

## 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.

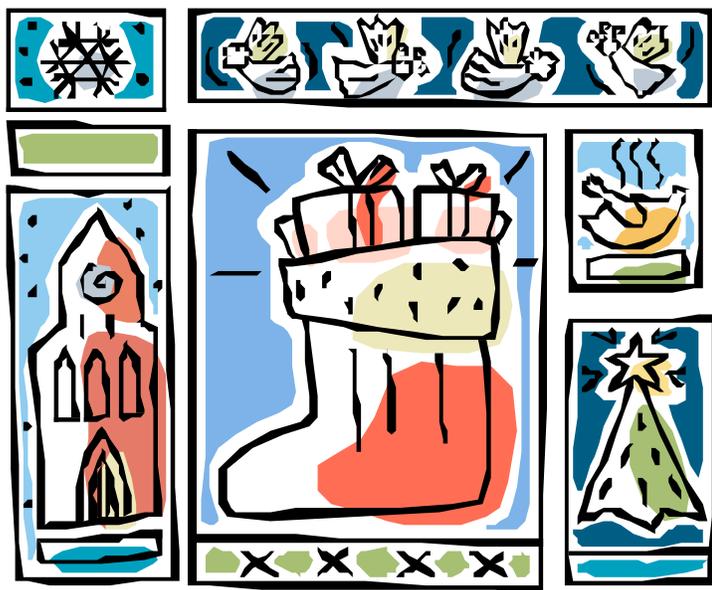
When in “Full Screen” view, left click to advance to the next page, or right click to go back a page.

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



SEASON'S GREETINGS TO ALL!

*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 500 email addresses. To get on the distribution list or to submit material, please send an email to Marietta Arce at [atenastoday@gmail.com](mailto:atenastoday@gmail.com).*

*Compositions from back issues are archived on the Atenas Chamber of Tourism and Commerce website, [www.atenascatuca.com](http://www.atenascatuca.com). Click on the English version and then Atenas Today on the business page.*



## 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](mailto:atenastoday@gmail.com)

Issue No. 96

December 23, 2012

### In This Issue:

Marietta Arce --Publisher's Note	p. 3
Community Bulletin Board	p. 4
New & Noteworthy	p. 5
Dennis Easters - Christmas Tamales!	p. 6
Suzanne Mark - Letting Go	p. 9
Christopher Clarke - The Death of Literature?	p. 11
Paul Furlong - A Family Christmas Card	p. 12
BudBudJones - It's a dog's life, really!	p. 15
Shannon Farley - Kid-Friendly Travel	p. 17
Sergio Molina - Responsible Food Consumption	p. 20
Judy Timson - Fast Approaching (Chili Cook-off)	p. 22
AT Staff Writer - The Forerunner Project	p. 26
Art Gallery	p. 27
Listing of Blogs of Interest	p. 33
Classified Ads and	p. 34
<b>Display Advertising</b>	
Advertising rates and policies	p. 38

## Publisher's Note



Greetings on a December day in Atenas! The sun is shining brightly. I hear the sounds of our visitors as they enjoy the gentle gusts while taking a leisurely walk. They are being introduced to the invigorating and intoxicating surroundings that make up and bless my life.

2012 is almost over. We are all getting ready to welcome a new year. I am more aware than ever that as I get older, the years pass by at greater speed. I am eager to greet my family and friends during the next several weeks. There is much enthusiasm to share news about the projects we will be tackling in 2013!

As usual, this month's issue is a wonderful collection of offerings from the artists and columnists who have become integral components of our monthly

magazine. I remain indebted to them all for their generosity and talents, and their willingness to bring us something new month after month.

I think we should all begin 2013 with firm goals, remembering always that every project begins first in the mind, and then with the first concrete action.

My best wishes for your continued health and happiness. However you define it, may success also be yours in the New Year. I am committed to making sure that we continue to bring you the best of Atenas today and every day.

With warm Season's Greetings,

Marietta Arce  
marietta.arce@gmail





## 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](mailto:atenastoday@gmail.com) by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month.

December 23 – Activities in Central Park of Atenas all day.

December 24<sup>th</sup> Christmas Eve – many institutions close at Noon.

December 25<sup>th</sup> Christmas – most businesses closed.

December 31<sup>st</sup> – New Year's Eve – Activities and parties all around town.

December 26<sup>th</sup> (Please confirm with Sara or Kay 2446-0664) and  
January 2<sup>nd</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup>, 23<sup>rd</sup> 30<sup>th</sup>

*Atenas Wednesday Women*  
informal get together at Kay's Gringo Postres  
every Wednesday afternoon at 12:30 PM

January 8<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup>, 24<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> Entrepreneur Camp at the Catholic Church with the following schedule: Tues&Thurs from 5-7:30 p.m./Saturdays 2-5 p.m. Donation of any amount suggested, registration required: [register@theforerunnerproject.com](mailto:register@theforerunnerproject.com) (see flyers around town for more information)

January 8<sup>th</sup> , -- Atenas Bridge Club meets at Don Yayo's Restaurant  
January 15<sup>th</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup>, 29<sup>th</sup> 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. No partner required.

January 8<sup>th</sup> 3 p.m. Abandoned Animals of Atenas Foundation meeting at Kay's Gringo Postres. Please contact Virginia 2446-5343 or Sylvia 8868-1386 for more information. Volunteers are needed and welcome.

January 9<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> Recycling in Atenas from 7 a.m. to 11 a.m. at the Plaza in front of the Central School, near the volleyball court.- Recycling of aluminum, metal, plastic, paper, cardboard and tetrapak - NO ELECTRONICS, STYROFOAM or EGG CARTONS Please rinse and separate your recyclables before dropping them off. Thank you.

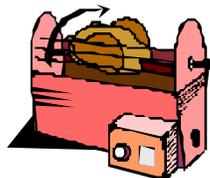
January 9<sup>th</sup> - Writer's Club meets at Colinas del Sol, at Noon. Contact L. Michael Rusin @ [crcaseyboy@gmail.com](mailto:crcaseyboy@gmail.com) (2451-8063) for more information.

