

## 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.

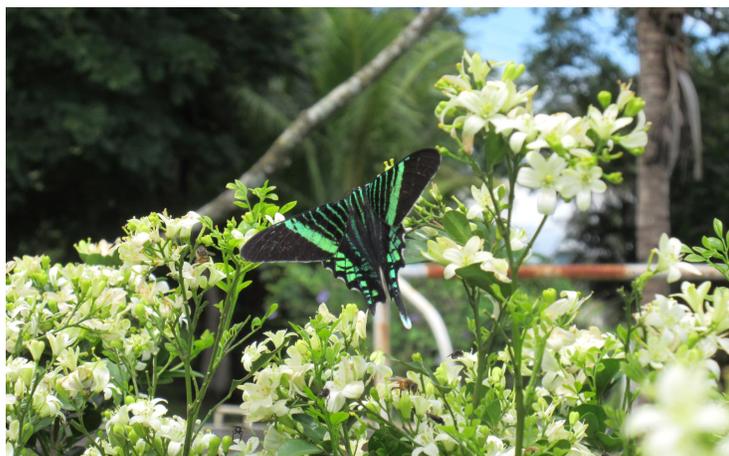
When in “Full Screen” view, left click to advance to the next page, or right click to go back a page.

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



June's Ur uca (*Murraya paniculata*) flowers and friend  
Photograph by Scott Schlieman

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

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

## Publisher's Note



It's raining, gloomy and chilly this morning. Instead of going to the pool, I have decided to do another favorite thing: compose my monthly greeting to all of you while I contemplate my surroundings and stretch my body.

We have been busy with visitors as I know many of you have. The end-of-school-year events are going on all around us and it seems that new arrivals, whether vacationers or new residents, are in evidence on our local streets and in the shops. National Games will take place in July and Atenas will be represented in several disciplines by our youth, notably male and female volleyball!

The lush green landscape I so eagerly anticipated is finally here and although our lawn could use some sprucing up, I am happy for the change. Large flocks of red-crowned parrots gather each morning and evening and loudly announce their satisfaction with the tropical seeds, fruits and flowers our property provides for them.

I look around me and marvel at how tall the trees on our land have grown in the last decade. It is somewhat sobering to accept the passing of time but it does serve to make me appreciate my

days and motivates me to live them fully.

One of our dogs (Winnie) has recently celebrated her 17<sup>th</sup> birthday! She has been our companion since she was six months old and we rescued her from her living situation. As I write these words, she is sleeping on the floor nearby. My husband says she likes my office because she can still "feel" the energy from all the years we spent together in this very room, then a classroom.

Our children are grown-up and I suppose Winnie is confused about the changes in our household. She never knows when they are coming home but when they do, she is aware of their every move!

Some of you have gone back temporarily to your summer places. Several families with young children are taking advantage of these months to relocate elsewhere in the States permanently. Some of us have the incredible fortune of being able to travel back and forth.

Whatever your situation is, enjoy it and make the most of it. For however long you lived here, I hope you have gathered wonderful memories of what it is to be part of 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](mailto:atenastoday@gmail.com) by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month.

July 1<sup>st</sup> – Official Canada Day

July 2<sup>nd</sup> – Canada Day celebrations at Balneario El Cerro in Atenas to benefit Animales Atenas, see information/flyer included in this issue's the Dog and Cat article

July 3<sup>rd</sup> – U.S. Celebrates Independence, activity being held at La Cervecería, Heredia (see attached flyer)

July 4<sup>th</sup> - Official U.S. Independence Day

July 2<sup>nd</sup> – July 16<sup>th</sup> – C.R. National Games will take place in San Jose, Desamparados, and Cartago

July 4<sup>th</sup> – July 15<sup>th</sup> - Costa Rican school children enjoy mid-term vacation

July 6<sup>th</sup> – Central Valley Garden Club meets. Please see flyer in this section for details.

July 10<sup>th</sup> – Spay/neuter clinic in Los Angeles, please see notice in Dog and Cat article

## REGULARLY SCHEDULED ACTIVITIES

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

Please note the following schedule change: NO discussion on June 26<sup>th</sup>, July 3<sup>rd</sup>, July 10<sup>th</sup> or July 17<sup>th</sup>. The next meeting will be on July 24<sup>th</sup> during which discussion will center on Chapter 5 of the current book, "The Book" by Alan Watts.

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

First Wednesday of each month – Recycling near CoopetransAtenas Bus Depot

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

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

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



## Buddhist Book Discussion

\*\*\*\*\*'

Every Sunday **schedule change on previous page**  
Meditation (optional) 1:30pm  
Book Discussion 2:00pm  
218 Roca Verde, Atenas

A gathering for those interested  
in Buddhism and Buddhist writings  
**ALL ARE WELCOME !**

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

Adrienne and Richard Baksa  
2446-8509  
adriennebaksa@me.com  
rbaksa@me.com

\*\*\*\*\*



**ATENAS NEW COMMUNITY** (associated with the Tico church, Iglesia Bíblica de Atenas)  
[facebook.com/groups/145046998883605](https://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:** Tuesdays - 6pm - Bible study in English. Wednesdays - 6pm - English worship First Sunday of each month - An English translator is provided for the 9:00am Spanish worship services. (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](mailto:judy@proslink.com)

**DIRECTIONS:** On Highway 3 at the blinking light

## DIA DE CANADA / FIESTA DEL 4 DE JULIO



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**2 de Julio del 2016 – de 11:00 a 4:00**

**A Beneficio De La Castracion de Animales en  
Costa Rica**

**Balneario el Cerro**

**Comida, Cerveza y Vino**

**BINGO**

**NATACION**

**VIVE LA MUSICA**

**Precio de la entrada 2,000 colones –  
ninos menores de 10 entran gratis**



VIVE MUSICA CON: \*CALVIN BAILEY\* \*THE GLORIOUS BASTARDS\* \* THE SUGARLAND BRASS CO.\*

## CANADA DAY / 4TH OF JULY PARTY



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**July 2nd, 2016 – 11:00 to 4:00**

**Benefiting Animal Castration in  
Costa Rica**

**Balneario el Cerro**

**Food, Beer & Wine**

**BINGO**

**SWIMMING**

**LIVE MUSIC**

**Entrance fee 2,000 colones – kids under  
10 admitted free**



LIVE MUSIC BY:\*CALVIN BAILEY\* \*THE GLORIOUS BASTARDS\* \* THE SUGARLAND BRASS CO.\*

Balneario El Cerro is located in Atenas!

# Independence Day Picnic



The American Colony Committee

Invites All U.S. citizens & their immediate families.

