

## 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

Issue No. 101

May 23, 2013



May: The Month for Flowers!

Picture Credit: Dennis Easters

*ATENAS TODAY is a free English language newsletter for the residents and potential residents of Atenas, Costa Rica. It contains informative articles and creative compositions submitted by our readers, and is distributed via email approximately once a month to over 500 email addresses. To get on the distribution list or to submit material, please send an email to Marietta Arce at [atenastoday@gmail.com](mailto:atenastoday@gmail.com).*

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

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## 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



If you came to Atenas on Sunday, April 28<sup>th</sup>, you would have caught me in my 'cowgirl' regalia! I relished and delighted in my duties during the Oxcart Parade. This year's event was a tremendous success. We had the opportunity to see how many of our families still farm in the traditional way: with teams of oxen. It was especially heartwarming to see young people proudly display their abilities in handling these large animals, even with several passengers in tow.

This year's parade surprised us with a wonderful innovation: A team of oxen led by Atenas boyero and tireless community leader don Ovideo Alpizar was selected to lead the parade with an oxcart made entirely of recycled material. Many hours of work were put into this effort and we thank those responsible for bringing it to our attention.



According to Fabio Viquez (creator), the above 'ecological oxcart' was built as a Blue Flag Project in the local High School (Liceo de Atenas). It is made up of 700 plastic bottles, 1200 caps and more than 5000 perforations were made in order to avoid any 'dengue' mosquito breeding.

It is the first 'ecological oxcart' design in the world, complete with solar power which is activated after 6 p.m.

It brings me great joy to participate in events which remind me of my heritage, one that includes honoring traditions and respecting everything life has given me. These annual parades allow me to grasp the importance of the cycle of nature, the law of planting and reaping. I hope you were able to join us as we celebrated the goodwill and solidarity which is ours in Atenas today and every day.

Happy reading!

Marietta Arce  
marietta.arce@gmail



## COMMUNITY BULLETIN BOARD

This space is available for posting community activities for the following weeks. Please provide information about your activity or event to [atenastoday@gmail.com](mailto:atenastoday@gmail.com) by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month.

May 25, One Billion Rising 10 to 2 pm in front of Cathedral Mercedes, Grecia (See FLYER)

May 26<sup>th</sup>, Buddhist Book Discussion at Roca Verde. (SEE FLYER)  
June 2<sup>nd</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup>, 23<sup>rd</sup>, 30<sup>th</sup>

May 27<sup>th</sup> - Memorial Day Observed in the U.S. - U.S. Embassy in C.R. Closed

May 28<sup>th</sup> Atenas Bridge Club meets at Don Yayo's Restaurant  
June 4<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup>, 25<sup>th</sup> 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. No partner required.

June 5<sup>th</sup>, June 19<sup>th</sup> - **Recycling** in Atenas from 8 a.m. to 11 a.m. at the Plaza in front of the Central School, near the volleyball court.- Recycling of aluminum, metal, plastic, paper, cardboard and tetrapak - NO ELECTRONICS, STYROFOAM or EGG CARTONS Please rinse and separate your recyclables before dropping them off. Thank you.

May 29<sup>th</sup>, (Please confirm with Sara or Kay 2446-0664) and  
June 5<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup>, 26<sup>th</sup>

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

May 30<sup>th</sup> - Friendly Poker Game in San Ramon (See Flyer Attached)

June 11<sup>th</sup> - 3 p.m. Abandoned Animals of Atenas Foundation meeting at Kay's Gringo Postres. Please contact Virginia 2446-5343 or Sylvia 8868-1386 for more information. Volunteers are needed and welcome.

June 12<sup>th</sup> - Writer's Club meets at Colinas del Sol, at Noon. Contact L. Michael Rusin @ [crcaseyboy@gmail.com](mailto:crcaseyboy@gmail.com) (2451-8063) for more information. Please confirm.

June 17<sup>th</sup> - PLEIN AIR - Contact Jan Yatsko at 2446-0970 or [janyatsko@ice.co.cr](mailto:janyatsko@ice.co.cr) to find out where the next activity will be held.

June 30<sup>th</sup> - CANADA DAY Celebration - See Flyer

## Press Release



### One Billion Rising!

#### Costa Rica is Joining the Campaign to End Violence Against Women



Pamela Hopkins leads dancers in rehearsal  
Photo Credit: Marilyn Pinney

May 15, 2013, Grecia, Alajuela – A local women’s group called *Blooms* is ‘*Rising and Dancing*’ in Grecia’s Central Park to show their support of a campaign that is sweeping the world. The event takes place Saturday, May 25, from 10 am to 2 pm in front of Cathedral Mercedes. Music and dancing will be featured, as well as information about the campaign to end violence against women and girls, and INAMU-sponsored programs in Costa Rica. The public is invited to dance, clap and march along!

There are three billion women in the world and it is estimated that one in three will experience rape or violence during their lifetime. Recent events of gang rape in India and the shooting of a Pakistani schoolgirl shocked the world. They were turning points in campaigns that have for years been waged by the United Nations and countless women’s groups. All of a sudden, the world rose to attention!

The *One Billion Rising!* Campaign, [www.onebillionrising.org](http://www.onebillionrising.org), was created by playwright Eve Ensler in the USA some 15 years ago. February 14, 2013 saw over 200 countries dancing to *Break The Chain*, an inspirational song written by singing dynamo Tena Clark and choreography by famed Debbie Allen. The dance continues now year-round.

“Dancing one day doesn’t solve the problem of violence against women but is a means of publicizing the need for change,” says Pamela Hopkins, lead dancer for *Blooms*. “It is a very empowering way for women to demonstrate their care for women and girls who suffer appalling conditions, however far away.”