January 18-20 Letting Go Workshop (see details on Page 10 of magazine)

January 21<sup>st</sup> - PLEIN AIR - A group of people with curious minds who meet the 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of every month at a different location to explore and express their creativity through visual art and writing. Larry Felder will teach how to 'see and draw' like an artist this month. Contact Jan Yatsko at 2446-0970 or [janyatsko@ice.co.cr](mailto:janyatsko@ice.co.cr) to find out where the group has been and where it is going.



**Pollos Jeffrey – Relocated** Next door to Regalos Country diagonal to the Church, Atenas Centro.



**New Mexican Food Restaurant : Mi Casa es Tu Casa** located across the street from the “Old” Coopeatenas on Highway 03 (main road to Orotina).



**PIZZERIA OLIVERA & POLLOS** – across from Municipality



*Calling ALL Chili Teams*– we are looking for you! For more information to sign up, please contact Mary Cook at 2446-7138 or email her at [wmmcook@gmail.com](mailto:wmmcook@gmail.com) . *Do you know a company or individual interested in being an event sponsor?* Please let us know by contacting Stef Bogatinoff at 2446-6234 or email her at [stef@costaconcierges.com](mailto:stef@costaconcierges.com). **CHILI COOK-OFF FEBRUARY 10, 2013**

## Christmas Tamales!



by Dennis Easters [easters3@msn.com](mailto:easters3@msn.com)

In Costa Rica the holiday season brings with it many traditions. One of the most awaited of those traditions is Christmas tamales. Making Christmas tamales is a tradition that has been around for centuries, handed down from generation to generation. For most Costa Ricans the best parts of making tamales is the closeness of family and friends, sharing stories of times gone by and the festive mood that is created when Ticos get together.



Personally, I am not big tamale fan. I like them, but they are not something I will go out of the way to eat. That was until I had one of Gerardo's mother's tamales. In my humble opinion, Mami Ofe makes the best tamales I have ever

eaten. Years back on one of our visits to Costa Rica, Mami had invited my family over to her house to share their family tradition of making tamales. We had so much fun and it was an experience I have never forgotten. In the end, making tamales somehow turned into a big neighborhood party.

I enjoyed my tamale experience so much that I wanted to share it with others. I called Mami Ofe and asked her if she would be willing to come to Atenas and teach a group of "gringos" how to make her famous tamales. On the other end of the line she let out a big laugh and said "claro que si", which means "of course"! Before she hung up, Mami instructed me to grab a pen and paper and make a list of ingredients that we would need.

Throughout the Americas tamales can be found in varying forms, as is true in Costa Rica. The base of the tamale is masa, which is a corn dough made from dried corn that is finely ground after it has been cooked. Once the corn has

been ground then it can be prepared with spices, pork fat and stock to make a flavorful base for the tamales.



In addition to the masa, tamales are filled with pork, chicken, rice, green beans, carrots, sweet peas, raisins, potato, boiled egg, olives and an array of other ingredients. Every family has their own recipe and favorite ingredients. The masa and other ingredients are then wrapped up in banana leaves to create the tamale. By tying two tamales together you create a "**piña**". The **piñas** are then carefully stacked into a large kettle, filled with water and boiled for about an hour. Traditionally tamales were cooked over a wood fire. Today many families still carry on this part of the tradition, cooking their tamales over a wood fire using coffee wood.

For our Atenas tamale day we invited a few friends to join us and share in the festivities. Gerardo's mother arrived along with his younger sister Wendy. As soon as Mami walked in the door she put on her apron and cracked the whip, reminding us that the process of making tamales is time consuming. I had been given orders to prepare all the meats

(pork and chicken) and vegetables ahead of time to save precious hours that could be better spent dancing and make the process simpler.

We began by wiping down the banana leaves with a clean cloth. The banana leaves are smoked to "cure" them, making them more pliable and easier to use. The next step in the process was to prepare the masa. To make a good masa you **MUST** use fresh ground corn which is mixed with stock, lard and a variety of spices, then cooked over a low heat for about 45 minutes. Mami Ofe adds two secret ingredients (Salsa Lizano and tomato sauce) that makes her masa different and more flavorful than most. Once the masa and the other ingredients are ready, the assembly line can begin.



To be comfortable, you need to spread out on a large area like a table or bar to assemble your tamales. The first step is

several (2-3) pieces of banana leaves in opposite directions. You then put a large spoon of masa in the center of your banana leaves. You can now begin to add your ingredients. A spoon full of rice, a few sweet peas, thinly sliced carrots, strips of red pepper, steamed green beans, pieces of pork and chicken, the raisins.

Once all your ingredients are in place you have to fold the leaves over, making sure the filling does not come out the ends, creating a nice square package. The finished product should look like a nicely wrapped Christmas package. You then put two tamales together, back to back and tie them with string to create a "piña". You then arrange the "piñas" in large pot or kettle, fill with hot water making sure that all the tamales are covered and boil for one hour. The last step in the process is to make a pot of coffee and enjoy the fruits of your labor.



Gerardo and I want to thank Mami Ofe for her love and helping us show others the tradition of making Christmas tamales, one of the most awaited traditions of the holiday season here in Costa Rica. We hope that some of you will try to make your own tamales and enjoy the process as much as we do! I have to note here that during the whole afternoon there was music blaring in the background and in between making tamales, Gerardo, his sister Wendy and Mami Ofe were dancing around the kitchen to the sounds of cumbia, salsa and merengue!



## Letting Go



by Suzanne Mark  
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As we head to the end of 2012 and beyond, many are asking how we can encourage awakening within ourselves and within our global community.

It seems that all of the constructs that we have held onto: religion, new thought, spiritual teachings or gurus, materialism or even the illusory stability of our personal plans and who we expected ourselves to be in the world are all falling away as we recognize without question that...

