

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.

Issue No. 127

July 23, 2015

ATENAS TODAY



A common sight in July: Pericos (Parrots)

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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.



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



As we head to the end of July, I am very aware that the celebration of Guanacaste Annexation day is very near. We have all had a busy month of celebrations with Canada Day, The Fourth of July and in my home, several birthdays; not to mention, the mid-year school vacation which allowed Costa Rican children and their families some rest. These events are wonderful opportunities to bring friends and family together for some well-deserved fun and bonding.

This has been a very busy time in our little town of Atenas. There is work underway in our Central Park to finish/repair the well which will hopefully alleviate the frequent and severe water shortages most households have to endure day after day. The work is going smoothly but it is not expected to be finished until perhaps September. In the meantime, the unsightly heavy-duty fabric wall serves to jog my memory a bit by trying to recall exactly what was there before! I will make it a point to visit the park more frequently after everything is put back in place!

Paving around town is almost completed and I am sure we are all happy about that. Most residents joke that it must be getting close to elections (yes, it is) but we all know that these pavings were necessary and scheduled long before elections were on the horizon.

We are enjoying the arrival of several new restaurants, a couple of new pharmacies, and a lovely store dedicated to wine. Please be sure to make a note of these new places and get out in support of the young people whose hard work and dedication are making their dreams come true. It is one thing to have a successful opening night, and quite another to keep the show running.

Another important undertaking is the “wayfinding signage” of Atenas center which should also be ready sometime in September. Although the tico way of giving directions is usually advertised as charming, there is really nothing charming about being lost in the rain, in the dark, in a strange place. Believe me, I’ve been there!

We receive many new subscribers after each issue and the month of June was no exception. I value your feedback because it helps to guide our selection of topics. Years ago we contemplated the translation of popular articles into Spanish, a project that has not been forgotten but feels less urgent now that so many of our tico residents are beginning to learn English! The multilingualism seems to be growing as more and more people realize what a wonderful place we have in Atenas today and every day!

Happy Reading!

Marietta Arce
marietta.arce@gmail.com



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.

July 25th – Guanacaste Annexation day – official holiday in Costa Rica

August 2nd – Feast of Virgin of Los Angeles, Patron Saint of Costa Rica

August 7th – Atenas Celebrates its birthday!

August 15th – Mother's Day is celebrated, official holiday in Costa Rica

August 24th – National Parks Day is observed

REGULARLY SCHEDULED ACTIVITIES

Every Sunday: Buddhist Book Discussion at Roca Verde (See Flyer)
PLEASE NOTE: The Buddhist Book Discussion is taking a brief hiatus.
No meeting during August.

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

Second Monday of every month: 4 p.m. Abandoned Animals of Atenas Foundation meeting at Antaños Please contact Virginia 2446-5343 or Sylvia 8868-1386 for more information. Volunteers are needed and welcome.

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 11:30 a.m. (Please confirm with Michele Clutter 2446-0664)

Atenas Wednesday Women
informal get togethers at Kay's Gringo Postres

PLEASE NOTE: The Costa Rica Writers Group meets in San Jose once each month. For more information, please contact Bob Brashears at bbrashears0@gmail.com or phone 8684-2526



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

If you wish a .PDF copy of the book, please email me and I'll send that to you



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.

Wednesday - 6pm - English worship service

1st Sunday of each month – An English translator is provided for the 9:00 a.m. Spanish worship service.

(After the service many of the ex-pats gather at a designated home for a potluck lunch. Just ask any ex-pat before or after worship for the particulars.)

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: On Highway 3 at the blinking light



Located 100 meters east of Coopeatenas
Hours: Every day from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m.
Enjoy the customer-friendly approach to wine!



ETNIA GASTROPUB



Across the street from Coopeatenas
Hours: M, W, Th & F from 4 p.m. Till Midnight
Saturday & Sunday from 2 p.m. till Midnight
Closed Tuesdays
phone: 4702-8677



**Tex-Mex Fast Food and Restaurant
Across the ICE Office Parking Lot (near Miranda)
Phones: 2446-2028 / 8812-3458**



**Farmacias San Gabriel
Located at the RIO GRANDE GAS STATION
Near entrance to Highway 27**



Go ahead – Blog... If you Dare



by Mary Martin Mason
marymason1946@gmail.com

Perhaps it is the magnetic field of the southern hemisphere with constellations differing from its northern neighbor. Maybe it is the proximity to the equator where the current in the liquid core of the earth's center reminds humans that they are passengers and not conductors. The occasional earth tremor and increasing eruptions of Volcan Turrialba announce, as we of the ex-pat community like to say, "You are not in Kansas anymore." Kansas could be Maryland, Texas, Munich, Ontario, Manitoba, Milan, or Paris. No matter. Costa Rica is situated between 8 and 12 degrees north on the equator, a location that disorients and confounds as much as it pleases.

Geographic confusion abounds in posts on a variety of ex-pat blogs. "My husband and I plan to relocate to Costa Rica. We would like to build a house on the beach in a SAFE neighborhood near an active retirement community. Absolutely need swimming pool and granite countertops. We are bringing our two French bulldogs so is there a quarantine period? How do we ship our car and belongings? What about health care there? Are there snakes?" The responses range from benevolent advice... "Don't build or even move until you have tried out at least three communities. Check out this blog on rules for bringing pets," ...to incredulous explosions. "Stay where you are, you putz. Anyone contemplating moving with as little information as you have deserves what you will get. I'd answer more completely but I have minutes left to live after being bit by a Terciopelo fer de Lance Pit Viper, the most poisonous snake on earth. Pura Vida."

Blogs for ex-pats are a meeting place, much like the Parque Central in Atenas, where one can sit for hours and observe without participating, choose to greet and embrace one another, or like a few of the old men, taunt, tease and call out to the pretty girls. A word about blog bullies who delight in provoking. These were the gang who did swirlies in high school and now lie in wait like silver back gorillas to beat their chest and call attention to themselves. They are necessary to the world of blogs, characters unto themselves. They have a polarizing effect that isn't all bad since it unites and clarifies the thought process for the offended.

