

CONEXIONES

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President's Message

Year End Reflections

Year-end reflections are a valuable practice to review and contemplate the events, achievements and personal growth experienced throughout the year. For those of us in our advanced years, this still holds true. There is still much to be achieved and big differences that we each can make in our communities. This introspective process can provide insights, gratitude and clarity for setting goals in the upcoming year. Take a few moments to reflect with these prompts and considerations for your year-end evaluation:



1. Achievements and Successes:

- What were your most significant achievements this year?
- Did you reach goals or milestones that you set for yourself?
- What strengths or skills did you discover, enhance or develop?
- What did you contribute to the community around you?

2. Gratitude:

In what areas have you noticed personal growth or positive change?

Have there been any mindset shifts or changes in perspective?

How have your values or priorities evolved over the year?

In what areas have you noticed personal growth or positive change?

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How have your values or priorities evolved over the year?

3. Personal Growth:

- In what areas have you noticed personal growth or positive change?

- Have there been any mindset shifts or changes in perspective?
- How have your values or priorities evolved over the year?

4. Looking Forward:

- What are your aspirations for the upcoming year?
- Are there specific goals or intentions you want to set for various areas of your life?
- How can the lessons and experiences of this year inform your plans for the future?

Taking the time for year-end

reflections allows us to celebrate our achievements, acknowledge our growth, and gain clarity on areas for improvement in the coming year. We still have so much ahead of us, what can we do to enhance life and purpose to leave a meaningful legacy.

At the Lake Chapala Society, we wrap up this year reflecting on our growth as an organization, and we look at ways to enhance our community moving forward. One of the magical things about Lakeside is the wonderful opportunities here - not to teach or be a



student - but to be both. To work in collaboration with the diversity that surrounds us. The years that I have shared here have been some of the richest and fullest years of my life. Finding a great new sense of purpose. If you are new at Lakeside – get engaged, the opportunities are abundant and so rewarding!

In closing out this year, I don't want to miss out on this opportunity to remind folks that for charities, year-end giving is an important part of our growth. Anyone who has spent any time on our campus is probably aware of the challenges we have with our restrooms. All restrooms on our campus were built as residential restrooms and only a quarter of them are currently working well enough for public use. Yet these toilets get the most use of any restrooms in Aji-jic. Imagine 1,000 people a week using your restroom at your home. Please end the year with a generous gift to the LCS Restroom fund. You can donate through our website: <https://lcsajijic.give-cloud.co/donations> or drop off a donation in our office in an envelope labeled RESTROOMS – or BAÑOS and include your name and contact info so we can thank you. We need \$200,000 pesos more (\$11,650 USD) in order to get the remodeling project underway. Can we count on you?

Our very best wishes for a wonderful year-end holiday season and, with your help, we look forward to serving our community in 2024!

Steve Balfour
President

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 and 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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Conecciones Team

The magazine's name, Conecciones -Connections in English - reflects its purpose, which is to enable the Lake Chapala Society to connect with the Lakeside community.

El nombre de la revista Conecciones refleja su propósito, favorecer la conexión de The Lake Chapala Society con la comunidad.

Publisher/Editorial: Lake Chapala Society

Editor-in-Chief/Editor en Jefe: Luis F. Pacheco

Managing Editor/Director General: Rachel McMillen

Associate Editors/Editores asociados: Sandra Baird, Harriet Hart, Diana Hunt

Production, Art & Design/ Producción, Arte y Diseño: Domitzu Medrano

Proof-reader/Revisión final: Thomas Gay

Translations/Traducciones: LCS

Conecciones welcomes submissions of articles from Lakeside authors. We reserve the right to edit as necessary. Submissions should be in MS Word approximately 600 words and should be directed to: submissions@lakechapasociety.com.

Advertisement inquiries

should be directed to ventas@lakechapasociety.com.

Conecciones agradece el envío de artículos. Nos reservamos el derecho de editarlos si es necesario. Los envíos deben ser en MS Word de 600 palabras aproximadamente y deben dirigirse a: submissions@lakechapasociety.com. Las solicitudes de publicidad deben dirigirse a: ventas@lakechapasociety.com.

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Cover: Domitzu

Conecciones Advertising Prices Precios de los Anuncios 2023

	Cost / Precio
Back cover / Contraportada (9 x 11.4" / 23 x 29 cm)	\$6,003
Inside front & back cover / Contraportada interna (9 x 11.4" / 23 x 29 cm).....	\$5,510
Full page / Página completa (7.8 x 10.2" / 20 x 26 cm).....	\$4,176
1/2 page / 1/2 página (4.7 x 7.2" / 12 x 18.5 cm).....	\$2,523
1/4 page / 1/4 página (3.5 x 4.7" / 9 x 12 cm)	\$1,334
1/8 page-business card / 1/8 página-tarjeta de presentación (3.5 x 2" / 9 x 5 cm)	\$464

All prices include IVA. All ads must be submitted by the 10th of the month for inclusion in the next month's magazine. Send to ventas@lakechapasociety.com.

Todos los precios incluyen IVA. Todos los anuncios deben ser enviados antes del día 10 del mes para su inclusión en la revista del mes siguiente. Enviar a ventas@lakechapasociety.com

Mensaje del Presidente

Reflexiones de fin de año

Las reflexiones de fin de año son una práctica valiosa para revisar y examinar los acontecimientos, los logros y el crecimiento personal experimentados a lo largo del año. Para los que ya tenemos una edad avanzada, esto sigue siendo válido. Aún queda mucho por hacer y podemos marcar grandes diferencias en nuestras comunidades. Este proceso introspectivo puede aportar ideas, gratitud y claridad a la hora de establecer objetivos para el próximo año. Tómese unos momentos para reflexionar con estas indicaciones y consideraciones para su evaluación de fin de año:

1. Logros y éxitos:

- ¿Cuáles han sido sus logros más importantes este año?
- ¿Has alcanzado los objetivos o metas que se había marcado?
- ¿Qué puntos fuertes o habilidades descubrió, mejoró o desarrolló?
- ¿Qué ha aportado a la comunidad que te rodea?

2. Gratitud:

- ¿De qué está agradecido este año? Considera tanto los grandes como los pequeños momentos.
- ¿Quiénes son las personas que han tenido un impacto positivo en su vida?
- ¿Cómo has crecido en su capacidad de expresar y cultivar la gratitud?
- ¿Cómo muestra su agradecimiento a los demás?

3. Crecimiento personal:

- ¿En qué áreas ha notado crecimiento personal o cambios positivos?
- ¿Ha habido algún cambio de mentalidad o de perspectiva?
- ¿Cómo han evolucionado sus valores o prioridades a lo largo del año?

4. Mirar hacia el futuro:

- ¿Cuáles son sus aspiraciones para el próximo año?
- ¿Hay objetivos o intenciones específicas que quiera establecer para varias áreas de su vida?
- ¿Cómo pueden las lecciones y experiencias de este año informar sus planes para el futuro?



Dedicar un tiempo a la reflexión de fin de año nos permite celebrar nuestros logros, reconocer nuestro crecimiento y aclarar los aspectos que debemos mejorar el año que viene. Todavía tenemos mucho por delante, ¿qué podemos hacer para mejorar la vida y el propósito de dejar un legado significativo.

En The Lake Chapala Society (Sociedad del Lago de Chapala) terminamos este año reflexionando sobre nuestro crecimiento como organización y buscamos maneras de mejorar nuestra comunidad en el futuro. Una de las cosas mágicas acerca de la ribera son sus maravillosas oportunidades - no para enseñar o ser un estudiante - sino para ser ambos. Trabajar en colaboración con la diversidad que nos rodea. Los años que he compartido aquí han sido algunos de los más ricos y plenos de mi vida. Encontrar un nuevo y gran sentido de propósito. Si es nuevo en la ribera - ¡comprométete, las oportunidades son abundantes y muy gratificantes!



Para cerrar este año, no quiero dejar pasar la oportunidad de recordar a la gente que para las organizaciones benéficas, las donaciones de fin de año son una parte importante de nuestro crecimiento. Cualquiera que haya pasado algún tiempo en nuestras instalaciones es probablemente consciente de los problemas que tenemos con nuestros baños. Todos los aseos de nuestro campus se construyeron como baños residenciales y sólo una cuarta parte de ellos funcionan para uso público.

Sin embargo, estos baños reciben el mayor uso de todos los baños en Ajijic. Imagina a 1,000 personas a la semana usando el baño de tu casa. Por favor termina el año con una generosa donación al fondo de baños de LCS. Puedes donar a través de nuestro sitio web: <https://lcsajijic.givecloud.co/donations> o dejar un donativo en nuestra oficina en un sobre etiquetado RESTROOMS - o BAÑOS e incluir tu nombre e información de contacto para que podamos agradecerte. Necesitamos \$200,000 pesos más (\$11,650 USD) para poder poner en marcha el proyecto de remodelación. ¿Podemos contar contigo?

¡Nuestros mejores deseos para una maravillosa temporada de fiestas de fin de año y con su ayuda esperamos continuar sirviendo a nuestra comunidad en el 2024!

Steve Balfour
Presidente

Brillante participación de Ajijic en los Gay Games Guadalajara

Una celebración de unidad, diversidad, solidaridad y fuerza

Por Victor Camarena Martinez

Guadalajara, Jalisco tuvo la fortuna de ser coanfitrión junto con Hong Kong de la 11ª edición de los Gay Games 2023. Del 3 al 11 de noviembre, la capital de Jalisco fue sede del evento multideportivo y cultural más grande e importante del mundo para la comunidad LGBTQI+ y aliados.

Como dice su slogan, estos juegos ofrecieron la oportunidad de "Hacer historia junt@s" ya que, por primera vez en sus más de 40 años de historia, los Juegos se realizaron en ciudades latinoamericana y asiáticas con la participación de más de 5 mil atletas de todo el mundo.

La Sociedad del Lago de Chapala y la comunidad de Ajijic en general llevaron a cabo varios eventos de recaudación de fondos

que nos permitieron patrocinar a 48 atletas y 8 simpatizantes para participar en diferentes deportes incluyendo: boliche, fútbol soccer, carrera 5K y participar en el desfile de banderas en la ceremonia de inauguración.

Nuestra delegación brilló en varias disciplinas, en la categoría de boliche división social nuestra delegación obtuvo cuatro medallas de oro, 3 de plata y 2 de bronce. En la categoría de carrera 5k femenina una medalla de oro y en Fútbol una medalla de bronce.

Estos juegos sin duda alguna fueron una excelente oportunidad de visibilidad de como la sociedad mexicana ha evolucionado, ya que tradicionalmente se le ha considerado como una sociedad machista



y muy conservadora. Estos juegos confirmaron que Jalisco se encuentra a la vanguardia de los derechos de la comunidad LGBTQI+ en el mundo.

La ciudad española de Valencia será la sede de estos juegos en 2026. Tenemos tiempo de empezar a entrenar y recaudar fondos para llevar una delegación de Ajijic más fuerte y empoderada.



