

THE GRAN PACIFICA WAVE

NEWS FROM THE EDGE OF THE SEA

FEBRUARY 2015

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STATEMENT FROM MIKE COBB

CEO GRAN PACIFICA

Welcome to the first issue of The Gran Pacifica Wave, the Gran Pacifica Property Owner Newsletter.

There have been many changes at Gran Pacifica over the past few months, ones that you should know about.

The 800-pound gorilla in the room is the departure of Roger Keeling and the abdication of his rights and responsibilities for property, golf, and utility management. In his absence, Patrick Hiebert, Pat Younis, Floyd Buch, Kent Payne, Leigh Burch, Linda Stack and many others have stepped up to pick up the pieces.



Gran Pacifica has stepped up to keep the golf course open, and with our partners, the restaurant open, condos renting, the water on, the TV and Internet working, and the grass mowed.

My hat goes off to the dedication of these individuals and many others in helping us get to the point we are today.

Moving forward means taking the lessons learned and implementing wiser practices across the board. One of these is a direct and frequent communication flow to property owners. Cheryl Nicholas, one of your neighbors, has agreed to write a property update every 2 weeks with news from the property, owner and guest interviews, activity reports and other relevant information so that you can stay abreast of what is happening in your community.

The divisiveness of the past has waned, replaced with the common goal of building our fledgling community into a village by the sea. I want to thank all the residents and owners who have approached me to give real support to Gran Pacifica and to encourage our common success. We all win when we work together.

Thank you for being a part of the Gran Pacifica community. I'm excited about the future and you should be too. Come visit and be surprised by how nice the place looks, feels and is. The property owner meeting is April 25th. It will be a great time to celebrate the new direction and new attitude taking shape right here at Gran Pacifica. Hope to see you then.

NOTE FROM YOUR EDITOR CHERY NICHOLAS

HER SUMMER IN GRAN PACIFICA

If you by chance don't know me, my name is Cheryl Nicholas and I have been living my invincible summer in Gran Pacifica for a year with my best friend, Cee Cee who seems to have acquired a fan base. People usually greet Cee Cee before they greet me. She's hard to resist, this blonde, half lab half shepherd with the deep brown eyes. I am so excited to have been given the opportunity to put together this newsletter. The past couple months have been worrisome, but thanks to some very astute leaders, we are on the mend and moving forward. This first issue is longer than the normal one planned, and it is packed with important information. Please note statements by Mike Cobb, CEO of Gran Pacifica and Pat Younis, President of the Property Owners' Association. Two profiles are featured in this issue as well.

The mission of our new adventure is to connect the community through relevant information such as events, property projects, resident and guest feature profiles, surfer news and letters to the editor. Separation and suspicion have taken a hike. Here we go!



GIOVANNI RODRIGUEZ SEEMS TO HAVE FALLEN IN LOVE AT FIRST SITE... TWICE

A DOUBLE LOVE STORY

"I remember going on a tour of the property and I just fell in love with the community, the challenges and the opportunity of growth." Giovanni

Giovanni Rodriguez, General Manager of Gran Pacifica's Vida Del Mar, seems to have fallen in love at first site ... twice! Giovanni came to Gran Pacifica's Vida Del Mar Resort by way of Miami, FL. He was born in Managua, then after the war, his family moved to San Pedro Sula, Honduras, where his parents purchased The Pirate's Den Resort. While attending the University of San Pedro Sula, he helped his family at the resort. After living in Miami 27 years, he was ready to move back to Nicaragua, where most of his family lives. After investigating Gran Pacifica, he states, "I remember going on a tour of the property and I just fell in love with the community, the challenges and the opportunity of growth!"

Giovanni met Huguette at a baseball game and two months later they were getting married! Giovanni says they just couldn't be apart. Giovanni's new bride, Huguette received a degree in dental medicine at the University of Managua, then went on to specialize in implant and other dental surgeries. Huguette's goal is to bring her skills to Villa del Carmen through the non-profit organization, Help Them Help Themselves.

