



Santa Julia volunteers are some of the most sensible, sensitive, and honorable in the world. You have taught us how to adapt to the girls and Madres we all love so much. Thank you.

Mexican Cultural Standards

(with gratitude to Warren Hardy for his input)

Overview

The cultural values and worldviews of Canadians, Mexicans, and people from the United States differ quite a bit. Where settlers in the U.S. and Canada came to take possession of their territories, Mexicans were conquered. Thus their ways of seeing the world, of holding cultural values and of relating to foreigners is significantly different from those of their neighbors to the north.

Living in Mexico, it is important to appreciate the cultural differences. It may mean the difference between having a rewarding experience with the Mexican people and having a frustrating one.

All volunteers are encouraged to attend Warren Hardy's free presentation on Mexican culture. The lecture lasts only about an hour. Below are some important excerpts from the presentation:

Core values of three North American cultures

| Canadian | United States | Mexican |
|--------------|-----------------------|--------------------|
| Organization | Financial Opportunity | Respect, Pride and |
| Cooperation | Time and its Control | Personal Dignity |
| Harmony | Individual Freedom | Trust |
| | | Family |
| | | Free Time |

It is apparent, we don't all value the same things. There are significant and fundamental differences in how we approach our worlds. There is no one value here that is better or worse than the other; only differences. Knowing and respecting these differences will make everyone's time with Santa Julia much more rewarding.

Below are some specific issues which you may routinely encounter.

These are generalizations.

Mexico has a formalized set of manners, called *La Cortesia*, which is expected and played out among all Mexicans. One of the more obvious protocols is the way Mexicans greet each other. In the morning it is *Buenos Dias*, in the afternoon it is *Buenas Tardes*, and in the evening it is *Buenas Noches*. This is more than just saying "Hello." It is the Mexican way of acknowledging one other. It is accompanied by looking one other in the eye and smiling. Often they will use a name or title, such as Señor or Doña. This greeting is an important part of the culture, and when a Mexican encounters anyone who does not share in the greeting, they are considered rude.

In this issue:

Mexican Cultural Standards
Why Volunteer?
Santa Julia Congratulates its Graduates
Events Calendar
Wish List

Contact Information:

email: info@santajulia.org
phone: San Miguel - 152-3709
US - 925-418-8002
website: www.santajulia.org

How to Donate:

U.S. tax-deductible donations are made out to San Miguel Community Foundation, noting Santa Julia on the memo line.

Other financial donations may be made to Casa Hogar Santa Julia Don Bosco, A.C.

Financial donations may be mailed to either of these addresses:

US: 5802 Bob Bullock Loop, C1B84/165;
Laredo, Texas 78041
SMA: Recreo 11, Box 165, San Miguel de Allende, GTO, Mexico 37700

continued from page 1



When conducting business with a Mexican, it is considered polite and proper to have chitchat before getting down to business. This may include asking about family.

A Mexican's sense of personal boundaries is very different from those of their neighbors to the north. They generally are more comfortable with greater closeness. Kisses on the cheek and hugs are at least as prevalent as handshakes, but we encourage the girls to shake hands in order to learn business protocol. That said, they are eager, loving girls, so don't be surprised if they tackle you with a hug. That said, if their sense of personal boundaries is at all bothersome or uncouth (they should not be allowed into a lady's purse or into anyone's pocket, for instance) please kindly help them understand that they need to respect your personal space.

The Madres and children are practicing Catholics. They base their faith on the concept that love is the greatest force in life. They respect all other faiths, and expect others to respect theirs. While evidence of their faith in love is palpable, the only signs a visitor might encounter are the Madres' habits, a few religious images, the children's chapel, and the prayers the children say before and after meals and at bedtime. The Madres have a private prayer time in the chapel in their home each morning, so we try very hard not to schedule anything until the afternoons.



The Madres literally work around the clock. They have a huge number of personal, interpersonal, administrative, and legal responsibilities. They are truly servant leaders, and deserve all the respect we can give them. If you encounter a Madre anywhere on campus or off, be sure to go out of your way to greet the Madre and let her know how much you appreciate her labors of love.

