committee-Structure basis.

The International Friendship Club has 3 mandates: to solicit and distribute funds and materials in response to the humanitarian needs of our community; to promote friendship through social and cultural activities; and to help organize and unite our community.

General meetings are held the second Tuesday of every month at the IFC clubhouse. Everyone is welcome!



Altruism Festival

The International Festival of Altruism is the biggest charity event of the year in the Banderas Bay region. Last year it raised over 500,000 pesos of which 24,000 pesos went to the IFC. It is organized by Kelly Trainor de O, the US Consul, and held at the Marriott Casa Magna Hotel.

This year the event will be on May 24 starting at about 5.00. Tickets cost 300 pesos when bought beforehand or 400 pesos at the door.

Tickets can be obtained from Eric Davies, (edavies.pv@gmail.com, 222-0523) or at the IFC clubhouse. ALL ORGANIZATIONS, INCLUDING IFC MUST SELL AT LEAST 50 TICKETS. Tickets include entry to the event, food, drinks and entertainment.

There are 24 charities allowed to participate, with IFC being 1 of 6 with an automatic entry and then there is a lottery to select the other 18. Along with the booths of the 24 charities there is FREE food served by at least that many restaurants -- some of the very best in Banderas Bay.

Raffle tickets will also be on sale and each of the

participating charities is given a "source" to solicit prizes. This year we have "Car services".

So, if any of you know any auto repair shops, limousine services, car washes or other relevant "sources" I would be delighted if you would tell me about it and how to contact the service. Even better would be for you to arrange as many prizes as you can -- and I guarantee to give you credit.

We can also solicit in other areas or even come up with our own ideas. I have already heard that someone is willing to donate a week's free stay in their luxury condo south of town and another to prepare gourmet dinner (for 4, 6, 8) in the home of ones choosing. Any other offers along this line would be gratefully appreciated (especially be me).

Now here comes the real plea.

Someone has to be at the Marriott by 11.00 a.m. to help bring out tables, chairs, set up booths, decorations, etc

Some one has to help the restaurant owners bring all the cooking apparatus, freezers, utensils, food, ice etc into the arena

Someone has to set up the IFC booth by 4.00 p.m. and man it from opening until closing.

It will obviously take MANY volunteers. PLEASE let me know ASAP (Eric Davies, edavies.pv@gmail.com, 222-0523) if you can help in any way.

BUT WAIT, THERE'S MORE. This is a terrific event and you can mingle with all the other volunteers of all the other participating charities and so is an excellent way to build up friendships across the bay. It would be great if IFC had dozens of volunteers, not only at the event, and to solicit raffle prizes, but also to sell entry tickets, lottery tickets and more.

Lets show them what IFC is made of.

SEASON END MESSAGE

Fred Forbes - V.P. Facilities Management

Well the end of another wonderful season is fast approaching and some of us return to our other homes and life, leaving behind many Mexican friends and acquaintances, and the many friends we have met at the friendship club functions over the years.

It has been a great season here for me with lots of activities at the club and all being well attended and everyone having a good time with old and newfound friends.

Our Friday night social has been very successful again this year and my restaurant tours have been well attended with everyone enjoying the fabulous foods they serve.

I look forward to seeing you all for the next season here in Vallarta at the IFC and hope that you have a healthy and happy summer, either here in beautiful PV or your respective country's.

Spotlight on Charity

By Janie Albright Blank

St. Patrick Would Approve: IFC Fiesta Raises Funds for Cleft Palate and Associated Local Charities

There is a saying that "Everyone is Irish on St. Patrick's Day" and that held true on March 17 as the International



Friendship Club (IFC) held a fiesta to honor the occasion. St. Patrick's Day is certainly not a traditional Mexican holiday but Mi Pueblito Restaurant at Los Arcos Hotel on Los Muertos Beach put on a great Irish buffet to honor the "Wearing 'O the Green." Lots of green was in sight as the IFC group enjoyed a buffet featuring corned beef and cabbage and a Mulligan Stew among other favorites. Co-Chairs of this event, Mel Bornstein and Fred Forbes, did some food tasting with the chef at Mi Pueblito trying various recipes until he came up with the mouth-watering Irish favorites that Fred and Mel approved.