“The statistics are staggering,” added *Blooms* spokesperson Joan Dewar. “Now is the time to change the plight of women and Costa Rica wants the world to know that they care!”

The United Nations estimates that globally 603 million women live in countries where domestic violence is not yet considered a crime. More than 100 million girls are ‘missing’ due to pre-natal sex selection. Up to 50% of sexual assaults are committed against girls under the age of 16. Up to 70% of women report having experienced physical and/or sexual violence. Over 600 million girls are child brides, married before the age of 18. It goes on and on...

*Blooms* is short for “*Bloom Where You Are Planted*”. The group has existed in the Central Valley since the early 90’s, with the goal of providing support and friendship to English-speaking women new (or not so new) to Costa Rica. Membership approximates 140 women of all ages from Costa Rica, the USA, Canada, Germany, Britain, France and many other countries. Membership inquiries are welcomed at 2444-8796, [dewar@casadewar.com](mailto:dewar@casadewar.com)

Media Contact:

Joan Ritchie Dewar

[dewar@casadewar.com](mailto:dewar@casadewar.com), 2444-8796



## 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,**  
from non-Buddhists to experienced Buddhist  
practitioners, whether you have read the book or not.  
Current book: "A Path With Heart" by Jack Kornfield

Please telephone or email  
for directions or information:  
Adrienne and Richard Baksa  
2446-8509  
adriennebaksa@me.com  
rbaksa@mac.com

\*\*\*\*\*

## Friendly Poker Game in San Ramon



We play every other Thursday from 12 noon till 5:00, Texas Holdem in Le' Organico- next to Cafe Delicias about 3 blocks west of the park and one block south in downtown San Ramon. The venue is closed to the public on game days and exclusively ours.

We have a small but friendly group of about 12 players at the moment, women are welcome we have some female players. Normally from 12 till 1:00 you have the opportunity to eat and chat. First tournament starts at 1:00 and lasts about 2 hours. We then have a short break and play a second tournament from 3:00 till 5:00.

Buy in is 20 dollars and for the first hour you can re-buy same stack for 10 dollars. 1st, 2nd and 3rd places get paid.

Next game is on the 16th of May and after that will be the 30th of May.

So, if you enjoy poker, want to have some fun and fancy your chances with lady luck come on and join us.

For information and seat reservation please email [jamesfrasergadd@hotmail.com](mailto:jamesfrasergadd@hotmail.com)



# CANADA DAY PICNIC



HAMBURGERS\*HOT DOGS\*CHICKEN\*CANADIAN BACON *EH!*

Sunday June 30, 2013

10:00am - 4:00pm



QUINTA ROMAVISTA (ATENAS) Barrio Mercedes

Advance tickets c 1,500 \*\*\* At the door c 2,000

Children 10 and under FREE \*\*\* Reserved table seating for 8 c 12,000

Tickets available from ARCR -2233-8068 or 221-2053

or e-mail [info@arcr.net](mailto:info@arcr.net) \*Advanced sales deadline, June 24\*

\*LIVE MUSIC\*DANCING\*SWIMMING\*TUG-O-WAR\*VENDORS\*

LOCAL ARTISANS\*BUY IT NOW TABLE\*

\*\*\*50/50 draw\*\*\*



SILENT AUCTION FUNDRAISER - PROCEEDS TO COSTA RICAN SCHOOLS

*Come one, come all, for a day of fun!*



# PICNIC DEL DIA DE CANADA EN EL CAMPO



HAMBURGUESAS \* PERROS CALIENTES \* POLLO \* TOCINETA CANADIENSE, *EH!*

Domingo 30 de Junio de 2013

10:00am - 4:00pm



QUINTA ROMAVISTA (ATENAS) barrio Mercedes

Si compra las entradas por adelantado c 1,500 \*\*\* En la puerta c 2,000

Los niños menores de 10 años GRATIS \*\*\* Reservación de mesa para 8 c 12,000

Entradas a la venta en ARCR-2233-8068 o 2221-2053

o por correo electrónico [info@arcr.net](mailto:info@arcr.net) \*Fecha límite de venta avanzada, 24 de junio\*

\*MUSICA EN VIVO \* BAILE \* PISCINA \* TUG-O-WAR\* VENTAS \*

ARTESANOS LOCALES \* MESA DE COMPRAS \*

\*\*\* Sorteo 50/50 \*\*\*



SUBASTA SILENCIOSA PARA RECAUDAR FONDOS PARA ESCUELAS COSTARRICENSES

*Vengo uno, vengan todos, para un día de diversión!*

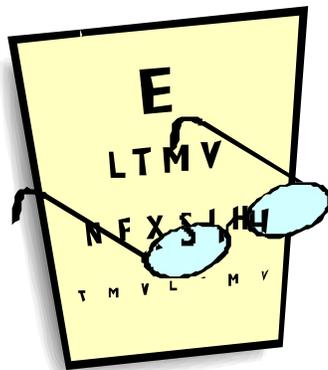


**THE FOLLOWING BUSINESSES HAVE RELOCATED ONE BLOCK SOUTH OF WHERE THEY HAVE BEEN. THEY ARE NOW ON AVENIDA CENTRAL, WHICH IS THE ROAD THAT LEADS TO THE 'RADIAL' TO HIGHWAY 27**

## *Pure Life Development*



**VICTORIA'S "LA OPTICA**



**RESTAURANT LA CARRETA (END OF MAY)**



Editor's Note: This article first appeared in the ILE Post #9, a publication written by Faculty and Students of English as a Foreign Language Major at the Universidad Tecnica Nacional in Alajuela. We are reprinting with permission.



