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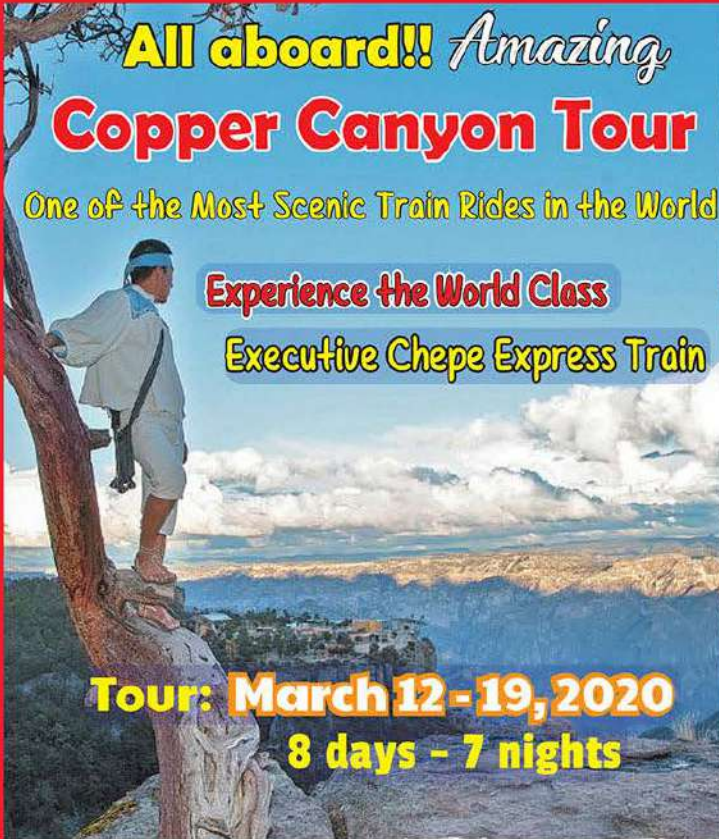
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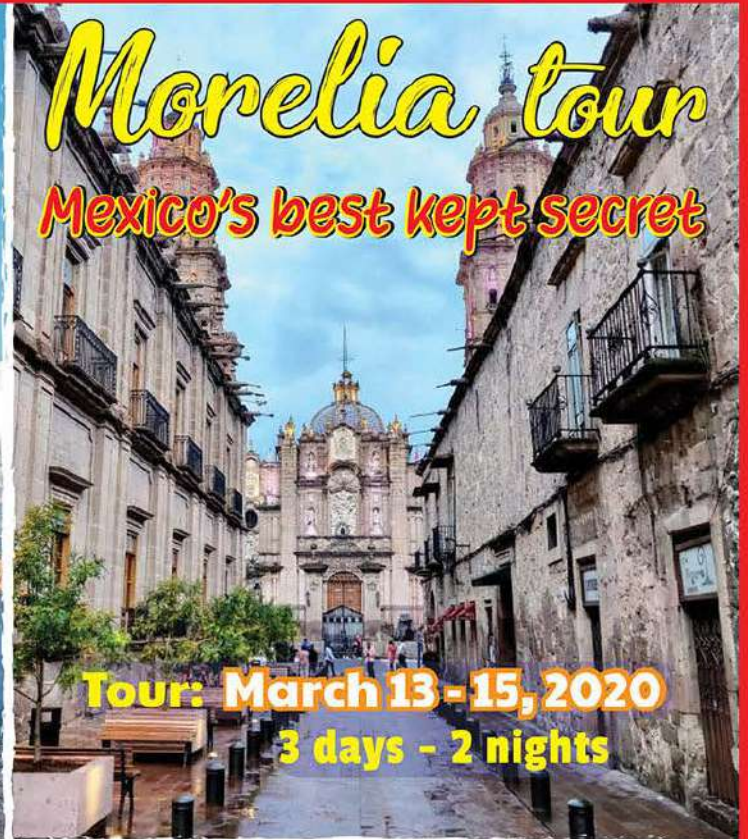
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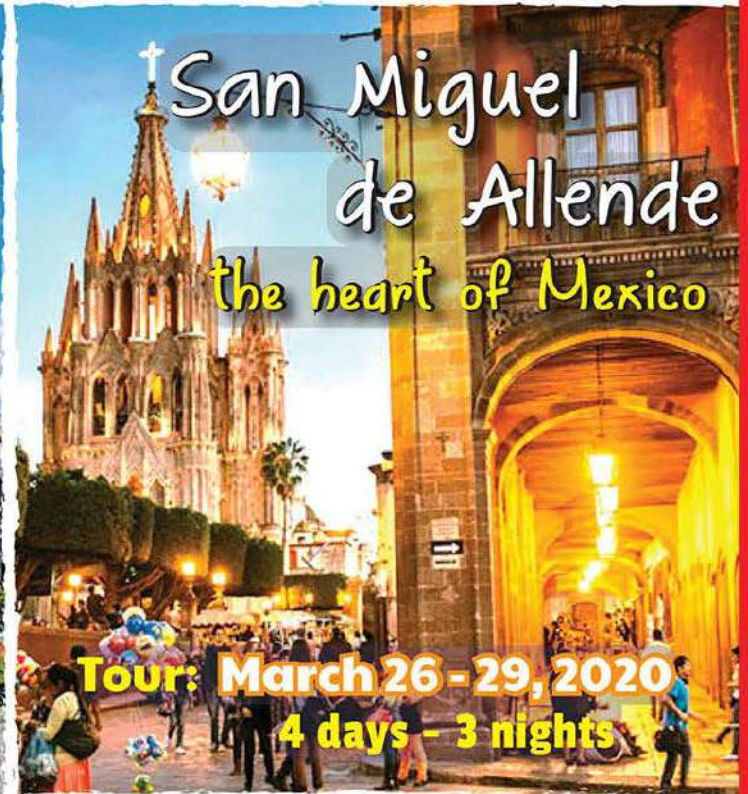
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The Lake Chapala Society

Mission & Vision

Our mission is to promote the active participation of Lakeside's inhabitants to improve their quality of life lakeside.

Our vision is a future where all Lakeside residents continually have a role in enriching the community's quality of life, vitality and prosperity through the exchange of knowledge, expertise, culture, heritage & language.

Nuestra Misión es promover la activa participación de los residentes de la Ribera de Chapala, para mejorar la calidad de vida en la comunidad.

Nuestra Visión es un futuro donde todos los residentes de La Ribera participen continuamente en mejorar la calidad de vida, vitalidad y prosperidad de la comunidad a través del intercambio de conocimiento, experiencia, cultura, patrimonio y lenguaje.

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The magazine's name, Conecciones — Connections in English — reflects its purpose, which is to enable the Lake Chapala Society to connect with its community. / El nombre de la revista Conecciones refleja su propósito, favorecer la conexión de The Lake Chapala Society con la comunidad.

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Propuestas de artículos para la revista Conecciones. Nos reservamos el derecho de editar según sea necesario. Las consultas deben dirigirse a editor@lakechapalasociety.com. Las consultas sobre publicidad deben dirigirse a ventas@lakechapalasociety.com.

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Lake Chapala Society

Looking Forward — The 2020 LCS Annual General Meeting

As we prepare for the Lake Chapala Society's Annual General Meeting (AGM), I take this time to reflect on our humble beginnings, our progress through the years and our vision for the future as we roll out the LCS 2.0 long range plan.

At this year's AGM, we will be reviewing some of the goals that have been established and providing a report on our progress towards those goals. Historically, we have had a low turnout for the AGM, but I would like to invite all members to join us on Thursday, March 19 from 10 a.m. until noon. We will have presentations that show our historical background and how we value and hold dear to the principals that have brought us to where we are today. We will review the restoration progress of the Neill James home and the other improvements to our campus. We will share some of the plans for the future that will allow us to carry on the legacy of our founders and Neill James' efforts to encourage collaborations between the Expat community and the local Mexican community.

Of course, as humans, we tend to resist change even though we know that change is inevitable. None of us has the same body and mind we had 20, or 60 years ago. This is also true of the needs of the community, as well as the condition of our campus. David Truly, who many know from his crowd packed Open Circle presentations and who has made tremendous contributions to the community, commented on LCS's role in the community. I paraphrase here

Local officials and members alike look to LCS to provide leadership and collaborations between the many sectors of the Lakeside community. We are uniquely positioned to facilitate collaborations that benefit all. We all want the same things, safe and clean communities where we can all continue to grow.

Through the many programs we offer to local children as well as adults, and the compassion that the expats have to embrace the community that has welcomed us with open arms and generous hearts, LCS provides the tools and the opportunities to extend our legacy as an oasis for personal enrichment, socialization and collaborations throughout Lakeside. This is the very basis for the LCS 2.0 long range plan. It shouldn't be about bringing a life style from north of the border and trying to force it on an existing setting here, but instead embracing the culture that attracted us here in the first place and growing with it.

We hope that you will join us at this year's Annual General Meeting. To participate as a voting member at the meeting, please make sure your membership is up-to-date. Stop by our membership office any time between Monday and Saturday from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m., to renew your membership if it expires before the AGM. For those who are only here for part of the year, we hope that when you arrived back at LCS, you noticed some of the many improvements we have been rapidly making on the campus to make it a better experience for all. We still have a ways to go, and we need your support to keep things moving. Please consider a donation to our An-

ual Giving Campaign, this can also be done in the office or online, or bring a donation to the AGM.

We hope to see you on March 19, on the campus of LCS. Come see the first steps in restoring the Neill James house.

Thanks so much for your support,

Steve Balfour
Executive Director

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Editorial

By Rachel McMillen

When LCS first created Conecciones, it was decided that there would be no editorial, and instead, we would post a message from the board. Why? Well, Conecciones IS an LCS magazine, created to connect with the community, and it needs a way to communicate that message — but I am breaking that rule today.

When I first arrived at Lakeside more than 10 years ago, LCS provided me, as it has provided so many of us, both an anchor and a place of respite where I could ease myself into a different culture. Its gardens welcomed me, its volunteers and programs informed me, its library and events entertained me. An LCS bus took me on my first trip into Guadalajara. An LCS course taught me Spanish. An LCS event introduced me to Mexican music.

In time I joined the host (more than 300) of LCS volunteers, and while working at the service desk I met many of the people who have since become friends. Later, it was LCS that enabled me to indulge my passion for sharing knowledge through the “Introduction to Lakeside” program, and my Creative Writing courses, as well as with this magazine.

I suspect that LCS has played a major role in the lives of most of Lakeside’s Expat population, and it is increasingly playing a major role in the lives of our Mexican neighbors, so it’s inconceivable

that it would cease to operate — yet the possibility exists.

Annual fees paid by the current membership cover barely a third of operating costs, and none of the capital or maintenance costs of keeping the buildings functioning, let alone standing. The situation is so dire that it may well be that in eight to ten years there will be no buildings. Seriously. The roof on the Neill James building has been leaking water into the walls for years, and without major work will soon collapse. The foundations of the *adobe* buildings that house the library and the service desk are crumbling, the roofs leaking, and the electrical systems are held together with little more than hope and duct tape.

There are those who tell me that “there’s nothing at LCS for me” and yet I see them at many of the events, or lined up to get their flu shot on health day. I hear them say how happy they are that so many Mexicans speak English and how great the LCS ESL program is. I see them enjoying the gardens, or sipping a glass of wine in the restaurant, or enjoying the music at one of the events. What would they do, I wonder, if LCS wasn’t there?

Even though I now live a 40-minute drive away from the LCS campus, and, therefore, make little use of the programs and events it provides, I am happy to support an organization that provides so much to so many, both Expat and Mexican. I hope you are too, and I urge you to attend the AGM that will take place on March 19 so you can hear for yourself what is planned, share your thoughts and ideas with the community we all love, and play a role in preserving one of our most cherished institutions.

