

HOW TO READ ATENAS TODAY

Many of the pages in Atenas Today are in two column format, and the default “view” in the *Adobe Reader* will present these pages in a large size that requires you to scroll up and down to read the whole page.

By changing the “view” to “**Full Screen**” you can fit the page to your screen and avoid the scrolling.

When in “Full Screen” view, left click to advance to the next page, or right click to go back a page.

If the text is too small for your taste, push the “escape” key to exit the “Full Screen” mode, and change the “zoom” level to get the size you want.

THE NEW YELLOW PAGES

Don't forget to download and save the latest version of the Yellow Pages. Many new businesses have been listed. This section will help you find the goods and services you need.

ATENAS TODAY

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Snow Moon February 11, 2017 at 6:44 p.m.
 Photograph Courtesy: Marina Zampieri

ATENAS TODAY is a free English language newsletter for the residents and potential residents of Atenas, Costa Rica. It contains informative articles and creative compositions submitted by our readers, and is distributed via email approximately once a month to over 600 email addresses. To get on the distribution list or to submit material, please send an email to Marietta Arce at atenastoday@gmail.com.

Compositions from back issues are now archived on [scomari.com / Atenas Today](http://scomari.com/Atenas Today).

Advertising rates and policies p. 45



DIRECTORY OF ENGLISH-SPEAKING PEOPLE IN THE ATENAS AREA

New names and numbers have been added to the directory. With each issue Atenas Today subscribers will receive an updated file containing the names and contact information of people who have chosen to be listed. Simply download the PDF file attached to this Atenas Today email and print it or save it on your computer.

If your name is on the list without contact information, it is because you are a subscriber to the newsletter, but have **not authorized the publication of your email address or other information**. To add or correct data please send an email to atenastoday@gmail.com

Publisher's Note



We are once again experiencing the excitement that comes with the start of a new school term. Our town is welcoming exchange students and also the increased visitors that these summer months always bring.

February is a wonderful month for participating in outdoor activities. It is a very popular time for weddings and all sorts of celebrations and festivals that add value to our lives and enhance our feelings of well-being and connection.

My heartfelt congratulations go to all the couples who are celebrating their Costa Rica one-year wedding anniversary. It seems like just yesterday 72 couples took over the Central Park of Atenas to renew their vows on Valentine's Day. It was a one of a kind occasion that I was thrilled to have witnessed in our little town.

The end of the month of love and friendship is approaching and soon we will be in the transition period leading to the rainy season. The weather these last few months has been very different from what we are used to: strong winds, volcanic ash, the occasional rainbow but we still enjoy daily spectacular sunsets from every spot in the country.

Whether you are visiting for a while or living here permanently, enjoy the great memories and strong friendships that you are forging in Atenas today, and everyday.

Happy reading!

Marietta Arce
marietta.arce@gmail

P.S. There are fiestas going on in the Barrio Jesus neighborhood (tope, etc.) but other than they are taking place this weekend, I have been unable to get any more info!



COMMUNITY BULLETIN BOARD

This space is available for posting community activities for the following weeks. Please provide information about your activity or event to atenastoday@gmail.com by the 15th of the month.

January 21st to Mid-March – Repairs on Platina Bridge; for regulations and bus schedule changes
(see flyers in this section)

February 25th – Piano Recital with Rubia Santos in San Ramon (see flyer this section)

February 28th – Mardi Gras

March 1st – Ash Wednesday, Lent begins

March 2nd – Piano Recital with Rubia Santos in UCR San Pedro (see flyer this section)

March 8th – International Women's Day 2016 Theme: **Be Bold For Change!**

March 17th – St. Patrick's Day!

March 22nd – World Water Day: A day for water and sustainable development
2017 Theme: Waste Water

REGULARLY SCHEDULED ACTIVITIES

Every Sunday: Buddhist Book Discussion at Roca Verde (See Flyer this section)

Every Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday: Hatha Yoga at Colinas del Sol
(see Flyer in this section for more details). Feldenkrais Method begins
March 2nd with Rubia Santos (see yoga flyer in this section).

Every Tuesday, Wednesday & Sunday Atenas New Community (Changes in Flyer)

Every Tuesday: Atenas Mindfulness Meditation Group at the home of Barb Moss,
barbsms@yandex.com#10 Roca Verde. All are welcome, attendance is free of charge (donations welcome), and no experience is necessary. The gate will be open between 8 to 9 a.m. Our practice consists of a half-hour meditation, a dharma (teaching) talk, and sharing. We conclude around 11 a.m., please plan to stay till then to fully experience the group energy.

First and some third Wednesdays (see schedule this section) recycling

Second Monday of every month: 4 p.m. Abandoned Animals of Atenas Foundation meeting at Antaños Please contact Sylvia 8868-1386 for more information. Volunteers are needed and welcome.

Second and Fourth Sunday of each month: 10 a.m. in the Catholic Church in San Jose Sur, mass in English said by Father José Brennan Aedth.

Every Tuesday: Atenas Bridge Club meets at Don Yayo's Restaurant. 12:30 p.m. to 4 p.m. No partner required.

Every Wednesday: At 11:00 a.m. (Please confirm with Michele Clutter 2446-0664)

Atenas Wednesday Women

informal get togethers at Kay's Gringo Postres

Third Thursday: 11:00 a.m. Costa Rica Writer's Group meets at Henry's Beach Bar near Multiplaza, Escazu, lunch follows at around 1 p.m.
Contact : Bob Brashears at bbrashears0@gmail.com



Buddhist Book Discussion

Every Sunday

Meditation (optional) 1:30pm

Book Discussion 2:00pm

218 Roca Verde, Atenas

A gathering for those interested
in Buddhism and Buddhist writings

ALL ARE WELCOME !

If you wish to know what book we're currently reading,
or if you need directions or any other information,
please feel free to telephone or e-mail:

Adrienne and Richard Baksa

2446-8509

adriennebaksa@me.com

rbaksa@me.com



ATENAS NEW COMMUNITY

Associated with the Tico church, Iglesia Bíblica de Atenas

facebook.com/groups/145046998883605

DESCRIPTION: Atenas New Community is non-denominational with a diverse congregation - Messianic Jews, Presbyterians, Mennonites, Methodists, Catholics, Southern Baptists, etc. The focus is on Jesus Christ and the Bible, not on esoteric and divisive theological differences.

SERVICES:

Tuesday - 6pm - Bible study in English at Iglesia Bíblica

Wednesday - 6pm - English worship service at The Brook Training Center

1st Sunday of each month - an English translator is provided for the 9:00am Spanish worship service at Iglesia Bíblica. After 1st Sunday service many of the ex-pats gather to eat lunch together, either for a potluck or at a local restaurant.

OTHER ACTIVITIES:

On the third Friday of each month at 6pm it's movie time at the Brook Training Center. Popcorn is provided. Bring your own beverage.

Early, early on **Easter Sunday** morning, we worship together at a member's home for Sunrise Service followed by a potluck breakfast.

On Christmas Eve at 6pm there is a bilingual candle light Communion service at Iglesia Biblica at the blinking light on HWY 3.

ENGLISH PASTOR: Steve Lucas - <https://facebook.com/steve.lucas> • 8764-8960

TICO PASTOR: Oldemar Artavia - <https://facebook.com/oldemar.artavia>

ADDITIONAL CONTACT: Judy Hickman • 2446-4791 • judy@proslink.com

DIRECTIONS TO IGLESIA BIBLICA: On Highway 3 at the blinking light

DIRECTIONS TO THE BROOK TRAINING CENTER: 200 meters north of Iglesia Biblica on the right. After going through the entrance gates, take a left and drive down the hill. Parking will be on your left and the entrance on your right. In the event of heavy rains, the lower parking area will be blocked off. In this case, please park in upper area and enter through the home.