For visitors who are residents of Costa Rica, blogs provide ready advice on everything from finding a watch repairman to addressing the army ants that periodically march through one's house, devouring everything in their path. Answers to the latter vary from "I like to pretend they're having a funeral. Take off your hat and play some music for them," to "Go out for breakfast. They are natural fumigators. Takes them about 2 hours. Nothing you can do. They are good for you. They kill and take everything on

their way through. Happens a lot when weather is changing. They are on the move and your house is in their path," to "If we don't hear from you by noon, nice knowing you."

Blogs can be informational, educational or arty, devoted to a cause, or lean towards the profane and highly uncensored. Some photography blogs reveal the stunning beauty of Costa Rica. Others are guides on travel and transportation. Young families are united around raising a child in a foreign land, and retirees share their tips on healthcare. There is a blog for every taste, and many including myself have waded into one innocently only to be eaten alive by lurking sharks. Shortly after my arrival last November, I heard of a Christmas concert and asked which church was hosting it and received a sarcastic reply about it being in a Buddhist temple. The blogs are a microcosm of a diverse, rich community comprised of both tico and gringo, where political colors are flown (even when prohibited), respect or occasional disrespect for our host country is touted, and a great divide as well as common denominators are revealed.

Aside from devilish pranks, occasional feuds and venomous rants, blogs reveal how transplants to Atenas hold a common regard for one another that is genuine. In times of illness or catastrophe, temporary housing, nursing care, meals, loans and even a place to stash cash until a bank account can be established, is proffered, sometimes publicly and at other times through Private Messaging. The disastrous fires in January evoked a community spirit with updates about dangers and outreach to those needing help.

Communities outside Atenas, as shown on some blogs, differ greatly. Some discourage newcomers with a palatable iciness. Others scoff at Atenas' claim of *El Mejor Clima del Mundo*, pointing out that Atenas can be damned hot when compared to locales that offer aeries atop cooler mountain tops. Some attribute Atenas' perfect climate claim to a *National Geographic* magazine article that described Atenas with the label while others point to some marketing ploy. No matter. The debate will continue on blogs yet to be written when the inevitable question arises, "How did Atenas get to be labeled *The Best Climate in the World?*" and if the blogger is brave, they will wipe the sweat from their keyboard as they type, "Does anyone have a thermometer here?" The debate will then renew.

Another topic that surfaces frequently concerns *insectos* and snakes, reviving the euthanasia versus preserving the species debate. For every blogger who saves and relocates a tarantula, there are those who prefer to hit and run. Chemical warfare is proposed as well as natural remedies.

Blogs resemble baseball games. By logging on, you take your place in the bleachers to either observe or to participate with boos or cheers for the players and the umpire. There may be joy in Mudville if the blog answers your question or supports your team. There can also be anguish – if like Casey, you strike out. Go ahead and log on. You were courageous enough to move to Costa Rica. Blog if you dare.

On Volunteering



by Charles McDermott

"Hi Charles, could I say... Thick skinned refers to a particular person who is insensitive and he or she can be criticized and this doesn't affect him or her at all."

I get text messages like this at random moments during my day. They are from the UTN (Universidad Técnica Nacional) students in my English conversation "class". Quotes around "class" because it's really a conversation club.

I volunteer once a week for an hour. In my fairly routine life around the expats in Atenas, I find I look forward to breaking away, taking a bus to Alajuela, and spending time with an entirely different demographic as a community service.

The classes are fascinating: the goal is to help the students get fluid in their conversation with native English speakers. As a result, there is little prep or structure. And the things I learn about Costa Rica, from people who have never been around foreigners before, are fresh and insightful. I enjoy my time so much, I've "extended" it by providing them with my cell phone number so they can text me homework questions.

I use English without giving it a second thought, so I get a kick when someone asks a question that makes me look at an idiom, word for word, and try to explain the logic to a Spanish speaker. Try explaining the

difference between "without a second thought" and "having second thoughts". Almost the same, right?

I've lived in many countries but I've never seen students so content with what little they have (most of the kids can't afford Internet at home) and yet so industrious about trying to improve their lot in life (explain that idiom...). And I am constantly amazed at how charitable they are towards each other. No cliques, no sneering at the failings of others. Really a great bunch. And, after almost two years of volunteering, I've seen about 4 "great bunches" pass through.

There's always a need for more English speakers, either in Atenas or especially, at the UTN HQ in Alajuela. The director of the English Department, Jose Soto, is motivated and always grateful for any help his students can receive from the foreign community. He gets that academics and real life are two different things.

If you'd like to join me in one of my sessions to see how fun and rewarding they are, drop me a line:

amserv@usa.net

How have you shared your talents lately?



See the amazing mass arrivals of sea turtles at Ostional Wildlife Refuge in Costa Rica

by Shannon Farley

If you've never seen it, the amazing phenomenon of massive arrivals of tens of thousands of sea turtles at one time coming ashore to lay their eggs on Costa Rica's beaches is one of the world's most spectacular nature events.



This time of year, from **July to December**, hundreds of thousands of **Olive Ridley sea turtles** swim to the remote beaches of the **Ostional National Wildlife Refuge** on the Nicoya Peninsula on Costa Rica's Pacific Coast. They arrive en masse, slowly hauling their heavy bodies out of the surf and up the sand to dig their nests and lay their eggs.

Founded in 1984, the **Ostional National Wildlife Refuge in Costa Rica** is the **second largest nesting site in the world** for **Olive Ridley sea turtles**, along with Leatherback and Pacific Green sea turtles.

<http://www.costarica-nationalparks.com/ostionalwildliferefuge.html>

Although sea turtles nest at Ostional all year long, July to December is the time for the mass arrivals. Called "*arribadas*" in Spanish (meaning "arrivals"), the non-stop stream of slow yet determined female turtles coming ashore to build their nests and carefully lay their eggs lasts a few days up to a week. There are usually several "*arribadas*" in the same season. The largest recorded so far in Ostional happened in November 1995, when close to 500,000 turtles came ashore.

