

#66

September | septiembre 2024

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# CONEXIONES

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## Children's Art Arte para niños

Bilingual Publication  
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# President's Message

By Yolanda Martinez



Yolanda Matínez; photo by Harriet Hart

It is an honor to have been elected as the President of the Lake Chapala Society at the Extraordinary Meeting (EM) held on August 20. The overwhelming attendance in person and on Zoom is a testament to our love for this organization founded by Neill James and others nearly 70 years ago.

She would be proud to see the improvements to the campus and the thriving programs – especially the Children's Art Program – which was so close to her heart. This year's camp engaged more than 200 children who worked with local professional artists and dozens of volunteers to bring a love of art and the joy of creativity into the lives of these young people.

This type of engagement brings the expat and Mexican communities together in ways that support the LCS Vision Statement: "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



LCS Extraordinary Meeting 2024; photo by V. Camarena

of knowledge, expertise, culture and language."

LCS has a vibrant campus with thousands of visitors each month and dozens of programs for both the expat and Mexican communities. We have beautiful new restrooms and infrastructure upgrades that addressed decades-old problems. The rebuilt café is a great success.

As I said in my speech at the EM, I ran on a platform of optimism and unity and looking toward the future, not the past. But we still face challenges. I, along with other board members, will begin hosting listening sessions with members and volunteers in the near future to ensure we can best understand your ideas, thoughts and concerns. We want, and need, your continued involvement!

Your financial generosity is also greatly needed. Membership has rebounded to very close to pre-pandemic levels, but membership fees make up only a small percentage of our operational costs. Program and concert revenues are holding

steady. But it isn't enough to cover our monthly expenses and continue the work necessary to maintain and improve our aging infrastructure. It is your donations that make up the difference, and LCS needs your help.

You will be hearing more about it soon, but you can make a difference today: Go to the LCS website and click on "[Donate](#)." Your one-time or ongoing monthly contribution of any amount will help us keep LCS open to everyone, continuing to make a meaningful difference in the lives of our members, supporters and the community.

I ask that you join me in keeping the momentum and energy of the Extraordinary Meeting going. It is time to honor the fine work of all those who have come before us over the decades and work together for an even brighter future out of our shared love of the Lake Chapala Society.

Please accept my sincere appreciation for your support!

Yoly

## 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.

## Board of Directors

**President/Presidente:** Yolanda Martínez Llamas

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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

**Managing Editor:** Sandra Baird

**Assistant Managing Editor:** Catherine Austill

**Associate Editors/Editores asociados:** Harriet Hart, Diana Hunt

**Production, Art & Design/ Producción, Arte y Diseño:**

Domitzu Medrano

**Translations/Traducciones:** LCS

## Editorial inquiries

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: [editor@lcsac.org](mailto:editor@lcsac.org)

*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: [editor@lcsac.org](mailto:editor@lcsac.org)*

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**Cover: Domitzu Medrano**

## Conecciones Advertising Prices Precios de los Anuncios 2024

	Cost / Precio
Back cover / Contraportada (8.5 x 11" / 21.5 x 28 cm)	\$6,600 MXN
Inside front & back cover / Contraportada interna (8.5"x11" / 21.5 x 28 cm)	\$6,060 MXN
Full page / Página completa (7.8 x 10.2" / 20 x 26 cm)	\$4,590 MXN
1/2 page / 1/2 página (4.7 x 7.2" / 12 x 18.5 cm)	\$2,775 MXN
1/4 page / 1/4 página (3.5 x 4.7" / 9 x 12 cm)	\$1,465 MXN
1/8 page-business card / 1/8 página-tarjeta de presentación (3.5 x 2" / 9 x 5 cm)	\$510 MXN

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 [sales@lcsac.org](mailto:sales@lcsac.org)

*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 [sales@lcsac.org](mailto:sales@lcsac.org)*



# Mensaje del Presidente

Por Yolanda Martínez

Es un honor haber sido elegida como Presidenta de la Sociedad del Lago de Chapala (The Lake Chapala Society) en la Reunión Extraordinaria (RE) celebrada el 20 de agosto. La gran asistencia en persona y en Zoom es un testimonio de nuestro amor por esta organización fundada por Neill James y otros hace casi 70 años.

Ella estaría orgullosa de ver las mejoras en el campus y los programas en crecimiento, especialmente el Programa de Arte Infantil, que tan cerca estaba de su corazón. El campamento de este año contó con la participación de más de 200 niños que trabajaron con artistas profesionales locales y docenas de voluntarios para llevar el amor por el arte y la alegría de la creatividad a las vidas de estos jóvenes.

Este tipo de compromiso une a las comunidades de emigrantes y mexicanos en formas que apoyan la Declaración de la Visión de LCS: “Nuestra visión es un futuro en el que todos los residentes de la ribera del lago tengan continuamente un papel en el enriquecimiento de la calidad de vida, la vitalidad y la prosperidad de la comunidad a través del intercambio de conocimientos, experiencia, cultura e idioma”.

LCS tiene un campus vibrante con miles de visitantes cada mes y docenas de programas tanto para la comunidad de expatriados como para la mexicana. Tenemos hermosos baños nuevos y mejoras de infraestructura que solucionaron problemas de décadas. La cafetería reconstruida es un gran éxito.

Como dije en mi discurso en el EM, me presenté con una plataforma de optimismo y unidad y mirando hacia el futuro, no hacia el pasado. Pero seguimos afrontando retos. Yo, junto con otros miembros de la

Junta Directiva, empezaremos a organizar sesiones para escuchar a los miembros y voluntarios en un futuro próximo para asegurarnos de que podamos entender mejor sus ideas, pensamientos y preocupaciones. Queremos y necesitamos que continúen participando.

Su generosidad financiera también es muy necesaria. El número de miembros ha vuelto a situarse muy cerca de los niveles anteriores a la pandemia, pero las cuotas sólo representan un pequeño porcentaje de nuestros costos operativos. Los ingresos por programas y conciertos se mantienen estables. Pero no bastan para cubrir nuestros gastos mensuales y continuar el trabajo necesario para mantener y mejorar nuestra antigua infraestructura. Son sus donaciones las que marcan la diferencia, y LCS necesita su ayuda.

Pronto sabrán más al respecto, pero pueden marcar la diferencia hoy mismo: Visita el sitio web de LCS y haz clic en «[Donar](https://lcsajijic.givecloud.co/donations)» <https://lcsajijic.givecloud.co/donations>. Tu contribución mensual única o continua de cualquier cantidad nos ayudará a mantener LCS abierta para todos, para continuar haciendo una diferencia significativa en las vidas de nuestros miembros, simpatizantes y la comunidad.

Les pido unirse a mí para mantener el impulso y la energía de la Reunión Extraordinaria. Es hora de honrar el buen trabajo de todos los que nos han precedido durante décadas y trabajar juntos por un futuro aún más brillante de nuestro amor compartido por la Sociedad del Lago de Chapala.

Por favor acepten mi sincero agradecimiento por su apoyo.

Yoly



Campamento de arte para niños; foto por D. Medrano





# Peter's Tale:

## From anecdotal story to life's journey.

A note from Intercam:

The closeness with our Clients **has fostered a partnership that goes beyond the typical "customer-service" interaction**, creating a more personal connection that sometimes goes even beyond that—it's like family. Because of this bond, we often receive emails and even handwritten notes delivered personally at our branches across Mexico, and **among them are stories that truly touch our hearts and inspire us to deepen our commitment to Humanizing Banking®**. What you are about to read isn't just any story; it reflects the experiences many have when first getting acquainted with Mexico and how they evolve with time. We are grateful to Peter for allowing us to share his story, hoping it will resonate with our valued Clients and others alike. This is his journey.

### My Experience Banking in Mexico.

As someone who has spent a significant amount of time in Mexico, I can tell you how crucial it is to have your financial affairs in order. In the past, before coming to this breathtaking place I now call home, I often asked myself how and where life could be most enjoyed, without any sort of worry, **and never actually thought about certain financial aspects**—both here and back home. Fast forward a few years, and banking in a new country became a reality, and with it, tons of challenges.

