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GRINGO Gazette

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Cabo Bello Beach.
Photo by Gracie
Atherton

Caboholic Hero Saves Woman from Drowning

BY FERNANDO RODRIGUEZ

The Caboholics social group was officially founded on October 3, 2010, by Johnny and Maddie Corona years after they made their first visit to Los Cabos during the early to mid-1990s.

"We got really involved with what was going on in Cabo during the 2009 swine flu influenza scare, and the negative publicity Mexico was receiving at the time," said Maddie Corona, originally from San Antonio, Texas.

"And there were so many people who were afraid to come down here that we decided to start a group and help spread the word that things weren't as bad as they heard on the news. So we started the website, cabofriends.net, which took us six months to create. After that, it became The Caboholics, once we obtained the trade-

mark; and the website was changed to caboholics.com."

The group has 12,560 members in the Caboholics support group on Facebook. The number has grown from the original 30 to 40 people that flew down here and met for that first time in February 2011. The Caboholics from 2011 raised \$483 US Dollars for local charities.

"Everyone had a great time, kicking back and relaxing, and we all agreed that Cabo was someplace special."

The subsequent Caboholics reunions grew every year and, in 2015, the group raised \$11,000 dollars for Los Cabos charities. The current list of charitable organizations on the Caboholics fundraising radar is the Senior Center, "Casa de Los Abuelitos," The Humane Society of Los Cabos, Los Bomberos de Los Cabos (Firefighters Asso-

ciation), the Sea Turtle Conservation and the Feeding Los Cabos Kids non-profit organization.

"Johnny was joking around about his addiction to Cabo, and that's really where it all started," noted Maddie. "We also personally drive into the colonias (neighborhoods) and do our best to help those in need."

"Sure, we all come down to relax, party, eat, drink, be merry, get crazy, and have an unforgettable time just like most typical tourists and visitors. The difference is this: for the countless memories of good feelings and great times that we take from this great place, We Give Back," states the Caboholics website homepage. A Caboholics requirement asks its members to help the less fortunate people of Cabo, which includes the children, the elderly, the homeless, the animals, and the volunteer fire department.

"Only a true Caboholic can understand the feeling you get when you arrive at the airport in San Jose del Cabo," said Johnny Corona, decades before leaving Los

Cabos forever. Born Johnnie R. Haney, Johnny Corona passed away on February 4, 2017, in Salem, Oregon, surrounded by family and friends at the age of 63.

This year's 11th Annual Caboholic Convention will again be held during its traditional early February schedule, and this past year, before it even got started, one of their members saved Mandy Bell from drowning on October 26, 2021.

"One of our beloved Caboholics became a hero and saved a life," said Jill Davidson, who lives in San Jose del Cabo with her husband, Bryan. "A small group of us were at Sandbar for massages and beach fun. One of us was very attentive to the beach because we had some very big waves. A panga came in to pick people up and as a woman was trying to board the panga, a wave hit and she went under the boat. Rico Austin jumped up and ran and swam to save her. As he grabbed her they both were taken down by another wave. Almost out of breath, he pushed her to safety. Her family watched in shock as

the entire rescue took place."

"We both want to thank you again for saving my life. Thank you for being such a sweetheart and such a good man," said Mandy Bell's daughter in an appreciative thank you note via Facebook Messenger.

And so once again, the Caboholics group and its members continue giving back to this beach community they love so much. 🦋

