



Free/Gratis

## ***Busting Out At The Seams!***

By: Christine Courtright

Oh, how our little town has changed over the years. We have seen unparalleled growth, new businesses come to town, new faces on the street and even new activities to enjoy. We love growth, but sometimes it can bring growing pains. Here, the obvious pain we see is in the traffic and lack of parking and often, not being able to get a table at our favorite dinner spot! The growth seems 'horrible' when you can't find a place to park to run in and grab a few tomatoes but look at it another way. Think of the exercise you get having to walk 3 blocks out in the sunshine and fresh air, greeting new faces and enjoying what Baja has to offer. Can't find a table at your favorite place, what a great opportunity to venture out and try a new place - who knows you might have found a new favorite place. The traffic, well, you may find yourself being creative and more selective about when you come to town!

One thing we don't see readily is how the growth has affected the locals. Sure, there are lots of jobs and money-making opportunities bringing in workers and their families from out of the area, but they are also facing a tough housing market and the school systems in all of East Cape are busting out at their seams with new students. All these new students mean more supplies are needed, more classrooms and on and on. That is where Asociación de Artes comes in.

Asociación de Artes is here to assist the schools with the needed school supplies, repairs and whatever their need is that is within our control. It is a big job that keeps getting bigger. We have to be creative, selective and continually work on ways we can raise funds to take care of all the needs. Our mission is to "help make the educational experience the best it can be at the 20 East Cape Area schools we support". And that is where you can come in.

By the time you read this, you may have already participated in our first fundraising opportunities at the Holiday Art Show. Maybe you were lucky enough to win one of our great raffle baskets or silent auction,

items. But if you missed the show, you have two big opportunities still coming. First is our **Artist Studio Tour** on February 7<sup>th</sup> from 10 – 4 here in the Los Barriles area. Get your ticket and tour 15+ studios with several artists at each location. It is a great time, and you get to get a glimpse of where inspiration comes from at the different artists home. It is a great opportunity to buy some of their creations, and we have a great variety of creations to see!

Your second opportunity is the big **Festival de Artes** at Hotel Palmas de Cortez, on March 17<sup>th</sup> from 10 – 4. This will be the start of your St. Patrick's day celebration! Come and see the works of some of the most talented, hand selected, artists in the Baja SUR. Enjoy the food and drink available and don't miss the traditional Mexican Folkloric entertainment that we have all day long. Lots of covered shade will be available so that you can enjoy the entire day shopping, eating, drinking and watching the bright and colorful entertainment.

Festival de Artes is our BIG fundraiser with our silent auction and raffle baskets. There are thousands of dollars' worth of goods that you are going to buy anyways, so why not buy them here and help the kids of the East Cape schools! Our collection team goes beyond the call of duty to get great items from artwork, merchandise, certificates, adventures and mini vacations. Everyone will find something that they need, so we encourage everyone to stop by the Silent Auction and Raffle area.

*Continued on Page 3*



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Advertising in the East Capers gets the word out about your business AND your ad money supports the 3 week 'Cursos de Verano' summer school, for over 120 local children, provides art supplies for 19 East Cape public schools, baseball camps, just to name a few things the Asociación de Artes does!

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## Contributions Can Be Made to the Asociación de Artes

The Asociación de Artes del Mar de Cortez A.C., Los Barriles, B.C. Sur, Mexico is a legal Asociación Civil Mexican corporation not affiliated with any other organization, association, club or business.

## Volunteers Needed!

The Asociación de Artes needs volunteers to help support their programs that bring the arts to the local communities and the schools.

To learn more about these programs, visit: [www.eastcapearts.com](http://www.eastcapearts.com). If you would like to volunteer, send an email to: [eastcapearts@gmail.com](mailto:eastcapearts@gmail.com).

## Call for Articles

East Capers is looking for fiction and true stories about our region and items that affect our residents. If you are interested in submitting articles, recipes, stories or your personal experiences in Baja, email your 1,000-words or less article to: [eastcapersmagazine@gmail.com](mailto:eastcapersmagazine@gmail.com)

## Thank You!

This publication is possible with the help of the board members of the Asociación de Artes and members of the community.



## Newsletter Email Address

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To learn about Ciudad Los Niños, visit their website at:  
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The opinions expressed within the articles in East Capers are those of the author and do not





*Busting Out Continued From Page 1*

The last thing is, for everyone to remember “it takes a village”. We can do the pre-planning with a few folks, but come ‘game day’, we need a small army of volunteers to help us carry out our mission! We have 2-hour shifts, all in the shade and all being fun jobs where you can meet varieties of folks! If you are unfamiliar with Asociación de Artes, go to our website, [www.eastcapearts.com](http://www.eastcapearts.com), and see what we are all about. If you wish to lend a hand, we would love for you to become involved. Many hands make light work, are we only need ‘many hands’ a few times a year! We are a great organization (we are not biased!) that affects all the children of the East Cape because we support all their schools. We do guarantee that you will leave with a sense of accomplishment knowing that you have participated in making a difference in hundreds of the lives of school children here in the East Cape!



## *Mexico City & Magical Monarchs*

By Julie Shipman—photo credit also!

A gang of Los Barriles girlfriends took a delightful getaway trip last winter to Mexico City and to witness the miracle of the migrating monarchs in the Biosphere Reserve World Heritage Site, 130 km northwest of Mexico City, in the state of Michoacán. We flew from SJD to MEX, an easy inexpensive flight. Mexico City has so much to offer that to do it justice would take chapters. As I have only sentences, I suggest the Hop-On Hop-Off Bus (yes, it’s cheezy but if you’ve never been, it’s a great place to start and decide where you want to go back to explore. Another fun idea is a city bike tour. For me, Casa Azul (the Frida Kahlo house) is a must-see. In addition, don’t forget to make some dinner reservations because the food scene there is outrageous; it competes with the best international cuisine. We ate at *Azul Historica* which not only boasts amazing food but also incredible ambiance and décor. If your budget is tight, Mexico City is also known as one of the best cities in the world for street food. You will not find flavors or options lacking. Accommodation is also plentiful. We stayed at the *Domingo Santo Hotel*

*Boutique* in the historic district. Great location, awesome rooftop bar and restaurant and very nice rooms. I would stay again.

Plan on a full day to see the butterflies. The experience is almost indescribable. To quote the UNESCO page regarding this World Heritage Site:

*“The overwintering concentration of the monarch butterfly in the biosphere is the most dramatic manifestation of the phenomenon of insect migration. Up to a billion monarch butterflies return annually, from breeding areas as far away as Canada, to land in close-packed clusters in the oyamel fir forests of central Mexico. This biosphere protects an estimated 70% of the total overwintering population of the monarch butterfly’s population.”*

The butterflies travel in groups of about 20 million insects and go between 80-120 miles per day to total around 3000 miles. They soar on warm air currents rarely needing to flap their wings. They start arriving in the biosphere in November and will be there through March. Peak viewing season is mid-January through mid-February. Tens of thousands will roost in one fir tree. We were there on a practically perfect day, a mix of sun and clouds. The monarchs hover together on the tree when it’s cloudy and flutter off the branches as the sun emerges. There were hundreds of thousands of them filling the sky as they received their solar energy boost before returning to rest. While each butterfly weighs only half a gram (less than a paperclip), there are so many that when they leave the trees, we could visibly

*Continued on Page 4*

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by

*Connie Heinen*



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*Butterflies Continued From Page 3*

see the branches lift up as the weight on them decreased. Wow. We were awe-struck.

I found the most fascinating part of the monarch migration to be the generational life cycle. It takes 4 generations of monarchs to complete the full migration from Canada (or the northern U.S.) to central Mexico and back. It's the last generation (the Methuselah) who does the bulk of the migration. Amazingly, while most monarchs live 2-3 weeks, the 4<sup>th</sup> generation often lives 7-8 months! They are the generation who know the correct path to migrate, even though they themselves have never made the long journey. The 1<sup>st</sup> generation migrate north from the southern U.S. to recolonize breeding grounds along the way through April-May. The 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> generations populate the breeding grounds throughout the summer. Then the 4<sup>th</sup> "Migratory Generation" start the cycle again to head south from the northern Rocky Mountains to the wintering sites in central Mexico and then back up to the southern U.S., from late summer through March. Scientists have yet to figure out how this internal compass works and is remembered after 4 generations. It's a migration marathon where each passes the torch. Pound for pound, their trek is equivalent to a human walking around the earth 11 times. Try that in one year!

As far as the day trip goes, we used Viator, but there are



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several other reputable companies. They picked us up at our hotel in a comfortable van, connected us to our local guide and we received lunch on site at the reserve. The drive is around 2 hours each way. Be prepared to hike at high elevation of around 10,000 ft (3000 meters); the air is thin. The temperature was cool, but not cold. It was perfect hiking weather. It takes about an hour to reach the site from the parking area. If it's crowded the guides will limit your visit there to around 20 minutes. Bring your camera!

Mexican butterfly conservationist Carlos Gottfried is known to have said, "When you stand in a monarch sanctuary, your soul is shaken, and your life is changed."



*Go online to get the full effect of the beauty of the butterflies—both pictures!*





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## ***Club Rotario Los Barriles Cabo Este – Tis the Season for Gratitude & Giving – Looking Ahead to 2024***

By: Linda Snider, Communications Director 2023-2024

### **Tis the Season-Gratitude**

Membership: Our freshman class of members have many talents, and unsurpassed excitement and energy. They have had their hands in these Club Rotario LB projects just since August 1:

\* Los Barriles Library & Tech Center Updates (new lap-tops & printer & wifi)

- \* Day of the Dead Cultural Parade & Cultural Event
- \* Post Hurricane Norma Flash Mob North Beach Clean Up
- \* Toy/Blanket Donation Centers for Christmas Giveaways
- \* Centro de Salud Generator Project
- \* 8th Annual Taste of East Cape Fundraising Event

Many of our members have also volunteered for other community projects by other organizations. Their hearts and their hands are always up.

Los Barriles Community: The Delegacion, other non-profit organizations, local businesses and community members who call Los Barriles home. Where we have asked for your help, you are always there to answer the call.