Cultural Truths

Family is the first Mexican priority.

Meld with, honor, and become part of the Santa Julia family before you expect to accomplish very much.

Honor Mexican intelligence.

Our hosts are not necessarily as book-learned as we do-gooders from el norte, but their cultural intelligence will almost always trump ours.

Mexicans are deftly deferential.

They don't take the credit, so neither should we. Give it to fate. Give it to your mother. Give it to your host. Just don't take it!

Mexicans are a formal lot.

We might not think so as we live surrounded by women nursing in public, the perennial boys 45 years old hanging around the ironsmith's shop in our 'hoods, or the kids sucking face all over town, but Mexicans are a formal people. Always ask permiso. Always say perdon. In fact, always ask. At Santa Julia, with five Madres in charge, we always ask, "Mother May I?" And, we have an understanding that their yes mean yes, their no mean no, and their maybe mean *ask later*.



continued from page 2



Mexican social position is more important than Mexican wealth.

We should always introduce our Mexican hosts with their accumulated power. For instance, "It is my sincere privilege to introduce you to Madre Teresa, who has a diploma in hog husbandry and cheese making; who used to be in charge of the Order; and who now is in charge of economics at Santa Julia." And, yes, we should actually invest the time in finding out this level of information about our Mexican hosts.

Mexican truth is tempered by diplomacy.

So, we might not hear the entire truth until we apply an appropriate amount of diplomacy.

Cultural Questions

Just What, Exactly, Is Our Interest Here?

Save 'em for a day or sustain 'em for a lifetime? An offering of wealth? Work? Wisdom? All of the above? Fine, we've determined, for instance, that we're in it for the long run or for the single project. We've determined that our gifts will be gifts in kind and of the service variety. Is this what the folks we are attempting to assist will accept? Is this what they will use? Is this what they can appreciate? Is this what they really need right now? In the venerated words of Stephen Covey, "we must seek to understand before being understood".

Can We Be Patient Enough?

We know we have to prioritize. We now know that despite our best intentions, our progress will be *poco a poco*. We know that many times our progress will yield one step forward and two steps back. We know that our work will be like peeling an onion, and will produce just as many tears. But we know that those tears will be born of both frustration and triumph.

When all else fails, ask, "What am I missing?"

There are likely very large holes in our understanding.

Rules of the Cultural Road in Mexico

Be a servant leader.

Lead through service. Actions and body language do speak more loudly than words, especially if they are gringo words or Spanish words in a gringo accent.

Insist on transparency. We should provide it and we should insist on it. Good Mexicans do.

Be grateful for every little thing.

Be grateful for every gift, especially the first, small, tentative one. Everything can depend on our graciousness.

Be compassionate, for everyone you meet is fighting a great battle.

Philo of Alexandria, philosopher

Support a Santa Julia girl

Half of Santa Julia's expenses could be met if 40 people pledged only \$100 USD a month to support their favorite girl in her direct costs (food, clothing, medicine, school, etc.). In exchange, you will receive a framed certificate with a photo of that girl, the monthly newsletter, and invitations to special events such as birthday parties.

Create a bright future for a special girl by contacting Robin Loving Rowland at robin@robinloving.com.

Monthly costs for basic needs

| | |
|--------------|--------------|
| Psychology | 16 |
| Education | 18 |
| Medical | 21 |
| Food | 33 |
| Clothing | 12 |
| Total | \$100 |

Saints Alive



Thanks to **Gigi Cutler and Don Barbaree** for the tree of harmony and miracles, shown here with Luz and Ernestina of Santa Julia.

Thanks to the **Texas Podiatric Medical Association** for donations of shoes and a first aid kit.

Thanks to all who attended the **Mi Vida** fundraiser.

Why Volunteer?

by Volunteer Manager, Sheila Byrns

Because it feels good...