Atenas Yoga Center

Class Schedule

Monday	8:30 am - 9:45 am	Hatha Yoga with Leah
Wednesday	8:30 am - 9:45 am	Hatha Yoga with Leah
Thursday	8:30 am - 9:45 am	Hatha/Vinyasa Flow with Clara
Saturday	8:00 am - 9:00 am	Hatha Yoga with Leah/Clara

Feldenkrais Method Classes

**Feldenkrais Classes on Awareness Through Movement
Starting March 2, every Saturday from 9:30 to 10:45 a.m.
with Rubia Santos, GCFP (Guild Certified Feldenkrais
Practitioner ®**

For more info, please contact Rubia at rssantos13@gmail.com

Hotel Colinas Del Sol is located in Atenas centro, about 100 meters after the main entrance of the Roca Verde neighborhood, **on the left**. We are in the salón de eventos



All classes are 3000 colones or US\$6 Mats can be rented for 1000 colones or US\$2 Please wear loose and comfortable clothing We also offer private sessions. Contact Us: 8835-9853 • 8928-5497
classes@atenasyoga.com www.atenasyoga.com

This is the scheduled recycling opportunities in Atenas. You will note that there are months in which there are two days.

Remember to classify, rinse, and bundle your items. Thanks!

MUNICIPALIDAD DE ATENAS

CRONOGRAMA DE CAMPAÑAS DE RECICLAJE
 DE 7:00am a 11:30am

4 ENERO	18 ENERO	CAMPAÑA DE RECICLAJE. PLANTEL MUNICIPAL 100 M NOROESTE DE ENTRADA PRINCIPAL DE CEMENTERIO	
1 FEBRERO		CAMPAÑA DE RECICLAJE. PLANTEL MUNICIPAL 100 M NOROESTE DE ENTRADA PRINCIPAL DE CEMENTERIO	
1 MARZO	4 ABRIL	CAMPAÑA DE RECICLAJE. PLANTEL MUNICIPAL 100 M NOROESTE DE ENTRADA PRINCIPAL DE CEMENTERIO	
3 MAYO	17 MAYO	CAMPAÑA DE RECICLAJE. PLANTEL MUNICIPAL 100 M NOROESTE DE ENTRADA PRINCIPAL DE CEMENTERIO	
7 JUNIO	5 JULIO	CAMPAÑA DE RECICLAJE. PLANTEL MUNICIPAL 100 M NOROESTE DE ENTRADA PRINCIPAL DE CEMENTERIO	

MUNICIPALIDAD DE ATENAS

CRONOGRAMA DE CAMPAÑAS DE RECICLAJE
 DE 7:00am a 11:30am

9 DE AGOSTO		CAMPAÑA DE RECICLAJE. PLANTEL MUNICIPAL 100 M NOROESTE DE ENTRADA PRINCIPAL DE CEMENTERIO	
6 SETIEMBRE	20 SETIEMBRE	CAMPAÑA DE RECICLAJE. PLANTEL MUNICIPAL 100 M NOROESTE DE ENTRADA PRINCIPAL DE CEMENTERIO	
4 DE OCTUBRE		CAMPAÑA DE RECICLAJE. PLANTEL MUNICIPAL 100 M NOROESTE DE ENTRADA PRINCIPAL DE CEMENTERIO	
1 DE NOVIEMBRE		CAMPAÑA DE RECICLAJE. PLANTEL MUNICIPAL 100 M NOROESTE DE ENTRADA PRINCIPAL DE CEMENTERIO	
1 DE DICIEMBRE		CAMPAÑA DE RECICLAJE. PLANTEL MUNICIPAL 100 M NOROESTE DE ENTRADA PRINCIPAL DE CEMENTERIO	

MUNICIPALIDAD DE ATENAS
GESTIÓN AMBIENTAL
 EMAIL: frdriguez@atenasmuni.go.cr
 TELEFONO: 2446-1363.

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Villa-Lobos



L. Pires de Campos



Camargo Guarnieri

Piano Estilo BRASIL Rúbia Santos



Centro Cultural e Histórico
José Figueres Ferrer
Celebrando 20 Aniversario del Centro
Galeria Olger Villegas Cruz

Sábado, 25 de febrero, 2017
5pm
San Ramón, CR
Entrada gratuita

A kind invitation:

Brazilian pianist Rúbia Santos (who lives in Atenas) will make her debut in Costa Rica with a concert of Brazilian piano music, including tangos, waltzes, preludes, jazzy-style, and more.

The entrance is FREE for both concerts!

Piano Estilo BRASIL with Rúbia Santos

Saturday, February 25th, at 5pm
San Ramón, Alajuela
Centro Cultural e Histórico José Figueres Ferrer
San Ramón, Alajuela
(The Centro is located on the North side of the Cathedral)
Visit www.josefiguere.org for more info

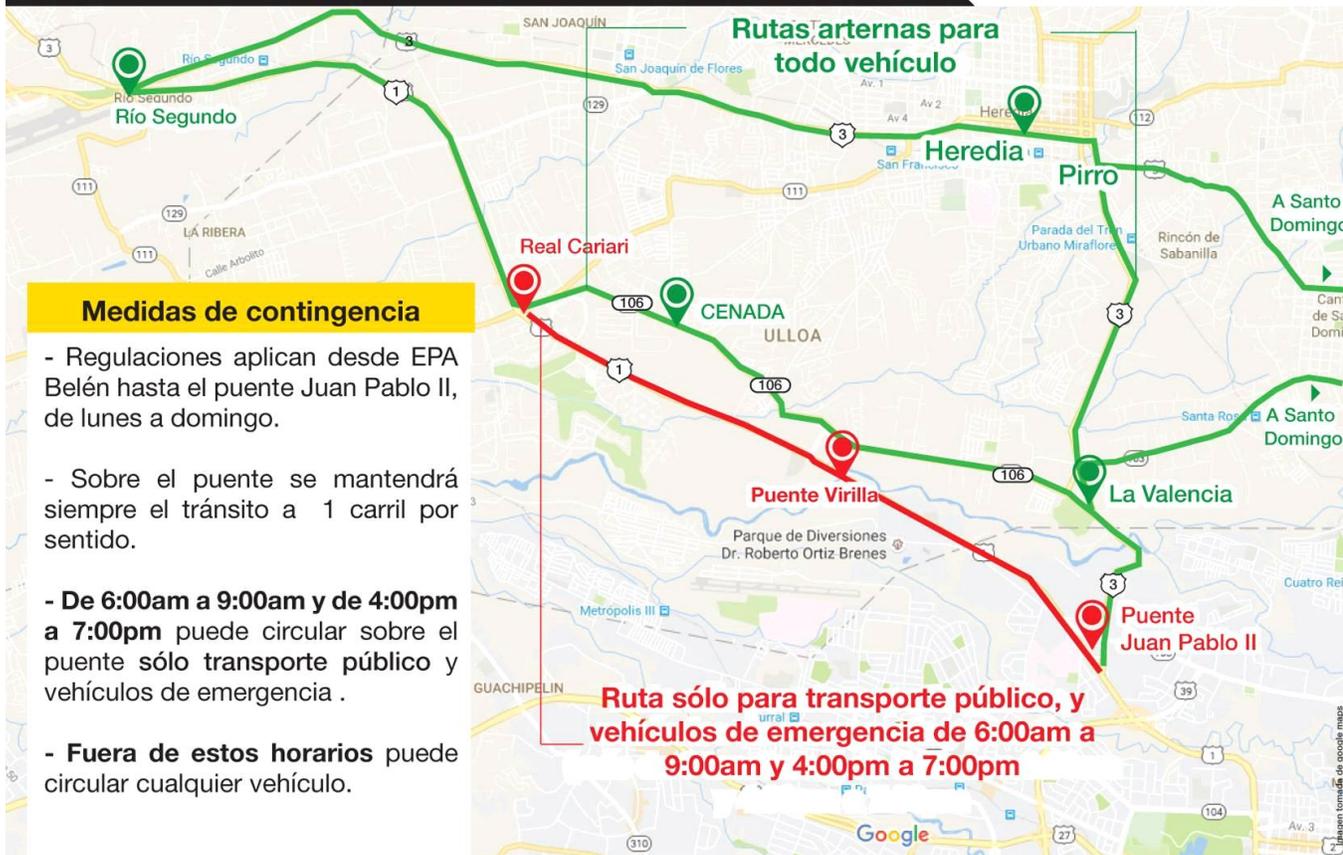
Thursday, March 2nd, at 7:00pm
Conciertos 2017 de la Escuela de Artes Musicales
Universidade de Costa Rica
Sala Maria Clara Culleli
San Pedro Montes de Oca, San José
<https://www.facebook.com/artesmusicalesucr/>

Regulations in effect January 21 to Mid-March for completing work on the “Platina Bridge”

Coopetransatenas Bus Schedule for this period is on the following page.