Club Rotario LB is grateful for each and every one of you! Thank YOU!

### **Tis the Season-Giving**

By publication date our main fundraiser, the Taste of East Cape will be in the record books. We wish to sincerely thank our Taste corporate sponsors: Platinum-Homes & Land of Baja: Gold-Los Barriles Life, JS Architecture Studio, LB Beach Gear Rental & JMT Construction: Silver-Quadman. And many thanks to this year's participating restaurants.

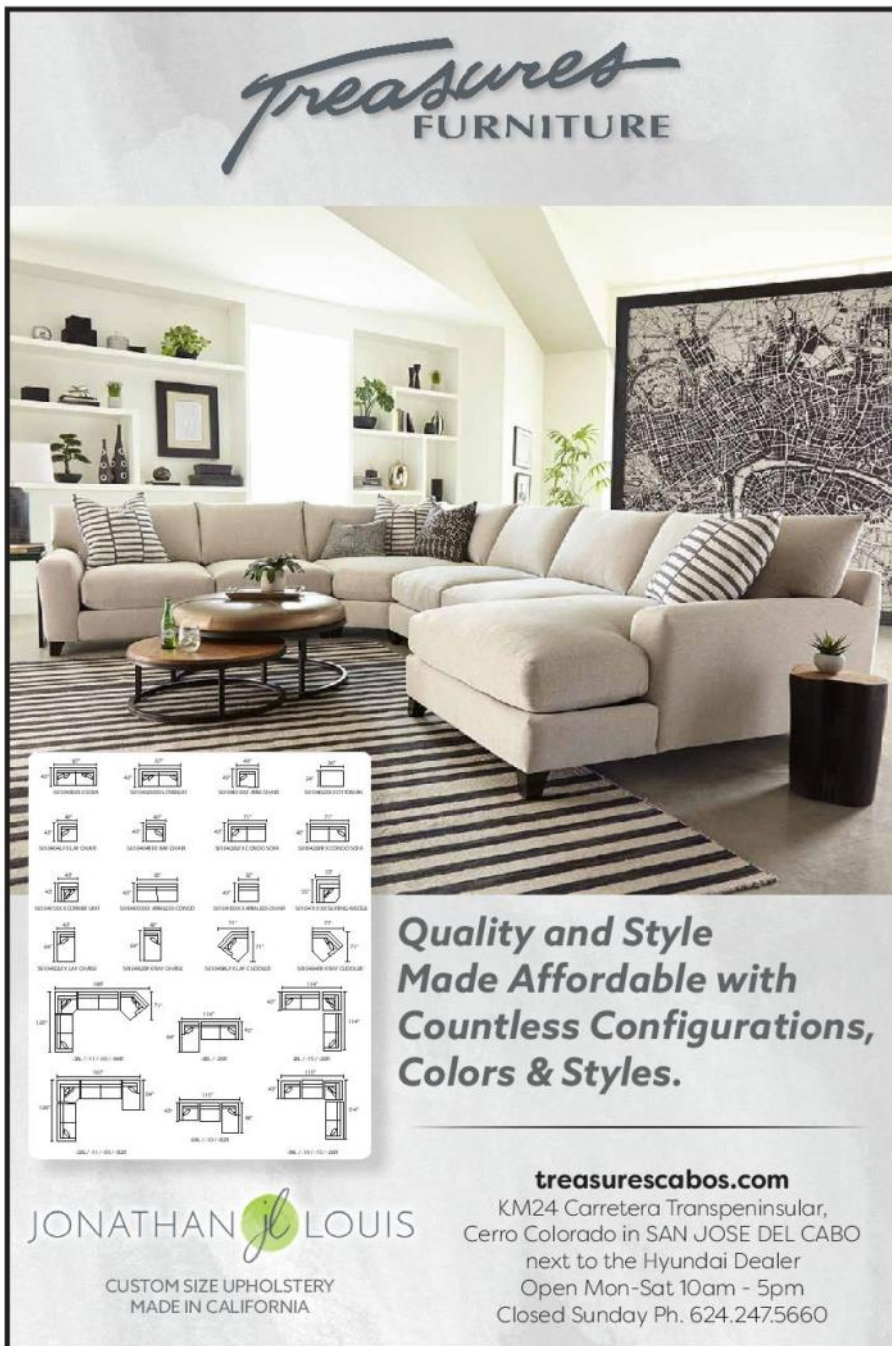
At the writing of this article, we are working with the Delegacion concerning the Fountain at the Barrels. It seems there is a snafu with CFE and the electricity to run the fountain? So, once that is cleared up we will address any repairs and regular maintenance. We are wrapping up our improvements to the Tech Center at the library. We are also in the middle of our annual Toy/Blanket Christmas Giveaway drive. Donation boxes (accepting toys/blankets & cash) are located at Homes & Land of Baja, Joe's Deli, LB Beach Gear Rentals & Maria's Restaurant. Donations accepted up to Christmas week.

### **Tis always the season to give**

Looking forward to 2024 What's next? In addition to continuation of health screenings and cultural events here is a list of projects we continue to work on behind the scenes: fixing & improving the Fountain at the Barrels, Laguna Park, El Cardonal Library, El Cardonal Desal Plant Water Reclamation Project, updating playground in front of Los Barriles Elementary School, and the kitchen at John Gullo Youth Hostel in El Cardonal.

This year Club Rotario Los Barriles has added another fundraiser in the Spring. We are partnering with Vita's Art + Fashion and La Playa Restaurant & Bar to bring back (after COVID) the popular 10th Vita's Fashion & Art Show. This event promises to be fun for fashionistas

*Continued On Page 8*



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Rotary Continued From Page 6

and art lovers across East Cape, all at one of Los Barriles' most beautiful venues. Date: March 13, 2024. Where: La Playa Restaurant. Stay tuned for more details!

Look for us on Facebook, our website and in the Baja Pony Express. Come join us at our No Host Team Breakfast meetings on Wednesday mornings @ Tico's Restaurant. Maybe become a member? If you have a community project you would like us to consider please contact us first. We need to be sure your project will meet Rotarian criteria prior to consideration by the Club. Questions? Concerns? Comments? Go to our website and use the "Contact Us" form. Or message us on Facebook



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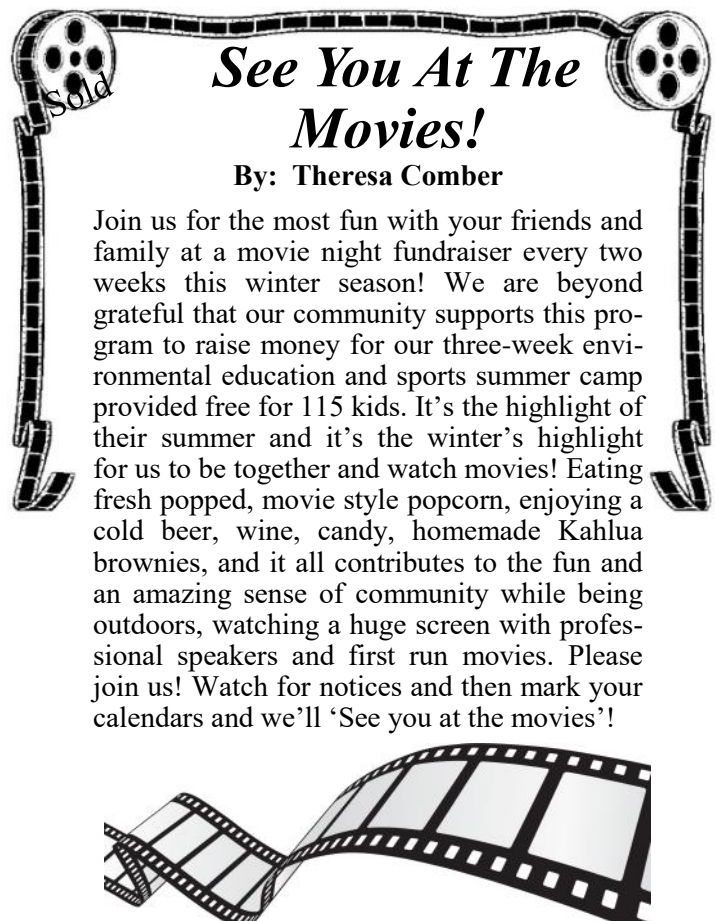
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By: Theresa Comber

Join us for the most fun with your friends and family at a movie night fundraiser every two weeks this winter season! We are beyond grateful that our community supports this program to raise money for our three-week environmental education and sports summer camp provided free for 115 kids. It's the highlight of their summer and it's the winter's highlight for us to be together and watch movies! Eating fresh popped, movie style popcorn, enjoying a cold beer, wine, candy, homemade Kahlua brownies, and it all contributes to the fun and an amazing sense of community while being outdoors, watching a huge screen with professional speakers and first run movies. Please join us! Watch for notices and then mark your calendars and we'll 'See you at the movies'!





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## *Navidad (Christmas)* *Dates in Mexico*

From: Wikipedia.com

**Christmas in Mexico** is observed from December 12 to January 6, with one additional celebration on February 2. Traditional decorations displayed on this holiday include nativity scenes, poinsettias, and Christmas trees. The season begins with celebrations related to the Virgin of Guadalupe, the Patroness of Mexico, followed by traditions such as Las Posadas and Pastorelas.

**Nativity Scenes** - The most traditional and important Navidad decoration is the nativity scene. It is generally set up by December 12, left on display until February 2, and is found in homes and churches.

**Feast of the Virgin of Guadalupe** - The Christmas season begins with celebrations in honor of the Virgin of Guadalupe, Mexico's patron saint. On December 3, a nine-day novena begins in honor of the Virgin of Guadalupe, which ends on her feast day of December 12.

**Los Posadas** - From December 16 to 24, there are a series of processions and parties called Las Posadas (from the word for inn). For many children, this is the most anticipated part of the Christmas season. The tradition was begun by Spanish evangelists to teach the Christmas story to the Indigenous people and ostensibly to supplant the rituals related to the birth of the god Huitzilopochtli.