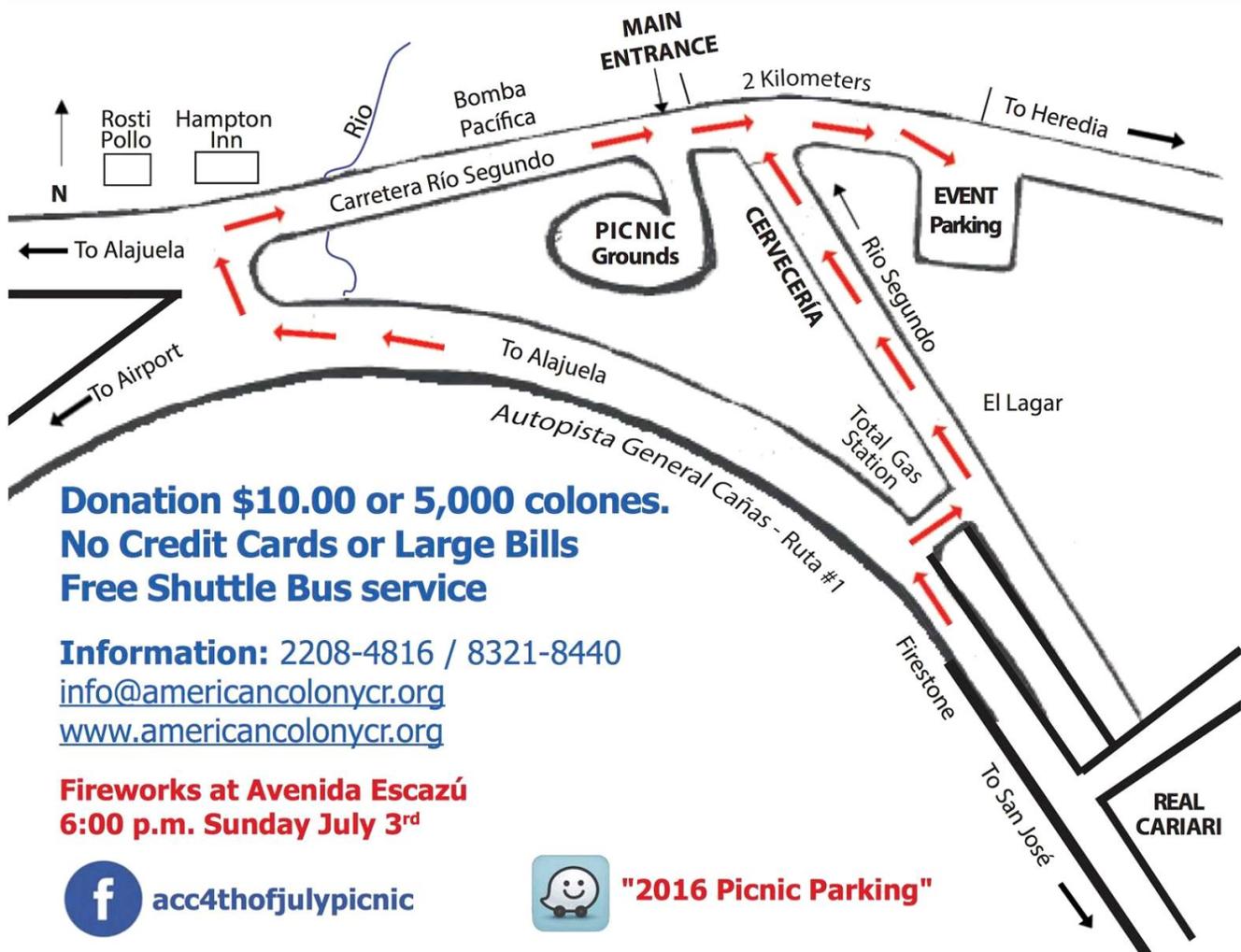
Each US citizen may bring ONE Tico friend.

Proof of U.S. & Tico citizenship Required

**Sunday, July 3rd, 2016**

**9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Cervecería Costa Rica**

**NEW EVENT ENTRANCE and NEW PUBLIC PARKING LOT...Both off the Rio Segundo road**



**Donation \$10.00 or 5,000 colones.  
No Credit Cards or Large Bills  
Free Shuttle Bus service**

**Information:** 2208-4816 / 8321-8440

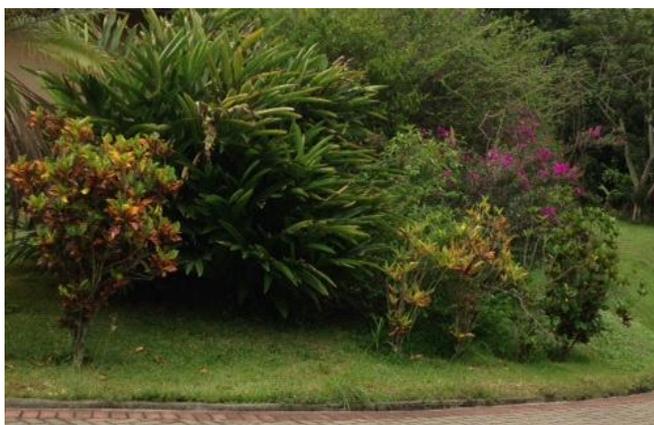
[info@americancolonycr.org](mailto:info@americancolonycr.org)

[www.americancolonycr.org](http://www.americancolonycr.org)

**Fireworks at Avenida Escazú  
6:00 p.m. Sunday July 3<sup>rd</sup>**



**"2016 Picnic Parking"**



The next meeting of the **Central Valley Garden Club** will be held on Wednesday, July 6th. We will be touring the Else Kientzler Botanical Gardens in Sarchi. Please plan to arrive by 8:30am so you can pay and get checked in. The cost per person will be 5,000 colones. The guided tour begins at 9am.

The tour will cover the history and development of the gardens, information on the plants they have there and the maintenance of the gardens. They have plants for sale. They do not have a cafe, but they do have picnic areas and people are welcome to bring a lunch to eat there.



There is a lot of construction on the road to Sarchi. Closer to the meeting date, along with directions, we will do our best to send out what we know about the status of the road. If anyone on this list lives near Sarchi and has that information, please contact us so we can get an update.

Please RSVP by replying to this email or by sending an email to [centralvalleygardenclub@gmail.com](mailto:centralvalleygardenclub@gmail.com) if you plan to attend so we can give them a final number as that will enable them to have sufficient guides.

Thanks,  
Debra, Rayene, Bina & MaeS

## Friendship Library\* News June, 2016



**Photograph: Eyleen Vargas** *La Nación*

I think it is safe to say there is something for everyone this month. New fiction, nonfiction, books in German, book in French, books in Spanish, books for kids, and a ton of DVDs.