Regulaciones necesarias para completar la ampliación a 6 carriles del puente Virilla RN 1

A partir del 21 de enero por espacio de 6 semanas



COOPETRANSATENAS R.L.

Horario Especial por Cierre a la Altura del Puente Río Virilla

Itinerario de Servicio de Autobuses

SALE DE ATENAS			SALE DE SAN JOSÉ		
L a V	SAB Y FE	DOM	L-V	SAB Y FE	DOM
4:30 SJ	4:30 SJ	5:00 AL-SJ	05:30	06:00	06:30
4:30 R27	5:00 AL-SJ	6:00 SJ	05:40	06:30	7:45
4:30 SARET	5:50 SJ	7:00 SJ	06:30	07:00	8:30
5:00 R27	6:00 SJ	8:00 SJ	06:30 R27	07:15	09:15
5:00 AR	6:50 R27	8:00 R27	07:00 R27	07:45	10:30
5:00 SJ	7:00 SJ	9:00 SJ	07:30	09:00	12:00
5:18 AM-SJ	8:00 R27-CY	10:30 SJ	08:00	10:00	12:30 R27-CY
5:35 SJ	8:00 AL-SJ	10:30 R27- RG	8:30 R27-CY	11:00	01:30
5:30 R27	9:00 AL-SJ	11:00 R27-CY	09:00	12:00	02:30
5:40 R27	9:00 R27-CY	12:00 SJ	09:30 R27	12:25 R27	3:00 R27-CY
5:50 R27	10:30 AT SJ	1:00 SJ	10:00	01:00	03:30
6:00 R27	10:30 R27-CY	2:00 SJ	11:00	01:30	04:30
6:00 SJ	12:00 SJ	3:00 R27-CY	12:00	02:00	05:30
6:20 R27-CY	12:00 R 27-CY	4:00 SJ	12:30 R27-CY	02:30	06:30
6:30 SJ	1:00 SJ	5:00 SJ	01:00	3:00 R27	07:00
6:40 R27	2:00 SJ	5:30 SJ	1:30 R27-CY	03:30	10:00 AL-AT
6:55 R27	2:30 SJ	7:00 SJ	02:00	04:00	
7:00 SJ	3:00 SJ		2:30 R27-CY	4:30 R27	
7:00 AR	3:30 SJ		03:00	05:00	
8:00 SJ	4:00 SJ		3:30 R27-CY	5:30 R27	
8:00 R27	5:00 SJ		3:45 R27	06:30	
9:00 SJ	5:30 SJ		04:00	8:30 SJ-AL	
09:00 R27	7:00 SJ		4:20 R27-CY	10:00 SJ-AL	
10:00 SJ	8:30 SJ		4:40 27-CY		
10:30 SJ			4:55 R27		
10:30 R27			05:00		
11:00 SJ			5:30 R27		
11:45 R27			5:50 R27		
12:00 SJ			06:00		
1:00 R27-CY			6:30 R27-CY		
1:30 SJ			07:00		
2:00 R27-CY			8:00 R27		
2:30 SJ			08:00		
3:00 SJ			08:50		
3:30 R27-CY			9:15 AL-AT		
4:00 R27-CY			10:00 AL-AT		
4:30 R27					
4:35 SJ					
5:00 R27-CY					
5:30 SJ					
6:30 SJ					
7:00 SJ					
8:30 SJ					



ABREVIATURAS;

L a V: Lunes a Viernes
 SAB y FE: Sábados y
 Feriados
 AL: Alajuela
 SJ: San José
 AL.M: Alto del Monte
 R27: San José por Ruta
 27 AR: Aeropuerto
 R27-CY: Ruta 27
 Entrando por el Coyoil
 R27-RG: Ruta 27 entrada
 por Río Grande

CONTACTENOS EN:

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 Tel: 2446-5767 / Fax: 2446-8838

Friendship Library News



February, 2017

Reading: It's how people install new software into their brains.

Greetings, dear readers. As a working librarian, I considered "selection" to be a primary responsibility. Building and maintaining a collection of resources for my specific clientele was critically important. That makes the maintenance of a library for (mostly) expats in a foreign country based on whatever is donated particularly interesting. Whatever comes in is what we have to offer. We never know what we will find on the donations table. That means that the clients themselves do the "selection". This month, it was mostly fiction by popular authors. For example:

- John Grisham, "The Racketeers"
- Michael Connelly, "The Lincoln Lawyer", "The Narrows", "The Closers"
- Dean Koontz, "Odd Apocalypse"
- Ken Follett, "Night Over Water", "Whiteout"
- Lee Child, "Persuader"
- Anna Quindlen, "Black and Blue"
- Faye Kellerman, "The Ritual Bath"
- John le Carré, "Absolutely Friends"
- Maeve Binchy, "Night of Rain and Stars", "Scarlet Feather"
- E.L. James, "Fifty Shades of Grey"
- Kathy Reichs, "Bare Bones", "Bones of the Lost"
- Jack Higgins, "The Bormann Testament"
- Michael DiMercurio, "Threat Vectors"
- James Patterson, "Triple Threat"
- Thomas Greanias, "The 34th Degree"
- Tami Hoag, "Deeper Than the Dead"
- Janet Evanovich, "Tricky Twenty-Two" (a Stephanie Plum Novel)

If history or biography is what you like to read, look for "Truman: the Tumultuous Years" (BIO TRU) or "Pillars of Wisdom" by T.E. Lawrence (NF 9). From the Goodreads review: "In his classic book, T.E. Lawrence—forever known as Lawrence of Arabia—recounts his role in the origin of the modern Arab world. At first a shy

Oxford scholar and archaeologist with a facility for languages, he joined and went on to lead the Arab revolt against the Ottoman Turks while the rest of the world was enmeshed in World War I." This book provides insight to modern concerns of the Arab states.

Lots of other interesting books have been added to the collection as well. For example, someone donated eight "romance novels". I've designated them with spine labels that have a pink heart and "Romance Novel" on the spine. And it would appear that a teacher has retired to Atenas and donated a large collection of beginning-to-read books. I've added those to the books for children with an "E" on the spine label. Anyone teaching English to youngsters will find these very useful. Someone working with older students may find "Practical Guide to English Grammar" (NF 4) useful. It's a truly ratty-looking book but the content is solid and it includes practice activities.

Three other new books for children deserve special note: "The Giver" by Lois Lowry is a powerfully written dystopian novel for older children. I would recommend reading it with a young person and talking about a world with no pain and with no choices. Also, we now have the ever-popular "Where's Waldo" and a wonderful book of poetry for kids, "Giant Children".

Lots of books in languages other than English have been donated. Twenty-five novels and several nonfiction titles in French have been added to the collection. About fifteen titles in German have been added as well as three new books in Dutch and a whole lot of new books in Spanish.

Folks who like short stories will find two new collections: "Best Australian Short Stories" and "Barcelona Plates". While the Australian title may be self-explanatory, the Barcelona Plates may need a little description. Again from Goodreads: "This is a collection of short stories, all of which have either a sinister or an amusing twist in the tail. For some, the twist is both sinister and amusing. The stories demonstrate a great deal imagination and variety." Books of story collections are designated "SC" and can be found on the top shelf of the nonfiction books.

Happy Reading.

-Linda Ledbetter, librarian
Friendship Library of Atenas

ACTIVITY OF THE MONTH



Fundación Ateniense de Ayuda a Animales Abandonados
Atenas Foundation for Helping Abandoned Animals
Cedula Juridica # 3-006-542026
ATENAS de Alajuela - COSTA RICA

VISIT TO HOGAR DE ANCIANOS

VALENTINE'S DAY

The two visits our group of volunteers and their pets made to the Atenas Hogar de Ancianos in 2016 proved so delightful to all involved that it was decided we would visit the residence again on Valentine's day, a day that was made even more special by the fact that it was the 103rd birthday of doña Romelia Alfaro, long-time resident and cheerful, humble person. Here are some pictures highlighting the event.