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International Women's Day: A History

By/Por *Curly Lieberman*

Many, if not most of us, are aware of International Women's Day. But do you know the history of this celebration? Did it begin with the feminist movement of the 1970s, or the women's suffrage movement 60 years earlier? Was it a demand for the vote or a marketing plan by the fashion industry to sell more gowns?

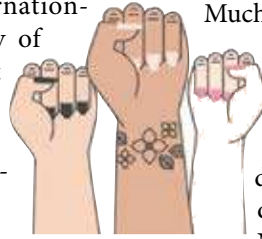
Nope. It was none of the above.

The origin of International Women's Day goes back to February 1908, in New York City. At that time, thousands of women who worked in the garment industry went on strike, demanding improved working conditions. The strikes continued for more than a year, until on February 28, 1908, the workers declared National Women's Day. Women working in the garment industry continued their struggle and were instrumental in getting worker safety regulations implemented, particularly after the Triangle Shirtwaist factory fire in 1911, where many workers died because they were locked in the sewing rooms and couldn't escape the fire.

At the International Conference of Working Women in 1910, German socialist Clara Zetkin proposed turning the day into an international event to advocate for women's suffrage. Hence, International Women's Day was declared in Europe, and little attention was paid in the United States, where their movement had begun.

The movement spread throughout Europe, including Russia, where popular protests against the Tsar were on the rise. One direct consequence of IWD was the granting of suffrage to Russian women. The movement continued to grow, and the observation of IWD spread around the world. Finally, in 1975, the United Nations endorsed the celebration, and it began to be observed in the United States, where it had started 67 years earlier. Although the movement started in the United States, its adoption by Russian socialists kept the U. S. from recognizing it until after the Cold War ended and the United Nations recognized International Women's Day.

Today, IWD is celebrated on March 8 around the world with everything from marches to conferences to celebrations. Happy International Women's Day to everyone!



Día internacional de la mujer, su origen

Muchos, si no la mayoría de nosotros, estamos al tanto del Día Internacional de la Mujer. Pero, ¿conoces la historia de esta celebración? ¿Comenzó con el movimiento feminista de los años 70 o con el movimiento por el sufragio femenino 60 años antes? ¿Fue una demanda del voto o un plan de marketing de la industria de la moda para vender más vestidos?

No. No fue ninguna de las anteriores.

El origen del Día Internacional de la Mujer se remonta a febrero de 1908, en la ciudad de Nueva York. En esa época, miles de mujeres que trabajaban en la industria de la confección se declararon en huelga, exigiendo mejores condiciones de trabajo. Las huelgas continuaron durante más de un año, hasta que el 28 de febrero de 1908, las trabajadoras declararon el Día Nacional de la Mujer. Las mujeres que trabajaban en la industria de la confección continuaron su lucha y fueron decisivas para que se implementaran las normas de seguridad de los trabajadores, particularmente después del incendio de la fábrica Triangle Shirtwaist en 1911, donde muchos trabajadores murieron porque estaban encerrados en los cuartos de costura y no podían escapar del fuego.

En la Conferencia Internacional de Mujeres Trabajadoras de 1910, la socialista alemana Clara Zetkin propuso convertir el día en un evento internacional para abogar por el sufragio femenino. De ahí que se declarara el Día Internacional de la Mujer en Europa y que se prestara poca atención en los Estados Unidos, donde se había iniciado su movimiento.

El movimiento se extendió por toda Europa, incluyendo Rusia, donde las protestas populares contra el Zar estaban en aumento. Una consecuencia directa fue la concesión del sufragio a las mujeres rusas. El movimiento siguió creciendo y la observación del día se extendió por todo el mundo. Finalmente, en 1975, las Naciones Unidas apoyaron la celebración y ésta comenzó a observarse en los Estados Unidos, donde había comenzado 67 años antes. Aunque el movimiento comenzó en los Estados Unidos, su adopción por los socialistas rusos impidió que los Estados Unidos lo reconocieran hasta después de que la Guerra Fría terminó y las Naciones Unidas reconocieron el Día Internacional de la Mujer.

Hoy en día, el Día Internacional de la Mujer se celebra el 8 de marzo en todo el mundo con diversos tipos de actividades, desde marchas hasta conferencias y celebraciones. Unámonos a la conmemoración del Día Internacional de la Mujer.

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Beautifying Lakeside One Woman at a Time

By Harriet Hart

Beauty salons are a place where women go to catch up on the local news, meet new friends, get advice, have their hair styled or their nails manicured, to be beautified! Edith's on Ocampo has served those functions for 32 years this April.

On a recent visit, I asked Edith why she had chosen hairstyling as her vocation.

"I come from a family of barbers. I always knew I wanted to style hair. My mother encouraged me." As a teenager, Edith moved from Tamaulipas on the Gulf of Mexico to Mexico City where she attended Alfonso Marcos, a prestigious school. "I lived with an uncle and his family." She graduated with a diploma that qualifies her to cut and style hair, do manicures, pedicures, and waxing. "Everything." She is also certified to teach these skills. Edith took a faded diploma down from the wall: "It's so old you can't see my name, but it says 1986 and has my photo."

"You're prettier now," chimed in a customer.

There were two other clients listening in to our conversation, and both had comments. "Be sure to say that Edith is an artist. The first time I had her cut my hair I thought, Boy, I've lucked out!" "She can fix bad haircuts and poor color jobs."

"She listens and does what you ask. And if you show her a picture, she'll tell you if she thinks it's wrong for you."

Edith calls styling hair her passion and likes to keep current by attending workshops. Her customers are very important to her. "Ginger Tanner was my oldest client. She came her every three weeks for 31 years. The day before Thanksgiving 2019 she came in, feeling very sick, but she said she wasn't going to die without a manicure and pedicure. And I found out she died the next day."

Edith said that she is grateful for the support of all her loyal customers. And those customers are grateful in return.

Not far down the street is a salon operated by Alexandra María Sepulveda called Mariale. She and Edith have several things in common. Mariele also grew up elsewhere, in her case Mexico City, and moved to Lakeside as a teenager because a brother already lived here. And like Edith, she becomes emotionally close to her regular customers. "I had

one who always said I was like her Mexican daughter. When she became ill and was hospitalized, I went to visit her. It was shortly after she had a manicure with me. She passed away just before I got there, but the nurse told me that the *Senora* was showing off her nails and talking about me right before she died." Mariele became tearful at the memory.

"Most of my clientele are expatriates," she explained. "As they age, it is important for them to feel attractive, well groomed, good about themselves. "We are in the business of keeping our customers beautiful." If local ladies don't feel they can afford regular trips to the salon, Mariele told me, they enjoy visits as treats for birthdays or Mother's Day. Mariele says her favorite service is to provide massages; she has a table in the salon at Constitution #28A and also makes house calls.

Mariele attributes her success to her ability to speak English, which she learned through classes at the Wilkes Center. "I went 16 years ago. My first teacher was so kind and I loved learning to speak English." Mariele's business partner Isabel also has LCS to thank as the recipient of a scholarship through their student assistance program.

Edith and Mariele are just two of the many hard-working women at Lakeside who help make Lakeside beautiful, one woman at a time.



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Embelleciendo la orilla del lago, una mujer a la vez

Por Harriet Hart

Los salones de belleza son un lugar donde las mujeres van para ponerse al día con las noticias locales, conocer nuevas amigas, recibir consejos, peinarse o tener un maniquiur, ¡para embellecerse! Edith's en Ocampo ha cumplido esas funciones durante 32 años, que celebrará este abril.

En una reciente visita, le pregunté a Edith por qué había elegido el cabello como su vocación.

“Vengo de una familia de barberos. Siempre supe que quería arreglar el cabello. Mi madre me animó”. En su adolescencia, Edith se trasladó de Tamaulipas, a la Ciudad de México, donde asistió a la prestigiosa escuela Alfonso Marcos. “Vivía con un tío y su familia”. Se graduó con un diploma que la califica para cortar y peinar el cabello, hacer manicuras, pedicuras y depilación con cera. “Todo”. “También está certificada para enseñar estas habilidades. Edith bajó un diploma descolorido de la pared: “Es tan viejo que no se puede ver mi nombre, pero dice 1986 y tiene mi foto.”

“Ahora estás más guapa”, dijo una cliente. Había otras dos clientas escuchando nuestra conversación, y ambas tenían comentarios. “Asegúrate de decir que Edith es una artista. La primera vez que me cortó el pelo pensé: “¡Wow esto es maravilloso!”

“Ella puede arreglar malos cortes de pelo y de tinte.”

“Ella te escucha y hace lo que le pides. Y si le enseñas una foto, te dirá si cree que está mal para ti”.

Edith llama al peinado su “pasión” y le gusta mantenerse al día asistiendo a talleres. Sus clientes son muy importantes para ella. “Ginger Tanner era mi cliente más antigua. La visitó cada tres semanas durante 31 años. El día antes del Día de Acción de Gracias de 2019 vino, sintiéndose muy enferma, pero dijo que no iba a morir sin una manicura y pedicura. Y me enteré de que murió al día siguiente”.

Edith dijo que está agradecida por el apoyo de todos sus

fieles clientes. Y esos clientes le están agradecidos también.

No muy lejos de aquí hay un salón operado por Alejandra María Sepúlveda llamado Mariale. Ella y Edith tienen varias cosas en común. Mariale también creció en otro lugar, en su caso en la Ciudad de México, y se mudó a Lakeside en su adolescencia porque un hermano ya vivía aquí. Y como Edith, se vuelve emocionalmente cercana a sus clientes habituales. “Tenía una que siempre decía que era como su hija mexicana. Cuando se enfermó y fue hospitalizada, fui a visitarla. Fue poco después de que se hiciera la manicura conmigo. Falleció justo antes de que yo llegara, pero la enfermera me dijo que la señora estaba mostrando sus uñas y hablando de mí justo antes de morir”. Mariale se puso a llorar al recordar.

“La mayoría de mis clientelas son extranjeras”, explicó. “A medida que envejecen, es importante que se sientan atractivas, arregladas, bien consigo mismas. “Estamos en el negocio de mantener a nuestras clientas hermosas.” Si las mujeres

locales no sienten que pueden permitirse visitas regulares al salón, me dijo Mariale, disfrutan del gusto como regalo de cumpleaños o del Día de la Madre. Mariale dice que su servicio favorito es dar masajes; tiene una mesa en el salón en Constitución #28A y también hace visitas a domicilio.

Mariale atribuye su éxito a su habilidad para hablar inglés, que aprendió en las clases del Centro Wilkes. “Fui hace 16 años. Mi primer profesor fue muy amable y me encantó aprender a hablar inglés”. Isabel, la socia de Mariale, también tiene que agradecer a LCS por haber recibido una beca a través de su programa de apoyo económico al estudiante.

Edith y Mariale son sólo dos de las muchas mujeres trabajadoras de la zona que ayudan a hacer la ribera de Chapala hermosa, una mujer a la vez.



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MOVERS & SHAKERS

By Harriet Hart

Aurora Michel Galindo will retire in June 2020 after 30 years as head investment strategist with Actinver (formerly Lloyd). Aurora is a petite, dynamic woman with small feet leaving behind big shoes to fill. Her successor, Carolina, laughed when I said so, acknowledging the truth of my observation.

What makes Aurora such a presence is her personal philosophy that “Things don’t happen by magic. I don’t want to change the world, I just want to change my community.” She says leaving your footprint is easy in a small community. As a new bride married to an agricultural engineer, she moved from Guadalajara to the Baja which she described as “virgin territory”. There, Aurora saw a need and organized the local women, teaching them to grow and cook various vegetables. When she left, these ladies held a huge farewell party and served up the dishes she taught them to make.

Aurora returned to Jalisco when her husband was offered a job here. Like many women, she put her husband’s career and the needs of her young family first, but “I always earned an income, first as an insurance agent, then a realtor. I chose flexible jobs so I could care for my kids.” She re-entered the work force full time in 1989, telling her boss “I’ll give myself three months to make a difference.” She did, but making a difference to her employer pales in comparison to what she’s done for the Lakeside community.