Last week, the phone rang and a moment later I heard Bruce say "I'll be there in five minutes". Someone who was preparing to return to the states had arrived at La Carreta with a car full of books. A man was bringing them in by the suitcase full. Those books were soon filling tables, chairs and a swing at our house as I sorted them out. I ended up with a tall stack of novels, another big stack of nonfiction titles and a huge assortment of books and DVDs for kids. I'll start getting a few at a time to the "new arrivals" cart after June 26th.

Earlier this week, we took a large collection of books in German to the library. Someone had donated a lot of novels of recent vintage. Those books are now worked into the existing German collection on newly-cleaned shelves.

Here is a sample of the new arrivals in English:

### Fiction

The Burning Room, by Michael Connelly. This crime fiction novel is part of the "Bosch" series. It takes place in the LAPD's Open-Unsolved Unit and involves a person who dies ten years after being fatally shot. Clues, of course, are hard to come by after so long.

Water for Elephants, by Sara Gruen. This title is not new and the book is not in perfect condition, but it continues to land on the "must read" lists. It takes the reader into the world of a 1930's traveling circus.

One Hundred Years of Solitude, by Gabriel García Márquez. The author has been awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature. One reviewer noted that it should be required reading for the entire human race. Set in Latin America, this is the epic history of a mythical town told through the history of one family.

The Lavender Garden, by Lucinda Riley. Fans of historical fiction will love getting lost in this story of intrigue set in France during WWII.

The Racketeer, by John Grisham. I thought I had read every Grisham novel, but this is new to me. Grisham fans will not be disappointed.

A Turn for the Bad, by Sheila Connolly. Here is a treat for fans of crime fiction that lets the reader spend a few hours immersed in the culture and ambience of a small, coastal Irish town.

Before I Go to Sleep, by S. J. Watson. Looking to escape into a well-told psychological thriller? Try this. It is the story of a woman who awakens everyday to an unfamiliar world because she cannot store memories. Everyday, she awakens beside a man who tells her he is her husband and she had a terrible accident that took her memory. As the story unfolds, she begins to piece together a past.

This month's donations of nonfiction titles runs the gamut from 500 Spanish Verbs through journeys into the supernatural, to a biography of Ghandi. Take some time to peruse the nonfiction shelves and check out the selection. Two titles in particular caught my attention:

A Course in Miracles Made Easy (NF 1) by Alan Cohen. The original Course in Miracles, described as "the self-study spiritual-thought system that teaches the way to love and forgiveness" has millions of fans. This "made easy" version is intended to make the system more approachable, easier to understand.

The History of Costa Rica (NF 9) by Iván Molina and Steven Palmer. This an imprint of the University of Costa Rica, written by respected historians.

And finally, just a gentle reminder to return those books when you are finished reading them so others can enjoy them also.

Happy Reading.

-Linda Ledbetter, librarian

\*Located in Restaurante La Carreta, 50 mts. east of the church, Atenas Central

# DOG OF THE MONTH



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

## GINGER



Ginger is a tranquil, sweet tempered lady of about four years. She is good with cats! Most of all she needs a family to love and care for her. She has been neutered and recovering from a bite. Ginger is a pretty girl and has the features of a collie. She will reward you with love and guard your property.

# CANADA DAY / 4TH OF JULY PARTY



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**July 2nd, 2016 – 11:00 to 4:00**  
**Benefiting Animal Castration in**  
**Costa Rica**



**Balneario el Cerro**

**Food, Beer & Wine**

**BINGO**                      **SWIMMING**  
**LIVE MUSIC**

**Entrance fee 2,000 colones – kids under**  
**10 admitted free**

## NEEDED VOLUNTEERS JULY 2

Join Animales Atenas for a fiesta July 2. It will be held at the Balneario de Cerro in Atenas from 11am until 4pm.

There will be live music, beer, wine liquor, swimming, bingo, a dog parade, local food vendors as well as artisans. In addition a raffle prize worth over C200,000 will be awarded at 3:30pm.

Volunteers are needed to work the bar, sell tickets at the gate, direct parking, help with the dog show and walking the dogs.

Volunteers for any amount of time or if you know someone who would like to assist email  
[cathyeeldred@gmail.com](mailto:cathyeeldred@gmail.com)

# SPAY/NEUTER CLINIC IN LOS ANGELES SATURDAY JULY 10

CALL FOR AN APPOINTMENT

Dora 8855-9822 [/doritrebole@yahoo.com](mailto:doritrebole@yahoo.com)

Sylvia [8868-1386/AnimalesAtenasCR@AOL.com](mailto:8868-1386/AnimalesAtenasCR@AOL.com)

The kindergarden school will open at 7am.

## *ANIMALES ATENAS PROGRAM*

Stop by the vacant lot next to Pali Grocery on Friday mornings to see the animals and good quality used clothing and household items. Donated items are needed and can be left at Kay's or at our Friday mornings location.

Sylvia Spix, Myrna Kastner

### SPECIAL NEED- FOSTERING

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

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

Animales Atenas does not have a shelter for abandoned animals.

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

## The Telenovela: A Guilty Pleasure



By Mary Martin Mason  
*marymason1946@gmail.com*

Years ago, under the pretext of learning Spanish, I started watching a telenovela on Univision in the United States. In those days, long before I envisioned myself living in a Spanish-speaking country, I struggled to eke out the storyline from exaggerated body language, typing in the Spanish subtitles as fast I could, using Google Translate. Later, I would discover the blog, Caray Caray, that recapped episodes in English so I could verify what had happened. The blog was proof that all over the world were others like me, viewers that were hooked on the guilty pleasure of watching telenovelas.

I soon recognized that these were more than a Latin version of the American soap opera. For one thing, the telenovela is time-limited to six months, at most a year, if popular enough to extend the series. The *protagonista* that suffers until the final moments of a series will soon appear in another telenovela, this time as the villainous *antagonista*. Telenovelas from Argentina, Colombia, and especially from Mexico are updated, revamped, and adapted by different directors and producers.

The United States has tried to capitalize on the popularity of telenovelas with *Ugly Betty* (based on a 2006 telenovela, *La Fea Más Bella*), *Jane the Virgin*, and a new series with Eva Longoria called *Telenovela*. Interestingly, these are all comedies, and while there are telenovelas that are comedic, the real enchilada of telenovelas is a hand-wringing drama that keeps millions and millions of fans at their television set daily across Central and South America.