Finding the right bank for me wasn't easy in a country such as this one. I didn't speak the language, and neither did the tellers. It was fun at first, but sometimes communication for important issues was often only in Spanish, which became frustrating, **especially when I needed assistance**. Every time I tried to express my concerns, it felt like I was starting over with a new person.

**"Instantly, it felt right,  
It felt like home."**

Then, one day, out of nowhere, while walking my adopted Mexican dog Steve to the vet with my loving wife Rachel, we stumbled upon **Intercam**. They welcomed both me, Rachel, and surprisingly, Steve, *with open doors—literally!* I was amazed how, for the first time, **I could step into a bank and not be asked to leave Steve outside!** And instantly, it felt right, it felt like home. Probably even more than home if I think about it—perhaps even better.

Since then, I found that whether I was working remotely anywhere in Mexico, escaping the winter chill from the US, enjoying an extended stay, or settling into a now well-earned retirement,



Intercam's been there, **especially what they so call their One-Stop Banking® service**, which has been a game-changer, handling every single aspect of my finances, just so I can focus on what matters most—*living my best life with Steve and my wife.*

Just ask yourself the following: Why not enjoy a life where everyday tasks are taken care of—getting groceries, walking Steve, paying the plumber, gardener, rent, or even taxes—letting you fully embrace all that Mexico has to offer? I've learned with old age that, in today's fast-paced world, **time is the ultimate luxury and convenience is key**. I've found that at *Intercam*, they genuinely understand that financial needs should enhance my lifestyle, not complicate it. And boy was I doing just that! Complicating my life! That's why **their OSB service**, as I like to call it, has become my go-to solution for a stress-free financial journey here in Mexico ever since I opened an account with them many years ago.



## Flawless Finances.

**"Now I can manage my savings, investments, and loans, all in one place."**

Picture this: waking up in Vallarta, Cancún, San Miguel de Allende, or any other beautiful part of Mexico for that matter, hammock rocking ever so slightly, wind blowing, with a clear mind, **knowing that all your daily tasks can be managed effortlessly, including your finances**, from everyday banking and investments to insurance and Foreign Exchange.

*I used to juggle multiple accounts and services back in the day, but not anymore. Now I can manage my savings, investments, and loans, all in one place.*



Transferring funds internationally or handling complex currency exchanges used to be a problem, but Intercam's expert team makes it a breeze. Whether I'm in Vallarta or Virginia, I know my transactions are quick, secure, and hassle-free, allowing me to spend less time worrying about finances and more time enjoying life.

One of the standout features for me has been the **Intercam's Dream Loan®** product. A few years back, I was eager to buy a fairly modest property for me and Rachel to retire in. They helped every step of the way when purchasing our dream home on the beach, and are we so happy to this day! We're planning on getting a second one next door later this year for my daughter and her boys to come down and visit good old Grampa during the winter months.

## A Simpler Life in Mexico.

**"At Intercam, we believe that convenience doesn't mean compromising on quality,"**

says Sebastian, one of the company's many personal Relationship Managers who has been a tremendous help to me. **"Our One-Stop Banking® service is personalized to fit your unique needs as a resident or visitor of Mexico,"** he adds. And I couldn't agree more! Having a dedicated financial advisor like Sebastian, who understands my needs and is committed to helping me has been a relief. Whether I prefer managing my finances online, through their mobile app, or in person, they've got me covered. The peace of mind that comes with knowing I have, not just Sebastian, but a whole team behind me is invaluable.

One of the greatest benefits of using Intercam is **that it allows me to reclaim my time and focus on what truly matters**. For me, that might mean Rachel growing her rose garden, me working on my rusted-out vintage Mexican buggy, exploring Mexico's rich culture when Steve, Rachel and I travel, or simply lounging in one of my hammocks. Gone are the days of running from one bank to another. *Now, I embrace a lifestyle of convenience, where my financial needs are met with efficiency, expertise, and a personal touch—all while enjoying the vibrant life that Mexico has to offer. It's more than just banking; it's about living.*

So there, **I just wanted to put my two cents out there**. I'm not usually the social kind but know that sharing my experience, from the moment Rachel, Steve and I walked through the doors to today will help others find a way to stress less and enjoy more. Sorry if I rambled way too much.

**"Thank you, Sebastian. Thank you Intercam. From your happy "amigo", Pete."**

*-Peter, 73, retired US Marine grandpa living in Los Cabos with his adopted dog, Steve, and his beautiful wife, Rachel.*

If you'd like to share your story with us, please don't hesitate to send us an email.

**We strive to improve every day, and stories like yours inspire us to become a better company for everyone:**  
**info@intercam.com.mx**

Following our and Peter's request, all names and places have been changed to protect the identity of those involved. At Intercam, we honor our Client's privacy and, for their safety, would never, under any circumstances, disclose sensitive information.





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## Did you know?

LCS not only offers numerous activities and services to its members, but a variety of outreach programs are also available to support local families in neighboring communities.

These outreach programs are funded through sponsorships, endowments, fundraising, membership and donations. They are hosted and supported by local organizations, volunteers and LCS staff. If you are interested in helping to support any of the following programs or activities, please notify the contact listed, or call LCS.



### English as a Second Language (ESL) Program

Classes for students and adults are held at Wilkes Education Center Biblioteca Publica de Ajijic, Galeana 18, Ajijic. Teachers are native English-speaking volunteers.

There are two semesters per year:

- **September to December** – Registration and testing was held August 12-17; classes begin September 9.
- **January to May** – Registration and testing run December 9-14; classes begin January 7, 2025

Enrollment is about 300 students per semester. Registration for classes is required. Cost is \$150 pesos plus the cost of the books. Classes are scheduled in the mornings, afternoons, early evenings and on Saturday mornings to accommodate students and working individuals.

Volunteers are needed to teach three hours per week. Contact Inezme@gmail.com or contact LCS for a volunteer application.

### Student Aid Program (SAP)

Since 1994, the LCS SAP has provided financial support for local Mexican students pursuing post-secondary education in a variety of careers. Gifts are awarded in the amount of \$4,000 to \$6,000 a year, depending where they go to study. SAP has supported more than 40 students per year. This program accepts applications in July and November. Qualification requirements and application information can be found on the LCS [website](#).

### Children's Art Program

LCS' oldest program was started in 1954 by Neill James. It is held every Saturday from 10:00am – 12:00pm. Students between 4 - 6 years old (with a parent attending) up to 18 years old are welcome. All art supplies and materials are provided. Volunteer and Art Program "graduates" are on-site to help guide and assist children. Registration is free.

### Summer Art Camp

Upward of 190 students participate each year in this one-week

program held in late July or early August. Registration is required, and volunteer helpers are welcome.

### Student Photography Program

Summer 2024 was the second year of this 12-week, once-a-week program. LCS provides the cameras, which were all donated to the program. Registration is required.

### Mudlarks for Kids

This new after-school children's ceramics program kicked off this September. Ten local children spend three hours a day twice a week over eight weeks, learning about pottery and creating art. Registration is required.

Volunteers and donations of art supplies are always welcome.

More information can be found on the LCS website at <https://lakechapalasociety.com/childrens-art-program/>

Or contact Victor Camarena, Director of Education, at [education@lcsac.org](mailto:education@lcsac.org)



# Cheese Enchiladas

Fusion food from the Columbian Exchange

By Ted Rogers

Ahhh, Mexican food!! UNESCO has listed Mexican cuisine as an “Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity,” and rightly so. It would be easy to think of Mexican food and Mesoamerican food as being synonymous, but Mexican food is one of the oldest fusion foods in existence.

Consider the cheese enchilada -- one of the first fusion foods that combined Mesoamerican cooking techniques and ingredients with food-stuffs that originated from Europe.

The invention of the tortilla enabled the empires of Mesoamerica to grow and spread. The indigenous people soaked dehydrated corn in lime (the mineral) and water. This is called the nixtamal process. Then, they dried the lime-soaked corn, ground it, and used it to make the dough for the corn tortilla.

