



Newsletter Las Noticias

April 2009



Santa Barbara/Puerto Vallarta Sister City Committee P.O. Box 3718 Santa Barbara, CA 93130

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President's Corner

Hola un Saludar,

This will be my last President's Corner message. This month marks my last one as president of the board of directors. As I hand my position off to another board member, I would like all of you to know that your Committee is in good shape. At its head is a great group of hard working industrious members. Financially the Committee is in excellent condition. Our membership after slipping a little has stabilized and continues to attract new members. Our organization is alive and vibrant as evidenced by our many projects, and the constant efforts and hard work of the members in meeting the challenges we continually face. Our relationship with our brothers and sisters in Puerto Vallarta is a living thing and as such continually grows and evolves. As our relationship constantly changes in many small ways, our goals and our friendship remain strong. Although we have many projects, they are not all active every year. New project ideas continue to be brought up, not just by the board members, but from the general membership. New ideas are always

explored and given attention, as they are what keeps our group alive. Not all new ideas result in new projects, and some can take years to become an actual project. As an example, Evie Treen spent 15 years working on the Law Enforcement exchange. It started with a "what if we could" idea. Gil Garcia has related many stories of how projects came in to being. All of us come up with an idea now and then. Please bring your ideas to the attention of your Board of Directors. By doing so you will be contributing to the health and well being of the Committee.

The April dinner meeting will be the annual election meeting and I encourage you to attend and cast your vote. At the April Board of Directors meeting a new President and Officers will be selected. Your current Board of Directors appointed a nominating committee to recruit new candidates and manage the elections. At the last dinner meeting I endorsed a candidate for the board. I also mentioned that she, Barbara Ellis, would be a great candidate for president. My endorsement and comment are in the spirit of encouragement for and support of the elections. I encourage any and all members to run for the board and once elected to volunteer to serve as one of the officers. We are engaged in selecting the leadership of our Committee, and some members are actively campaigning. We are a democratic organization. Run for a position and Vote!

I want to express my gratitude to all of you for the opportunity to serve as your president. I especially want to thank those few who talked me into running for the board. I am also grateful to the few board members who with unusual persistence persuaded me to volunteer to serve as president. There have been moments since when I have said to myself, "What have I gotten myself

into!" I wish I could translate that into Spanish.

Serving on the board and especially as president has deeply enriched my experience as a member. I still have a year to serve on the board so I will be available to all. Muchas mas Gracias mi amigos mio de entranas! My Spanish may be lacking but my heart is in it.

Sincero,
Craig Nielsen
President

DINNER MEETING

Wednesday, April 1, 2009

Social hour: 6:00 p.m.

Dinner: 6:30 p.m.

Cost: \$19.00 (includes tax, tip)

Place: Mulligan's Restaurant at the SB Community Golf Course
Menu: Bar-B-Q chicken, potato salad, fresh garden salad, chili beans and dinner rolls.

Program: Elections and surprise guest speaker!

Call Joe Vazquez at 684-4724 for reservations by Sunday, March 29.

We prefer you make your reservations by e-mail to baja.lot@verizon.net if at all possible. PLEASE REMEMBER TO CALL IN NO LATER THAN **SUNDAY.....OR AS SOON AS YOU RECEIVE THE NEWSLETTER** Reservations are called in on Monday afternoon. PLEASE CALL TO MAKE YOUR RESERVATIONS EARLY!

A RESERVATION MADE.....IS A RESERVATION PAID!

NEXT BOARD MEETING

6:30 pm Tuesday April 7, is our board meeting at the Re/Max Realty, 1900 block of State St. It was formerly the McDermott-Crocket Funeral Home

WELLNESS

Our members seem to be suffering from all sorts of ailments but our trusty Wellness Lady, Dee Dee Lane, takes care of sending our best wishes to all of them.