### *Fundamental Aspects learned at an Early Life*

*by Michael Arroyo (ILE Student)*

Any Psychologist would accept that many important aspects of personality are learned during early stages in life. Behaviors, thoughts, attitudes you see in a person are the direct result of distinctive experiences during his or her childhood.

Dylan Revoc was a child raised by his parents in a typical Costa Rican home. His home was next to his grandparent's house, and Dylan developed a special relationship with his grandfather; they enjoyed everything they did together, especially playing soccer almost every afternoon.

Dylan's grandfather wanted to give everything to his grandson. He used to buy toys for Dylan every weekend even though Dylan's grandmother didn't like this. Dylan's grandparents loved to admire the smile in Dylan's face.

One day Dylan asked his grandfather to buy him a bicycle, and a couple of weeks later he got his first marvelous red bicycle. However, now Dylan had a tough challenge to face: riding his new bicycle.

Every day Dylan got up early and tried to ride his bicycle. He got a lot of scars in his legs and arms during his practice. But each time Dylan fell down from the bicycle, there was his grandfather cheering him up: "You can Dylan, I know you can".

Dylan gave his best, and after three weeks, he was able to ride his bicycle alone, and his grandfather was always proudly looking at him every single moment. Three years later, Dylan's grandfather died, but Dylan had in his mind something to remember his grandfather for the rest of his life.

As expected, Dylan faced a lot of challenging situations during his life. Many times he failed on a test, at work, and in all those occasions he remembered his grandfather's words: 'you can Dylan do it, I know you can'.

Even though Dylan grew up in an environment in which people used to give up when they were supposed to make an effort, many people admired him because he always figure out how to solve difficult situations in his life. This was true,

One day someone asked Dylan: "How did you learn to give your best once more even when you have failed many times? You are so persistent!"

And Dylan replied:

"Trying to ride a bicycle".

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## Lessons learned from two years of organic management at the CSDS orchard

Dr. Achim Häger, Natural Resource Management Professor (ahaeger@fieldstudies.org)

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Personally, I do not like the term 'pest' very much, as it reflects our narrow perspective on things. At the CSDS we have about 2.5 hectares of land dominated by 2 exotic tree species (oranges and mangoes, both originally from Asia). Both are fairly well adapted to the seasonal tropical climate, but without human intervention, the surrounding semi-deciduous tropical forest would take over the place in a few years. What is nature supposed to do? Of course it will send us 'pests and diseases' in the form of fruit flies, rust mites, leaf cutter ants, scale bugs, beetles, caterpillars and all sorts of fungi to make room for a far more diverse, productive and native vegetation. On the other hand, fresh orange juice and ripe mangoes picked right from the tree are really great. And besides that, these fruits are an important source of income in this area, because they do grow and taste great here.

The common response to pressure from 'pests and diseases' is chemical warfare. Until a couple of years ago, commercial insecticides and fungicides were commonly used on the CSDS farm by external contractors managing our orchard, and by our own maintenance staff. There is a long list of very convenient and effective products. But improper handling or long-term exposure to pesticides can cause a long list of severe toxicological effects, such as skin and eye irritation, nausea, headaches, cramps, vomiting or diarrhea. Chronic effects include potential damage to the liver and reproductive organs, birth defects and cancer. Effects on the environment may include large scale kills of birds or fish and toxicity for honeybees, among others. Globally, tens of thousands of people die every year of pesticide poisoning and externalities from negative impacts of pesticide use on human health and the environment amount to billions of dollars.



Experimental biological control of leaf cutter ants by applying mold growing on orange peels.

When we started our certification process with the Rainforest Alliance, we decided to go beyond the regular requirements and transition right away into organic farming. We took the farm management in our own hands and got seriously involved with integrated pest management (IPM). IPM basically consists of three steps that help to minimize the application of agrochemicals: Prevention, monitoring and control. In the case of organic farming there is a strong emphasis on prevention and monitoring, because the options to control a massive pest outbreak are limited.

About two years ago we hardly knew anything about the management of tropical fruit orchards. With the help from our local staff and students we now have identified the most important 'pests and diseases' at our site and have gained a substantial understanding of their ecology, life cycles, and – their potential weak spots. Most importantly, we are dealing with leaf cutter ants (*Atta* sp.), formerly kept at unperceivable levels by chemicals, fruit flies (e.g. *Anastrepha ludens*) and fungal infections such as gummosis (*Phytophthora* spp.) on orange trees and anthracnose (*Colletotrichum gloeosporioides*) in mangoes. In addition we have learned some important lessons that may help us to get closer to our goal: grow healthy oranges and mangoes organically.

Lesson 1: First surprise – organic agriculture does in fact use some chemical inputs. The Costa Rican Ministry of Agriculture, as well as the USDA National Organic Program refer to a list of allowed substances. Fungal diseases for instance can be reduced by a combination of prevention (e.g. pruning trees) and control with copper sulfate. Subsequently beneficial fungi of the genus *Trichoderma* can be introduced to help us avoiding new infections.

Lesson 2: Organic agriculture requires a lot of work and research. This is a good thing, because that is exactly what we are doing here. Fortunately, we do not really rely on selling our fruits. While we are currently losing a substantial part of our production to 'pests and diseases', the farm has a higher value now as an outdoor laboratory and classroom for our students and faculty.

Lesson 3: Leaf cutter ants are really hard to beat. They form a super-organism buried deep down in huge underground nests where they feed the leaves of our fruit trees, vegetables, tree nursery and ornamental plants to a fungus that in turn feeds their exploding populations. They can kill a tree by defoliating it repeatedly. We have tried several organic remedies – all failed. We need to become more systematic in our efforts to get the ants down to a level that will allow co-existence. As a first step are now building physical barriers to protect our trees individually. As a next step we try to decrease their numbers either by attacking them directly (e.g. by using a non-toxic mineral, Diatomite, which dehydrates their bodies on contact) or their fungus, by trying to introduce other fungi into their nest.

