

HBSCA NEWS

Hermosa Beach Sister City Association Newsletter

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From Liz Ramirez



Whale Season in Loreto! – December through March...



There are eight species of whales that visit Baja California Sur every year: Orca, Humpback, Finback, Sei, Minke, Pilot, Gray and the largest of them all, the Blue Whale. We are so fortunate that Loreto is a wonderful place to view these magnificent mammals. The whales enjoy the Sea of Cortez, much as we do, for their “vacations,” relaxing and sleeping, eating the abundant food, mating, and birthing their calves. There are many organizations that offer Whale Watching Tours, and some offer entire packages including transportation, lodging, meals, etc. A few that I’ve found so

far are: [Wild Loreto](#), [Loreto Sea and Land Tours](#), and [Baja Peninsula Adventures](#).

Typically, Loreto celebrates the Blue Whale Festival in March, with cultural and recreational activities, educational information, and day trips into the Sea of Cortez to get up close and personal with our marine cousins! There isn’t any information on 2021 as yet...You can visit [Eco-Alianza’s Soundings April/March 2020](#) for more information from last spring.

According to TripSavvy.com “during the months of February and March, blue whales can be spotted in the waters off Loreto...Tours in the Bay of Loreto National Marine Park, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, typically last around 8 hours and take place on pangas (small boats) of 4-10 people. [Loreto Blue Whales](#) offers small boats that are personally reserved for your group of up to 4 people.”

I am looking forward to trying out tours into the Sea of Cortez from Loreto and La Paz, as well as driving over to the Pacific side of the peninsula to see Magdalena Bay and Laguna San Ignacio. Come on down and join me!

Halloween and Dia de los Muertos



Seems a good time to get into this one: **What exactly is the Mexican Day of the Dead celebration and how does it relate to Halloween?** If you are a nerd like me, you can totally geek out on this subject! [History.com has one of the best and most complete descriptions of the history of Halloween.](#) It is celebrated on October 31 as it is the EVE of All Saints’ Day thanks to a decree by Pope Gregory III. But of course, like everything good, imitation is the highest form of flattery and it “borrowed” from more ancient rituals and festivals. Read more on this [here](#), including how it really got going in the US!

So, now how about Dia de los Muertos? Well, turns out that it basically combines All Saints (Nov 1) and All Souls (Nov 2) into a two-day celebration (not mourning) of the passing of friends and family. According to Wikipedia: “Mexican academics are divided on whether the festivity has indigenous pre-hispanic roots or whether it is a 20th century rebranded version of a Spanish tradition developed by the presidency of [Lazaro Cardenas](#) to encourage Mexican nationalism based on Aztec identity. Consequently, it has become a national symbol and as such is taught (for educational

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purposes) in the nation's schools. In 2008, the tradition was inscribed in the [Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity](#) by UNESCO." See more [here](#).

La Perla de La Paz –



I was told a story about a giant pearl that was discovered here in Loreto, sold to someone in La Paz, and eventually gifted to the Queen of England and is now known as the Perla de La Paz and is part of the Queen's Crown Jewels. I was also told that Japanese pearl interests, through industrial espionage, ruined the pearl/oyster beds of the Sea of Cortez. I have not been able to find any corroboration of these urban legends, and most sites list reasons for the loss of pearl producing oysters in the Sea of Cortez to over-fishing, pollution, and political causes. I did find some fun facts on the Sea of Cortez Pearl industry at the GIA gem site. [Read here for a short history.](#)

Pat and Mimi Woolley – MB Artists



Recently, a local neighborhood newsletter highlighted the artistic achievements of Pat Woolley Belasco and her daughter Mimi. Pat has been an avid supporter of the HBSCA for many years. She loves to tell the tale of when she and her late husband (and HBSCA founder) Jack Belasco drove their VW camper full of medical equipment across the border down to Loreto! She was in Loreto for the 2000 US Mexico Sister City Conference "Protect Our Shared Environment" that eventually led to the protection of the Loreto National Marine Park ([see our April 2020 newsletter on our webpage](#)). You can see theirs and others works at [Pierspective](#) and you can [click here for Mimi's entry](#) and [here for Pat's](#).

UPDATES:

- Join us for our **General Membership Meeting on Monday November 2nd at 6:30pm**. Here is the link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89437029958?pwd=RGpBSzNBbVl1NHRWRGZUZjIRaHNXZz09>
- **The Fire Truck** donated by the Tulare Fire Department to the Loreto Bomberos is getting new tires and a few other repairs in Los Angeles thanks to the LA Bomberos Association. Friends of Loreto Cerritos and the LA Bomberos are also adding additional equipment to the truck before it makes it way to Loreto.
- **Eco-Alianza** has posted a new video for it's 2020 Capital Campaign. See it [here](#) and donate [here!](#)
- Check out a [beautiful brand new home for sale in Loreto](#). The home was designed and built by Orlando de la Cruz (of Orlando's Restaurant and Casa Mangos Hotel) See additional properties for sale in Loreto at www.misionloreto.com
- **Do you need your knives sharpened?** Visit <https://knifesharpenings.com/>
- Visit our [website](#) and join us on [FaceBook](#)

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Stay Safe and Sane, Healthy and Happy Out There!