Dora Castro & doña Romelia Alfaro
Photograph by Mary Mason



L-R Jodie, Harriet, Mary, Anita, Toni, Jaye and Dora with pets and residents



Toni, Jaye and Mylo

ANIMALES ATENAS PROGRAM

Stop by the community building next to the Fire Station on Friday mornings to see the animals and good quality used clothing and household items. Donated items are needed and can be left at Kay's or at our Friday mornings location.

SPECIAL NEED- FOSTERING

Foster volunteers open their homes and hearts to animals for adoption. Many of these are abandoned by the owners and are starving on the street.

Animales Atenas provides all vet care as well as providing food, treats and toys free to foster parents.

Animales Atenas does not have a shelter for abandoned animals.

If you are not able to foster and would like to help in some other way, we have other options for volunteering.

DORA 8855-9822
doritrebole@yahoo.com

Sylvia 8868-1386
AnimalesAtenasCR@AOL.com

The Art of Living Well and Longer in Costa Rica



*by Mary Martin Mason
marymason1946@yahoo.com*

Moving to a foreign country in one's retirement years is counterintuitive. Retirement is a time to seek the security of immediate health care and the proximity of family. While my cousins were buying houses near their grandchildren in communities designed for health emergencies, I was foregoing Medicare Plan B and entering into Costa Rica's CAJA maze, acting as if I would live forever.

Although it does not possess a fountain of youth, Costa Rica promotes living well and long. The country has one of Earth's five Blue Zones, the Nicoya Peninsula, where centenarians outlive the rest of the planet. Remaining active, they succumb to old age rather than to obesity, heart disease, cancer and diabetes, subsisting largely on rice and beans, corn tortillas along with cheese and eggs and lots of fruit. Most of their diet comes from plants and from carbs derived from whole grains, beans and tubers like yucca.

My goal in retiring in Costa Rica was not to outlive Betty White or to idle away my days in Nicoya while munching on mamón chinos. I wanted to tap into some of the Tico characteristics that appear to increase longevity, mainly happiness and serenity. It became important as I entered into the twilight years to seek what makes human life meaningful, exploring answers through the eyes of a different culture and people.

Doña Romelia turned 103 on February 14. Although she is not from the Blue Zone, like many Costa Ricans, she has lived past the century mark. During a Valentine's Day visit by Animales Atenas to Hogar de Ancianos, she appeared alert, diverting the unexpected attention on her birthday by blessing those around her. Dona Romelia attributes her longevity to healthy living, a deep and abiding faith, and a good heart.



Dora Castro with Doña Romelia Alfaro

Photograph by Lynda Geyer lyndartist@hotmail.com

Many emigrants like myself can attest to the Tico good heart that goes beyond having a healthy ticker. "A good heart" doesn't mean that you were awarded a gold star in kindergarten for behaving. Here, a *corazon bueno* is nurtured by growing up in close proximity and never leaving family. A genuine concern for one another radiates out beyond one's family to consider the needs of others. As a result, the most vulnerable, the very young and the old, are revered in Costa Rica.

The billfold lost and returned by a stranger; the preference given to the elderly, pregnant or disabled in bank lines; the greeting by each person as you pass on a walk into Atenas speaks to a good heart. I have never had to stand on a bus, no matter how crowded. I have been welcomed as a full family member inside two Tico families who worry about me being idle or alone on holidays.

In her living, and ultimately in her dying, a close friend and professional cohort brought me to live in Costa Rica. Amy Silberberg was a nationally recognized photographer and family law attorney. Like me, she was adopted and was an adoptive mother. We both disparaged the lack of information and inclusion of birth fathers in the legal and very emotional process of adoption. "Why don't you interview fathers," she suggested, "and I will photograph them? It will be the first book to be published on this topic."

For two years, Amy and I spent time compiling the experiences of men who had lost children in a variety of ways, through divorce, custody disputes, not knowing they were a father, addiction and through involuntary and voluntary relinquishment for an adoption. After a homeless man I interviewed refused to be photographed, with his permission, Amy took pictures of his hands. The result was one of the most poignant depictions in the book, his scared, gnarled hands representing the many losses that had accrued in his life.

Five weeks after being diagnosed with a rare form of cancer in 2003, Amy died. My son and I were devastated by her death. We had often travelled with Amy to conferences or on book tours after *Out of the Shadows: Birthfathers' Stories* was published. I knew that annually, without fail, she had gone to Costa Rica to do bird watching. I wondered why she returned again and again, leaving obligations to her family and to her law practice. I decided to pay homage to a country that had captured her imagination. Other than a quick phone call while she was in the hospital and in which we too quickly had expressed our final words to each other, I had not been able to be a part of her exit. In Costa Rica, perhaps I could say the goodbye to her that had been left hanging.

In December 2003, I followed a trail left by Amy. Aside from the incredible rugged beauty of the country, I was introduced to the many characters, human and otherwise, that inhabit Costa Rica. Howler monkeys were my alarm clock my first morning in Samara. The property's guard armed with a machete gruffly refused to allow me to photograph him, covering his face when he saw my camera. My cabana hostess owned a digital camera – a rarity in those days – and was thus commissioned to photograph crimes scenes. Even so, a recent incident was declared a suicide despite the camera's proof to the contrary. Ants invaded my safe in my casita and ate the crackers I had stored there. On a bus filled with foreigners that lurched to a sudden stop, various languages tried to identify a shape hanging onto a cecropia tree. When someone yelled out, "Slow monkey," I glimpsed my first sloth.

Near the cloud forest of Monteverde, I sought Amy in the night sky's unfamiliar constellations that dot the southern hemisphere. After all, the atoms in our bodies are connected to stars. Ultimately, I found her in a butterfly garden when a blue morpho attached itself to my head and had to finally be removed by an employee.

Back in frozen Minnesota, I declared, "I am going back. In fact I may move there some day." The news was not well received.

Amy's husband warned me that the country lacked a solid infrastructure, a fact I had already determined. In those years Costa Rica had sketchy if any Internet. One-way bridges revealed raging rivers below, and few establishments accepted credit cards. I was not to be deterred. Annual and sometimes semi-annual trips strengthened my resolve as I began to hone my information gathering into a destination, that being Atenas.

Caveat Emptor

In a recent public blog the question of why expats leave Costa Rica was posed. Among the many responses cited were health concerns, a weak infrastructure, and the rising cost of living. Many of reasons were debated by respondents with examples of those conditions existing back in one's home turf. One answer stood out, attributing exiting to inadequate preparation or to health-related issues.

Lately I find myself inundated with requests from friends and their friends about moving to Costa Rica to escape the chaos in the United States that seems to be spreading like a cancer. I try to temper information proffered with a warning like those on cigarette packages. Don't believe everything you read in the glossy magazines containing surveys that declare Costa Rica as the best retirement destination and the happiest place on earth. Your life will change drastically, requiring that you adapt to Costa Rica. Do not expect the country to adapt to you. Survival is easier if you alter your diet, sleeping and rising, pace, and expectations. Accomplishing one task daily translates into a successful 24 hours. A sense of humor, an adventurous spirit, good manners, curiosity, and above all, attempting to speak Spanish are requisite.

Harriet Cates, a resident with her husband Bob since May, 2010, took an early cue from Ticos about living meaningfully in Costa Rica. Shortly after her arrival she was lying on a gurney in a hallway, awaiting treatment for an appendicitis. Her worry and concern was met by both doctors and other patients with the single word *tranquila*. Harriet says, "Here, in a strange setting with my limited Spanish vocabulary, I began to understand a philosophy of the Ticos that promotes acceptance of difficulty with graciousness and understanding that all is well within the total scheme of things. I have incorporated much of Costa Rica's approach to life with a mantra of 'Be happy, be tranquil, be loving and be grateful.' The people of this country have given me new tools to deal with our complicated world."