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Brilliant Participation of Ajjic at the Gay Games Guadalajara

A celebration of unity, diversity, solidarity, and strength.



By Victor Camarena Martinez



Guadalajara, Jalisco was fortunate to co-host with Hong Kong the 11th edition of the Gay Games 2023. From November 3 to 11, Jalisco's capital city hosted the world's largest and most important multi-sport and cultural event for the LGBTQI+ community and their allies.

As their slogan stated, these games offered the opportunity of "making history together" because for the first time in its 40+ year history, the Games were held in both a Latin American city and in Asia with the participation of over 5,000 athletes from all over the world.

The Lake Chapala Society and Ajjic's community at large conducted several fundraising events that allowed us to sponsor 48 athletes and 8 supporters to participate in different sports including: bowling, football/soccer, a 5K race and partake in the parade of flags at the opening ceremony.

Our delegation shone in several disciplines. In the category of bowling social division, we won four gold medals, three silver and two bronze. In the category of female 5k race, one gold medal, and in football soccer, one bronze medal.



We were very happy to participate in the Gay Games because it was a chance to empower every member of the community and it represented the construction of a more fair and egalitarian society and was also a great opportunity for social change towards the LGBTQI+ community. As one member of the delegation mentioned, "this was an experience of a lifetime, regardless of my sexual orientation or gender identity."

These games were undoubtedly an excellent opportunity for improved visibility of how Mexican society has evolved, as it has traditionally been considered as a "machista" and very conservative society. These games confirmed that Jalisco is at the forefront of LGBTQI+ rights in the world.

The Spanish city of Valencia will host the games in 2026. We have time to start training and fundraising to bring a stronger and more empowered Ajjic delegation.

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Volunteer, Volunteer

Meaning from LCS Dictionary

By Claudina González Durán

noun: 1. A person who freely offers to take part in an enterprise or undertake a task.

At the heart of the Lake Chapala Society community, a profoundly impactful A.C. that promotes coexistence between the local population and foreign residents, lies an invaluable group of individuals: **the volunteers**. These men and women play an essential role in fulfilling the society's mission, creating and strengthening bonds among the diverse communities that coexist along the shores of Mexico's largest lake.

On the past November 15th, during "Volunteer Appreciation Day," a survey was conducted among the Lake Chapala Society volunteers, since it was a day dedicated to celebrating and thanking them for their tremendous work. The survey was very brief and straightforward, it asked them to respond with complete honesty to the following questions: "What is the best part of being a volunteer at LCS?" and "What does LCS mean to you?" (They had to answer this last question with just one word.)

A variety of motivations and passionate testimonies about their commitment to community service emerged. Some responses were very humorous, others more succinct, in both English and Spanish, etc. One of the recurring themes was the personal satisfaction derived from contributing to the society's well-being. Here are some responses.

For me, LCS means: "community" "service" "Gringo heaven" "laughter" "connections" "happiness" "friendship" "benevolence" "masochism (haha)" "fun" "love" "security" "involvement" "camaraderie"

The diversity of skills and talents that volunteers bring also stands out as a crucial element. From organizing events to teaching languages, managing the library, to the simple act of a friendly face welcoming you to our campus every day - this is what each individual contributes to LCS, a unique and valuable perspective. The flexibility and adaptability of volunteers become one of the key factors in addressing the changing needs of the community. From these two questions, I also realized that many volunteers see their commitment as an opportunity to learn and grow.



In addition to the tangible impact on the community, volunteers also highlight the formation of meaningful relationships as one of the most rewarding aspects of their service. Many mention having established lasting connections and friendships that transcend many sorts of boundaries. These testimonies prove it:

The best part of being a volunteer at LCS is... "Meeting new people" "Sharing my passion for something" "Utilizing my skills" "Interacting with local children" "Giving back to the community" "Helping others" "Embarking on a new life" "The smiles on others" "Learning" "Talking to others about books" "Having a daily purpose" "Being part of the community"

In summary, the importance of volunteers in such a large A.C. like The Lake Chapala Society is not to be underestimated. Their dedication, diverse skills, adaptability and the formation of meaningful connections are vital elements for the ongoing success of the association in its mission to build and strengthen communities. These and more testimonies represent the wealth and depth of the experience of being part of something bigger, where selfless service becomes the bond uniting a multicultural and diverse community toward a common goal...

May we all be
"people helping people."



Voluntario, Voluntaria

Significado del Diccionario de LCS
Por Claudina González Durán

sustantivo

1. Persona que decide prestar un servicio o realizar un trabajo por voluntad propia, sin que esté obligado a hacerlo.

En el corazón de la comunidad de Lake Chapala Society, una asociación civil de gran trascendencia que busca promover la convivencia entre la población local y los residentes extranjeros, se encuentra un grupo invaluable de individuos: los voluntarios. Estos hombres y mujeres desempeñan un papel esencial en la realización de la misión de la sociedad, creando y fortaleciendo los lazos entre las diversas comunidades que coexisten a orillas del lago más grande de México.

El pasado 15 de noviembre en el "Volunteer Appreciation Day" se realizó una encuesta a los voluntarios de Lake Chapala Society, aprovechando que era un día para festejar y agradecer su gran labor. La encuesta era muy sencilla, les pedí responder con toda honestidad a las siguientes preguntas: ¿Cuál es la mejor parte de ser voluntario en LCS? y ¿Qué significa LCS para ti? (tenían que responder solo con una palabra a esta última).

Surgieron una variedad de motivaciones y testimonios apasionados sobre su compromiso con el servicio comunitario. Unos con más humor que otros, con más o menos palabras, en inglés y en español; uno de los temas recurrentes fue la satisfacción personal derivada de contribuir al bienestar de la sociedad. Les comparto algunas respuestas.

LCS significa para mi: "comunidad" "servicio" "cielo gringo" "risa" "conexiones" "felicidad" "amistad" "benevolencia" "masoquismo (jaja)" "diversión" "amor" "seguridad" "participación" "camaradería"

La diversidad de habilidades y talentos que los voluntarios aportan también destaca como un elemento crucial. Desde la organización de eventos hasta la enseñanza de idiomas, la organización de la biblioteca, el hecho de que todos los días exista una cara amable dándote la bienvenida a nuestro campus. Esto es lo que cada individuo aporta a LCS, una perspectiva única y valiosa. La flexibilidad y adaptabilidad de los voluntarios se convierte en uno de los factores clave para abordar las cambiantes necesidades de la comunidad. Y en estas dos preguntas también nos damos cuenta que muchos

voluntarios ven su compromiso como una oportunidad para aprender y crecer.

Además del impacto tangible en la comunidad, los voluntarios también destacan la formación de relaciones significativas como uno de los aspectos más gratificantes de su servicio. Muchos mencionan haber establecido conexiones duraderas y amistades que trascienden las fronteras culturales.

Lo mejor de ser voluntario en LCS es... "Conocer gente nueva" "Compartir mi amor por algo" "Aprovechar mis habilidades" "Interactuar con los niños de la zona" "Devolver algo a la comunidad" "Ayudar a los demás" "Llegar a una nueva vida" "La sonrisa en los demás" "Aprender" "Hablar con los demás sobre libros" "Tener un propósito diario" "Formar parte de la comunidad"

En resumen, la importancia de los voluntarios en una asociación civil tan grande como The Lake Chapala Society no es para subestimarse. Su dedicación, habilidades diversas, adaptabilidad y la formación de conexiones significativas son elementos vitales para el éxito continuo de la asociación en su misión de construir y fortalecer comunidades. Estos y más testimonios son la gran riqueza y profundidad de la experiencia de ser parte de algo más grande, donde el servicio desinteresado se convierte en el vínculo que une a una comunidad multicultural y diversa en pro del mismo objetivo...

Que todos seamos: "personas ayudando a personas".

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The Group No One Wants to Belong To

By D’Vorah Kelley

In 2021 three women met on a Facebook group for people caring for spouses with a brain disease, commonly known as dementia and, after conversations back and forth, they decided to move their husbands, and themselves, to Ajijic. Two of the women had their husbands in the same facility, while the third eventually had round-the-clock-care in her home. The second week they were all together, they held the first support group at LCS - it was, and still is, specifically for those who are caring for a spouse or life partner with dementia. The first meeting three other women joined Beth, Cathey and D’Vorah, and gradually, over time, the group has seen as many as twenty-one people at the weekly meetings.

For almost two years the group met outside near the ATM, eating lunch together, sharing their stories, their tears, and also laughter. Word of mouth, and a listing in the Conecciones calendar brought more people looking for support as they navigate a journey no one had signed up for. Some were snowbirds, others here temporarily, some had moved

here after checking the group’s Facebook page, some who had part-time to full-time support in home, while others visited their loved ones in several of the many facilities to be found here at Lakeside. The one thing they all had in common is that their loved ones needed more care than they themselves could give, and they needed the support of others who were experiencing life with a partner with dementia. Earlier this year the group moved to a bigger space to accommodate the growing numbers.

For more than a year the group consisted of women, but gradually several men also joined and found valuable support. Two Facebook groups were created, a private one for those who attend the group in person, and a public one for people seeking information. Caregivers Considering Ajijic now has 140 members and several who now attend the weekly group here found us via that page.

Since its inception, nine members of the group have become widows or widowers, yet they continue to attend to offer



Cathey Merrill, Beth Burgos, D’Vorah Kelley the first day we met!

encouragement and support to those still on the journey. As the group grew, so did the need for more guidelines. Those whose loved ones have died are now the “compassionate listeners” rather than continuing to share their stories. The leadership of the group has also shifted from the original members to those who are still caregiving.

The meetings are a safe space to share the roller-coaster ride that is dementia with others who understand and care. We welcome new members who are caring for their life partners to join us every Tuesday morning from 10:30 - 12:30 at LCS.

Contact: Cathey Merrill (001-713-253-3537) for more information.

HomeTitleLock[®]mx

by Felipe González

The inheritance process is full of pitfalls. It requires the services of an expert, who acts professionally and diligently, and is always there to provide the support that clients require.

Make sure that what you leave behind goes into the right hands and your wishes are respected. Remember, “an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure”.

If you need help in regards to inheritance, look no further! I can assist. Reach out.



www.lakechapasociety.com

Santa's Vacation Home

By Diana Hunt

If you see a Santa look-alike walking around Ajijic this time of year, your eyes are not deceiving you. Actually, Francis Dryden has been Santa Claus for 30 years. He embodies the jolly man with his empathy for children, his knowledge of latest toy craze and his easy laughter.

It all started with his wife's two young grandchildren.

"I thought it would be fun to play Santa for them," Francis explained. "I told Anastasia I wanted to grow a beard and pretend to be Santa checking to see if they had been naughty or nice. I knew I could grow a beard - I won a beard growing contest years ago."