The dramatic element central to every telenovela is an extended family living under one roof with the generations engaging in incredible conflict. Imagine generations of your family cohabiting for years and years. Usually the conflict ensues because either the father or mother (or sometimes a grandparent) is the meanest of the mean and is determined to ruin any happiness for their son or daughter who inevitably is in love with someone of whom they don't approve. It's Romeo and Juliet on a grand opera scale against a backdrop of incredible family wealth such as a ranch that raises prize bulls for bullfighting, a popular mariachi club in Mexico City, a winery, or a goldmine. Also living under the same roof – or perhaps in adobe shacks out back, are a staff of cooks, maids, stablemen with their own conflicts and foibles. It's *Upstairs, Downstairs* or *Downton Abbey* conflicts of class with stock characters whose lives represent class differences played out dramatically.

Typically there are several love stories running simultaneously, each couple having their own theme song that an orchestra blares whenever the two are shown on screen, sometimes to the point of drowning out the dialogue. Pay attention because these songs are often on the Top 10 Play List that is heard in restaurants, on street loudspeakers, and in *tiendas* across Latin America.

Telenovelas have rules that offer a glimpse into the Spanish-speaking culture. First, any prayer fervently offered to the Virgencita (often depicted as Our Lady of Guadalupe) will be answered, maybe not in the exact form as requested, but it will be honored. There is even a show called *La Rosa de Guadalupe* that is not a series so much as it is a singular show with different characters that are victimized, pray to the Virgin, and then are saved by the end of the hour.

A cardinal rule of telenovelas is that any blood connection between parent and child will result in eerie coincidences. A common story is a mother or father separated from their child at birth. Paternity is often a big fat question, or a woman is forced to give up her baby that she searches for incessantly or she has been told is dead, but contrary to all evidence, including a clearly marked grave, she knows in her *sangre* that the child is still alive. When Mother and son meet for the first time, just short of recognition, they will feel the call of the blood as they stare deeply into each other eyes. If that same son has a car accident and the steering wheel impales his chest, the mother will grasp her heart and feel his pain, even though she is in another pueblo. In one telenovela, both Mother and daughter shared a trait of scratching their arms when upset. Even face to face, both simultaneously scratching their arms to the point of bleeding, there was no light bulb going off for these two. This is another vital part of any telenovela. What is DUH obvious to the audience escapes the heroes and heroines for 50 or more episodes.

In telenovelas, heroes and heroines may not always wear white hats, but they display qualities that are admired in Latin culture. These include an unwavering faith, loyalty to their families, kindness to children, and a belief in fairness that transcends class and other differences. Villains, in direct contrast, are adept at using the hero or heroine's unwavering faith, family loyalty and especially naivety to their evil advantage. A telenovela is a romp of unmitigated evil triumphing over good for months on end, leading up to grand finale where the bad guys get what has been coming to them.

The telenovela villain requires incredible acting skill, sometimes not to laugh at the dastardly deeds required. He or she commits or hires someone to murder multiple other persons and gets away with it until the *última semana* or grand finale. Their every waking moment is dedicated to inflicting misery on the heroes. Villains have been born out of Latin stereotypes; the Catholic zealot, the cruel mother who must have been absent in Catechism for the study of the Beatitudes; the drug lord posing as a respectable businessman; the womanizing government official who has fathered so many children, now grown, that a variety of couples in town are perilously close to committing incest.

Most important for pleasurable viewing is recognizing that each telenovela contains a Latin version of karma. That villain you've been hissing for months will meet an end equal to his or her evil deeds. The gorgeous, vain anti-heroine who has snatched away everyone's husband and killed off her female competitors will have her face burned beyond recognition in a fire she sets. The nasty who has sent the hero to prison for a trumped up charge and then paid a prison gang to beat him will end up in that prison as a favorite on date night with that same gang. One insidious woman was so evil that she was devoured by wolves in the last hour. Another had her tongue cut out (as she had done to someone else) and her hands severed so she couldn't communicate, the premise being that she no longer would have a way with manipulating others with the evil words that had served her well.

At least one bad character will be redeemed by the final show. The trick is to figure out which badie is redeemable. Typically, this character has not committed murder but has wrecked enough havoc to apologize for their sins, try to make some sort of restitution, but still be denied a love interest or the pot of gold they coveted. It's a watered down form of Karma.

The cardinal rule of telenovelas is a last show extravaganza that checks off all the boxes. These include wiping out the bad guys and holding a wedding, complete with some soaring orchestra playing the love theme. Each wedding tries to outdo the weddings of other telenovelas, the bride carried to the church in a coach driven by white horses with Mariachis on the horses, enough flowers to set off the allergies of the locals. Whatever actors are still alive by the final show are in the congregation. If the wedding occurs 2 or 3 years later, the audience is alerted by *dos años después*. The wedding is a clever way to tie up loose ends with characters without spending time following who married whom, who has had a baby, and other life events.

A requirement in watching telenovelas is to suspend logic just as one must do with musicals like *West Side Story* when street gangs break out in song and dance. Despite Mexico City's population of nearly 9 million, characters constantly run into each other in a restaurant or move next door to one another. Pregnancies outside of marriage become public knowledge in the waiting room as some nurse loudly announces the news. (There is no HIPAA, the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act in the United States that assures private health information is kept private, in Telenovela Land.) When someone is shot or endangered, instead of calling an ambulance, the characters gather around the injured and shout, "*Ayúdame*." Those who make it past the *Ayúdame* scene to enter a hospital always wear a neck brace. It is as standard as being shocked by paddles in a North American medical show.

Most exasperating is that much of the story line revolves around a huge secret that only one of the cast and the audience knows, but out of pride or some other misguided motive, the one in the know will not reveal. Everything could be solved in five minutes if that person would just fess up the paternity, the murder they witnessed, the double identity of a villain. In many telenovelas, the local priest has heard the confession of the villain but is tied by the vows he took not to spill the sacred beans. Why would anyone evil enough to commit murder enter the confessional booth? That is one of many questions too logical to pose for the telenovela.

My latest discovery is TLNovelas, a channel that airs old telenovelas. Currently TLNovelas is offering a delightful reshooting of *Fuego en la Sangre* or *Fire in the Blood*. Three brothers played by telenovela super stars and hunks (including Jorge Salinas, my George Clooney heart throb of the telenovela world) set out to avenge the death of their little sister who has been impregnated by Bernardo Elizondo. The sister dies in a storm after learning Bernardo is dead, showing up at his funeral and announcing she has every right to be there because she is *embarazada*, enraging the thoroughly nasty widow of Bernardo who tosses her out in the elements where she drowns with a bit of assistance from the arch villain in the show. Guess what? Bernardo and his widow have three daughters that the three avenging brothers decide to seduce and desert in order to avenge their sister. For each brother, as he meets the sister to whom he is assigned, there is instant *amor* at first sight.

