

ygm JUNE 2009



For further information about Merida and the Yucatan please visit our friends at –

www.yucatanliving.com www.yucantoday.com www.yolisto.com

MELLO Nite continues to occur on the **THIRD Friday of each month**, with the June evening being June 19th. The event is open to all with a cash bar and free botanas (appetizers). Bring friends. The event starts at 7:00 pm and ends at 10:30 pm. As always, donations of appetizers are appreciated!

MELLO Nite *siendo el TERCER viernes de cada mes, con la reunión de junio el 19 de junio. El acontecimiento está abierto a todos con una barra de efectivo y botanas libres (aperitivos). Traer a amigos. Comenzamos 7:00 P.M. hasta 10:30 P.M. ¡Como siempre, agradecemos las donaciones de aperitivos.*

DENIS LAFOY'S EVENT AT FIESTA AMERICANA FRIDAY JUNE 5, 2009

As of this writing I have had no confirmation. I will post to the MELL website when I have that confirmation. Go to www.meridaenglishlibrary.com where you can also see this YGM each month!

MELL SURVEY 2009

By now you should have seen the 2009 MELL Survey in your email. The results of our surveys are very important in planning for the future! Please take the time to complete it, adding any comments, and return by email to us OR drop it off during regular MELL hours. Thanks. Deadline is **June 5th**, please.

YGM ADVERTISING RATES *See our first paid ads at the end of this newsletter!

At the April Board meeting, the Board approved charging for advertisements other than those by certified charitable organizations. The rates become effective May 1, 2009. They are as follows –

¼ page 100 pesos (max. 5 x 4 inches) ½ page 200 pesos (max. 5 x 8 inches)

full page 400 pesos (max 8.5 x 11 inches)

You must send in copy ready advertisements! The deadline is the 25th of each month.

We will continue to LIST your event in the monthly YGM Calendar. Only if you want an ad of the type described above do you need to pay. Thanks for your understanding.

YGM is sent out to over 600 members per month. This is a great audience for your advertisement in Merida.

DVD COLLECTION

Siete Almas with Will Smith

Devil Wears Prada with Meryl Streep

NB...Please check your DVD player for a missing MELL DVD – Death on the Nile - the case came back empty.

MELL STORE

Next time you are in check out the MELL Store. Here you will find not only the very good NEEM botanical products, but also our T-shirts, aprons and book bags. All are very reasonably priced and make great souvenirs for your friends and families.

MERIDA FABRIC SHOPPING BAGS @ 50 PESOS!

DONATIONS THIS MONTH

George Doherty, Debbie Moore, Joanie O'Brien and Michael Keating, Doug McLaughlin, Dan Karnes, Diosmel Gonzalez (44 art books!), Grant Spradling, Will Larimer, Stephen Dodwell, Sallie Beck, Harold McAnaney, Keith Heitke, Lynn Roberts, Anibal Gonzalez, Elizabeth & Jeff Carney, Jaxvier Ramirez, Bette Steinmuller,

Thanks to all of you!

EXPIRATIONS AS OF May 31, 2009

If we have erred, please contact us immediately so that we may check our receipts....our apologies...

Samed Abraham, Susan Arcudia, Augusto Castillo, Janice Fraser, Vicky Garcia Rios, Mercedes Gaset Aguirre, Elias Granillo, Peter Hand, Barbara Joy Huhtala, Maria Eugenie Icaza, Woodrow Jones, Clin Joseph, Bruce Kelley, Tommy Key, Irving Kuyoc, Kathleen Lasher, Dianela Manzur, Turita Mareya, Miriam Martinez, Harold McAnaney, Borge Molin, Maria Molina, Jose Palomeque, Jorge Perez, Roberto Quintal, Jillian Raucci, Mikael Redman, George Reeves, Nadene Richards, Dave |Saunders, Daniel Taylor, Marisol Valencia Chavez, Katherine Wingate,

DO YOU KNOW OF ANY MEMBERS WHO ARE NOT RECEIVING YGM ON A REGULAR BASIS? If so, we may not have their correct email address. Please have them call us if they are not getting YGM Monthly! 924-8401