Usually at the end of the moon cycle (new moon), the turtles start arriving on the high tide at night, using the high surf to propel them further up the sand and the protection of darkness against predators. Turtles use their large fins to move up the beach and dig their sand nests. Each will lay between 80 and 100 white soft-shell eggs, then cover the shallow nest and return to the ocean, leaving their offspring to their own fate.

Although more than 10 million eggs are laid during each season, only a fraction of these will hatch 60 days later; and even fewer hatchlings will make it to the ocean and survive – a reminder on how important it is to protect these endangered turtles. However, on the first day of an “arribada”, the Nosara community has permission to harvest turtle eggs for their own consumption because these eggs would get trampled anyways as thousands more turtles come ashore to nest. The rest of the time, the nests and eggs are protected by national park service guards and community volunteers.

You can visit Ostional National Wildlife Refuge and see this amazing sea turtle event when you stay at **L'acqua Viva Resort & Spa** (<http://www.lacquaviva.com/>) in Playa Guiones by Nosara. The hotel is located a short drive from Ostional, and arranges **naturalist guided tours** to see the turtles.





Tryin' to make it real VIII

“Remember the day you quit Fuzz?”

“Yeah, I remember...”

“How come you did that?”

“I dunno know; I just felt my lips move and heard myself say—I quit.”

Paul Furlong

A van pulled over for me and I dove in just as the side door was sliding back. It was like falling into a padded room, blue with whacky smoke and full with hippy chicks and guys up front driving. “Here, smoke this,” says a woman in the dark and, you know I did. We were on a straight through ride to somewhere east and I just settled in with my head on my pack, Ravi Shankar played low on the box as the wheels from the highway kept the same song and there was peace there in this cosmic box of family-to-go; people sleeping or quietly talking...and I drifted into reasons for not racing.

I suppose there *isn't* any reason to race unless you count *burning desire*. I just knew I'd race when I was a boy and waited thirteen whole years for school be over. A Mexican coin, a block of wood and a hammer notarized a bogus note from my mother to enter my first event at the "Twin Sisters"—four identical mountain peaks in a row—hair scramble in 1962 outside of Vacaville California. It didn't matter that I fell down a mountain, made mad repairs; missed a turn, run through a barnyard full of chickens and barking dogs and finally made one lap. I don't remember but I think I just quit from pure exhaustion.

After that I rode scrambles whenever I could, mostly down at Lodi where a lot of top riders cut their teeth. Anyway, racing was what I did—and who I was—even if it was a rough start and a little late. There were interruptions like a hitch in the navy, marriage, injuries and such. I rode my first professional race at Daytona in '67, rode fairground dirt track half miles and outlaw road race organizations in the US and Canada.

1971 was a high water mark in my career. A Senior in the US and Canada, I was a Junior with the American Motorcycle Association because of the way points were collected through different kinds of racing.

1972 would be the year, if I missed this chance to be picked up by a team; I was done. I'd built a squadron of paper airplanes out of foreclosure notices; I needed backing and a tuner with experience *now*.

My Kawasaki H1R road racer was fast, but terrifying to ride. Among other things over the winter, we moved the engine forward in the frame, cut more radical porting in the cylinders and installed a beautiful hand hammered aluminum quick fill fuel tank with a rubber check. Any shortfalls I assumed, I'd work through in the heat of racing. So we went to Daytona, Laura, Tim and I.

But the bike handled worse with the modifications we'd made. A typical lap had me running down the back straight in the neighborhood of 160 mph with the front feeling vague as the bike gently rocked the front wheel, a prelude to a speed wobble that can end with the bars slapping violently from side to side till the bitch pitches its rider over the bars.

*"Mama always told me not to look into the eyes of the sun...
But MAMA, that's where the fun is...!"* Manfred Mann

...then riding high into the banked third turn, suspension compressing from G forces; chin on the tank, double vision, my H1R still shaking her head; aim down the bank to cut the fourth turn as tight as possible to keep from hitting the wall coming out. About this time wind pressed underneath the bike and felt like it might flip over backwards—finally we'd continue our Watusi shake past the start-finish line—all this with the throttle pinned in high gear, then dive down into the infield course for the relative sanity of “just racing.”

Meanwhile during the week of practice my engine happily ate pistons right up to the start of the race when I'd finished a major rebuild and barely made the grid. I'd qualified well enough, Kevin Camron was in my pit for refueling and if my bike would last and I stayed on it—I'd win my class and a ride on a team as an expert next year—everything depended on this race.

Timmy bumped me off and my twitchy H1R added to the smoke on the grid. I waited for the start, sweating in my leathers, blipping the engine as mechanics cleared from the grid. Engine smoke rose into the bright Florida sun. I controlled my breathing to keep my shield from fogging. Countdown reached 1 minute, then turned sideways to show 30 seconds remaining, we put our bikes in gear and the sound of our engines rose like angry elephants on speed; every throttle is fully open just before Al Wilcox drops the flag and a cloud of blue smoke rises from thirty odd riders and we're off, slipping our clutches madly. I got a good start as the first lap went directly onto the back straight to spread us out. I began to move up, picking off riders as I went.

My bike was barely under control on the oval and I almost lost it on the second lap from the mixed drafts of other bikes. I wondered how I'd ever last a hundred miles.

The problem solved itself on the sixth lap when the chain came apart on the back straight. Consumed in the moment; I pushed the bike backwards, (hum... where would the parts be if I was accelerating through 150 mph?) until I found three of the four pieces of the master link and put it together to make it to the pits.

Kevin did what he could but the damage was done—caused by a loose wheel nut— and sent me out, but the chain came off again while coming off the fourth turn of the oval. This time I pushed my broken motorcycle back to the pits in despair—there was no tonic, no check I could

write or promise I could make...no matter how I arranged the bones, they always told the same story; I was done—but fear or pride wouldn't let me *know* it.

>>>>>>>><<<<<<<<<

Then came Road Atlanta, a new track for me, the next national on the AMA calendar. After smacking the hay bales during practice, Tim and I worked furiously to get the bike ready for the race but I started with a sticky throttle and rode until it was obvious that I wasn't racing anymore and pulled in. This was the confirmation I needed to be sure of what I already knew after Daytona—I was done.