### There is nothing to hold onto.

Perhaps, like me, you have felt that lately when you make a life plan (with the best of intentions) the energy seems to go out of it within days or weeks, and you soon find yourself wondering why you were so excited about this or that project or creative endeavor. All the habits of "futurizing" seem to just dissolve back into the present moment and you ask yourself, "What was *that* about?"

This can be frustrating and confusing if you are in the habit of pushing, holding on or attempting to impose your will rather than flowing with what presents in the moment. Something you first judge as undesirable and that you resist can morph into a wonderful opportunity for expansion and integration and you might even see your life

change into something that you never imagined within a short space of time: relationships ending or beginning, life work shifting, moving house or country, loss of interest in what was held dear, new and surprising interests emerging, and a kaleidoscope of new associations and events to choose from. Or, your life might even look the same outwardly, but you find yourself feeling very different inside and making new choices with associations and how you spend your time.

The catch is that sometimes it is difficult to let go of old attachments, and we react at the onset of sudden change. If we are able to let go of that initial reaction, we can flow into a reality that is more satisfying and in which we feel expanded and at peace in each moment. To this end, it is useful to focus on letting go of feelings (those things called emotions)—but you can also use this basic technique on thoughts or beliefs.

### Simple steps for letting go

1. Notice your inner reaction to what is happening. Simply notice it. You might feel it as a body sensation like tightness, discomfort or contraction, or perhaps a pushing, pulling or holding on. Experience where it IS in the body and FEEL it. Is there an emotion associated with it?

The main categories of emotion are: SHAME, APATHY, SADNESS, FEAR, WANTING, ANGER, PRIDE or any variation thereof. The precise name is not always as important as the feeling that goes with it.

2. Could you just allow that feeling to BE here? Allowing, embracing and welcoming are other ways you can ask yourself. Could you embrace the feeling? Could you just welcome it? And more...and even more than that? ...and still more?
3. Repeat the questions in #2 as each successive feeling arises. Don't expect feelings to stay the same, just embrace/allow each one that arises without judgment. As you fully allow the feeling(s) they will release, change and shift. Other feelings will come up.
4. If you get stuck, ask yourself "could I let go of wanting this feeling to be different?" (It helps if you say "Yes!" but you do not have to) Just embrace again, welcome it, more, and even more.
5. At a certain point, you will feel like the feelings you resisted having are gone and you are in another state of being: courageous, relaxed, open and aware. This might take 5 minutes or be something that you do throughout the day or over several days. Letting go is a practice.
6. Remember: Feelings are just feelings. They are not FACTS and they are NOT who you are. And you can let them go by simply allowing them in this methodical fashion.

Eckhart Tolle, the author of The Power of Now and A New Earth, says that emotions are the interface between the body and the mind. As you practice letting go as a way of being, you not only change your emotions, you change your body and mind. By letting go, you tend toward areas of higher

energy and vibrancy. You re-enter the FLOW that is your real nature. Try letting go and see how many great results you can have. You might want to jot these positive results down as you notice them, and soon you will encourage yourself to live in a higher, more expanded state of BEING. This basic technique is amazingly powerful, and there are even more powerful ways to accelerate letting go which we will teach in the upcoming workshop (see below for details).

Happy letting go!

Suzanne

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Call to save your space for the Letting Go Workshop in Atenas, January 18-20<sup>th</sup>. Times are Friday evening 5PM-8PM, Sat. 10AM-5PM, Sun. 9AM-4PM. The instructors Daniel Sternberg, Ph.D. and Suzanne Mark will teach you how to let go of anything that is bothering you, old or new. Call 2446-0674 for information. Suggested donation: \$100. (\$395 value) We have shared this technique with thousands throughout the world, and we highly recommend it for its effectiveness, and ease of leaning.

## The Death of Literature?



by Christopher Clarke  
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Yesterday there was a program on a little watched Sky TV channel. Sadly, I did not catch its title nor the names of the various US professors speaking. Here is the gist of it.

A professor recalled a recent first day of college. A student asked what course references they should start with. When he told them to read a book, there was a groan from the students. They do not like reading books. They like the Internet. He went on to explain that the average student only reads three pages of any web site on average. He asked us, the TV audience, whether we would prefer a doctor who had read the article in the medical journal or merely an abstract on the Internet.

They conducted interviews and psychological experiments with users of the Internet from different generations to see if their ways of seeking knowledge were changing due to the Internet. The conclusion was that there were distinct differences between the way younger people are learning and prior generations. Brain pathways are being altered. Previous generations were required to and did conduct deeper research into the things that they were required to study or which interested them. The current

students are skimming a very wide range of data to learn. There was some inconclusive discussion about whether this would result in new knowledge and learning or was a bad thing. One chap said that every generation feels that the new generation is going off the rails in the way it learns. We had heard from elsewhere that many readers of i books abandon them for something better, after only a few pages. This seems to corroborate the trends discussed.

It was after the program that I thought of further consequences, if these trends are true and develop. This means that the market for books in any form, including i books will shrink dramatically. Those of us who write books may be the last of our kind.

In an op ed piece in the New York Times, there was a piece on how photographs had been devalued. In the past a photograph was carefully composed and perhaps posed. It was expensively developed into hard copy and given pride of place in a frame in the household or office. Now, every cell phone has a camera. Photos are shared with everyone by phone and Facebook. They are no longer valued and have become less meaningful, to be lightly discarded. This seems to be another aspect of the same phenomenon.