While corn on the cob has virtually zero nutritional value for humans, the nixtamal process produces a corn-based food that has some nutritional value. Corn on the cob is a great vehicle to transport butter to one's mouth, but corn in its raw or boiled state is virtually indigestible to humans. The nixtamal process transforms the amino acids in the corn into a form we can digest. The nixtamalized corn flour is then blended with fat, rolled out, and heated quickly to produce a tortilla.



To make an enchilada out of a corn tortilla that won't roll up well, the tortilla was lightly fried to soften it, then dredged through a piquant sauce based around tomatoes and peppers. By the time of the Aztecs, enchiladas were common foods. When Bernal Díaz del Castillo first entered the Aztec capital Tenochtitlán on 8 November 1519, it was not so much the architecture that amazed him, as it was the food. The rolled piquant tortillas, stuffed with cooked shelled beans and various meats such as frog, turkey and duck, were a delicacy.

But there was no such thing, yet, as a cheese enchilada -- because the Aztecs had no dairy products. In the sixteenth century, the "Columbian Exchange" brought cows, pigs, dairy and more to the Americas. We often think of the conquistadors as only searching for gold, but they were actually bio-prospectors looking for new foods to bring back to Europe.

The Columbian Exchange brought corn, tomatoes, potatoes, tobacco, peppers, cocoa and more from the Americas to Europe. Citrus fruits, grapes and other items made their way from Europe to the Americas, along with horses, pigs, cows and dairy products.

Cheese became a new protein with which to stuff the enchilada. Though the Mesoamericans had enchiladas prior to the Spanish, the Columbian Exchange introduced a new ingredient to give us an almost five-hundred-year-old fusion food we still enjoy today: the cheese enchilada!

*Gotta run . . . I'm hungry for the tasty, gooey, wonderful flavor of a cheese enchilada!*





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# "We Wanna Help!" Art Therapy in Action

By Dale Green

The Lakeside area is well-known for its glorious weather and its powerful spirit of giving. A key part of this generosity is volunteering to support underprivileged or abused children. While many people are familiar with Mama Cleo's Boys Home, not everyone knows about similar homes for girls.

That's where Jo Lapinski, an Ajijic resident, comes in. Jo saw a need and found three girls' homes that were struggling to keep up with the number of girls being placed there by DIF (Mexico's version of Child Protective Services). These girls are victims of abuse, neglect, or exploitation. With a background in education and a passion for art, Jo founded WE WANNA HELP!! ("WWH") last year. A simple Facebook post quickly attracted over 25 local women to join her cause.

Every week, WWH brings support, care, and arts activities to three girls' homes: La Ola, Treasure House, and Love in Action. Jo and her team work hard to create a safe, fun, and art-filled environment for the girls. Their goal is to help the girls build resilience and confidence.

At Treasure House, for example, each visit starts with a "Circulo de Amor," or circle of love. This calming ritual involves deep breathing, gratitude, and visualization to foster trust and safety. After this, the girls split into groups for visual arts activities like painting, drawing, and crafting. Community donations provide a variety of materials, from Styrofoam to crochet hooks, to spark creativity. Jo notes some activities haven't gone as





planned—like when the girls preferred grinding colored chalk into dust over drawing. But Jo and her team are learning from these experiences and adapting.

The last part of each visit includes performing arts—ballet, modern dance, rhythmic movement, and more. This is a chance for the girls to have fun and express themselves.

The results of the program can vary. Sometimes the girls are engaged and joyful; other times, they seem distant. But each visit helps Jo and her team understand the girls better and tailor their efforts to meet their needs. Despite the challenges, Jo and her team always leave with a smile, a hug, and a promise to return with more art and love.

**If you're interested in volunteering or supporting WWH's efforts, contact Jo at [WeWannaHelpnow@gmail.com](mailto:WeWannaHelpnow@gmail.com).**



WWH Art project

# OPEN MIC

The LCS Saturday Open Mic is a coffee-house style open mic geared toward single performers or small groups. We welcome all levels of talent and encourage a variety of media -- singers, instrumentalists, poets -- literally anything that can be performed on a small stage. This open mic started several years ago on the campus and is now held at LCS' Blue Patio, with food and drink service by Casa Linda.

This weekly event is run by three of Lakeside's biggest music supporters: Larry Sulky (you may know him from his open mics at La Bodega and El Patio); Dan Dover (a Portland singer-songwriter who hosts house concerts and song circles in his home); and Becky McGuigan (a long-time singer-songwriter). They have attracted a variety of performers, including tenured and new artists.

## Join us for the Saturday Open Mic

Our open mic is held on the LCS Blue Patio  
from 11:00 to 1:30 pm every Saturday.  
(Sign-up begins at 10:15)

### All Performers are Welcome!



Casa Linda Restaurant will  
be serving drinks and  
meals to the Blue Patio  
upon request.

Performers can  
sign-up onsite  
at 10:15am.  
Entertainment is  
from 11-1:30pm.  
See you there!





# LCS CHILDREN'S ANNUAL ART CAMP 2024

## 189 Budding New Artists

By Harriet Hart

In 2013, the Children's Art Program held its first Summer Art Camp at LCS. Over 70 children attended workshops in different art mediums. This pilot project was so successful, it has become an annual event.

Just weeks before it began this year, Victor Camarena assumed the leadership and organization of the 2024 Children's Art Camp, the largest enrollment ever, with 189 children registered. He hustled to recruit more teachers and volunteers to add additional workshops. As a result, his team ensured every child could take part. I visited this bustling art camp for two days running, observing every class and every instructor. ***The air crackled with creativity and joy.***



Watercolor student; photo by C. Gonzalez

### Meet the Instructors, the Magic Makers



Jesus Lopez Vega, longest serving art teacher; photo by Harriet Hart

**Jesus Lopez Vega** has taught every year since the Art Camp began. He teaches the drawing and painting class to 40 youngsters, assisted by six volunteers. He believes all children are born with a gift for art, although "only 4% have the talent to become professional artists". Now, his son Eduardo and daughter Rosario are also volunteer instructors at the camp. The family tradition continues.



Javier Zaragoza and protege José María; photo by Harriet Hart

**Javier Zaragoza** teaches advanced students the technical aspects of painting: perspective, color and composition. He introduced me to his protégé, Jose Mariá, who, despite being hearing impaired, has attended the classes for years. Javier believes that art camp is necessary because it allows time for students to gain a variety of skills. I met Javier in the acrylics class taught by Eduardo Lopez Garcia, currently a graphic design student at the University of Guadalajara and Jesus' son.



Advanced Watercolor; photo by Harriet Hart

Across the lawn, the first time Children's Art Camp instructor, **Ricardo Sánchez Corona**, was instructing. Ricardo donated one of his watercolors to LCS for a raffle last winter and raised \$54,000 pesos for the Children's Art Program. Students, ages 12 to 16, worked on a **Still Life** with fruit, planning later to create scenes. After being trained as an architect in Mexico City, Ricardo took up watercolors as a hobby. He and his partner (teaching assistant Andy) moved to Lakeside in January and are eager to give back to this community. They lived in Morelia for a few years, where Ricardo volunteered at an orphanage, and realized how much he enjoys working with children.





Rosario Lopez Garcia teaching *Watercolors for Kids*; photo by D. Medrano

Nearby **Rosario Lopez Garcia** instructed for the first time 30 younger children in *Watercolors for Kids*. She laughed. “These kids are amazing. They have so much energy, so I must move quickly.” Behind her, petite artists proudly pinned their works to a clothesline, to dry in the breeze.

Her neighbor, **Ramon Marcelino Caranza**, taught Introduction to *Drawing*. Ramon taught this class after being recruited by Jesus Lopez Vega, who recognized his volunteer work with the art program throughout the year.

In the gazebo, **Mario Ramirez** offered *Advanced Drawing* lessons. Mario hails from the town of Tequila where he worked for a tequila distillery for 15 years, but quit to do art. “It was the best decision I ever made.”

**Noel Gonzalez**, in his second year at Art Camp, led a *Sketching* class with incredible results. His students rapidly surpassed all previous efforts.



