



INTERNATIONAL FRIENDSHIP CLUB
Edificio Parian del Puente # 13 (upstairs)
Libertad corner of Miramar, El Centro,
Puerto Vallarta
Hours 9 am - 2 pm, Mon. - Fri.
Tel: (322)-222-5466
from the US/Canada 1-514-418-2123
www.IFCVallarta.com
Email: info@ifcvallarta.com
ADMINISTRATOR - Josué Santiago

President's Message

As our busy season comes to an end, I'd like to pause to thank everyone who has made this great year possible, from the many volunteers - too many to mention them all by name - who offer countless hours of time and talent to our projects and activities, and to all members, whether first-time or long-term, for the financial and moral support that keeps this great organization growing and thriving. And thriving we are, with an active membership count well over 600 this year.

The many programs your efforts have supported this season include a successful new English Outreach Program offering basic English language skills to local residents who need it for work or school, as well as a new Dental Outreach Program being piloted with children who lack dental care in the Boca de Tomatlán and south shore area.

Our new Education Committee approved 7 grants to support educational initiatives underway in some of Vallarta's most economically challenged areas, partnering with a diverse group of established and respected educational and charitable organizations including the American School and British American School, Los Mangos Library and The Vallarta Youth Orchestra, The Volcanas Community Education Project and SETAC Community Center, and The Vallarta Botanical Gardens.

A revamped Patrocinio Program encourages all IFC members to step forward to sponsor, with IFC financial support, a local resident who has a specific medical problem requiring one-time financial assistance. Applications and guidance are available at the office.

In addition the IFC has expanded its Rice and Beans program aiding various community centers that provide daycare, meals, and remedial instruction in impoverished areas, as well as providing some emergency funds to families in extreme need. We also distribute school supplies each summer to a wide variety of organizations.

The IFC now more than ever serves as a "United Way" of Puerto Vallarta, offering monthly financial support to a growing list of local charities thanks to your continued financial contributions. After careful review of their programs and onsite visits, the following charities have been added to our list this year: orphanages Corazon de Niña and Casa Hogar Maximo Cornejo, and humanitarian and service organizations Dives in Miseracordia, Arroyos de Esperanza, CANICA, and SETAC, as well as Biblioteca Los Mangos. IFC aid also continues strong to the following charitable and service organizations we have long supported: Clinical Santa Barbara de Rehabilitación, Pasitos de Luz, Refugio Infantil Santa Esperanza (RISE), and The Salvation Army food kitchen.

As you know, in addition to funding charities the IFC continues to offer numerous social and recreational activities to its members and the general public, hosts fundraising events, and offers classes and lectures throughout the season. Attendance has never been better and your donations help cover overhead. Thanks to all who have made this great variety of activities and community-building possible.

I'm delighted to report the IFC has completed a very successful season of Home Tours, now in its 27th season, as well as a weekly Botanical Gardens and Zoo Tour added this year. Tours raise funds that not only help support all the activities mentioned above, they also are the main source of fundraising for our flagship program, the IFC Cleft Palate Surgery program, also in its 27th season. Our most recent clinic in March was a great success and plans are underway for more great clinics to come.

Our thanks go out to the fantastic medical team, the many IFC volunteers who organize and carry them out, local businesses and restaurants, and the CMQ Hospital and staff and the Villanueva family for their vital assistance in making this program an ongoing success.

I also thank all the hardworking residents and individuals and establishments of Puerto Vallarta that help keep the IFC functioning and make it possible for all of us to enjoy its many activities and benefits, beginning with our own hard working employee, office administrator Josué Santiago, along with our accountants, bankers, Notario, and others who help us take care of business.

I ask that you please extend your own personal thanks to the countless restaurants and other merchants who offer IFC members generous discounts on meals and merchandise, further enhancing the value of an IFC membership and thereby underwriting our many efforts to truly be international friends.

As the saying goes: A Friend in Need Is A Friend Indeed. When we help those in need, this is the IFC at its finest!

With thanks to one and all,
Dan Grippo
President

Membership

I want to thank everyone who joined new this year or renewed their memberships. We feel very thankful for your participation in the different activities this year.

We now have over 600 paid members in the Friendship Club who have either joined or renewed their memberships. Many people have helped by volunteering their time to sign up new members. I would like to thank my co-chair, Jan Blacklidge, also Bill Le Beau, Randy Sloan, Ann Yusaitis, Betty Hibbs and Barbara Smialek for helping out. It is a combined effort of all of us in reaching our goals this year.

Please think about bringing a friend you know who is not a member to one of our future events, to introduce them to our wonderful organization. If you have had a good time, spread the word please.

This year we have been selling memberships at the Saturday market, during the IFC Social Hour, before meetings and at other events. Next year I would like to set up a membership table at the Thursday market at the Marina. I am looking for volunteers to help us every Thursday during the high season.

We have about 25 people who we have incorrect emails for, so if you are not receiving IFC information please contact me at: mom2051@aol.com

Beverly Le Beau

Membership Chairperson



Education

The new Education Committee has been very active the last few months holding meetings and conducting site evaluations. Our purpose is to provide funding and to collaborate with projects that educate, inform, and support the most economically challenged families and young people in the Vallarta community.