Sand castles have no foundations, dreamers only dream, but racing motorcycles are kinetic works of art that require the prescience of an artist who understands how they work. I'd turned the bike over to Timmy and took up residence in a torrid affair with Laura—what happened to me—I had it comin'.

The anger I'd kept submerged since Daytona had finally found me. Not at Timmy, who just didn't know how to tighten a motorcycle wheel, no; it was me who evaded the responsibility of building and maintaining my ride.

"I quit," sounded to me like a mumbled whisper; but with a finality that I recognized as truth; I was done racing, done with a childhood dream.

"What?" Asked Tim

"I quit, I'm done racing," lamely motioning towards the bike, tools, van and the activity around me. Suddenly I needed to hide from the people I raced with; I was in the presence of men who wouldn't understand. I didn't trust myself to talk to Tim, and began to pack up. We loaded the bike and quietly drove north, away from the scene of the crime.

>>>>>>>><<<<<<<<<

"Pssst...." a sound came from the woods from a man beckoning in the shadows. It was black out except for random splinters of light from passing traffic. My ride van family had

dropped me off at the beginning of the Pennsylvania Turnpike; I was close now—and began walking to the entrance.

“Hey! Over here!” I saw this wild looking dude with long stringy hair and wondered if I should just walk into the light and stick out my thumb.

“Waddia need?” I yelled back. By this time I’m closing on him and doing my best to see.

“I’m lonely... just wanna talk,” he said. I could see he was young and empty handed and walked a little closer. I decided to trust him enough to hear his story. He showed me a path that led into the woods and as my eyes became accustomed to the darkness, I saw from the loose way he ambled along that he wasn’t a threat. Torn between curiosity, making it home by morning and a genuine desire to help this man, I hesitated; prepared to blow it off or follow him to whatever was in those woods.

“Yea’ see, I got this camp and even with a fire, cops can’t see it from the road. There’s chickens yonder at this farm. I checked it out; no one’s going to chase us. I could get us one for supper,” he looked at me expectantly, like a nod from me and we’d be stealing chickens together.

“Nah, I’m almost home man, been on the road a year and I don’t want to eat now anyway,” I said in a rational tone. I’d been in these kinds of deals before where anything could happen and I knew how easy it is for me to get sucked in, like past some uncertain point where I would cease to be an observer and become a player.

He was gathering wood and putting a fire together as we talked. I found a log and rested myself on it and rolled a cigarette.

“Wanna smoke a joint?”

“Sure, why not,” I said; anything to put some sanity into the conversation. He removed his baseball cap and pulled a mostly whole joint from his hatband. I reached over and took a stick from the fire and offered it. As he drew in the smoke, the flame mirrored a wavering orange light that colored his face like a jack-o-lantern. I noticed too, that he didn’t have a beard.

“Hi, my name is Paul,” I said.

“Billy Lee,” he said passing the joint, “pleased to meet you,” he said squeezing out the words while holding the hit.

“How long you been on the road Billy?”

“Five...no, six years.” Billy played with the fire and sat across on a battered aluminum chair that had found its way to the woods. I pictured it going for \$19.95 at Sears in its heyday.

“How old are you, if you don’t mind my question?”

“Be twenty in a couple months I guess, no, I don’t mind; don’t get to talk to people much.” Billy had a far off look as the fire played with his features. “Me and Cheryl Jean run away back then and just started hitchin’.”

I listened to his story and questioned my need to leave in such a hurry. I imagined thin wispy hair framing clear translucent skin with light gray eyes...oh, the vows they must have taken at their campfires, eating chicken and deciding where they’d go to next, just the two of them and the road. I expected him to say she was with her folks visiting...

Billy lowered his voice and kept on, “I guess it’s been four years now since she’s gone. “We’d been all over the country together, pretty much every state...” I let him roll with it.

“One day we got a ride goin’ out to the coast, a gal driving with her boyfriend. They was nice people and offered us sandwiches and such...you know, looked like we’d got a good ride till a truck come across the road and hit us.”

I’d been looking at his face as he spoke but dropped my head to the fire and sat there watching the flames. I lit the roach, took a hit and passed it to Billy, who’d stopped talking but he was still there, at the wreck, and would be unless he could break free of it.

“An’ you been on the road alone since?”

“Yeah, pretty much, just doin’ it same as before,” Billy said, and a quietness settled in where no words would fit. We passed the roach till I got the last nose hit; and we watched the fire till you could hear every rustle of the trees and every crackle of the fire. Finally I stood and shouldered my pack, it was time.

“I’m headed home Billy, you might think about doin’ the same—or just stop someplace where it feels good and settle in if you can. Ain’t no right answers, you know that...”

“Yeah, I know Paul, thanks for stoppin’,” he said as he reached for my hand. I took it, pulled him to me in a hug and headed down the trail to the highway. Pretty soon the light from the fire became invisible—sort of like my reasons for quitting.

end

Fuzzlong@gmail.com

For those of you who’ve been following this series, this is the last piece. However when the book is stitched together, there’ll be new material...just has to be. Paul

Friends who followed my progress in *Atenas Today*, thank you from the bottom of my heart for letting me grow right in front of you. I realize I haven't stuck to the *Atenas Today* format of keeping to articles (mostly) about our little town but from my perspective, it's been fun.

I'm busy with new projects and now that this eight piece story is over, I believe I'll just try to step back and write a story now and then; perhaps of more interest to a greater number of you.

Also a big hand to Marietta for her patience and friendship over the last five years, she only censored me once, what a great editor! Paul Furlong



Shine! You Are Also Light

By Konrad Esquivel

“He is just a little boy. Let’s bring him with us,” said the mother.

“He is nine and well equipped to understand his strength,” said his dad.

His name? Dan, and he is just a normal boy in the eyes of those close to him... to all, except his parents. They know better. Like most parents should. They refuse to see in him, but the best of him.

Dan was having nightmares, and his troubled heart and tortured mind were big issues for him.