Engraving group with Bruno Mariscal Jr.; photo by D. Medrano

Eight kids learned *Engraving* from **Bruno Mariscal, Jr.** Lessons included how to draw a picture, make plates using a lino cutter, smear them with black gooey stuff, and roll them out on paper with a rolling pin! A messy process that produced professional results.

There were three classes that involve sewing: *Crocheting* with **Judith Krenn**, *Embroidery* with local maestra **Lupita Vega** and *Monster Doll Making* with

**Melody Peterson** and **Betti Clark**. I confess the dolls were my personal favorites. Inspired by Jean Molineaux’s work, Betti found patterns online encouraging her students to create little monsters that start out scary but usually end up cuddly. “The children are simultaneously learning basic sewing skills—hemming, stitching, sewing on buttons, mending—while having a hilarious time.”



Melody Peterson teaching *Monster Doll Making*; photo by D. Medrano

A new art form was *Cartoneña*. Instructor **Octavio Ignacio Pérez** explained that unlike papier mâché, you don’t need to soak the paper in hot water, but can just use it dry with flour, water, and glue. His students created wonderfully imagined, strange bird-like creatures.



Ceramics class; photo by D. Medrano

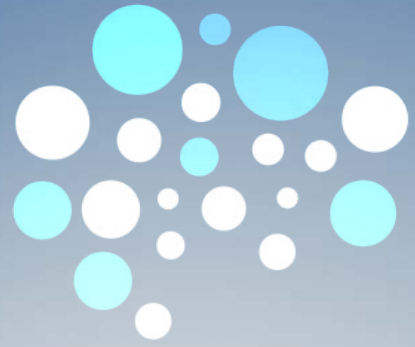
Nearby, the **Mudlarks Potters** led a class in *Ceramics* under the tutelage of **Andrena Joyce**, while budding and enthusiastic *Photography* students roamed the campus with **Alicia Knox** and **Sandy Britton**.

**Art offers children a world of possibilities.** It sharpens motor skills, ignites language development, boosts brainpower, fosters cultural awareness, teaches essential life skills, elevates academic performance, shapes positive personalities, and nurtures emotional wellbeing. At the LCS Children’s Art Camp, **Lakeside kids experience all these incredible benefits, setting the stage for a brighter, more creative future.**

**A MILLION THANKS TO ALL THE PEOPLE WHO MADE THIS MAGIC WEEK HAPPEN!**



# RECOGNIZE THE EARLY SIGNS OF MEMORY LOSS



## Spade Neuropsychology

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Jacob Spade PsyD  
[dr.spade@spadepsychology.com](mailto:dr.spade@spadepsychology.com)

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loss, mild cognitive  
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415.178.4990

Proudly serving English speakers in  
Lakeside Ajjic and Chapala





**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)

Being Love & Bliss Meditation	W 10:15-11:15
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 Huara Chess Club	Sat 10-12
Crochet Class	TH 12-2
Exercise	M+W+F 9-9:50
Gentle Yoga & Body Awareness	W 10-10:50
Intermediate Hatha Yoga	T 2-3:30
Iyengar Yoga	F 11-12
Learn to Knit	T 11-12:30
Line Dancing, <a href="mailto:gail@doughertynet.com">gail@doughertynet.com</a>	T + TH 10-11:15
Move to the Beat	M 10-11
Mudlarks Pottery Open Studio	M + F 10-2
NIA Fitness Seasonal June-Sept	F 10-10:50
Stretch & Balance	M + TH 8:45-9:45
<i><a href="mailto:harry_bertram@hotmail.com">harry_bertram@hotmail.com</a></i>	
Spanish in Action classes (español en acción)	
See LCS website or in the office for more info	
Tech Help via Email	<i><a href="mailto:lcs.tech.training@gmail.com">lcs.tech.training@gmail.com</a></i>
Write to a Prompt Writers' Group	TH 10-12

### 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 [lakechapalasociety.com](http://lakechapalasociety.com) & select libraries/English.

### SOCIAL ACTIVITIES (M)

American Mah Jongg	TH 10-1
Bridge For Fun -Resumes November	F 1-4:30
Discussion Group	W 11:30-1
Duplicate Bridge	W 1-4
English/Spanish Conversation* (Open to public)	Sat 12-1:30*
Everyday Mindfulness	M 10:30-12
Game Group	TH 1-5
Open Circle	S 10:30
Scrabble	F 11:30-1:30
TED Talks - Resume 1st F October	12:30-1:45
Tournament Scrabble	T 12-1:50
UFO Cafe Discussion Group	3rd T 1:30-3:30

### HEALTH INSURANCE\*

Hospital San Antonio	TH 10:30-12:30
IMSS & Immigration Services	M+T 11-1:30
Call Veronica for an appointment 333-157-9472	
Lakeside Insurance	T+TH 11-2
Ribera Medical Center	T 10:30-12:30
Shiatsu Chair Massage	1st & 3rd TH 10-12
By appointment only, call 331-604-0971	

### HEALTH & LEGAL SERVICES\*

Audiology Oir Bien- hearing care specialists	M+W+F 9-3
(Consultation fee) Call for appointment 332-945-3267	
Becerra Immigration	TH 10:30-12:30
Blood Pressure Screenings -seasonal	F 10-12
Finestra Investment Consulting	3rd TH 10-1
Intercam Banking Services	M - F 10-1
Optometrist Claravision	TH 9-4
Call for appointment 331-411-1178	
Solbes & Solbes	2nd M 10-12
SkyMed	1st W 11-1

### 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	T 11-12:30
(Support Group)	
Diabetes Support Group	Zoom 1st F 1:00
contact <a href="mailto:welchk4diabetes@gmail.com">welchk4diabetes@gmail.com</a>	
Information Desk	M-Sat 10-2
AA Open Meeting	M+TH 4-5
Needle Pushers	T 10-11:45
Toastmasters	M 7-9
Voter Registration	M 10-1 until 15 Oct

### NEW ACTIVITIES:

#### U.S.VOTER REGISTRATION

Democrats Abroad will be assisting registration and ballot requests on the following dates on the NJ Patio or Blue Umbrella Patio from 10-1 September 2,9,17,19,21,23,24,25,26,27,30 and October 3,7,10,15. Larry Pihl, [larry.pihl@gmail.com](mailto:larry.pihl@gmail.com), 331-704,6475.





# The Lake Chapala Society **CLASSES**

**MEMBERS GET A 30% DISCOUNT**

## Registration Required at:

LCS office | Mon to Sat | 10 am to 2 pm  
www.lakechapalasociety.com

There is no refund

For any questions related to classes  
Please contact [education@lcsac.org](mailto:education@lcsac.org)



## Latin American Short Story Workshop

By Mario Z Puglisi

- Wednesday, September 11, 18, 25 & October 2
- Wednesday, October 9, 16, 23 y 30

2:00 pm to 3:30 pm

General fee: \$1,500

Unlock the art of storytelling in our four-week Latin American Short Story Workshop. Explore literary history, master creative techniques, and study renowned authors while crafting your own narrative voice. Join us and elevate your writing skills.

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

By Víctor Camarena

- Wednesday, Sept 11 CLASS  
9:30 am to 11:30 am  
Wednesday, Sept 18 TEST  
visit to the Secretaria de Transporte  
Wednesday, Oct 9 CLASS  
9:30 am to 11:30 am  
Wednesday, Oct 16 TEST  
visit to the Secretaria de Transporte  
Wednesday, Nov 13 CLASS  
9:30 am to 11:30 am  
Wednesday, Nov 20 TEST  
visit to the Secretaria de Transporte

General fee: \$850

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



## Mexican Manners and More

By Víctor Camarena

- Wednesday, September 4
- Wednesday, October 2
- Wednesday, November 6

10:00 am to 12:30 pm

General fee: \$760

This is a one session class. Participant will learn skills and knowledge on how to minimize the Cultural shock adjusting to a new country.



## Introduction to Spanish

By Inez Dayer & Christine Wysock

- Thursday, Sept 5, 12 & 19
- Thursday, Oct 3, 10 & 17
- Thursday, Nov 7, 14 & 21

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.