Bernardo has died in a horse accident precipitated by his creepy son-in-law that spooked Bernardo's horse on purpose and the audience knows helped drown the sister. Now, whenever the horse sees the son-in-law who murdered him, he neighs like the horse in Young Frankenstein in the Frau Blucher scenes. Whenever that happens, I am reduced to laughter.

Over the years, I have come to respect the work of producers including Salvador Mejia Alejandro, a producer of *Fuego en la Sangre*. His love of his native Mexico is reflected in the vibrant colors that splash off the screen, the recipes for the cuisine that is interwoven into the stories, and his adoration for his native country.

Product placement is blatant in telenovelas with a sponsor's product that seems to appear in every scene. Sometimes social messages are woven into the plot such as the importance of mammograms linked to a characters struggling with cancer, or a woman escaping the violence in her home with specifics given on how to get find domestic violence shelters. These can sometimes backfire with audiences showing their displeasure. One nice and not so nice aspect of audience response is ratings can determine if a story can continue long past its capacity to entertain. The Caray Caray blog has suggested that monkey writers occasionally take over, as evidenced by thin plots and the introduction of new characters who seemed to have dropped in from outer space.

As for learning Spanish from the telenovela, there are wonderful phrases you will hopefully never have the occasion to say. These include *Cállate* or Shut up, *Suélltame* or Let go of me, *No me toques* or Don't touch me, and my favorite that is repeated whenever a character is shocked, which is fairly often, "*No puede ser! No puede ser!*" It cannot be. It cannot be.

Fault me, if you like, for devoting so much time to a genre of television that is overacted and often more parodic than lifelike. For me the telenovela is a temporary escape into a world where bad guys pay the price for their sins, good but not so savvy folks ultimately find happiness, and solutions are just a prayer away. It is escapism at its best.

## Harmonizing Grief and Stress

by Konrad Esquivel

A young woman who loved the path to spirituality used to come to visit. One Saturday morning, after harvesting potatoes in the fields, she and Juan sat down to rest. The Master approached them and sat with them to drink lemonade. She was depressed because of personal matters and she was having a hard time hiding it.

The Master kept listening while she was explaining how complicated her life was. When she paused, the Master jumped in and said, "Carmen, who do we have to ask permission from for you to be happy?"

Carmen understood and laughed. "Master, I know it depends on me; just the same, I'm worried and anxious."

"Juan, what is your answer to this situation?"

Juan, who was by his side, said, "Well, I would say don't get all stressed out because everything will be fine. You will see that everything is going to be alright."

"I would like to add something," said the Master. "It seems important to me that you do not sit waiting for peace to come on the basis of hope. When we live from 'I hope this will be resolved,' then there is no inner strength."

The Master added, "Look, Carmen, it's not about us thinking or feeling that we have the solution, but about allowing us to be happy notwithstanding . . .

"It's like when a couple says, 'We agree to disagree,' and that's how they keep the peace.

"It's an internal frequency that does not depend on circumstances. That's why it's said to be a peace that exceeds all understanding.

"Experience it the other way around. You could say, 'With all that's happening to me I should be stressed and depressed, but how wonderful it is to be in peace notwithstanding my circumstances.

"You don't necessarily have to be happy on account of your adverse circumstances, but you can be in peace."

Continued next page...

## **Wishing for Silence**

If you learn anything from the Master is that everything speaks to you. From each thing, from each situation, we can learn and receive information, and Juan thought this was fascinating.

It was a rainy day and Juan saw him seated under an overhang next to the lemon tree. He asked him, "What have you received? What information has reached you?"

Without making a fuss the Master answered, "I have received nothing because I don't need information or learning at this time."

Juan remained silent and thought, "What a strange inner peace! If he needs to laugh he laughs, if he needs to think he thinks. He's silent when the situation does not require his attention. His silence is like a void.

"Today I learned something deep about inner silence," Juan continued brooding. "I dare say that the Master lives in the perfect moment. It's not that he interprets or judges each moment as perfect, but that he lives in the moment, which for him is always perfect.

"Learning this only makes me wish more deeply for inner silence."



# The Crazy Antics of Prepositions

By Shannon Farley

Being foreigners living in Spanish-speaking Costa Rica, sometimes we are so focused on learning and speaking Spanish that we forget how challenging the English language is. And, really, we should be ecstatic if we meet anyone who speaks English well as a second language!

Take for instance prepositions. I know “*de*”, “*en*” and “*a*”, etc. in Spanish have their particularities, but for the most part, they are consistent. In English, we say we lie *in* bed but *on* the couch. We watch a film *at* the theater but *on* the big screen, and *on* television. For native speakers, we grow up hearing these words all of the time and learning them easily, but try to explain why certain prepositions are used one way and not another can be maddening. “It just is,” is always a go-to answer!

Explain these, for instance:

- We agree *to* a proposal, *with* a person, *on* a price, *in* principle.
- We argue *about* a matter, *with* a person, *for* or *against* a proposition.
- We compare *to* and compare *with*.
- We live *at* an address but *in* a city or country, *in* a house, *on* a street, *with* other people.

It’s a lot to remember! Here is my favorite example of English prepositional phrases, taken from the Guide to Grammar and Writing by the Capital Community College Foundation in the U.S.

You can sit **before** the desk (or **in front of** the desk). The professor can sit **on** the desk (when he’s being informal) or **behind** the desk, and then his feet are **under** the desk or **beneath** the desk. He can stand **beside** the desk (meaning **next to** the desk), **before** the desk, **between** the desk and you, or even **on** the desk (if he’s really strange). If he’s clumsy, he can bump **into** the desk or try to walk **through** the desk (and stuff would fall **off** the desk). Passing his hands **over** the desk or resting his elbows **upon** the desk, he often looks **across** the desk and speaks **of** the desk or **concerning** the desk as if there were nothing else **like** the desk. Because he thinks of nothing **except** the desk, sometimes you wonder **about** the desk, what’s **in** the desk, what he paid **for** the desk, and if he could live **without** the desk. You can walk **toward** the desk, **to** the desk, **around** the desk, **by** the desk, and even **past** the desk while he sits **at** the desk or leans **against** the desk.

All of this happens, of course, in time: **during** the class, **before** the class, **until** the class, **throughout** the class, **after** the class, etc.

# Something (Or Eight Things) About Cuba



By Dana Schlieman

In March of 2016, I visited Havana, Cuba in a weeklong study-abroad program with my university. Here are some of the things I saw, felt, and loved there.