Fellow dinosaurs, we will die before the death of literature, but maybe it is coming soon thereafter. *Après nous la deluge.*





Merry Christmas

A Family Christmas Card

Paul Furlong

December 10, 1990

*"My darling boy," she'd say, and I could feel the love come off her moon face like desert shimmers. I remember.*

*You're going home, Nan, going home." I checked my mirror and tucked in behind a truck. It felt good to be on the road again, even for an hour or so. I thought about how Mikey used to sleep on the furnace grate, ("such a hot dog") so many years ago. I remembered the old worn pine board floors, and the smell of coal. Driving without the radio, I could almost hear the sound of Nan's creaky stairs... a door latch dropping. I remember.*

*I had dinner with Cousin Gordon, who drove us to Short Hills. I gazed through the windshield and tried to recognize the roads I used to walk and wished the houses would disappear.*

*"Nan, I can't spend much time with you here now, but you're home. I'll come visit again. Please forgive me for not staying..."*

*Gordon stopped the car and I lifted Nan out. I undid the wire tie and began to walk along the road past the driveway towards the corner.*

*Christmas lights from the house illuminated the bank above and as cars randomly passed, their lights detailed every shrub. I reached deeply into the bag, and as a car passed, I began to throw Nan's ashes in wide sweeping arcs along the bank. Pebbles and dust flew into the light and I felt a sense of release that made me feel warm and happy.*

*I covered the bank along the front, around the corner to the end, and put the bag in my pocket. I continued down to the church and drove away with Gordon. That's how it happened.*

*I never knew the names of the flowers Nan grew in her rock garden, or even paid much attention to them, but they added a backdrop to my life and their beauty is part of the way I see today. She influenced my sense of color and balance and made me know somehow that peace and serenity was in my genes and it would only be a matter of time before I calmed down enough to appreciate it. A cornerstone was taken from my life when Nan sold the property, and though I never knew I missed it, bringing her home restored a sense of origin to me.*

*If the things I've described here seem arrogant, offensive or superficial to anyone in the family, please forgive me. It was done for love, not sensation...or approval. Anyway Nan is home.*

*Home Again, a poem*

*She rested in the leaves to wait.*

*All those miles*

*All those years. Then the rain came.*

*Droplets formed, then ran together and became*

*Little rivers that flowed from leaf to stem and down to earth.*

*Bits of freshly scattered carbon and dust washed down too, into the sanctified ground of Nanny's rock garden. She is home again.*

*Merry Christmas everybody, Chip*

When my mom died this year at ninety three, my step dad sent pictures and papers she'd accumulated over the years. In them was the piece you see above.

My Nanny took wings in 1984. She was ninety seven, raised four girls through depression and war and lived throughout my youth in a two hundred year old house in Short Hills New Jersey. When she sold the house, the four sisters kept her at their homes through the various parts of the year. When Nan died, her sisters gone, mom inherited her ashes. They sat in the laundry room on a shelf for six years. One day I was talking to mom about it and she told me how terrible she felt about them just sitting there. I asked her to give them to me, that I would take her home and I did, in time for Christmas.

The above was a Christmas present and card to my family 22 years ago. I normally don't send cards out, don't celebrate Christmas, but this just fell in my lap so to speak, and I thought of you. So, by extension, this is a card to those of you who could stand a little Love and Peace.

Merry Christmas to all from my family to yours, Gaby, Andre, Paul, Pancho, Manfred, Missy, Raul, Girt, Peppe, Lu Lu, Pati, Paco, etc. etc.

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



**Stories from Mr. BudBud, Primero Perro of Lighthouse Animal Rescue. They were written 8 years ago when he first came to Costa Rica for a house sitting job.**

**6/14/2004**

**Hola!! Folks!!**

**Today we went over to the next mountain and looked at some property there. The property is very nice and the view is WOW!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!  
You can see LOT'S of towns from there.**

**We were supposed to meet a man in Grecia to see some pictures of some property he has but he never got there.  
It was storming pretty bad and we figure he will call to set up another time to get together.**

**We ate at a place in Grecia and it had some REALLY delicious looking pastries!!!!  
The lady who owns the soda likes me a lot and calls me an "educado perro."  
Mom looked it up when we got home!  
It means "refined dog!!!!!!"**

**We had "pollo" sandwiches. "Pollo" means chicken!!! It is pronounced po-yo.  
In spanish two L's together are pronounced like the y in yes or you.**

**The letter "E" always sounds like the a in canine or stay.**

**The letter "A" always sounds like the a in bark or ball.**

**The letter "I" always sounds like the i in drink or sink.**

**See???? I'm learning spanish!!!!**

**Actually, dogs all speak the same language. We only learn HUMAN languages to understand you humans!! That makes us all bi-lingual!!! LOL!!!**

**You guys sure like to complicate things. All speaking different languages and stuff.**

**OH!!!! Mom talked to the lady at the no-kill shelter today. She says the boxer is VERY sweet and very active. She said they will have to be very choosy about the home they adopt him to. They don't want him to go to anyone who would tie him up. They must have fenced property where he can run!**

**Mom told her about our shelter, Lighthouse.**

**She is very interested in meeting Mom and wants Mom to maybe open a new project if we move over here.**

**She says she has a beautiful piece of property that she would love to use for abandoned horses, cows, etc. but she can't do it all by herself. Right now she is very snowed under with street dogs and cats.**

**That is usually the way it is with Mom at our shelter back home so we knows how it is!!**

**Anyway, she wants Mom to come see the shelter and talk to her.**

**Mom feels LOTS better now about the boxer too.**

**Well, enough for tonight. Mom is cooking up some fried green tomatos and they sure smell good!!!!**

**She had to use the corn tortilla meal though so we will just have to wait and see how they taste.**

**More tomorrow!!!!**

**BudBud the educado perro!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!**

## Top Tips for Kid-Friendly Travel during the Holidays

By Shannon Farley

Traveling with kids ... over the holidays or anytime ... for the seasoned traveler, it's no big deal, they say. A bit more luggage and stuff to carry. For first-timers they tend to fall into two camps – optimistic or terrified.

My sister is probably the most efficient family traveler I know. She has her work cut out for her with 2-year-old and 4-year-old girls. Like a well-oiled machine, she's ready for every contingency as if preparing for a survival operation. Sticky hands or nowhere to wash before eating? She pulls packets of wet wipes from a handy pocket of her carry-all, akin to Mary Poppins' bottomless carpetbag. Hungry? She keeps Ziploc bags of healthy snacks and small juices or waters at the ready. Cold? Hot? Or dirtied your shirt? She pulls out fresh changes of clothes and layers from the bag. Need a blanket for a nap? She has one of those too.