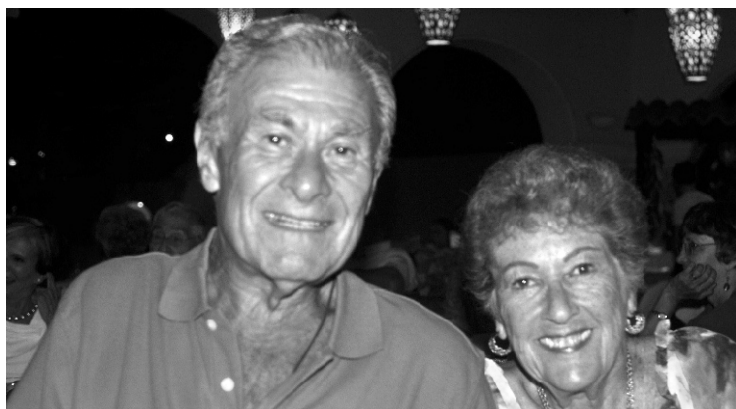


Mi Pueblito put on quite a floor show, and although it was lacking the Irish Jig, it did feature dances from various Latin countries as well as some exotic dancers performing the Hawaiian Hula. As always, Mi Pueblito featured live music for dancing and IFC members took full advantage. Our IFC member and volunteer photographer, Bob

Davidson caught a number of folks, whether Irish or not, enjoying the festivities. There were also a number of door prizes awarded and probably the most memorable was



when our IFC club president, Mandy MacLeay, won a free membership to the IFC for next year! Well, that's certainly one way to make sure she continues with the amazing work she does for the club! It was a great evening to have some delicious food, dancing and friendship while knowing we were holding a great fundraising event for the IFC's programs.



No matter how many children are treated, or how many success stories we tell about these beautiful children, there are, sad to say, always new babies born each year with a cleft lip or palate.

If you would like to learn more about the Cleft Palate Program or other charities the IFC helps to support, please stop by our clubhouse or visit our website (www.ifcvallarta.com). And don't forget the IFC Home Tour. Home Tour funds support this worthy cause.



Closed Monday

Vallarta Botanical Gardens

9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

- Palm Gardens • Rose Garden
- Tree Fern Grotto • Orchid House
- Jungle Trails • Tropical Bird Watching
- Agave Gardens • Mexican Wildflowers
- Carnivorous Plants • Restaurant

24 Km south of town (on Hwy 200)

www.vallartabotanicalgardensac.org

COMMUNITY SERVICES

SUSAN HARRIE DAVALOS, RN

I like to remind people that summer is when the needs are greater for more of the locals. School supplies are needed in the height of the rainy season. School begins in mid-August. The IFC has been gracious enough to give a donation to allow me to buy school supplies for needy kids in the out backs of Puerto Vallarta, as well as those I know in many other areas also. I will be asking for a larger donation this summer.

If anyone would like to help out with school supplies, please leave a donation in my name and how you would like it to be spent (school shoes, tuition, school books, school uniforms and the like). Backpacks of good quality are available at a reduced price the weeks before school begins. The week prior to school is an exciting shopping season for me! Getting it out to the kids is a joy!

It is encouraging to see them so proud of whatever the school item is that they receive!

We have started something and it is working out well. Someone had visitors coming in and when asked if they could bring anything, they answered, "of course, colored pencils!" I received a donation and many smiles from a couple who brought in 30 packs they had found at the dollar store. BRAVO! It is a great idea to have your guest bring some pens, pencil sharpeners or a backpack.

At the last cleft palate program, while working with one of the Regional Hospitals staff nurses, I realized the pediatric area is in need of pacifiers for their sick infants that are recuperating from illnesses and surgeries. Again, I am willing to accept bags of donated pacifiers and new born baby clothes (slightly used is okay). Baby clothes and pacifiers are light and stuff well in suitcases!

One of the city's independent charities supported by the IFC was dissolved (due to a lack of funding) leaving 3 families, 2 having paralyzed women, without help. A group of those who were concerned got together and through the graciousness of two couples, have constructed a plan to give them shelter and food. 6,000 pesos a month for 3 families totaling 14 people in all is a bargain and a blessing. I am always thankful when people reach inside themselves and ask what they can do -AND THEN DO IT!

The IFC has many people giving generously of themselves and I salute them! They are our HEROS! I thank all of you for the work you do and the time you generously give to keep our programs running.

Kelly Trainor de O, the USA Consular agent, will be in the IFC Clubhouse the first Wednesday of the month (9:00 am to 11:00 am) to assist you with all your passport needs or any other information you may require. For further information: consularagentpvr@prodigy.net.mx.

