



2025 DECEMBER NEWSLETTER

Santa Barbara/Puerto Vallarta Sister City Committee



Published Nov. 24, 2025

Santa Barbara, California

November General Meeting Cesar's Restaurant –

We had a great turnout for our November meeting. Our guest speaker was Fred Sweeney, a retired architect. He spoke about a new non profit created to address two large building projects, one behind the Mission and the other on Grand Avenue. If you want more info go their website: <https://sagesb.org> and find out what has been accomplished so far and what is yet to come.

As usual a delicious meal of chile relleno/ enchilada and sauteed fish with rice and vegetables was served by chefs at Cesar's. Their meals never disappoint!!

Many members donated prizes for our opportunity drawing, to name just a few Becky Betancourt, Maria Hidalgo, Mary Frink, Marti Garcia, Carmen Flores, Tere Jurado and husband Rey Peñaloza.

POSADA Holiday Celebration

Moose Lodge –
110 W Victoria

4:00 pm Dec. 21, 2025

Meal by Villanueva Catering
Tamales, mole rojo
and more

Music by DJ Joey De Sales
Silent Auction

*Dress up - Wear something
something sparkly!!*

\$40 members
non members \$45

RSVP early to:
Sbpvsistercity805
@gmail.com



Members enjoying a convivial meal, meeting new people and making new friends.



Prize winner Mary Frink



Cheli Hidalgo, Robert with Alma Vaja,

Robert, Cheli and Anne Hefferman, lucky lady!!

All photos provided by Tere Jurado

@TereJurado805



Tere Jurado and Luis Moreno



Robert Hernandez (in red) handing out gifts to the many lucky opportunity drawing winners.



Nominating committee report for 2026 SB/PV Sister City Board of Directors

Vacancies for a two year term:

1. **Cheli Hidalgo**
2. **Sebastian Aldana**
3. **Alma Vaja**
4. **Marti Correa de Garcia**
5. **Danny Contreras**

SB/PV Sister City sincerely thanks the outgoing board members for their service.

4. Alicia Sorokin – Has completed four years of service and is now termed out
5. Bonnie Carroll - Has completed four years of service and is now termed out
6. Maria Sanchez – Has completed four years of service and is now termed out.
7. Claudia Alvarado – Conflict with work schedule
8. Zahida Carrera – Conflict with work schedule
9. Margaret Saavedra – Termed out – but will remain on Board as President Ex-Officio

**Respectfully submitted with thanks to the nominating committee participants
Gil Garcia – Chair Nominating Committee.**

Candidates for a two year term of office for Board of Directors



Alma Vaja

I had a wonderful and rewarding career with Santa Barbara County, where I worked for 16 years before retiring a couple of years ago. Even though I'm officially retired, my dedication to helping people continues! I'm currently active as a Family and Marriage Therapist (AMFT, APCC), and I'm very passionate about my work with three different Santa Barbara nonprofit organizations. I'm fortunate to be able to serve both our English and Spanish-speaking communities, which is something I truly value. Alma has served as a director on our Board in previous years.

Cheli Hidalgo

My background is Human Resources which involved working with various type of people from assembly workers, admin staff, CEOs to Judges. Even though it was challenging I've always enjoyed helping people. I've been a SBPV member for over 15 years enjoying the traveling, the events and it's been a good way to keep up with my computer skills. Cheli has also served as a Director in past years.





Marti Correa-Garcia

Marti has been an active member of the Santa Barbara/Puerto Vallarta Sister City Committee since 1980. She was President in 1986 and again in 2003-2005. She has also been Treasurer numerous times. This organization is special because it helps her understand her Mexican roots.

Currently, Marti is an active member of the Rotary Club of Santa Barbara North, on the Board of Directors of the Friendship Center, La Vista Foundation and SoCal Sister Cities International. She came to Santa Barbara 1977 and has served on numerous community non-profit organizations.

Danny Contreras

Danny has been a member of Santa Barbara/Sister Cities Group for many years. Danny has been employed at Smardan Hatcher for over 40 years and is general manager. His experience in general business will be a bonus for our board. He and his wife Marcie are regular participants in our varied Sister City dinners and programs.



Sebastian Aldana

I am a Santa Barbara native, first generation. My father was from Jalisco and my mother from Nayarit, Mexico. I love what I have seen of Mexico so far. Puerto Vallarta is awesome and I hope my wife Norma and I will be able to live in the Puerto Vallarta region six months out of the year when I retire, I would love to explore my roots. I am currently working at the Four Seasons Biltmore Resort, as security personnel. I am very engaged with the Santa Barbara community, I have two Mayor and City Council appointed positions, Parks and Recreation Commissioner and Neighborhood Advisory Council - East side Representative.

Current President of Santa Barbara Eastside Society non profit. I support our current projects in Puerto Vallarta, looking forward to the next few years as we continue to fundraise and put smiles on people's faces along with enjoying the camaraderie of the Puerto Vallarta community. Sebastian has served as a director on our Board in the past .and also served as President.

