

# News from Villa Infantil

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## EFAI Gives Grant

Once again, Villa Infantil has been chosen to receive grants from the Educational Foundation of the Americas, Inc. to use for education purposes.

For the past several years, EFAI has generously given grants to ten of the children at the orphanage. This year the Foundation increased the number of recipients to twelve children.

These grants certainly help the Villa defray education expenses in a big way.

Madre Maria has always said that education is a key to ensuring a better life for her many children. Her philosophy fits that of EFAI to a "T."

EFAI's mission states,



*"The mission of the Educational Foundation of the Americas, Inc. (EFAI) is to improve and stimulate the quality of education in the His-*

*panic Community of the Americas with specific emphasis on identifying and promoting model programs and/or educational institutions. Additionally, the directors expect to foster bilingual or tri-*

*lingual education that will allow this community to participate effectively in modern society and in the global economy."*

The children are taught English as part of their education which is a requirement in Mexico for qualifying for higher education.

## Casa Flores Donation

Casa Flores chose Villa Infantil several years ago to be their charity of choice. Over time they have used their B&B, located in Ajijic as a drop off point for donations for people who could not go to the Villa themselves. Recently, owners Fernando and Steve purchased a brand new very large

freezer AND a new refrigerator for the Villa. As if this wasn't generous enough, they even stocked the appliances with food.

Villa Infantil is very thankful to have the affiliation with Casa Flores.

Each room of Casa Flores is decorated with a different theme.



Visit their website at [www.casafloresajijic.com/](http://www.casafloresajijic.com/) and tell your friends to visit. If people book through our website, [www.friendsofvillainfantil.com](http://www.friendsofvillainfantil.com), a donation is given to the Villa.

# Note from the Editor

Much has changed in the seven years since I first was introduced to Madre Maria and the children at Villa Infantil. Most of the children who were there back then have either been adopted or have been reunited with their families.

Probably the biggest change for me is that I have left the lakeside area. But the thoughts of the work of

Madre Maria was never far from my mind and now circumstances have led me to become involved once again. How inspiring it is spreading the word of the amazing home on “the other side of the lake.” So thanks to some supporters still at the lake, I’ve been given information to share with you and an opportunity to once again let you know what is hap-

pening at Villa Infantil on Lake Chapala.

I hope you like our new format and enjoy this edition!

It’s good to be back.



## Coming and Going

There were 10 adoptions in 2010 and so far this year we have had 5 – two brothers, two sisters and one young lady who was 3 months old when she arrived at the Villa and was adopted by her new family just before her 9<sup>th</sup> birthday. It’s always bittersweet when any of the children leave the Villa because they have become so much a part of our lives. We miss them, but are thrilled that they have found a very special family of their

own.

The newest arrival at the Villa is a 9 months on baby boy. He was a very sad, undernourished little guy when he arrived, but it didn’t take Sister Patti long to nurse him back to health. He is now a happy little soul who is very good natured, alert and has a smile for everyone. He also gets plenty of love and attention from his little brothers and sisters at the Villa

*...one young lady who was 3 months old when she arrived at the Villa was adopted by her new family just before her 9<sup>th</sup> birthday.*

## St. Andrew's & San Andres



local Charities to receive funding. Thanks to the Out-

The Outreach Committee of St. Andrew’s again this year included Villa Infantil in their list of

reach Committee’s generous donations, some wonderful projects have been completed at the Villa to further ensure the safety and well being of the children.

For many years, Trish Connor has presented Madre with a donation from San

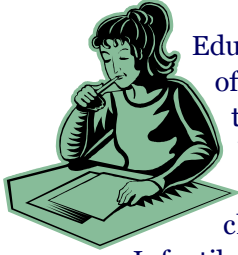
Andres Catholic Church in Ajijic for a year’s supply of bottled water for the Villa.

Madre Maria is very grateful for the continued support of both St. Andrews and San Andres.

### THANK YOU VOLUNTEERS

You work tirelessly to support Madre Maria and the children and never ask for, or receive, the credit you truly deserve. Thank you for all your efforts. **You are the greatest!**

# Pen Pal Program



Educational Foundation of the Americas, Inc, the organization that has given educational grants to 12 children at Villa Infantil this year (see article on Page 1) has initiated and is also helping coordinate a pen-pal program between children from the Villa and children living in other countries worldwide. The program officially got underway in May when our oldest child at the

Villa sent her first letter to her penpal in San Antonio, Texas.