**Christmas Eve and Christmas Day** - The last posada is early Christmas Eve. What follows is a late-night Mass called the Mass of the Rooster. The name comes from the tradition that the birth of Christ was announced by the crowing of a rooster. Following the Mass, there is a traditional midnight feast. Traditional dishes include bacalao, reconstituted dried cod cooked with onions, tomato sauce, olives, and more. Christmas presents are usually opened at the stroke of midnight. The rest of Christmas Day is quiet in Mexico as families recuperate from the festivities of the night before, often eating leftovers from the midnight dinner.

December 28 is Mexico's version of April Fools' Day, called **Los Santos Inocentes** (The Sainted Innocents). It was originally called Los Santos Inocentes to commemorate the infants killed by King Herod to avoid the arrival of Christ.

**Three Kings Day Epiphany** called Día de los Tres Reyes Magos (Three Kings' Day). This day celebrates when the Three Wise Men arrived to visit Child Jesus bearing gifts. On the night of January 5, children traditionally leave a shoe by the doorway where the Wise Men will enter, although this is not done in all parts of Mexico.

**Candlemas** is celebrated on February 2, as it commemorates the presentation of Child Jesus to the temple. On this day, people bring their images of Child Jesus to be blessed.

*Now you know why businesses are so quiet so during this season!  
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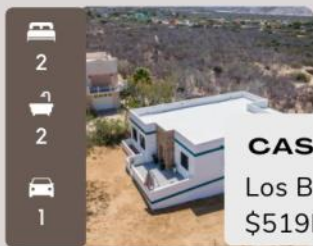
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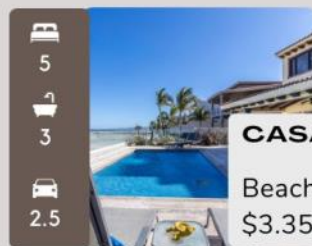


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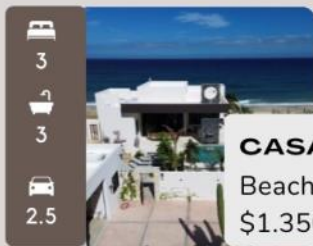


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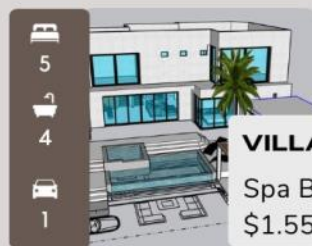


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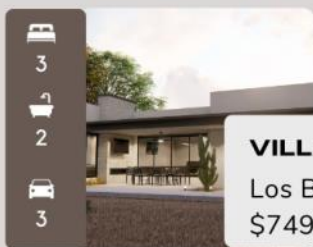


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## Dylan's Story

By: East Cape Health Center Team

Our dear Dylan Mateo, a child of only 3 years old, faces a significant challenge on his journey towards a life full of sounds and possibilities.

Dylan Mateo Sánchez Vargas is 3 years old and lives in La Capilla. He is an only child and has a single mother. Mateo was diagnosed with bilateral profound hearing loss when he was 11 months old, and it was confirmed when he was 1 year and 2 months old.

Dylan recently underwent his second cochlear implant, a significant milestone that fills our hearts with joy and represents a crucial development in his auditory abilities during his growth stage. Thanks to the support of Cabo del Este, Los Cabos children's foundation, and the East Cape Health Center, we were able to raise the necessary funds for the acquisition of the second implant.

The surgery, successfully performed on Friday, November 17th, we want to express our gratitude to this community for consistently supporting those in need, showcasing commendable solidarity. This opportunity will enable Dylan Mateo to integrate into society and develop his abilities like any other child. It signifies a significant effort on the part of the community, which has been following the case since its inception.

Dylan Mateo needed all of our help, and he required an amount of \$200,000 pesos to cover the total cost of the second implant and have it placed. Just like in the first

campaign, funds were collected through the 'Los Cabos Children's Foundation,' which provided their bank accounts to gather the necessary funds and make the payment for the implant directly to the Pediatric Hospital in Culiacán, Sinaloa.



Dylan after surgery thanks to the community support changing his life!

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## ***COMFORT ZONE - What have You Done To Bust Out?***

By: Sefi Held

After seeing the movie "NYAD" it prompted a discussion about taking ourselves out of our comfort zone. Diana Nyad, at 64 years of age, went above and beyond that with her five attempts to swim from Cuba to Florida and her determination to never give up paid off and she accomplished something that many younger swimmers had not been able to achieve.

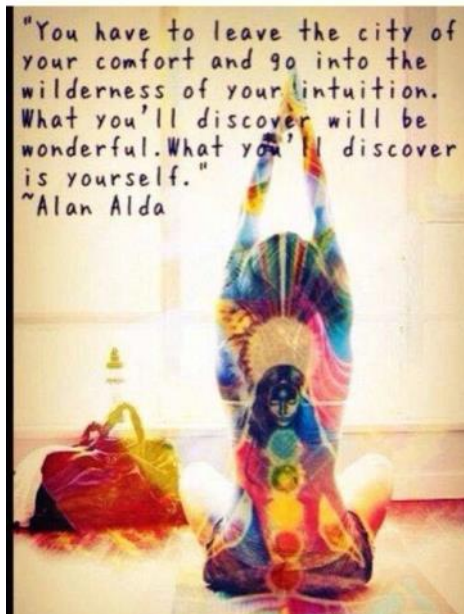
We often talk about challenging ourselves - maybe by taking a new class, new courses, changing our exercise habits or going on that Yoga Retreat to challenge our minds and creative spirits. These new events can recharge your batteries leaving you happier by learning, growing, and improving. It takes us out of the confines of our comfort zones and changes things up.

My first experience with this was not by my choice. I was nine years old when my father finished his service in the Air Force and moved our family from Frankfurt, Germany to a very small farming community (1300 population) in Arizona. I could not speak English and begged to be sent back to Germany to live with my grandparents. A huge challenge for my comfort zone. I survived and soon accepted the challenges that living in a new country offered.

One of the vacation/ changes of scene from my regular college routine that I chose to challenge my comfort zone was going to the Mardi Gras in 1968, meeting HH, my husband now, and moving to Toronto, Canada.

Building our first home, raising a family, working as a Law Clerk and volunteering as a fitness/yoga instructor at our local YMCA kept me busy for many years. When my 62<sup>nd</sup> birthday was approaching, I decided that I wanted to hike the Inca Trail to Machu Picchu in Peru. My girlfriend also wanted to go, and we booked a two week trip that included visiting the Amazon and Lake Titicaca as well. Circumstances changed and she was unable to go. I was very disappointed but for me it was now or never before these old knees of mine would no longer be able to do that climb. One of my better decisions for sure and my comfort zone was way more challenged than I ever could have envisioned.

It might be time for you to get out of your comfort zone and experience something new. You just might be surprised by what you discover along the way.



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## *Passwords and Devices*

By: Lane Sykes

There is nothing more exciting to talk about than Passwords. Frequently we receive notices that "Y" site has been hacked and passwords were exposed. We hear about it, take it in stride and move on with the day. Here's what happens behind the scenes. Most of us tolerate passwords as a speed bump to the data or web page that we seek. A lot of us reuse the same password for convenience and that's where the trouble begins. When that low level website is hacked, the bad guys have your logon info for that site. That could be the logon info that you may be using with your banks or investment sites. That gives them the keys to the kingdom. There are a lot of good password clients that will generate secure passwords and remember them for you. Personally, I use Google Chrome which has secure password storage and is cross platform (Mac, Windows, Iphone and Android). Firefox is another good choice. I encourage everyone to use two factor authentication. What's that? Whenever I logon to an important site (banking or investments), that web site will send me a text message with a code that I then enter into that site's prompt. You have a limited time to make that happen. The theory is that a hacker will most likely not have your logon info and cell phone. This really works if you have your phone secured with FaceID, fingerprint or code. I know, that takes more time, but that's why we are in Baja, we have

time. What would happen if someone stole your laptop and phone? You could lose everything and I mean everything.

Probably the most hacked site is Facebook. If Facebook is important to you, use a strong password and two factor authentication. If you are hacked, it's possible to recover your site but speed is most important. The other Facebook issue is "cloning". Someone creates a Facebook page that looks exactly like yours. If that happens, immediately change your photo so that everyone would recognize the real "You". Facebook lets all your contacts know of that profile change.

At least once a week, I read on social media or the BPE, that someone has lost a phone or portable device. In most cases if you act fast, you have a good chance to find and recover it. Most important is to remember your Apple Icloud account or Android account info. If your device still has a charge and an internet connection via mobile data or WiFi, you can locate your device. If you have an Apple device, go to "Find My" on another of your Apple devices or logon to Find My Iphone. If you have an Android, go to Find My Android on any internet connected device. Have your credentials handy in case this ever happens to you. What happens if you don't have your portable device secured with a passcode, fingerprint or face ID? Not good, it could be gone forever unless a good Samaritan finds it. Portable devices are easy to factory reset if you haven't secured them. If that happens, it's gone!

Google will soon begin to delete dormant Gmail accounts. If you haven't used your Gmail in two years, you are eligible to have that account deleted. Give it some thought. Did you use that email for a long ago credential that might be important to you?

Backup strategy. Boring! One copy of a photo on an external device does not constitute a backup. External drives and internal drives due fail. None will last forever. Don't get complacent. Use both internal and external devices as well as an online backup. You should always have three copies of important photos and documents. A quick search for "online backup" will generate lots of options. By the way I have had three external drives fail this year as well as an external flash drive.

It's been a long time since I've seen a computer virus Mac or Windows. The money is in phone calls and computer scams. Remember, Microsoft, Apple, the IRS, the Sheriff will not call you. No one from a legitimate source will ask for payment via a gift card. If you get a suspicious "pop up" on your computer, the best thing to do is reboot the device immediately. It's been a good year for me this year. I now have 9 lifetime automobile warranties at a huge savings.



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# Why Do I Get Reflux (GERD)?

By: Kathinka Roesiger

The stomach - our first defense

We are constantly exposed to our external environment: From the food we ingest, the microbes that we touch with our hands, from our skin that is covered with billions of bacteria, the bacteria and viruses we inhale, the ones that come from our pets....many microbes go in and out - but others stay to live with us.