Dad got in Dan’s bed, not just to comfort him, but to share a true story. He said:

“Dan, there once was a teacher. He taught us simple principles that became powerful tools in life. One day we were walking down the field where we were to fix a fence. As we walked, I asked him how we can overcome fear. The teacher stopped in his tracks and said to me,

‘Juan, this is a huge subject and with many angles as there are people, but you know me, I like simplicity and I hope my answer can give you some good perspective. And it’s okay if it doesn’t; you can always find answers by other means of inquiry.

‘Look around Juan, what is the color of light?’

I said, “white.”

‘Juan, do you see white between you and me?’

“No,” I said less confidently. “I guess we can say that it is transparent.

“But what he said after that really changed my mind.”

‘Well, that is what it appears to us,’ he said. ‘How do you know it is there? What gives you the certainty that it is there?’

“I can see clearly,” I said.

‘Right Juan! When light appears, clarity shows up.

‘We might not know what spiritual light is exactly, but when it is present, clarity shows up. Peace enters in, not because conditions change outside, but because Clarity and Presence is what you really are.’

“Son, we are light and we can shine, as natural and simply as much as we can feel, just as much as we can fear. But when we shine, Clarity is present and then fear dwindles or disappears completely.

“We are all perfectly equipped to shine, because that is what we are inside. If you keep a clean heart, then it is easier to be transparent.

“I understand that you and your friends have been watching horror movies and playing games based on scary pictures and sounds. If you want to go through that experience, you may also know that the experience comes with seeds that, in your case, grow into nightmares. In other kids, their experience may grow into other things. But in you, you have nightmares.

“Your heart is not clear and your mind is muddy with images that take your peace away. Come, let’s do it right now, let’s shine, you know what I’m talking about.” The child stayed quiet and started centering and sobering his spirit until it was still and quiet. His smile showed the softness of peace.

“You see how real it is?”

‘Thanks dad,’ said the boy. ‘You always teach me amazing things.’

“Nobody can take that away from you, this is what you are inside.

“You may be in fear, but you are not fear. You are light. You may be full of worry, but that is not who you are. You may have doubts, but that is not who you are. Those things come and go, but not light. Light is not a possession. It is what you are made of inside.

“Adults can cope with fears and worries. We are also clouded in our minds by worry, and our hearts grow heavy with fear. But if we learn how to use our natural gift of Presence, then it all becomes easier to cope, and we are strengthened and empowered to keep on going with life.”

Days later a friend came to visit and the conversation was geared towards inner peace and freedom from fear. Dan was passing by and his dad called over.

“Can I ask a favor from you, we are just talking about inner peace and I would like if you can show us how to shine.” Dan immediately said, ‘I don’t know how to teach her that’. “Dan you are right. It is not your responsibility. All we want is to see you shine. You can be in charge of your light, but not in charge of other people’s light. So, just do your thing.”

Dan closed his eyes and started to soften out and entering into peace so quick and so deep that it was evident that there was a change in the room’s atmosphere. It didn’t take long and Dad told his friend. “Do you see how simple it is? We are all equipped to shine easily and right away.” Turning to Dan, he said, “Dan, do you realize that you didn’t have to think how to do it or you didn’t have to give any command, first you started shining and then thoughts came to you. Shining is a way of detaching from life’s issues.”

‘You are right Dad. That is so cool,’ and off he went to his games.

Let us be like children, let us be the light of the world.

Be present and shine. Give us your best light!

Here and There



by Carole Connolly
caroleconnolly@gmail.com

Living in Atenas, Costa Rica, I got used to certain things – like seeing little downy feathers stuck to the shells of my multi-sized and various colored eggs. I got used to having to smash the shell pretty hard against the edge of the metal bowl to crack it open. I became accustomed to picking out the little red dots that floated in the whites. After a while, I didn't even bother. What's the big deal? I'm sure I've eaten worse and not known it.

After moving back to California a couple of weeks ago, I bought staples at the fancy market in Running Springs - milk, bread, butter, eggs, corn-on-the-cob, and a package of Pinwheels. What's a Pinwheel? It's a chocolate cookie with a layer of marshmallow, dipped in milk chocolate, shaped like a mini ...well, pinwheel. Oh, and lemons. Yellow lemons.

From Atenas, I miss the *limones* with their green skins and orange-colored flesh that exude delicious juice; but, still, from here in the U.S., they are not lemons. We adapt. The best part? If I needed a wedge of "lemon" for my morning tea, I just trudged up the path and plucked a few from the tree above my casita. There was never a shortage and never a price tag. They just grew there.

Today, I walked to the General Store in Green Valley Lake where I am staying temporarily. I had seen a few lemons in the produce case a couple of days prior. The sign said "Open," but the door was locked. As I started to leave, the owner came to the door, greeted me pleasantly and invited me inside. I smiled and said, "Sorry, it's not a big purchase."

He was unfazed, "That's okay. None of them are (large purchases), but it all adds up." I went directly to the cold case and stopped short. No lemons. No limes. The store-keeper saw me standing there, frozen.

"What's wrong?" he asked.

“I was looking for a lemon. Or a lime.”

“Oh. Sorry. We ran out. We’ll have some on Wednesday or Thursday (today is Monday).

“Oh, okay, thanks. See you then,” as I envisioned the heap of lemons I had seen in Running Springs the previous day.



The day the van broke down and had to be towed to the shop. I should have bought lemons. There are no lemon trees in the yard; lots of pine trees, but no lemons. That plastic lime at which I wrinkled my nose the previous day is looking better. And I must learn to be gentler with the thin-shelled eggs. The first one I grabbed out of its Styrofoam container crumpled between my fingers when I tried to pick it up. I barely touched it – I mean, really. What kind of hen produced this egg? I probably don’t want to know.



I am amazed at the cheap prices of some of the common items that are rare and expensive at the local Atenas markets, such as a liter of Coca Cola; \$3.00 at CoopeAtenas, \$.79 at Safeway in California. Considering the cost of importing these “gringo” items, the high price in Costa Rica is understandable. Everything is a trade-off.

Oh, and the driving? I drove to the store on smoothly paved roads with clearly marked lanes and not a pothole to be found. I was driving slowly in the big ole van, and moved into the right lane to let the faster cars pass me. I changed lanes cautiously looking carefully for vehicles passing on the right. For some reason, many Costa Rican drivers use the left lane as the slow lane and the

right as the passing lane. Motorcycles use any lane they want or just weave in and out of cars without regard to lanes.