## 1. The food.

As is the case in many Latin countries, there isn't a ton of variation in the main ingredients used in Cuban meals on a daily basis. However, these limitations have forced the Cubans to become creative in their preparation of these foods, and the results are, in my experience, infallible every time. I would give my left leg for another taste of Cuban rice, beans, *ropa vieja* (shredded beef), *tostones* (fried plantains), garlic shrimp, chicken, lobster, or even the tiny, insanely sweet bananas I ate almost exclusively for breakfast.

## 2. The drinks.

I don't know if it was just the bars and restaurants I visited that happened to have this in common, or if it's possible that this is an island-wide phenomenon, but I had some *strong* drinks during the week I spent in Cuba. One Cuban margarita packed the punch of at least two (maybe three) of the ones served at my go-to Mexican restaurant in New York. While we're on the subject, the incredible mojito frappés at Paladar Doña Eutimia in Old Havana are a must if you ever find yourself in the area.

## 3. The water.

Just to clarify, I do not recommend or condone drinking the tap water in Cuba. From here on out if ever I refer to "the water" in Cuba, I am referring to the sea. But I'm not talking at large about the Caribbean or its beaches; I mean, specifically, the water that is in the Caribbean Sea. I have never seen such clear, beautiful water, never seen sunlight react on its surface in quite the same way, and you should believe me when I tell you I could have stood on this dock and stared into the water for an entire day (and was quite unhappy not to be able to).



4. The colors.

There's not a lot to say here that hasn't been said about Cuba before, but there's a reason it comes up so much so it's worth mentioning. Be prepared to have your eyeballs assaulted in the best possible way by the vibrant colors found *everywhere* in Cuba. If you don't come back wanting to paint the outside of your house bright pink, something is terribly wrong.



5. Ernest Hemingway's fishing village.

Cojímar is located on the northwestern coast of Cuba, and is known for being the town that served as the inspiration for Hemingway's *The Old Man and the Sea*. The village is beautiful, sunny, and peaceful, and the perfect place to stare into the ocean for hours at a time while a man with a guitar serenades you, if you're into that.



6. The people.

Visiting Cuba as a student may have exposed me to certain levels of hospitality that not everyone might have the pleasure of experiencing, but that in no way takes away from the fact that the Cuban people are among the friendliest around. Most everyone wants to help you, feed you, and make you smile.

7. The love.

It is a little-known fact that no one loves the way Cubans do. Need proof? Just take a stroll along the Malecón (an 8km long esplanade along the coast of Havana) at any time of the day and marvel at the number of people getting cozy on the low wall.

8. The energy.

One of the most incredible, indescribable things about Cuba is not even about Cuba at all; it's the feeling you get when you're there. It could be the sea air, the crystalline water, the beautiful people, the delicious food, the amazing colors, or the flowing rum, but I think the energy in Cuba is more appropriately attributed to the lack of smartphone technology. Yes, it's been said before: technology and the Internet are turning us all into socially inept robots with rice pudding where our brains used to be, but you don't really realize this until you go somewhere for a week where it's pretty much impossible to get online and check your Instagram, unless you have extreme patience for slow Internet, which I do not. If I could leave you with just one thing to know about Cuba, it's this: the lack of technology and the absence of an Internet presence, make Cuba the most *alive* place I've ever been. Forget about your phone and just breathe it all in.



All pictures taken by Dana Schlieman

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



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

Hola Y'all,

Everything here in Costa Rica is really fine!!!! The rainy season has started and now the grass and the mountains are greening up and everything is looking BEAUTIFUL!!!!

It rains about two or three times a week right now. Just for maybe a half hour to an hour. The flowers and stuff are just JUMPING out of the ground!! Mom bought okra seeds when she was in the states because she can't find okra here. She's a southern gal y'know and she does love her okra. Us perro's aren't crazy about it but we usually eat a few bites just so we don't hurt Mom's feelings. Actually it is pretty good when she fries it! We DON'T like fried green tomatoes though!!!! Well...except for Demon Dog Delilah. She'll eat ANYTHING!!!

Mom and Dad went to look at a house for sale the other day and the man who owns it has a NATIONAL CHAMPION tope horse!! Mom said it was REALLY pretty!!!

OH!!!! And over here, when Mom tries to buy clothes they are all TOO SMALL!!!

Mom says even the X-Large is X-Small. LOL!!! She usually wears a size 8 or 10 in American clothes but over here the 10's are more like 5's and 6's in the States. Anyway, she has started buying her clothes at a place in Grecia that sells used American clothing. That is where MOST of the ex-pat ladies buy their stuff. Mom can find clothes in her size there and they fit!!

She went in there the other day to look to see if they had any new sundresses in.

She happened to look at the jacket rack when she passed it and guess what she found!!!

A DOWN JACKET!!!!!!!!!!!!!! In COSTA RICA!!!!!!!!!! Mom says she is sure they were THRILLED that she bought it. There certainly is not a huge market for one of those HERE!!!

LOL!!! The temps stay between 50 and 85 in our area and about the lowest they get in the whole country is in the 40's.

Anyway, Dad is going back to the States this month and so Mom bought the jacket for my two legged human brother in Tennessee! He can USE it!! Mom says it would cost at least \$100.00 in the states. She bought it for 500 colones. That's \$1.20 in dollars!!

Today we went to town to meet the other ex-pats for coffee. I let Krystal go along this time. It was her "turn." She usually behaves pretty good but her butt is awfully wide so the stroller is a little crowded. I have to push and shove pretty hard to maintain my space. If any of you can find us a twins stroller we really need one!!! Mom had one for us in the states but it was the "side by

side” kind and would not fit in most doorways. She says we need one of the “front and rear seat” ones.

While we were having coffee this brown street dog comes up and asked us if we were crippled!!! The nerve of that guy!!! Just because we were in a stroller he assumed that we could not walk!!! Hmmmppphhhh!!! I told him real quick that “YES we can walk and we can also kick BUTT if we have to!!” He still hung around though and kept checking out our “ride.” THEN he starts kissing up to Krystal!! RIGHT IN FRONT OF ME!!! And Krystal was just SOO flattered!! She made a complete fool of herself flirting with that jerk!

Mom and Dad dropped us off back at home and went to see a friend’s casa. He had invited them a long time ago but they never got around to it. Anyway, Mom said the casa was HUGE!!! It is 6,000 square feet and is on 3 acres of beautiful property. It has 7 bedrooms and 5 baths! It also has a guesthouse and a caretaker’s house. Mom says she sure could rescue a lot of animals if she had a place THAT big!!

The owner wants to sell it. He is asking 750,000.00 for it. LOL!!!! Mom said we would just have to settle for something a LOT smaller and less expensive.