This is a wonderful opportunity for communication between young people who can use their native language or learn a second language. We are all very excited about this program. If you have children or grandchildren who are interested in participating in the Pen-Pal program, please contact Sandra Cartwright at [sncmex2@yahoo.com](mailto:sncmex2@yahoo.com) or 376-764-0093

## SPONSORSHIP

*Please consider sponsoring or co-sponsoring a child at Villa Infantil. A contribution of \$30.00 USD a month will help provide an education and assist in assuring the general well-being of a child*

# Summer Schedule

The children get out of school on July 8th for 6 weeks of summer vacation. During this time, the Villa is closed and the children stay with various families in the area. The children usually stay with the same families during each holiday, so they are always excited to see their "vacation" families again.

The week before school gets out Madre Maria, Sisters Patti and

Blanca are busy sorting clothes, shoes and personal items to be packed into each child's suitcase for the summer vacation. Once the children leave for their vacation, Madre Maria, Sisters Patti and Blanca take a well-earned vacation too and attend a special Retreat, along with many Sisters of different Orders. Three weeks before the end of summer vacation, Madre Maria, Sisters Patti

and Blanca return to the Villa to get ready for the return of the children.

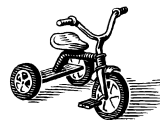
The children all arrive back at the Villa two weeks before school starts, giving them time to get back into a routine before the day to day structure of the new school year begins.



## Thank You Sponsors!

On behalf of Madre Maria and the children, we would like to give a special **Thank You** to our wonderful sponsors. You have stayed with us through thick and thin, in spite of a sometimes unfavorable economy on both

sides of the border. Your continued financial support helps provide an education and assists in assuring the general well-being of your sponsored child or children and is **very** much appreciated. We couldn't do it without you!!"



## Make a Play Date

Missing the grandchildren? Then make it a point to make a trip to the other side of the lake and spend some time with the kids at Villa Infantil. Your day will be so rewarding! Normal visiting hours at the Villa are: Monday - Friday: 10 to 12 & 4 to 6

and Saturday 10 to 1:30

There are no visiting hours on Sundays and holidays as the children are often away.

Madre and the sisters will welcome your visit but please be respectful of their time.

## Contact Information

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**Lunch Relief & Weekly Needs:**

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**Webmaster and Newsletter Editor:**

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## A Note from Sandra

*I would personally like to thank Sally Pachulski for her continued support of Madre Maria and the children at Villa Infantil. Sally has been the Villa Webmaster and Newsletter Editor for many years. When she and her husband, Dennis, returned to the States over a year ago we all suffered a tremendous loss. We were happy for them because they would be closer to their children and grandchildren, but we were sad to see them leave. Sally might have left Mexico, but she never left the Villa Infantil, Madre Maria and the children and has always kept them in her heart.*

*We are thrilled to have our Webmaster and Newsletter Editor back. Thank you Sally.*

*Sandra Cartwright*

## Lunch Relief at the Villa

For as long as the Children of La Villa Infantil volunteer organization has been in existence, volunteers have been providing lunches on a weekly basis to relieve the staff of the orphanage from having to prepare at least one meal a week.

Upon taking over at the beginning of 2011, I have been blessed with a considerable number of volunteers, most of whom live here year round, and consequently, we have been able to provide lunches on almost every Tues-

day and Thursday of this year.

I would like to thank Lisa, Maurita, Leah, Peg, Joseph and Karen, Pam and Pamela as well as Sherry Hudson and her friend Kerry Markert, who unfortunately passed away, a few short months ago.

Over time, we all learned what the children would enjoy eating and what would end up on the sides of their plates. Ideas were shared and suggestions made and culminated with an enjoyable party at the beautiful home of Joe and Karen on April 4<sup>th</sup>, where recipes were exchanged and a good time was had by all.

I would like to thank all the

lunch volunteers for their extraordinary efforts so far this year, and I hope we can all look forward to a tasty and enjoyable rest of the year.

Geoff Long.

Lunch co-ordinator.