Lesson 4: Fruit flies are rather easy to beat. They can ruin a whole harvest, but they have a weak spot. The larvae need to get out of the fallen fruits and into the ground, in order to complete their life cycle. So we pick up the fallen fruits and that's it. These fruits are turned into organic fertilizer.

Lesson 5: Other 'pests', such as scale bugs or rust mites are bizarre and amazing little creatures that we never would even have heard of without studying our trees more closely. They can get massive, but are easy to control, e.g. by washing them off the branches.

After 2 years we cannot say that we are there yet. We are still struggling to get things under control. Is it worth all the extra hours of work and demolished orange trees? In my opinion – yes, absolutely. Finally we are making a true connection to our farm. The benefits of teaching and learning by doing are obvious. Understanding the challenges of organic farming in the tropics is an eye-opening experience. Hopefully we will soon be able to produce high quality oranges and mangoes and to become an example for other growers in the area.

This article is reprinted with permission.

## Our Story



by Marco V. Bermúdez Sancho  
mkipi@hotmail.com

From an early age and because my mother, Gema V. Sancho Ramirez, made a decision to show me what it was like to work hard and with a good attitude, I began to work with a neighbor who had for years had his own business. It is here that I began to want to have my own business. Even though I was young, I discovered that there were both great opportunities and challenges that present themselves when one is in business for himself.

As the years went by, my sister, Daniela and I were both working in different companies and had, we both agreed, all the necessary knowledge to go ahead and make a reality our idea to go into business for ourselves some day. I was an experienced "Fish and Shellfish" employee at Wal-Mart, first as Sales Assistant and later as Marketing Manager.

One night in September 2012 I asked my sister what she thought of the idea of opening a "Gourmet" Fish Market. Since she had a great desire to make her start in the business world she fully supported the suggestion. That is how, at the end of 2012, I decided to quit my job at Wal-Mart, my sister Daniela, decided to invest part of her savings, our parents (Marco Sr. and Gema) helped us with a mortgage at the bank and our younger sister, Graciela, helped us during her free time by cooperating throughout the entire process.

This is how this project, which we call "Del Mar, Fish and Shellfish" came about. It is the answer to the burning need to find a variety of high-quality marine seafood at good prices in Atenas. In addition, we wanted to provide excellent service with a clean, safe and pleasant environment which invites the customer to shop here.

Our original desire was to open by December 2012, but due to different reasons, we were unable to do it. By January 2013 we had paid our first month's rent in the commercial space and we began the arduous task of finding the right suppliers who would help us convert this space into what you find today. The process of remodeling, municipal permits and the coordination of all the parties involved took around two and a half months.

Our goal was to open before Holy Week, as this is traditionally 'high season' in this business. With God's blessings and the efforts put forth by everyone, we were able to open our doors on Friday, March 22, 2013!

We are very aware that starting a business is not easy. Our firm vision is to grow in product development and services with our customers.

We hope you come visit us soon. We are located at Centro Plaza Atenas, Locale 6, 50 meters North of Importadora Monge



## Cave Restructuring at the Bar II

Paul Furlong

*Last month we reminisced over a relaxed and disaster free ride to Nicaragua. No flats, no oil belching into the dirt or high speed drama; just the pleasant company of Ric, my friend and sometime customer. As the story goes, we crossed into Nicaragua, spent two days in San Juan Del Sur and a night on the beach in Pochomil. The back story continues to be the creation of a man cave, that unique place for only one person; even a woman, though it begs the question, if you already rule the roost, why live in a cave?*



My cave in the background, right up to the moment of departure, I continued to throw stuff away that didn't fit my style.

Studying his map, Ric points us toward Puerto Sandino<sup>i</sup>, a port that is really a port. We follow false leads on ever narrowing and degrading dirt roads until, someone finally fesses up; there ain't-a gonna be no swimming beach, no hotel and no stinkin' Tequila Sunrise

Back on blacktop, riding towards paradisiacal possibility, we come to Jinotepe, a busy little town with its own little outlaw carwash.

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<sup>ii</sup> Augusto Nicolás Calderón Sandino began with a dream for his people. But to save them, he had to enslave them. Then Daniel arrived with the same dream with the same result. It's only when the people themselves demand *sovereignty* over their own dreams that freedom can exist.



Even outlaws get the blues. That small black graffiti just aft of the bike is the real power in the hood.

We stop for late breakfast at a little outdoor restaurant with a dirt floor. We rode our bikes down an alley and parked close to our table. The waitress was sexy, flirtatious and the food was good. Neither of us felt a need to respond, it was a play that we watched in appreciation. But we were going to Leon, and the ride was easy.

Easy enough to drift into cave-man-land for an overall look. One doesn't lay a rug on a wet floor I'll have to fix the leaks. I'll try that new rubberized paint to seal it from the outside. Gaskets for the door, dig proper drainage alongside the shop, it's gonna be dry. I'll close off window vents and put up screen in the rest for eight legged bugs and heavier stamped screen for two legged bichos. My cave, conceptually a motorcycle shop on one side with loud Latino music and the occasional deafening bang; the other side with low light, Billy Holliday; soft carpet, a table and a chair. There'll be a couch in the corner for reflection.

Traffic thickens as we enter the outskirts of Leon. My cave becomes translucent as trucks and motorcycles fence with me over yardage. Cave size bits of color and shape pass by. Instant reincarnation awaits those who bask in unbidden fantasies; a taxi on steroids pops into view, poof goes the cave as I focus on balance and traction.