"If we don't take care of our customers, someone else will."



PATRICIA YOUNIS, POA, ACTING PRESIDENT



HER ACTING PRESIDENT IN GRAN PACIFICA

When asked to contribute to the launch of The Gran Pacifica Wave, I must confess I had a hard time deciding where to start. It has been a rough few months. I hated reporting unsettling news but as I write, Editor Cheryl tells me Mike Cobb has recounted the story, so now I can focus on the good stuff!

Despite the agitations and factions that seemed to grow increasingly more divisive under TKG management, this event brought us together. Although wrenching news continued to flow forth over weeks, we pulled in unison. I came to Nicaragua to be here in person and, like others, was determined to make certain the situation would be managed with care, and that daily operations would continue without visible effect. POA did what we needed to do. We made certain the POA funds were safe and accounted for. We supported the workers who faced daunting pressure to not file claims on their unpaid Social Security, Health Insurance and other employer-paid benefits. POA, GP and Patrick Hiebert provided bus transportation into Managua, counsel and support, time off and lunches so that these men had the confidence to appear and make their cases known before the government agency that handles employer/employee matters. The workers agreed to continue working despite the lack of clarity as to who was their employer. Together we all held hands and crossed the flood waters!

My comments would be incomplete if I did not celebrate the efforts of Patrick, and his tireless assistant, Angela Smetana. Despite the fact Patrick was personally financially affected, he quickly determined the best way to push back was to step forward. Clearly declaring that he was representing only himself as an individual, Patrick moved from Canada to Gran Pacifica within days of the news. He self-funded operations and payrolls. He worked with little sleep and struggled through confusion for weeks. Together we – all of us, GP, Patrick, POA and the respective staffs - worked to assure this unsettling period was as operationally seamless as possible for owners, residents, guests – and employees. The difference is that Patrick is at ground zero. He is immersed in the daily problems 24/7. Because of his efforts, events planned at the property long before this happened, have come off without a hitch (well, maybe little ones!). Thank You, Patrick for a Job Well Done!

We are now sailing forward with the wind at our back!

Stay Tuned!

FEATURED GRAN PACIFICA GUEST

FEATURED GUEST

Julia Smetana says her sister, Angela Smetana, a manager at Gran Pacifica's Vida del Mar, has been on her radar for over six years. When, each year while Angela was in the Peace Corps in Nicaragua, Julia would ask her sister when she was coming home, and Angela would respond, "Maybe next year." When Angela acquired the job at Gran Pacifica, Julia kept asking. Then, Angela met Osmond and Julia knew in her heart Angela wasn't coming home ... at least for a very long time. So, Julia came to her big sister. Since 2011 she has visited Angela in Gran Pacifica three times and this time, she brought her boyfriend of two years, Micah. They saved for a year, Micah gave his two week notice as a logistics manager at Albertson's Food Corporation and they took off for Nicaragua.

Julia has a clinical doctorate in physical therapy and is considering a position as a traveling physical therapist. For now, they are looking forward

When I asked them if there was an engagement in the future, they looked at one another and said, not really. Micah added that they knew they would last to travel. Although the word "love" wasn't expressed, Julia said there is no other person she would rather be with right now than Micah. He is more laid back, she explains. Julia is definitely not laid back—a very verbose young lady.

What they love about Gran Pacific is the seclusion, friendly folks and wide open spaces. What they consider are challenges are the seclusion and distance to the city. They have no qualms about jumping on a bus to their destination. They are looking forward to exploring Nicaragua.

Two free birds roosting awhile in Gran Pacifica.



FUTURE MEDICAL/DENTAL CLINIC JUST OUTSIDE GRAN PACIFICA'S GATE

MEDICAL/DENTAL CLINIC

When Patrick revealed this heart wrenching story, I knew it had to get out to the residents of Gran Pacifica.