Restaurant Etiquette -

when using your membership card for a restaurant discount
William M Le Beau - Vice President

We have many restaurants which offer a discount to our members as a way to support their community as well as to encourage people to patronize their restaurant. All that they ask in return is for us to show our membership card when we are first being seated and introduced to the waiter. This helps them to alert the person who makes out the check "la cuenta" that will be delivered at the end of the meal. Waiting to show your membership card until the la cuenta is delivered is in poor taste and may result in your not receiving the discount. They are more than happy to give you the discount and will provide the same service regardless of when you show your card.

Please let us know in the IFC office if you follow the above procedure and you are not accorded the discount.

Also, if you patronize a restaurant regularly that is not offering a discount, you can talk to them about whether they would entertain the idea of offering a discount. If they say yes and you wish us to approach them about the program, let the office know and we will approach them.



THANK YOU

The IFC would like to thank the following people for their generous donations:

Dorothy Pauly/Christ Child Society of Chicago
Geraldo Lugo & Staff
Doug & Karen Gillespie
Robert & Wendy Tremblay
Ruth Miller
Charles & Elizabeth Moorhead
Charles & Erdene Hand
Jim Newby
Joe & Trudy Hall



Spotlight on Charity: Arroyo de Esperanza

By Janie Albright Blank

The International Friendship Club, in its mandate to respond to the humanitarian needs of our community, is always happy to spotlight the efforts of other members of the population that are also making their mark in our little piece of paradise. The IFC is proud to be able to help many such agencies.

On Feb. 23 I had the pleasure of accompanying Susan Davalos, Community Services Director for the International Friendship Club (IFC), along with Bob Davidson, the volunteer photographer for the IFC on a visit to a new community outreach center. The center is called Arroyo de Esperanza and is headed by Pastor Luis Miguel Vasquez de Reyes and his wife Lupita Solis. Pastor Luis Miguel formerly headed another center with a similar mission called Pan de Vida. In just a matter of months this group located in Colonia Salitrillo out beyond the Regional Hospital already has over 200 children in their program. They offer daycare, help with homework and tutoring, English classes and crafts for the children as well as Bible study. The children range in age from infants to high school. They have over 50 adults learning English and making crafts for sale as well as being involved in Bible Study groups.

The reason for our visit this week was because a group from a large community church in Snohomish, Washington called Gold Creek was on hand with nurses and volunteers and were partnering with a local doctor from Puerto Vallarta to do health screenings for the children. Nurses Jen Stout and Ann Ehoff and their husbands and families were in Puerto Vallarta for a combination vacation and volunteer trip. Jen, Ann and Susan Davalos measured height and weight, did pulse and blood pressure readings and took temperatures. Children with any problems will be seen by the doctor.



The members of the Gold Creek congregation have made a financial and volunteer commitment to Arroyo de

Esperanza to help them acquire land and build a large building capable of handling this quickly growing community. Right now they are in a rental building with some small tents to handle the large group and various activities. Already they have set their sights on a nearby parcel of land. Plans are in the works for two buildings one for administration with an apartment above and another to hold the activities and worship services. They envision sewing labs, classrooms, a kitchen and an auditorium capable of holding 500 people.

Today Pat Cox, a volunteer from Gold Creek Church who winters in Bucerias, was organizing the clinic as well as crafts for the children. When we arrived the children were fast at work with new puzzles the volunteers brought from Washington State. Later in the afternoon volunteers were blowing up balloons and making dogs and various animals to the delight of the kids. Pat and her husband Ray volunteer as often as possible at Arroyo de Esperanza. Ray said that the congregation back in Snohomish sold Christmas trees and pledged a days pay to help support this fledging community that most will never see.

The women are involved in doing crafts for sale. They are making the popular crocheted necklaces, beautiful pounded and formed metal work known as Reposé including art frames, crosses and other pieces, and some adorable “fairy crowns” that every grandmother will want to take back for their granddaughters. Right now they have a booth at the Sunday Farmer's Market in LaCruz and hope to branch out to other locations in the future.

The children must show a good command of Spanish before being qualified to begin English lessons. Volunteers work with the children to help them to achieve high marks in school. If a child meets certain standards then the \$50 annual fee for books and school supplies is waived. The community puts a very high value on education and from the looks of things today they are getting results. We observed some youth and adult English lessons in progress. Greg Swearingen and his wife Alicia volunteer one day a week at the Center. Greg is on a sabbatical leave as an associate pastor from a Vineyard congregation in Colorado. He is volunteering with the Worship in Paradise Congregation in Puerto Vallarta. Greg said teams of volunteers buy and prepare food for Arroyo de Esperanza making hot dogs on Wednesday and Quesadillas on Fridays. Another project the volunteers do is make reading glasses for those in the community who need them. They have a metal jig and turned out 45 pairs last week!