Tranquila, like a great deal of Spanish, can be lost in a literal translation. "Be peaceful," or as we might say, "Chill out," means waiting in long lines and practicing a patience that would have confounded Job. Buying one screw in the hardware store may take up your morning. You will play musical chairs in the bank or post office. Instead of shoveling snow, you will be sweeping volcanic ash out of your house. Your inner clock will need to be adjusted, and if you have any Type A characteristics, you may need a personality adjustment.

Here's the reality of moving to a foreign country for seniors. Unless you isolate yourself, you will find camaraderie and friends to assist in times of medical emergencies as you, in turn, will help them. If you can learn from your host country how to release fears about the future and live in the moment, you will experience "tranquilidad", at first in moments, then for hours, and ultimately for days. Perhaps that is the gist of living well and long in Costa Rica, apparently a dying art in some other countries. Here, as the proverb goes, *Hay que escuchar a la cabeza, pero dejar hablar al corazón*. In order to live well, no matter where you live, you have to listen to the head, but let the heart speak.

Road noise in Costa Rican protected areas

Dr. Edgardo Arévalo, Resident Tropical Ecology Professor (earevalo@fieldstudies.org)

Anthropogenic noise is increasing as a result of human industrial development and the use of road networks. These human activities not only change the soundscape composition but also contribute to greenhouse gas emissions. Road noise propagates through the different human inhabited, as well as natural protected areas, inducing shifts in species distribution and composition. Likewise, recent warming temperatures at both local and global levels are favoring low land species to move upwards, thus altering the elevational distribution of some species. These changes in species distribution and composition alter the dynamic of the interacting sounds between human induced changes and the bioacoustics emitted in the landscape. I have been studying the interaction between noise and bioacoustics at different elevations with different levels of noise in Costa Rica. The study sites are found within a representative altitudinal range, including Carara National Park (50m), Santa Rosa National Park (250m), Monteverde Cloud Forest Reserve (1500m) and Poas Volcano National Park (2500m). The objective of this research is to examine the immediate effects of noise on bioacoustics, and the potential long term effects of climate change on the soundscape composition at the landscape level.



Photo: Aerial Photograph that illustrates anthropogenic activities, such as land conversion, and the altitudinal gradient of the forest in Carara National park. Evidence suggests that some species are moving upwards and expanding and shifting their geographic distribution range due to climate change. Photo Roberto Ramos.

Nadando por la Vida (Swimming for Life)



by Tina Newton

tinanewton71@gmail.com

Too many people and particularly children, in Costa Rica, die in water related accidents in pools, rivers, and the ocean. Worldwide, an average of 2 people die by drowning per minute (International Life Saving Federation). These accidents could often be avoided or survived through water safety education and swim training. With the recent tragedy and loss of two of our own children in Atenas, this is the best time to try to prevent this type of tragedy from happening again. Teaching children to swim and having water safety education is not something that is commonly part of the Costa Rican culture and especially among people of lesser resources. So, people continue to play in the pools and even the ocean without knowing how to swim or being able to recognize water danger. This is a country with oceans on two sides, where rivers are vacation spots, and pools are one of the main party sites for families and children. For this reason, a swim campaign has been initiated in order to spread the knowledge and education of both swimming and water safety with a goal of spreading water education to every child in the Atenas area and demonstrating the importance of swimming to every adult in the region.

Several steps have already been made in the campaign. The project was first presented to the Municipality of Atenas, the Ministry of Health, and private swim instructors to rally support. All were completely supportive and understanding of the need to combine the issues of safety, health, sports, and education in bringing this to the community. In December, flyers, sponsored by Tristan & Newton Real Estate and the Municipality of Atenas, were distributed to the community addressing the issue of water safety in pools, rivers, and the ocean. Then, in January, Luis Ugalde held the annual swim camp for three weeks. Luis has approximately 37 years teaching swimming in Atenas and the swim campaign was able to sponsor 21 additional children with needs to participate through donations from our expat community. In total, 60 children graduated from the program.



At the end of January, the first meeting was held forming the swim commission of people from the Municipality, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Education, the Sports Committee, private swim instructors, the Scouts, the Young Red Cross, and individuals who are supportive of the program. This first meeting was dedicated to discovering how each organization and individual could best participate in the campaign and promote swimming throughout the community. It was discovered that neither the Scouts nor the Young Red Cross currently have swimming in their programs, and they were very eager to incorporate this both to teach the children involved in

those organizations and because they have to complete projects such as education in the schools and the community. Swimming and water safety works perfectly as the theme for these projects and both groups are going to put together a plan to incorporate this for this year. Funding can also be asked directly from such organizations (the Red Cross and the Scouts) to support the training of their members. In addition, fundraisers can be held to support the Scouts and Young Red Cross in this initiative. With a formalized plan and exact focus on the campaign, the commission can better approach the Sports Committee and the Ministry of Health as well as apply for grants for funding which will assist in the formation of both swimmer and the education of water safety. An official name was determined for the campaign and is now known as "Nadando por la Vida" (Swimming for Life).



Personally, it was exciting to see such a fruitful meeting with organizations excited about the opportunities and the ability to incorporate these activities which will guarantee a higher rate of success. Specifically, if the children involved in Scouts and the Young Red Cross learn to swim and understand more about water safety in general, that gives them a recruiting tool as organizations for children wanting to join, and then they take this knowledge and spread it to the schools and community as part of their projects. It was truly great to see the next steps falling into place with organizations within the community.

If anyone wants to help or participate, there are many ways to do so. This is a project that will be ongoing and will affect the community tremendously in a positive way each year. It will help prevent drownings, allocate funds to an additional sport that is one for all ages and abilities, and maybe even inspire future champions from Atenas. Donations are always needed, grant writing will be undergoing, and anyone who can help teach beginners in swimming will be welcomed. Put your skills to use and get involved in the community. And most importantly, help save lives.

You can contact Tina Newton at tinanewton71@gmail.com or 7234-9737 for more information or to sign up to assist the campaign. To sign up a child or adult in ongoing classes of swimming you can contact Jeremy and Ana with "Just4Fun" at 8360-9408 for classes throughout the week or Luis Ugalde at 6058-7546 for Saturday morning sessions. They have for all ages and levels and all classes are currently taught at the Balneario El Cerro in the center of Atenas, behind the Central Elementary School.

All pictures courtesy of Tina Newton.

Tattoo -For You!



Carole Jean's new Tattoo

by Carole Jean Connolly
caroleconnolly@gmail.com

The first time I saw my beautiful twenty-something niece's tattoo on her leg my lips curled. It was a big fat rat. A rat! On her leg right where everybody could see it. It was crawling up the outside of her calf. Eeeewwww! Tattoos – not just for tough guys anymore. Why?! How could she? And then we started visiting and laughing just like we always do.

She was the same sweet, smart, gorgeous young lady she always has been – just with a tattoo. Well, several tattoos. I didn't ask about them that day. I was too appalled. And then I started noticing other people's tattoos and they were everywhere. There were intricate colorful ones as well as plain monochromatic ones. There were hearts and flowers, tributes to loved ones and bold Chinese characters signifying people's names and such.

Tattoos have been around for centuries dating back to the ancient Egyptians. There is a fascinating summary at the Smithsonian.com site:

<http://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/tattoos-144038580/>

To commemorate my upcoming big birthday, I decided to get a new tattoo. No, it's not my first. I put out the word to friends looking for a recommendation for a tattoo parlor. I was surprised when one of my more conservative friends replied, "There's a good place called "F U Tattoo" on Capitola Road. My sister and I are going there next week to get matching tattoos for our birthday." *Huh?* Well if it's good enough for them it's good enough for me.

I trotted myself over there after checking their website. They open at noon. At 12:01 I walked through the front door.



F U Tattoo means "For You Tattoo", right?

After being pleasantly greeted by a young man covered with tattoos, multiple piercings and a shaved head I explained my request. "Oh, Hi," I chirped trying not to stare at his stuff. I zeroed in on his eyes and told him I wanted a small flamingo tattooed behind my ear...or should I get a unicorn? Or maybe one of each. After all, I do have two ears.