In order for any bacteria to stay with us, they first have to survive the acid in our stomach. This is the first defense of our digestive system and it insures that not too many bacteria enter our small intestine. This is why it is so important to keep our stomach acid enough, which means a PH between 1 & 2.

## What causes Reflux

One of the reasons for having acid reflux is, that the sphincter which connects the esophagus to the stomach relaxes. It actually needs the stomach acid to be low enough so it can close correctly. If the stomach PH increases (becomes less acid), the sphincter relaxes, the valve stays half open and you get reflux.

If there is not enough stomach acid a series of conditions happen that cause more pressure inside the abdomen and that in turn, pushes up and opens the valve at the entrance of the stomach. If on top of that a little stomach acid touches the esophagus it starts to hurt and burn as this part of our digestive system does not have any protection against HCL (stomach acid). This is why you feel relief, if you then take an antacid medication. But this will not solve the problem...what is worse; if you take antacids too frequently it can worsen the situation.

Unfortunately, most of the time acid reflux is interpreted as having too much stomach acid, which is why some of the most sold and used over the counter medications are proton pump inhibitors (like Omeprazole) that block acid production of the stomach. The symptoms, like burning and pain will go away with this for a short while, but the underlying cause remains untreated. In reality these kind of medications are meant to treat excess acidity of the stomach, but most often reflux is caused by too little stomach acid. So, taking acid inhibitors for a longer period of time will result in problems.

This is why you should first seek the help of a doctor or nutritionist to find out if your stomach is actually too acid or if lack of acid is causing your reflux.

## Here are the signs, that your stomach is not acid enough:

- Constipation
- Burping after eating
- Slow digestion
- Feeling very full after eating
- Nausea
- Gases
- Feeling better between meals when no food was ingested.

## These are the possible consequences, if your stomach does not produce sufficient acid:

- Reflux
- Bacterial overgrowth in the small intestine (SIBO), fungal infections or parasites
- intestinal permeability
- growth of Helicobacter Pylori which thrives in a lower acid environment
- Reduction of the intrinsic factor which helps us absorb Vitamin B12 (causing a deficit of Vitamin B12)
- Bad absorption of some supplements and medications that need high acid to be dissolved.
- Chronic fatigue
- Headaches
- IBS
- Skin issues (acne)
- Decreased immune system function
- Decrease neurotransmitter synthesis
- Hair loss
- Inflammation in the joints

## What you can try, if the PH in your stomach is not acid enough:

- Make with your food
- Have some Vitamin C (500 - 1000 mg) before a heavy meal
- Do not overeat
- Don't drink too much during a meal, better between meals
- Include probiotic foods daily (yogurt, kefir etc.)
- Avoid added sugar, sweeteners and too much fat



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Continued On Page 18

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GERT Continued From Page 17

- Don't drink sodas
  - Don't eat between meals so the stomach can rest
- If all the above does not improve the situation contact a nutritionist for help.

If any of the above remedies actually do make you feel better, there is a strong indication that you actually are dealing with low stomach acid – so stay with it, to make your gut healthier!

- A ginger tea with lime, drink it before eating.
- Papaya and pineapple have digestive enzymes which can help you with digestion.
- Take a spoon full of apple cider vinegar.



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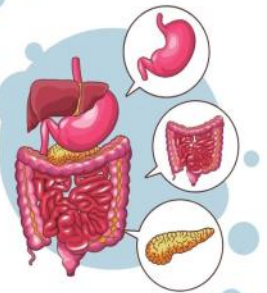
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## *The Los Barriles ATV Fun Ride*

By: Blackie Gordon

Record numbers of riders have signed up for this year's ATV Fun Ride. We have done Rock 'n Roll. We've done Country Music. This year it is Classic Movies. There is a new website which has all the information riders need. It can be found at <https://www.AtvFunLosBarriles.com>

This year there is a photographic competition as well as a prize for the best dressed group. A registration fee, raffle, buskers, bush bar, and James Bond Martini Bar all assist with raising money for charity. But above all there is a group of enthusiastic ATV riders dedicated to ensuring participants will enjoy "The most ATV fun you'll ever have". They have composed the puzzles, prepared the trails, marked the route, and they keep an eye on riders during the event.

There are lots of active retirees in Los Barriles and more than a dozen charities where you can get involved in improving the lives of those who most need help in our town. The Community ATV Fun Ride raises funds for the Feeding the Hungry Charity - because no one should go to bed hungry.

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# *Volunteering and its Surprising Benefits*

## *Giving to Others Makes Healthier and Happier*

From Helpguide.org

lives, it can be hard to find time to volunteer. The benefits of volunteering are enormous to you, your family, and your community. The right match can help you reduce stress, find friends, reach out to the community, learn new skills, and even advance your career – if you are working. Giving to others can also help protect your physical health. Learn more about the many benefits of volunteering others and find tips on getting started.

### **Volunteering?**

Volunteering offers vital help to people in need, worthwhile to the community, but the benefits can be even greater for you, the volunteer. Volunteering and helping others can help you reduce stress, combat depression, keep you motivated, and provide a sense of purpose. While the more you volunteer, the more benefits you'll receive, volunteering doesn't have to involve a long-term commitment or take a huge amount of time out of your busy life. Volunteering in even simple ways can help others and improve your health and happiness.

### **Volunteering:**

Research shows that the happiness effect helping others kindles happiness, as studies have demonstrated. When researchers at the University of Economics examined the relationship between volunteering and measures of happiness in a large sample of American adults, they found the more people volunteered, the happier they were, according to a study in Social and Medical Research. Compared with people who never volunteered, the odds of being "very happy" rose 7% among people who volunteer monthly and 12% for people who volunteer every two to four weeks. Among weekly volunteers, the odds of being "very happy"—a hike in happiness comparable to an increase in income of \$75,000–\$100,000 versus \$20,000, say researchers.

**Volunteering:** 3 ways to feel healthier and happier  
Volunteering connects you to others  
Volunteering is good for your mind and body

**Volunteering brings fun and fulfillment to your life**  
**Volunteering connects you to others**

One of the better-known benefits of volunteering is the impact on the community. Volunteering allows you to connect with others and make it a better place. Even helping with the smallest tasks can make a real difference to the lives of people, animals, and organizations in need. And volunteering is a two-way street: It can benefit you and your community as much as the cause you choose to help. Volunteering as a volunteer helps you make new friends, expand your social network, and boost your social skills.



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### **Make new friends and contacts**

One of the best ways to make new friends and strengthen existing relationships is to commit to a shared activity together. Volunteering is a great way to meet new people, especially if you are new to an area. It strengthens your ties to the community and broadens your support network, exposing you to people with common interests, neighborhood resources, and fun and fulfilling activities.

### **Increase your social and relationship skills**

While some people are naturally outgoing, others are shy and have a hard time meeting new people. Volunteering gives you the opportunity to practice and develop your social skills, since you are meeting regularly with a group of people with common interests. Once you have momentum, it's easier to branch out and make more friends and contacts.

### **Benefit 2: Volunteering is good for your mind and body**

**Volunteering provides many benefits to both mental and physical health.**

Volunteering helps counteract the effects of stress, anger, and anxiety. The social contact aspect of helping and working with others can have a profound effect on your overall psychological well-being. Nothing relieves stress better than a meaningful connection to another person.

Working with pets and other animals has also been shown to improve mood and reduce stress and anxiety.

Volunteering combats depression. Volunteering keeps you in regular contact with others and helps you develop a solid support system, which in turn protects you against depression.

Volunteering makes you happy. By measuring hormones and brain activity, researchers have discovered that being helpful to others delivers immense pleasure. Human beings are hard-wired to give to others. The more we give, the happier we feel.

*Continued On Page 20*

## Recycle by sharing with a friend or return to East Capers Rack!

*Volunteering Continued From Page 19*

**Volunteering increases self-confidence.** You are doing good for others and the community, which provides a natural sense of accomplishment. Your role as a volunteer can also give you a sense of pride and identity. And the better you feel about yourself, the more likely you are to have a positive view of your life and future goals.

**Volunteering provides a sense of purpose.** Older adults, especially those who have retired or lost a spouse, can find new meaning and direction in their lives by helping others. Whatever your age or life situation, volunteering can help take your mind off your own worries, keep you mentally stimulated, and add more zest to your life.

**Volunteering helps you stay physically healthy.** Studies have found that those who volunteer have a lower mortality rate than those who do not. Older volunteers tend to walk more, find it easier to cope with everyday tasks, are less likely to develop high blood pressure, and have better thinking skills. Volunteering can also lessen symptoms of chronic pain and reduce the risk of heart disease.

### **Benefit 3: Volunteering brings fun and fulfillment to your life**

Volunteering is a fun and easy way to explore your interests and passions. Doing volunteer work you find meaningful and interesting can be a relaxing, energizing escape from your day-to-day routine of work, school, or family commitments. Volunteering also provides you with renewed creativity, motivation, and vision that can

carry over into your personal and professional life. Many people volunteer in order to make time for hobbies outside of work as well. For instance, if you have a desk job and long to spend time outdoors, you might consider volunteering to help plant a community garden, walk dogs for an animal shelter, or help out at a children's camp.



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## In Celebration of Atole

By: Renée Lagloire, M.A. Anthropology

Delicious and nourishing, *atole* is a popular beverage that has its roots in ancient Mexico. It is known that the Olmec, the Maya, and the Aztec people consumed it in many flavors. *Atole* is made of dried maize that has been soaked and cooked in an alkaline solution -- a process called *nixtamal*. After cooking, the *nixtamaled* maize is cleaned of its outer layer and is ground, becoming *masa*. *Nixtamal* allows for various minerals, amino acids, and vitamins to be absorbed into the human body. This makes *masa*-based foods, including *atole*, very nutritious, especially when combined with other foods.

*Masa* can be made into *tortillas*, *tamales*, *huaraches*, *tlayudas*, *gorditas*, and many other Mexican favorites. To make *atole*, *masa* is mixed with water and other ingredients, and is kept at a low boil until it thickens. It is always served hot. In Nahuatl, the language of the Aztecs, the drink was known as “*atolli*” which translates as “watered down.” From *atolli*, the drink became *atole* in Spanish.