Get Well cards were sent to

**Obedia Chierici
Danny Ramirez
Margaret Molina
Josie Schreier**

If you know of anyone who is ill, PLEASE let either a board member or DEE DEE LANE know! No cards can be sent unless you let us know how our members are doing. The phone numbers for your board members are included in every newsletter. Dee Dee may be reached at 967-7596. Thanks for your help!

UPCOMING CALENDAR

- Mar 29-Apr 4 Student exchange to PV
- April 1 Elections!! Be sure you dues are paid so you can come out and vote!!
- April 22-26 Mexico/US National Conference Saltillo, Coahuila, Mexico. This promises to be a great conference and a fun time. See Gil or Alice for more info.
- May 2-3 Cinco de Mayo Festival
- May 6 Friendship Dinner and Installation of new officers.

- June 1 First day to make your deposit on the 2009 PV Trip!
- June 7 USMSCA BBQ at South Gate Good food...good friends – lots of prizes!! See Gil or Alice. Maybe we can carpool.
- July 31 – Aug 9 PV Guests Arrive!!! Stay tuned for schedule.
- Aug 1 El Fandango....get those dancing shoes ready. Stay tuned for Interesting and exciting information.
- Aug 5-9 USMSCA International Conference Austin, Texas. New President will be elected at this conference.
- Sept 11-11 Concert. Stay tuned for more details
- Oct 22 UN Dinner. Always a fun event
- Nov 28-Dec 8 Puerto Vallarta – here we come!!

BADGES

Let me know when you are coming to the dinner meeting so I can be sure to have your badge. Please either call me at 684-4724 to make arrangements to pick up your badges or come to our dinner meeting and see what a great time we have! This is what Sister City's all about. People to people.

Renewals

The following members have renewed and are continuing to have fun being part of this organization!

Dan Michel
Margaret Pettit
Janet Baker
Trini/Willie Quinn
John/Barbara Ahlman
Jessea Gay Marie

....and then we have a new member!

Hadi Arfaei

Entre Amigos
by Barbara Hirsch,
Ecofacts, UCSB

San Pancho, a village in Nayarit, Mexico, has recycling. I was so glad to find wire recycling bins for public use along the dirt and stone streets, for plastic, glass and aluminum. When I was having breakfast this morning, a wiry old fellow came in to fill his old plastic soda bottle with milk, sugar and coffee (in that order). He knows the inherent functional value of a plastic bottle, even if he does not know that it will last hundreds of years.

There is a recycling park with play structures built by the community of scrap materials, including a bridge made out of tuna fishing nets, and a group of women make lots of cool things to sell out of bottles, pop tops, plastic bags. Even those plastic six pack holders (known to cause damage to sea life) are colored and woven into flowers....there`s a metaphor. But the world has a limited capacity for plastic flowers, yes?

Anyway, I learned that this all began only 14 months ago with a dedicated group and already, all of the school children are competing for bringing in recycling, and of course, they are teaching their parents. A small local organization called Entre Amigos has been seminal in making all of this happen. They

offer the community a library, education programs and scholarships. A compacter was purchased for their recycling depot, and it was decided in the beginning that they were NOT sending their recycling to China. It is sold or made into plastic lumber, benches and play structures, glassware, etc. in this

region. Best of all, there are now many more programs being planned in other communities, based on this one, because of its great success. What an inspiration to experience great work like this!

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Thoughts From Sabina Roan



After a Montreal metro ride standing next to people complaining about the distance to the nearest supermarket, and trudging home amid the snow and ice with cold feet, I plopped down and opened my laptop. Pushing away the thoughts of the loads of school work I had to finish, I opened Facebook. A message pulled me away from my begrudging, self-centered, non-productive state of mind that afternoon: my friend Yasir from Iraq, whom I had met at Global Youth Village last summer, had posted this update, "my neighbour was killed two hours ago and they putted him in the bathroom !!!!! ohhhhhhh my god."