One day, while I was driving along a country dirt road, transporting volunteers to where we were rebuilding a school in Villa El Carmen, the clutch on the van burnt out. We managed to get a ride for the others but I stayed with the van until the tow truck came. While I was waiting, I noticed a little boy watching me from the bushes. He was tossing a baseball in the air so I waved him over to play catch with me. It didn't take long to realize that even at 10 years old, he was much better than me, and he laughed at how acrobatic he had to be to catch my throws! He made me laugh ... but then I noticed his throwing style was strange.

When he came closer, it was clear why that was. His arm was at a 45 degree angle between his wrist and elbow. I asked him what happened, and he said he'd fallen out of a tree. So, I asked, "And the doctors let it heal like that?"

He looked at me like I had two heads. "Doctors?" was all he said.

It hit me hard imagining the pain that little boy must have endured sleeping through many nights with his badly broken arm untreated with no pain killers. These beautiful and promising children in Nicaragua have no access to health care and can't even get a broken arm fixed properly. My own daughter had fallen out of "monkey bars" on a playground and her arm had looked the same, and she cried and cried because it hurt so badly, then two hours later pain medication helped her settle down and her arm was straight again and in a cast. This little boy's parents just wrapped his fractured arm up in cloth, and I could picture his mother holding him as he sobbed for many nights while he went through the pain of both bones in his forearm being snapped and healing crookedly without any pain medication at all. His parents couldn't afford the ride to the hospital or the fees for the care. And unfortunately, the sorrowful day didn't end there.

Later that evening, back in the comfort of one of the Las Perlas condos at Gran Pacifica, I had gotten a message from a friend that one of the brightest eight year old boys in school named Francesco had not been to classes for a few days. Everyone believed he just had a flu. I was horrified to learn that Francesco had died of pneumonia simply because his parents could not afford to bring him to the hospital or pay for the simple treatment that would have saved his life. For a few dollars, this boy's life could have been saved. Anyone of us would have gladly brought him to the hospital if we had known the situation.

It immediately became very clear to me. We need to build a medical clinic—a medical-dental clinic where parents know they can bring their children and they will be cared for at no cost. This clinic is the current big project undertaking by Help Them Help Themselves.

Please contact Patrick for information regarding how Gran Pacifica residents can get involved in supporting the clinic. Perhaps you are a contractor and have extra materials you can donate, or you have a vehicle and can help transport volunteer workers, or water or other needs. Please help us help them to help themselves

To contact Patrick Hiebert regarding the clinic, please email him at:

Patrick@VidadelMarNicaragua.com

or phone him at: 505.8219.8279



GRAN PACIFICA HAPPENINGS

PICNIC / BBQ

The Gran Pacifica community picnic/pig roast this month was packed with great food and interesting people. Delicious food was served in the form of “Caballo Bayo,” which is a traditional Nicaraguan buffet of tortillas, meats, cheeses and salsas. It was a truly excellent meal served in traditional clay pots. There was a great turnout of friends, residents and guests. The environment was one of relaxed enjoyment with a mixture of music and much laughter heard among the chatter. Check out Gran Pacifica’s Facebook page for some beautiful photos of the afternoon

For the past month, the condominiums were 100% booked with 70 Yoga instructors and instructors-to-be, who were conducting an intense teaching/learning retreat. They departed just a couple short days before the BBQ.

Speaking of yoga, Melissa Boyles, on New Year’s Eve, she and her boyfriend, Mitch “Spun Fire” between the pool and the beach. It was pretty amazing to see these two energetic young people perform.

Mitch held two chains, one in each arm with a torch at one end of each. They were about two and a half feet long. Melissa had a hula-hoop with fire material attached in five places around the hoop. And they went to spinning the fire, entrancing the crowd. They performed for at least fifteen minutes, smiling and having a good time with the audience. Melissa had that hoop up around her neck while we all held our breath. She had no problems. When they finished, they both came up to the tables, grinning like Cheshire cats

Building action has been going on consistently. The Casita Village just had another seven lots sold and building to begin in the not too distant future.