After starting his beard in mid-summer (it was white by then), he borrowed a Santa suit, took a clipboard and paper to make a list and, before Christmas, walked by the grandkids' house when it was arranged for them to be looking out the window. The following week he did it again, "checking it twice." The kids went nuts.

"A couple of friends saw the beard and I was asked to do it for their grandkids," he continued. "I ended up doing many houses almost every night in the weeks before Christmas. This one night, a neighbor came out and in-

roduced himself as the owner of most of the shopping centers in Edmonton [Alberta, Canada]. He asked, "Why don't you come to one of my shopping malls and make money doing this?"

That started a 20-year career as an official - and quite successful - Santa Claus. (His real career was a real estate agent, so he could take off two months a year.)

"I have worn hearing aids for 50 years so I could hear the kids," Francis explained, "where all the other Santas couldn't hear a thing. I didn't drink, I didn't smoke, you could only have a certain amount of body fat - I weigh the same today as I did 30 years ago. I ended up doing far more photos than any of the others. Some of the Santas didn't last. It's hard work, from 10 in the morning until 3 there is a steady line of kids. We had an hour off and started again from 4 until 8, five days a week. We started in early November until Christmas Eve. My two days off, I would keep busy going to schools, hospitals and special events. I made good money and had all my expenses paid."

He took to the persona like a natural. He explained that often the other Santas had beards that were yellowed, poorly shaped and scraggly, they got too fat or too drunk and most had not done any preparation. The Santas who couldn't hear the kids who asked for expensive items like laptops or other electronics just said, "Ho ho ho, yes indeed." So, the parents had to buy a laptop.

"I didn't do that. I explained to the children who asked for those things that Santa only builds toys. The parents were relieved, so word got out to take their kids to my particular shopping center. It was the same with pets," he continued. "Kids want a puppy, but the day after Christmas they don't want a puppy. I explained that millions of kids



want a puppy, but Santa can't take them all for pee at the same time while traveling in his sleigh and, besides, it is cold at the North Pole."

Santa/aka Francis would start in July going through the internet finding which toys and dolls were popular that year, what colors, the prices and he copied the information down to study it. He also arranged for short videos plus photographs to sell and the parents lapped it up. He brought in a lot of money.

Francis and Anastasia moved to a more temperate climate in Lakeside in 2012 but Santa still maintains his workshop at the North Pole.

"The kids here saw I had this huge, white beard so I got invited to house parties and to orphanages," he said. "They loved it. They knew about Santa probably from the Coca Cola Santa Claus. I played the drums in a band for years at La Bodega Restaurant/Bar and Boutique so I became their Santa Claus."

For his Mexican Santa, he wears Hawaiian shirts with matching headbands on his red fur cap, cut-offs and white knee socks with red tennis shoes.

As a member of the Lake Chapala Shrine Club, he has gone in years past to the Shrine Hospital in Mexico City. This year they are reinstating their Christmas celebration for 800-900 children and their parents. Santa will be there.



La casa de vacaciones de Papá Noel

Ho ho ho!

Por Diana Hunt



que no oían a los niños que pedían artículos caros como ordenadores portátiles u otros aparatos electrónicos se limitaban a decir "Ho Ho. Sí, claro." Así que los padres tuvieron que comprar un portátil.

"Yo no hice eso. Explicqué a los niños que pedían esas cosas que Papá Noel sólo fabrica juguetes. Los padres se sintieron aliviados, así que se corrió la voz de que llevaran a sus hijos a mi centro comercial particular. Lo mismo ocurría con las mascotas", continúa. "Los niños quieren un cachorro, pero el día después de Navidad no quieren un cachorro. Les expliqué que millones de niños quieren un cachorro, pero Papá Noel no puede llevarlos a todos a hacer pis al mismo tiempo mientras viaja en su trineo y, además, hace frío en el Polo Norte."

Santa, es decir Francis, empezaba en julio a buscar en Internet qué juguetes y muñecas eran populares ese año, de qué colores, los precios y copiaba la información para estudiarla. También preparaba videos cortos con las fotos para venderlos y los padres se lo tragaban. Ganó mucho dinero.

Francis y Anastasia se mudaron a un clima más templado en Lakeside en 2012, pero Papá Noel sigue manteniendo su taller en el Polo Norte.

"Los niños de aquí veían que tenía una barba blanca enorme, así que me invitaban a fiestas en casa y a orfanatos", cuenta. "Les encantaba. Conocían a Papá Noel probablemente por el Papá Noel de Coca Cola. Toqué la batería en una banda durante años en La Bodega Restaurante/Bar y Boutique, así que me convertí en su Papá Noel."

Para su Santa Claus mexicano, usa camisas hawaianas con diademas a juego con su gorro de piel rojo, pantalones cortos, calcetines blancos hasta la rodilla y tenis rojos.

Ha ido en años pasados al Hospital Shrine en la Ciudad de México como miembro del Lake Chapala Shrine Club. Este año están reinstaurando su celebración de Navidad para 800-900 niños y sus padres. Santa Claus estará presente.

Si en esta época del año ves a un doble de Santa Claus caminando por Ajijic, tus ojos no te están engañando. En realidad, Francis Dryden ha sido Santa Claus durante 30 años. Encarna al hombre alegre con su empatía por los niños, su conocimiento de la última moda en juguetes y su risa fácil.

Todo empezó con los dos nietos pequeños de su mujer.

"Pensé que sería divertido hacer de Papá Noel para ellos", explica Francis. "Le dije a Anastasia que quería dejarme crecer la barba y hacer de Papá Noel para comprobar si se habían portado bien o mal. Sabía que podía dejarme crecer la barba: gané un concurso de barba hace años."

Después de empezar a dejarse barba a mediados de verano (para entonces ya era blanca), pidió prestado un traje de Papá Noel, cogió una tablilla con sujetapapeles y papel para hacer una lista y, antes de Navidad, pasó por casa de los nietos cuando se dispuso que estuvieran mirando por la ventana. A la semana siguiente volvió a hacerlo, "comprobándolo dos veces". Los niños se volvieron locos.

"Un par de amigos vieron la barba y me pidieron que lo hiciera para sus nietos", continuó. "Acabé haciendo muchas casas casi todas las noches en las semanas previas a Navidad. Una noche salió un vecino y se presentó como el dueño de la mayoría de los centros comerciales de Edmonton [Alberta, Canadá]. Me dijo: "¿Por qué no vienes a uno de mis centros comerciales y ganas dinero haciendo esto?"

Así empezó una carrera de 20 años como Papá Noel oficial -y con bastante éxito-. (Su verdadera carrera era la de agente inmobiliario, por lo que podía tomarse dos meses libres al año.)

"He llevado audífonos durante 50 años para poder oír a los niños", explica Francis, "cuando los demás Papás Noel no oían nada. No bebía, no fumaba, sólo podía tener una cierta cantidad de grasa corporal: hoy peso lo mismo que hace 30 años. Acabé haciendo muchas más fotos que los demás. Algunos de los Papás Noel no duraron. Es un trabajo duro, desde las 10 de la mañana hasta las 3 hay una fila continua de niños. Teníamos una hora libre y volvíamos a empezar desde las 4 de la tarde hasta las 8, cinco días a la semana. Empezamos a principios de noviembre hasta Nochebuena. En mis dos días libres me mantenía ocupada yendo a colegios, hospitales y eventos especiales. Ganaba bien y tenía todos los gastos pagados."

Se adaptó al personaje como si nada. Explicó que a menudo los otros Papás Noel tenían la barba amarillenta, mal formada y desaliñada, engordaban demasiado o se emborrachaban demasiado y la mayoría no había hecho ninguna preparación. Los Santos



The Many Gifts LCS Gives Us



By Harriet Hart

Gifts are things (objects or gestures or acts) given freely. They bring pleasure and comfort and can improve the quality of our lives. They can be small or large, cheap or expensive, wrapped or plain. During this holiday season, the gift giving time of the year, it struck me that the Lake Chapala Society gives its gifts to Lakeside residents all year long.

Let's pretend you are a newcomer to town. This is your first visit to Mexico. You just got off the plane from a northern clime and feel apprehensive. Your host takes you to LCS, where you are welcomed on arrival by a friendly person speaking English, an "amigo" prepared to give you a tour of the place and explain what services are available. You don't want a tour, but you do need some pesos and there's an ATM, right inside the main gate. Pesos in your pocket, you realize you drank too much coffee before you left home and need a toilet. Voila. There are two on your left, and they're free! And clean.

Perhaps you just arrived from Canada where the ground is covered with snow. And now you're in a tropical garden where you can stroll among the plants and admire the fish in the koi ponds. You can feel the tension leave your body. You're read to explore Mexico, but you need information about the practicalities of life here. Where do I get a taxi? Rent a car? See a doctor? Buy a flashlight or whatever it is you forgot to pack? There's an Information Desk right across from the library staffed by a helpful, friendly person who was once a newcomer. You need reading material and didn't pack a book. You are standing in front of the largest English library in Latin America. Need to rent an apartment? There's a Bulletin Board with lots of useful ads about available housing, upcoming events and services you might need. All of this – the pesos, the clean toilet, the beautiful natural surroundings, the helpful information – are free. They are gifts we take for granted.



But LCS isn't just for newcomers. Long time expat residents and Mexican nationals can be the recipients of the many benefits LCS provides as well. Executive Director Luis Pacheco and I sat down for lunch at the new café to talk about all the things it has to offer. Everyone has free access to the gardens, the ATM and the five patios: the blue umbrella, verandah, the Neill James Plaza with its gazebo and bandstand, the children's art area and the south campus patio. Everyone is welcome to stroll the gardens, eat at the restaurant or use the public toilets. And everyone has access to the health and legal services. (Buying a membership offers even more benefits.)

The Lake Chapala Society provides educational opportunities for the entire community. The Wilkes Education Center offers English as a Second Language courses for Mexicans who want to learn English. In 2023, 250 enrolled. It also boasts an extensive library of Spanish books. Mexican children can participate in the Children's Art Program every Saturday morning and attend the summer art camp. This summer, over 150 kids studied painting, jewelry making and ceramics. Kids can also take classes in photography and chess. The Lake Chapala Society provides direct aid via scholarship support to 40 Mexican young people, enabling them to study in a variety of post-secondary institutions.





LCS is a lifelong learning center where adults can study a variety of things, too. Classes include the standards such as Introduction to Spanish and Getting Your Jalisco Driver's License and the embroidery class, held three times a week taught by a true maestro and special ones such as Memoir Writing. You can try your hand at pottery by joining Mudlarks, or line dancing your way to physical fitness.

Open Circle, held every Sunday morning, will open your mind. Recent topics included Things You May Not Know About Laughter with Ed Tasca and more serious subjects such as Dia de Muertos with Loretta Downs. The intellectually inclined can attend Ted Talks on Thursdays where participants watch a TED talk together and discuss things as current as global warming and artificial intelligence.

