



HISTORY OF THE ASSOCIATION



The story of the Homeowner's Civil Association of La Cholla starts after World War II. Many southwestern fisherman discovered the fertile grounds of the Sea of Cortez. As a result, many took the long trek across the desert with truck and boat to come to the Puerto Peñasco area to fish. In those days, the highway stopped at the border. The last leg of the trip was filled with sand and the aggravation of getting stuck. Upon arriving in La Cholla, they were rewarded with excellent fishing. The thought of returning to the border through the sand spawned the idea of "renting" a plot of land from the local land owners. Gustavo "Gus" Brown bought the land from the widow of his uncle, James Duncan Brown. Duncan

Brown was killed in an incident at the border near San Luis. His widow was not a Mexican citizen and according to the 1917 Mexican Constitution, could not own land in the restricted area. Gus had been born in 1919 in Ciudad Juarez, Chihuahua and was a Mexican citizen. He bought the 3,374 acres containing Cholla Bay in 1956. The system was simple then; some rocks, a little paint and a handshake was all that was needed to secure your piece of La Cholla. Leaving your boat and/or trailer on the rented land made the return trip to the US much easier and made a return trip to La Cholla quicker and easier as well.

There were no services in La Cholla; e. g. no electricity, no piped water, no sewer, no telephone. The roads were basically trails through the sand. The earliest map of La Cholla was drawn by Bill Valentine in 1948. Bill's book, *Valentine and Friends Revisited*, is a great read for anyone interested in the golden years of La Cholla fishing.

In 1955, the Cholla Bay Sportsmen's Club was founded. In those days, its primary function was to run a monitored radio system and a search and rescue operation to make fishing far more safe than previously. During these years, more and more fishing cabins and shacks were built in La Cholla by the fishermen.

The Gustavo Brown companies envisioned developing the Sandy Beach area to promote tourism in the Puerto Peñasco area. With help from the City, State and Federal government, the dream became a reality. One of the issues facing the developers was the legal status of the renters in the community of La Cholla. By the early 1990's, La Cholla had become a community. Beautiful homes were replacing the fishing shacks and city services were becoming a necessity. The Sonoran government insisted that a Mexican non-profit corporation be

created to "regularize" La Cholla. In 1991 the corporation, Asociación de Regularización de Vecinos de la Cholla, A. C., was recognized as the entity to represent La Cholla. To ensure the regularization of La Cholla moved forward, a deadline of July 1, 1995 was set for the land renters to enter into a purchase agreement for their land. At the same time, the state of Sonora formed a technical committee to work out the details of regularizing La Cholla. This committee included representation of the Vecinos de la Cholla, the city of Puerto Peñasco, the state of Sonora, the Land owner, and Bancomer.

The committee met 25 times over the course of 2 1/2 years to start the infrastructure of La Cholla and create bank trusts for the land owners of record. Bancomer created the largest master trust in Mexico to enter into trust agreements with La Cholla's foreign owners. Our Association, through our first President, Alan Peterson, made sure the power brought into La Cholla was adequate for current and future needs. Telmex began telephone service to La Cholla as the electric project was completed. Your Association paid for a feasibility study to bring water to the edge of La Cholla through a pipeline installed by the developer. The study resulted in the city (OOMAPAS) providing water to our standpipe. The roads and signage, although owned by the city, are maintained by your Association.

The community center was purchased from the Cholla Bay Sportsmen's Club and additional land was acquired to accommodate outdoor events and provide adequate parking. The Association remodeled and expanded the community center to include a large open meeting space, a commercial kitchen and a library. As with La Cholla's roads, there is a park maintained by the Association, but owned by the City.

La Cholla has come a long way from a remote fishing village to where it is today. Many can say they own a home in Puerto Peñasco, but few can say they are part of a community of mixed cultures with a common bond of the Sea of Cortez and being part of the La Cholla community.