WOMEN'S BOOK CLUB THIS MONTH –

"Portrait in Sepia" is the selection for June. Join the Club on May 14th at MELL. Contact Fabienne O'Neill for details - fabienneo@hotmail.com

The upcoming schedule includes the following titles –

JULY - What the Psychic Told the Pilgrim by Jane Christmas

OR Truth and Beauty by Ann Patchett

AUGUST - History of Love by Nicole Krauss

AWARD WINNERS 2000 – 2008 (See the list of winners posted at MELL)

Did you know that one of our goals this past year was to purchase as many of the award winning books as was feasible? Many we already had thanks to our members. As of this writing we have the winning titles from 2000 to 2008 – Pulitzer, Book Critics' Circle, Man Booker, Hugo, Canadian Governor-Generals, Edgar and National Book Award. We are working on the Western Book Awards for all of you western fans! Check out our new Wish List on Amazon.com to see what we are currently looking to obtain!

MEXICO IN THE NEWS!

Drop me a line if you want to have me continue this type of article when they are found...

Mexico's Health Chief Receives Plaudits

By William Booth and Joshua Partlow
Washington Post Foreign Service
Monday, May 11, 2009

MEXICO CITY -- The face of the flu outbreak in [Mexico](#) is all bushy eyebrows and droopy mustache, and it speaks in tones deeply somber but not quite funereal. The face belongs to a previously obscure gastroenterologist named José Ángel Córdova, the health secretary, who is now the second most powerful man in Mexico.

For 17 consecutive days, Córdova has been giving the nation and the world a daily diagnosis of an epidemic -- and explaining the tough measures that he and Mexico are taking to confront it.

The treatment appears to be working, and Mexico and Córdova are winning applause from global health experts for a swift, coordinated, transparent response that probably saved lives here and abroad.

"I think we should all shout, 'Gracias, Mexico!' I believe the Mexicans have prevented a true pandemic from happening," said Laurie A. Garrett, senior fellow in the global health program at the Council on Foreign Relations and author of "The Coming Plague," a book about newly emerging infectious diseases.

Every day, sometimes twice a day, in a series of 27 nationally televised news conferences, Córdova explains his bar graphs and pie charts in a measured monotone, probably not unlike the way he might tell his patients the results of their colonoscopies.

Unlike the Chinese government, which hid SARS patients in military hospitals and stonewalled international health monitors, the Mexican health secretary takes questions from the news media as he defends often-unpopular decisions -- closing restaurants, schools and churches, and barring fans from soccer games. He explains why the government believes that "social distancing" is a vital tactic to slow the spread of the virus.

"I am like this. I will not change ever. I always have been like this," Córdova said in an interview, explaining how he has tried to communicate the threat without inciting panic. "We will continue sharing the information because we are sure this information will be useful to the other countries, and we don't wish for the other countries to suffer."

In the wake of avian flu outbreaks, some developing countries have balked at sharing samples of their viruses, out of concern that developed countries and their pharmaceutical industries are exploiting the pathogens to patent vaccines that would later be sold. Córdova said Mexico has given over samples of the virus to international organizations to help develop a vaccine.

If Mexico had not closed down commerce and government as it did, according to calculations by Óscar Mújica, an analyst with the Pan American Health Organization, the virus would have killed 8,605 people and put more than 30,000 people in the hospital. The death toll from swine flu stood at 48 people as of Sunday.

"Now you hear some people saying that it was an excessive response. But what people seem to forget is that the reason why this crisis is now coming down was because the initial response was so vigorous," said Julio Frenk, dean of the Harvard School of Public Health and Mexico's health secretary from 2000 to 2006. "I think Mexico did a great service to the rest of the global community. It gave other countries of the world time to prepare themselves."

When the outbreak began, Mexican President Felipe Calderón was constitutionally required to be protected from infection and the health secretary was required to assume extraordinary powers to control the epidemic.

This clout helped Córdova take decisive action at a time when his decisions to limit public life in Mexico were costing the country billions of dollars in lost business revenue.

"It was really complicated, because I needed to explain and try to be clear what will happen if we don't make these decisions," he said.