Aurora has volunteered with The Red Cross, Ajijic Limpio, The

Chamber of Commerce, Amigos del Lago, the Auditorio, and the Lake Chapala Society, to name a few. She is passionate about the environment, explaining how a committee she served on had Lake Chapala designated as a “User of the Basin” along with agriculture, industry and human consumption, which means the National Water Commission takes the lake into account in its annual calculations for water distribution and usage.

There are two educational institutions Aurora helped create, working with the community to build a trade school, Conalep, and a university, because “education is the key to success in life.” She was the first Mexican to serve on the Board of the Lake Chapala Society and still helps out with the Conexiones initiative, which brings local businesses together on a monthly basis for networking purposes.

Just down the street from Actinver is Yoly’s Styling Salon. On January 6, when I paid a visit, owner Yolanda Martinez Llamas was celebrating the 24th anniversary of the opening of her business. Running it takes a lot of energy, but Yoly has plenty to spare. Like Aurora, she believes in the importance of community involvement.

Her current role as President of the Red Cross involves overseeing a clinic that employs 45 people including doctors, nurses, and support staff. “We are not funded by the government,” she explained “We are a private organization supported by donations.” Their major fundraiser is an annual golf tournament in November.

Yoly became involved in The Red Cross after being in a car accident: “They took me to the Red Cross and I realized they needed volunteer help. I agreed to serve on the nine member Board of Directors. The Red Cross treats approximately 1500 patients every month. Ninety-one percent are Mexican, and pay what they can. “We provide medical help no matter what; no-one is turned away.”

Yoly takes her volunteerism seriously. “After my daughter’s recent health crisis, I made a promise.” She won’t elaborate, but claims her maternal instincts assist in her role as President. “They treat me like their mom,” she laughs.


Yoly attributes her philosophy of giving back to her own mother. “Since I was a little girl, she taught me how to give. It’s part of my nature, the person I am.” She believes anything can happen at any time to anyone, and we all need to be ready to help.

Prior to her presidency of the Red Cross, Yoly served on several boards including the Lake Chapala Society, the Chamber of Commerce, and SIMAPA. Now, in addition to all this, she studies law at the UNIM, a local affiliate of the University of Guadalajara. When asked if she planned on working as a lawyer, she said she just wants to learn more about the law, which she considers another way of helping people solve problems.

These are just two movers and shakers who are making Lakeside such a great place to live.



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LIDERES SOCIALES

Por Harriet Hart

Aurora Michel Galindo se jubilará en junio de 2020 después de treinta años como jefe de estrategia de inversión de Actinver (antes Lloyds). Aurora es una mujer pequeña y dinámica con pies pequeños que deja atrás grandes zapatos que llenar. Su sucesora, Carolina, se ríe cuando se lo dije, reconociendo la verdad de mi observación.

Lo que hace a Aurora tan presente es su filosofía personal de que “las cosas no suceden por arte de magia. No quiero cambiar el mundo, sólo quiero cambiar mi comunidad”. Dice que dejar tu huella es fácil en una comunidad pequeña. Como nueva novia casada con un ingeniero agrícola, se mudó de Guadalajara a la Baja que describió como “territorio virgen”. Allí, Aurora vio una necesidad y organizó a las mujeres de la zona, enseñándoles a cultivar y cocinar varias verduras. Cuando se fue, estas señoras hicieron una gran fiesta de despedida y sirvieron los platos que ella les enseñó a hacer.

Aurora regresó a Jalisco cuando a su esposo le ofrecieron un trabajo aquí. Como muchas mujeres, ella puso la carrera de su esposo y las necesidades de su joven familia en primer lugar, pero “Siempre he ganado un ingreso, primero como agente de seguros, luego como agente de bienes raíces. Elegí trabajos flexibles para poder cuidar a mis hijos”. Volvió a entrar en la fuerza de trabajo a tiempo completo en 1989, diciéndole a su jefe: “Me daré tres meses para hacer la diferencia”. Ella lo hizo, pero lo que hizo en su trabajo palidece ante la diferencia que ella ha hecho por la comunidad de la Rivera de Chapala.

Aurora ha sido voluntaria con la Cruz Roja, Ajijic Limpio, la Cámara de Comercio, Amigos del Lago, el Auditorio, y Lake Chapala Society, por nombrar algunos. Ella es una apasionada del medio ambiente, explicando como un comité en el que ella sirvió, designó al Lago de Chapala como “Usuario de la Cuenca” junto con la agricultura, la industria y el consumo humano, lo que significa que la Comisión Nacional del Agua toma en cuenta al lago en sus cálculos anuales para la distribución y el uso del agua.

Hay dos instituciones educativas que Aurora ayudó a crear, trabajando con la comunidad para construir una escuela de oficios, Conalep, y una universidad, porque “la educación es la clave del éxito en la vida”. Ella fue la primer mexicana en servir en la Junta Directiva de Lake Chapala Society y todavía ayuda con la iniciativa de Conexiones, que reúne a las empresas locales sobre una base mensual para fines de creación de redes.

Justo al final de la calle de Actinver está el Salón de Estilo de Yoly. El 6 de enero, cuando hice una visita, la dueña Yolanda Martínez Llamas estaba celebrando el 24 aniversario de la apertura de su negocio. El funcionamiento del mismo requiere mucha energía, pero a Yoly le sobra. Al igual que Aurora, ellas creen en la importancia de la participación de la comunidad.

Su actual función como presidenta de la Cruz Roja implica la supervisión de una clínica que emplea a 45 personas, entre médicos, enfermeras y personal de apoyo. “No estamos financiados por el gobierno”, explicó. “Somos una organización privada apoyada por donaciones”. Su mayor evento de recaudación de fondos es un torneo de golf anual en noviembre.

Yoly se involucró en la Cruz Roja después de tener un accidente automovilístico: “Me llevaron a la Cruz Roja y me di cuenta de que necesitaban ayuda voluntaria. Acepté formar parte de la junta directiva de nueve miembros”. La Cruz Roja trata aproximadamente 1,500 pacientes cada mes. El 91% son mexicanos y pagan lo que pueden. “Proporcionamos ayuda médica sin importar lo que pase; nadie es rechazado”.

Yoly se toma en serio su voluntariado. “Después de la reciente crisis de salud de mi hija, hice una promesa”. No quiere dar más de-

talles, pero afirma que sus instintos maternales le ayudan en su papel de presidenta. “Me tratan como su madre”, se ríe.

Yoly atribuye su filosofía de devolver a su propia madre. “Desde que era una niña, me enseñó a dar. Es parte de mi naturaleza, la persona que soy”. Ella cree que cualquier cosa puede pasarle a cualquiera en cualquier momento, y todos debemos estar listos para ayudar.

Antes de su presidencia de la Cruz Roja, Yoly sirvió en varias juntas, incluyendo Lake Chapala Society, la Cámara de Comercio y SIMAPA. Ahora, además de todo esto, estudia derecho en la UNIM, una filial local de la Universidad de Guadalajara. Cuando se le preguntó si planeaba trabajar como abogada, dijo que sólo quiere aprender más sobre la ley, que considera otra forma de ayudar a la gente a resolver problemas.

Estos son sólo dos de las líderes sociales que están haciendo de la Rivera de Chapala un gran lugar para vivir.



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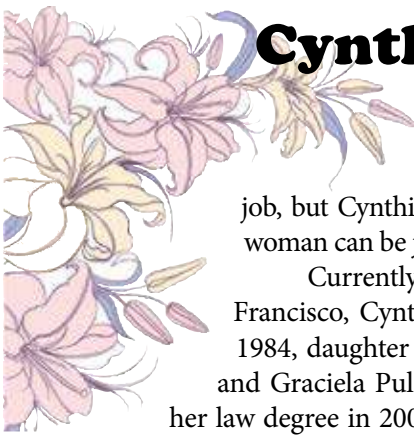
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Cynthia Guzmán Pulido **By/Por Rachel McMillen**

The management of funeral homes has typically been considered a man's job, but Cynthia Guzman has proven that a woman can be just as successful.

Currently, the CEO of Funeraria San Francisco, Cynthia was born in Chapala in 1984, daughter of Donato Guzmán Aguayo and Graciela Pulido Chavarria. She obtained her law degree in 2006, but had been helping her father run his funeral home since the age of 16 when she started working in the office. Over time, as she watched her father's devotion and care to both the deceased and the mourners, she became interested and involved in other areas of the business.

With the expat population rapidly growing, she contacted the consulates in Guadalajara to ensure she could take care of the legal and administrative requirements and offer assistance to foreigners as well as nationals.

In 2010, her father started giving Cynthia more and more responsibility and eventually he retired for good (although he remains available for advice and support.) She then started attending specialized seminars and conferences and became a member of the National Association of Funeral Home Managers. She also established relationships with Mexican authorities, doctors, churches, retirement homes and other institutions in order to help her clients obtain death certificates and other legal documents, and made strategic alliances with several Funeral Homes abroad to whom she can deliver the deceased's ashes.

In 2012, she added a Candlelight Chapel, cremation, and the transportation of remains from homes, hospitals and other cities in Mexico. She offers a wide variety of caskets and several types of urns including special ecological containers that can be thrown in water or planted to grow as a flower or tree.

With a team of 18 highly trained employees including her brother Donato Jr., a branch in Atotonilquillo, and a new office in San Luis Soyatlán, Cynthia has acquired new equipment to benefit her clients and their families. She can be contacted at 376-765-2053 or 331-263-0914 or by email at cindiguzman16@gmail.com.

La administración de una funeraria ha sido considerada típicamente como un trabajo de hombres, pero Cynthia Guzmán ha demostrado que una mujer puede ser igual de exitosa.

Actualmente es la Directora General de Funeraria San Francisco. Cynthia nació en Chapala en 1984, hija de Donato Guzmán Aguayo y Graciela Pulido Chavarría. Obtuvo su título de abogada en el 2006, pero ha estado ayudando a su padre a manejar la funeraria desde los 16 años cuando empezó a trabajar en la oficina. Con el tiempo, mientras observaba la devoción y el cuidado de su padre tanto por el fallecido como por los dolientes, se interesó e involucró en otras áreas del negocio.

Con el rápido crecimiento de la población de extranjeros, se puso en contacto con los consulados de Guadalajara para asegurarse de que podía ocuparse de los requisitos legales y administrativos así como ofrecer asistencia tanto a los extranjeros como a los nacionales.

En el 2010, su padre comenzó a darle a Cynthia más y más responsabilidades y eventualmente se retiró para siempre, aunque sigue estando disponible para dar consejos y apoyo. Cynthia luego comenzó a asistir a seminarios y conferencias especializadas y se convirtió en miembro de la Asociación Nacional de Gerentes de Casas Funerarias. También estableció relaciones con autoridades mexicanas, médicos, iglesias, casas de retiro y otras instituciones para ayudar a sus clientes a obtener certificados de defunción y otros documentos legales, e hizo alianzas estratégicas con varias funerarias en el extranjero a las que puede entregar las cenizas del difunto.

En 2012, añadió una capilla a la luz de las velas, la cremación y el transporte de los restos de los hogares, hospitales y otras ciudades de México. Ella ofrece una amplia variedad de ataúdes y urnas, incluyendo contenedores ecológicos especiales que pueden ser lanzados en el agua o plantados para que crezcan como una flor o un árbol.

Con un equipo de 18 empleados altamente capacitados, incluyendo a su hermano Donato Jr., una sucursal en Atotonilquillo, y una nueva oficina en San Luis Soyatlán, Cynthia ha adquirido nuevos equipos para beneficiar a sus clientes y sus familias. Ella puede ser contactada al 376-765-2053 o 331-263-0914 o por correo electrónico a cindiguzman16@gmail.com



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Photographs can create a portal not only to the past and present, but also to the future. These portraits of the faces of the elder women of Ajijic reveal their understanding of this *pueblo*, memories of their youth, love, giving and creating, and honour the lives of women everywhere. The fragility of age is a gift for younger generations. Caring about our elders enables a greater understanding of our own lives. Love, respect for, and the acceptance of aging, are a part of the culture in Ajijic.