I remember a few years ago, I was driving on a newly paved road in Santa Cruz, California with a thirty mile per hour speed limit. When I got pulled over for speeding, I explained to the cop, “Sorry. I’m used to driving in Costa Rica. These roads are too smooth, and I didn’t realize I was going fast.”

“Lady, I thought I heard them all. Never heard that one before. Here’s your ticket. You can go to traffic school, so your insurance doesn’t go up. Have a nice day!”

On my next trip to Costa Rica, I got two tickets in less than five minutes. The first one was for passing a slow hay truck on a curve. When I got waved over by the Transit Police, I protested, “But, everybody else passed him, too! He was barely moving!”

He smiled and said, “You passed on a double yellow line. That’s dangerous.”

I looked at the newly paved road and protested. I said, “But there aren’t any lines on the road.”

“They just finished paving. They haven’t had a chance to paint them yet. Here’s your ticket. You can pay at the bank!”

What? No traffic school?

Ah, but that was there. And now I am here!



I will enjoy the best of both worlds. If you are *there*, embrace all the good and remember where you are. I will do the same *here*. Pura Vida!

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.



"The Hollywood Boyero"

25" x 28"

Oil on Canvas

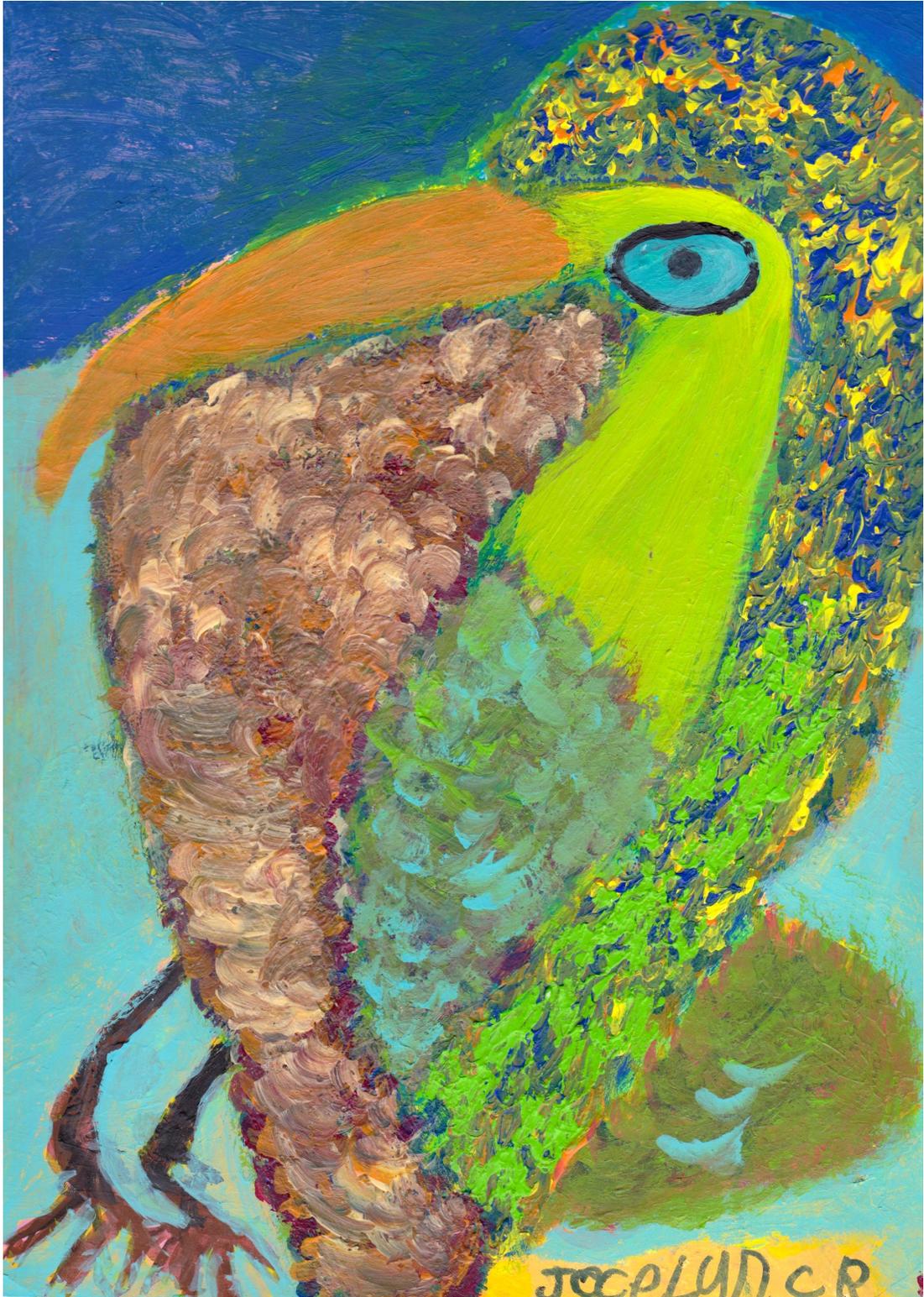
Artist's Statement: This exhibitor struck an enthusiastic pose. He is clearly quite proud of his team and the sun glasses were just right for the gesture.