Calderón's support for the measures was crucial, Córdova said. From the beginning, Córdova said, Calderón's directive was: "We must move faster than the epidemic."

Mexicans have paid a heavy price. Finance Secretary Agustín Carstens officially declared Thursday that the Mexican economy was in recession and that inflation was accelerating. He forecast that the economy could contract by 4.1 percent this year because of the global financial crisis and the swine flu outbreak. The epidemic cost Mexico \$2.3 billion, as consumer spending plunged and foreign tourists disappeared.

Córdova's step-by-step measures were taken from a plan devised in coordination with the World Health Organization after the earlier outbreaks of SARS, or severe acute respiratory syndrome, and avian flu. Mexican epidemiologists had run models calculating that a lethal avian flu virus could infect a million people in eight weeks and kill more than 50,000.

Such a toll was on Córdova's mind, he said, when he first heard of the outbreak of a suspicious influenza. "The first problem was this is a new virus, and nobody knows what was going to be the behavior of the new virus. Nobody knows," he said.

The confirmation that Mexico was facing a new swine-human flu came April 23 at 3:00 p.m. in a conference call with Canadian and U.S. health officials. By 11:00 that night, Córdova went on television and announced the closing of schools.

After shutting down every school in Mexico City, the government expanded the closures nationwide. Troops deployed across the capital to hand out millions of face masks to pedestrians. Within a few days, posters materialized in subways and public squares instructing people to wash their hands and go to the hospital promptly if flu symptoms manifested themselves.

Some of the measures went against the grain of Mexican society. The government barred fans from soccer games, allowing the televised matches to continue in empty stadiums. Sunday Masses were called off in one of the most Catholic countries in the world. All nonessential government and commercial activity was vastly scaled back, including restaurants, theaters, museums, movie theaters, gyms, pools and sporting events.

Despite the shock and expense of such decisions, Mexicans largely abided by the measures and the shutdown was orderly. The government stopped short of other measures, such as closing borders or stopping public transportation.

Mexico was more prepared than many countries might have been to handle such an outbreak. It had a national early warning system in place to look for unusual clusters of infectious disease. It had a stockpile of a million doses of flu treatment ready for an emergency.

"I am just floored by how good their response has been. Couldn't ask more from a country, especially a poor country, a developing country," said Paul J. Gertler, professor of health services finance at the School of Public Health at the University of California at Berkeley, who has worked in Mexico. "I think the whole world will be better prepared for what comes in the fall because of Mexico."

(Thanks to Joan Farrell for bringing this to my attention).

ADMINISTRATOR RAMBLINGS

Thanks to all who have already submitted their surveys. I have compiled all to date and would like to make a few comments –

Regarding the Saturday Symposia, the idea would be to charge NON-MEMBERS (membership has its perks). With regards to the Beach MELLO Nite, that would be in addition to the regular third Friday nights in Merida. I hope that clarifies those points.

Many have commented about the direction of MELL. I/we are working on a document which will address this oversight. I expect that it will be ready before the next YGM at the end of June.

MELL does have a suggestion box in which we invite you to post any comments or ideas that would improve our operations and collection. Some of the previous submissions have been already been undertaken.

Below is an updated list of our services...

MELL SERVICES - June 1, 2009

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Internet Access | 10 pesos per hour |
| 2. Printing and copying documents (scanning) | 3 pesos per page |
| 3. Rental of garden for private parties | Ask about rates (pending Board approval) |
| 4. Listing of rental properties & houses for sale | FREE |
| 5. Community Bulletin Board (one month duration) | FREE |
| 6. Business advertising in YGM | Ask about rates |
| 7. Used Books for sale | 10 pesos per book or 12 for 100 pesos |
| 8. Conversaciones Con Amigos (Monday Nights) | DONATION |
| 9. MELLO NITE (Every third Friday of the month) | CASH BAR (FREE ADMISSION) |
| 10. SATURDAY SYMPOSIA (OCTOBER TO MARCH) | FREE |
| 11. HOUSE AND GARDEN TOURS (OCT. TO MARCH) | 200 pesos per person |
| 12. YGM Newsletter (monthly) | FREE TO MEMBERS |

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