As I spoke with the elder women of Ajijic, I learned the history of this *pueblo*. Common threads in their lives reveal much about our natural environment, creative life, and the love that connects this particular place to its community. These women have given me their portraits and within them I found the true magic of Ajijic.

The running water of the *arroyos* in the mountains, the shallow water by the shore of the lake, a special rock, a footpath into the hills, medicinal herbs, all sang through the minds of these women. The source of water was central to the early lives of these elders. Was water running in the *arroyo* of *Tempisque*, *el Acoco*, *el Arroyo Grande* or *el Tepalo*, or should we go to *el Ojo de Agua*? Are the children ready to help with the laundry tub as we walk down to the lake? What a beautiful day to bathe!

One of the women photographed, always washed with a friend whose husband had a truck. He would drive to Guadalajara every day at 5 a.m. to pick up building supplies, returning at 8 a.m. the same day. He would stop by in the evenings calling at Anita's front door: "Anita, the water is running in *el Tempisque*." Anita and her friend *Cota* would gather their laundry and supplies in a tub to be ready early in the morning for the ride to the foot of the mountain. They carried their tub up the path to the washing area. It was still dark, so they took candles to light the path and the washing area. They washed rapidly so that they got down to be picked up at 7 a.m. for their ride home.

Other women and their children either walked with their washtubs from their homes to the lake or to the *arroyos*, always to a special gathering place where information and conversation created social continuity. Children played together in the streams and bathed in the *arroyos* and the lake. They found fresh water clams and crabs and small fish and learned the names of trees, plants and insects.

Many friendships were created and problems shared in conversations as the women worked. Later, they organized together to confront issues of concern with the townspeople. Isolation inside the home did not exist then because the water source, the planting season and their extended families created a community where social problems were approached together.

In late January and February, families and friends would go to the mountains to clear areas for the planting of corn. Women brought food for picnics. During harvest, women would work to take the kernels off the corn. They made *Nixtamal*, dried *maize* treated with lime and later ground into dough for *tortillas*. Throughout the year, wom-

en made *tortillas* over open fires.

One of these women's families had a mango orchard near the *Ojo de Agua* that is now at the top of *Colón* Street. Fruit orchards were abundant near the lake as well. What is now the Old *Posada*, was a coffee plantation where only women worked. The *mayordoma* was a woman who sang ballads and *ranchera* songs while working. Because there were no noisy cars or trucks, her music could be heard throughout the town.

Many of the women featured in *Fountains of Life* embroidered or crocheted and would sell their creative wares to women's collectives. Ignacia Ponciano, better known as the *Bola*, continued to embroider and sell her work to these collectives until her death in late 2019. The *Maestra Bricia* taught other women the art of sewing and making clothes. Today, women's embroidery collectives continue the tradition.

Knowledge of curative plants and the practice of traditional medicine live on today as well. The mysterious bite of the *arlomo* was cured by one of the women who had knowledge of the seven herbs necessary to heal the wound. Medicinal practices using local plants were the only medicine available to many in the local population. *Doña Maruza*, *Doña Chabela* (cover photo) and others portrayed in this collection were known for their curative knowledge.

All the women in these photographs, are over 80 years old, the majority over 90, and are all from Ajijic. Some have never left this area throughout their entire life. Others moved their family to Guadalajara with the hope of offering their children more opportunities, but later returned. Many have siblings or children that migrated to the U.S. or Canada.

I arrived in Ajijic in 1985. I learned through meeting these women how life existed before I came. In 1985, it still seemed to be a small, quiet *pueblo*. I watched girls circle one way and the boys another, walking around the town square to meet each other, exchanging glances. I bought my food from little stores where they sold mangos beautifully cut and placed on a stick that was stuck into a cabbage. I would drink my freshly squeezed orange juice from a glass and listen to the morning conversations of the local people. Paper sacks were made from folded newspaper that could be filled with my purchases and we all carried woven bags. No Styrofoam, plastics or cars cluttered the streets.

Women still washed their clothes on a rock on the lakeshore. Fisherman threw their nets into the water in the distance. I met countless elder women and men whose knowledge of the medicinal herbs, plants and trees of both mountain and lakeside kindled my desire to learn. I hiked in the mountains and listened to their stories until I understood the language. I discovered that survival here depended on the richness of the environment and that Ajijic was a place where knowledge is

born and cultivated from experience of the land. It was from these early years, that I developed a need to preserve local knowledge and identity.

In May of 2019, I presented *Fountains of Life, Elder Women of Ajijic*, an exhibition in the *plaza* that honoured the lives and knowledge of elder women in our community. It was attended by many of these women, most of whom walked through the cobbled streets to the *Plaza Principal*. Some of these photographs are shared in this issue of *Conecciones*, a magazine seeking to draw our community together.



Ma. Anna Romero Ibon "Anita"



Ignacia Ponciano "La Bola"



Isabel de la Rosa Valasco Doña Chabela



Cecilia Marques Sambrano "Doña Ceci"



Ma. de Jesus Hernandez Casillas de Higuera



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Emilia Gonzalez Lorenzana "Doña Emilia"
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Lessons (M)

Bordados Artístico	M+W+F 4-6
Cardio Dance	F 12:30-1:30
Chair Tai Chi Chih	F 2-3
Espanol en Action (Spanish in Action)	M+W Sign up + cost
Exercise	M+W+F 9-9:50
Exploring Spanish	W 12-1:30, Sat 11-12:30
How to Draw Almost Anything	TH 12-1:30
Intermediate Hatha Yoga	T+TH 2-3:30
Introduction to Lakeside	(S) 2nd TH 9-12:30
Introduction to Spanish	(S) T 12-1:30
Line Dancing	T+TH 10-11:15
Mudlarks Pottery Introduction to Ceramics	(S) T+TH 11-1
Mudlarks Pottery Open Studios	(S) M-F 10-2
PEP & Prueba Mexico Series	(S) Cost
Scottish Country Dancing	TH 11:15-1
Stretch & Balance	T+TH+Sat 8:45-9:45
Tai Chi Chih Introduction	M 11-12:30
Tai Chi Chih Ongoing	W+F 10-11
Tech Class Basics	(S) 1+3+4+last TH 10-11:30
Tech Help Desk	TH 12-2
Walk For Fitness	M 10-10:50
Warren Hardy Spanish Series	(S) + Cost
Write to a Prompt Writers' Group	TH 10-12
Zumba Gold	W 10-10:50

Libraries (M)

Book Library	M-Sat 10-2
Books on Tape	M-Sat 10-2
Library of Congress ** Talking Books	M-Sat 10-2
DVD Library/Book Store	M-Sat 10-2

Social Activities (M)

All Things Tech	F 10-11:30
Bridge 4 Fun	T+TH 1-4:30
Chautauqua Institute	M March 23, 3-4:30
Conversaciones en Espanol	M 12-1:45
Discussion Group	W 11:30-1
Everyday Mindfulness	M 10-11:30
Film Aficionados	TH 2-4:30
Games Group	M 1-4
HOT Science	T 1:30-2:45
Personal Enhancement Workshop	(S) W 10-11:30
Scrabble	M +F 11:30-1:30
TED Talk Learning Seminars	T 12-1:30
Tournament Scrabble	F 12-1:50

Health Insurance *

Hospital San Antonio	TH 10-12
Hospital San Javier	Last F 10-12
IMSS & Immigration Services	M+T 10-1
Lakeside Insurance	T+TH 11-2

Health & Legal Services *

Becerra Immigration	TH 10:30-12:30
Blood Pressure Screening	M+F 10-12
British Consular Agent	Last Sat 10-12
Hearing Aid Services	(S) M+Sat 11-4
La Pueblita	2nd W 10:30-1
My Guardian Angel	T 10:30-12:30
Optometrist Claravision	(S) TH 9-4
Skin Cancer Screening	(S) 2+4 W 10-12
Sky Med	1st F 11-1
US Consulate **	(S) 2nd W 10:30, sign up 10

Lessons *

Children's Art	Sat 10-12
Hurachess Chess Club	Sat 12-1
Children's Photography Class	Sat 10-12

Libraries *

Wilkes	M-F 9:30-7, Sat 9:30-1
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Social Activities*

Spanish/English Conversation	Sat 11-12:30
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Service & Support Groups *

Al-Anon (in Spanish)	M 6-7:30, W 5:30-7:30
ASA Board Meeting	Last W 10:30-12
Diabetes Support Group	1st F 11-12
Information Desk	M-Sat 10-2
Lakeside AA	M+TH 4:30-5:30
Needle Pushers	T 10-12
Open Circle	Sun 10-11:30
Ranch Adoption Day	1st+3rd TH 10:30-1
Toastmasters	M 6:30-9

Ticket Sales *

M-Sat 10-12

Lake Chapala Society
LakeChapalaSociety.com
16 de Septiembre 16-A,
45920, Ajiijic, Jalisco, MX

Office & Libraries
Mon-Sat 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Grounds open 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Lake Chapala Society

(C) Members Only - must show card

*** Open to the Public**

TED TALKS LEARNING SEMINARS (C)

Sala, Tuesdays, 12-1:15 p.m., Check calendar and website for details

March 3: Elif Shafak: "The Revolutionary Power of Diverse Thought."

March 10: Andrew Forrest: "A radical plan to end plastic waste".

March 17: Nick Hanauer: "The Dirty Secret of Capitalism: And a New Way Forward".

March 24: Steven Johnson: "Where good ideas come from".

March 31: Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sachs: "How we can face the future without fear, together".

FILM AFICIONADOS (C)

2 pm, Sala, Check details on website and calendar

March 5: The Farewell, 2019, USA (94 minutes)

March 12: Shirley Valentine, 1989, UK (106 minutes)

March 19: Beanpole (Dylida), 2019, Russia (133 minutes)

March 26: Dark Waters:, 2019, USA (123 minutes)

TECH CLASSES (C)

Tech Help Desk Thursdays, 12 - 2 p.m., Neill James Stage. Walk up. One-on-one help with technical devices. Bring devices

Tech Class Basics, Thursdays 10-11:30 a.m., Sala. Email sign up lcs.tech.training@gmail.com

March 5: Advanced Google Photos: Sharing, printing, downloading, basic editing

March 19: NO CLASS due to LCS Annual General Meeting

March 26: Voice Control for Your Tech Device: Are you aware that most modern smart phones and tablets can do almost anything just using your voice?

HOT SCIENCE (C)

Tuesdays, 1:30-2:45 p.m., Sala, Discussion of the week's news from science, technology and medicine

MOVING THROUGH GRIEF & LOSS WORKSHOP (C)

March 10, Tuesday, 2-3:30 p.m., Ken Gosh Pavilion: Explore your experience of grief as well as common elements you share with others. Gain support, clarity and tools for moving forward. Workshop is limited to 10 participants. Workshop given by Adele St. Pierre, MA, Fairfield University Pastoral Counseling, North Carolina Hopsice Grief Counselor and Grief Workshops, Register by email to: astpierre2345@gmail.com

PERSONAL ENHANCEMENT WORKSHOP (C)

Wednesdays, 10-11:30 a.m., Sala, Insights to greater growth. Email sign up danielacuff@sbcglobal.net

CHAUTAUQUA INSTITUTE (C)

Monday, March 23, 3-4:30, Sala

The third lecture in the monthly "Shifting Global Power" series is given by Dr. Brad Allenby: "1788, 1938, and Today: Fulcrum Points in a Geopolitical Evolution". Allenby will suggest that the United States, as we knew it, is gone. Like other pluralistic societies it is unable to respond to the rapidity of changes in our geopolitical world. And the question is whether it's possible to put together something new.

LCS BUS TRIPS *

Tickets on sale at LCS service desk and Website. Price \$450 pesos members, \$550 pesos non-members unless listed otherwise. Bus leaves La Floresta at 9:30 a.m. unless noted otherwise.