He patiently explained that it would have to be very small or else extend down my neck. Hmmmm. No neck tattoos for me. I wanted the option to show or not to show my tattoos. Yup, plural. I went quiet and started thinking about what and where I wanted my new body art. He must have taken my silence for apprehension. He leaned in and gently asked, "Is this your first?"

I stood up a bit straighter, grinned, and said loud enough for the others to hear, “Oh no. I have one done by Lyle Tuttle!” It occurred to me that he might be too young to know who that is, but he surprised me. His face lit up and he said, “Lyle Tuttle! Whoa, the man himself. Can I see it?” “Ummmm, not right now.” I wasn’t about to drop my drawers for some twenty-something kid. I have my standards!

I got the idea for my butt tattoo after sitting on a spider, getting bitten and needing a two-inch incision to pack the infected area. The ugly purple scar was visible in my bikini and I simply could not have that. I remembered my good friend, Geni, got a tattoo around her waist after a horrible car accident on Saint Patrick’s Day in 1972. She was ahead of the curve. She had the extensive scar camouflaged with a vine of the most beautiful red roses that wound around her entire body. This was no sissy tatt. If Geni could do that, I certainly could endure the pain of a mere two inches.

I found Lyle Tuttle on Columbus Street in San Francisco. As I entered his walk-up studio, I saw photos of celebrities on the wall. If he was good enough for the likes of Cher and Janis Joplin, he was plenty fine in my book. He opened his first studio in 1954. He is now eighty-five years old and still does the occasional tattoo according to Wikipedia:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lyle_Tuttle

Years later, I moved to South Florida and met an enchanting young woman named Sheila. She had a large, stunning tattoo covering the back of her shoulder. It was a happy, vividly colored butterfly. Or was it a bird? Or a spray of flowers? Memory plays tricks. I just remember it was a happy tattoo and it made me smile.

One Sunday night I was sitting alone in my apartment bored. I dialed my friend, “Sheila, what’s

the name of your tattoo artist? Do you have his number?” Off I went at 11:00 at night racing to get to his shop before the midnight closing hour. I told him I wanted him to tattoo a big, bright butterfly over my fading sprig of flowers. It seemed a simple enough task to me. He examined the spot and asked, “Who did this tattoo?”

I answered, “A guy named Lyle Tuttle in San Francisco.”

He jumped back and exclaimed, “Lyle Tuttle?! I’m not touching this. I cannot mar the work of the master.” I never knew I had such a sacred bottom.

I thought for a moment. “Okay, leave it intact and just tattoo around it. Can you do that?” He pressed his lips together and nodded. “Sure, hop up on the table.” And so, a beautiful butterfly surrounded by vibrant flowers was born. I’m told it’s pretty, although I never get to see it and mostly I forget it’s even there.

I don’t know what triggered the idea. I woke up one morning and just had to have a flamingo tattoo. Was Felicia, my balcony mascot, sending me subliminal messages while I slept? After the initial interview at *F U Tattoo* (really – that’s the name) we set the appointment for Saturday. I met my artist, Aiden. We discussed the options – placement, colors, and general demeanor which was to be happy. Size? Whoops! We forgot to discuss that.

After the brief discussion, Aiden donned a woolen beanie, rubbed his hands together, smiled (or should I say leered), raised his eyebrows over his black horn-rims and said with his British accent, “Let’s get to work.” Although I tried not to stare at his face tattoo to see if it was a teardrop – you know, the gang symbol that signifies you’ve killed somebody – I couldn’t help myself. Once I determined that it was a cross I breathed easier. I

mean, who knows what could happen if he didn't like the way it came out?

I hopped up on the table and laid face down while Aiden did his magic. I took my mind to the turquoise waters of the Caribbean, gripped the side of the work table and gritted my teeth. No way was I going to admit how much it hurt. Anybody who says it doesn't hurt is lying!

As promised, my friend Christina showed up to give me moral support. She's a millennial whose peers are covered in ink of all types, so she was well-versed in the subject. Her face lit up when she walked over to the table and saw my almost completed work of art. "It's adorable!" she gushed. "It's really big, but good."

Big?! How big? I wouldn't get to see it until the job was done. Well, I thought, I might as well like it. It's already there.

A few minutes later, a beaming Aiden said, "That's it! All done. Go look in the mirror."

I skedaddled over to the wall mirror, grabbed the hand mirror off the hook and looked over my shoulder. *Boing!* went my eyes. "Big? It's HUGE!" *Objects on your shoulder may appear larger than they actually are.* After a few seconds of silence with both Christina and Aiden standing with eyes riveted on me, I broke out into a big smile, "I love it!" They both breathed out and their shoulders relaxed.

As I lay plans for my Big Birthday celebration in Las Vegas, I'm wondering if I can get a discount if I show the hotel people my tattoo. The party is booked at..."The Flamingo!"

And if you're ever in town and simply must get a tattoo go see Aiden at **F U Tattoo** – Tattoo For You!



Carole Jean and Aiden, The Artist

Atenas Campus Grows

On January 18th, UTN Atenas Campus opened some new facilities that will help develop students' academic progress and receive a greater number of students at UTN's dormitories thanks to the training center.



FACILITIES

Training Center:

These facilities were built by Sinohydro (Power China) under an agreement that will allow them to use the facilities while they work in the hydroelectric dam of Chucás. The facilities include 40 dormitories, 3 conference rooms, a dining room and a kitchen.



Collection and Processing of Whole Blood Laboratory:

This is a project lead by the Research and Knowledge Transfer Department, whose

objective includes the sale of plasma to the University of Costa Rica for the production of antiophidic serum.

Freestall Barn:

A freestall barn sets forth all factors related to nutrition, health, and growth, as well as all other activities of the dairy operation. Buildings and equipment on a dairy farm facilitate the job of caring for the animals.

Iguana Farm: as part of the current animal-breeding farm, this building aims to establish 'optimal conditions for sustainable production and marketing of the green iguana to benefit the small farmer' while also allowing natural populations to recover.

Biosafety Hog Farm Module:

The objective of this facilities is the implementation of measures that reduce the risk of disease agents being introduced and spread. The measures taken to improve biosecurity depend on the pig production system concerned and the local geographic and socio-economic conditions.

Food Technology Laboratory:

This lab will benefit the learning process for preservation, processing, packaging, distribution, and safety to provide nutritious and wholesome food to the consumers.

"Currently this campus has around one thousand students, and almost half of them reside in the UTN's dormitories. This is one of the important reasons why we need to offer all students high quality facilities for both their academic training and their comfort inside the campus.," said UTN Atenas Campus Dean Rodney Cordero.



"This is one more step this campus takes to offer a constant improvement of its facilities. Students deserve high quality education, and this is not only a matter of excellent teachers but also of facilities," said UTN Chancellor Marcelo Prieto.

In addition to all this, UTN Atenas Campus already began building a modern butterfly farm that will open this year.

From education and research to campus operations and facilities, UTN is taking great strides to create new opportunities to become the best option for higher education in Costa Rica.

An Old Lady's Take on the Super Bowl



*By Harriet Sheppard
hweyman@gmail.com*

It all starts with a phone call. My brother calls and insists that I watch the Super Bowl. He says that our hometown team will be playing. "Harriet, it's going to be played in ATLANTA, you have to watch..." I'm suspicious of my brother's insistence about this, as our family has a long history of indifference to team sports. They like tennis, golf (yawn), pole vaulting, and high jump, swimming and diving. I like water ballet, which I consider to be a team sport.

Having nothing better to do, I peruse the stations on my newly acquired USTVNOW. It's wonderful. I can see American TV on my large perfectly clear screen for free. I click around until I see a blundering stampede of red and blue irregular shaped masses that vaguely resemble body parts. Oh goody.

Hmmm.... Not sure which is my team. There has got to be a way to tell. Really, shouldn't they have that clearly marked somewhere? Not everyone knows who's who in football. Soon I spot a little box at the top left that says Red 12 / Blue 0. That's a start. I listen hard for whom is ahead. They say it's the Falcons. Who are the Falcons? And why is there no mention of the Braves? At least I know Falcons are red.

In listening for some comment about the Braves, and hearing none, I turn up the volume to diminish the noise of those incessant cicadas. I hear... the Falcons this... the Patriots that...