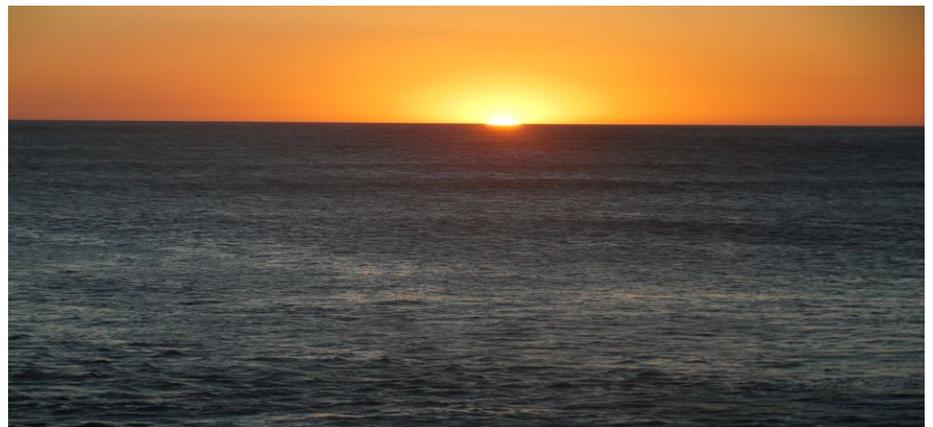
The Villa Verde solar homes are moving along quickly.

Yoga classes will resume now that yoga retreat is over. Also, surfing lessons are available through the surf shop.

Mark your calendar for April 25th. That is the date of the Gran Pacifica Property Owners’ Meeting.

Stay tuned! Coming is more information on events and activities. Gran Pacifica is on the move!

GP BBQ FEB 21



SURFING IN NICARAGUA



SURFING IN GRAN PACIFICA

Super surfing in Nicaragua was a hidden treasure until a little over a decade ago when, after the new democracy, locals who had been surfing in Florida began returning from their self-imposed exile.

Now, it is well known that Nicaragua, especially the southwestern parts of the coastline has some of the best surfing in the world. I am a four year old when it comes to surfing, but I'm learning. Sitting on the grass near the beach, I watch the surfers as they paddle and peer toward the horizon, looking for the big wave that is going to come close enough to shore before it breaks, and big enough to get into the 'tube.' That, someone explained to me, is the hollow space the waves creates as it breaks. Many times I see the experienced surfers gliding with the waves through that tube with such grace and synchrony, they seem to become part of the undulating ocean. Come to think of it, if there is no synchrony, there is no riding of a wave.

In this Southwest corner of Nicaragua, the temperature of the water varies from 21 to 31 degrees Celsius. The temperature, location and geographic logistics are what make this part of the coastline so desirable.

This time of year, swells aren't as big, but there is a good supply of off shore wind that, I learned, helps the waves increase in height. A narrow stretch of coastline separates Lake Nicaragua (the largest lake in Central America) from the Pacific Ocean. The huge body of water creates atmospheric conditions causing winds to blow off shore most of the year. There seems to be no "off-season" for surfers. In Gran Pacifica, some of the surfers stay all year long, or they have property and home they come to parts of the year.

I may get my nerve up and give it a try. I figure if I can ride a Harley Davidson over 20,000 miles, I should be able to ride a wave for a quarter of a mile.

Surfer's Corner will be adding information as we go. The goal is to give you up to date information and add to your surfing experiences.

We welcome comments suggestions on topics, 'how to' info, tips and hints about surf boards and the surf.

The link will take you to the site where you can get all the surfing data you need.

<http://magicseaweed.com/Masachapa-Surf-Report/2560/>

Also, for daily information on the conditions, see the white board outside the Surf Shop near the Sea Salt Restaurant. Surf boards and Boogie Boards are for rent at the shop as well.