

## The Value of Volunteering

By Peggy A. Nelson, Vice President, International Friendship Club

As snowbirds settle in for a winter in lovely Puerto Vallarta, what fulfills the days more than lending a hand? There is so much need and many opportunities for volunteering in Vallarta. I have been a grandmother to a teenage boy through Vallarta Abuelos, a deeply rewarding experience. I remain involved in the family of my teenage grandson even though he has aged out of the program. Now, the International Friendship Club (IFC) is a strong focus for me.

There are lots of studies showing the health benefits of staying active, helping others, and making a difference. By volunteering, we can add meaning to our lives and feel a sense of accomplishment. We meet other volunteers. We are engaged in our city, and we get to become part of it more deeply. Volunteering is an ideal part of fulfilling a retirement, connecting with others and feeling good about oneself.

The International Friendship Club has many great opportunities for volunteering, from education and social services committees that consider IFC funding of various non-profits in the Vallarta area, to developing education and enrichment programs, to setting up or working on social events, to our English Outreach program in which volunteers teach English, to helping IFC Home Tours. And more.

I've previously highlighted our Home Tours volunteers, who enthusiastically lead tours of artistic and exceptional homes and villas around Vallarta. Behind the scenes are many volunteers, the ticket takers, the people who interface with the homeowners who generously donate their fascinating homes and design inspirations for these tours. Behind every guide are several other volunteers who make it happen.

IFC volunteers staff the front desk at the IFC Clubhouse. Stop by and meet them. The Clubhouse is located upstairs, at the corner of Libertad and Miramar, just north of the Calle Insurgentes Bridge, in el Centro. The official address is Edificio Parian del Puente #13.

IFC volunteers bartend at happy hours, oversee the smooth running of bridge classes and games and yoga, meditation and tai chi classes, obtain bar and restaurant discounts for members, set up Dine-Arounds and Meet & Greets, and much more.

If you'd like to learn more about the IFC and opportunities for volunteering, check out our season opening reception on Sunday, December 3. Live music (Xochiquetzal, an eclectic duo with Latin soul), drinks and hors d'oeuvres will be offered from 5-7:00 PM, at the Arte Vallarta Museo, Calle Guillermo Prieto 164, Colonia El Remance, Puerto Vallarta (follow Rio Cuale around the corner to the east from the Emiliano Zapata Municipal Market). Purchase tickets online only, by November 30, in the calendar section of the IFC website, ifc.org. And, while you're at it, bring a new toy for the Toys for Tots program.

Feel free to contact us with your ideas, or for more information about volunteering, at our website [ifcvallarta.org](http://ifcvallarta.org)

Looking ahead, on January 21, IFC and the Instituto de Artes Musicales en Puerto Vallarta (IAMPV) jointly host a benefit concert at Oscar's Restaurant featuring the Salty Paw Jazz Orchestra. Proceeds help fund musical education for student members of Salty Paw and IAMPV. The concert is at 4:00 PM. Tickets will go on sale soon at the IFC website. This will be another delightful afternoon of music, great company and good food in a gorgeous setting.



Home Tours volunteers