Keep them entertained is the firm conviction my sister believes. A happy, entertained child is much nicer to travel with than a bored, cranky, screaming one. True, and it works. Coloring books, crayons, sticker sheets, paper, reading books, a portable kid's computer programmed with educational games, and portable DVD players loaded with her girls' favorite movies all fill my sister's arsenal.



Did you know that children can be the ideal travel companions? Their excitement at nearly everything, interest in the smallest of details, energy, adaptability and rapid ability to pick up other languages makes them fun and valuable too. You'll find that cute smiling children break down all international language barriers and bring forth smiles and warmth from adults of all countries. On the flip side, when things aren't going so great, crying children can elicit sympathy and open doors fast by adults who aren't used to crying bouts.

Any travel with children is an educational opportunity impacting more learning than in the classroom. Kids become students of life, culture, language, geography, history, nature, art and music when taken on journeys locally or across borders.

Most of the wisdom on the internet offering helpful advice for traveling with children boils down to a top 10 core points to follow:

1. **Make it fun, festive and happy!** As in all things with kids, make it fun and interesting. For children, it's 100% about the journey – every bug, plant, animal, rock, button or lever – along the way.
2. **Plan.** Pack, plan and prepare for every possible event – at least in small quantities.
3. **Study.** Know where you're going, what the weather is like, activities you may do, any local cultural particularities you need to be aware of, medical contingencies, food in the area, etc. The internet stores a wealth of information. Traveler's blogs and chat forums pertaining to the area give you first-hand insider knowledge and people you can ask questions. Involve older children in pre-trip studying and you not only increase the excitement, you also multiply your brain-storage capacity for details.

4. **Pack lightly.** I know, easier said than done when you have to follow point #2 to plan for every possible scenario. When flying, your carry-ons are your most important piece of luggage – here is where you need your changes of clothes, blanket, snacks, medicines, Band-Aids, and your entertainment arsenal (see above). Kids age 4 and up can manage their own carry-on bags, giving you more room to spread it all around. The latest kid's carry-on I just saw is a red "Lightning McQueen" race car (think Disney's "Cars" movie) mini plastic backpack-of-sorts on wheels. Fun and perfect for kids to easily wheel around. Make sure to check airline regulations in advance to know what you can and cannot take on board.



5. **Feed them.** Have snacks and water available at all times – in the car, at the airport, on the plane, etc. When you get past security at the airport, stock up on water bottles to bring on board the plane. Don't rely on airline carts for your nourishment or you'll be left waiting and wanting. There's nothing worse than a hungry or thirsty child ... or adult, for that matter.

6. **Start early.** Take advantage of higher energy in the mornings to start your travels. If afternoon nap time falls during your flight, try to make your child as comfortable as possible to sleep. Otherwise, when you land, get to your destination in as short a time as possible so you can all rest. I don't advocate ever traveling on a night flight with children, unless you're going to board the plane near normal bedtime of 8:00 or 9:00 pm and fly long-haul for 11-12 hours; be prepared to have a sleeping child on your lap most of the way. The "Start Early" tip applies to activities during your travels as well – go do that morning tour and leave the afternoon for relaxing.



7. **Take breaks and take it easy.** This one is important. You might be used to go-go-go, but your child might not be. Take breaks when possible. Make a mini-activity out of breathing deeply and stretching together to relax. Remember, a stressed-out parent cues a stressed-out child. When you get to your destination, follow the “take it easy” mode by choosing activities with short travel times.
8. **Make the airport easy.** This means arriving early for your flight – everything takes longer with kids. You’ll hopefully have already checked in on-line and have your seat assignments pre-set. You’ll have packed your carry-on bags security snag-free. Everyone dress comfortably with slip-on shoes, little jewelry, and no belts if you can help it, so security check is a breeze.
9. **Wear them out.** This applies more for airline travel than anything else. When you get through to the inner airport area and boarding gates, walk around, look at stuff, make it an adventure and discover new things. Your goal is to burn off extra energy before being strapped into an airplane seat for hours. Some airports even have play areas for kids.
10. **Make them cozy.** No matter where you are, when it’s time for bed, make your kids as cozy and comfortable as possible – preferably with that favorite blanket or toy – so they’ll sleep soundly and get rest. It won’t matter if it’s a tent, hotel, train, plane or boat, so long as they feel safe and comfortable.



The airline JetBlue offers parents a **7-tip guide for easy flying with kids**, plus a **free downloadable “Soar with Reading Activity Kit”** from their website that includes reading material and videos to keep your kids entertained. Check out their link here:  
[http://www.jetblue.com/travel/kids/?source=msn\\_tips\\_for\\_traveling\\_with\\_children&placement=none&sc=PPC](http://www.jetblue.com/travel/kids/?source=msn_tips_for_traveling_with_children&placement=none&sc=PPC)

Here are a few more great links for kid-friendly travel:

#### **Helpful Tips for Airplane Travel with Children**

<http://www.familyfreshcooking.com/2012/03/06/15-helpful-tips-for-airplane-travel-with-small-children/>

#### **50 Ways to Entertain a Kid on an Airplane**

<http://www.parenting.com/gallery/50-ways-entertain-kids-plane?pnid=363362>

#### **How to Survive Plane Rides with Small Kids**

<http://travelwithkids.about.com/cs/accessibility/ht/Surviveplane.htm>

**HAPPY HOLIDAYS & SAFE TRAVELS!!!**

# Responsible food consumption!



**Sergio A. Molina, Ph.D.**  
**Resident Lecturer-Environmental Economics and Policy**  
**Center for Sustainable Development Studies**  
**semolina@fieldstudies.org**

**It is all about tasty food. But is it truly? Most people in Costa Rica would be unlikely to trade a delicious cup of arabica coffee, a guanabana milkshake, or rice-and-beans for a hamburger with fries and a Coke. Well, let's not be naïve, maybe some will; but not without a bit of regret.**