Conexiones, now approaching its fifth anniversary, is the magazine LCS publishes that keeps readers (English and Spanish) abreast of what's current at LCS as well as providing informative articles on Mexican culture and community activities. 7,000 readers enjoy access online and 1,500 print copies are available at LCS and assorted businesses (like Intercam, Dental Express and Quality Care.) Gratis.



Luis Pacheco emphasized to me that he views LCS as “a gift to the community, where people can be themselves and give to others.” At last count, 270 volunteers helped out in 2023 with the programs and activities outlined above. Membership in LCS gives residents the chance to try things out, to fulfill secret ambitions. Personally, over the years I've staffed the Information Desk, designed and implemented an oral history project and helped edit a magazine. Each felt like an opportunity I was being given and I suspect the other 269 volunteers feel the same way.

“Giving is not just about making a donation. It is about making a difference” (Kathy Calvin.) The Lake Chapala Society inspires to do so; it strives to “enrich the quality of life, vitality and prosperity [of residents of our community] through the exchange of knowledge, expertise, culture, heritage and language.” It makes a difference with its gardens, facilities, programs and publications. And it supports other charities. Last year it helped raise a million pesos for the Red Cross. Other charities it supports are Niños Incapacitados and Lakeside Food Bank.

As the festive season approaches, remember “everyone can experience the joy and blessing of generosity, because everyone has something to give” (Jan Grace.) You can give LCS donations of time or your talents and expertise, or money and LCS, in turn, will continue to give its gifts to the Lakeside community in the year that lies ahead.





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Office & Library Hours: Monday to Saturday 10 am to 2 pm

Grounds open: Monday to Friday 9:00 am to 5:00 pm / Saturday 9:00 am to 2 pm

***Open to the Public (S) Sign up (C) Member card (M) LCS members only**

LESSONS (M)

Bordado Artístico (Spanish)	M+W+F 4-6
Children's Art - Open to all (Children 5 years & under must be accompanied by an adult)	Sat 10-12
Children's Chess Club	Sat 12-2
Exercise	M+W+F 9-9:50
Gentle Yoga & Body Awareness	W 10-10:50
Intermediate Hatha Yoga	T 2-3:30
Introduction to Lakeside	4+6 Dec. 10-12
Introduction to Spanish	7,14,21 Dec.TH 10-12
Learn to Knit	T 12-1:30
Lyengar Yoga	F 11-12
Line Dancing, gail@doughertynet.com	T + TH10-11:15
Meditation	T 9:30-10:30
Move to the Beat	M 10-11
Programa de Fotografía Juvenil	SAT 10-12
Stretch & Balance	M +TH 8:45-9:45 <i>harry_bertram@hotmail.com</i>
Spanish in Action classes (español en acción) See LCS website or in the office for more info	
Spanish A La Carta Online Program	See LCS website/more info
Tech Help via Email	<i>lcs.tech.training@gmail.com</i>
Write to a Prompt Writers' Group	TH10-12

LIBRARIES (M)

Book + DVD Libraries	M-Sat 10-2
Books on Tape & Library of Congress Talking Books. To order books on-line, you must use a computer or a tablet/iPad. It is not possible to order using a cell phone. Go to lakechapasociety.com & select libraries/English.	

SOCIAL ACTIVITIES (M)

American Mah Jongg	TH 10-1
Discussion Group	W 12-1:30
Duplicate Bridge	W 1-4
English/Spanish Conversation* (Open to public)	Sat 12-1:30*
Everyday Mindfulness	M 10:30-12
Game Group	TH1-5
Open Circle	S 10:30
Scrabble	F 11:30-1:30
TED Talks	TH 12:30-1:45
Tournament Scrabble	T 12-1:50

HEALTH INSURANCE*

Hospital San Antonio	Th10-12
IMSS & Immigration Services	M+T 10-1
Call for Appointment 333-157-9472	

Lakeside Insurance	T+Th11-2
Shiatsu Chair Massage	1st & 3rd Th10-12
By appointment only, call 331-604-0971	

HEALTH & LEGAL SERVICES*

Audiology - hearing care specialists	M+W+F 10-4
(Consultation fee)	Call for appointment 332-945-3267
Becerra Immigration	Th 10:30-12:30
Blood Pressure Testing	F 10-12
Finestra Investment Consulting	3rd T 10-1
Intercam Banking Services	M-F 10-1
Optometrist Claravision	Th9-4; Call for appointment 331-411-1178
Solbes & Solbes	2nd Monday 10-12
SkyMed	1st W 10-12

SERVICE & SUPPORT GROUPS *

AA Women's Meeting	T 4-5
Al-Anon (Spanish)	M 6-7:30, W 5:30-7:30
Caregivers of Spouses with Dementia (Support Group)	T 10:30-12:30
Diabetes Support Group	Zoom 1st F 1:00 contact welchk4diabetes@gmail.com
Information Desk	M-Sat 10-2
Lakeside AA	M+Th4-5
Needle Pushers	T 10-11:45
Toastmasters	M 7-9

NEW ACTIVITIES:

JANICE KIMBALL BRAVADOS BOOK LAUNCH

Thursday, 7 December, 1-3pm SC Patio, debgang1223@gmail.com

DUPLICATE BRIDGE

Wednesdays, 1-4pm SC patio. LCS members only. Participants must be able to play bridge. No bridge lessons are given. Contact: Mike Campolieto, mikecampolieto@gmail.com

MEDITATION

Tuesdays, from 9:30-10:30 in the Ken Gosh Pavilion. Join guided meditation. LCS Members only.

Jeanette Monosoff, jeanettemonosoff@gmail.com

TAI CHI CHIH

Tuesdays + Fridays 12-1 pm SC patio. Beginning 26 December, LCS members only. An easy form to learn to improve balance. Daryl Isenberg, daryl.isenberg@gmail.com

NIA FITNESS

Beginning 5 January to 30 January, Tuesdays 9-10am + Fridays 10-11am on the SC patio. Susan Michie, sgm150@ymail.com



The Lake Chapala Society **CLASSES**

MEMBERS GET A 30% DISCOUNT

Pre-Registration Required
At LCS Office on Monday through Saturday
From 10 am to 2 pm

LakeChapalaSociety.com
There is no refund
For any questions related to classes
please contact education@lcsac.org



Mexican Manners

By Alfredo Pérez

- Wednesday, December 6
- Wednesday, January 3
- Wednesday, February 7
10:00 am to 1:00 pm

General fee: \$760

In this class participants will learn general information on the regions in Mexico, how the language shows part of the ideology and logic of Mexicans, body signs, what's polite and what's not and Mexican time structure.



Memoir Writing Classes

By Doris Gallan

- Wednesday, December 6
- Wednesday, January 3
- Wednesday, February 7
2:00 pm to 4:00 pm

General fee: \$780

This two-hour workshop will guide users on how to begin their story (which usually isn't at the beginning), create an outline to determine the best order of their stories, organize their writing to complete their book, and find inspiration while overcoming writing challenges.



Introduction to Spanish

By Inez Dayer

Gayla Doucet

- Thursday, Dec 7, 14 & 21
- Thursday, Jan 11, 18 & 25
- Thursday, Feb 8, 15 & 22
10:00 am to 12:00 pm

General fee: \$790

This three-session class is designed for people without any Spanish language background. Your instructor will introduce you to Spanish pronunciation, basic vocabulary, and social protocols.



Rights and Obligations with Respect to Your Domestic Employees

By Solbes and Solbes

Friday December 15

12:00 pm to 2:00 pm

General fee: \$740

In this interesting class, participants will learn about their obligations to their domestic workers regarding vacations, social security, bonuses and how to legally terminate their services.



Introduction to Lakeside 101 things you need to know to settle here successfully!

By Barbara Harkness

- Monday & Wednesday,
December 4 & 6
- Monday & Wednesday,
January 15 & 17
- Monday & Wednesday,
February 19 & 21

10:00 am to 12:00 pm

General fee: \$1,500

Welcome to Mexico!

These two hour sessions will provide you with a wealth of information and resources to make your transition to Lakeside as painless as possible.

Getting your Jalisco Driver's License... Without Losing Your Mind

By Víctor Camarena

- Wednesday, Dec 13 CLASS
9:30 am to 11:30 am
Wednesday, Dec 20 TEST
visit to the Secretaria de
Transporte
- Wednesday, Jan 10 CLASS
9:30 am to 11:30 am
Wednesday, Jan 17 TEST
visit to the Secretaria de
Transporte
- Wednesday, Feb 14 CLASS
9:30 am to 11:30 am
Wednesday, Feb 21 TEST
visit to the Secretaria de
Transporte

General fee: \$790

In this class, participants will learn all the requirements to obtain Jalisco's drivers License.



CLASSES

MEMBERS GET A 30% DISCOUNT

All You Ever Wanted to Know About Your Smart Phone...(but were too afraid to ask)

By Andrea Putnam

Friday, January 12

10:00 am to 12:00 pm

General fee: \$540

This class provides a comprehensive tour of the different operating system features you can use on your smartphone or your tablet device.

Advanced Care Planning - Living Well and Dying Well at Lakeside

By Loretta Downs

• Friday, February 9 & 16

• Wednesday, April 17 & 24

10:00 am to 12:00 pm

General fee: \$780

This is a two class course. Empowers you with the knowledge and tools to navigate this delicate but essential aspect of life, ensuring your choices and values are upheld. Join us for a transformative experience in securing your future with confidence and care.



DECEMBER
SUNDAY MORNING
10:30 IN THE GARDEN AT
LAKE CHAPALA SOCIETY



DECEMBER 3TH



Michael Hogan

How the US and Mexico Came Together to defeat the last Empire in the Americas



DECEMBER 10TH

Indie Film festival



Freedom Riders film



DECEMBER 17TH



Greg Custer

Is it time to move the US-Mexico border? Let's consider the consequences.

NO OPEN CIRCLE ON DECEMBER 24TH

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ESPAÑOL EN ACCIÓN

Por la Profa. Sandra Gutierrez

Autora Dolores Alicia Ordóñez Pinter

Whether you want to learn Spanish or improve your Spanish skills, this is the right course for you!

We recognize the importance of learning Spanish as a means of creating connections, communication, and understanding with others. We offer 6 different levels from beginner to advanced in a 10-week course with two classes per week of 2 hours each. A total of 40 hours per course.

1A JAN 8TH TO MAR 21ST

Monday and Thursday - 10:00 am to 12:00 pm

1B JAN 9TH TO MAR 15TH

Tuesday and Friday - 10:00 am to 12:00 pm

2A JAN 8TH TO MAR 21ST

Monday and Thursday - 12:30 pm to 2:30 pm

2B JAN 9TH TO MAR 14TH

Tuesday and Thursday - 3:00 pm to 5:00 pm

3A JAN 8TH TO MAR 21ST

Monday and Thursday - 3:00 pm to 5:00 pm.

3B JAN 9TH TO MAR 15TH

Tuesday and Friday - 3:00 pm to 5:00 pm.