Al Alexander
jeanandal@gmail.com



Still Life
15 in x 15 in
Oil on Canvas

Harriet Sheppard
hweyman@gmail.com



Panama Bird

Jocelyn Farquhar

Jocelyn@squibblesdesigns.com



"Pork and Beans"
32"x 32"
acrylic on gallery wrapped canvas

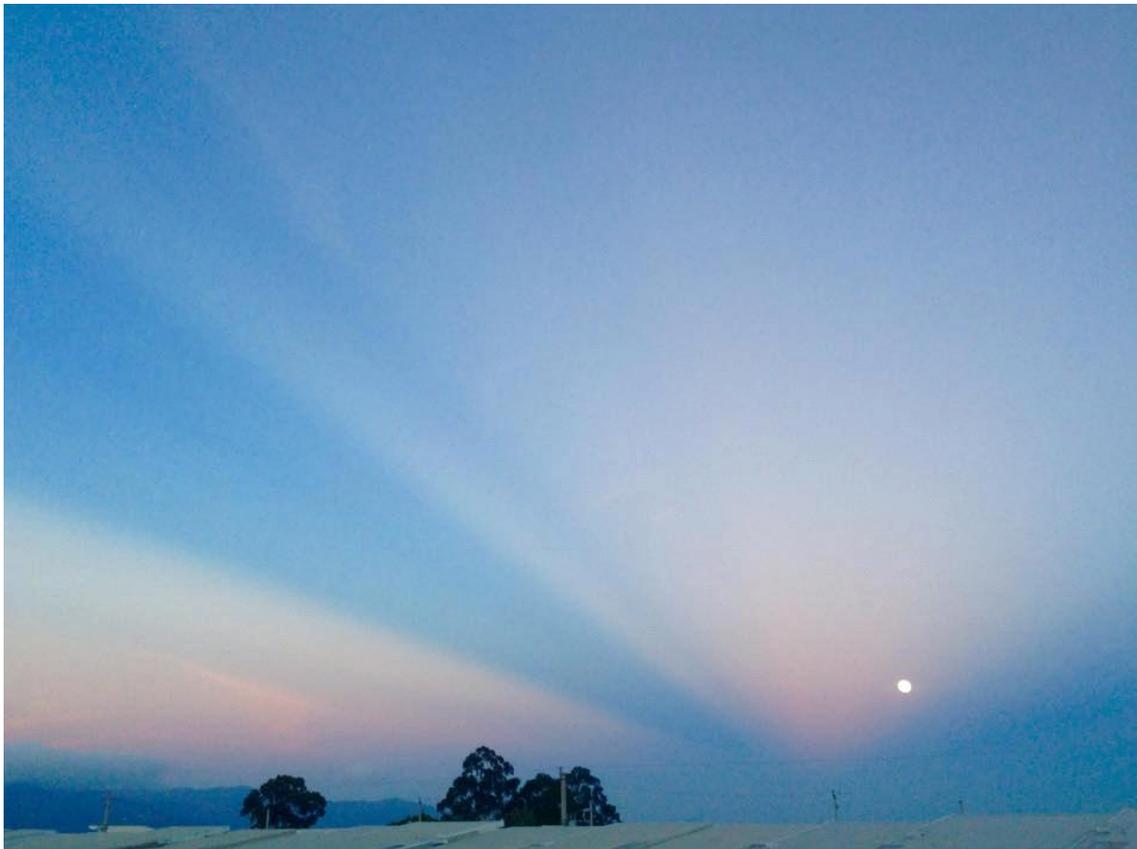
Artist's Statement: ...coffee beans, that is, the red cherries!

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



Tom Duffy

**Moon Over Atenas
June 30, 2015
tom@duffyportraits.com**



**Full Moon Over San Pablo, Heredia
Early morning June 16, 2015
Photograph: Maria Laura Charles**

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.**

Biolley Buzz	bcrcoffee.com
Bunky Bartlett	http://www.bestofcostarica.org
Carole Connolly	http://carolejeanscostaricacapers.com
Claudia Leon	http://photoleraclaudinha.smugmug.com/
Charlie Doggett	http://straightline-cmkl.blogspot.com/
	http://costaricadecisionprocess.blogspot.com/
De La Pura Vida Costa Rica	delapuravida.com
Dennis Easters/Pure Life Development	http://www.atenasrealestate.cr/index.php/blog
Diane Miskell	http://dianascostaricablog.blogspot.com
Fred Ball	http://natureboy70.blogspot.com/
Going Like Sixty	http://goinglikesixty.com
Julie and Rick in Costa Rica	http://julieandrickincostarica.blogspot.com/
Marietta Arce	http://marisundays.wordpress.com
Mi Chunche	michunche.com
Nadine Hays Pisani	happierthanabillionaire.com
New Life in Costa Rica	http://www.anewlifeincostarica.com/nuevo_vida/
Paul Furlong motorcycle blog	http://eyeneo.com/
Pura Vida Mommy	puravidamommy.blogspot.com
Rubiatica	rubiatica.blogspot.com
Shannon Farley	http://enchanting-costarica.com/
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Su Espacio	http://www.suespacioatenas.blogspot.com/
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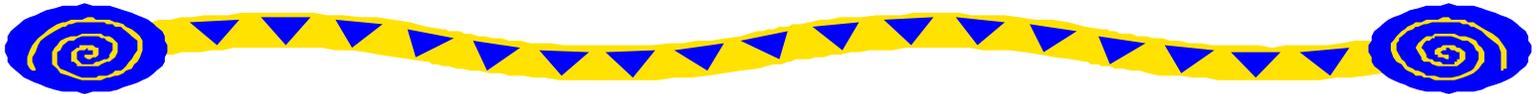