## Comedy Sketch Writing Class

By Frank Lynch

Wednesday Sept. 11, 18, 25 and  
Oct. 2, 9 and 16

10:00 am to 12:00 pm

General fee: \$1,000

Learn how to write comedy sketches in this 6-week workshop. Explores formats, types and structures, while analyzing comedy classics. Write, read and prepare for a final show! Guaranteed humor!



## Piano As Easy As It Gets

By Donn Rochlin

Friday September 20, 27 and  
October 4

11:00 am to 12:30 pm

General fee: \$1,500

Unlock your musical potential! In just 3 sessions, master chords with an easy system to play any song, any style, while boosting creativity. Fun, simple, and perfect for all levels. Keyboard optional—join and sound like a pro!



# CLASSES

**MEMBERS GET A 30% DISCOUNT**



## **Fearless Public Speaking**

**By Donn Rochlin**

**Wednesday, September 25**

**10:00 am to 1:00 pm**

General fee: \$520

Overcome your fear of public speaking and discover the joy in it! Learn to become a confident, engaging speaker through comedy sketch writing, regardless of your experience. Embrace the fun in expressing yourself before an audience!



## **The Art and Science of Longevity: Lifespan and Healthspan**

**By Dan Bunger**

**Monday October 7**

**9:30am to 11:30am**

General fee: \$485

Discover how proper nutrition and exercise can enhance both lifespan and "healthspan," ensuring vitality in your golden years. Learn how small changes can lead to significant benefits, regardless of your current health and fitness level.



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

**By Reba Mayo**

**Friday, September 27**

**2:00pm to 4:00pm**

General fee: \$650

Welcome to Mexico!

This is a 1-session class, will provide you with a wealth of information and resources to make your transition to Lakeside as painless as possible.



## **Advanced Care Planning - Living Well and Dying Well at Lakeside**

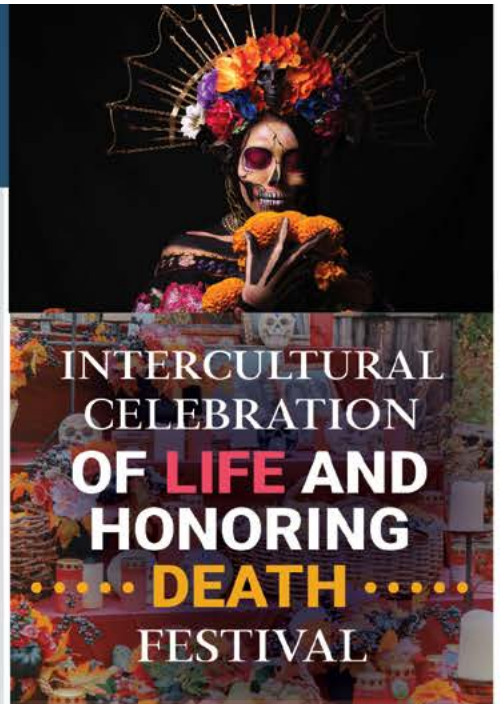
**By Loretta Downs**

**Friday, October 11 & 18**

**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.



## **INTERCULTURAL CELEBRATION OF LIFE AND HONORING DEATH FESTIVAL**

**Thursday, October 24**

**A class on "The Day of the Dead" Traditions and Building Altars at LCS By Victor Camarena**

**2:00 pm - 4:00 pm**

Free class

**Sunday, October 27**

**Open Circle at LCS**

**10:30 am - 12 pm** "How to live forever" by Lorreta Downs

**Free FUN Children's Halloween Party at LCS campus**

**3:00 - 6:00 pm.**

Two hundred tickets available at LCS

**Monday, October 28**

**Building Altars**

**10:00 am - 2:00 pm**

A Mexican tradition to honor the life of our loved ones.

**Celebration of Life Ceremony**

**4:30 - 6:30 pm**

A ceremony of remembrance, candle-light event with motivational speakers.

Registration at

[www.LakeChapalaSociety.com](http://www.LakeChapalaSociety.com)

16 de Septiembre 16-A, Ajijic

Monday to Saturday

10:00 a.m. — 2:00 p.m. \*For further

information please contact:

[education@lcsac.org](mailto:education@lcsac.org)



# TOURS



**SHOPPING FRENZY OR TIME TO PAMPER YOURSELF  
AT THE BEST MALL IN GUADALAJARA  
PLAZA ANDARES**

**TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 24**  
**10:00am to 6:00pm**

Discover the most exclusive shopping destination in Guadalajara: Andares Mall. With over 230 national and international brands, top restaurants, a spa, gym, salons, and entertainment options, it offers unparalleled luxury in the beautiful Zapopan area. Visit Andares for a premier shopping and leisure experience.

**GENERAL FEE: \$1,300**

**MEMBERS GET A 30% DISCOUNT**



**We will depart from La Floresta sculpture**

Limited seats.

Registration required at:

LCS office | Mon to Sat | 10 am to 2 pm

[www.lakechapalasociety.com](http://www.lakechapalasociety.com)



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



**Armando Garcia-Davila**  
Picked out of the trash heap

**SEPTEMBER**  
**1ST**



**S. Janet Payne**  
Vote! Vote! Vote!

**SEPTEMBER**  
**8TH**



**Luis Guzman**  
Los Niños Zapateadores de  
Jalisco

**SEPTEMBER**  
**15TH**



**Mia Ruiz**  
International Day of Peace at  
Lakeside

**SEPTEMBER**  
**22ND**



Yes, You Can Vote from Mexico.

*Paid Advertisement*

# How to send in your 2024 U.S. Ballots on time!

**All U.S. Citizens:**

**Request and RETURN Your Ballot in September.**

September is the smartest month to request *and return* your 2024 U.S. Election Ballot.

*Strongly recommended:* **Return your ballot by September 30.**

Why? Because this gives you plenty of time to fix any issues—and make sure your voice is heard!

If you haven't already, request your 2024 ballot right now at [www.VoteFromAbroad.org](http://www.VoteFromAbroad.org)

**Easy next steps!**

- Go to [www.VoteFromAbroad.org](http://www.VoteFromAbroad.org) to get started. QR Code below.
- Then, if you **need in-person assistance**: Visit the Vote From Abroad team right here at **LCS**.

This knowledgeable, certified team is at our **LCS campus many Mondays in September** (unless we're closed) and other days. See the ad below for times.

- **Return your ballot by Sept. 30.** You can return it later than this date, but it's *not recommended!*

**Safest, most convenient way to vote from Mexico?**

As an “overseas” voter, how can you skip the frustration of receiving your state's ballot too late—and then having little time to send it back?

Easy answer: the non-partisan Vote From Abroad program.

**About Vote From Abroad**

Vote From Abroad is based on a Federal act that's been around for *almost 40 years*.

It's called UOCAVA (Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act), enacted in 1986. And it protects you, the voter living abroad.


A few UOCAVA / Vote From Abroad advantages:

- Your ballot must be sent to you by Sept. 21 (at least 45 days before the election). Giving you plenty of time to return your voted ballot, even if your state *only allows you to return your ballot by mail*.
- Plus, if your ballot does not arrive on time, you have a backup option: the Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot (FWAB) that also protects you against U.S. postal delays.

The bottom line: Your vote counts, even if your state has new restrictions that make it harder to cast your ballot.

*Questions? Email us at:*

*[VoteLakeChapala@gmail.com](mailto:VoteLakeChapala@gmail.com)*


2024 U.S.  ELECTIONS


**YES! YOU CAN  
VOTE FROM  
ABROAD.ORG**

**All U.S. Citizens:**  
Request Your 2024 Ballot right away  
at [www.VoteFromAbroad.org](http://www.VoteFromAbroad.org)

Visit us in person for  
**Personal Voter Assistance  
@ Lake Chapala Society**  
**10 am–1 pm each day,  
Sept. 2, 9, 17, 21.**

Or during our special focus  
on **Returning Your Ballot:**  
**10 am–3 pm each day,  
Sept. 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 30**

  
Scan above!

