

**To Joan  
Memories and Tributes from your friends  
and colleagues of Niños Incapacitados and  
the Mexican National Chili Cook-Off**



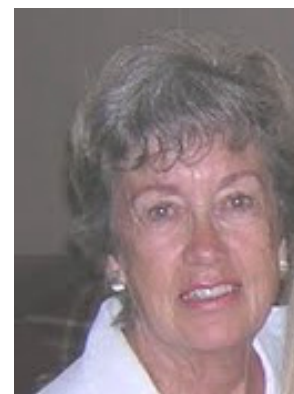
I admired you from the moment that I met you, and this only increased as I learned more of your story – marveled at the fact that you and John had pulled up stakes way back when and ventured into Mexico to live and work and establish your lives at a time and in conditions that would not have tempted most of us to leave our comfortable existences ‘up north’.

Then there’s your tireless and dedicated work as you helped establish Niños Incapacitados when you recognized the great need. Establishing is one thing, keeping at it is quite another. I witnessed some of your frustrations with things (and officials) bureaucratic (as well as we well-meaning but transient snowbirds) and your patience as you worked through these times. Working with you at the clinics – observing is more like it as you were the one who knew the language, the process, and the people – demonstrated to me the personification of extreme dedication. Then there’s all the preparation, hauling around, and clean-up required for the Chili Cook-off!

In all your endeavors, it was a mystery to me how you packed everything that you needed into that Volkswagen!

Best wishes, Joan, on your ‘retirement’. I hope your health will allow you enjoyment of this next stage in your life.

Much love,  
Anne Callon





*Christmas at Jocotepec clinic 2011.*



**F**or some 30 odd years you have given of yourself to make a difference to others. You exhibited boundless energy and that “get up and go” that I only hope I will have for as many years as you.

You like to show a tough, unbending exterior, but those of us who know you know there is a heart of gold beneath. I’ve seen your face light up countless times when clients finally understand what we are trying to teach them. Patience does have its rewards, albeit sometimes long in coming.

Joan, you were missed at the clinic. As you know, this was the last one before the Christmas holiday. We had a lot of *regalos* for the kids and, thanks to Kari, we stamped each one of them with a happy face which added to the festivities. We received hugs and kisses from both the parents and the little ones, which makes it all worthwhile.

You will continue to be an inspiration to me, and I hope I can walk as many miles in your footsteps.

Abrazos,

Barb.



**H**ola Joan,

Bill Dingwall here, a newer Niños Incapacitados Board member ... but I guess we are all newer given your incredible longevity with the wonderful organization that you chartered.

My first recollection of meeting you was at the Niños tent a few years ago ... there you were, keeping us all organized and the burgers flowing!

You may recall the horn on your famous orange VW bug was stuck ‘on’ ... and blasting away. I was the guy who somehow found the way to get it to stop, much to everyone’s pleasure who were within earshot ... then, you let me have a hamburger.

Sending you best wishes as you return to the U.S.A.

Bill



**D**ear John and Joanie,

So many very special memories. I am especially proud of the job you and I did, Joan, on the eyeglass project. That was challenging and lots of fun seeing all those folks getting to sew, read and work for the first time in years. John, your generosity and loving nature, especially the time you took in teaching Georg to make silkscreen prints, will not be forgotten. Thanks to you we were able to make a living when times were tough for artists.

All those wonderful dinner parties at your house, full of laughter, intelligent conversation, fabulous food. I wish I had some of your recipes! And the crazy fun times, one of the high points being Mitch and Ermajean's hot tub! (or, as Georg said, Hermachine). Thank goodness no photos remain of that! I am so glad your creative spirit was fulfilled during the years you wrote your novels -- something that many people now don't even know about. But I read them and they were great!

You and John have always been united in your generosity and love for the crippled, the needy and the underdogs as well as your soft spot for needy kitties. The gringos know you for your indefatigable work at the Chili Cook-off, but your neighbors and the many who walked again, thanks to you, will remember you even longer.

I love you both dearly and will always treasure your friendship and the memories.

Phyllis



**D**ear Joan,  
Words are not enough to tell you what my heart feels!

As a Mexican, I want to thank you for making the DIFFERENCE to so many people's lives ... you are the kind of person who "Walks the talk", and on your Walk you have left an unforgettable legacy to this community. You are the kind of person of whom God would say "This is my beloved child whom I rejoice in having created".