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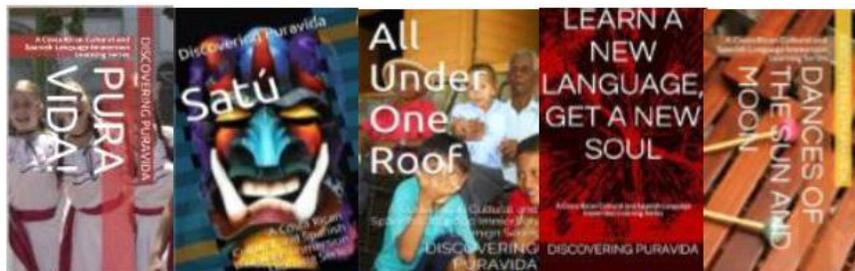
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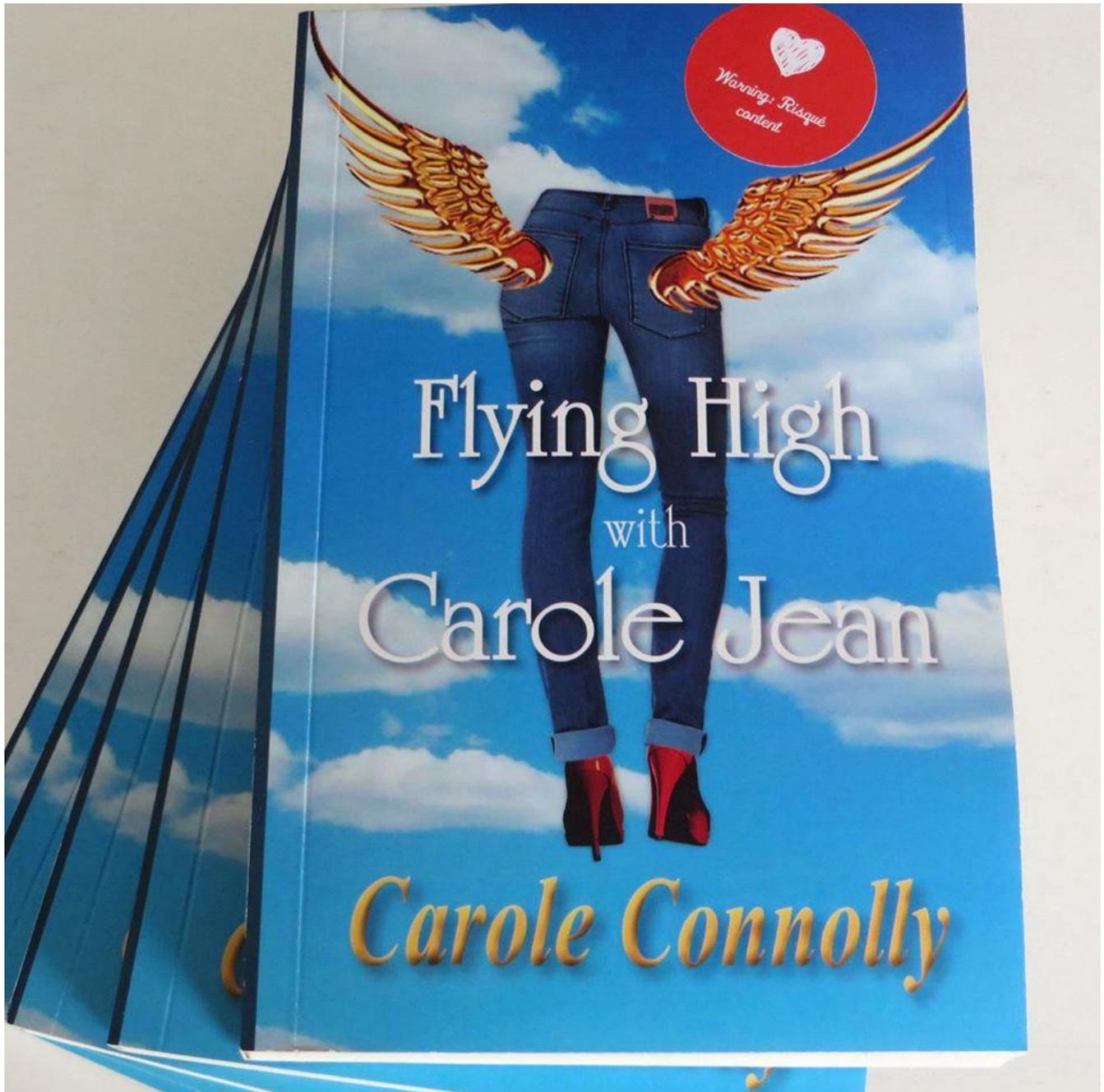
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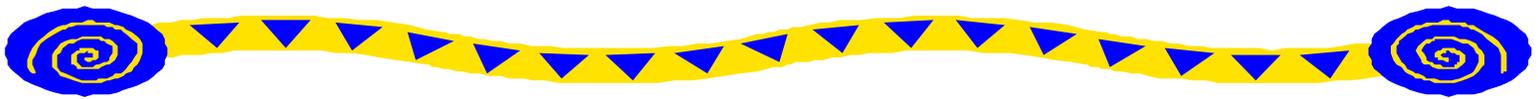
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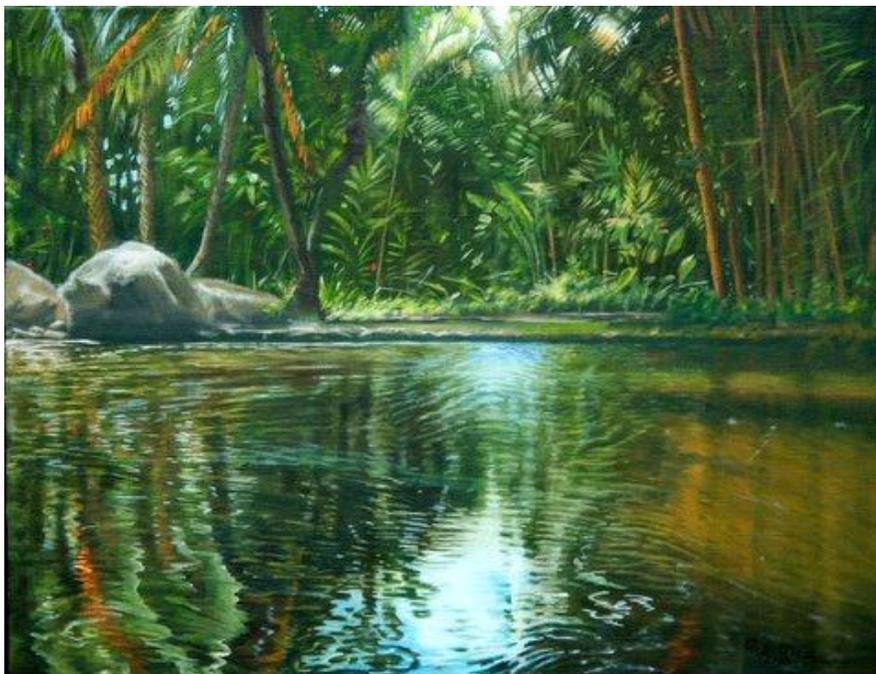
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