**At our Center for Sustainable Development Studies (locally known as *Universidad de la Presa*), also, a Rainforest Alliance Certified® small farm of mangoes and oranges, our students have been fostering their own organic growth with food for thought. This semester we have explored various sustainability issues regarding water and energy use, biodiversity, soil and air protection, along with social equity and economic development.**



**These educational activities and life experiences have helped us all more personally realize that in the face of increasing consumption, sustainable food production systems are critical for long-term wellbeing. While visiting APROCAFE, our local organic coffee association here in Altos de San Isidro, Atenas, we recognized firsthand it is possible to secure a sustainable source of income for owners of small farms and protect the health of their families by avoiding imported harmful agrochemicals. Moreover, these goals can be achieved while simultaneously protecting the**

**natural ecosystems and its provision of services such biodiversity, clean water, and pollination. Additional experiences such as watching the documentary Food Inc. and visiting the small**

**community of El Sur de Turrubares, which highly depends on out-of-town food due to crop damage by wildlife, further provoked us to question our eating habits.**

**Although exploring vegetarian and even vegan options could be appropriate, it is important to realize – for meat, cheese, and egg lovers – that even cutting our animal diet in some degree could make a big impact on the environment. Although we recognize that all animal-derived food is not produced the same way, for the most part its production follows unsustainable patterns in the name of efficiency, and often ignores the social and environmental burden on our only food provider, nature.**

**Is it all about tasty food? Healthy tasty food? Sustainable healthy tasty food? Our choice!**

**“But that's the challenge -- to change the system more than it changes you.”**

? Michael Pollan, *The Omnivore's Dilemma: A Natural History of Four Meals*

FAST APPROACHING  
2013 Atenas Charity Chili Cook Off  
We Do It For The Kids!

By Judy Timson



**When:**  
Sunday, February 10, 2013. (the Sunday after Super Bowl)

**Where:**  
Quinta Romavista, Barrio Mercedes, Atenas  
two kms. off the old Alajuela to Orotina, Highway #3

**What Time:**  
Open To Public 11:00AM to 4:00PM

\*All proceeds go to support the Hogar de Vida home for abandoned, abused and orphaned children in Atenas\*

"Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much"  
Helen Keller

I have always admired Helen Keller's optimism and wise words of wisdom during her lifetime. Here was a person born into a dark world of blindness and deafness. Yet, she lived through a very difficult childhood that many of us cannot even begin to imagine all the obstacles she and her family encountered.

One person, a teacher, stepped into her life that opened the doors to experiencing life for the first time through communication and education. It didn't happen overnight, it took a significant amount of time to lay that foundation of trust and for the first time in Helen's life, she was able to know joy – all because it started with one person dedicated to making a difference for this one child.

Imagine what her life would have been like had no one stepped in to help her or even tried. Giving up on a child, even a blind and deaf child, is not acceptable to anyone. And yet, it does happen. Children are abandoned. Children live in poverty. Children come from abusive situations – including sexual, physical or emotional abuse. It happens everywhere....even here in Atenas, Costa Rica. It's hard to think it happens in this new homeland of ours, but sadly, it does.

But, just as Helen Keller grew and prospered in her life and went on to become a treasured inspiration for many, she recognized the importance of giving back. She knew she had received that ultimate gift herself – someone caring enough to offer stability, protection, love, understanding and compassion – and she offered hope for others.



And Hogar de Vida does just that for its children living there. When I think about why I am involved in this year's Atenas Charity Chili Cook Off, my mind automatically circles around the children at Hogar de Vida. I had the privilege of touring Hogar de Vida recently and was amazed that on this property, there were about 35 children living there – ages birth to 10 years old. These are all Costa Rican children. Their mission is to give love, protection and a substitute family for these at-risk children. I witnessed how they help to meet the children's needs by offering a stable home environment, providing good nutrition, providing a foundation around education, and offering trustworthy authority figures and spiritual guidance. This Christian-based organization not only offers hope and love, they offer the children an opportunity to build a foundation of faith to help support them throughout their lifetime.

And it began with founders Tim & Dena Stromstad in 1995. In the early 90's Tim & Dena founded a children's home in Guatemala and had a calling to open another one here in Atenas. When Hogar de Vida's doors opened, it started with one small home and has not grown to three homes, supervised by experienced and loving "Tias" or aunties. This home provides around the clock,

365 days a year care. Tim and Dena live on the property and oversee all operations.

Collectively, we can all support Hogar de Vida by participating and attending this year's Atenas Charity Chili Cook Off. Our team of dedicated volunteers is determined to double what was raised last year – we want to raise at least \$10,000. Only about 35% of Hogar's budget is secured from the Costa Rican government, while the remaining 65% comes directly from donations. As with any non-profit, it can be a challenge to meet budget needs year to year, which is why our Atenas Charity Chili Cook Off is so vitally important to Hogar de Vida. We are doing this for the KIDS!



Many will ask how are the proceeds from this event going to support Hogar de Vida. Well, this year's support is more critical than ever because of a recent break-in on the property. Approximately \$10,000 was taken in equipment, electronics and money. Because safety for these children is top priority, they began to lay the foundation for a secure and safe property. There are five phases to complete in order to have a structured security wall in place to provide full protection for the children. Phase 1 is complete – a four-panel concrete wall, approximately 100 meters long. Phase 2 is in the works – a new wall on the east border, the entry point of the most recent burglary. A back hoe and dump truck will be required to clear the trees and the current fence, and then prefab wall panels, cement, sand and rock need to be purchased in addition to hiring a crew. The estimated cost for this new wall is \$30,000; so far

approximately \$6,000 has been raised. The funds collected at the Atenas Charity Chili Cook Off will go to help fund this Phase.

So, please come and join us on Sunday, February 10<sup>th</sup> – 11am to 4pm for a fun day filled with chili tasting, food, raffles, book sales, beer garden, music, and dancing, swimming, mechanical bull riding and face painting. For more information, check out our new website. Come make a difference with us!