PURPOSE OF THE ASSOCIATION TODAY

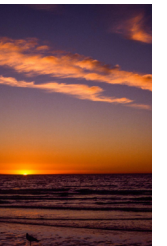
Many Americans scream and run at the thought of the American style "HOA". In Mexico, there are non-profit civil associations, such as ours. The Vecinos de la Cholla AC can best be described as a service association. Our members pay minimal annual dues to enhance the services provided by the Municipio de Puerto Peñasco. The Vecinos AC does not tell its members what color to paint their homes, what to plant in their yards, when to pull in their trash cans, etc. Colonia La Cholla is part of the Municipio de Puerto Peñasco. Without our association, the only services provided would come from the city of Puerto Peñasco. We would be on same road and signage maintenance as the rest of the city. Drive the back streets of Peñasco to get an idea of how our roads would be maintained. The city does not have any budget for our park and certainly not our privately-owned clubhouse. The quasi-governmental entity, OOMAPAS has a difficult

time providing water to the city; our standpipe would be a low priority and our water delivery trucks may have to fill their trucks in town causing a cost increase to La Cholla residents. Our local La Cholla police officers would have to depend on the city to maintain their vehicles. Without dependable vehicles, police service in La Cholla would be at the mercy of the city vehicle maintenance yard.

The Vecinos de la Cholla AC is operated by a board of directors elected by our membership (general assembly). The general assembly is the ultimate authority of the Association. In April there is a meeting of the general assembly. The main purpose of this annual meeting is to elect officers and board members. Officers and board members serve 3 year terms. All officers and board members serve voluntarily; there are no paid officers or board members. At \$150, our annual association dues are by far the lowest in the area. Annual dues in Las Conchas are nearly \$1,400 annually with all of the American-style HOA regulations. At \$800 annually, Playa Encanto also has all of the CC & Rs you can expect north of the border. La Cholla has no CC & Rs and complies with the building standards required by the city. If you like a highly regulated, American style HOA, La Cholla would probably not be for you. La Cholla has a unique blend of Mexican families living here for over 50 years, full-time American expats, and part-time American weekenders. We lack the HOA militants telling you to pull your weeds.

What the Vecinos AC does:

- 1) Maintains the entrance road from the Wrecked at the Reef turn off to the edge of the Colonia La Cholla subdivision.
- 2) Maintains the interior roads of La Cholla.
- 3) Maintains the street signage within La Cholla.
- 4) Maintains and improves "Firecracker" park.
 - √ Horseshoe pit
 - √ Basketball court
 - √ Pickle ball court
 - √ Soccer field (sand)
 - √ Ramadas, tables and BBQ s
 - √ Children's playground equipment
- 5) Maintains and improves the Community Clubhouse.
- 6) Maintains and improves our lending library.
- 7) Maintains the water supply to La Cholla for the independent water delivery trucks.
- 8) Supports police service to La Cholla.
- 9) Negotiates with the Municipio de Puerto Peñasco on services they provide, such as garbage pick up.



SERVICES IN LA CHOLLA

Electricity

In the entire country of Mexico, there is one supplier of electricity. This supplier is the Comision Federal de Electricidad (CFE). Although, it is a separate entity, it is owned by the Mexican government. They read meters at the end of every other month. These months are the odd months, January, March, May, etc. CFE does NOT mail bills to your US address. They will deliver your bill electronically to your email inbox or they will simply role up the paper bill and stick in your electric meter. Rates are based on where you live in Mexico. The Puerto Peñasco area is rated as "E". The E rating is for areas with hot summers and mild winters. The summer rate makes it affordable to run electric air conditioning, but VERY expensive to run electric heat in the winter. CFE is ruthless when it comes to disconnecting service; be sure to pay your bill on time, there is no grace period. It is advisable to set up an on-line CFE account to receive your bill electronically rather than physically. With an on-line account, you can pay through their website. The only American credit card accepted is American Express. Some Vecinos have used Xoom to pay CFE, but Xoom does charge a fee. You can set up auto-pay, but we would advise against it. If there is a billing error, they will automatically deduct the incorrect amount and it is VERY difficult to dispute and get your money back,

CFE website: www.cfe.mx

The website is in Spanish, but most browsers will translate it for your convenience.

It is also possible to pay your bill at the CFE office in Puerto Peñasco. There is a self service kiosk in the their office. To use the kiosk, you must have your paper bill and the kiosk only accepts pesos.

The local CFE office is located just off Benito Juarez at Av. Constitución and Ignacio Comonfort.