Yasir and I have been sending each other messages, asking how the other feels about school and about the health of each other's families. He is in his last year of high school, and experiencing similar stress to what I felt last year. It's easy for us to relate

about many things. On the last night of Global Youth Village, when we were all hit by the harsh reality that would pull us apart the next morning –a reality that contained not a speck of fairness– Yasir and I had a heart wrenching conversation. We talked about our life histories. He told me how his family fled their war-ravaged nation but ended up returning because, despite the horror and danger, it was their home. I told him that I decided to go to school in Canada, far away from my family. Yasir, like his fellow exchangers from Iraq, was intensely interested in the idea of going to school in the U.S. For participating on the exchange trip (which included living with a family, going to the camp, and a visit to Washington, D.C.), the teens were risking not only their own lives but those of their loved ones. Many desperately hoped to find scholarships to study in the U.S., to gain a quality education and later return and contribute to Iraq. Some had had their school shut down due to bombings and disappearances of teachers. I had taken my privilege of going to school pretty much for granted before learning that people I connected with did not have this privilege.

Upon returning home, I talked to people and sent out emails, trying to find a way to lend a hand to my friends and help them find U.S. schools. But as of yet, a lot of my emails are unanswered and I

really have not found any possibilities. It's as if the world they are in, in Iraq, is so disconnected from this one that there are no gates through which to exchange information.

Grasping the hand of someone who's so far away gives me the strength to reach further. Santa Barbara Sister Cities provided me with opportunities that taught me how to hold hands with people I have never realized I could reach. SB Sister Cities, especially Jan Olivas, not only informed me about the Global Youth Village but worked hard to make my attendance financially possible. Thank you, from the bottom of my heart, for providing me with the tools to become a conscious and active global citizen. Nunca voy a olvidar que somos una sangre.

Last summer, our Sister Cities organization joined with private individuals and organizations in Santa Barbara to sponsor Ms. Sabina Roan, A Dos Pueblos student and former Student Ambassador to Puerto Vallarta, to attend the Global Youth Village International Camp with Teenagers from Iraq and the United States. The goal of the camp is to foster international understanding and personal development. Sabina is now in Canada pursuing a degree in Environmental Studies. She recently submitted this essay on her experience and the impact it had on her life.

CANDIDATES FOR ELECTION TO THE SANTA BARBARA/PUERTO VALLARTA SISTER CITY COMMITTEE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Hello,

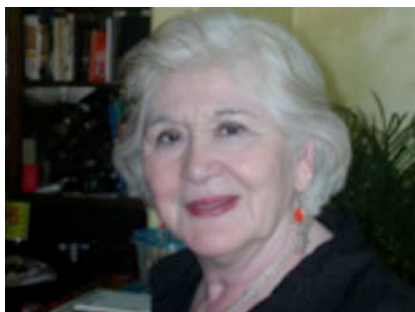


Many of you know me as “La Primera Dama,” wife of outgoing President, Craig Nielsen. I work for the Santa Barbara County Sheriff’s Department as Parking Enforcement Officer out of the Isla Vista Foot Patrol. I have worked with most of the Sheriff personnel who have gone to Puerto Vallarta for the police exchange. It is a program I would like to see go forward in the future and continue with the support of our Sister City members here and in Puerto Vallarta.

I have been a member of SB/PV Sister City Committee since 2003. Since joining, Craig and I have made friends here and in Puerto Vallarta. These friendships will continue throughout our lives. Sharing ideas, cultures and memories has made us aware of how special the connection to one another is, no matter where we live.

I support all of our programs and want to work to continue every one of them. If elected to the board, my primary goal will be to keep the organization vibrant and fun. On a more serious note, I will do my best to promote new members and continue the hard work I know it takes to enable our group to enjoy the “Sister City” experience.

Marcia Nielsen



Hola Amigos,
Soy Romelia (Romie) and I am asking for your re-election support to continue to represent you on the Santa Barbara/Puerto Vallarta Sister City Committee Board of Directors.