We will miss you in our community. It will be hard to see the Chili Cook-off without you, or any other event where your presence guarantees success.

God's blessings and our love

Aurora Michel Galindo



A photo from that excellent lunch party Aerial hosted when you resigned after so many hardworking years on the Board of Niños Incapacitados. We tried then to express how much we appreciated all you have done. And I, along with many of your other friends and colleagues, are saying it again.

We met properly for the first time over a cup of coffee. You had kindly agreed to an ‘interview’ for a piece we wanted to write to recognize your contribution. Not only did I learn about how it all began with a group of friends in the early 1970s with *Amigos de Salud*, which became Niños Incapacitados in 1993, I also learned about the books you had published about boats, shipwrecks and murder in nineteenth century Mexico, and your year as a journalist covering Lakeside for The Guadalajara Reporter with John as your photographer. It was a very enjoyable, somewhat surprising and memorable cup of coffee! How I wish there could have been more of them.

The best wishes, admiration and gratitude of many, many people go with you, including your friend,

Jane

**D**ear Joan,

You and I began working together back in 1974 when I came to live in the area. We first met at my house in the little village of San Pedro Tesistan. I was just starting my job of family planning and training in women’s health.

You helped me in many different ways, supporting my project and John taking pictures. You believed in me and promoted my work. We have also been partners in the Chili Cook-off for more than 30 years! Working with you has been a wonderful experience.

So my best wishes for the family, my admiration and respect, and my love always. It has been an honor to work with you, my dear Joan.

Silvia Flores

**D**ear Joan,

Joyce and I have known you for just one of the sterling eighteen years you have devoted to Niños Incapacitados, known you just long enough to enjoy a “Touch of Frost”. And certainly long enough to appreciate all you have done for so many Lakeside children and their families.

May you have a safe journey home.

Farewell,

Joyce and David McNiven



**J**oan,  
I will never look at another hamburger without thinking of you, and the Chili Cook-off will never be the same.

Ann Heath

*The first Chili Cook-off,  
1978.*



**M**y husband John and I met you in the early 1990's when we drove children in need of medical care to Guadalajara. On occasion the appointment was canceled by the doctor, due to an emergency golf game; other times we waited many hours for the child to be seen. Comida at one of the surrounding outdoor stands seemed to soothe things! Apart from the many years working at the Chili Cook-off burger stand, the most memorable time with you was when a Canadian taxi driver would deliver 'half-baked' wheelchairs and parts of same, to be used as needed for the children. The remains of that project, like an old shipwreck, can still be viewed in Magarita's back yard. I will miss that lovable 'tall drink of water' who has done so very much -- quietly and lovingly and unobtrusively -- for the children and the parents of our disabled children in the Lake Chapala area.

And finally, I need to remind you of the "folic acid" inclusion in the tortilla flour -- preventing cleft palates. All due to your efforts, Joan.

With fondest regards,

Patsy Smart



*Patsy organized a  
Niños float in the  
Mardi Gras Parade  
in 2011.*

**M**y first introduction to you, Joan, was via Anne Callon, the Secretary of Niños when I first arrived. Anne did the data entry of the children's reimbursements and helped prepare the reports for IJAS to give to you. I got involved because Anne wanted to create a database and run the reports from there. I did the database design. We had many back-and-forth messages, with many different report versions, to convince you it could be done. We finally got there and, thanks to all Dan's work since then, the whole thing is quite seamless these days and even IJAS is impressed! So we've come a long way. Making the DVD was fun too.



I have much admiration for your selfless dedication to your years of work in helping Mexican families deal with their children's medical issues. I'm sure they would like to say this to you as well. You were always larger than life and definitely the heart of Niños. We'll miss you greatly.

With my best wishes,

Kari.