Thursday, 12 March: Tlaquepaque. Retailers of Mexican clothing textiles, leather. Dining, churches & museums. Bus leaves at 10 a.m.

Wednesday, 18 March, Galerias Mall/Costco. Retailers including Liverpool, Best Buy, Sears & restaurants. Costco, Sams, Mega & Office Depot.

Thursday, 19 March, Amatitan/Tequila: Tres Mujeres Distillery, The true home of the *tequila*. Tour the distillery with tastings & a Mexican meal in *Tres Mujeres* Restaurant. Cost includes transportation, tour & restaurant. \$900 pesos members and \$995 pesos non-members.

Wednesday, 15 April, Galerias Mall/Costco, Retailers including Liverpool, Best Buy, Sears & restaurants. Costco, Sams, Mega & Office Depot.

Wednesday, 22 April, Bed Bath & Beyond/City Market/Patria Mall. Shop linens, household goods & food stuffs. Bus leaves at 10 a.m.

COSTCO *

Sales & Membership renewals, Wednesday, March 11, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

WILKES FILMS

Every Friday 7 p.m. free at Neil James Biblioteca Wilkes Education Center, Galeana #18, Ajijic / Todos los viernes 7 p.m. gratis en Neil James Biblioteca Centro Educativo Wilkes, Galeana #18, Ajijic

Marzo 6: La Razón de estar contigo, Un nuevo viaje, Bruce Cameron

Marzo 13: Tierra de zombies, Emma Stones, Jesse Eisenberg, Woody Harrelson

Marzo 20: Air Bud, Kevin Zegers, Kevin Diccio

Marzo 27: Alicia en el país de las maravillas, Disney

Lake Chapala Society

Save
the
Date

March 19: LCS Annual General Meeting 10 a.m.
March 21: Blues Festival, 2:30 to 6:30 p.m.
April 4: Fashion Show, time to be determined
June 6: Hurachess Chess Tournament, time to be determined
July 11: Music Festival, 2:30 to 6:30 p.m.



PERSONAL ENRICHMENT PROGRAM SERIES

DEALING WITH THE SERVICES OF BUILDING AND REMODELING IN MEXICO

Marcos Fuentes Wednesdays, March 4 & 11
 Fee: \$500 10 to 11:15 am
 Series of 2 sessions. Know the legal processes for construction and a municipality's requirements for building.

EVICION OF RENTERS & LAND SQUATTERS

María de las Nieves Fridays, March 6, 13, 20, & 27
 Solbes & Diego Solbes 2 to 3:30 pm
 Fee: \$650
 Series of 4 sessions. Have you heard the news lately regarding home invasions? We will be explaining what to do to avoid it and what to do if it already happened to you.

THE FIVE REVOLUTIONS THAT SHAPED WESTERN THOUGHT

Ted Rogers Wednesdays, March 11, 18, 25
 Fee: \$800 April 1, 8, 15 & 22 from 1 to 2:30 pm
 Series of 7 sessions. This course focuses on how five revolutions, the Glorious Revolution, the US Revolution, the French Revolution, the Russian Revolution, and the Indian Revolution shaped western thought and politics, defining the contemporary Western world as we know it.

DRIVER'S LICENSE Monday & Tuesday
 Alfredo Pérez March 23, 10 to 11:30 am &
 Fee: \$950 March 24, 7 am to 12 pm
 Monday, April 27, 10 to 11:30 am & Tuesday, April 28, 7 am to 12 pm

*All classes are in the South Campus Board Room at LCS
 YOUR MEMBERSHIP MUST BE CURRENT DURING THE COURSE
 *More information at www.lakechapalasociety.com
 Register in LCS office or website.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

LCS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (AGM) (C)

Thursday March 19, 10 a.m. to 12 p.m.
 Back grounds.

LCS service, info, membership desks and libraries are closed until the completion of the AGM.

Desks and libraries will open at noon (12 p.m.).

Cancelled are the following activities:

Write to a Prompt, Tech Class Basics, Line Dancing, Scottish Country Dancing, Ranch Adoption Day, Stretch & Balance.

Possible delays include:

Tech Help Desk, How to Draw Anything

THE LAKE CHAPALA SOCIETY CONEXIONES ENTRE AMIGOS

SOCIALIZING SOCIALIZAR FEATURED SPEAKER PONENTE
 DESTACADO SNACKS & CASH BAR BOTANAS Y BAR

Tuesday / March 10 / 5:30 pm

Zacatecas tourism office

VOLUNTEERS
 NEEDED!

LCS NEEDS

Grounds Blood Pressure
 Information Technology Membership
 Email freetogomexico@yahoo.com for information

US CONSULATE *

2nd Wednesday of the month.
 Sign up at 10 a.m. that day.
 Information available in the LCS office.

DIABETES SUPPORT GROUP *

1st Friday of the month, 11 a.m.-12 p.m., Gazebo.
 Information on monitoring diabetes.

Lake Chapala Society



PRUEBA MEXICO SERIES

Mexican Corn Husk Dolls Monday & Wednesday
\$480 with Genaro Reyes March 2 & 4
 Series of 2 sessions. Learn the history of the Corn Husk Dolls and how to create them with your own hands. 1:30 to 3:30 pm

Trip to the capital of the women clothing in Jalisco (Zapotlanejo)
\$650 with Alfredo Pérez Tuesday, March 3
 In Zapotlanejo there are various textile workshops that sell clothes for all tastes. 8 am to 6 pm
 Enjoy buying clothes, knowing the monuments in the historic center and getting a drink at the Bicentennial Park. We will return to Ajijic for the afternoon.
 For more details please send a message to directoreducacion@lakechapalasociety.com

Trip to the Traditional barrio (neighborhood) of Santa Tere
\$650 with Alfredo Pérez Thursday, March 5
 We'll visit the Church, the market and all the commercial area (you can find almost anything), and we'll finish with a delicious traditional Tapatio dish in a restaurant that holds the Guinness record of being the fastest in the world. 8 am to 4:30 pm
 For more details please send a message to directoreducacion@lakechapalasociety.com

The Difficult Journey Friday, March 6
 - simulation - Practice your Spanish 10 am to 1 pm
 Fee: \$250
 The Difficult Journey is a simulation of arriving at the Mexico/US border and also preparing a trip to Mexico City. This is not a class, but it is, for sure, an opportunity to practice your Spanish in a stress free and friendly environment.

Mexican salsas Monday, March 9
\$480 with Ana Moreno 11 am to 1:30 pm

Learn how some of the favorite Mexican salsas in the region are made. What ingredients you need, how and where to buy them. How Mexicans use them. What food you can dress with them.

Mexican Corn Husk Flowers Tuesday & Thursday
\$480 with Genaro Reyes March 10 & 12
 Series of 2 sessions. Learn the wonderful art of turning corn leaves into beautiful handmade decorations. 1 to 3 pm

YOUR MEMBERSHIP MUST BE CURRENT DURING THE COURSE
 *All classes are in the South Campus Board Room at LCS
 Register in LCS office or website, Members only



Showcasing THE LEGACY

of the Lake Chapala Society
 Thursday, March 19 from 10:00 to noon

All services and libraries closed between 10am to 12pm.

Kickoff the Lake Chapala Society 65th anniversary at our Annual General Meeting. Review the major milestones that have brought us here Share the road map that will take us to our 75th anniversary

LCS 2.0—EXPANDING THE LEGACY
 as an oasis for personal enrichment
 socialization and collaboration throughout Lakeside.

Refreshments

Door prizes (come early for best chances to win)
 9:15 registration opens
 9:45 first door prize
 10:00 role call and 2nd door prize
 10:15 final door prize and presentation begins

Bring your member card or Renew your membership at 9:30 to vote at the AGM
 Annual membership is \$760 pesos, (\$41 USD or \$54 CAD)

Be prepared to be wowed!

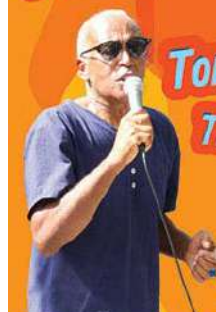
2ND ANNUAL LCS BLUES FEST DAY OF THE BLUES



Blue Jay Slim & The Blues Machine

DAY OF THE BLUES

SAT MARCH 21
 2:30 TO 6:30 PM



Tommy Banks & The Soul Investors

FOOD CATERED BY:



\$300 PRE-SALE
\$350 AT DOOR

ADMISSION DOES NOT INCLUDE THE FOOD



At The Lake Chapala Society A.C. / 16 de Septiembre 16-A / Ajijic, Jalisco, MX
 Tel. (376) 766-1140 / www.lakechapalasociety.com

www.lakechapalasociety.com

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EXTENDING OUR LEGACY
...as an oasis for personal enrichment,
socialization and collaboration
throughout Lakeside.

**OUR VISION
& MISSION**



GREATER INTEGRATION

GREATER COLLABORATION

**EXPANDED USE OF
INFORMATION
TECHNOLOGY**

**42 FAR-REACHING GOALS
FOCUSED ON**

- ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
- COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
- PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT
- CAMPUS REDEVELOPMENT
- FUND ADVANCEMENT

Las fotografías pueden crear un portal no sólo al pasado y al presente, sino también al futuro. Estos retratos de los rostros de las mujeres mayores de Ajijic revelan su comprensión de su pueblo, los recuerdos de su juventud, el amor, el dar, el crear, y honran la vida de las mujeres de todo el mundo. La fragilidad de la edad es un regalo para las generaciones más jóvenes. Cuidar de nuestros mayores permite una mayor comprensión de nuestras propias vidas. El amor, el respeto y la aceptación del envejecimiento son parte de la cultura en Ajijic.

Mientras hablaba con las mujeres mayores de Ajijic, aprendí la historia de este pueblo. Los hilos comunes en sus vidas revelan mucho sobre nuestro ambiente natural, la vida creativa y el amor que conecta este lugar particular con su comunidad. Estas mujeres me han dado sus retratos y dentro de ellas encontré la verdadera magia de Ajijic.

El agua corriente de los arroyos en las montañas, el agua poco profunda a la orilla del lago, una roca especial, un sendero en las colinas, hierbas medicinales, todo cantaba a través de las mentes de estas mujeres. La fuente de agua fue central en las primeras vidas de estos ancianos. ¿Corría el agua en el arroyo del Tempisque, el Acoco, el Arroyo Grande o el Tépalco o deberíamos ir al Ojo de Agua? ¿Están los niños listos para ayudar con la tina para lavar ropa mientras bajamos al lago? ¡Qué hermoso día para bañarse!

Una de las mujeres fotografiadas siempre se bañaba con una amiga cuyo marido tenía un camión. Él manejaba a Guadalajara todos los días a las 5 a.m. para recoger materiales de construcción, regresando a las 7 a.m. Pasaba por las noches llamando a la puerta de Anita: "Anita, el agua está corriendo en el Tempisque." Anita y su amiga Cota recogían su ropa y suministros en una tina para estar listos por la mañana temprano para el viaje al pie de la montaña. Llevaban su tina por el camino hasta el área de lavado. Todavía estaba oscuro, así que llevan velas para iluminar el camino y el área de lavado. Se lavaron rápidamente, así que bajaron para que las recogieran a las 7 a.m. para llevarlas a casa.

Otras mujeres y sus hijos caminaban con sus tinas desde sus casas hasta el lago o los arroyos, siempre a un lugar especial de reunión donde la información y la conversación creaban una continuidad social. Los niños jugaban juntos en los arroyos, se bañaban en los arroyos y el lago. Encontraban almejas, cangrejos de agua dulce y pequeños peces y aprendían los nombres de los árboles, plantas e insectos.

Se crearon muchas amistades y se compartieron problemas en las conversaciones mientras las mujeres trabajaban. Más tarde se organizaron juntas para enfrentar los problemas que preocupaban a la gente del pueblo. El aislamiento dentro del hogar no existía entonces porque la fuente de agua, la temporada de siembra y sus familias extensas crearon una comunidad en la que los problemas sociales se abordaban juntos.