While chocolate was the drink of the powerful in pre-conquest civilizations of Mexico, *atole* was everyone's drink. Rich and poor alike drank *atole*. There was a plethora of variations. For example, among the Aztecs, if maguey syrup was added, the drink was called *nequatolli*; the addition of ground chile, salt and

tomato yielded *iztac atolli*; if beans were added, the dish was called *ayocomollatolli*. Some *atole* was medicinal. For example, *tlatonilatolli* – made with *epazote* (a native herb), and lots of ground chile – was thought to strengthen the whole person. *Izquiatolli*, a mixture of toasted and ground maize mixed with chile, was used to treat chronic sadness. Merchants, warriors and other travelers were known to carry *pinolli* balls, made of dried ground toasted maize, that they kept in pouches. By adding water and other flavors to their *pinolli* balls, they could have a meal on the go.

The cultural legacy continues into the present with *atole* playing an active role in the everyday and ceremonial lives of the people of Mexico. Dry *masa* is widely available throughout the country, it is called *masa-harina* and has quickly become the ingredient of choice in making *masa*-based dishes. To make *atole*, the dry *masa* is mixed with water (or milk) and *piloncillo* (sugar cones, similar to brown sugar) and is heated. Sometimes cinnamon, vanilla or anise is added. *Atole de fruta* has puréed pineapple, strawberries or other fruit added. Chocolate *atole*, called *champurrado* is also a popular beverage. (See recipe below)

In day-to-day lives in modern Mexico, *atole* is considered a comfort food, with the elderly especially appreciating it. Many parents depend on *atole* to nourish their children or other family members who are sick. *Atole* also continues to play a role in the ceremonial life of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Mexico. It is served at Day of the Dead (*Día de los Muertos*) gatherings throughout the country. It is also the beverage given during the *Posadas* on the days preceding Christmas in some of the more traditional areas of Mexico. The *Posadas* are community re-enactments of Joseph and the expecting Mary seeking shelter in Bethlehem. After knocking on many doors and asking by song for a place to stay, the request is finally granted, and the procession is given “shelter” and are served *atole* and *tamales*. *Atole*, in addition, is featured at the Candlemas celebration (*el Día de la Candelaria*) in the more traditional parts of Mexico. The host of this party is decided on Kings' Day (January 6) when a traditional wreath-shaped sweet bread (*Rosca de Reyes*) is served, into which a small plastic baby doll is baked. The person whose slice of sweet bread contains the doll is obligated to serve *tamales* and *atole* at the Candlemas party, celebrated on February 2. This officially ends the Mexican holiday season which started on December 12, the day of the *Virgen de Guadalupe*, also celebrated in many parts of Mexico with *atole* and *tamales*.

*Atole* is very soothing, and for its simplicity, is amazingly delicious. It tastes slightly of corn tortilla, with creamy hints of cinnamon and vanilla, a true marriage of flavors. Its consistency can be thinner or



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*Atole Continued From Page 22*

thicker, depending on personal taste. While *atole* is widely available in a variety of flavors in instant form, you'll find it much more satisfying if you make it yourself. This recipe for chocolate *atole*, known as *champurrado*, is perfect for you and your friends as the weather turns a bit cooler. Enjoy!

**Champurrado – Chocolate Atole**

3 cups warm water

3 cups milk

6 Tbsp. masa harina (or 1/3 cup fresh nixtamal)

1 ½ disks Mexican chocolate, chopped

2 - 6 ounces piloncillo chopped (microwave can be used to warm the piloncillo for ease of chopping, but handle with care, it gets very hot)

1/8 tsp. anise seed, ground (optional)

In a large pot, whisk *masa harina* into the warm water until thoroughly combined.

Add milk, chocolate, piloncillo and anise.

Bring to a simmer and whisk until chocolate is melted and sugar is dissolved. Continue to cook 10 – 15 minutes until the *champurrado* thickens. Pour into mugs. Enjoy!



## ***They're Creepy And They're Kooky...***

By: Sheryl Segal

For our 24th production, Baja Shakespeare is proudly presenting an adaptation of the smash hit musical, *The Addams Family Fiesta*. Gómez, Morticia, Wednesday, Pugsley, and the entire spooky, kooky, eccentric family are coming to Los Barriles! It seems like the perfect setting for a fiesta, until a game, a potion, and some ghosts stir things up...

The BS troupe is gearing up to bring a great show to the community. A successful show requires lots of volunteers, on stage and off. Last year we performed for over 700 people, so we can always use another set of hands. Our community is filled with talent, so if you'd like to join a bunch of enthusiastic, slightly zany folks, we'd love to have you.

Baja Shakespeare will perform *The Addams Family Fiesta*

at the Hotel Palmas de Cortez in February 2024. The seven show dates are 2/16, 2/17, 2/18 (matinee)

2/21, 2/22, 2/23, 2/24. Curtain rises at 7 pm and 1:30 matinee.

Tickets will go on sale in January. Get tickets early as these shows sell out.

Any questions? Please contact [ssegal34@yahoo.com](mailto:ssegal34@yahoo.com)

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## ***Ecofriendly Sunscreen: Five Things You Need to Know***

By: Stream2Sea

### **1. Avoid petrochemical sunscreen ingredients**

The full impact of petrochemical sunscreen ingredients – including oxybenzone, avobenzone, octinoxate, ensulizole, homosalate, octisalate, octocrylene, padimate O and butyloctyl salicylate – is still being studied, but it appears that they all can damage aquatic ecosystems and the creatures who live in them in amazingly small concentrations.

### **2. Read the back of the package**

There is no legal definition of “reef-safe” or “ecofriendly” sunscreen so manufacturers can say almost anything on the front of the bottle. They are, however, required by law to list active ingredients on the back of the label. Take the time to check and make sure that they don’t contain petrochemical sunscreens or things like oxybenzone, butyloctyl salicylate, octinoxate, octocrylene or nano zinc that could harm our oceans, lakes, rivers and reefs.

### **3. Ecofriendly sunscreen is important wherever you’re using it**

More than 14,000 tons of sunscreen are reported by NOAA to wash off our bodies and into the oceans every year. What they don’t tell you is that the most important source of ocean-harming petrochemicals isn’t from beach-goers and scuba divers, but rather from the wastewater created when you wash

those chemicals off in a shower or flush them down the drain. Most wastewater treatment plants can’t remove these synthetic organic ingredients so they flow into the nearest body of water, which eventually ends up in the ocean.

### **4. Check the container too**

Eighty percent of ocean debris is plastic, that can take hundreds of years to break down. Plastics kill millions of animals every year who mistakenly eat it or get tangled in it. More recently, studies are showing that microplastics created when plastic containers break down into tiny pieces have been found in more than 100 species of fish and shellfish that humans are likely to eat. Look for products that are packaged in sustainable containers made with bio-resins from sugarcane or post-consumer recycled materials like milk jugs.

### **5. Ecofriendly is people-friendly too!**

Many questions remain about the safety of petrochemical sunscreens for the people using them too. In 2019, the FDA removed the GRASE – generally recognized as safe and effective – designation for petrochemical sunscreen ingredients and asked manufacturers to provide safety data. To date, they have not provided sufficient safety documentation for the FDA to reverse their decision. The only sunscreen ingredients that are still considered GRASE are zinc oxide and titanium dioxide. One product line by Stream2Sea is found to be reef safe and includes the GRACE safe product. The field is growing so chemical companies continue to put new petrochemical based sunscreens on the market. And that is a good thing for those of us that want to preserve our oceans!

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## *A Trailer Towing Adventure*

By: Bill Osborne

To say we were green when it comes to towing a trailer is a huge understatement! The only trailer-towing experience we had prior to the trip to Los Barriles was when we drove from Piqua Ohio, where we purchased the trailer to our home in Lyle, Washington. Driving across the United States on the Interstate Highway System was easy. So, how challenging would it be to drive from our home to Los Barriles?

Because we were rookies, we decided not to travel alone in Mexico. How and where would find someone with whom to caravan? Several weeks prior to leaving, Cheryl went on line and sought out potential caravan prospects. She was contacted a man who liked the idea of traveling together. We met Tony Mounts and he said, "I have an old Nissan Xterra with almost 200,000 miles. My plan is to keep it under 55 and I will not drive when it gets dark. Does that work for you two?" Little did we know what his presence would mean to us. We agreed to meet at 6am the next morning and begin our Mexican adventure.

At the Mexicali border crossing, Tony led us into the correct lane for those people with trailers. Unlike some of the stories we heard about crossing at Tijuana, the Mexicali border was well organized and set up well for trailers. The Mexican Immigration official directed us to a special place for trailers. As soon as we parked, he placed cones around our trailer and directed us inside to complete our paperwork. We were on our way.

The road to Highway 5 was a bit tricky and at one point, we had to make a long, 90-degree turn in traffic. I was in the inside lane, which was too tight to make the turn successfully. I had cars and trucks pinning me in, so I had to try to make the tight radius turn. I almost made it. The back of the trailer clipped the concrete base of a light pole. Upon inspection, the trailer suffered only a minor scratch. We both sighed a sense of relief when we entered Highway 5.

One thing that Tony suggested was that he would lead us through towns, where I would top off the gas tank. We came up with a great game plan. When we approached a town, I pulled over to the side of the road. Tony went ahead and sought the best place to refuel and called us. "Go to the third Pemex, enter at the far end, and loop around to the pump where I am parked. That route will allow you to make a large radius turn where you can fill the tank." As we passed Pemex #'s 1 & 2, I could see why he chose #3 and why our 50'-plus rig would have never worked in the first two stations.

Day one in Baja ended at Gonzaga Bay. We found a campground that had a beautiful setting, right on the water. We offered to buy Tony dinner at Alfonsinas, a restaurant at the end of the campground. The meal was excellent and Tony, Cheryl, and I had a good talk about our life stories. While we were awaiting dinner, a large television turned on, and to our surprise, the Seattle Seahawks were playing. The broadcast was in Spanish, but we could tell what was happening by watching.