PUERTO VALLARTA ITINERARY
December 7 – 11, 2025

Sunday , Dec. 7, 2025		Rec. 11/22/25
5:30 pm	Arrive in PV via Charter Bus - Welcome to Playa Los Arcos Hotel <i>Note: PV Members will come to greet us and help with luggage</i>	
	Dinner on your own	
Monday, Dec. 8, 2025		
Arrive 8:30 - 9 am	Welcome Breakfast at Santo Coyote Restaurant in Marina Vallarta - <i>transportation TBD, allow about 2 hours</i>	n/c to members of SB/PV
2:00 pm	<i>Visit to Mothers of Children with Cancer at DIVAC. Transportation TBD</i>	n/c to members of SB/PV
5- 5:30 pm	Meet in front of Woolworths’s to prepare to walk in ‘Peregrinacion’ to Our Lady of Guadalupe Church, walking distance – but taxi is an option – duration about an hour. Be sure to pack white shirt/top and pants or slacks in white to walk in the procession.	
6:30 – 7:00 pm	Dinner on your own	
Tuesday, Dec. 9, 2025		
	Sleep in – free time – breakfast on your own	
12 noon	Committee Meeting at City Hall, Downtown Puerto Vallarta – <i>Board Members only</i>	
6:00 p.m.	Friendship Dinner hosted by Puerto Vallarta - For all members of Sister Cities and special Guests. <i>Location to be determined</i>	n/c
Wednesday, Dec. 10, 2025		
	Free Morning – Things to do?? We will provide a list.	
Time TBD	Dinner at Hotel Playa Los Arcos, hotel guests free! <i>Non guests, cost is \$27</i>	SB/PV member n/c
Thursday, Dec. 11		
8:00 am.	Farewell - Breakfast at Andale Restaurant - Another option <i>°Rotary Breakfast at Marriot – TBD -- Cost is \$15.00</i>	n/c for SB/PV members
11:00 am	Depart for PV Airport – for return flight home <i>(PV Members will provide transportation to Airport)</i>	
	<i>°We are waiting to confirm the attendance of the Rotary Group Governor and guests.</i>	

There may be changes - You will be notified by “ WhatsApp”

Board Activities from our November Meeting

During last year’s visit, we went to the ‘Desarollo Infantil y Familas’ (DIF) clinic. Since our visit they made a request totaling \$8,431.00 for equipment.

- *SB/PV will fund DIF \$3000 for the Chattanooga electrotherapy combo. DIF will agree to fund. the additional \$504 –to cover the total cost. Our group will also apply for a Rotary Foundation grant for \$2500 cost an aquatic bike and SB/PV will cover any remaining balance not covered by grant.*
- *Another topic on our Agenda was the Lemus Memorial at the McKenzie Dog Park area. Members of the community brought to our attention the sorry state of the memorial. We will work with the City of SB to improve the situation there.*



Comité de Ciudad Hermana Santa Bárbara/Puerto Vallarta

START DATE: 01/SEP/25

Duration: 3 months

MANICURE Y PEDICURE SPA

MONDAY
4:00 PM A 7:00PM
RECOVERY FEE \$550.00 PESOS
DOES NOT INCLUDE MATERIALS

“Turn personal care into a business opportunity.”

START DATE: 04/SEP/25

Duration: 5 weeks

EYEBROW STRAIGHTENING AND EYELASH LIFTING

THURSDAY
4:00 PM A 7:00PM
RECOVERY FEE \$400.00 PESOS
DOES NOT INCLUDE MATERIALS

“Train yourself, undertake, evolve.”



In partnership with the Jalisco State Institute for Job Training. Courses endorsed by the Ministry of Education (SEP). You will receive a certificate upon completion.

Requirements: Completed application, Proof of Address, Copy of INE and CURP

Registration is open until August 20th or until places are filled.
Dr. Mike Lemus 150, Zona Hotelera, Zona Hotelera Nte., 48314 Puerto Vallarta, Jal. ☎ 322 101 1367

AFCC – Mothers of the Children w Cancer had the opportunity to attend these classes offered by Jaslisco.State Institute for Job Training. Funds for this were generously donated by members listed in this Newsletter last month. The courses have been completed and the “Mothers” are thrilled that they have been able to take these classes. They are overjoyed that they will now be able to work and help to support their families!

A visit is planned with the “Mothers’ on our trip to Puerto Vallarta. They want to personally offer their thanks to members who helped fund their classes. Many want to use their skills but will need continued funding for a ‘beauty box’ and supplies so they can use their training.

Reported by Luz Maria Ortiz



HAPPY HOLIDAYS



WELCOME NEW MEMBER
James Saavedra

RENEWING MEMBERS
Christina and Dan Kahn

173 Total members

Board of Directors 2025
Marti Correa, de Garcia President
Danny Contreras- 1st V. Pres
Maria Sanchez – 2nd V.Pres
Gary Petlow, Treasurer
Bonnie Carroll
Jacqueline Duran
Alma Soto
Alicia Sorkin
Claudia Alvarado.
Margaret Saavedra, Recording Scty. & President Ex Oficio
Newsletter Editor Since November 2022

Newsletter published once per month,

Coming Events:
12/1 to 12/11 Visit to Guadalajara and Puerto Vallarta
12/21 Posada Holiday Celebration
Moose Lodge
January 2026 – No meeting planned