A finales de enero y febrero las familias y amigos iban a las montañas para limpiar las áreas para la siembra de maíz. Las mujeres traían comida para el almuerzo. Durante la cosecha las mujeres trabajaban para sacar los granos del maíz. Hacían Nixtamal, maíz seco tratado con cal y luego molido en masa para tortillas. A lo largo del año, las mujeres hacían tortillas sobre fuego abierto.

Una de las familias de estas mujeres tenía un huerto de mangos cerca del Ojo de Agua que ahora está en la parte superior de la calle



Ma. de Jesus Magdaleno Mejia "La Marusa"

Colón. Los huertos de frutas también abundaban cerca del lago. Lo que ahora es la Vieja Posada era una plantación de café donde sólo trabajaban mujeres. La mayordoma era una mujer que cantaba baladas y canciones rancheras mientras trabajaba. Como no había coches o camiones ruidosos, su música se podía escuchar en todo el pueblo.

Muchas de las mujeres bordaban o tejían a crochet y vendían sus productos creativos a colectivos de mujeres. Ignacia Ponciano, más conocida como la Bola, continuó bordando y vendiendo su trabajo a estos colectivos hasta su muerte a finales de 2019. La Maestra Bricia enseñó a otras mujeres el arte de coser y hacer ropa. Hoy en día los colectivos de bordadoras continúan la tradición.

El conocimiento de las plantas curativas y la práctica de la medicina tradicional también viven hoy en día. La misteriosa mordedura del arlomo fue curada por una de las mujeres que tenía conocimiento de las siete hierbas necesarias para curar

la herida. Las prácticas medicinales con plantas locales eran la única medicina disponible para muchos en la población local. Doña Maruza, Doña Chabela y otras retratadas en esta colección eran conocidas por sus conocimientos curativos.

Todas las mujeres en estas fotografías tienen más de 80 años, la mayoría más de 90. Las mujeres en estos retratos son todas de Ajijic. Algunas nunca han salido de esta zona en toda su vida. Otras se mudaron a Guadalajara con la esperanza de ofrecer a sus hijos más oportunidades, pero luego regresaron. Muchas tienen hermanos o hijos que emigraron a los EE.UU. o Canadá.

Llegué a Ajijic en 1985. Aprendí a través del encuentro con estas mujeres cómo existía la vida antes de mi arribo. En 1985 todavía parecía ser un pequeño y tranquilo pueblo. Vi a las chicas dar vueltas en círculo en un sentido y a los chicos en otro, caminando por la plaza del pueblo para encontrarse, intercambiando miradas. Compré mi comida en pequeñas tiendas donde vendían mangos bellamente cortados y colocados en un palo que se clavaba en un repollo. Bebía mi jugo de naranja recién exprimido de un vaso y escuchaba las conversaciones matutinas de la gente del lugar. Se hacían sacos de papel de periódico doblado que se podían llenar con mis compras y todos llevábamos bolsas tejidas. No había espuma de poliestireno, plásticos o coches desordenados en las calles.

Las mujeres todavía lavaban su ropa en una roca a la orilla del lago. Los pescadores arrojaban sus redes al agua a lo lejos. Conocí a innumerables mujeres y hombres mayores cuyo conocimiento de las hierbas medicinales, plantas y árboles tanto de la montaña como de la orilla del lago encendió mi deseo de aprender. Caminé por las montañas y escuché sus historias hasta que entendí el idioma. Descubrí que la supervivencia aquí dependía de la riqueza del medio ambiente y que Ajijic era un lugar donde el conocimiento nace y se cultiva a partir de la experiencia de la tierra. Fue a partir de estos primeros años que desarrollé la necesidad de preservar el conocimiento y la identidad local.

En mayo de 2019 presenté Fuentes de Vida, Mujeres Mayores de Ajijic, una exposición en la plaza que honraba la vida y el conocimiento de las mujeres mayores de nuestra comunidad. Asistieron muchas de estas mujeres, la mayoría de las cuales caminaron por las calles empedradas hasta la Plaza Principal. Algunas de estas fotografías se comparten en este número de Conexiones, una revista que busca unir a nuestra comunidad.



Lakeside Hearing Audición del lago

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- 2.-Spine, rib, sternum, clavicle, shoulder blade or scapula, iliac 80%
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- 4.-Skull 50%
- 5.-Facial bones 40%
- 6.-Humerus, radius and ulna 25%
- 7.-Burns of 2nd and 3rd degree, compensation of 20%

*Age limit to apply 80 years old, policy renewable up to 90 years old.



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Tuesday and Thursday
from 11 am to 2 pm at the LCS

Office: 33 1594 7899
mail: edgardo@lakeside.mx

There are scores of talented women entrepreneurs at Lakeside, and we've selected two to feature. These successful women have built businesses from the bottom up through passion, sacrifice, and commitment.

Diane: Owner of Diane Pearl Colecciones

Diane Pearl Colecciones is located on the corner of Colón and Ocampo in the heart of Ajijic. Her shop stocks an extensive range of Mexican jewelry, ceramics, art and sculpture.

Diane, 68, is single and moved to Ajijic in 2002 from a small town named Truth or Consequences, New Mexico. In her prior life, she was a production artist for small companies in New York City. She's done freelance carpentry, jewelry and sewing, as well as run an art gallery. When she left the U.S., she was looking for adventure in her life and found it in Ajijic.

Needing income, Diane first started an artisan cooperative. After 18 months, she decided she wanted a dictatorship rather than a democracy in order to move her dreams of a retail outlet forward.

Since then, she's built a shop recognized village-wide as the place to go for handmade Mexican (70%) and gringo (30%) arts and crafts. Today, she works with over 200 artisans from all over Mexico, mostly on consignment.

Diane says her biggest challenge was learning the retail side of art. She had help from several people who taught her how to price, promote, and display her inventory.

As her way of giving back to the community, she sells tickets for local events without any commission and stocks treats for local dogs who know where to go for a doggie treat and drink of water.

Over the past three to four years, she's been creating adult and children's coloring books and classes. Her first book, *Tranquility*, is available on Amazon.

Diane's latest project is selling masks on which she has drawn a "color-by-number" design so customers can decorate them with gel pens and pencils. Feathers, glitter and lace glam up and personalize the masks.

Diane is planning exciting art workshops starting in March. Contact her at dianepearlmexico@gmail.com for dates, times, location and costs.



Lupita: Owner of Panino Restaurant

Meet Lupita, owner and manager of Panino, one of the most popular Lakeside restaurants, located on the Carretera just east of Super Lake in San Antonio and serving lunch weekdays from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Lupita Moreno Rosales was raised in Guadalajara, the sixth of eight children. Prior to moving to Ajijic in 1994, she had careers in business administration, banking and as a stock market investment counselor in Petaluma, California.

When I asked her why she decided to get into the restaurant business, she laughed and said, "It was so stupid! One year I vacationed with my brother in Los Olivos, California, where we saw a small restaurant named Panino. That planted the 'restaurant seed' in me."

Lupita next started Panino in La Montaña Plaza with the encouragement of her family. She hired one employee and served Panino sandwiches. In 2007, she and her husband, Jim, purchased their current building and opened with a staff of six and an expanded menu.

Most of her "family" recipes come from her mother and brother-in-law. Today, 63 and a widow, Lupita employs several cooks and manages a staff of 13 people.

Her biggest challenges have been finding quality suppliers, being consistent, and dealing with the government and their continually changing requirements. Her biggest joys are cooking (occasionally) and visiting with her customers.

Lupita knows, after 20 years, how much inventory to keep, based on the time of year. She works daily from 7:00 a.m. until 5 p.m. and goes to the gym every afternoon. She also provides catering services for groups from 25 to 600.

When asked what she would advise future restaurateurs, she said, "It's a big commitment. You need to be willing to sacrifice a lot of things . . . and have enough money to last two years."

An advertisement for SOL Beauty Parlor. The top part features the text "20% DISCOUNT BODY WAX ACRILIC NAIL Tuesday and Thursday". Below this is a stylized logo for "SOL BEAUTY PARLOR" with a pink circle. To the right is a close-up image of a hand with manicured nails. At the bottom, it says "English Spoken" and provides two phone numbers: "376 108 2105" and "33 2154 1586".

Moving to Lake Chapala Discount Coupon



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And we donate 2% to LCS! *

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* Your discount is equal to 5% or \$500 USD, whichever is less. To receive the discount and have us make the donation to LCS, use discount code: LCS. Expires December 31, 2020

Las mujeres de la rivera de Chapala “pueden hacerlo” Por Blue

Hay decenas de mujeres empresarias con talento en la rivera de Chapala, y hemos seleccionado dos para presentarlas. Estas exitosas mujeres han construido negocios desde abajo a través de la pasión, el sacrificio y el compromiso.

Lupita: Propietaria del Restaurante Panino

Primero, conozca a Lupita, propietaria y gerente de Panino, uno de los restaurantes más populares a orillas del lago, situado en la Carretera al este de Super Lake en San Antonio y que sirve el almuerzo entre semana de 11 a 4 p.m.

Lupita Moreno Rosales vivió su infancia en Guadalajara, la sexta de ocho hijos. Antes de mudarse a Ajijic en 1994, trabajó en administración de empresas, banca y como asesora de inversiones en el mercado de valores en Petaluma, California.



Cuando le pregunté por qué decidió entrar en el negocio de los restaurantes, se rio y dijo: “¡Fue tan estúpido! Un año fui de vacaciones con mi hermano a Los Olivos, California, donde vimos un pequeño restaurante llamado Paninos. Eso sembró la ‘semilla del restaurante’ en mí”.

Lupita empezó a hacer Paninos en la Plaza de La Montana con el estímulo de su familia. Contrató a un empleado y sirvió sándwiches. En 2007, ella y su esposo Jim compraron su actual edificio y abrieron con un personal de seis personas y un menú ampliado.

La mayoría de las recetas de su “familia” provienen de su madre y su cuñado. Hoy, con 63 años y viuda, Lupita emplea a varios cocineros y dirige una plantilla de 13 personas.

Sus mayores desafíos han sido encontrar proveedores de calidad, ser constante y tratar con el gobierno y sus requisitos continuamente cambiantes. Sus mayores alegrías son cocinar (ocasionalmente) y visitar a sus clientes.

Lupita sabe, después de 20 años, cuánto inventario mantener, basado en la época del año. Trabaja diariamente desde las 7 a.m. hasta las 5 p.m. y va al gimnasio todas las tardes. También proporciona servicios de catering para grupos de 25 a 600 personas.

Cuando se le preguntó qué aconsejaría a los futuros restaurantes, dijo: “Es un gran compromiso. Tienes que estar dispuesto a sacrificar muchas cosas... y tener el dinero suficiente para durar dos años”.

Diane: Propietaria de las Colecciones de Perlas de Diane

Diane Pearl Colecciones se encuentra en la esquina de Colón y Ocampo en el corazón de Ajijic. Su tienda tiene una amplia gama de joyas, cerámicas, arte y esculturas mexicanas.

Diane es soltera, 68 años y se mudó a Ajijic en 2002 desde un pequeño pueblo llamado Verdad o Consecuencias en Nuevo México. En su vida anterior, fue artista de producción para pequeñas empresas en la ciudad de Nueva York. Ha hecho trabajos de carpintería, joyería y costura por cuenta propia, así como dirigir una galería de arte. Cuando dejó los Estados Uni-

dos, buscaba aventura en su vida y la encontró en Ajijic.

Necesitando ingresos, Diane comenzó una cooperativa de artesanos. Después de 18 meses, decidió que quería una dictadura en lugar de una democracia para poder avanzar en sus sueños de una tienda de venta al por menor.

Desde entonces, ha construido una tienda reconocida en todo el pueblo como el lugar para la artesanía mexicana (70%) y gringa (30%). Hoy en día, trabaja con más de 200 artesanos de todo México, en su mayoría en consignación.

Diane dice que su mayor reto fue aprender el lado del arte al por menor. Tuvo la ayuda de varias personas que le enseñaron a poner precio, promover y mostrar su inventario.