  
**Ballots + Assistance  
for U.S. Citizens  
Since 2006**

Questions? Email [VoteLakeChapala@gmail.com](mailto:VoteLakeChapala@gmail.com)  
Paid for by Democrats Abroad Lake Chapala.



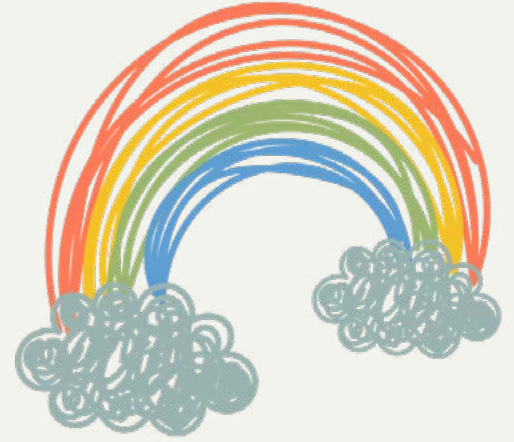
# CAMPAMENTO DE ARTE INFANTIL DE LCS 2024

## ¡189 Jóvenes Artistas en Potencia!

Por Harriet Hart

En 2013, el Programa de Arte Infantil organizó su primer Campamento de Arte de Verano en LCS. Más de 70 niños asistieron a talleres de diferentes disciplinas artísticas. Este proyecto piloto fue tan exitoso que se ha convertido en un evento anual.

A solo unas semanas de que comenzara este año, Víctor Camarena asumió el liderazgo y la organización del Campamento de Arte Infantil 2024, el de mayor inscripción hasta la fecha, con 189 niños registrados. Se esforzó por reclutar más maestros y voluntarios para agregar talleres adicionales. Como resultado, su equipo se aseguró de que cada niño pudiera participar. Visité este bullicioso campamento de arte durante dos días seguidos, observando cada clase y a cada instructor. El ambiente estaba cargado de creatividad y alegría.



Embroidery final products; photo by D. Medrano

asistido a las clases durante años. Javier cree que el campamento de arte es necesario porque permite a los estudiantes adquirir una variedad de habilidades. Conocí a Javier en la clase de acrílicos impartida por Eduardo López García, actualmente estudiante de diseño gráfico en la Universidad de Guadalajara y hijo de Jesús.

Al otro lado del césped, **Ricardo Sánchez Corona**, instructor nuevo en el Campamento de Arte Infantil, estaba dando clases. Ricardo donó una de sus acuarelas a LCS para una rifa el invierno pasado y recaudó 54,000 pesos para el Programa de Arte Infantil. Los estudiantes, de entre 12 y 16 años, trabajaron en una *Naturaleza Muerta con frutas*, planeando más adelante crear escenas. Después de formarse como arquitecto en la Ciudad de México, Ricardo se dedicó a las acuarelas como pasatiempo. Él y su pareja (el asistente de enseñanza Andy) se mudaron a Lakeside en enero y están deseosos de retribuir a esta comunidad. Vivieron en Morelia durante algunos años, donde Ricardo hizo voluntariado en un orfanato

## CONOCE A LOS INSTRUCTORES, LOS CREADORES DE MAGIA

**Jesús López Vega** ha enseñado todos los años desde que comenzó el Campamento de Arte. Él imparte la clase de dibujo y pintura a 40 niños, asistido por seis voluntarios. Cree que todos los niños nacen con un don para el arte, aunque "solo el 4% tiene el talento para convertirse en artistas profesionales". Ahora, su hijo Eduardo y su hija Rosario también son instructores voluntarios en el campamento. La tradición familiar continúa.

**Javier Zaragoza** enseña a los estudiantes avanzados los aspectos técnicos de la pintura: perspectiva, color y composición. Me presentó a su protegido, José María, quien, a pesar de tener discapacidad auditiva, ha





Introductory Watercolors; photo by C. Gonzalez

y se dio cuenta de cuánto disfruta trabajando con niños.

Cerca de allí, **Rosario López García** dio su primera clase a 30 niños más pequeños en **Acuarelas para Niños**. Ella se rió. “Estos niños son increíbles. Tienen tanta energía, así que debo moverme rápido.” Detrás de ella, los pequeños artistas orgullosamente colgaban sus trabajos en un cordel para que se secaran con la brisa.

Su vecino, **Ramón Marcelino Caranza**, enseñó **Introducción al Dibujo**. Ramón dio esta clase después de ser reclutado por Jesús López Vega, quien reconoció su trabajo como voluntario con el programa de arte durante todo el año.

En el gazebo, **Mario Ramírez** ofreció lecciones de **Dibujo Avanzado**. Mario es originario del pueblo de Tequila, donde trabajó en una destilería de tequila durante 15 años, pero dejó su trabajo para dedicarse al arte. “Fue la mejor decisión que he tomado.”

**Noel González**, en su segundo año en el Campamento de Arte, dirigió una clase de **Bocetos** con resultados increíbles. Sus estudiantes superaron rápidamente todos los esfuerzos anteriores.



Embroidery; photo by C. Gonzalez

Ocho niños aprendieron **Grabado** con **Bruno Mariscal Jr.** Las lecciones incluyeron cómo dibujar una imagen, hacer placas usando un cortador de lino, cubrirlas con una sustancia negra pegajosa y rodarlas sobre papel con un rodillo. ¡Un proceso desordenado que produjo resultados profesionales!

Hubo tres clases que involucraron costura: **Crochet-ing** con **Judith Krenn**, **Bordado** con la maestra local **Lupita Vega** y **Fabricación de Muñecos Monstruos** con **Betti Clark**. Confieso que los muñecos fueron mis favoritos personales. Inspirada en el trabajo de Jean Molineaux, Betti encontró patrones en línea que alentaron a sus estudiantes a crear pequeños monstruos que comienzan siendo aterradores pero generalmente terminan siendo adorables. “Los niños están aprendiendo simultáneamente habilidades básicas de costura—dobladillos, puntadas, coser botones, remiendos—mientras se divierten mucho.”

Una nueva forma de arte fue la **Cartoneña**. El instructor **Octavio Ignacio Pérez** explicó que, a diferencia del papel maché, no es necesario remojar el papel en agua caliente, sino que se puede usar seco con harina, agua y pegamento. Sus estudiantes crearon criaturas maravillosamente imaginadas, extrañas como aves.



Young Photographers; photo by C. Gonzalez

Cerca, los **Mudlarks Potters** dirigieron una clase de Cerámica bajo la tutela de **Andrena Joyce**, mientras que los entusiastas estudiantes de **Fotografía** recorrían el campus con **Alicia Knox** y **Sandy Britton**.

El arte ofrece a los niños un mundo de posibilidades. Agudiza las habilidades motoras, enciende el desarrollo del lenguaje, aumenta el poder cerebral, fomenta la conciencia cultural, enseña habilidades esenciales para la vida, eleva el rendimiento académico, da forma a personalidades positivas y nutre el bienestar emocional. **En el Campamento de Arte Infantil de LCS, los niños de Lakeside experimentan todos estos increíbles beneficios, preparando el escenario para un futuro más brillante y creativo.**

**¡Un millón de gracias a todas las personas que hicieron posible esta mágica semana!**



Watercolor student; photo by D. Medrano



# EDUCATION AND CULTURE

## Ajijic Celebrates Mexican Independence

By Victor Camarena



*Fiesta Mexicana 2023; photo by V. Camarena*

Every year, our vibrant town, comes alive with the colors, sounds, and spirit of Mexico as it celebrates its Independence Day. This year, as has been done in the last few years, the Ajijic Delegation, a key local organization dedicated to preserving and promoting Mexican culture, is organizing its traditional fundraising event "Mexican Fiesta" at The Lake Chapala Society (LCS). The aim is to gather resources to support the activities planned for the grand celebration of Mexico's Independence, which falls on September 16th.

The Mexican Fiesta is Friday September 6th from 2:00pm to 7:00pm in the gardens of LCS. Tickets are \$500.00 pesos and include a fabulous Mexican show and typical food (tacos). Tickets will be available at different local businesses in Ajijic, and at the LCS Service Office or LCS web page. All of the ticket revenue goes to Ajijic's Patriotic Celebrations Committee.