Mom and Dad went to the Oasis for lunch after they left the man’s casa and there was this little, black street dog sitting there waiting for them. She came right up to Mom and Dad and wanted loving. She was sort of timid, like she had been hit before, but she wanted loving bad enough to risk it. She would sort of duck her head and tail and flinch when they reached out to her.

Anyway, they ate lunch and Mom kept feeding her bits of her pollo, (chicken). Mom and Dad both could tell that the little dog had been dumped recently and she was not sure what to do. She could smell food at the Oasis so she figured it might be safe to hang out near there. Anyway, Mom and Dad both knew what would happen to her. She would either get startled and run into traffic or she would become street wise, hang around, and end up pregnant and starving. So...when they got ready to leave, they picked her up and brought her to our casa!!!

Now Mom has got to figure out a way to keep her a secret from the landlady!! LOL!!!! She is a sweetie though and let Mom give her a bath, (she was pretty dirty and smelly) and then she wanted to play with all of us. It was raining when Mom and Dad picked her up so Mom named her “Lluvia” (pronounced zyuvia). Lluvia is the Spanish word for rain!! In Spanish the two ll’s are pronounced sort of like the “y” in yes but they add a little bit of a z to it too. So it comes out sounding like “zyuvia.” Mom said “Rain” is a very 70’s name. LOL!!! She fits right in here. Mom is going to take her to the vet for shots and make an appointment to get her spayed.

This afternoon, Enid came over with the boys, Dario and Javiercito. She asked Mom could she cut the boys hair!! Mom said “SURE!! I’ve got a GOOD set of dog clippers!” So she did!!! It looked pretty good too!!!

Tailwags and kisses from  
BudBud the Perro Primero!!!

## Coloring Inside/Outside the Lines!



*by Marietta Arce  
marietta.arce@gmail.com*

In 1950, Max Klein (engineer and owner of Palmer Paint Products) and Dan Robbins (a commercial artist) invented Painting by Numbers, which practically guaranteed that anyone could be a Rembrandt! The kits became instant best sellers for the company and competitors were soon on the scene.

By the time I was 10 or 11, one of those popular kits appeared under our Christmas tree. I have no real memory of the finished project but I do recall being thrilled that the outcome was more or less what the box depicted. I felt very talented even though deep inside I knew that the “amazing artwork” I produced was due to the fact that I had patiently and carefully checked and re-checked every tiny number against the paints before the brush ever touched the paper.

As I got older and my life became too busy, my creative impulses were relegated to the margins of my notebooks where I doodled countless geometric designs intended to imitate the gorgeous colorful patterns my kaleidoscopes

made, especially when the lighting was perfect. I intended to go back and color them eventually but there was always something more pressing or exciting to do!

When our children were young, we spent countless hours coloring. I discovered that while I enjoyed coloring-in someone else’s drawings, our daughter preferred to create and color her own designs that later became the unique and original color combinations adorning much of our refrigerator space for years.

My last two decades have been largely devoted to home making, a labor of love that has allowed me to expand my knowledge in lots of areas, especially after we set up our school at home. Going back to school (as their “teacher”) made me realize that I had a dormant desire to write and also illustrate my own stories. I felt that no one could actually capture the *exact* idea I wanted to represent in my narratives. Sadly, I can’t really draw!

When our daughter (future Film Major) was a sophomore in college, one of her roommates was studying illustration. I remember visiting them and finding various, colorful and gorgeous illustrations discarded carelessly on the floor near the wastepaper basket. I was

shocked but when I asked my daughter about them she told me that her roommate was not happy with them, “And by the way she’s not even as good as some of the other students.” I think at that moment I put aside any ambition to illustrate my own work, I’ll stick to writing.

Last December, I attended a large seasonal gathering of women that included a gift exchange. I was surprised when I opened my gift: a coloring book with intricate *mandalas* and a box of colored pencils! I remember reading that coloring books were making a comeback, that they were no longer “just for kids”.

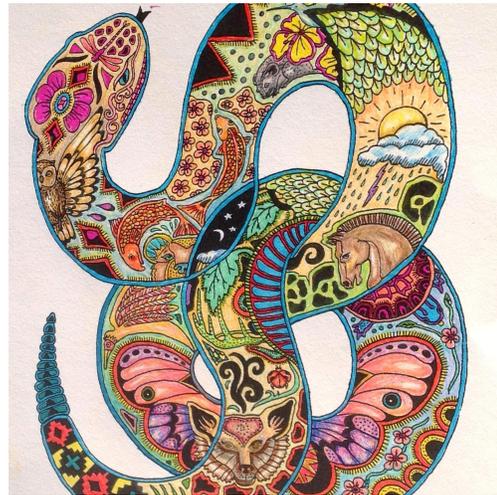
My friend Judy Timson is a big fan of the activity and spends many of her hours coloring and creating beautiful works that she shares with us on Facebook!



Judy and dragon fly

Judy recently visited and I was able to ask her about this rather serious hobby. She explained that it is something she loves doing and that she has many friends with whom she shares this passion and they “network” about the different books

available, techniques, coloring tools etc. While Judy and I did not discuss the 2014 Huffington Post article touting the “stress relieving benefits” of coloring, I am sure that Judy and the others who are focusing on this activity can attest to them.



Judy's colorful snake!



A gathering of colorists

My journalist’s instincts prompted me to research the current adult coloring book craze. Although coloring books for children and adults have been around for decades, Scottish illustrator Johanna Basford’s 2013 release of her first coloring book, *Secret Garden* sparked a new trend. Flora and fauna inspire her illustrations and she says in an interview that she

drew the pictures as a way to relax. The book is so popular it has been translated into at least 14 languages and has sold several million copies.

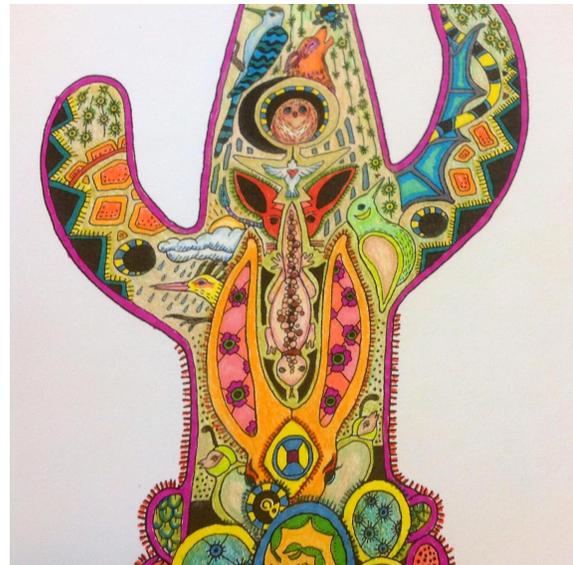
Ms. Basford shares that she is thrilled that her books are popular with adults, that every person adds color differently and it is this that makes the pictures complete. She enjoys seeing people posing next to their completed works because it fills her desire to co-create. There are no rules, she says, except to enjoy the process, relax and have fun.