4A JAN 8TH TO MAR 21ST

Monday and Thursday - 12:30 pm to 2:30 pm

4B JAN 9TH TO MAR 15TH

Monday and Friday - 12:30 pm to 2:30 pm

Have you made your New Year's resolutions for 2024?

By Victor Camarena Martinez

A New Year's resolution is a tradition in which a person resolves to continue good practices or change an undesired trait or behavior on the first day of the new year. Creating New Year's resolutions has become a tradition around the world whether they're rooted in religion, culture or an entirely individual practice.

The very first New Year's resolutions dates happened over 4,000 years ago. The first recorded people to celebrate a new year were the ancient Babylonians. Their new year celebration was a 12-day festival called Akitu. During the celebrations, Babylonians would make resolutions to their gods and they believed that if they kept their resolutions, the gods would treat them favorably that year, but, if they broke their promises, they would get on the bad side of the gods.

The modern Gregorian New Year began in ancient Rome in 46 BC, when Emperor Julius Caesar introduced a new calendar and declared January 1 as the start of the new year. During this time, the Romans would offer sacrifices to Janus (Roman God) and make resolutions for good behavior.

Nowadays, New Year's resolutions are a common practice around the world and the resolutions people make may change from country to country. In a recent survey launched by Google Maps, internet users worldwide shared their resolutions and the differences between continents were considerable.

The results showed that the average person in the United States and Egypt had more health-related resolutions, while Australia and Japan were looking for love. In Russia, educational goals were most prominent and, in India, people seemed more career-driven.

However, there were also similarities worldwide, and the most popular resolutions included the following:

1. Planning to exercise, eat healthier and lose weight.
2. Consume less alcohol.
3. Change sleeping habits, establish good sleep hygiene or getting enough sleep, at least eight hours of sleep per night.
4. Learn something new, such as learning a new language or craft.
5. Saving money for a rainy day or putting extra money aside for a beautiful holiday with their loved ones.
6. Travel more.
7. Focus on self-love, self-care and kicking a bad habit.
8. Make new friends and stay in contact or rekindle relationships with family members and old friends.
9. Read and write more.
10. Spread love and lead a fulfilling life.
11. Focus on mental health and reduce stress.

While there can be many reasons why New Year's resolutions fail, it's not impossible to stick to them. The best resolutions are simple and achievable: limit how many you make and focus on things that will help you lead a happier life and improve your well-being.

¿Has hecho ya tus propósitos de Año Nuevo para 2024?

Por Víctor Camarena Martínez

Un propósito de Año Nuevo es una tradición en la que una persona se propone continuar con buenas prácticas o cambiar un rasgo o comportamiento no deseado el primer día del nuevo año. Crear propósitos de Año Nuevo se ha convertido en una tradición en todo el mundo, ya sea que tengan sus raíces en la religión, la cultura o sean una práctica totalmente individual.

Los primeros propósitos de Año Nuevo se remontan a hace más de 4.000 años. Las primeras personas de las que se tiene constancia que celebraran un año nuevo fueron los antiguos babilonios. Su celebración del año nuevo era un festival de 12 días llamado Akitu. Durante las celebraciones, los babilonios hacían propósitos a sus dioses, creían que si cumplían sus propósitos, los dioses los tratarían favorablemente ese año, pero, si rompían sus promesas, los dioses no estarían nada contentos.

El Año Nuevo gregoriano moderno comenzó en la antigua Roma en el año 46 a.C., cuando el emperador Julio César introdujo un nuevo calendario y declaró el 1 de enero como inicio del nuevo año. Durante este tiempo, los romanos ofrecían sacrificios a Jano (dios romano) y hacían propósitos de buen comportamiento.

Hoy en día, los propósitos de Año Nuevo son una práctica común en todo el mundo, los propósitos que hace la gente pueden cambiar de un país a otro. En una reciente encuesta elaborada por Google Maps, los internautas de todo el mundo compartieron sus propósitos y las diferencias entre continentes fueron considerables.

Los resultados mostraron que la persona media en Estados Unidos y Egipto tenía más propósitos relacionados con la salud, mientras que Australia y Japón buscaban el amor. En Rusia, los objetivos relacionados con la educación eran los más destacados, y en la India, la gente parecía más orientada a la carrera profesional.

Sin embargo, también hubo similitudes en todo el mundo, y las más populares fueron las siguientes:

1. Planear hacer ejercicio, comer más sano y perder peso.
2. Consumir menos alcohol.
3. Cambiar los hábitos de sueño, establecer una buena higiene del sueño o dormir lo suficiente, al menos ocho horas de sueño por noche.
4. Aprender algo nuevo, como aprender un nuevo idioma u oficio.
5. Ahorrar dinero para días difíciles, o guardar dinero extra para unas bonitas vacaciones con sus seres queridos.
6. Viajar más
7. Centrarse en el amor propio, el autocuidado y dejar un mal hábito.
8. Hacer nuevos amigos y mantener el contacto o reavivar las relaciones con familiares y viejos amigos.
9. Leer y escribir más
10. Difundir el amor y llevar una vida plena.
11. Centrarse en la salud mental y reducir el estrés.

Aunque puede haber muchas razones por las que fracasen los propósitos de Año Nuevo, no es imposible cumplirlos. Los mejores propósitos son sencillos y alcanzables: limite el número que se hace y céntrese en cosas que le ayuden a llevar una vida más feliz y a mejorar su bienestar.

Wrestling match, Tour in Guadalajara



**TUESDAY DEC. 19TH
5:00PM TO 11:30PM**

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Library Updates

Science fiction is a popular genre in both books and movies. Sci-fi writers speculate about alternative ways of life usually made possible by technological change. Like fantasy, and often associated with it, science fiction envisions alternative worlds with believably consistent rules and structures, set apart somehow from the ordinary or familiar world of our time and place.

It is fascinating to read early science fiction and to realize what figments of a writer's vivid imagination have actually come true. Think cell phones, video conferencing, AI, computers and tablets for starters.

Frankenstein by Mary Shelley is often considered the first written work of science fiction. Other early sci-fi writers include Jules Verne, HG Wells and, in some of his stories, Edgar Allan Poe. You can find several of these classics in the library. And no article about science fiction would be complete without mention of the master of the genre, Isaac Asimov.

Space travel, aliens and discovering new worlds are popular themes that can be found in the works of Frederik Pohl, Edgar Rice Burroughs and Robert Heinlein. Often science fiction authors explore the worlds they create in a series of works. Pohl does this in his Heechee series and Burroughs introduces us to several worlds in the many trilogies that he wrote.

Time travel is also an often-used tool and Michael Crichton is the master of this genre in *Jurassic Park* and *Timeline*. More recent works include *The Time Traveler's Wife*, the bestseller *Cloud Cuckoo Land* and my personal favorite, *The Midnight Library*.

While there are fewer women writers of science fiction, popular authors include Anne McCaffrey, Ursula Le Guin and Marion Zimmer Bradley. Lose yourself in an alien world in Bradley's *Darkover* series or spend time with dragons in McCaffrey's world of *Pern*.

Many of our library visitors are already science fiction fans. But if you are not among those devotees, consider giving the genre a try. Whatever subject you enjoy, the LCS library has something for everyone!



Los muchos regalos que LCS da

Por Harriet Hart

Los regalos son cosas (objetos o gestos o actos) que se dan libremente. Aportan placer y consuelo y pueden mejorar nuestra calidad de vida. Pueden ser grandes o pequeños, baratos o caros, con envoltorio o sin él. En estas fiestas, la época del año en que se hacen regalos, me llamó la atención que The Lake Chapala Society entrega regalos a los residentes de Lakeside durante todo el año.

Imaginemos que eres un recién llegado a la ciudad. Es tu primera visita a México. Acabas de bajar del avión de un clima norteño y te sientes aprensivo. Tu anfitrión te lleva a LCS, donde a tu llegada te recibe una persona amable que habla inglés, un “amigo” dispuesto a darte un recorrido por el lugar y explicarte qué servicios están disponibles. No quieres una visita guiada, pero necesitas unos pesos y allí hay un cajero automático, justo dentro de la puerta principal. Con dinero en el bolsillo, te das cuenta de que bebiste demasiado café antes de salir de casa y necesitas ir al baño. Voilà. Hay dos a tu izquierda, ¡y son gratis! Y limpios.

Quizá acabas de llegar de Canadá, donde el suelo está cubierto de nieve. Y ahora estás en un jardín tropical donde puedes pasear entre las plantas y admirar los peces del estanque Koi. Puedes sentir cómo la tensión abandona tu cuerpo. Estás listo para explorar México, pero necesitas información sobre los aspectos prácticos de la vida en la Ribera. ¿Dónde consigo un taxi? ¿Alquilo un coche? ¿Ver a un médico? ¿Comprar una linterna o lo que se te haya olvidado meter en la maleta? Justo enfrente de la biblioteca hay un mostrador de información atendido por una persona amable y servicial que también fue en algún momento una recién llegada. Necesitas material de lectura y no has metido un libro en la maleta. Estás frente a una de las mayores bibliotecas en inglés de América Latina. ¿Necesitas alquilar un apartamento? Hay un tablón de anuncios con montones de avisos útiles sobre viviendas disponibles, próximos eventos, servicios que podrías necesitar. Todo esto -los pesos, el aseo limpio, el bello entorno natural, la información útil- es gratis. Son regalos que damos por sentados.

Pero LCS no es sólo para recién llegados. Los expatriados residentes desde hace mucho tiempo y los ciudadanos mexicanos también pueden beneficiarse de las muchas ventajas que ofrece LCS. Luis Pacheco, Director Ejecutivo, y yo nos sentamos a comer en la nueva cafetería para hablar de todo lo que ofrece. Todo el mundo tiene acceso gratuito a los jardines, el cajero automático y los cinco patios: la sombrilla azul, la veranda, la plaza Neill James con su quiosco de música, la zona de arte infantil y el patio del campus sur. Todo el mundo puede pasear por los jardines, comer en el restaurante o utilizar los aseos públicos. Y todos tienen acceso a los servicios sanitarios y jurídicos. (Adquirir la condición de socio ofrece aún más ventajas).

The Lake Chapala Society ofrece oportunidades educativas para toda la comunidad. El Centro Wilkes ofrece cursos de inglés como segunda lengua para mexicanos que desean aprender inglés. En 2023 se matricularon 250. También cuenta con una amplia biblioteca de libros en español. Los niños mexicanos y extranjeros pueden participar en el Programa de Arte Infantil todos los



sábados por la mañana y asistir al campamento de arte de verano. Este verano, más de 150 niños estudiaron pintura, joyería y cerámica. Los niños también pueden tomar clases de fotografía y ajedrez. La Sociedad del Lago de Chapala proporciona ayuda directa mediante becas a 40 jóvenes mexicanos, lo que les permite estudiar en diversas instituciones de enseñanza postsecundaria.