Ric, a discerning chap, requires inexpensive hotels with a view. Hot, uncomfortable and tired, I find a place to pull over in late afternoon traffic. Surprisingly, there's a bar across the street. It's cool inside. We order a beer to be polite, it's hot after all and we'd ridden a long way. Things progress towards a good time with a bar maid, her cell phone, a tour book and beer soaked map. Over the music, I simultaneously translate and yell over the top to WATCH THE BIKES! Calls were made, prices hammered, not a moment too soon we mounted our motos.

City planners made Latin American streets one-way to keep us from bumping into each other. "Look," they say, "No bumping into each other!" They make their point with gory pictures in The Daily Rag. Tires wear unevenly for suitors with lovers across town and gentlemen like ourselves, after a beer or two, who can't remember four blocks north, one east, three south, and left fifty meters. Oh, I could go on...

This brings us within a block or so of where we started; never mind the spent fuel, congestion and gasses. The bar maid had sent a runner, (who could have crawled) for her tepid commission.

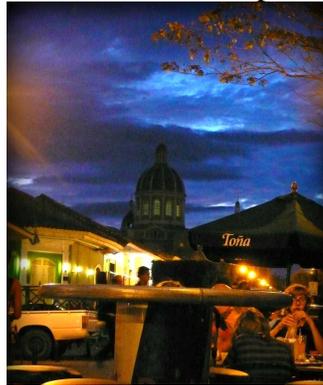
Ric checks out the hotel while I chat with the runner and desk clerk. Rick comes down with a smile; it even has a roof view of the city. On the street, we push our magic buttons, ride onto the sidewalk, launch ourselves hard left up a steep angled ramp through a narrow doorway into the lobby and put our kickstands down on good Spanish tile. They would stay there for two days.



Showered and settled, Ric goes on a walkabout. His holy grail each trip is to buy something nice for Gayle, his wife and best friend. I nap in the air and write until Ric returns. The sun is just going down so we climb the stairs to the roof for a view that's been there for centuries.



Cooler now, we walk in search of substance. We find a place with a view and stiff drinks.



Ric is a gastronomic connoisseur. I actually prefer McDonalds and Burger King. He's tolerant of my fetishes' and I'm enthusiastic about his. We keep walking until we find a place with food and atmosphere. There's a depth of culture in Leon that even Granada lacks; her buildings speak of grandeur and loss, a duchess in her declining years with her head up and wits still about her. And we walked, I swear... Night life was coming next week or had just passed through,

"Sorry, nothing tonight," they'd say to an otherwise empty cabaret. But Ric and I see humor where there often isn't any. We finished the rum and sat on our beds with the TV on till I folded my hand and rolled over for the night.

I went on strike the next day. I would not drink, I could not think! I spent some quiet time in a café down the street as Ric went for a walk. We had a quiet evening and ate Asado in a local restaurant. I enjoyed my Coke and the food was good. We packed our bags and retired early. Breakfast the next morning was like the deck of a European passenger ship with travelers of all nationalities and persuasion. We sat with a missionary couple who were very nice but had no interest in theology or discussion of any kind on the subject of who we are. Breakfast over, Ric and I pumped their hands, smiled and backed away graciously. We were about to do the thing we do best; blow town.

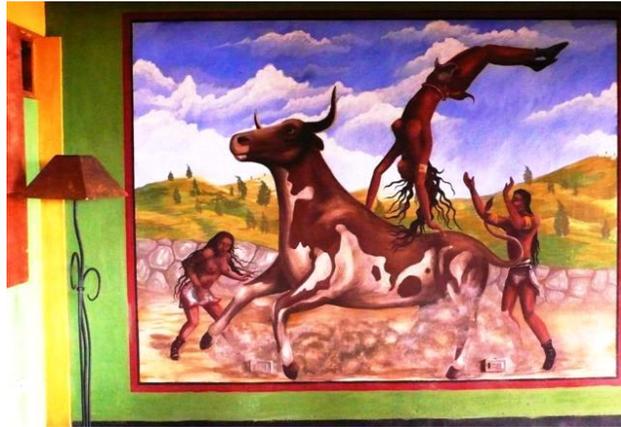
The map showed a bee line to Corinto Beach. On the way, I realized you can't varnish a carving until it's carved. I was tired of being drunk; I could no longer conceptualize the cave beyond where it was. I needed to get my hands dirty. That's what vacations and tours are about; a break to re-evaluate our direction and set a new course if need be. If it's true that many of us are entering our golden years, they should have some quality to them. Without a word between us, I could feel Ric had similar inclinations. We'd reached that undeniable point where home looked pretty good.

Corinto Beach: A major football game was about to occupy TV screens throughout the land. It was hot and the hotels seemed not to care about us. We waited at the bar for a couple to leave their hot room with a fan. Bored, not happy with the selection, we mounted up and headed to a different beach. We didn't bother with helmets or jackets for the short ride up this sandy empty road. It felt good to be free in the heat at thirty miles an hour. As we rounded a bend, little policemen in front of their little police station motioned us over. Smiling like crocodiles, we said we were only going 500 meters to another beach, but corrupt cops, captains, municipalities, governments, all of them, are like fiefdoms of yore and law, logic and safety have nothing to do with them jacking you up for money. Poop happens they say, pay or stay; we paid. A woman Inspector, out for our last nickel, suggested we stay at her cousin's hotel just up the road. As a matter of courtesy and to get the hell out of there, I nodded yes. No beach, no security, no bar, no fun. Adios!