The next morning, we set our sights on Hotel La Huerta in San Ignacio. Upon advice from some of our friends, we chose the new Highway 5. Good decision. The first half of Highway 5 was wider and much nicer than Highway 1. The hotel had a great place to park, the rooms were clean, and the restaurant was excellent. The next morning, we were greeted by some of the local residents, a group of small goats, foraging for food.

Day three started out well, but the wide highway was replaced by the typical Baja roads which are narrower than American roads. On one of those narrow roads, I saw a semi-tractor trailer approaching us. As he approached, it became clear that he was taking his half out of the middle. I moved over to the right as far as I could until the trailer wheels hit the soft shoulder. I felt the back end starting to slide downhill. Fortunately, I had retracted the side mirror on the left side of the car. If I had left it out, there is no doubt, it would have been ripped off the car. With the trailer slipping off the road, headed towards a thirty-foot

*Continued On Page 27*



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Towing Continued From Page 26

bank, the semi passed. I shifted to 4-wheel drive, turned left, applied slight pressure to the trailer brake, and gave a lot of power. Fortunately, the trailer returned to the pavement, and we were back underway. Cheryl slept through the whole ordeal!

The day ended at Hotel Tripui, south of Loretto. The grounds of the hotel were beautiful. It had tall palms, huge bougainvillea, barrel cactus, and countless other plants. The food was excellent, the rooms were wonderful, and the view at sunrise was spectacular.

The next day was our last with our friend Tony. We drove to La Paz where he lived. He suggested that we stay at Campestre Maranatha. Because the camp was almost empty, we were allowed to park parallel to the road, occupying seven spaces. We walked across the street and bought Tony one last meal and prepared for the final leg of our journey.

The next morning, we left Maranatha and headed to Los Barriles. The drive was slow, but beautiful. As we approached town, we contacted a friend who had the skills to park our trailer in Verdugo's campground. We had made it! Looking back, there were some stressful moments on the road, but the entire trip was a success. We owe a huge debt of gratitude to our new friend Tony Mounts, our angel who made the difference between what could have been a disaster to a wonderful adventure.



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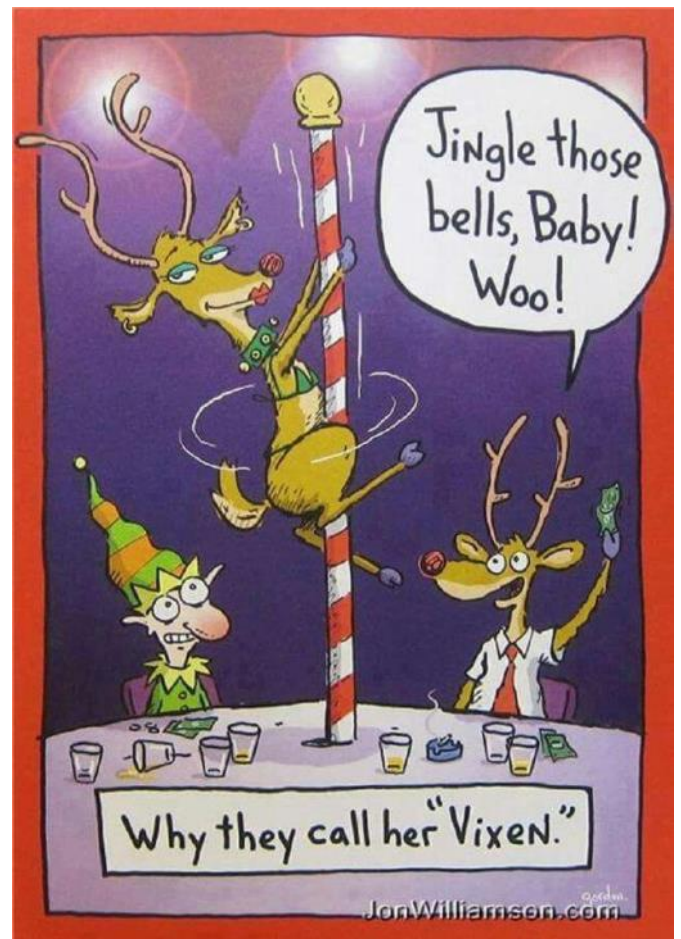
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## ***East Cape Growth Driven By Community Spirit & (non- fishing) Sporting Activities***

By: Emma Nicholson

A new report shows that foreign inhabitants of Baja's East Cape are drawn to the area because of community spirit and the growth of sporting activities.

The research conducted by Ronival's Los Barriles office polled hundreds of foreign residents and found that 48% of respondents live in the area because of hiking, mountain biking, horse riding, yoga, pickleball, diving and paddle boarding. 42% cite community spirit as a main reason for living in towns such as El Cardonal, Los Barriles and La Ribera – the main towns on the East Cape.

Both new and longer-term residents attributed the following to why they live on the East Cape:

- The swimmable beaches (64%)
- Fitness and sporting activities (see above) (48%)
- Community spirit (42%)
- Sport fishing (26%)
- Restaurants and cafes (24%)
- Windsports (19%)

The research contradicts the long-held view that sport fishing (26%) and windsports (19%) are the major drivers for moving to Los Barriles, El Cardonal and La Ribera. In fact, the growing number of restaurants and cafes (24%) is an increasingly popular reason for living in the area thanks to new locations such as La Casita, Gaviota, Lisca and Santuario in Los Barriles as well as Mozza (Costa Palmas).

Growth has also been driven by friends and families of existing residents making the area their home. A staggering 50% of inhabitants have introduced up to 5 people to the area who have also decided to buy, build or rent in the region.

Residents come from across the US and Canada with the top five locations as follows:

1. California
2. Colorado

3. Washington
4. British Columbia
5. Oregon

However, the recent changes across the East Cape have had an impact. While 75% of foreign residents said that they would not be leaving in the next 12 months, 25% said they are considering it, or have decided to move. The main reasons given are: overdevelopment, more people coming to the area and that they could no longer afford to live there due to rising prices.

"We have been seeing a change on the East Cape over the past few years thanks to the natural beauty of the region, and the plethora of activities and strong community spirit. Most notably the Los Barriles office is seeing more residents introducing their friends and families to the area who understandably love it as much as they do. With this growth, it's important that we maintain the vital community essence while also working together with our Mexican hosts on infrastructure and utility projects so that we can continue to live in paradise."

The research also found that foreign residents want to remain in the area thanks to:

1. The beach life
2. Strong network of friends and the social life
3. The international airport in San Jose Del Cabo
4. Better healthcare available in San Jose and Cabo
5. Volunteer opportunities

### **Details about Survey**

Respondent demographics:

- 320 respondents to a SurveyMonkey, in-person and social media survey conducted across residents of the East Cape (June – Sept 2023)
- 84% are homeowners.
- 13% rent on a permanent or long-term basis.
- Age range from 30 to 60+.

From EC Editor—I found this interesting as my husband and myself are responsible for the sale of 7 properties in our beloved East Cape paradise. I guess we have only ourselves to blame for the traffic!



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## *The Eastside Epic: Baja's Bike Race for a Reason*

By: Mike Stone

With expansive vistas of the majestic Sea of Cortez paired with the challenging variety of desert track, there seem to be endless opportunity to become invigorated and inspired while riding a bicycle on the east side of Baja Sur. I feel so well here. I am so very fortunate to have these three pillars that I know contribute greatly to wellness in my life: The Sea. The Desert. The Ride.

Feelings of gratitude are with me during all my activities while in Baja, and this feeling was particularly strong on a Christmas morning bike ride when I was overwhelmed with inspiration to create an event where fellow cyclists could come together and enjoy this breathtaking and challenging environment, all with the purpose of giving back to the incredible Mexican communities that welcome us and freely share their adventure playground. A FUNd raising bike race was created. It's called the Eastside Epic and the positive response from all the early participants has been just as inspiring as the environment in which it's held.

There are several worthy charitable foundations doing great work in Baja. I believe that education is a cornerstone for any healthy community, so the decision to where the funds raised at our races would go was an easy one. The East Cape Guild has long been working toward

supporting local students. We team up with them for volunteers and they see that the funds raised in our events are awarded to deserving students. All lives are lifted in an educated community.

Since the very first Epic three years ago, racers, volunteers, and sponsors have all done their part to increase the stoke meter for this event. Homes and Land of Baja have long been supporting the Guild's mission of providing scholarships to students and they were quickly and enthusiastically on board with our mission.

Frame Fine Clothing is a Mexican fashion company and each season they design a unique and custom neck gaiter/ buff that each participant receives. The Epic Buff has quickly become cherished and appreciated hallmark swag. It is so very practical for protection from the sun, wind, and blowing sand.

Rancho Cacachilas has also been there from the beginning. They are exemplary stewards of Baja Sur and each season they have contributed by awarding day passes to the Ranch for several lucky race participants.

Hammer Nutrition has continued to provide supplies that support the racers' nutrition and hydration needs at start and finish as well as an aid station on course.

Each season a variety of local shops and restaurants give generously, and we are able to award gift certificates to many of the racers. It is truly a remarkable experience where the practice of giving literally results in receiving.

And now I am also very grateful to add the Asociación de Artes who publish East Capers Magazine to this list. Through all my seasons in Baja, they have provided great information and inspiration. And now they are helping to increase awareness, and hopefully participation in our race by sharing this article with you!

The Eastside Epic bike race is held on the first Sunday of February each season in Los Barriles, BCS. The course is different each year and is announced in advance on the [eastsideepic.com](http://eastsideepic.com) website. It varies a bit in length, about 30k, but always promises a breathtaking route that mixes road surfaces with desert track, providing something for everyone. And everyone is welcome to participate. The bike you have is the best bike for this event. E-bikes have their own division.

So, are you in? Gorgeous sea views, a challenging good time all in the true spirit of community. You are Epic and I will love to see you there! Register at our web site. Check in is from 7 am to 7:45 and the Race starts at 8:00 with awards immediately after the last rider crosses the finish line. A healthy challenge, a chance to meet new friends, give back to our communities, and still have time for a Sunday afternoon session on the water, the pickleball court, or beach? What could be more Epic than that?