Mexican Independence Day is a major event in the national calendar, marking the beginning of the struggle for freedom from Spanish rule. The movement began on September 16, 1810, with the famous "Grito de Dolores" by Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla, a call to arms that sparked the Mexican War of Independence. Today, this day is celebrated with great enthusiasm across Mexico, characterized by parades, fireworks, traditional music, and dances that reflect the country's rich cultural heritage.

In Ajijic, a town known for its artistic community and cultural vibrancy, the celebration of Mexican Independence is especially significant. It serves as a time for both locals and expats to connect with Mexico's history and traditions.



*Fiesta Mexicana 2023; photo by V. Camarena*

The Ajijic's Delegation through the Patriotic Celebrations Committee has long been at the heart of organizing the town's Independence Day celebrations. This group works tirelessly to ensure that each year's festivities are memorable and inclusive, showcasing the best of Mexican culture while fostering community spirit. Their activities include traditional parades, the reenactment of the "Grito de Dolores," live music performances, and various cultural exhibitions.

The event is more than just a fundraiser. It is an opportunity for the people of Ajijic to come together, celebrate their heritage, and contribute to the preservation of a tradition that has shaped their identity. As the town prepares to mark another year of independence, the efforts of the Ajijic Delegation ensure that the spirit of Mexico remains as strong and enduring as ever and LCS is extremely pleased with this collaboration.





# LA FIESTA MEXICANA

September 6<sup>th</sup> 2024  
In The Lake Chapala Society  
at 3:00 pm

**3:00 to 5:00**  
**TRADITIONAL MEXICAN FOOD**  
MARIACHI, SAYACAS SHOW,

**5:00 to 6:00**  
**FOLK BALLET**



Fiestas  
Patrias



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**EVENT TO THE BENEFIT OF AJIJIC'S 2024**  
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# EDUCACIÓN Y CULTURA

## Ajijic Celebra la Independencia de México

By Victor Camarena

Cada año, nuestro vibrante pueblo mágico, cobra vida con los colores, sonidos y espíritu de México al celebrar su Día de la Independencia. Este año, como se ha hecho en los últimos años, la Delegación de Ajijic, una organización local clave dedicada a preservar y promover la cultura mexicana, está organizando su tradicional evento de recaudación de fondos "Fiesta Mexicana" en The Lake Chapala Society (LCS). El objetivo es reunir recursos para apoyar las actividades programadas para la gran celebración de la Independencia de México, que se celebra el 16 de septiembre.

La fecha de la Fiesta Mexicana es el viernes 6 de septiembre de 2:00pm a 7:00pm en los jardines de LCS, los boletos cuestan \$500.00 pesos e incluyen un fabuloso show mexicano y comida típica (tacos). Los boletos estarán disponibles en diferentes negocios locales en Ajijic, y en la Oficina de Servicios de LCS o en su página web. El 100% de los ingresos de los boletos se destinan al Comité de Festejos Patrios de Ajijic.

El Día de la Independencia de México es un evento importante en el calendario nacional, que marca el inicio de la lucha por la libertad del dominio español. El movimiento comenzó el 16 de septiembre de 1810, con el famoso "Grito de Dolores" de Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla, un llamamiento a las armas que desencadenó la Guerra de Independencia de México. En la actualidad, este día se celebra con gran entusiasmo en todo México, caracterizado por desfiles, fuegos artificiales, música tradicional y bailes que reflejan el rico patrimonio cultural del país.

En Ajijic, la celebración de la Independencia de México es especialmente significativa. Sirve para que tanto locales como expatriados conecten con la historia y las tradiciones de México.

La Delegación de Ajijic, a través del Comité de Festejos Patrios, lleva mucho tiempo en el centro de la organización de las celebraciones del Día de la Independencia de pueblo. Este grupo trabaja incansablemente para garantizar que las festividades de cada año sean memorables e inclusivas, mostrando lo mejor de la cultura mexicana y fomentando al mismo tiempo el espíritu comunitario. Sus actividades incluyen desfiles tradicionales, la recreación del "Grito de Dolores", actuaciones musicales en directo y diversas exposiciones culturales.

El evento es más que una recaudación de fondos; es una oportunidad para que la gente de Ajijic se reúna, celebre su herencia y contribuya a la preservación de una tradición que ha formado su identidad. Mientras el pueblo se prepara para celebrar otro año de independencia, los esfuerzos de la Delegación de Ajijic aseguran que el espíritu de México permanezca tan fuerte y perdurable como siempre y LCS está sumamente complacido con esta colaboración.



Fiesta Mexicana 2022; photo by D. Medrano



Fiesta Mexicana 2022; photo by D. Medrano



Fiesta Mexicana 2022; photo by D. Medrano



# PLAYING WITH MUD

By Catherine Austill

When Jennifer Johnson made Ajjic her home in 2017, the mosaicist and ceramist could not find a local pottery studio where she could develop and share her love for the craft.



*Jennifer Johnsons; photo by D. Medrano*

Armed with years of experience, a kiln and many tools and supplies from her studio in CA, Johnson approached Lake Chapala Society with a proposal to open a studio. Her vision of developing a space where people explored their creativity became a reality on June 4, 2019, with the enthusiastic support of former LCS president Terry Vidal. The Mudlarks Pottery & Beach Club of Ajijic studio at LCS received a delivery of nearly 2,000 pounds of Laguna clay, and classes became a reality.

Pottery as an art form offers historical insights into various aspects of human societies, such as dreams, sacrifices, and utilitarian purposes. The name **Mudlarks** is a term referring to someone who scavenges from the shores of waters around the world, gathering pottery relics.

Johnson teaches a ceramics technique called **handbuilding**. Rather than creating pieces using a throwing wheel, artists use a combination of pinching, coiling and slab building. A variety of glazes and underglazes are added to low-fire earthenware clay, resulting in one-of-a-kind colors and effects for each creation.

Johnson has incorporated Mexican indigenous artisan techniques and traditions through workshops taught by guests, including internationally acclaimed artist Xun Pedro Lopez from Amatenango del Valle, Chiapas.

“Mud, as a medium isn’t intimidating,” explains Johnson. “It is very forgiving.” Keeping the pre-fired work cool and damp allows artists to alter and change clay creations before committing to them.



*Pottery creations in various stages; photo by C. Austill*

## Building community

“I’ve watched students create a real sense of community over the years,” says Johnson. “Seasoned artists learn new techniques and ideas from each other, and new artists nurture their creativity and confidence.”

A sense of community is also clear in the contributions people have made over the years. Marsha Thomsen made and donated a custom wedging table, while Carlos Contreras made two steel worktables for the volunteers who help keep the studio organized and running smoothly.

The purpose of all creations made at Mudlarks is for personal use. Many students of all levels of creativity and experience have left their mark



at LCS. Ceramic creations adorn the LCS campus - as decoration and signage, and in the studio and its garden space. Visitors can find surprise pieces available for taking in the Mudlarks tiny free gallery outside the LCS Library.

As Jennifer and husband Hunter also keep busy with other local art groups and community involvement, she reflects on her succession plan for Mudlarks. "The steadily growing interest in the program will require additional experienced volunteers, teachers and studio managers," says Johnson.

"I am happy to see Mudlarks artists be their best creative selves," explains Johnson, noting that it has been a challenge to accommodate the large number of adults and children who want to learn the art.

Johnson and her small team are all volunteers, and often contribute their own resources to the program, resulting in minimal operational overhead. With the continued support of LCS executives, Steve Balfour and Alfredo Pérez Aldana, LCS staff and members, Mudlarks has become a steady source of revenue for the organization. In July, Mudlarks expanded into the kitchen area of an adjacent building on campus. This provides additional studio work and storage space, and a new after-school children's ceramics program where ten local children will spend three hours a day twice a week over eight weeks.