Water

Although promised by the developer through the "regularization" process during the 1990's, La Cholla does not have water piped to each property. We depend on independent water delivery drivers to fill storage tanks at our La Cholla homes. The water trucks are filled by a stand pipe located near the police station. Our water supply is at the end of the main line that serves the condo projects on Sandy Beach. At times, our standpipe runs dry due to heavy use at these developments and OOMAPAS and/or the city cannot provide an adequate supply. During these "dry" times, the water trucks cannot be filled. We advise keeping an eye on your personal supply and not wait until you are on empty. Most houses have a water fil-

tration system to collect sediments before entering your house. Water truck drivers contact information:

Julio Felix - Voice or text: 638-100-2745
Ramon Villa - Voice or text: 638-105-0551
Julio Cesar - Voice or text: 638-107-1583
Rafael - Voice or text: 638-107-5000

They have Facebook pages where you can order water as well.

The water supplied by the water trucks is perfectly safe for normal household use, however; most Vecinos use purified water for drinking and cooking. There are purified water providers all over Puerto Penasco, although not in LaCholla. These stores will sanitize and fill a 5 gallon bottle for \$10 MXN (50¢ USD)

Sewer

Although promised by the developer through the "regularization" process during the 1990's, La Cholla does not have a central sewage disposal system. Each home has a private septic system. There are companies in Puerto Peñasco that provide septic tank pumping services, if required.

Telephone/Internet

TelMex serves the LaCholla community with landlines and Internet service. Service is billed monthly and starts at \$389 MXN; which is roughly \$20 USD. This includes a landline and DSL at 20mgs. Like CFE, it is best to set up an on-line account. TelMex does accept American credit cards. Many Vecinos feel they don't need a land line, because their American cell phones work in Puerto Peñasco. Another option that does not include a landline is a TelMex "hotspot". These devices communicate with the local cell towers and are often more reliable than wired connections. The service is billed bi-annually and works out to be about \$25 USD per month.

The Mexican TelMex website is: www.TelMex.com Your web browser should translate this website as well.

There is also an American TelMex website in English It is www.TelMexUSA.com. You can pay your Mexican TelMex bill through this website for a \$2 surcharge.

The TelMex office is located at the corner of Juan De La Barra and Nicolás Bravo in el centro. (look for the tower) Like CFE, they have a self-service kiosk at their office.

There are other private internet services available, but specific details would need to be provided by these companies or their clients.

Garbage Collection Service

Oomislim is a quasi-governmental agency, which provides garbage collection service in LaCholla. The service is purchased annually at a cost of \$5,300 MXN (\$265 USD). Oomislim provides a sticker for your house after paying for your service. They will NOT pick up garbage at your house unless you have their sticker. For full-time and extended stay Vecinos, this charge is tolerable. In 2021, the AC piloted a "pay as you go" plan approved by Oomislim to help our part-time Cholla homeowners. Unfortunately, Oomislim chose not to continue the program for 2022. Oomislim does not have an on-line payment option. Their office is located on Belisario Domínguez in Colonia Oriente. They do accept pesos, dollars and credit cards.

Street and Sign Maintenance

Our Association provides maintenance on the main entrance road into LaCholla, as well as the interior streets. We also maintain the street name, speed limit and stop signs. The street maintenance is on a regular schedule, but if you have a problem with your street or see a problem on one of the main roads, contact Vecinos President, Pat Sledge at:

TucsonRedRocker@gmail.com

Problems with signage may be reported to Pat as well.

La Cholla Lending Library

Our La Cholla lending library is part of the Community Clubhouse. It is located on the west side of the building and the door is clearly marked. Gordy Waite continues to be our wonderful volunteer librarian. There is a library map on the table that will help you find the section you are looking for.

- How does the library work? It is a lending library. Take a book/puzzle/movie/game and bring it back when you are finished.
- What can be donated? Fiction & non-fiction books in good condition with no tears, pages missing or water damage. We will also take DVD movies, audio books on CD, puzzles and games with complete sets/pieces. (Please no magazines, how-to books, textbooks, manuals or oversized coffee table books.)

The Association provides keys to the library to Vecinos AC members. If you don't have a key, please let Gordie know and he will be happy to get one for you.

Gordy Waite - M50/L1 • Local phone: 638.382.5031 • USA: 928.300.9042 - Keys are also available directly from the Association by US mail if you email: info@VecinosDeLaCholla.org.

Vecinos de la Cholla A. C. Contact Info:

Email: info@VecinosDeLaCholla.org

Website: www.VecinosDeLaCholla.org