Como forma de devolver a la comunidad, vende entradas para eventos locales sin cobrar comisión y tiene golosinas para los perros locales que saben que deben ir allí para recibir una golosina y beber agua.

Durante los últimos tres o cuatro años, ha estado creando libros y clases de colorear para adultos y niños. Su primer libro, Tranquilidad, está disponible en Amazon.

El último proyecto de Diane es vender máscaras en las que ha dibujado un diseño “color por número” para que los clientes puedan decorarlas con bolígrafos y lápices de gel. Plumitas, purpurina y encaje dan brillo y personalizan las máscaras.

Diane está planeando emocionantes talleres de arte a partir de marzo. Contacta con ella en dianepearlmexico@gmail.com para conocer las fechas, horarios, ubicación y costos.

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Ilsa Picazo, 21st Century Woman

By Amelia Stevens MD



"I am committed to sharing experiences with you that will make you value yourself more."
("Me comprometo a compartirte experiencias que te harán valorarte más.")

Local author, feminist, artist, public speaker Ilsa Picazo specializes in themes that concern women. Her calling

in life is to educate and empower women through her books, articles, workshops and more recently YouTube videos.

By the age of nine, Ilsa knew she wanted to be a writer. She eventually studied at a prestigious school of journalism in her native Mexico City and, thereafter, worked in various areas of journalism and communication.

Her husband's work as a nuclear physicist took them to Canada for more than a decade. In those years, her focus turned definitively to women's issues. During long conversations with a woman sociologist friend, it became clear that there was little available practical information for women on the subject of menopause. Her first book *Mujeres de Trece Lunas* (Women of Thirteen Moons) appeared in two volumes. In it, she addresses the

psychological, physiological and relationship challenges that women face during pre-menopause, menopause and post-menopause. In a frank and reassuring way, she answers the kinds of questions that women may be afraid to ask or have no one to turn to for answers. Themes include acceptance, myths and misinformation (equating menopause with being old); the empty nest experience, especially problematic for Latin American women; dependent elderly parents, among others.

Mujeres de Trece Lunas received much grateful response from women in the relevant stage of their lives. Younger women, struggling to balance the demands of traditional womanhood with the challenges of achieving professional and legal equality in a world still dominated by men, demanded a similar book pertinent to their lives. Ilsa next wrote *Atrévete a Ser Mujer con M Mayúscula* (Dare to be a Woman with a Capital W), published in late 2016. She informs from personal experience and wide-ranging research about self-care, health issues including cancer, challenges of the mother-daughter relationship, sexuality, sexual abuse, divorce; the conflict between tradition and the changing roles of women.

Recently, Ilsa has completed a yet unpublished epic feminist novel, *Ondine*. It is the story of two heroines, one a pirate, from different historical eras who merge over the course of the book to confront and combat the abuses of women by a society dominated by patriarchy.

Much personal experience fuels Ilsa's work. She is twice divorced, and now happily married to her third husband of many years. She is a mother, a grandmother and a breast cancer survivor. She exercises daily, is a vegetarian and has a meditation practice. Tragedy left its deepest mark when her daughter took her own life at the age of 31. In the depths of grief and depression, Ilsa wrote a never-published but cathartic novel about it.

All of Ilsa's work is buttressed and broadened by in-depth research. She says that among her most influential mentors are Simone de Beauvoir, Gloria Steinem, Marta Lamas, one of Mexico's leading feminists, and American Jungian psychiatrist Jean Shinoda Bolen.

In addition to her writing, Ilsa presents workshops on such topics as self-image, nutrition and exercise, the delights of sexuality, meeting your goddesses. Complete offerings and registration are available on her website.

Ilsa's greatest reward comes from helping other women learn to understand and value themselves more. She has many plans to continue promoting that goal. Her work, so far available only in Spanish, is primarily directed to women in Latin American cultures. The themes however are relevant to all women everywhere.



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Ilsa Picazo, Una mujer del siglo XXI

Por Amelia Stevens MD

“Me comprometo a compartirte experiencias que te harán valorarte más”.

La autora local, feminista, artista y oradora pública Ilsa Picazo se especializa en temas que conciernen a las mujeres.

Su vocación en la vida es educar y empoderar a las mujeres a través de sus libros, artículos, talleres y más recientemente videos en YouTube.

A la edad de nueve años Ilsa supo que quería ser escritora. Eventualmente estudió en una prestigiosa escuela de periodismo en su ciudad natal de México y luego trabajó en varias áreas del periodismo y la comunicación.

El trabajo de su esposo como físico nuclear los llevó a Canadá por más de una década. En esos años su enfoque se dirigió definitivamente a los asuntos de la mujer. Durante las largas conversaciones con una amiga socióloga se hizo evidente que había poca información práctica disponible para las mujeres sobre el tema de la menopausia. Su primer libro *Mujeres de Trece Lunas* apareció en dos volúmenes. En el aborda los desafíos psicológicos, fisiológicos y de relación que las mujeres enfrentan durante la pre-menopausia, la menopausia y la post-menopausia. De manera franca y tranquilizadora, responde al tipo de preguntas que las mujeres pueden tener miedo de hacer o que no tienen a quien recurrir para obtener respuestas. Los temas incluyen la aceptación, los mitos y la desinformación (equiparar la menopausia con ser mayor); la experiencia del nido vacío, especialmente problemática para las mujeres latinoamericanas; los padres ancianos dependientes, entre otros.

Mujeres de Trece Lunas recibió muchas respuestas agradecidas de mujeres en la etapa relevante de sus vidas. Las mujeres más jóvenes, luchando por equilibrar las demandas de la feminidad tradicional con los desafíos de lograr la igualdad profesional y legal en un mundo todavía dominado por los hombres, exigieron un libro similar pertinente a sus vidas. A continuación, Ilsa escribió *Atrévete a Ser Mujer con M* Mayúscula, publicado a finales de 2016. Ella informa a partir de su experiencia personal y de una amplia investigación sobre el cuidado de sí misma, temas de salud como el cáncer, los desafíos de la relación madre-hija, la sexualidad, el abuso sexual, el divorcio; el conflicto entre la tradición y los papeles cambiantes de la mujer.

Recientemente Ilsa ha completado una novela épica feminista inédita, *Ondine*. Es la historia de dos heroínas, una de ellas pirata, de diferentes épocas históricas que se fusionan a lo largo del libro para afrontar y combatir los abusos de las mujeres por parte de una sociedad dominada por el patriarcado.


Mucha experiencia personal alimenta el trabajo de Ilsa. Está dos veces divorciada y ahora felizmente casada con su tercer marido de muchos años. Es madre, abuela y sobreviviente de cáncer de mama. Hace ejercicio diariamente, es vegetariana y practica meditación. La tragedia dejó su marca más profunda cuando su hija se quitó la vida a la edad de treinta y un años. En las profundidades del dolor y la depresión Ilsa escribió una novela nunca publicada pero catártica sobre ello.

Toda la obra de Ilsa está respaldada y ampliada por una

investigación profunda. Ella dice que entre sus mentores más influyentes se encuentran Simone de Beauvoir, Gloria Steinem, Marta Lamas, una de las principales feministas de México, y la psiquiatra junguiana americana Jean Shinoda Bolen.

Además de sus escritos, Ilsa presenta talleres sobre temas como la imagen de sí misma, la nutrición y el ejercicio, las delicias de la sexualidad, el encuentro con sus diosas. La oferta completa y la inscripción están disponibles en su sitio web.


La mayor recompensa de Ilsa viene de ayudar a otras mujeres a aprender a entenderse y valorarse más. Ella tiene muchos planes para continuar promoviendo ese objetivo. Su trabajo, hasta ahora disponible sólo en español, está dirigido principalmente a las mujeres de las culturas latinoamericanas. Sin embargo, los temas son relevantes para todas las mujeres en todas partes.





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Christy Caldwell Presents Cinemusic Concert Sunday, March 8 at 5 p.m.

Christy Caldwell's dream of bringing young Mexican talent onstage with her will be realized on Sunday, March 8th at the Auditorio de Ribera in Ajijic. She is a classically trained mezzo soprano who has performed on three continents in four different languages. When Christy recently retired to this area from Miami, she joined the Rotary Club of Ajijic and was introduced to *Musica Para Crecer*, the small music school in San Juan Cosalá, which the club has supported for many years.

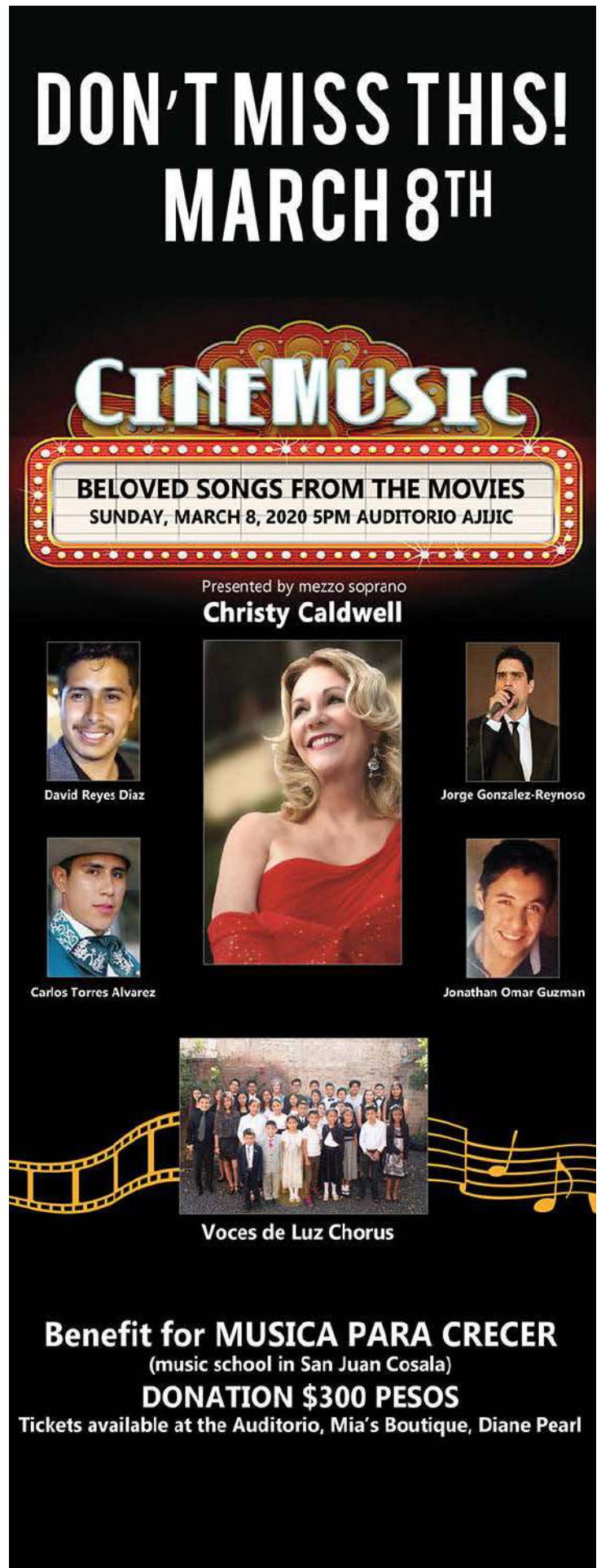
Her father, a lifelong Rotarian who passed away in 2017 at the age of 94, left clear instructions as to what he expected her to do with her inheritance — help people. When she learned that the school had lost their government funding she jumped into action. Although Christy suffered a vocal injury and is no longer able to sing the soaring arias and Broadway tunes she loves, she realized she could still entertain and help children and young adults achieve their dream of performing.