To this end, we have chosen seven projects for initial funding and collaboration, projects that help equip libraries in remote rural schools and upgrade public access computers, print informational brochures on HIV prevention and fund musical instruments for young student musicians, support after-school education in challenged communities and provide basic school supplies for many students every summer. And we have more projects on the horizon!

Participating in this committee has indeed been very rewarding and enlightening. I encourage everyone next year to volunteer some time with the IFC and its many charitable and educational programs. You won't be disappointed!

Henry Golas

Community Service

Looking for a Chairperson that I can work beside! Sign up at the IFC front desk! There are opportunities galore this year and next to make a change for the better in many lives in and around Puerto Vallarta.

I really want to thank our new IFC president, Dan, for his insight into the needs of the community. He has hit the nail on the head AND scored a home run in this area! Community Service programs have always been about the needs of the poor and now the IFC monies extend to the needy in many more ways. IFC sponsors a reimbursement program to many civil associations giving direct aid to the poor and disadvantaged.

IFC has established a dental program to assist the kids that do not have a dentist in their town. We cannot do this by ourselves. We thank the local dentist, C.D. Gerardo Mijares, for his efforts and compassion as he works at a discount for these kids. Intervention at an early age teaches kids the life long importance of oral hygiene and health. It is a win/win situation!

The IFC has a newly formed Education Committee that is looking into giving aid to the many who help kids grow and learn in the Puerto Vallarta community. If interested to lend a hand in follow-up visits to the areas receiving funds from the IFC, please call or write to us. We are delighted to have company on our rounds through the communities!

Susan Harrie Davalos RN



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Medical Update

Our cleft lip and palate repair team cleared the hurdles we have come up against over the last two months to come together and successfully complete a round of surgeries. Our team of surgeons, nurses, anesthesiologist and volunteers gathered at Hospital CMQ Centro on March 12. CMQ hospital has allowed us to use their facilities free of charge for each of our surgical programs for the last 2 and one half years. Our team meets 4 times per year at CMQ to transform lives and make complete smiles where there were none.

We receive our patients soon after birth, sometimes while they are still in post-partum, and follow them through to adulthood. We guide the families through the passage of one or several surgeries. The IFC has a specially trained dentist who is often our first contact with newborns with cleft palates. These children are unable to suck. The dentist designs a special apparatus for each child that covers the difficulty, allowing the baby to nurse sufficiently to grow until they can have surgery.

For some kids, a major facial reconstruction during late teen years is provided when the face has reached adult size. There are many variables to clefts, as well as sequeli. Each child's challenge is different and requires individualized treatment from birth forward. Our IFC program meets the many challenges!

Consultations took place the day prior to the surgeries. Our team would like to thank the many volunteers that met early on that day and stayed for several hours, some more than that, working with the kids. We provided fun/diversion as well as therapeutic games for the kids while they were waiting the many hours to be seen.

There is always room for improvement. I would love to teach families health, nutrition and hygiene during this long period of free time. If any one would like to help with this missing piece or provide Spanish educational videos, please call or write the IFC with your ideas.



IFC Tour Season Ends

A big thanks to all the club members who worked so hard and regularly each week to make this one of the IFC's most successful tour seasons.

A special thanks to Vicky Mason who led the Home Tours this year, providing a strong financial base for Club outreach.

Thanks also to the owners of the homes who participated and Robert Price and everyone at the Botanical Gardens for their continued support.
John Lockington

IFC Publicity Review

The IFC publicity has increased quite a bit this season. We are still getting an article published in the PV Mirror each week from November until the close of our season in April. That has been most successful. The idea is to have "IFC" in the headline to catch attention and let the community know what a vibrant club we have. The PV Mirror quality is excellent and they use color photos and color in the paper.

We also have 4 online publications that will publish us as well. All articles are sent to them each week and you can read the articles online. They are: VallartaToday.com, BanderasNews.com, PVAngels.com and PVGuide.org.

I encourage you to bookmark all of these publications and take a look. They are all great sources of PV news.

Vallartatoday.com has a nice feature you might want to use. If you go to their website on the very top right you can click and enter your email address and each week they will email you a summary digest with links to read all their articles including the IFC. They also have a great events calendar and we enter all of our events such as our Tours and lectures, etc., there.

The PV Mirror also has an online version of the weekly printed paper called the City Paper, which can be found at <http://www.pvmcitypaper.com> where you can read the IFC article if you don't pick up a paper or are back at home.

If possible I send each publication a different photo to go with the article. We do run a 1/8 page Tours ad each week of the season in the PV Mirror and a small business card Tours ad in the Tribune.

This season we also made a good contact at the Bay Vallarta Magazine and they have been including our tours and other events in their bi-weekly listings.

With the exception of the two small ads to publicize our fund raising Home Tours and Botanical Gardens and Zoo Tours all publicity is free. If you read another paper or online publication please email me with any additional publicity sources or suggestions you might have.

¡Gracias!

Janie Albright Blank
IFC Publicity



We would like to thank CMQ Hospitals for generously donating hospital rooms and services to the IFC Cleft Palate Program



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Basilio Badillo ·365
Col. Emiliano Zapata
(322) 223 1919

CMQ Premiere Hospital
Av. Francisco Villa ·1749
Col. Vallarta Villas
(322) 226 6500