LCS es un centro de aprendizaje permanente donde los adultos también pueden estudiar diversas cosas. Las clases incluyen las estándar, como Introducción al español y Obtención de la licencia de conducir de Jalisco, y la clase de bordado, que se imparte tres veces por semana por un verdadero maestro, y otras especiales, como Escritura de memorias. Puedes probar suerte con la alfarería uniéndote a Mudlarks, o bailar en línea para ponerte en forma.



El Círculo Abierto, que se celebra todos los domingos por la mañana, te abrirá la mente. Entre los temas más recientes figuran Cosas que quizá no sepas sobre la risa, con Ed Tasca, y temas más serios, como el Día de Muertos, con Loretta Downs. Las personas con inclinaciones intelectuales pueden asistir a Ted Talks los jueves, donde los participantes ven juntos una charla TED y debaten sobre temas tan actuales como el calentamiento global y la inteligencia artificial.

Conexiones, que se acerca a su quinto aniversario, es la revista que publica LCS y que mantiene a los lectores (en inglés y español) al tanto de las novedades de LCS, además de ofrecer artículos informativos sobre la cultura mexicana y las actividades de la comunidad. 7,000 lectores tienen acceso en línea, y 1,500 copias impresas están disponibles en LCS y en diversos negocios (como Intercam, Dental Express y Quality Care.) Gratis.

Luis Pacheco me recalcó que ve LCS como “un regalo a la comunidad, donde la gente puede ser ella misma y dar a los demás.” En el último recuento, 270 voluntarios ayudaron en 2023 con los programas y actividades antes mencionados. Ser miembro de LCS da a los residentes la oportunidad de pro-



bar cosas, de cumplir anhelos secretos. Personalmente, a lo largo de los años he trabajado en el mostrador de información, he diseñado y llevado a cabo un proyecto de historia oral y he ayudado a editar una revista. Cada una de ellas me pareció una oportunidad y sospecho que los otros 269 voluntarios piensan lo mismo.

“Dar no es sólo hacer un donativo. Se trata de marcar la diferencia.” (Kathy Calvin) The Lake Chapala Society inspira a hacerlo; se esfuerza por “enriquecer la calidad de vida, la vitalidad y la prosperidad (de los residentes de nuestra comunidad) mediante el intercambio de conocimientos, experiencia, cultura, patrimonio e idioma.” Marca la diferencia con sus jardines, instalaciones, programas y publicaciones. Y apoya a otras organizaciones benéficas. El año pasado ayudó a recaudar un millón de pesos para la Cruz Roja. Otras organizaciones benéficas que apoya son Niños Incapacitados y Lakeside Food Bank.

A medida que se acercan las fiestas, recuerda que “todo el mundo puede experimentar la alegría y la bendición de la generosidad, porque todo el mundo tiene algo que dar.” (Jan Grace) Puedes dar a LCS donativos de tiempo o de tus talentos y experiencia, o dinero, y LCS a su vez seguirá dando sus dones a la comunidad de La Ribera en el año que se avecina.



¡Solo levanta la mirada!

Por John Hopkins

Nota del editor: John Hopkins y su esposo, Alfredo Pérez Aldana, director de Administración y Finanzas de la Sociedad del Lago de Chapala, viajaron a España para recorrer el Camino Inglés de Santiago de Compostela el pasado abril.

Nunca olvidaré lo ansioso que estaba en los días previos a nuestra partida para recorrer el Camino Inglés de Santiago de Compostela. Mi esposo, Alfredo, y yo habíamos estado planeando este viaje de peregrinación en Galicia, España, durante muchos meses y finalmente había llegado el día de embarcarnos en nuestra aventura. Estábamos medio emocionados y medio nerviosos, para ser honesto, un poco desconcertados, sin saber exactamente qué esperar de un viaje que sería diferente a cualquier otro que alguno de los dos hubiera ya hecho.

Tim Welch, peregrino veterano del Camino y residente de largo tiempo en la ribera del lago, lo resumió sencillamente cuando nos deseó "¡Buen Camino!" el día que partimos de Gualajajara: "Solo levanten la mirada", dijo.

No entendí completamente lo que Tim quería decir hasta, digamos, a mitad del primer día del Camino de Ferrol a Pontedeume, una distancia de 28

kilómetros. Cansado, hambriento, aún con jet lag y un poco escéptico acerca de lo que exactamente habíamos emprendido, tuve la oportunidad de levantar la vista mientras estaba debajo de un espeso bosque de eucaliptos. Entonces lo entendí. Mis pies habían sido mis compañeros constantes durante las últimas cuatro horas, con la cabeza baja, contando inconscientemente los cientos de pasos que había dado desde que salimos de la pensión esa mañana. Arriba y adelante de mí, se extendía una belleza increíble: un cielo azul glorioso y un sendero serpenteante que se abría paso por un valle exuberante de verde, salpicado con algunas vacas pastando a lo largo de un arroyo. Y el silencio. Oh, el silencio. No se escuchaba ningún sonido, excepto por el constante ritmo de nuestras botas en el sendero de tierra mientras continuábamos hacia el destino del día.

Como pronto me di cuenta después de mi primer día caminando el Camino, mis miedos se evaporaron y pensé para mí mismo: "Puedo hacer esto"; y luego quería más, mucho más. Cada día, no podía esperar a despertar para comenzar una nueva aventura.

El Camino de Santiago es una peregrinación con raíces en la Edad Media. Conduce a la tumba que se cree que pertenece al apóstol Santiago el Mayor, venerada en la cripta de la Catedral de Santiago de Compostela. El Camino fue, y aún es, la ruta más antigua, concurrida y conocida de Europa.

Aunque el Camino consta de muchas rutas en toda Europa, elegimos caminar el Camino Inglés, un recorrido de 120 kilómetros desde Ferrol, en el norte de la provincia de A Coruña, en Galicia. Pasaríamos seis días con paradas nocturnas en Pontedeume, Betanzos, Bruma, Sigüeiro y finalmente Santiago. Aunque la mayor parte del camino serpenteaba por pueblos rurales, montañosos y aislados, siempre nos alegraba encontrar lugares ocasionales para tomar descansos en cafeterías locales y



lugares un poco más espontáneos para tomar un café con leche y una tortilla de patatas. Además de los impresionantes paisajes, era difícil pasar por alto los muchos aromas primaverales que se percibían prácticamente en cada giro: eucalipto, lila, glicina y el olor siempre presente de la rica tierra húmeda desgastada por los miles de pies que recorren la ruta.

Después de caminar los 124 kilómetros a lo largo del Camino de Santiago sobre colinas y a través de bosques en el sendero sagrado de Ferrol a Santiago, llegamos a la catedral de Santiago de Compostela, donde nos quedamos humildemente maravillados por su majestuosidad y por todos los peregrinos que nos rodeaban. Pero luego, tan pronto como esa emoción pasó eventualmente, surgió un sentimiento en las entrañas; mientras tanto Alfredo y yo nos mirábamos y decíamos: "bien, ¿y ahora qué?" El sentimiento no era de decepción, ¡en lo absoluto! Era más bien un sentimiento como: ¿qué significa realmente toda esta caminata, contemplación y, en algunos días, pura tortura?

Unos meses después, llegué a la conclusión de que el Camino fue una forma de demostrar que yo, casi a los 70 años, aún podía hacer lo que antes este cuerpo que alguna vez corrió maratones, para hacer algo desafiante junto a alguien que significa el mundo para mí. Alfredo, por otro lado, explicó que se dio cuenta, por primera vez en reali-



dad, de cómo se siente ser extranjero en una tierra extraña. En su primer viaje fuera de México, aparte de los viajes a la frontera en Laredo durante sus días universitarios, Alfredo relató cómo ahora podía entender cómo muchos de nosotros, extranjeros aquí en la ribera del lago, posiblemente nos sentimos al llegar por primera vez.

Él explicó: "La frase 'viajar abre los ojos' finalmente resonó en mi cabeza, cargada de significado. He escuchado a muchos inmigrantes hablar sobre lo complicado que es tratar de entender una cultura diferente, una costumbre diferente, a veces sin sentido para el observador.

"Esta experiencia estalló en mi cabeza después de terminar el camino. Comprender la moneda, las palabras, las señales en la calle, ubicarte en el espacio, percibir olores y sonidos diferentes y darte cuenta de que los autos realmente se detienen para que cruces la calle en lugar de atropellarte, pero aún dudas en cruzar; ver que las casas no tienen muros perimetrales para la seguridad, algunas solo presumen de una pequeña cerca solo para marcar el espacio; ver a per-



sonas en el tren dejar sus dispositivos y, en un abrir y cerrar de ojos, ir al baño y al regresar, esos dispositivos los estaban esperando justo donde los dejaron. Todo esto me hizo ser muy consciente de que hay otras formas en el mundo. Me ayudó a ser más colaborativo con el proceso de adaptación y la forma en que piensan los inmigrantes, y a saber que es posible ser mejor y tener una vida diferente."

Aunque un poco tristes de regresar a México, pasamos nuestro último día en Santiago, disfrutando de este lugar históricamente hermoso, y nos dirigimos a la imponente catedral para asistir a la Misa del Peregrino, donde se impartieron bendiciones a peregrinos de todas las procedencias y rincones del mundo, unidos en Santiago para celebrar un sinnúmero de victorias personales.

Durante la misa abarrotada, el sacerdote advirtió a la multitud sobre la importancia de estar "presentes" y vivir "en el momento", y resistir las distracciones que nos aíslan de amigos y familiares.

Creo que en el mundo de hoy esto no podría ser más cierto para todos nosotros.

Han pasado cinco meses desde que completamos nuestro primer Camino, y Alfredo y yo hemos reservado otro viaje para el próximo abril, caminaremos el Camino de Fisterrais desde Santiago hasta el Cabo Fisterra, o Finisterre, antes considerado como el final del mundo. ¡Buen Camino!



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Just Look Up!

By John Hopkins

Editor's note: John Hopkins and his husband, Alfredo Pérez Aldana, director of Administration and Finance at the Lake Chapala Society, traveled to Spain to walk The English Way of the Camino de Compostela last April.

I will never forget how anxious I was in the days leading up to our departure to walk The English Way of the Camino de Santiago Compostela. My husband, Alfredo, and I had been planning this pilgrim's journey in Galicia, Spain, for many months and the day had finally arrived to embark on our adventure. We were half excited and half nervous - to be quite frank, freaking out a little - not knowing exactly what to expect from a trip that would be unlike any other that either of us had taken.

Veteran Camino pilgrim and longtime Lakeside resident, Tim Welch, put it simply as he wished us "Buen Camino!" the day we departed Guadajajara: "Just look up," he said.

I did not fully understand exactly what Tim had meant until, oh, say mid-way through the first day of the Camino from Ferrol to Pontedeume, a distance of 28 kilometers. Tired, hungry, still jet lagged, and a bit dubious about what exactly we had undertaken, I happened to look up while standing beneath a thick grove of eucalyptus trees. Then it hit me. My feet had been my constant companion for the past four hours, my head down, unconsciously counting the hundreds of steps I had taken since first leaving the pension that morning. Above and ahead of me was an expanse of incredible beauty—glorious blue sky and a winding trail that snaked its way through a lush valley of green, dotted with a few grazing cows along a meandering stream. And the silence. Oh, the silence. Not a sound to be heard except for the steady cadence of our boots on the dirt path as we continued toward the day's destination.