Some innate knowledge of my homeland tells me that we (Atlanta) would never have a team called The Patriots. The first team I ever remember was a baseball team called The Atlanta

Crackers. I'm not sure what you know about the South, but the word "cracker" calls to mind trucks bearing hunting rifles atop, and Confederate flags whipping along-side radio antennas. For this reason, I can't imagine that we would have a team with such a lofty name as The Patriots.

My deductive reasoning is leading me to believe that my team is the Falcons. So what....I mix up my sports. After a while I see that this thing is being played in HOUSTON not Atlanta. My brother who said it was being played in ATLANTA owns a bar. Any bar-fly who can simultaneously balance on a stool and hold a beer, will attest to the fact that THE most talked about subject in a bar is sports. My poor brother, who is not a sports fan, manages to either pantomime the spirit of such discussions or excuses himself feigning the need to get back to work.

It takes me forever to realize Super Bowl LI means fifty-one (51). I keep reading it as Super Bowl Lee. Who is Lee and what does Lee have to do with the SB? Li must be Chinese; otherwise it would be spelled L-e-e. I'm sure the Chinese hacked into the heart of the favorite American pastime. But if so, why would they let on with a clue, LI? At some point somebody translates for me. I am impressed that those SB people know how to use Roman Numerals, which I flunked in high-school.

Oh boy, Atlanta is ahead. I'm truly neutral about this. I could care less. AND it seems I had read some things in the *Boston Globe* about a certain Tom Brady. (He's on the other team). I read that he is really OLD. That got my attention. I worry about him being brutally attacked and piled upon by a relentless group of grinding backhoes. I have to give him credit for continuing to play this game. I personally want to be like the 98 year old yoga lady that becomes a Pretzel on command

Thank goodness it's half-time. There is Lady Ga Ga....somewhere amidst the smoke and flames. She is dressed as a knight who forgot to adorn the bottom half of her armor. The flames of hell are behind her and just as I think they've diminished, up roar rows and rows of more white geyser-like flames. Now where is she? Oh here she comes swooping down on ropes like an iron-clad Tinker Bell, from the night sky. The sky looks weird to me. The stars don't look real. The stars are moving into formations like a marching band. They can't be light bulbs because there's no place to screw them in. Later I learn these are not stars but drones. (Wonder how much that cost?)

In my day the entertainment was someone singing The Star Spangled Banner.

Here's the great thing about listening to football for me. It reminds me of Thanksgiving when I was young. Dinner was over. Everyone was moving in slow motion after consuming a 20 pound turkey, squash casserole, sweet potato casserole, biscuits, gravy, bing cherry salad (yuk),

ambrosia, and of course Aunt Tea's scalloped oysters. The TV was droning on. Aunt Louise had left, which I knew because there was an absence of banshee shrill in the kitchen. She and her husband Buddy lived out of town and came every year with yet another story about their "plantation" which was a two-acre piece of flat dry red clay in south Georgia. The place came with a name (Boxwood or Rosewood or something) so Buddy, thought himself royalty. He referred to his home as ..."the last outpost of gracious southern living..." Oh please.

Gentle Aunt Tea was quietly cleaning the kitchen. She loved all God's helpless creatures. One time my young cousins and I found a half-dead little bird and took it to her. She asked us to go get some whiskey. We knew right where it was, as it was the main store of liquid refreshment for all adults in my family. She lovingly cupped the baby bird in her hand and gave it a tiny drop of whiskey with an eye-dropper. Her young audience stood aghast as baby bird plopped back, feet straight up, and croaked. It was a quick but painless death. We all knew her intentions were the best.

Aunt Tea, Aunt Mary, Aunt Betsy and my mother cleaned, while all the men and my cousins and I dozed to the muffled sounds of the annual Thanksgiving Georgia versus Georgia Tech. game. We were in Uncle Fontaine's den which was softly lit by the green lights coming from 20 or so aquariums. (He was known to be one of few able to raise, in captivity, the epistograma, a rare tropical fish.) He had returned from WWII with Tourette's Syndrome, and while not cussing at his fish, was bellowing at me and my cousins to "...get out of the goddam Mimosa tree..." or some such. As a result we all grew up familiar with and a downright fondness for foul language, as we knew he loved us. So the muffled sound of the crowd, the soft green haze, the bubbles of the aquariums were all like a lullaby. That's what I used to love about football.

Next time I'm thinking I will watch the Super Bowl with someone who can hear better than I can and who knows a little more about the game than I do. Maybe they can explain all of that disorganized running around and butting heads to me.



Wikipedia image



Barrio Jesus Riding Club/ Club de Equitación de Barrio Jesus
Barrio Jesus, Atenas, Costa Rica
English: 8320-2112
Spanish: 8733-9935/ 8786-8004
<https://www.facebook.com/atenashorseback/>

We are a family of 4 who decided to bring our teenagers to Costa Rica after my husband Tony retired from a Fire Department in Arizona. I was born in India and my husband spent time in Japan while in the USMC. So, the both of us have had the privilege of meeting amazing people and gaining all the wonderful experiences, as well as the difficult ones of living in a country other than our own. We were blessed to be able to give this same opportunity to our two youngest children Katelin and Benjamin. We chose Costa Rica for its wonderful people, culture and geography. Being in Costa Rica gives us the close proximity to the United States where our two older children, Jordan and Rachael are.

Costa Rica, this amazing and magical place where dreams can come true, right? We bought horses when we came to Costa Rica so I could begin fulfilling my dream. We met Adrian when we decided to board our horses in his barn. Adrian has a wife and 2 children that live with them. They are probably some of the nicest people we have had the pleasure of meeting. Adrian is an excellent rider and knows horses really well. When I asked him if he would like to start a riding club to give lessons and trail rides, he was very excited and open to it. He had given lessons previously, but only through word of mouth. So, he is giving lessons in Spanish and myself in English. Both, my husband, Tony and Adrian run the trail rides together. Thus far, our trail riders have enjoyed the ride and the handsome wranglers accompanying them.



As of now, we offer Beginner Horseback Riding Lessons for children and adults in Spanish and English, Intermediate and Advanced Lessons in Spanish only. We also offer beautiful trail rides in Spanish and English. Roping, Barn Fun Days for little ones, Parties and Celebrations are additional services we offer. We can customize our services and lessons to suit the needs of our clients.



Why horses? I fell in love with horses when my grandmother gave me a Big Book of Horses Encyclopedia when I was 10. I have wanted one since then. The creatures absolutely fascinated me! I didn't have the pleasure of actually learning to ride and own a horse for another 30 years. Once I did, there was no going back. I studied to be an Equine Practitioner in Arizona to learn as much as I could about horses. I have delved in depth into the therapy and guided education aspects of horses after working with foster children in the US. It has been my dream to have a program to use horses to help children and adults heal and grow.



Being a survivor of an extremely difficult childhood and life and working with children and parents in the Foster Care system in the United States, I can say I understand how much the need is for programs such as ours to be available to families and individuals at risk. Equine Guided programs are a very special and successful way to introduce healing and growth. Currently, Equine Programs are used in helping people with PTSD, Depression, Anxiety, and Autism, etc. In addition, sometimes, people just need to grow personally or gain skills such as focusing, physical fitness, be a learner or become coachable, intensify self-reflection and inquiry, or focus on your core priorities. Horses are amazingly intuitive and forgiving animals that have the ability to help us with so many of our human needs. Wouldn't it be wonderful to

have an Equine Guided Heal and Grow Program here in Atenas? Keep your eye out; we will be implementing one in the near future.

Our family culture is one of love and service to our fellow citizens. Therefore, It is our goal to be able to offer programs free of charge, to children and adults who don't have the means to pay. We plan on reaching out and working with therapists and non- profit organizations in the community to help and serve those in need. In the meantime, we encourage you to come enjoy our trail rides or lessons. We look forward to meeting you!



All pictures courtesy of Christine Verespe

It's A Dogs Life...REALLY!!



Stories from Mr. BudBud, Primero Perro of Lighthouse Animal Rescue. They were written 11 years ago when he first came to Costa Rica for a house sitting job.