Musica Para Crecer, under the direction of brothers Daniel and Juanpi Medeles, plays a vital role in San Juan Cosalá. The school's director Socorro (Coco) Wonshee remarks: "Besides developing the children's musical talents, the most important aim of the program is to keep them away from the drugs, alcoholism, violence and lives without hope and joy that are due to the poverty, vulnerability and marginalization present in so many of our towns." Christy hopes to sell out the auditorio and raise \$100,000 pesos to support the school. The CineMusic show, as the name suggests, features the most well-known and beloved songs from movies such as *Godfather*, *Dirty Dancing*, *Ghost*, *Pearl Harbor* and *Gladiator*. Clips from the movies and soundtracks will be playing behind the performers. There is something from every era — from Fred Astaire & Ginger Rogers to Bradley Cooper & Lady Gaga. Sharing the stage with her are two graduates of *Musica Para Crecer*: David Reyes Diaz and Carlos Torres Álvarez who are part of a popular local trio *Linaje Bohemio*. Also joining the cast will be Jonathan Omar Guzman who performs with the Jamm Band and Jorge González-Reynoso of the rock band *Gargamel*. Tickets are \$300 pesos and are available at the Auditorio, Mia's Boutique and Diane Pearl. Don't miss this unique show and help a great cause!



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Gisela Morales, Project Moringa Madres, San Juan Cosalá

Por Barbara Hildt

Weezie Burgess, past president of Operation Feed, took me to meet Gisela Morales in a small grove of moringa trees just below the mountain in San Juan Cosalá. When they met five years ago, Gisela was one of many impoverished mothers standing in line, waiting for a handout of free food for her seven children.

Every day Gisela had to leave her kids in the care of her nine-year-old daughter to work from 6 a.m. until 10 p.m. at a Pemex. Exhausted from being on her feet all-day and walking for 45 minutes to her home, she earned just 86 pesos. Desperate, Gisela would ask neighbors for a few tortillas or bread. Seldom did she receive help.

Born in Jalisco, Gisela had grown up in Berkeley, CA where her father worked as a gardener. Her parents brought her back to live in San Juan when she was 16. She was very shy, had no friends and little hope for her future. Over the years, more than one man promised to support her as father of one or more of her children. They all abandoned her.

When Weezie heard Gisela speaking English she asked her if she might be interested in a project to grow, harvest, package and sell the leaves from moringa trees, a nutritious dietary supplement. She explained that it could employ and benefit the lives of a few local women, but it would probably be a year or more before they would earn much. Taking a bit of a risk, Gisela quit her job at Pemex and started planting moringa trees.

Five years of dedication and hard work changed the lives of Gisela, her children and the other three women who are part of the Moringa Madres cooperative. They work 6-7 hours a day and earn not less than 1,000 pesos a week. Two teenage girls also earn a little to pay for transportation to school by helping to clean moringa leaves.

With encouragement from Weezie, the Moringa Madres de-



veloped a set of rules which they call their values. Each time they meet, they begin by reviewing their values and re-prioritizing them if needed. Hanging above the table in their small workspace is the list of these values in Spanish and English: Teamwork, Responsibility, Respect, Honesty, Punctuality, Valued, Fairness, Nondiscrimination, Peaceful Environment, and Flexibility.

Gisela disclosed that she had a difficult relationship with her mother and that Weezie had become like a mother to her, providing encouragement and affirmations that she needed to change her life. She has become a self-respecting, self-confident woman able to help empower other women. And she has become the kind of mother she believes her children deserve.

Gisela lives for her children. "Every day I put my feet on the ground and decide what I need to do. I go to work. I feed my kids and make sure they go to school." She has a daughter in high school, three kids in primary school and one in kindergarten. Gisela tries to instill in her children the same values that she and the Moringa Madres live by.

Gisela gave examples of how the development and health of children, adults and even animals have benefited dramatically from taking moringa. Her own little girl, who couldn't talk at age four, began speaking after taking moringa. A veterinarian was amazed that a dog's liver failure was 90% reversed from having moringa added to its diet.

The success of the Moringa Madres and the benefits to the women and their families is due to growth in sales of their products both locally and in the U.S. El Granero (The Granary) in Ajijic sells enough of their products to cover one of their payrolls per month. They have shipped 430 pounds of products to Thistle Farms and Urban Juicers in Nashville, Tennessee. Whole Foods stores are also selling products made with their moringa. One can find Gisela selling their products at the Ajijic tiangis on Wednesdays.

Gisela's story of how her self-esteem, outlook and her life were changed by the caring mentoring of Weezie Burgess, confirms the importance of women empowering women, who have little except their potential and a desire to change. Gisela has become a great role model for other women and girls.



Gisela Morales, Proyecto Moringa Madres de San Juan Cosalá

Por Barbara Hildt

Weezie Burgess, ex presidente de Operation Feed, me llevó a conocer a Gisela Morales en una pequeña arboleda de moringas justo debajo de la montaña en San Juan Cosalá. Cuando se conocieron hace cinco años, Gisela era una de las muchas madres con necesidades, que hacían cola, esperando que le dieran comida gratis para sus siete hijos.

Todos los días Gisela tenía que dejar a sus hijos al cuidado de su hija de nueve años para trabajar desde las 6 a.m. hasta las 10 p.m. en una gasolinera. Exhausta de estar de pie todo el día y de caminar 45 minutos hasta su casa, ganaba sólo 86 pesos. Desesperada, Gisela les pedía a los vecinos unas tortillas o pan. Rara vez recibía ayuda.

Nacida en Jalisco, Gisela había crecido en Berkeley, CA donde su padre trabajaba como jardinero. Sus padres la trajeron a vivir a San Juan cuando tenía 16 años. Ella era muy tímida, no tenía amigos y tenía pocas esperanzas para su futuro. A lo largo de los años, más de un hombre prometió apoyarla como padre de uno o más de sus hijos. Todos ellos la abandonaron.

Cuando Weezie escuchó a Gisela hablar en inglés le preguntó si podría estar interesada en un proyecto para cultivar, cosechar, empacar y vender las hojas de los árboles de moringa, un nutritivo suplemento alimenticio. Explicó que podría emplear y beneficiar las vidas de algunas mujeres de la localidad, pero que probablemente pasaría un año o más antes de que ganaran mucho. Tomando un poco de riesgo, Gisela renunció a su trabajo en la gasolinera y comenzó a plantar árboles de moringa.

Cinco años de dedicación y trabajo duro cambiaron las vidas de Gisela, sus hijos y las otras tres mujeres que forman parte de la cooperativa Moringa Madres. Trabajan de 6 a 7 horas diarias y ganan no menos de 1,000 pesos a la semana. Dos adolescentes también ganan un poco para pagar el transporte a la escuela ayudando a limpiar las hojas de moringa.

Con el estímulo de Weezie, las Moringa Madres desarrollaron un conjunto de reglas que llaman sus valores. Cada vez que se reúnen, comienzan por revisar sus valores y de ser necesario los priorizan nuevamente. Colgada sobre la mesa en su pequeño espacio de trabajo está la lista de estos valores en español e inglés: Trabajo en equipo, Responsabilidad, Respeto, Honestidad, Puntualidad, Valoración, Equidad, No discriminación, Ambiente pacífico y Flexibilidad.

Gisela reveló que tenía una relación difícil con su madre y que Weezie se había convertido en una madre para ella, dándole ánimo y afirmaciones que necesitaba para cambiar su vida. Se ha convertido en una mujer que se respeta, segura de sí misma y capaz de ayudar a empoderar a otras mujeres. Se ha convertido en la clase de madre que cree que sus hijos merecen.

Gisela vive para sus hijos. "Todos los días pongo los pies en la tierra y decido lo que voy a hacer. Voy a trabajar. Alimento a mis hijos y me aseguro de que vayan a la escuela". Tiene una hija en la escuela secundaria, tres hijos

en la escuela primaria y uno en el jardín de infantes. Gisela trata de inculcarles los mismos valores por los que ella y las Madres de Moringa viven.

Gisela dio ejemplos de cómo el desarrollo y la salud de los niños, los adultos e incluso los animales se han beneficiado dramáticamente al tomar moringa. Su propia niña, que no podía hablar a los cuatro años, comenzó a hablar después de tomar moringa. Un veterinario se sorprendió de que la falla hepática de un perro se revirtiera en un 90% al agregar moringa a su dieta.

El éxito de las Moringa Madres, los beneficios para las mujeres y sus familias se debe al crecimiento de las ventas de sus productos tanto a nivel local como en los EE.UU. El Granero en Ajijic vende suficiente de sus productos para cubrir una de sus nóminas por mes. Ellos han enviado 430 libras de productos a Thistle Farms y Urban Juicers en Nashville, Tennessee. Las tiendas Whole Foods también están vendiendo productos hechos con su moringa. Uno puede encontrar a Gisela vendiendo sus productos en el tianguis de Ajijic los miércoles.

La historia de Gisela de cómo su autoestima, su perspectiva y su vida cambiaron gracias a la cuidadosa tutoría de Weezie Burgess, confirma la importancia de la potenciación de las mujeres, que tienen poco más que su potencial y su deseo de cambiar. Gisela se ha convertido en un gran modelo a seguir para otras mujeres y niñas.



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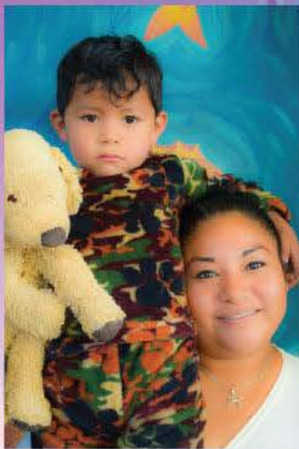
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**Meet some of our Children.....
Why we need your help!!!!**

Conoce algunos de nuestros niños... ¡por ello es que necesitamos tu ayuda!

Meet our adorable Luisa Sofia, who joined Niños Incapacitados in January 2018. Luisa Sofia is 4.5 years old. She needs our support to pay for Special Studies, diapers, medicine and therapy because suffers from Cerebral Palsy. Here Mother is a stay at home Mom and her father is a labourer. They live in Atequiza. In the past year, your donations have supported this family to the amount of \$44,208 pesos. As you can see, Luis Sofia is going to need our continued support for a while to come.

Luisa Sofia, de 4 años se unió a Niños Incapacitados en Enero de 2018....., requiere apoyo para pagar estudios médicos, pañales y terapia debido a su parálisis cerebral. Su mamá es ama de casa y su papá jornalero y viven en Atequiza. El año pasado, tus donativos los apoyaron con \$ 44,208 pesos. Como puedes ver, Luisa Sofia va a continuar requiriendo de tu aydua.



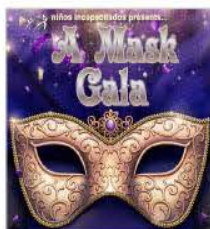
Meet our special little guy, César who came to Niños Incapacitados in January 2016. César is 3.5 years old and he suffers from Hidronefrosis Bilateral. Hydronephrosis Bilateral is the inflammation of both kidneys. Kidney inflammation occurs when the urine can not drain from the kidney and, as a result, accumulates in it. This can occur due to an obstruction in the ducts that drain the urine of the kidney (ureters) or by an anatomical defect that does not allow the urine to drain properly.

His Mother is a stay at home Mom and his father is a labourer. They live in San Juan Tecomatlan. We have supported this child by paying for medicines, transportation and anticonvulsant medications. To Date your donations have supported this family to the amount of \$30,309 pesos. César will need our help for a long while in order to live a somewhat comfortable life.

Este es César, nuestro niño especial quien llegó a Niños Incapacitados en Enero de 2016. Tiene 3 años y sufre de hidronefrosis bilateral, la cual inflama ambos riñones cuando la orina no es drenada por los mismos y por tanto se acumula en su cuerpo, debido a una obstrucción de la uretra o una falla congénita. Su mamá es ama de casa y su papá jornalero, viven en San Juan Tecomatlán. Tus donativos han apoyado a César con \$ 30,309 pesos, pero va a seguir necesitando tu ayuda para tener una vida más llevadera.

Mark Your Calendars for our Gala Event!!

Thursday, March 19, 2020
Hotel Real de Chapala,
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