Visit Our New Website  
[www.atenaschilicookoff.com](http://www.atenaschilicookoff.com)

## The Forerunner Project Inc.



by AT Staff Writer

We have recently become aware of the existence of the Forerunner Project Inc. from a conversation we had with Paul and Margaret Weigel, the visionaries behind it. ([www.theforerunnerproject.com](http://www.theforerunnerproject.com))

Forerunners, say Paul and Margaret, are the non-conformists who question things and who are passionate about finding a better way to do things. They prefer the word 'forerunner' to 'square-pegs' or 'boat-rockers' because a 'forerunner' is one who sees a vision of the future and has the passion to bring it into the present.

In today's world many institutions are not able to successfully recognize and use the talents of this kind of person. Instead many businesses and schools misunderstand these talents and feel threatened by them.

The mission of the Forerunner Project is to help identify and encourage the gifts that are inherent in every person in order to allow them to make exceptional contributions towards the betterment of our world.

The Forerunner Living and Learning Community (FLLC) is one primary project that will provide opportunities for people to retire with purpose or for people to bring purpose to their lives. This ambitious and forward looking project has as its premise an intentional

community who will share their knowledge and skills with youth so that these youth can in turn learn what their own strengths are and where their purpose lies. The idea is to build a sustainable community and to create successful businesses and employment. The community will demonstrate the exponential increase of other economies when 'synergy' of this type is present.

During the month of January, the Forerunner Project Inc. is bringing an Entrepreneur Camp to Atenas. This camp is open to 'forerunners' from the ages of 15 – 99! Please see the flyer below for more information

### "We need a nation of entrepreneurs"

Minister Alejandro Cruz  
Costa Rican Ministry of Science and Technology

"In Costa Rica the mantra is 'get an education so you can get a good job,' not 'get a good education to start your own company so you can create jobs for other people'.....If they don't see everyone else doing it, they will be content working for someone else."

".....we can't expect anybody to follow their dreams alone."

Mario Chaves, CEO and Co-Founder of  
Avantica Technologies



Honored for Innovation in the  
Entrepreneur of the Year Awards 2009

## ENTREPRENEUR CAMP

Learn how to Start and Run a Successful Business

- Find out what you need to start a business and how to get it
- Discover your talents and strengths, and how best to use them
- Learn which businesses you will be most successful at
- Know how, when and where to start your business
- Learn how to evaluate your ideas and how to generate more
- Learn how to achieve any goal

Meet Aspiring and Successful Entrepreneurs  
and Improve your English

For Entrepreneurs ages 15 - 99 years

**When:** Starts Tuesday, January 8 (Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday) for 3 weeks

**Times:** Tuesday and Thursday - 5-7:30 - Saturday 2-5

**Location:** Catholic Church - Atenas

**Cost:** FREE with a donation (of any amount) to help the needy

**Registration:** You must register to attend by texting your name to 8466-7134 or emailing it to: [register@theforerunnerproject.com](mailto:register@theforerunnerproject.com)

Presented by: The Forerunner Project Inc.

## **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.



"Morning Flower"

7" x 9"

Oil on Linen.

Al Alexander

*jeanandal@gmail.com*



Watercolor

[gavalos@fieldstudies.org](mailto:gavalos@fieldstudies.org)



Overdrive

Dragonfly Animal Portraits

[www.dianamiskell.com](http://www.dianamiskell.com)

<http://dianascostaricablog.blogspot.com>



Flattery

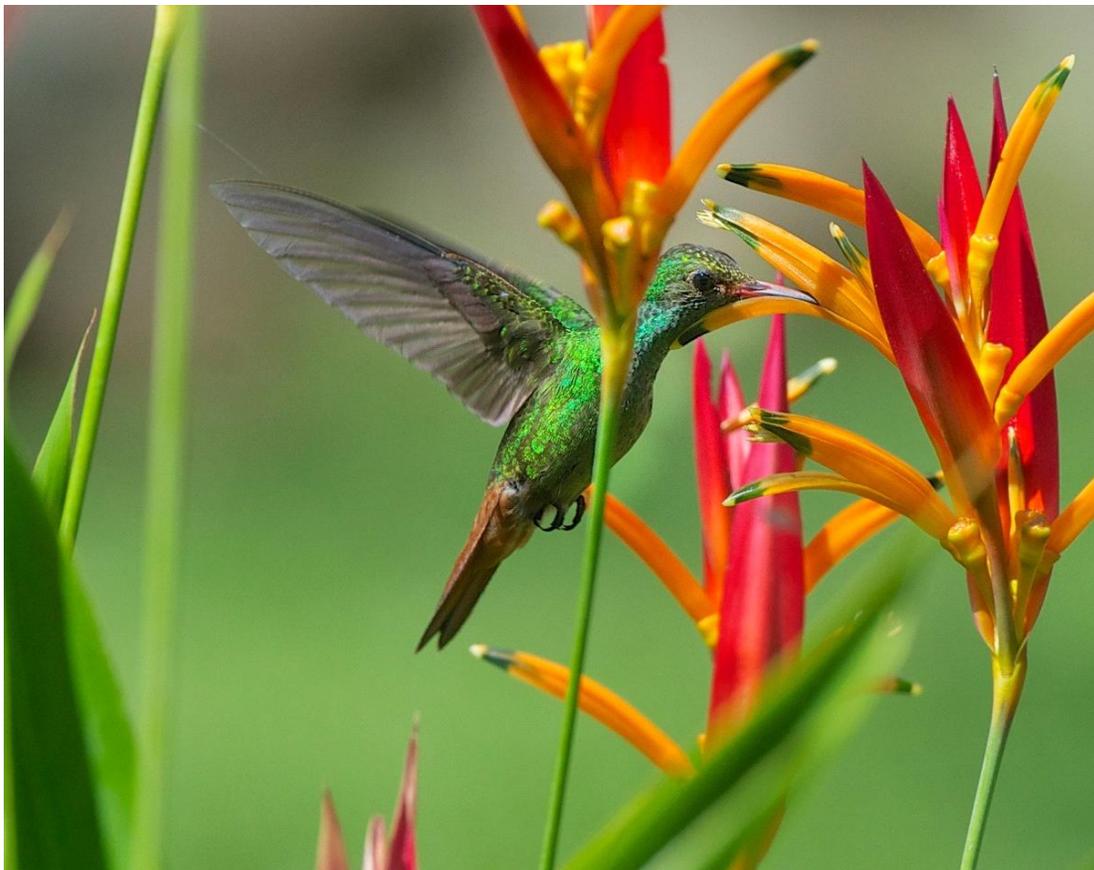
36" x 36", Acrylic on Board

Harriet Sheppard

[hweyman@hotmail.com](mailto:hweyman@hotmail.com)