We stopped up the road and looked at each other. We'd been through a lot together. Ric had ridden with me to places that weren't on the map; to every country in Central America and Mexico. We'd handed our bikes up from outboard boats on the San Juan River before there was any vehicle traffic at all, and had to push our bikes through customs offices. We rode 150 kilometers of creator pocked dirt road with no idea if there would be gas, food or even a bed before the sun went down. We laughed in Honduras when my teeth bounced off the sink into the toilet of our eight dollar room; but it was with stone hard faces that we pulled out the map and drew a line to get us the hell out of Corinto Beach.

We made Granada by late afternoon and had one of the best meals of the trip. Ric has a way of knowing when I'm down. He bought dinner and whiskey and we had good spirited conversation. We got a room at the Alhambra, my favorite hotel in Nicaragua and we were on our way home. The next morning I went out early while Ric shopped one last time for Gayle. Oatmeal breakfast was delicious. Sweet too, was time alone with a book. We crossed into Costa Rica on the heels of a huge BMW motorcycle tour. A herd of tour buses grazed by the side of the road and hundreds of people lined out to the road. Say what you want about geezers but that gold card you get when you turn sixty five has clout. I danced my way to the head of the line and stepped into air conditioned bliss while Ric sweated and watched the bikes.

The wind had been terrible on the way up but nothing compared to the steady blow from the East we experienced on the way home. The gusts came unexpectedly and took all my attention. At one point a screw holding my face shield and visor pulled loose and ratcheted my head back with such force I was looking under my glasses to see the road; it took all my strength to get my chin back where it belonged. We gassed in Cañas and turned East toward Lake Arenal for, what else, World Class Wind Surfing and home of the Volcano Brewing Company & Hotel.



Does this curious art have anything to do with our choice of hotels? You be the judge.

The food was very well prepared and the staff excellent. If you have occasion to travel to Lake Arenal, you should try a home brewed beer with anything at all on the menu. The next morning we headed home. We took the Zarcero route and rode through fog so thick only the white line kept us from going over the edge. It finally cleared in Zarcero and we stopped for a coffee and a snack. Ric took this picture:



My Man Cave? It's coming. Building sealed and painted, drainage dug, the sorting and tossing still goes on but the nasty part is finished. I've spent weeks with paint under my fingernails and I'm not done; but there are nights when escaping to my cave is a joy. As it evolves, it becomes more personal, more covert and maybe too much a part of me to share. Funny how things work out, don't you have a project to do?

[Fuzzlong@gmail.com](mailto:Fuzzlong@gmail.com)

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



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

**6/25/2004**

**Hola!! Everybody!**

**Well today was pretty neat and interesting.**

**When Mom and Dad and I got ready to go into town today we found that the battery was dead in the car!!!**

**BUMMER!!!!**

**It went dead yesterday but Dad had it charged at the garage and it seemed to be doing okay.**

**He figured Mom had left some lights on or something.**

**Anyway, when it was dead again this morning Dad walked down to the local garage and told the mechanic that we needed a new battery.**

**The mechanic ordered one, brought it to the house and installed it. He charged \$2.50 for his labor!!**

**The battery was expensive though because it is a special kind.**

**I heard Dad say it was \$75.00.**

**Anyway, while we were waiting for the battery to get here Mom looked out back and said "OH LORD I HOPE THAT IS NOT SMOKE!"**

**We all ran outside and looked.**

**The clouds had rolled in between the mountains and you could not see very far at all.**

**It looks REALLY spooky!!!!**

**Once we got the car running we headed into town. Just as soon as the kids saw our car they came running.**

**I can't remember their names but they remember mine!!**

**They go to town with their grandfather and WAIT for our car to get there!!!**

**Mom wanted to get her new jeans hemmed because they were too long. Also they are what Mom calls "bell bottoms."**

**She says they may be in style here but they are NOT in**

style in the states!! So she wanted to get some of the flare taken out of the legs too.

We went to Grecia and walked around town until we saw a taylor shop. The guy who does the tayloring has a beagle dog and he brought it out to see me while we were there.

He fixed 4 pairs of Mom's jeans. Hemmed them and took the flare out of the leg, and charged about \$9.00.

We ran into some gringos's who meet in the park every day to have coffee together. All of us went to the indoor market. There was a dog there who was very friendly and sweet and he came right over to Dad to be petted.

We also went into one of the pet shops because Mom wanted to buy some vaccines and worm medicine for the chihuahua puppies I told you about the other day. Mom wanted to be sure they would at least get the basic worming and at least a couple of the vaccinations before we have to go back to the states. They are REALLY cute puppies. Mom wants one SOOOOO bad!!! We wormed them today!!!! We will start their vaccines next week.

Course y'all know Mom. She ALWAYS wants to adopt the babies she thinks may be at risk.

The pet shops here don't have a LOT of pets for sale. Usually two or three puppies and maybe some rabbits, chicks, and baby ducks. Mom is glad that they don't have LOTS of puppies for sale.

By the way!! Some of you know about my little friend Cullen Bosheers! His family helps Mom with the rescue babies. They foster one or two when Mom has too many to take care of!! Anyway, Cullen is 8 years old and he got run over by a trash truck in Edgewater Florida. He was hurt really bad and Mom called ALL her friends to ask them to pray for him.

Well we got word from his mom that he is finally awake enough to talk to them and she reads my e-mails to him. HI CULLEN!!!!!!!!!!!!!! GET BETTER REAL SOON!!!!

OH!!!! I was laying in Mom's lap last night and sleeping SOOOOOOO sound!!!! Mom thinks it is funny to re-arrange my lips when I sleep. She did that last night and Dad took pictures. I am NOT amused!!!!

Anyway.....all in all it was a pretty interesting day.

Hope y'all enjoyed hearing about it!!

BudBud, who does NOT see anything funny about having his lips re-arranged!