**D**earest Joan,

Although we've only known each other for six years, our involvement with you and the annual Chili Cook-off has been one of the most rewarding experiences of our lives here in Mexico. Although we were recruited by Loren Reynolds and had no idea what we were getting into, we found the warm reception from the board and its members, including you, gave us a new meaning of community service. We had never met people like you, so dedicated to helping others. With your help, we became more involved in the Cook-off, to the extent that it became our lives for several months before and after each event. With your past experience and guidance, we became real "chili heads" and found unknown personal rewards we had not expected. Like you, we knew what we were doing to help those less fortunate was the greatest feeling we had experienced. Although there were heated moments during many of our board meetings, I quickly became aware that your suggestions for improvement were always right on the mark. Your thoughts were always insightful and your dedication to the cook-off was unwavering. Countless people in the Lakeside communities have you to thank for helping lift their lives. They may not have seen you flipping burgers all day or making that long trip from the food booths to the bodega to drop off your earnings, but they all know that some wonderful person has touched their lives and made them better – and that was you. The Cook-off will never be the same without you, but you'll be remembered in our hearts for as long as it continues. Thank you for your inspiring friendship and unselfish work. Your smile will continue to shine and light us all forever. You are truly a saint.

Your honored friends,

Jim Hussin and Don Howse



**W**hen I first joined Niños Incapacitados ten years ago, I was given a description of you before we met – tough, no-nonsense, not to be “messed with”. I was almost afraid to meet you. But when I began to work with you, Joan, I found that your reputation was not representative of what I personally experienced. You kept telling me that you were so glad I was willing to raise money and plan events – “Things I have NO interest in doing whatsoever,” you said.

All of my interactions with you have been most pleasant, friendly, interesting, as well as inspiring. How could I not admire your determination to help as many medically needy Mexican children as possible, your incredible work ethic, and your total dedication to countless children over so many years?

You leave a legacy that I hope others can contribute to with your spirit for endless years to come. Joan, I hope that you take great pride and personal satisfaction for all that you have achieved – quite remarkable!

My sincere best wishes in the years ahead. **YOU WILL BE MISSED!**

Fondly,

Margaret Quinn



**J**oan, we remember meeting you at Ninos Incapacitados eleven years ago, and soon discovered that you were a cornerstone of the organization and a great fountain of knowledge in general. You, Art Post, Anne Callon and I (Darleen) spent many happy hours together at the Ajijic clinic and I appreciated your patience and expertise.

And both of us have enjoyed your never-failing presence at the Chili Cook-off over the years that we have been able to help with. It has been such a privilege to know you, and we wish you comfort and peace on your next journey.

Dave and Darleen Pike



Dear Joan,

I have had the privilege of knowing you for over thirty years. The first year that we started the Chili Cook-off in 1978, you came by to see what we were doing and I think to check us out. I guess you found that the event and we were O.K. and you joined up with us in 1979. You have been the head of the food booths for these past years and only your health has brought you up short now. One thing I know for sure is that even though you will not be here in person for the 34<sup>th</sup> Chili Cook-off in February 2012, your heart will be with us.

You have dedicated your life to helping others in the Lakeside communities. You are a very special person and I am so grateful to have worked with you these past years. Last year you were given the Woman of the Year Award and I felt so very honored that I could give it to you, even though yours was the last award of a very long night!

Joan, even though you have to return to the States, I know that your heart and thoughts will be here in Mexico with all of us. I want you to know how grateful I am to have known and worked with you. My thoughts and prayers will always be with you and may God bless and keep you.

Much, much love. You will always be a part of Mexico and we will not forget you!

Your friend always,

Ann Whiting

*Front: Ann Whiting, Founder; Mickey Church, Founder Volunteer;  
Back: Joan Frost, Founder Volunteer,  
Ron Dorcey, Founder Volunteer*



Joan,

I haven't known you for very long since I am new to Ajijic and Niños Incapacitados, but I have enjoyed working with you at the clinic in Jocotepec. All of our clients know and respect you and will miss you very much. Thank you for all you have done for the children and their families. You will be remembered fondly. And I am happy to have met you.

Bev Kephart



Dear Joan,

I am so happy that you received the 2010 Woman of the Year Award – because you really deserved it. Our time working together on the Chili Cook-off has been enjoyable and lots of fun. You were a good “boss” and I will miss you.

With love,

Jim Kaye



You have been in my Mexican life for almost eight years and it will certainly be very strange not to see you at meetings and the Chili Cook-off, much less not seeing that orange Volkswagen with the roof rack tearing up and down the *carretera*.

You inaugurated me so well into Niños Incapacitados, and I thank you for that. The clinics were “all yours” when I arrived, with the exception of help from Jimmy Kaye, Robin and a couple of others. You were so glad to find someone who spoke good Spanish and you guided me into how the clinics were run.

