



BLACKJACK MADNESS

By Jim Evans

Pictures by Kris Hatherall

Amigos por un Refugio Animal en Manzanillo, A.C. (ARA), held their first ever Blackjack tourney on Monday June 21, 2010 at the Hotel Playa de Santiago. As advertized in their press release the hotel was truly a "magical location". The seventy plus attendees were treated to a magnificent view of the sunset from their tables facing the pristine almost isolated beach located in the southeast corner of Santiago Bay.

The festivities kicked off around six-thirty and it wasn't long before cries of "BLACKJACK" filled the air.. each contestant who got a blackjack was given a raffle ticket, and their choice of one item from many donated by **Sol** and **Corona**. Thirty five local merchants contributed a myriad of prizes and gift certificates which were raffled a few at a time every thirty minutes throughout the evening by the event emcee Alan Soberano. ARA's president Debi Teter, was kept hopping as she delivered baubles, bangles, plastic beer mugs and raffle prizes while overseeing the event.

The temperature that evening was approx 31 degrees with humidity topping 75 %, yet everyone stayed until the last card was dealt. Patty Talasy, who with her husband Eddie co-chaired the event, said later that she had asked for "no breeze so the cards wouldn't blow around.. boy did I get it!!! So Hot". The bartenders, Jerry Szakaes and Buzz Teter did an admirable job as they provided libations to slake the thirsts of the participants and dealers alike...

and Eddie Talasy, and Debi Teter, for planning and carrying out this event



Ed Preston won the Prize



Debi and Patty of ARA



The motley dealing crew

Thirteen dealers, including some who had never even played blackjack, were trained and retrained during the previous week by Eddie, who patiently explained the rules and techniques for dealing blackjack.

In the end the person with the most chips and selected an original painting donated by MC Anderson. Ed's total winnings for the four hour event were 308 chips, representing \$ 3080.00 pesos, not bad considering he started with 20 chips and never looked back, but then he had a great dealer. In fact, Ed spent most of the evening trying to lose his chips so he could go to dinner failing that he just crushed the field. He was last seen heading toward the exit with his entourage mumbling, "anybody know where we can get a pizza?" Evidently the tourney was a success because ARA has voted to continue on at least an annual basis. The Planning Committee for ARA consisting of: Ginny Ruiz, Dorothy Szakaes, Lora Bloss, David Ward and Glenna Palidor, is to be congratulated, along with Patty