# Visit the Curú Wildlife Refuge on the Nicoya Peninsula



By Shannon Farley

When I used to guide nature tours in Costa Rica, people would always ask me, “Are we going to see monkeys (or a sloth, toucan, etc.)?” I would always respond, “Well, it’s possible, but not guaranteed; it’s not like we put the animals out in their positions in the morning!”

When we talk about the Curú Wildlife Refuge, however, it actually almost *is guaranteed* to see a wide variety of wildlife. The Curú Wildlife Refuge protects tropical dry forests, beach, and mangrove estuaries and rivers on Costa Rica’s southern Nicoya Peninsula, near Paquera and Tambor. Curú is privately owned and part of a large farm that combines sustainable agriculture and forest management with the protection of wildlife and nature. For eco-tourists, the Curú Wildlife Refuge is a highlight attraction of the Nicoya Peninsula.

(<http://www.curuwildliferefuge.com/index.htm>)



Located only 15 minutes from the ferry terminal in Paquera, the Curú Wildlife Refuge is one of the smallest sanctuaries in Costa Rica, with only 84 hectares (207 acres). Despite its small size, Curú is home to a rich and diverse wildlife population spread over five ecological habitats, ranging from tropical dry and moist forest to mangrove swamps and marine habitats. Part of the reason for its high biodiversity is that the protected forest of Curú connects to the Biological Wildlife Corridor of the Nicoya Peninsula. As you drive from Paquera to Tambor, you will pass through a heavily forested part with giant trees; this broad strip of forest allows animals to migrate between Curú and the

peninsula’s mountainous interiors. (Drive slowly and watch out for animals on the road!)

The Curú Wildlife Refuge is considered one of the best places in Costa Rica to observe wildlife. In this area live more than 232 bird species, 78 kinds of mammals, 87 types of reptiles, 25 amphibian species, and 500 different plants. The most common bird species are Motmots, White-fronted Amazons, Laughing Hawks, woodpeckers and herons; Scarlet macaws have successfully been reintroduced in the area and can often be seen in the mornings or the late afternoons. Mammals you might see include White-faced monkeys, Howler monkeys, Spider monkeys, White-tailed deer, Collared Peccaries, Coatis, Raccoons, Coyotes, Anteaters, Otters,

Pumas and Ocelots. Iguanas are everywhere. On the beach, Olive Ridley, Hawksbill and Green sea turtles lay their eggs. (<http://nicoyapeninsula.com/wildlife/index.php>)

The habitat of the mangroves swamps is one of the more fascinating ecosystems. An immense number of small organisms live in the nutrient-rich mud of these swamps, which attract many species of fish, raccoons and flocks of water birds to feed. All five of Costa Rica's mangrove species are represented in Curú.



## History of Curú

Over the past 80 years, the Schutt-Valle family has managed the Curú land. The area has become an important ecotourism location and research center for students and scientists. Costa Rica resident

Federico Schutt de la Croix purchased the land in 1933 from the Pacific Lumber Company that logged the area for valuable tropical trees. The area was then used as a sustainable development project with selective timber harvesting, agriculture and cattle grazing. The three children of Federico and his wife, Doña Julieta Schutt de Valle, all work in animal conservation and sustainable activities, like small mango and teak plantations. The family's land covers 1,496 hectares (3,697 acres); 1,100 hectares (2,718 acres) are protected forest (75%), 312 hectares (771 acres) are for grazing and agriculture (20%), and 84 hectares (207 acres) contain the Curú National Wildlife Refuge (5%). The Curú National Wildlife Refuge was officially created in 1983.



(<http://www.curuwildliferefuge.com/history.htm>)

## Details for going

The entrance to Curú is 6 km after Paquera and 16 km before Tambor. There are several trails within the Refuge, including short, easy trails and long, difficult trails that can take several hours to complete. Curú is open daily from 7 a.m. – 3 p.m. Entrance is \$10 per person per day. A map and good trail description can be found at: <http://nicoyapeninsula.com/curu/curu.php>

## A Place to Stay

There is a new little boutique hotel right outside of Paquera, where you can easily spend the weekend and visit both the Curú Wildlife Refuge and also take a boat to Tortuga Island. Vista Las Islas Hotel & Spa ([www.vistalasislas.com](http://www.vistalasislas.com)) is located literally 5 minutes from the ferry terminal in Paquera; just a few turns after you start on the road away from the terminal, there will be a left turn on a dirt road toward "Playa Organos." The hotel is a few kilometers down the road, on the left; there are signs.

Vista Las Islas Hotel sits up on a promontory and is owned by a lovely Swiss couple, Thomas and Antonia. They built the hotel and opened about a year ago. The hotel design is charming and well-done, featuring 18 luxurious rooms with private balcony terraces and ocean views of the Nicoya Gulf and famed Tortuga Island. The infinity pool looks right out to the sea, and there is plenty of white stone pool deck for sunning or reading in the shade of an umbrella. A local artist has painted beautiful murals of birds, butterflies, flowers, fish and other wildlife throughout the hotel. There is a river below their property with a mangrove estuary perfect for kayaking. The beach at Playa Organos is smooth sand, and waves are small with no dangerous currents – perfect for swimming!



Rooms at Vista Las Islas Hotel



Pool at Vista Las Islas Hotel

## Hogar para Ancianos Hortensia Rodríguez Sandoval de Bolaños de Atenas



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

Since childhood there has been a special place in my heart for the elderly. I was fortunate in that my great-grandmother became my babysitter when my mother was working. Grandma Murphy, as we lovingly called her, lived in an old, typical, Florida Cracker house that she and my great-grandfather had built by hand in the early 1920's. Her friends and neighbors would always stop in and visit, telling stories about old times, laughing and reminiscing. At the young age of 5 she taught me to rake leaves and push a lawn mower. Her lessons instilled in me a work ethic and pride that I will cherish all my life.