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## ***Cancer's Collateral Damage in BCS***

By: Leaders2Give

Amid life's challenges, two moms found each other while navigating the tough road of illness with their kids.

One mom was looking after her 10-year-old daughter, Paloma, while the other juggled her 1-year-old and 12-year-old sons. Paloma and the 1-year-old boy had cancer. The two moms became tight as they tackled hospital visits and treatments together for their sick children.

That was almost 10 years ago. Fast forward to today, and both of those sick children are now doing great! As for the older son, he is suffering from depression, anxiety, bulimia, and he recently dropped out of college. His mother explained how she couldn't care for him while she was away seeking treatment for his brother. The impact of that early abandonment resulted in emotional trauma for the boy.

The toll on children who are abandoned while a single parent is dealing with a medical crisis is real. When they are abandoned in places like the slums of San Jose, they also face food and water scarcity, while being exposed to crime, drugs, and worse.

Paloma's mother is Belén Meza Sáñez, the Subdelegado of El Cardonal, BCS, and Vice President of Líderes Para Dar Mexican AC (nonprofit). Líderes Para Dar is Leaders2Give's sister organization which is helping to build the John Gullo Home for Children in El Cardonal and will be responsible for the daily operations of the home once it is built.

This story underscores why the John Gullo Home for Children is so important. When families such as the one in the story above experience a health crisis, they're all too often torn between caring for the sick child and making sure the rest of the children are being properly

*Continued On Page 32*

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*Cancer Continued From Page 31*

cared for. In too many cases, children are abandoned in dire circumstances right here in BCS; this is particularly true for single mothers.

The good news is we are close to having the construction of the home finished! We just need the BCS community to help finish it off and get home operating.

You can help us turn \$100,000 into \$200,000 so we can start accepting children into the John Gullo Home for Children!

We have most of the funds to complete the capital construction but not all, and we need 3 years of operational funding before opening the doors.

Our all-volunteer Board of Directors along with Los Bariles resident and philanthropist John Gullo, have pledged a combined \$100,000 if the community can match it.

Make an even bigger difference by doubling your donation!

Whether it's a large or small donation, every bit counts and makes a significant difference in the lives of these vulnerable children, particularly when you can...

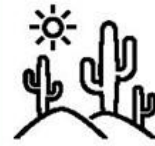
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Naming rights are still available for visible areas within the facility such as the children's dormitories. Consider creating a legacy for your family or loved one.

If you can help us reach this goal, the entire home can be built and furnished, landscaping completed, and the shade pavilion erected. In other words,... the home will be ready for children!

Leaders2Give has several means available to accept donations that reduce, and frequently eliminate, third party fees (such as checks, wire and Zelle transfers, and others have zero third party fees). And since the Leaders2Give team is 100% volunteer, the overhead costs are minimal.

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*Paloma when she was receiving chemotherapy treatment for bone marrow cancer.*



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## Beach Front Gear Rentals....Perfect!

By: Christine Courtright

A few years ago, I had family coming so I did what we all do and went out and bought snorkel gear for everyone to use. I envisioned all of us in the water at once and beaching daily. Well, only half the gear was used.... once. It was stored in my bodega next to the beach umbrella, extra chairs and water toys. Last year when I came down, I find my beach umbrella brittle, holes in the water toys, and the rubber parts of the snorkel gear getting brittle and stretched out- one that still had the price tag on the gear bag! I can count on one half of one hand how many times the gear was used, and my thought was that 'I wasted money'.

But I still have friends and family coming and I want them to have a good time. So was I ever delighted to see a new business in town - **Los Barriles Beach Gear Rentals** (and a new East Capers Magazine advertiser). Conveniently located right there on the beach in front of Hotel Playa del Sol, you could not have a more central place. Intrigued, I sat down with Cheryl Hampton, the owner, to find out how this all came about.

Cheryl worked in the corporate world for years, with all the stress, deadlines and long hours. Several years ago, she and her husband decided enough was enough, retired, bought a motorhome and spent the next 3 years driving around Canada, USA and Mexico. Well, we have heard the story before, they came to Los Barriles for two weeks and succumbed to the 'Baja Magic' and two weeks became two months and they knew their traveling days were over and this was the place! They wanted to stay in paradise with our beautiful uncrowded beaches, sunshine, palm trees, outdoor activities, and friendly residents.

Cheryl quickly observed while hanging out on the beach that visitors would come to the beach, look around comment how beautiful it was and decide without beach gear, well it might not be as fun or enjoyable. And the idea clicked. What about a business that would help add "comfort and fun to the beach". There were plenty of rental places in town, but why not one right

on the beach? Well, she was off and running and the business soon developed, and she was ready for business by March 2023. She may have started known as the 'umbrella lady' with helpful ideas of where to go, what to see and do and where to eat, but now she could be called the beach fun lady!

Starting with the basics of beach umbrellas and chairs, she has expanded to snorkel gear, paddleboards, kayaks, floating chairs, Bluetooth speakers, shade canopies, and even electric underwater scooters! As a PADI Divemaster, she also takes or arranges for people to snorkel or scuba at nearby world class sites in Cabo Pulmo National Marine Park, La Paz and Cabo San Lucas. For me it is great that I don't have to store in my small home the extra gear that may or may not be used for when my guests come. I have the knowledge that the equipment is going to be new, well cared for and always clean and sanitary. She also has a

*Continued on Page 34*

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*Beach Gear Continued From Page 33:*

line of Reef Safe sunscreen products!

Los Barriles Beach Gear Rentals is open Wed – Sunday, 10 – 5 from October – late June. But if you need something out of those hours, she is available by appointment. They take credit cards (who carries cash on the beach) and have that oh so convenient location on the beach. The website is [www.lbbeachgear.com](http://www.lbbeachgear.com) email at [info@lbbeachgear.com](mailto:info@lbbeachgear.com) or call/whatsapp 624-243-4877.



## Passwords, Codes and Accounts

By: Chris Courtright

Several years ago, a friend's husband was telling me about his summer project. He decided he was not getting any younger and thought he should write down all his many passwords, codes, account numbers and everything he thought his wife would need if something should happen to him. I thought to myself, good project, but probably premature. Well, to all our shock, he died suddenly about 3 weeks later! We were all

stunned, and it was not until that moment, did I realize how important to his wife and loved ones that listing of passwords, codes and accounts was. His wife would have had a terrible time trying to figure out how to access accounts, email and social media, etc. Not to mention all the bills, insurances and business details of their lives.

I can tell you when the shock passed, I immediately started making my listing and what a help it has been for me especially since, anymore, everyone wants you to have a password for something! One page has turned to 4 pages! And don't forget, as you change the password, cross out the old one and write the new one down. It will be a constantly changing list. I change my main document every 6 months or so to add the new passwords and update the changed ones. It has been especially helpful when so many of my records are in my US home! I also learned watching a financial advisor on TV, that with most couples, there is one or another that takes care of all the business in the family. So, it is not uncommon that one knows all the details and the other does not.

Now fast forward several years. My dear friend is diagnosed with progressive Alzheimer's. This woman remembered everything and never wrote down anything because she remembered. She was the family 'bookkeeper and IT department'. Now her husband is struggling to do anything. As an example, I tried to help him get access to his thousands of air miles on Alaska Airlines. We called to explain the situation and without the password to her email account, he cannot change anything to access their Alaska miles. And of course, he does not have access to the Alaska mileage account because he does not have the user id or password as it was not written down. He has had so many situations like this that have come up since her diagnosis. The 'monthly bills' are much more likely to help (they want their money), but it is what I will call the 'benefits' that are so difficult to work with— including life insurance policies. And if you have a reoccurring bill that you want to cancel. Well, you can't. The only fix is to get rid of the credit card number or bank account that the bill is charged to.

I write this in the hope that all of you out there start thinking that writing down all codes, passwords, account information is a good idea so that if memory loss, death, illness or tragedy arrives, your loved ones do not have another stress added to their already stressful situation. And as we all get older, our memory does fade (fact of aging), the listing will come in really handy for you! I don't leave home without it because I can seem to remember my own email password! When I travel, in my carry-on suitcase, right next to my toothbrush is my password list!

So, I will get off my soap box with the hope that everyone out there will learn from other's lessons and make their and their loved one's life a little easier by listing their passwords, codes and account numbers. Life is so much fun, but it is very unpredictable, and nothing is guaranteed. A listing to me is one thing I can control in my very unpredictable life!!! Might be a nice Christmas gift – a list of passwords, codes and accounts!

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## 100 Kids Learn to Swim & Snorkel the Reef

By: Theresa Comber

In three short weeks 100 kids stole our hearts and left their indelible stamps as they shared their lives with us. Long after Curso de Verano 2023 summer camp ended we were still in the glory of the afterglow.

At the start, they are as excited as kids can be. They smile up into your face, you learn their names, personalities and create relationships. You watch them absorb amazing lessons taught by visiting marine biologists about octopus, manta rays, turtles. They create stunning crafts that sync their just-learned lessons. Painted rock turtles, handmade and decorated octopus sitting on rocks, shopping bags adorned with manta rays and sea creatures made for great crafts fun.

The great joy was teaching them to swim. Some reluctant to even put their face in the water ultimately became non-stop lap swimmers. It's August HOT, and the kids yearn to be in the pool. They pile out of our "Be Awesome" vehicles and rush onto the pool deck calling your name and running up for a hug. (Our shuttle drivers are doing laps every hour and twenty minutes to and from the DIF Cancha near Tio Pablo's, delivering squealing kids to four different pools!) Apurarse! Hurry! Shower up and splash in!

As the wet fun begins, we visit our environmental goal - to have every child ultimately snorkel on the reef. To share with them their first fish, turtle, even a lobster! To create swimmers that see their Sea of Cortez is Jacques Cousteau's World's Aquarium. To learn what a privilege and responsibility this is. Even the six-year-olds learn that they can make a difference. As they learn the lessons, they start to have pride in what they have right here in their backyard. And they can't wait for the reef.