WOW!!! More excitement!!! Uncle Phil has come to visit!! We picked him up at the airport. Of course, as usual, we have to be petted by EVERYONE at the airport so we enjoy that. It's funny.....we go there so often most of the taxi drivers at the airport know us by our first names!! LOL!!!

Anyway Uncle Phil took us and Mom to dinner that night and we had....you guessed it...pollo. We did get bites of Mom and Uncle Phil's dinners too though.

The next day Mom drove us all over to show Uncle Phil the sights. Enid and Javiercito went with us too!! We stopped at a roadside stand where they were selling "Jugo de caña." That means sugar cane juice!! I didn't get to drink any but Mom says it is really good!!! They sell it in little plastic bags and you just tear off a corner and drink it out of the bag!! Later on we stopped at a soda for lunch. A little street dog came up while we were there. A tico who had just ridden up on his bicycle saw us sitting there and tried to shoo the street dog away. Mom bristled. You know, like when us perros get mad and the fur on our necks and backs stand up. That's bristling. Anyway, Mom just got up, walked over, and gave all of her food to the perro. The tico watched this and then smiled at Mom.

Mom figures maybe the ticos think that people from the US think of dogs as dirty and don't want them around their restaurants. When he saw Mom take her food to the dog and pet the dog maybe he realized that Americans aren't all goofy.

While we were riding around the mountains we spotted a house with a cow...on the porch! Guess they don't have a barn! LOL!!!

We showed Uncle Phil Zarcero. That is where they have the pretty topiary in the park in front of the church.

Then we went to a waterfall! It was REALLY far down there!! Enid says that waterfall is 160 meters high!! That's 525 feet!! Uncle Phil held me up so Mom could take a picture of me and the waterfall and then Mom held me while Uncle Phil took a picture. It was really high up so Mom held me extra tight.

The floor of the place where the waterfall is was made of cypress slabs and concrete!! Mom thought that was REALLY neat!!!

We rode around ALL DAY!!! I sat in Uncle Phil's lap and looked at all the mountains. Uncle Phil even took a picture of me looking at the view. When I got tired I just went to sleep on Uncle Phil's knee like I do on Dad's. Dad was still in the states and he usually is my "knee bed."

We went up on Torro Amarillo. That is REAL high up and you drive in the clouds!! Uncle Phil just LOVED it!! And then when you start down out of the clouds you can see the sunshine down below you!!!

Tailwags from BudBud the "Cloud traveling" perro

An Unplanned Sanctuary for Iguanas



by Marietta Arce
marietta.arce@gmail.com

Earlier this week as I was making my way back from doing my laps, I noticed that our dog, Lila, was observing something with such concentration it looked like she wasn't breathing. Taking my cue from her and wondering if some poisonous snake was in our path, I stopped walking and held my breath!

I followed her gaze and eventually I was rewarded when I saw just the tiniest movement from an iguana that was perfectly balanced atop one of the jagged rocks nearby. It was amazing to note how perfectly the iguana blended in with the rock. If it hadn't been for Lila, I would have passed up this opportunity to observe one of nature's gifts.

Generally speaking, these magnificent dwellers and I ignore one another. I am usually distracted as I make my way down the stairs, startled by the sound of the rustle of leaves as they sense my approach. I cannot understand how they get caught by the dogs in the area because they dash wildly as soon as they see

me and disappear into their favorite hiding places until they are sure I am gone. I rarely remember to bring my camera!

A few years ago, I was lost in thought while admiring the beauty surrounding me on that fine morning. My attention was suddenly diverted when I noticed a young green iguana fusing with the foliage around it as it made its way down the slope. I remember feeling grateful that our property had become a sanctuary for these and other creatures; though I do confess that the many varieties of ants are less than a welcome sight when their trails are making roads in the grass!

All in all though, life is good here in Atenas and I am happy that we mostly coexist in harmony.



Lila sniffing while Canela rests!

The Atenas Today Art Gallery

The Art Gallery is a regular feature of Atenas Today. Local artists are encouraged to submit photographs of their works to be included in the gallery, and to send a new picture each month. The artists may be contacted via the email addresses shown.



El Caballero
24" X 24"
Oil on Linen

Artist's Statement: This Costa Rican gentleman was clearly very proud of his horse and his horsemanship.

Al Alexander
email: jeanandal@gmail.com
website: www.alalexanderartist.com



Babycheeks
15" x 20"
Acrylic

Artist's Statement: Sold! Juried into the 2011 Rocky Mountain Horse Expo Show "Art in the Park" Denver, CO. He is a registered Canadian Sport Horse, born in 2004. His name is Time Flies by Timely Venture out of Practically Yours. Bred and raised by Lynda Rivington, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada. Photo reference is mine which I took when he was just a foal.

Diana F. Miskell
Horse and Cattle Art: www.dianamiskell.com
Costa Rica Blog: www.dianascostaricablog.blogspot.com

For the bloggers...



We are providing a list of *blogs* that might be of interest to our readers. By providing this information, we are not endorsing or accepting responsibility for any content found therein. Please contact us if you have any other blogs of interest that you would like to share. These are alphabetized for your easy reference. **Please advise if you find that some blogs no longer exist.**

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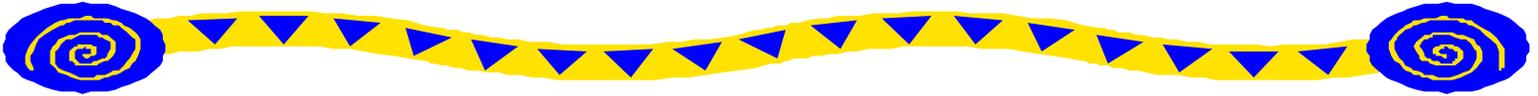
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Andres Pimentel

*Physical Therapist
Massage Therapist*



7047-6020

Andresptcr@gmail.com

English and Spanish spoken

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Diana F. Miskell

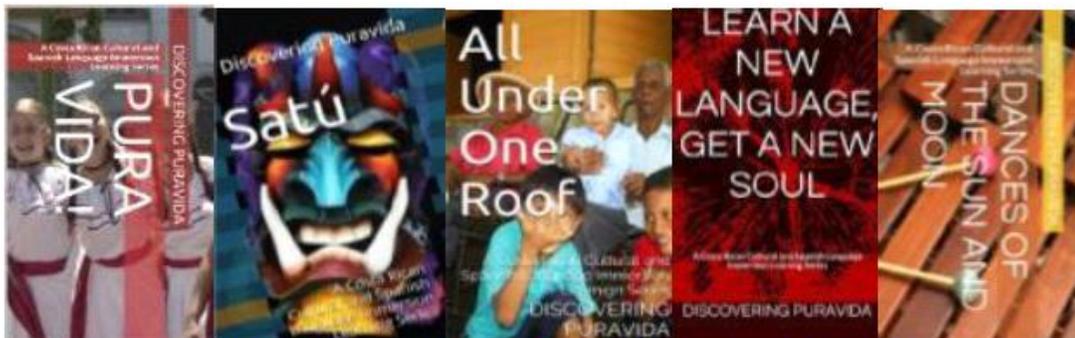
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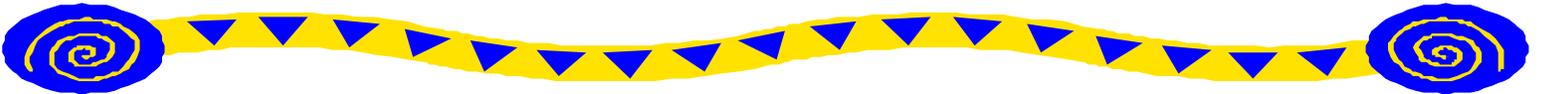
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Paul is excited about his new book (lots of pictures) and suggests that you order from his Facebook Page:

<https://www.facebook.com/bohemianroadtrip/>

He said, "Under the header to the right is a blue Shop Now bar in blue... press that, he says, "and all your troubles will fade into a stream of conscious and take you far, far away." Hey, that's what he said...

He also said, "It will cost more to ship a book to Costa Rica" but he'd choke it down because "we're all in this together."

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