Ms. Basford's first book was followed by *Enchanted Forest* and *Lost Ocean*. She will release *Magical Jungle* in August 2016. She is 33 years old. Her success can be credited to her perseverance despite challenges and overwhelming odds.



another colorist at play

The way I see it, a new industry category for adults has been created. It is fortuitous that social media today allows the exchange of all kinds of information. Just like there used to be a magazine for every possible interest, there are coloring books for all the different genres just waiting to be discovered!



another of Judy's creations

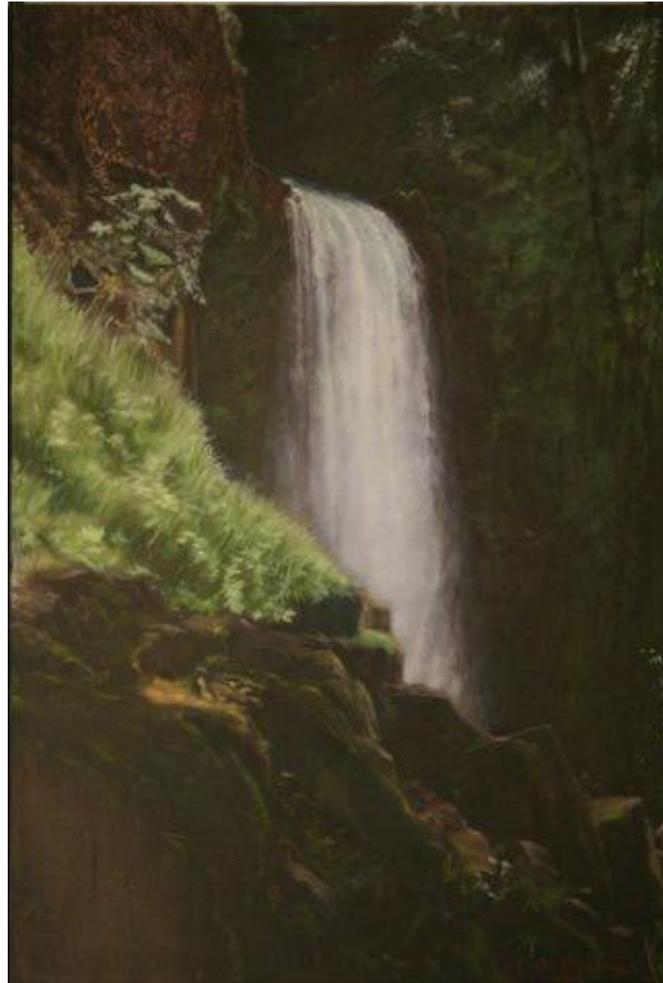
I am embarrassed to admit that I have not done any coloring in the book I received back in December. For some time, I contemplated giving it to a more worthy recipient. I have begun to rethink that idea. It is possible that the notion of being a Rembrandt (only with a Paint by Numbers kit) has stayed with me all these years and I am fearful of coloring "on my own". The bottom line, though, is that as I age and get used to the empty nest, I will need to find things to do to fill the many hours! Why not color, inside or outside the lines?

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Judy Timson FB page for pictures!

# **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.



**“La Paz Waterfall #2”  
33" x 22"  
Oil on Linen**

**Artist’s Statement:**

I painted this because the water is so dramatic, from so many different viewpoints.

**Al Alexander**  
email: [jeanandal@gmail.com](mailto:jeanandal@gmail.com)  
website: [www.alalexanderartist.com](http://www.alalexanderartist.com)



**"Untitled"**  
**31.5 x 31.5"**  
**acrylic on gallery wrapped canvas.**

**Artist's Statement: Not quite finished. Photo Reference: Pam Utton**

**Diana F. Miskell**  
**Horse and Cattle Art: [www.dianamiskell.com](http://www.dianamiskell.com)**  
**Costa Rica Blog: [www.dianascostaricablog.blogspot.com](http://www.dianascostaricablog.blogspot.com)**

## For the bloggers...



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

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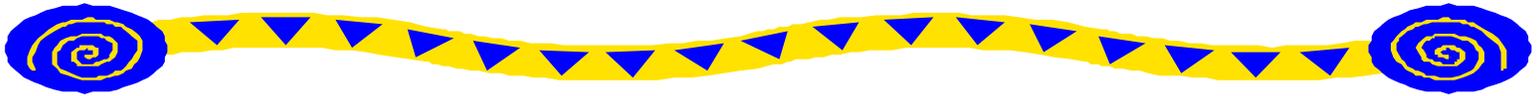


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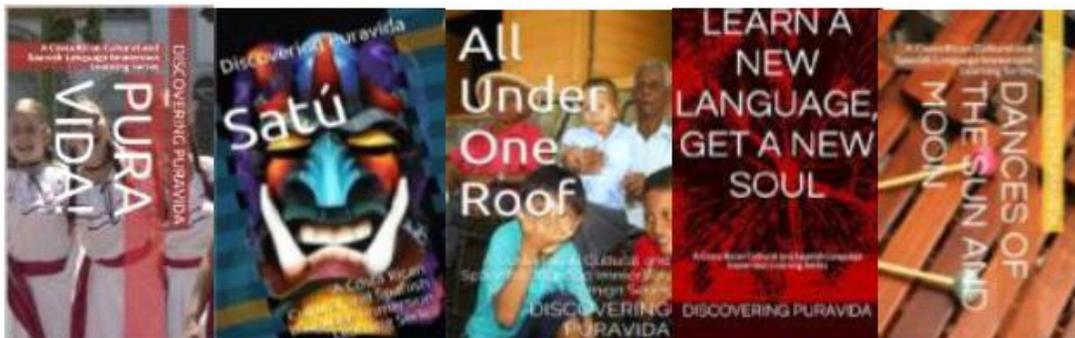
## Horse and Cattle Art

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Canada: 604-200-7299  
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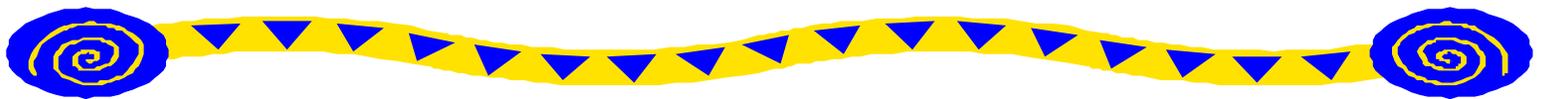
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