As I would soon come realize after my first day of walking the Camino, my



fears evaporated and I thought to myself, I've got this; and then I wanted more, a lot more. Every day, I couldn't wait to wake up to begin a new adventure.

The Camino de Santiago is a pilgrimage rooted in medieval origins. It leads to the tomb believed to be that of the Apostle Saint James the Greater, enshrined in the crypt of Santiago de Compostela Cathedral. The Camino was, and still is, Europe's oldest, busiest and most well-known route.

While the Camino consists of many routes across Europe, we chose to walk the Camino Ingles, a 120-kilometer journey from Ferrol in the north of the province of A Coruña, in Galicia. We would spend six days with nightly stops in Pontedeume, Betanzos, Bruma, Sigüeiro and finally Santiago. While most of the Camino snaked through rural, mountainous and isolated villages, we were always delighted to find occasional places to take breaks at local cafes and seemingly spontaneous out of the way places for a cup of café con leche and tortilla de patatas. Apart from the breathtaking scenery, it was hard to miss the many fragrant spring aromas virtually at every turn - eucalyptus, lilac, wisteria and the ever-present smell of the rich, damp earth worn bare from the thousands of feet that tread the route.

After 77 miles of walking along the Way of Saint James over the hills and through the forests on the sacred path from Ferrol to Santiago, we arrived at the cathedral in Santiago de Compostela where we humbly stood in awe of its majesty and in awe of all the pilgrims surrounding us. But then, as soon as that emotion eventually passed, there was this gut feeling as Alfredo and I looked at each other said, "okay, what now?" The feeling wasn't one of disap-



pointment - not at all! It was more of a feeling like what exactly does all of this walking, contemplating and, on some days, pure torture, really mean?

Some months later I came to the conclusion that the Camino was a way for me to prove that I, at nearly 70 years old, still had it in this once marathon-running body to do something challenging alongside someone who means the world to me. Alfredo, on the other hand, explained that he realized, for the first time actually, what it felt like to be a foreigner in a strange land. His first journey outside Mexico aside from border trips to Laredo during his college days, Alfredo related how he could now understand how many of us foreigners here at Lakeside possibly feel when first arriving.





He explained: “The phrase ‘travel is an eye-opener’ finally resonated in my head, loaded with meaning. I have heard many immigrants talk about how complicated it is to try to understand a different culture, a different custom, sometimes meaningless to the beholder.

“This experience exploded in my head after finishing the Camino. Understanding the currency, the words, the signs on the street, locating yourself in space, perceiving different smells and different sounds and realizing that cars actually stop for you to cross the street instead of driving into you, but you still hesitate to cross; seeing that the houses don’t have perimeter walls for security, some only boasting a small fence just to mark the space; seeing people on the train leave their devices and, at the drop of a hat, go to the restroom and that on their return those devices were waiting for them right where they were left. All this made me very aware that there are other ways in the world. It helped me to be more collaborative with the process of adaptation and the way immigrants think, and to know that it is possible to be better and to have a different life.”

While a little sad to be heading back to Mexico, we spent our final day in Santiago, taking in this historically beautiful place, and made our way to the massive cathedral to attend the Pilgrim’s Mass where blessings were bestowed upon peregrinos from all walks of life and from all corners of the world, united in Santiago to celebrate a myriad of personal victories.

During the standing room only mass, the priest cautioned the crowd on the importance of being “present” and living “in the moment,” and to resist the distractions that isolate us from friends and family.

I believe that in today’s world this could not ring truer for all of us.

Five months have now passed since completing our first Camino and Alfredo and I have booked another journey next April and will walk the Camino de Fisterrais from Santiago to Cape Fisterra, or Land’s End, once believed to be the edge of the world. Buen Camino!




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Care Options at Lakeside Guide Part 4: Essential Questions for Choosing Your Ideal Care Facility

By Sandra Baird

Embarking on the journey to find the right care facility for yourself or a loved one is a heartfelt endeavor. It's about starting a new chapter filled with care, comfort and respect. Here is a carefully selected list of important questions to guide you through this process. These questions aim to shed light on each facility's approach to care, lifestyle and community, ensuring you find a place where joy, dignity and support are a priority. As you explore your options, remember, each question is a step towards a decision that feels right for you and your family.

General Information

1. What types of care do you provide here?
2. Are you able to take care of specific health issues, like memory problems or diabetes?
3. How many staff members are there for each resident?
4. Does the staff speak English and Spanish?
5. Could you tell me about the training your staff has?
6. Is your facility licensed, and do you have any certifications?

Living Arrangements

7. Can you tell me about the living spaces? Are there options for private or shared rooms?
8. Is it possible to bring our own furniture or decorate the room?
9. How do you decide who shares rooms?

Health and Personal Care

10. What happens in case of a medical emergency?
11. Is it okay to keep seeing our own doctors?
12. How do you handle medication management?
13. Do you offer on-site therapy or rehabilitation services?

Cost and Insurance

14. How much does it cost to stay here, and what does that include?
15. Are there additional fees for specific services?
16. Do you accept insurance or offer any financial assistance?

Daily Life and Activities

17. What kind of activities and social events do you have for residents?
18. How is the food, and can you cater to special diets?
19. What are the visiting rules for family and friends?

Policies and Procedures

20. What's the procedure if someone needs to leave or change their living arrangements?
21. How do you address concerns or complaints from residents or their families?

22. Are residents allowed to go out for personal visits or errands?

Long-Term Considerations

23. What happens if a resident's health needs become more complex over time?
24. How do you manage transitions to different levels of care?

Community and Environment

25. What's the overall atmosphere like here?
26. How do you ensure the safety and well-being of residents?
27. Is it possible to speak with some current residents or their families for their perspective?

Miscellaneous

28. Are pets allowed in the facility?
29. How do you celebrate special occasions like birthdays and holidays?
30. Do you have transportation services for external appointments or shopping?

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Cuentos de animales y recuerdos de Conejos

Por Diana Hunt

Adelia vive en Lakeside con sus dos perros y su gato blanco y negro, Munroe, que es un conocido ladrón del vecindario. El vecino tiene cinco gatos y los gatos van al patio del otro y casi siempre juegan a pelearse. De vez en cuando, cuando Munroe va a visitar a sus vecinos y el hombre no está en casa, entra en la casa y va hasta donde están guardadas las golosinas para gatos. Abre el armario de la cocina, arranca los paquetes y se sirve.

El vecino dice que en realidad no le importa; obviamente, si le importara podría arreglar algo para disuadir a ese gato descarado.

Siempre me han gustado los conejos. Recuerdo que mi primer conejo fue un típico conejo doméstico blanco. Le puse el nombre de Príncipe Blanco, quizá pensando que era mi príncipe con un abrigo de piel blanca y largas orejas. De todos modos, todos los veranos de niña me iba de campamento durante un mes. Un año me llevé a Príncipe Blanco conmigo. Lo dejé vagar, comiendo toda la hierba que quisiera. Como era de esperar, acabó desapareciendo. Me quedé destrozada, pero me dije que había encontrado a su princesa y se había ido a vivir feliz para siempre.



Otro conejo que me regalaron cuando era adulta era un gran Checkered gigante negro (la raza más grande del mundo) al que llamé Zafiro. Esta raza es conocida por su energía, sus cuerpos fuertes y musculosos y sus poderosas patas. Por aquel entonces, vivía en una manzana en la que las puertas traseras de las casas adosadas daban a un césped común. Zafiro tenía su casa y su caja de arena en el patio trasero cerrado y pasaba su tiempo al aire libre. Si algún gato se atrevía a acercarse a "su" casa, arremetía contra él para ahuyentarlo.

Una vez estuvo a punto de electrocutarse al morder el cableado del frigorífico. Sabía que tenía que quedarse en el linóleo de la cocina hasta que yo no mirara, y entonces saltaba inmediatamente a la alfombra y al sofá.

Un fin de semana de Navidad hubo una gran ventisca y me quedé (encantada) en la estación de esquí. Pero cuando llegué a casa descubrí que habían entrado a robar. Supongo que Zafiro no pudo ahuyentar al ladrón, porque la encontré acurrucada en el sofá, donde había hecho un enorme agujero en una esquina. Durante años, me limité a tapanlo con una almohada.

Charlie Brown era un caballo con sentido del humor. Era un pura sangre alazán con mucho hueso. Era un antiguo saltador de obstáculos que me regalaron por Navidad. El segundo día que lo tuve en casa y entré en su corral, vino galopando hacia mí. Se me puso el corazón en un puño cuando chilló hasta detenerse delante de mí, me tocó con el hocico y se marchó al galope. ¡A la caza! Estaba jugando. Intenté correr tras él, pero, por supuesto, no pude alcanzarle. Se acercó galopando varias veces, me tocó la manga y salió corriendo. Así que esa se convirtió en nuestra rutina.

Pero su mejor broma fue cuando un amigo me preguntó si podíamos ir a dar una vuelta. Jim era un hombre grande, así que lo subí a Charlie. Me di cuenta de que a Charlie no le gustaba su energía. Jim también tenía ideas sobre nuestra relación que yo no compartía. En aquel momento yo tenía un segundo caballo, así que salimos los dos a dar un paseo. Vi un brillo en los ojos de Charlie y supe que esto no iba a terminar bien.

Al cabo de media hora, Charlie se desplomó de repente. Jim consiguió bajarse sin hacerse daño. Yo me reía mucho por dentro porque sabía que ese caballo quería librarse del equipaje. Jim, con razón, estaba terriblemente preocupado, preguntándose si era demasiado pesado para llevarlo. Estuve de acuerdo en que tal vez lo fuera, así que sería mejor llevar al caballo de vuelta a casa. Fue un largo paseo hasta el establo. Charlie Brown estaba muy orgulloso de sí mismo.

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Animal tales and Cottontails Remembrances

By Diana Hunt



Adelia lives in Lakeside with her two dogs and her black and white cat, Munroe, who is a well-known neighborhood thief. The man next door has five cats and the cats go into the other's yard and mostly play-fight. Every once in a while, when Munroe drops in to visit his neighbors and the man is not home, he waltzes inside the house to where the cat treats are stored. He opens the kitchen cupboard, rips open the packages and helps himself.

The neighbor said he doesn't really mind; obviously if he did mind, he could fix something to deter that cheeky cat.

I've always liked rabbits. I remember my first rabbit was a typical white domestic rabbit. I named him White Prince, maybe thinking this was my prince in a white fur coat and long ears. Anyway, every summer as a child I went to camp for a month. One year I took White Prince with me. I let him roam, eating all the grass he wanted. Not surprisingly, he eventually disappeared. I was devastated, but told myself he found his princess and hopped away to live happily ever after.