**Photograph by Jose Mario Leon Espinoza, student**



**Photograph by Peter Boyer, Atenas Resident**



Christmas Star  
Jocelyn Farquhar

5 Greeting Cards and Envelopes \$15.00  
[squibblesdesigns.com](http://squibblesdesigns.com)



Larry Felder

"Beach Crab at Playa Esterillos Este"

10" x 8" oil on canvas, 2011

Email: [larry@feldergallery.com](mailto:larry@feldergallery.com)  
Blog: [www.larryfelderart.blogspot.com](http://www.larryfelderart.blogspot.com)  
Portfolio: [www.larryfelder.weebly.com](http://www.larryfelder.weebly.com)  
Gallery: [www.feldergallery.com](http://www.feldergallery.com)

## For the bloggers...



We are providing a list of *blogs* that might be of interest to our 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.

Biolley Buzz	<a href="http://bcrcoffee.com">bcrcoffee.com</a>
Claudia Leon	<a href="http://photoleraclaudinha.smugmug.com/">http://photoleraclaudinha.smugmug.com/</a> <a href="http://straightline-cmkl.blogspot.com/">http://straightline-cmkl.blogspot.com/</a>
Costa Rica: Sisters in Transition (Judy & Roxi)	<a href="http://costaricasistersintransition.blogspot.com">http://costaricasistersintransition.blogspot.com</a>
De La Pura Vida Costa Rica Diane Miskell Dovile Vaigauskaite	<a href="http://delapuravida.com">delapuravida.com</a> <a href="http://dianascostaricablog.blogspot.com">http://dianascostaricablog.blogspot.com</a> <a href="http://www.powerofindividual.org">www.powerofindividual.org</a>
Fabulista De Costa Rica Fred Ball	<a href="http://fabulista DECR.blogspot.com">fabulista DECR.blogspot.com</a> <a href="http://natureboy70.blogspot.com/">http://natureboy70.blogspot.com/</a>
G. Martin Lively Going Like Sixty	<a href="http://fishinginandaroundcostarica.blogspot.com">fishinginandaroundcostarica.blogspot.com</a> <a href="http://goinglikesixty.com">goinglikesixty.com</a>
Julie and Rick in Costa Rica	<a href="http://julieandrickincostarica.blogspot.com/">http://julieandrickincostarica.blogspot.com/</a>
Lois and Jim Craft	<a href="http://adventurecraft.blogspot.com">adventurecraft.blogspot.com</a>
Marietta Arce Mi Chunche	<a href="http://marisundays.wordpress.com">http://marisundays.wordpress.com</a> <a href="http://michunche.com">michunche.com</a>
Nadine Hays Pisani New Life in Costa Rica	<a href="http://happierthanabillionaire.com">happierthanabillionaire.com</a> <a href="http://www.anewlifeincostarica.com/nuevo_vida/">http://www.anewlifeincostarica.com/nuevo_vida/</a>
Paul Furlong Paul Furlong motorcycle blog	<a href="http://shootright.blogspot.com/">http://shootright.blogspot.com/</a> <a href="http://eyeneo.com/">http://eyeneo.com/</a>
Pura Vida Mommy	<a href="http://puravidamommy.blogspot.com">puravidamommy.blogspot.com</a>
Rubiatica	<a href="http://rubiatica.blogspot.com">rubiatica.blogspot.com</a>
Somewhere In Costa Rica Su Espacio	<a href="http://someswhereincostarica.com">http://someswhereincostarica.com</a> <a href="http://www.suespacioate nas.blogspot.com/">http://www.suespacioate nas.blogspot.com/</a>
The Real Costa Rica The Very Worst Missionary The View From Here	<a href="http://blog.therealcostarica.com">blog.therealcostarica.com</a> <a href="http://theveryworstmissionary.com">theveryworstmissionary.com</a> <a href="http://theviewfromherecr.blogspot.com">theviewfromherecr.blogspot.com</a>

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- Medications administered as per your instructions.
- Any medical attention needed, we will take the pet to the veterinarian of your choice (arrangements will be made for payments in any such emergency).
- We can pick-up and drop-off your pet at your home (Atenas area).



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Call Tom Yatsko at: 2446-4764 or 8306-9767

Visit us every Friday 6-11 AM at the Atenas Feria at the white tent. At the Grecia Feria, Friday from 2-8 PM and Saturday from 6 AM to 1 PM, stand #28A.



Dan Sternberg Ph.D. (licensed Psychologist in Utah)

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In Atenas, at 2446-0674 and at [slsedona@aol.com](mailto:slsedona@aol.com).



A nonprofit organization that harnesses the power of the Internet to provide adolescent health education services to youth and family development organizations who seek to improve the health, education and well being of youth.

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at:  
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English/Business/Atenas Today](http://www.atenascatuca.com/English/Business/Atenas%20Today)

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Atenas Today is sent out monthly to over 400 email addresses of people who live or vacation in the Atenas area. Display ads up to half a page in size cost \$20 per insertion; full page ads are \$35 per insertion. Ads in the Atenas Today Yellow Pages cost \$5 per month for one column by one inch, and \$10 per month for one column by two inches.

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- 3) cash in envelope in PO Box 65 (Marietta Arce Valverde) in Atenas.

**In all cases be sure to include your name and what the money is for.**