Arroyo de Esperanza is looking for volunteers. You need not speak Spanish to help this community. They are right at the end of the Majesterio bus line so although quite a distance it is not difficult to get there by bus. If you are interested you can contact Pastor Luis Miguel by email at Luismivaz@hotmail.com or Pat Cox at Patthodgsoncox@aol.com.

MEDICAL SERVICES

Patricia Mendez

Thank you to all of you who attended the Informe Anual of our Cleft Palate Surgery Program on Feb 1. I know it was a disappointment that Dr. Fuentes couldn't be there and of course, we didn't know that would be the case until noon on that day. So Emma Gonzalez, surgical nurse and assistant to Dr. Fuentes, and I gave the Informe using his power point presentation and notes. I also want to thank Flowers To Go for the lovely arrangements and Fred Forbes for taking care of that for us. Thank you to all the people who brought food for the reception....it was a nice buffet. We had a nice attendance by the press...4 newspapers sent their reporters. I do hope that any of you that read the papers will clip the articles for us.

At the Informe, you met Anabella Vargas, 16 yrs old, who is going to have a nose constructed at this program. It is a rather complicated procedure and requires 2 surgeons working at the same time to complete. We had only one



surgeon this time, so we were not able to do that procedure for her. She has had the skin expander for 6 months and has grown enough skin...and really can't wait another 3 months till the May program. So we will be taking her to Guadalajara to the Sanatorio Versalles where Emma Gonzalez is Chief of Nursing. The Sanatorio Versalles is offering their facilities at the price they would to family of staff....practically a donation. Dr. Fuentes and his team will donate just as they would if they were doing it here during the regular program. We will have to stay in Guadalajara for a few days after her release for the first follow up appointment, and then she will come home and be seen by Dr. Ricardo Rivera for the continuing follow up.

Our patients this week were a new baby girl of 3 months for her first lip closure, 3 boys of 1 ½ yrs for closure of the palate, a 3 yr old girl for construction of the pharyngeal flap,

a 12 yr old boy for insertion of a skin expander. He was born without ears and we are starting that process one ear at a time. We also had a 53 yr old woman for removal of a growth on her eyelid, quick and simple, with impressive



results. It is amazing to me that sometimes it can take so little to make such a huge difference in the life of someone, in their ability to interact with the world, go shopping, go to work, ride the bus, all of those moments in which our face is what that person on the other side of it is reacting to.

Also, during the time Emma and I were speaking to you, there were 2 babies born at Regional Hospital – one with a cleft palate and the other with bilateral cleft lip and palate. There is never a program that we don't have at least one new baby entering the program. We are never going to run out of work to do.

Thank you all for your support. You all are what make this program possible.

Wish List

For future Cleft Palatte surgeries, I need:

- ☞ number 18 foley catheters and anti reflux collection bags
- ☞ surgical booties and surgical masks...the elastic type, not ties
- ☞ spanish books for kids
- ☞ spanish books for diabetic teaching,
- ☞ folders from doctors offices or magazines that offer support and ideas

Gala Fashion Show

By Mandy MacLeay

Another big win for our charities! The IFC Luncheon



Gala Fashion Show was a sell out and we all enjoyed a nice lunch at Coco's Kitchen. His and Hers fashions were presented by Coleccion La Bohemia with great introductions by owner Toody Walton. The models did a super job and the setting was perfect to show off the beautiful fashions and accessories worn by the models.



We also received the support of many local businesses:



Casa Tito, Ara Salon, Amapas Sunset, Bolero, Dante Galeria, Cabillito De Mar, Cueto & Brasilia, No Way Jose, The Outback Steakhouse, Fireworks, The River Café, Galeria Uno, Brazil Steak House, La Bohemia, Mi Querencia, Senor Frog's, El Torito, Elle Salon, La Piazzetta, Oscar's Restaurant, Archie's Wok and La cuiza Galeria-Bar. We wish to extend our many thanks to you all for helping our charity fundraiser. Your support is always most appreciated.



Our member Donna Feldman hosted this event and Bob Davidson was on site to take some great pictures. Thank you to all the other volunteer members that also help put this event together and thank you to all our guests for their participation.