...to know that you have helped that person, that family, the community in which you live. There is a deep satisfaction, satisfaction that comes from doing just one little thing.

Because when many do just one little thing, big changes happen.

It also feels good...

...to have the sense of belonging that comes from being with others who have a similar commitment;

...to be part of a larger community whose goal is to make that small change that adds up to being life-changing for someone or something.

...to be part of a team where the goal is both fun and gives a sense of achievement — a challenge and an opportunity to grow.

Why Santa Julia?

If you have visited the Santa Julia campus, you know. If you haven't, please ask me and I will take you there.

If you have had the opportunity to see those happy little faces, to respond to the eager connection the girls offer so freely, and to hear the stories of many of those girls' backgrounds, you understand.

If you can picture how difficult the lives of these girls were before volunteers became a part of the life of Santa Julia — so that instead of begging for funds for very meager food and living in a rubble/garbage filled environment they now live in a calm, orderly environment with a focus on education and preparation for life upon graduation from Santa Julia — you know.

Thank you for considering one of the more than 200 volunteer positions available at Santa Julia.

Contact Sheila at sheilabyrns@gmail.com.

Santa Julia Congratulates its Graduates!



Several Santa Julia girls have matriculated from one major academic level to the next this summer, and everyone's happy about it.

- ö Going from pre-school to kindergarten are Luz and Dulce.
- ö Going from kindergarten to first grade is Guille.
- ö Going from elementary school to junior high school is Azucena.
- ö Going from junior high school to high school are Casandra and Maria de Jesus.

Thanks to donors and various volunteers led by Sheila Byrns and Judy Howe, the girls enjoyed a celebration in their honor recently.

Next time you're on campus, congratulate our graduates!

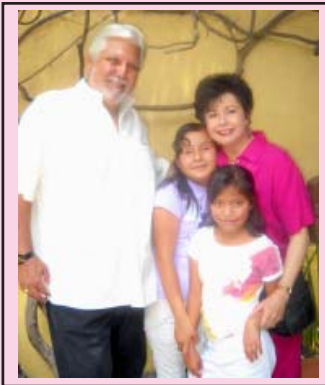
They're going places!



Events Calendar

Be a Grandparent for a Day - or Longer!

The Santa Julia girls miss their grandparents, and many San Miguel residents miss their grandchildren from their countries of origin. The solution: Celebrate Grandparents Day with the Santa Julia Girls Sunday, September 26, from noon – 3 pm at Puente Viejo, Calzada de la Aurora 52. Food, games, swimming, and framed photos of you and your grand girl will be provided for only \$300 pesos. Contact Vincent Gioia at gioia@gte.net.



John and Irene De Leon hug a couple of Santa Julia girls at the inaugural Grandparents Day party last September. If you are interested in being a Grand for a Day (mas o menos), please let us know! Being with the girls was so much fun that John and Irene have since pledged to volunteer in Santa Julia's computer lab.

Rotary International Golf Benefit for Casa Hogar Kids

Already touted as one of the world's best golf courses, the recently opened Ventanas Golf Resort in San Miguel de Allende, Guanajuato, Mexico, will host Rotary's premier International Golf Benefit Friday, October 29, 2010.

Ventanas, home to exclusive homes, villas, and lots, is partnering with the Rotary Club to benefit the Casa Hogar Kids, 144 abandoned children who happily define themselves by their futures rather than their pasts.



Only 144 players will have the opportunity to be the first benefit players on this Nick Faldo course in the perfect climate of San Miguel de Allende, called by Travel and Leisure this year, "one of the four best places to live in the world".

Golfers will receive complimentary refreshments and carts, an awards banquet, and the opportunity to win a new golf cart, a new quattrimoto four-wheeler or \$4,000 USD/\$50,000 pesos, and other great prizes. Sponsors will enjoy international media publicity, complimentary golf registrations, and the opportunity to share their products and services with the hundreds of people at the tournament.