Many of you already know me as an active Sister City member for the last 15 years off and on. For those of you who don’t know me I have been involved in community work with nonprofit agencies for much of my adult life including working as a case manager with young teens and families promoting systems of care focusing on health, education and psychosocial needs.

Now that I am a retired young senior I have the time and energy to give back to our community and especially to participate in our PV Sister City’s activities. We have “mucho” fun playing and working hard while helping our neighbors in Mexico.

Please vote for me to keep an enthusiastic young retired senior active on your behalf. Thanks for your support!

Romie Alvarado



Here I go again getting involved into another committee, but this one is very close to my heart. I have been a member for a long time and it is time to give back. I believe that I have the qualifications to become a good board member. I am on the board of the Santa Barbara Youth Mariachi Group and President and Founder of the Lincoln School Alumni Association. I am also a past Senior Regent of the Women of the Moose. I will work hard and dedicate my time and energy to the betterment of the Puerto Vallarta Sister City Committee Board. So please vote for Angie Shaw for Board Member

Hi/Hola Members:



I am Marti Correa de Garcia but some people call me Smarty Marti and others call me Party Marti and then there is my husband who calls me Tardy Marti or "Blonde" the name Dr. Michael Lemus used to call me, however you can call me just plain Marti. Now that you know who I am I'd like to ask for your vote.

I have been a member of the Committee since the early 1980s. My husband, Gil and I spent our honeymoon in P.V. and have seen this beautiful pueblo grow just like our membership. Time really does fly when you're having fun with a great bunch of fiesta people from Santa Barbara and Puerto Vallarta.

I am a dedicated Sister City citizen diplomat and have been actively involved in the Sister City movement through the "people-to-people" programs we participate in. I feel an extreme amount of pride when we go to Puerto Vallarta and see the many accomplishments our organization has contributed to the P.V. community. We should all feel a personal satisfaction when we see the many projects our club has achieved over these 37 years of Sister City involvement.

I have been president twice and am now running once again for the board of directors to help in any way I can to ensure the Santa Barbara/Puerto Vallarta Sister City Committee continues its

programs and friendship with our Mexican neighbors.

Thank you for your participation and hopefully your vote.



For the last two years I have had the privilege of serving on your Board and the pleasure of working with the most wonderful group of people I have ever known. It has been a lot fun but more than that, I believe wholeheartedly in the projects we have undertaken in Puerto Vallarta as well as here. Hard work that yields such positive results in achieving our goals of creating a better world of friendship and understanding is tremendously satisfying. Thank you for the past two years and please allow me to continue working with you and for you for the next two.

Thank you,
Barbara J. Ellis



My name is Frank Bischof and I am a native of Santa Barbara. I attended local schools and worked numerous jobs before following in my Father's footsteps as a Sheet metal /air conditioning professional for 28 years.

Upon retiring in 1998, I worked for a local property management company for a short time and decided it was time to enjoy my retirement, so I took up my second love, golf.

At the urging of my wife's siblings, Elva Sanchez and Bob Betancourt, we attended our first Santa Barbara Puerto Vallarta Sister Cities meeting. We joined the organization immediately and began to participate in monthly meetings and were fortunate to meet Puerto Vallarta members during their visit to Santa Barbara.

We began to understand more about the organization when we visited Puerto Vallarta in December of 2008. Through our travels to various areas of Puerto Vallarta such as the kindergarten, local orphanage, Rehabilitation Center and the Police Academy we were able to see first hand the wonderful work being done by the Sister Cities organization.

My wife and I have thoroughly enjoyed our experiences with the

organization and have made wonderful new friendships.

I feel privileged to be nominated for a position on the Board of Directors of the SBPV Sisters Cities and look forward to the opportunity to serve the members and communities we represent.