Jennifer Johnson explains how the kiln works; photo by C. Austill



Pottery creations; photo by D. Medrano



Original creation by Thomas Gigante; photo by C. Austill

**Note: Mudlarks' Open Studio hours for LCS members are Monday and Friday 10-2.**

**Cost is \$600 pesos plus \$600 for one slab of clay.**

**A mandatory introductory class covers studio etiquette and clay techniques. Registration information is available online.**







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Photo by Canva

# Tequila Daze!

By Neal Williamson



The origin of International Tequila Day is unknown. Likely, the tales created about its history are just marketing genius! Of course, those who have consumed excessive amounts of the famous liquor may have added to the wild stories.

An example is the myth about the “tequila worm.” People suspect the tequila worm, mostly found at the bottom of Mezcal bottles (a similar spirit), to be a marketing ploy for its “effects.” Regardless, in 2018, the Mexican Senate ruled that the holiday occurs on the **third Saturday of every March**. In the United States, National Tequila Day takes place on **July 24th**, so feel free to celebrate both days, here in paradise!

National Tequila Day, or any day for that matter, is all about enjoying tequila. You can nicely pair tequila with food, and there is certainly no shortage of great local restaurants where you can find the right meal to complement with a fine tequila.

Whatever your favorite brand or type is, exploration can lead you to a multitude of amazing tequilas. Before your journey, let’s learn a method to enhance the experience and deeply appreciate tequila.

## I coined this method "Chill, Sip, Savor"

First, **swirl the tequila** in a cocktail glass. Much like wine aficionados do, bring it to your nose a few times and gently inhale its fragrances. Notice its beautiful color and how your heightened senses have made you salivate.

Now, take a **Very Small Sip** - Just enough to wet your lips. Let it slowly permeate your tongue and then swallow.

**Repeat the process three times**, sipping a little more, as you desire. It’s likely you’ll experience some incredible flavors that you may not have noticed before.

## A Brief History of Tequila

Many records document Tequila’s direct connection to Mexican culture. Historians have traced tequila’s origins back to pre-Hispanic times when the native Aztecs and other Indigenous groups fermented the sap of the agave plant for ceremonial and religious purposes. When Spanish conquistadors arrived in the 16th century, they introduced the distillation process, which led to the evolution of tequila as we know it today.

## Six Classifications of Tequila

### Blanco, Reposado, Anejo, Extra Anejo, Crystalino, and Joven or Gold tequila.

Note that all tequila begins as Blanco, before aging and other special distillation processes change its classification. My Tequila master’s philosophy was that there are only two types of tequila. He’d say, “Blanco y Otra”, since all tequila begins as Blanco.



Studies have found that moderate consumption of tequila is associated with potential health benefits. Agave is a source of inulin, a type of dietary fiber that promotes gut health. Tequila contains compounds like agavins that researchers have studied for their potential to lower blood sugar levels. Pure spirits can be carb free, gluten-free, kosher, and keto! It’s key to remember that excessive alcohol consumption can have adverse effects on health, and individuals should responsibly and moderately enjoy any potential benefits.

We all need some holiday hedonism, creature comforts, and to enjoy good times in the company of friends and loved ones.

## If you’ve had a few rounds too many?

Don’t be afraid to ask for a designated driver, call a taxi, borrow a walking cane, a guide dog, or whatever is available to help you get home safely!



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# Tails of Mexico

*“Adoption is an option; sterilization is the solution” ~ Susan Watkins*

By Diana Hunt



*Courtesy Tails of Mexico*



*Courtesy Tails of Mexico*

Tails of Mexico is not a shelter, nor does it place animals for adoption or fostering. The organization offers sterilization and education services for pets belonging to impoverished Mexican families.

“We conduct free spay/neuter clinics for street dogs and pets of villagers living in the poor pueblos around Jocotepec,” explains Susan Watkins, current Tails of Mexico co-owner with her husband. “The people living in these villages cannot afford to pay for neutering, do not have transportation, and there are only four small animal veterinarians in the entire municipality.

“The local governments of the towns we hold clinics in support us by donating tables, chairs, lights and other necessities,” Watkins continues.

Several weeks prior to a planned clinic, volunteers go to the villages to administer vaccinations, explain to the owners what to expect on surgery day, what to do post-surgery and to determine

who may need transportation. The organization uses printed information and WhatsApp for follow-up communications.

“People arrive on clinic day bringing cats or dogs in various creative ways,” Watkins smiles, seeing pets in bird cages, string bags and wheelbarrows. “The villagers appreciate being informed and follow our recommended protocol.”

Once the surgery is done and the animal is in recovery, the family can help with its care. They learn how to clean the ears and eyes, cut the nails, and brush the animal correctly.

When the animal is ready to go home, the owner receives a collar and leash, an engraved name tag, the brush used on the animal, a toy, often a food dish and food -- donations from stores in the US and private individuals. Watkins is very persuasive, getting pet store managers to donate sale items that have not sold.

Dogs that were brought in for sterilization over the past few years were overwhelmingly female. But habits are changing, thanks to some local male veterinarians. They explain to the men that their dogs “won’t lose their mojo” if neutered, and that it may save a dog from possible testicular cancer. Now, 40 percent of the animals are male.

The organization sees more cats coming in. Tails of Mexico also catches feral cats; spaying or neutering them and returning them to their colonies. At the request of LCS, Tails sterilized the entire cat colony living on the grounds.

Tails of Mexico will have sterilized nearly 10,000 animals by the end of October, on its 10th anniversary. Its annual fundraiser is being held October 10 at the Raquet Club. In numerology, Number 10 is associated with the concept of karmic completion and fulfillment -- a nod to the value of hard work in overcoming obstacles.

That seems to hit the nail on the head for Tails of Mexico.



# Alternative Health: Biophotons Light Therapy

By Sharon Brooks



Welcome to our series on alternative health modalities! Join us as we continue to explore a world of unique healing practices, from ancient traditions to modern innovations.

Biophotons Light Therapy is a safe and painless wellness technique that uses low-intensity light emissions to promote healing. It has shown benefits for various conditions, including cancer, cardiovascular disease and inflammation. It works by exposing the body to specific wavelengths of light, energizing, cellular communication, which promote healing.

Let's dive into some key points of what researchers have discovered.

Biophotons are ultra-weak light emissions from our body's cells believed to carry essential information about our health. Living cells continuously absorb and release light as photons, which are not visible to the naked eye. Researchers from Germany and the Netherlands have developed specialized instruments to identify and quantify this occurrence. These cells play an important role in various biological processes, including cell communication, metabolism, and energy transfer. According to the Health Angel Association, the aim of Biophoton Light Therapy is to "release energetic blockages and disturbances in the body to restore its self-healing capacity."

Benefits:

- Relieves pain from migraines, neck, back and sciatic
- Regulates Hormonal Imbalance

- Addiction/Smoking Cessation
- Influences Weight Loss: Not a standalone weight loss solution
- Alleviates Skin Problems: Such as eczema, psoriasis, and acne
- Benefits: Chronic fatigue syndrome, neuralgia, wound healing, musculoskeletal injuries, arthritis, tinnitus, and mood disorders

The results and timing vary according to individual complexities. Some people feel relaxed and lighter after one session. Within a few sessions, improvements in pain reduction, energy levels or sleep quality may become noticeable. Long-term benefits for lasting changes, especially for chronic conditions, require weeks or months to become noticeable.

This therapy is non-invasive, making it a safe option for many individuals.

- The practitioners carry out a treatment with glass rods held in both hands. The instrument amplifies the body's coherent light while reversing the chaotic light.

- By measuring points on each finger and toe, we can get a picture of which organ systems are energetically affected. Then, the glass rod sends the light back to the body.

Proponents of biophoton therapy have published findings in scientific articles, including studies conducted at leading centers like Georgetown University Hospital.

Consulting experienced practitioners is crucial to explore its potential benefits for your specific health needs.

\*<https://advancedtechnologygroup.org>.

It is important to emphasize that, while Biophoton Light Therapy sessions demonstrate many health benefits, individuals should not rely on it as a substitute for medical advice from a qualified physician. [The American Biophoton Association comprises practitioners across North America who have completed specialized training in biophoton light practice and continue to update their skills.](#) It is advisable to search out these trained and skilled practitioners.







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