Another rabbit I got when I was an adult was a big, black Checkered Giant (the world's largest breed) who I called Sapphire. The breed is known to be energetic with strong, muscular bodies and powerful legs. At the time, I lived in a block where the back doors of the attached houses opened onto a common lawn. Sapphire had her house and litter box on the enclosed back porch and had her outdoor time. If any cat dared to come near "her" house, she would lunge at them to chase them away.

She nearly electrocuted herself once by chewing through the refrigerator wiring. She knew to stay on the kitchen linoleum until I wasn't looking, then she immediately hopped onto the carpet and on the sofa.

One Christmas weekend we had a huge blizzard, and I was (delightedly) snowed in at the ski resort. But when I came home, I discovered my house had been burglarized. I guess Sapphire couldn't scare the burglar away, because I found her curled up on the sofa where she had eaten a huge hole in the corner. For years afterward I just kept a pillow over it.

Charlie Brown was a horse with a sense of humor. He was an old-style, chestnut Thoroughbred with a lot of bone. He was a former show jumper who I got as a Christmas present to myself. The second day I had him at home and walked into his corral, he came galloping at me. My heart was in

my throat as he screeched to a halt in front of me, touched me with his muzzle and galloped away. Tag! He was playing tag! So, I tried to run after him but, of course, I couldn't catch him. He came galloping up to me several times, touched my sleeve and ran off. So that became our routine.

But his best joke was when a friend asked me if we could go for a ride. Jim was a big man so I put him on Charlie. I could tell Charlie did not like his energy. Jim also had ideas about our relationship that I did not share. At that time, I had a second horse so we both set off for a trail ride. I saw a glint in Charlie's eye and I knew this was not going to end well.

About a half hour into the ride, Charlie all of a sudden collapsed. Jim managed to get off without being hurt. I was laughing so hard inside because I knew that horse wanted to be rid of the baggage. Jim, rightly so, was terribly worried, wondering if he was too heavy to carry. I agreed, perhaps he was, so it would be better to lead the horse back home. It was a long walk back to the barn and Charlie Brown was very proud of himself.

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Bravados

An Anthology

By Rachel McMillen



Language, Learning, and Laughter:

Inside the Wilkes
Center's Unique Journey
By Sandra Baird

What does it take to leave your home and move to another country? A new anthology, created by none other than Ajijic's own Janice Kimball, sheds light not only on why twenty-six of Lakeside's current residents took that step, but also on why they have stayed - and it turns out the reasons are as varied as the writers.

They follow in some famous footsteps. Neill James, whose original residence still houses the Lake Chapala Society, arrived here in 1943 and started compiling her notes and journals into five books, including the well-known *Dust on My Heart*.

She was followed by Ernest Hemmingway and D.H. Lawrence (and perhaps George Bernard Shaw, although his presence is not documented) and Ajijic took on the mantle of an international art and music center.

The contributors to *Bravados* continue that tradition. Many are well-known artists and/or published authors. All are now a part of the mosaic that makes up this small Mexican community; neighbors and friends who have brought with them their unique experiences and their special talents and have found new inspiration here on the shores of the largest lake in Mexico.

But finding new inspiration is not all these *Bravados* have experienced. Each of them, in their own way, has fallen in love with their new home, and each of them has in turn contributed to it. Reading these stories leaves no doubt that Mexico, with its warm and vibrant culture, has woven a magic web that has caught them firmly in its grasp. As Kenneth Salzmann says, "Mexico, it turns out, has a lot to teach an aging gringo."

They have come here from all across the globe: France, Canada, the United States, Northern Ireland, Australia and they have come here for different reasons, but all have found a new way to live their lives along the shores of Lake Chapala. In sharing those lives in this new anthology, they offer each of us new insights and new perspectives that just might be the what's behind that saying we hear so often: "People come here to die and learn how to live."

Meet the Authors

Mark your calendars. On Thursday, December 7th at 1:00 you will have a chance to meet many of the authors of this new anthology. LCS is sponsoring this special event for Lakeside readers on the South Campus, back patio. Copies of the anthology will be available for purchase.

The Wilkes Education Center is a vibrant hub of learning and growth, not just for students learning English as a second language, but also for the dedicated volunteer teachers guiding them. Beyond language classes, the center also boasts a rich English and Spanish library, cherished by many for personal reading adventures. Additionally, a picturesque garden at the Wilkes Biblioteca serves as a lively venue for weekly discussions on current events.

During a recent visit to the center, I had the opportunity to engage with the students and hear their thoughts firsthand. Their words are a testament to the center's impact:

"The teachers want to help us; they really care about us."

"I am taking the class to be able to help my children with their English homework."

"I am making new friends in the class. We help each other."

"I am learning the language from a native speaker. Much better."

"The classes are free. They will help me get a better job."

"It is a nice place to learn at. Not like a regular classroom. More casual and fun."

"I can help my husband with translation now. I like that."

"We need to learn to speak English to travel to other countries for work too."

The center also thrives, thanks to other volunteers like Tony, a former Harvard librarian, who expertly reorganized the library. Then there's Maria, the center's sole employee, who not only maintains the facility but also steps into the classroom to teach whenever there's a need. Inez Dayer, a volunteer administrator responsible for classes and teachers, encapsulates the essence of the Wilkes Center: **"Everyone grows here. We are all learning."**

This community-centered approach at Wilkes Education Center highlights the mutual growth and learning experienced by both students and volunteers, creating a unique environment where everyone thrives together.

Lengua, aprendizaje y risa: El viaje único del Centro Wilkes



Por Sandra Baird



El Centro Wilkes es un vibrante centro de aprendizaje y crecimiento, no sólo para los estudiantes que aprenden inglés como segunda lengua, sino también para los dedicados profesores voluntarios que los guían. Más allá de las clases de idiomas, el centro también cuenta con una rica biblioteca en inglés y español, apreciada por muchos que viven grandes aventuras personales con sus lecturas. Además, un hermoso jardín en la Biblioteca sirve de espacio para animados debates semanales sobre diversos temas de actualidad.

Durante una reciente visita al centro, tuve la oportunidad de conversar con los estudiantes y escuchar sus opiniones de primera mano. Sus palabras son testimonio del impacto del centro:

"Los profesores quieren ayudarnos; se preocupan de verdad por nosotros."

"Voy a clase para poder ayudar a mis hijos con las tareas de inglés."

"Estoy haciendo nuevos amigos en la clase. Nos ayudamos unos a otros."

"Estoy aprendiendo el idioma de un nativo. Mucho mejor."

"Las clases son gratuitas. Me ayudarán a conseguir un trabajo mejor."

"Es un lugar agradable para aprender. No es como una clase normal. Es más informal y divertido."

"Ahora puedo ayudar a mi marido con la traducción. Eso me gusta."

"Necesitamos aprender a hablar inglés también para viajar por trabajo a otros países ."



El centro también prospera gracias a otros voluntarios, como Tony, un antiguo bibliotecario de Harvard que reorganizó la biblioteca con pericia. También está María, empleada del centro, que no sólo se encarga del mantenimiento de las instalaciones, sino que también acude a las aulas para enseñar siempre que hace falta. Inez Dayer, es la voluntaria responsable de las clases y los profesores, resume la esencia del Centro Wilkes: **"Aquí todos crecemos. Todos estamos aprendiendo."**

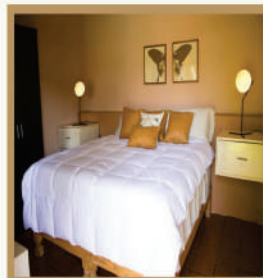
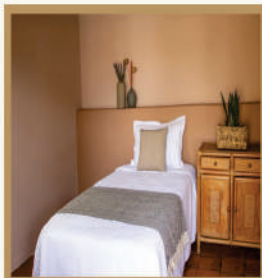
El enfoque del Centro Wilkes centrado en la comunidad, pone de relieve el crecimiento y el aprendizaje mutuos que experimentan tanto los alumnos como los voluntarios, creando un entorno único en el que todos prosperan juntos.

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Chuckle and Unwind: Tips for Stress-Free Living

By Sandra Baird



Ready to dial down the drama and turn up the tranquility? Dive into these sprightly tips to send stress packing. From strategic shirt selections to serenading traffic standstills, discover how folder flair and key cabanas can bring you bliss. Embrace each day with a chuckle, and watch the worries waltz away!

- 1. Waiting for a Call:** Instead of glaring at the silent phone - while you wait conquer a crossword or defeat a sudoku.
- 2. Morning Prep:** Choose tomorrow's Hawaiian shirt tonight. That way you know it's clean.
- 3. Easy Access Documents:** Create a flashy folder so you can sashay to your needed papers, no search and rescue required.
- 4. Key Spot:** Set up a 'key cabana' so you never have to do the 'where are my keys' tango again.
- 5. Traffic Time:** Leave early, but if you still end up in a traffic jam, make your vehicle a personal sing-along booth.
- 6. Nighttime Routine:** Put by the front door what you need to take with you tomorrow, then no next day last-minute scramble. Stop eating at least two hours before bedtime to avoid indigestion.
- 7. Breathing Breaks:** Zen in Ten: Take one-minute breathing breaks. Ten deep breaths and slow exhales can lower your blood pressure by 30%.
- 8. Task Batching:** Map out your week like a treasure hunt - combine tasks like grocery shopping and paying a phone bill with a coffee date with a buddy.
- 9. Water Bottle Reminder:** Keep a water bottle at your side - did you know grumpy people are often dehydrated? The body gets cranky.
- 10. Unsubscribe and Unfollow:** Weekly unsubscribe to email newsletters and promotions that are boring. No one will be offended.
- 11. Daily Walks:** Mother Nature has the magical ability to de-stress you. "Nature never betrayed the heart that loves her." Wordsworth, poet
- 12. Compliment Others:** Making someone else's day with praise will also raise your spirits as well.
- 13. Music Therapy:** Melody Medicine: Create a playlist that includes songs that make you smile and want to dance and sing along - watch **Pharrell Williams - Happy** on YouTube - I challenge you to re-

sist tapping your foot and laughing at all the people 'busting a move' to it.

14. Laughter is Medicine:

Line up those comedy clips and watch them when needed. I recommend Michael McIntyre, the British comedian. I can watch his clips on YouTube repeatedly, especially the episode "**My Name Is Ackle Ackinckacker!**" about a visit to the dentist.

15. Stretch Often:

Stretching immediately reduces tension. Get so good elongating your body that you can even impress a cat!

16. Prioritize Sleep:

Stop watching the late-night bad news and skip the zombie apocalypse movie to have a peaceful sleep. Go to sleep at the same time every night and you will find it easier to fall asleep.

17. Delegating Tasks:

The more you involve other people in larger tasks like decorating the Christmas tree, the more fun and less stress. Keep in mind that perfectionism kills joy.

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