I remember when the organization went “online” so to speak and we had to learn how to post charges and expenses, loans, etc. on the computer. I remember having to *talk you down* about this innovation ... but look how well it has worked.

I will remember you fondly, of course, and I wish you all the best in the years to come. Remember – California isn’t Mexico and you will no doubt want to rebel against what the U.S. has become. But, won’t it be nice to take a drink of water out of the tap and to have a daily newspaper delivered.

Thank you for saying how good it has been to work with me. That means a lot.

Rich



Dear Joan,

So sorry to see you leave Lakeside. I've just read the amazing chapter about your life here in the new book *Ajijic: 500 Years of Adventure*. You and your husband, John, certainly were pioneers for all of us who live here now. Your relationship with the community has been incredible from the very beginning. What an adventure you've lived out here!

As one of the founders of Programa pro Niños Incapacitados, you were invaluable to me during the years I served on the Board. I admired your total dedication to the children and families you served as Director of this non-profit organization that so many have come to love and respect.

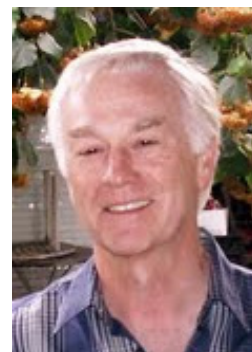
With your brusque style and offbeat humor, you managed to keep an ever-changing and diverse Board in line over the years. You served not only the Board, but also your beloved community in Jocotepec, meeting well beyond the regular hours of your clinic time there. Parents often showed up at your home to receive help.

Your annual contribution to the Chili Cook-off added significantly to the Niños Incapacitados income when expenses mounted each year. You were everywhere, from the first organizational meetings, making sure everyone was doing their job from ordering the meat supplies to serving their time at the cash box, grill or condiment table. You were often the last to leave, making sure all was cleaned up each night. What dedication and endurance!

While we didn't always agree on all issues, you kept us all on track and in compliance with Mexican procedures and rules for non-profit organizations. You were always an energetic and charismatic contributor to every aspect of what has become one of the most worthwhile charities here at Lakeside.

Thanks, Joan, and my best wishes for this new stage in your life in the States. You will be greatly missed by me and many others here at Lakeside.

Robin Lawrason



Joan:

Desde que aceptaste iniciar el Programa de Niños Incapacitados., el cual sólo pudo salir adelante al tesón, carácter y trabajo tuyo, tuvimos una relación muy cercana aun sin estar personalmente juntas. Son muchos los recuerdos que no alcanzo a enumerarlos. Solo sé resumir que gracias a ti, Helen Dunn, Tom Donegan, y muchos otros amigos, algunos que ya no están entre nosotros, y los que siguen uniéndose para la misma causa a pesar de no ser o no tener alguien con alguna discapacidad, el Programa sigue vivo.

Adelante amiga guerrera, Joan. Un día en algún lugar del Cielo nos veremos todos de nuevo.

Con mucho cariño,

Margarita



*Margarita (left) with Mireya, one of the first serious cases in the Niños Incapacitados program.*

Thank you, Joan, for all the good work that you've done by being a founding member of Niños Incapacitados and its predecessor organization *Amigos de Salud*, in addition to all the long hours and hard effort you've put in working with the Chili Cook-off, which has benefited so many children here at Lakeside.

We're going to miss you immensely and we wish you all the best.

Much love,

Dan



**M**y dear Joan,

I wish you to know that if I were the King of England, or at least the Prime Minister, I would bestow upon you the official title of DAME. Then the world would get some idea of the significant roles you have played during your lifetime. The records of very few people could compare with the contributions you have made to Lakeside, Niños Incapacitados and humanity as a whole.

Your love of all children would be almost impossible to equal as would your overall determination and perseverance for the betterment of our society.

I will miss your presence here and our not-frequent-enough luncheons. You are an irreplaceable one of a kind and it has been my honor and privilege to know you. In my heart you will always be the LADY JOAN FROST.

With love,

John



**W**e met in the spring of 2005 when Niños Incapacitados was in desperate need of a new Treasurer, and I subsequently became the “victim”. It soon became apparent that there were several people within the organization who could be described as the “cement” holding things together. However, and of more importance, I quickly came to realize that there was one individual who was not only the “cement” but also the actual foundation on which Niños stood, and she also provided a significant share of the “fuel” driving the group forward. I remained active with the organization for three years and throughout that time had the opportunity to work closely with you and now ... in my mind ... only two words remain to best describe you – inspirational and dedicated – that’s Joan Frost. And I’m sure that, regardless of where you might be, you’ll continue to do only good things ... for others.