Yours truly,

Frank Bischof
March 12, 2009



My name is Helen Caldwell and I have been a SBPV Member for the last 100 years. I am a therapist and adult education instructor. My hobbies are traveling all over the world, meeting handsome men, learning tai chi and giving back to my community (in that order) . I know many of the present Board Members and feel that I would work well with them in the challenging work of Sister Cities. I believe that the Sister Cities Movement makes the world a smaller place. Please consider me when you vote in April. P.S. I am really smart and have a PHD. (written with tongue planted firmly in cheek)

Helen Caldwell



Hal Oquist

(biography not available)

PUERTO VALLARTA HERE WE COME!
STUDENT EXCHANGE 2009
MARCH 29 THRU APRIL 5

THE FOLLOWING STUDENTS HAVE BEEN SELECTED TO PARTICIPATE IN OUR STUDENT EXCHANGE PROGRAM
BIANCA LOPEZ SAN MARCOS HIGH
LIONEL RODRIGUEZ SAN MARCOS HIGH
ELIAS RODRIGUZ SAN MARCOS HIGH
ELLY IVERSON SANTA BARBARA HIGH
SPECIAL THANKS TO MARIA CABRERRA ACADEMIC

COUNSELOR AT SAN MARCOS HIGH SCHOOL AND SUSAN YOUNG OF THE SANTA BARBARA TEEN CENTER FOR HELPING US IDENTIFY THESE WONDERFUL STUDENTS WHO WILL BE GREAT AMBASSADORS REPRESENTING SANTA BARBARA ON THIS CULTURAL AND LANGUAGE EXCHANGE. I HAVE THE PLEASURE OF PERSONALLY BEING THEIR CHAPERONE THIS YEAR AS WELL AS DIRECTING THE PROGRAM. STAY TUNED IN LAS NOTICIAS NEXT MONTH FOR OUR ADVENTURES.
ROSANNE CRAWFORD

Survey Results

Thanks to all who participated in filling out the survey sent to you in the February Las Noticias. A total of 28 people responded. Although we have already completed the summary of the survey, we will always welcome your thoughts. If you still would like to give your input, please complete and return the survey sent to you. Your input is very valuable in planning purposeful and productive meetings.

Restaurants:

Although you were requested to prioritize, many of you opted to place checkmarks in front of your choices while others did prioritize.

The results were as follows:

	Checkmarks Received
Jake's	7
Mulligan's	5
Elks	3
La Rumba	2
Timber's	0

In order to compare the prioritizing, it was necessary to assign a number value to each rating. A value of 5 was assigned to each first priority, 4 to second priority, 3 to third priority, 2 to fourth priority, and 1 to fifth priority. With this point to rating equivalence, the restaurants received the following points:

Mulligans's	61
Jake's	46
La Rumba	37
Timbers	23
Elks	18

Under Other Options:

16 of you stated you would like picnics but many commented they would like it once a year.

Appetizers, dessert only and meetings every other month received few votes each.

Ten of you responded that you would not attend if the cost was \$20.00 or more and four if it was \$25.00 or more.

In reference to program, the largest number of points was received by Social as the main purpose of the meetings. Many good, constructive comments were received concerning the informational and informative aspects of the meetings.

We will continue to listen to your productive input, so please let us know what you think.

2008 - 2009 Board of Directors

Craig Nielsen, President.....967-3146
Barbara Ellis, 1st Vice Pres.....898-0245
Rosanne Crawford, 2nd V P.....569-0985
Gil Garcia, Treasurer.....965-8561
Jessea Gay Marie, Corres. Secy...895-0894
Alice Vazquez, Recording Secy...684-4724

John Ahlman, Director.....969-2915
Romie Alvarado, Director.....963-7549
Monica Falcon, Director.....962-8406
Dave Gorbet...Ed/Dir.....,687-0057
Miguel Avila.....896-0581
Hal Oquist, Director.....969-693
Jan Casserly Olivas, Ex-Officio.....687-441