Additional information about registration and sponsorship is available from tournament chairpersons John Doherty at jd98lv@hotmail.com and Robin Loving Rowland at robin@robinloving.com.

Events Calendar

Harmony Raffle

If you are 18 or older and have either an address, an email, or a phone number, then all it will cost you is \$5 USD/\$60 pesos to be eligible to win a new Quatrimoto four wheeler or \$4,000USD/\$50,000 pesos in the Harmony Raffle, benefiting Santa Julia and others.

“Especially in these economic times, it’s important that our nonprofits work together in harmony to meet their charitable goals,” said raffle organizer John Doherty. Participating nonprofits from San Miguel are Casa de los Angeles (daycare), Casa Hogar Santa Julia (girl’s home), Hospice San Miguel (end-of-life care), la Biblioteca (bicultural literary arts center benefiting youth), and the Midday Rotary Club (worldwide community service).

Representatives of each of these nonprofits are currently selling tickets for the grand prize, a new Yamaha Big Bear 250cc Quatrimoto and matching red helmet, the value of which is \$50,000 pesos/ \$4,000 USD, as well as many other prizes, including a vacation package, original art, rocking chairs, a quilt, and a deluxe stay at the Rosewood Hotel. Watch for the ticket sales tables around town, including every Saturday at parque Juarez, Sundays at la Biblioteca, and various times in the Jardin, la Luciernaga, and the Juan de Dios and Tianguis markets.

The drawing will happen Friday, October 29, between 3 and 5 pm at Ventanas de San Miguel Golf & Resort at the awards banquet of the premier Rotary San Miguel Charity Golf Tournament benefiting Santa Julia and other children’s homes.

For more information about prizes and online purchase of raffle tickets, click into www.harmonyproject.weebly.com or contact: Robin Loving Rowland, robin@robinloving.com, 152-3709 or 925-476-8117(US), or buy your tickets from the Santa Julia girls at the organic market each Saturday at Juarez Park from 9am to 2pm.



Pal Program

Many of you have participated in our Pal Program, like a pen pal program but via email to info@santajulia.org. When your letters come in English, we send them to the girls’ English teacher for response. When they come in Spanish, we refer them to the girls’ social worker for response. All that said, we know that the girls don’t always respond. We recently created the Santa Julia Advisory Council to help the girls and their miracle-making Madres, and we have two teens who represent the other girls at the Council each month. We asked them about the lack of responsiveness, and they said that if there are no digipix attached to their emails, they feel lost as to whom they are responding to. So, please include a photo of you each time you write, and thanks for befriending the girls in this way to improve their literary skills!

Wish List

There are always necessary items that the girls or the Madres need and cannot afford to buy. We count on our community's generosity to supply them. If you can help with any of the items listed below, please contact info@santajuila.org Thank you!

Celebrate Mexico's Independence!

September marks the 200th anniversary of Mexico's Independence, and the 40 Santa Julia girls want to celebrate. How much fun to take a few girls to the various events around town! For more information, contact Santa Julia's Volunteer Manager Sheila Byrns at sheilabyrns@gmail.com.

Count the Beans or Bring in the Bacon!

The girls are not the only ones who are eager to mix it up with volunteers. The Santa Julia Advisory Council has more than 200 volunteer positions, including those for accountants and fundraisers. If you have general accounting and Quick Books abilities, or if you are interested in some of the fun planned on the fundraising side of the house, please contact Financial Manager Rod Dye at rdye81701@earthlink.net.

Give Santa Julia the Run Around!

With 40 kids and only 5 Madres, there's always more to do than can be done. If you're the kind of person who loves to stay busy, let us offer you the opportunity to fulfill on various errands that need running. Contact Robin Loving Rowland at robin@robinloving.com.

On the Road Again!

We have a number of girls over the age of 15 who could really benefit from driver's education if a volunteer were available to help?



"I hope to return again to San Miguel and visit Santa Julia. This was clearly the highlight of my trip to San Miguel. Working with these lovely girls would be gratifying.
Anita H., Arkansas