100% Goal met! Every child swam on the reef! A 1:1 adult-to-child ratio had ten of us swimming arm-in-arm, hand-in-hand, shoulder-to-shoulder, switching out kids every twenty minutes for hours. A few little ones were

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even hoisted onto Chepe's back, our successful local boy professional Exotikite instructor and our own Awesome Sportfishing deckhand. It's a good thing he brought his long fins as he was long on little ones looking for a ride. Chepe found the lobster that created nonstop squeaks into masks. Our visiting Marine biologists even found a turtle.

Each child now has their very own mask and snorkel. Like us, they have a bucket of just earned memories. School started in another week. We spent the best part of their short summer together and our spirits are full of love, laughter and accomplishments.

For certain with summer camp, nothing happens without an amazing team. So many hands and so much effort that

*Continued on Page 36*

## EAST CAPE HOME HEALTH

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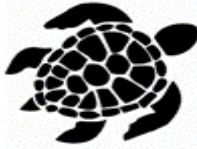
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## Recycle by sharing with a friend or return to East Capers Rack!

Swimming Continued From Page 35

made this possible. Two years of movie night fundraising makes the foundational difference to assure funds are raised so this completely free program has no cost barrier to entry. Recycling monies left over after Blue Barrels and Zona Tranquila beach projects add to the funding. If you touched any of those, you made the difference here.

I'm personally blessed beyond measure with the privilege to participate and I've walked alongside all these amazing people that create Curso de Verano including East Cape Environmental Education & Recycling + Baja's Awesome + DIF Delegacion Los Barriles + Baja Coastal Institute and all these amazing volunteers: Omar Araiza, Maria Fernandez, Lupita Araiza, Robin Neal, Alison Tinger, Brant Dyer, Wendy Dyer, Angie Harder, Hunter Circe, Cesar Roldan, Fernando Garza, Chris Schraefel, Isabel Flores, Paul Neal, Karen James, Lorie Gammon, Eric de la Rosa, Pattie Weber, Karla Martinez, Priscilla Duran, pools at Casa Wright, Casa Bodenhamer, Baja's Resort at East Cape, Palmas de Cortez. And nothing happens without the amazing oversight of our DIF partners Obdulia Mendoza and Maria Flores.



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## ***East Cape Health Center***

By: East Cape Health Team

We love to share our success stories with the East Cape community, including one of our most heart-warming accomplishments to date --finding funding for little Dylan. Although we have seen many miracles in our clinic, Dylan's case is particularly gratifying. Dylan's mother came to us around 2 years ago when she learned her young son was born with congenital hearing loss. Because of Dylan's age, he was a perfect candidate for cochlear implants which would allow him to learn language skills and attend school in a normal classroom setting.

However, until the necessary funds could be raised for the implant surgery, Dylan was required to make multiple trips to the Mexican mainland for testing, and, after special training, to adapt to the use of hearing aids.

Hoping to help Dylan avoid the stigma of hearing aids and gain better hearing, we began a fundraising campaign on our website and

social media channels. We are happy to announce that we raised \$5,000 USD which, when matched by a generous local donor and with financial assistance from the Los Cabos Children's Foundation, was sufficient to fund Dylan's surgery. Dylan is now attending school, speech therapy sessions and is thriving at home having received the gift of hearing.

Our goal at East Cape Health Center is simple, to continue to provide the East Cape region with exceptional medical, dental, laboratory, and pharmacy services and to expand our donor base so we can care for more families like Dylan's.

One such fundraising opportunity for us was the Rotary Club's Taste of the East Cape event held December 2nd at Laguna Park. The East Cape Health Center provided a no-host, fully equipped bar with the proceeds benefiting our organization. With a handful of volunteers, along with our

medical and dental teams, we worked as bartenders and servers to help quench the thirst of the guests. It was a great evening where all enjoyed the live music and delicious tastings from 18 of our local restaurants and also help support us and our mission in the process.

We are so very grateful to all of you who contributed to Dylan's surgery and have given so generously to us over the years. We could not provide the excellent care that we do without your support. As the year ends, we invite you to consider the East Cape Health Center in your tax planning. There are several ways to donate to us directly or via one of the options available at our partner organization: [www.leaders2give.org](http://www.leaders2give.org).

*'Tis the  
Season  
Giving<sup>of</sup>*

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## East Cape Guild Fundraisers

By: Kim Plotkin

Last year was the East Cape Guild's biggest year for scholarships; 274 high school and college scholarships. The Guild's first college scholarship recipients graduated from college last year! Rising scholarship demands by qualified students has made fundraising as important as ever!

The Guild will hold a Valentine's Day dinner and dance on February 14<sup>th</sup>. Look for details on the Baja Pony Express and Everything Los Barriles.

The Guild's biggest event will be the Guild's Second Music Festival which will take place on March 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> 2024. This year the Guild expects to feature 5 or 6 singer song-writers from Nashville's Combustion Music. A VIP dinner will take place on March 1<sup>st</sup> at an as yet undetermined location. The March 2<sup>nd</sup> community concert will take place at Hotel Palmas de Cortez. The concert will be opened by the Lack Family which will play only original songs. The Lack Family will be followed by the visiting Nashville songwriters. The concert will conclude, as it did last year, with a group musician jam session and dancing. Expect this year's community concert to be even better than the amazing premier event.

Look for details and ticket information on the Baja Pony Express and Everything Los Barriles Facebook Page. There will be two tiers of seating for the community concert; standard and a VIP seating area with tables and table service. Food and drink will be available for purchase at the concert.

In addition to these events look for the Tamale Day celebration on February 6<sup>th</sup> at the town concha where locals compete for the best tamale and attendees get to get a true taste of local food and talent.

Finally, please support the Guild and our local musicians by attending Open Mic night, every Wednesday at La Fogata restaurant. Open Mic night supports the Guild through past the hat contributions.

Look for more information about the Guild on its web-site; [Eastcapeguild.com](http://Eastcapeguild.com).

Guild recipients are leaders in our community and help Los Barriles and the East Cape be the special place that it is.





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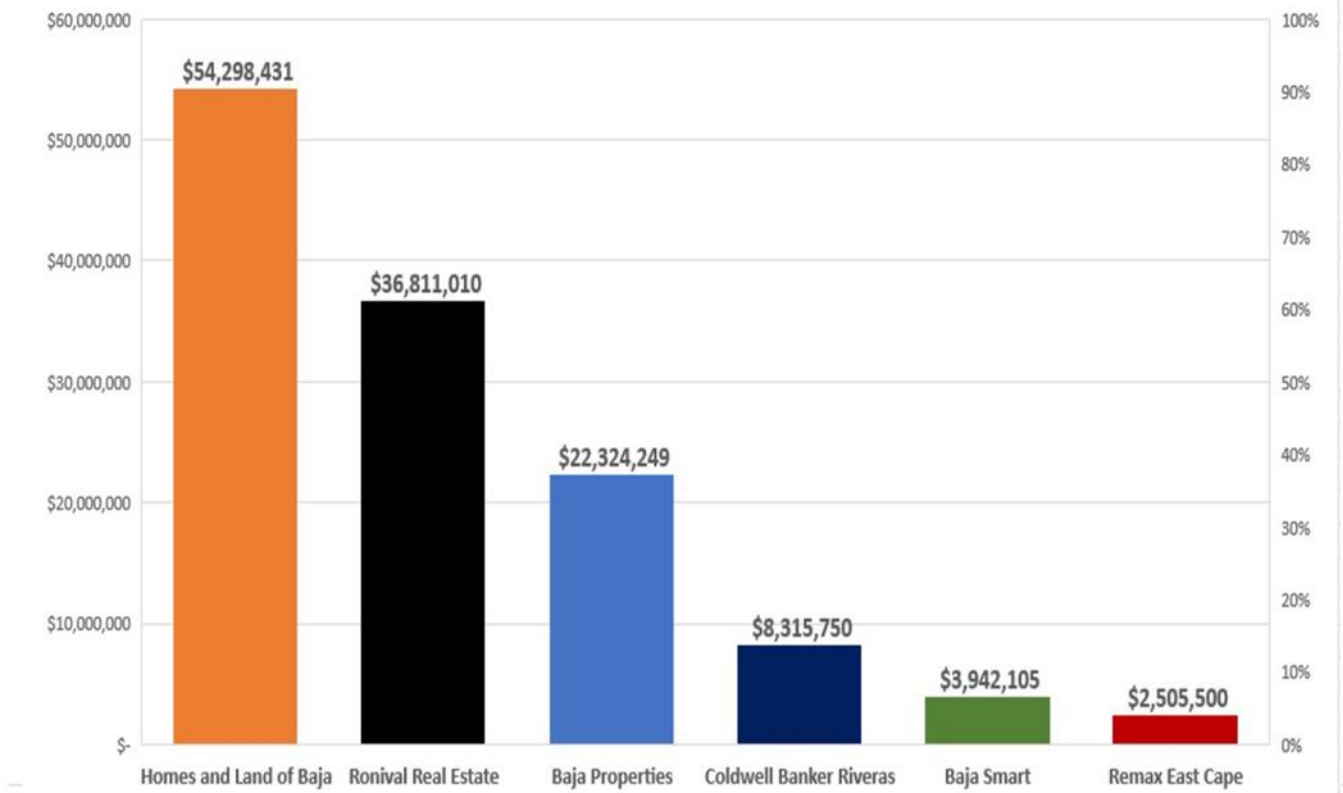


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## 2022 - 2023 Sales and listings on the North East Cape



## Results say it all so give us a call!

Take a look at the 22-23 stats from the Northern part of the East Cape! These are stats that represent where our buyers and sellers actually are, not stats from down close to Cabo. In Real Estate many people talk about how good they are and what they can do for you, but we believe that results say it all.

We would like to thank all our new buyers and sellers for thier support! To all you new sellers, the market is still good so let us know if you would like to sell your home or homesite. Our Office is in the center of Los Barriles in the Palapa building next to the yellow Tiki Bar with the big parking lot and also across the street from the veggie stand.

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We are very carefully to select referrals.

## EAST CAPE HEALTH CENTER LA RIBERA

We are excited to announce an important update regarding our health center in La Ribera. We'll be rotating doctors from Los Barriles to la Ribera to improve healthcare in our community. In November, a new team will join us, increasing availability for medical care.

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