Cam Doherty



Dear Joan,  
Memories ... such wonderful memories of the indefatigable Joan.

Meeting you in late 1982 ... probably at Roma and Jackie's home on the highway and overhearing snippets of long discussions about the latest "crippled kids" – reporting on the interminable trips to Guadalajara with the children for diagnoses ... planning the long excruciating van trips to the Shriner's Hospital in Mexico city ... deciding which of you was transporting the next child and parent ... worrying about funding ... hearing of Jackie trying to sell cactus !!! in painted pots in Ajijic to raise a few more pesos for the cause ... I remember even Susan and I getting roped in to help you package the earliest printings of cards for sale.

Dinner parties around your circular table laden with great food ... you regaling us with the outrageously funny (but sadly true) stories of your frustrated dealings with officialdom ... wheelchairs or crutches holed-up in Vallarta ... or heaven knows where ... contradictory information from all sources ... probably made worse by Jackie and Roma's guess-and-by-golly Spanish. And when Tony and I met and married in 1988, you made room for an extra chair at the table ... as did Russell and his gourmet dinners ... and John and Russell would be ready for sleep while the rest of us wanted to finish hearing of your recent exploits ... the inside stories of the Chili Cook-off ... the planning for the exciting new Niños Incapacitados ... the latest on Joco politics ... collecting food from DIF.

Joan, you are leaving more than memories behind on Lakeside ... you leave so many, many lives changed for the better ... and institutions that will carry on the work you set your heart on.

Go gently. Peace.

Gwen and Tony Burton



**W**hen we sat on the Board with you, Joan, we both admired your understanding of the workings and complexities of Hacienda. Maureen worked with you in the clinic in Chapala for several years and saw at first hand your efforts to deal with the difficult task of sharing out the resources. We have both worked with you several years at the Chili Cook-off and seen first hand how you organized volunteers and supplies to maximize profits for many charities.

For so many years your generosity with your time, your home and your energy has helped Niños Incapacitados become the effective, successful charity it is today.

We both thank you for your dedication and pledge to continue our help to your beloved Niños.

Bernard and Maureen Downes



Dear Joan,

Here are a few recollections of our early days of the Programa pro Niños Incapacitados del Lago. It seems to me that your little orange VW bug has always been around - and how it performed! In the early days we loaded up our compact cars (before the days of CV's or vans) with several mothers or aunts and three or four children and brought them from the outlying villages to Ajijic where volunteer doctors would hold clinics to prescribe for and treat our children on several days every month. Or we would pick up those needing water therapy for regular sessions at the thermal pools in Chapala and San Juan Cosalá. Some of our little charges lived as far from the Lake as El Molino. But we didn't just visit the children in their homes; volunteers like Bernice and Tom Donegan took in children whose single parents could not handle their large broods without help. The scope of "The Niños" was indeed broad. Many of our members also worked with the riding program which helped many needy children with physical therapy, and we were frequently confused with that group.

But, back in the day, we took our little patients, with their parent, into Guadalajara for their treatments, or to put them in hospital or a clinic for overnight operations, or to Tlaquepaque to be measured for corrective shoes. You knew Guadalajara better, I think, than any other Gringo at the Lake. We even used to gather up all our bus ticket stubs (yes, we did make use of the buses at times) and take them into a bus office in Guadalajara for some sort of redemption. I thought I'd never find that place.

But you would go to the ends of the earth (well, to the west coast of Mexico) to do battle with the Aduana for a shipment of used wheelchairs brought down to us by the Canadian Navy.

In more recent years, you have been best known for your close ties with the Chili Cook-Off. That too, has changed a lot. The venue, before it was at the water park was, for several years, right across the *Libramiento* in the space now occupied by the new shopping mall. And, before there was a water park or shopping mall, you could not predict from year to year where you and your crew would be setting up their cookers. When the beach was much broader than it has been for years (and there was talk of our losing our Lake) the Chili Cook-Off could be found on the beach.

You were not only the cofounder of Niños but have been a key part of every aspect of it's 17-year history. And I am so glad to have been a part of it all with you.

J.J.