Let's face it; if we are lucky enough, we are all going to get old. My personal goal has always been to live to at least 100, that is, if I can still care for myself. However, life has taught me that we don't always have a choice with our health no matter how careful we are with diet and exercise throughout our lives. So, what options are there in Atenas for the aged who cannot care for themselves? Traditionally speaking, Costa Ricans care for their elderly at home and a big percentage still do. Unfortunately, as the country "progresses" and develops, families no

longer have the time to take care of their elderly family members at home. More and more of Costa Rica's elderly are depending on private care or nursing homes.

About a year ago my good friend Marietta Arce and I visited the local nursing home in Atenas. The locals refer to it as the Hogar de Ancianos but the proper name is Hogar para Ancianos Hortensia Rodríguez Sandoval de Bolaños de Atenas. Marietta and I had arranged a meeting with Ana Lissette Herrera Quesada, the director of the Hogar to learn more about the facility and see if the Hogar was in need of any assistance. During our visit we learned a lot and were inspired into action.

Ana enthusiastically offered us a tour giving us information about the Hogar's history, their mission, the facility, residents, staff and how they receive their funding. The Hogar was founded in 1978 but actually started to function in 1974. The land where the Hogar is located (3.25 acres) was donated by Mr. Froilan Bolaños. In honor of this generous gift of land, the facility was named after Mr. Bolaños' wife, Hortensia Rodríguez Sandoval de Bolaños.

As we walk around the grounds and through the facility, I realize something is missing. The "smell" that I had associated with nursing homes since childhood had eluded me and was replaced by the freshness of the surrounding countryside. The Hogar was impeccably maintained and the residents were very active, engaged and not just stuck in a corner somewhere. Ana pointed out to Marietta and me the

importance of cleanliness and the work it entails as we entered the large laundry room that is run by a single elderly woman. The linens and clothing of nearly 80 residents are laundered DAILY, making for non-stop, back-breaking work.

We leave the laundry facility and continue on our tour to a large outdoor patio where a group of the residents are playing bingo. I ask Ana to tell us the mission of the Hogar and she responds "We provide quality care for the "abuelos" (the endearing way Ana and the staff refer to the residents) who are without a home, family or who are without economical resources to care for themselves. We want to ensure that they enjoy a high quality of life during their last years." Marietta and I are eager to be informed so we ask Ana about the services the Hogar provides to the residents. Ana continues, "We offer integrated attention for elderly adult residents with lodging, three meals a day plus two snacks accompanied by coffee, tea or juice. The meals and snacks are all planned by our own staff dietitian. The abuelos also have physical therapy, recreational therapy and 24 hour nursing care with an on site pharmacy. Medical care is provided via the Caja (the national health care system) which also includes mental health with a psychologist. We try and provide all of this with love in an atmosphere of harmony."

Looking around, I am amazed how much space the Hogar has to offer its residents. There is over 40,000 square feet of construction that consists of large indoor and outdoor common areas, beautiful gardens, which were being replanted during our visit by some of the

residents and staff. Not only could we see that the flowers brought a splash of color to the Hogar, but a sense of purpose and sparkle to the residents' eyes. As part of the recreational activities there is a vegetable garden and fruit orchard that is cared for by the residents and employees. The Hogar offers shared and private living quarters for the residents, depending on the physical and financial abilities of the residents.

As our tour continues, we ask Ana how many abuelos live at the Hogar and she answers "Currently there are about 75 residents who call the Hogar home, 3/4 of which are economically challenged making only a basic monthly pension." With that many residents, who takes care of them? Ana says "The facility depends on 20 trained caretakers, an administrative staff of three, one physical therapist, one nutritionist and a recreational physical therapist."

It all sounds good and the facility obviously runs like a well oiled machine under Ana's direction, but how do they pay the bills? Ana states "In the beginning the Hogar had a difficult time maintaining itself and meeting the needs of its residents. However, with the help of the community at large the Hogar has at least been able to cover its expenses and give quality care to the residents that call it home. Our board of directors have been proactive in the Hogar's financial stability by attracting events for fund raising such as the annual Ox Cart parade, charity auctions and Atenas of Yesteryear (to become Atenas Heritage Festival), a one day event that celebrates the cultural traditions and heritage of "yesteryear". These events account for about 60% of the Hogar's

funding and the remaining 40% is provided by the government via the Consejo Nacional de Persona Adulta Mayor y la Junta de Proteccion Social de San Jose. In addition, a minimal amount of the residents make monthly contributions based on their government pension. The Hogar also offers private efficiencies that can be rented for C400, 000.00 per month for those who have the ability to pay privately.”

In all honesty our visit to the Hogar had ulterior motives. Strive and Thrive, a mastermind group that I along with Shannon Farley, Marietta Arce, Isabelle Jones and Leah MacLauchlan founded, were collectively interested in finding a great cause to champion. After Marietta and I visited the Hogar, we knew we had found our mission and we were all enthusiastic to help the abuelos. The brainstorming began and the result was the creation of a one day event, Atenas of Yesteryear (Atenas Heritage Festival). The idea of the event is to bring all the traditions (food, games, music, art) of Atenas and Costa Rica together in one place to benefit the Hogar de Ancianos. Our first event was held the end of March and was a complete success. The event’s success was due to the combined efforts of the community at large.



As the young traditional dancers and Yoshii Sasaki, a 91 year old Japanese watercolor artist proved to us, you are never too young or too old to help your community! We are look forward to organizing our next event which will take place in December.



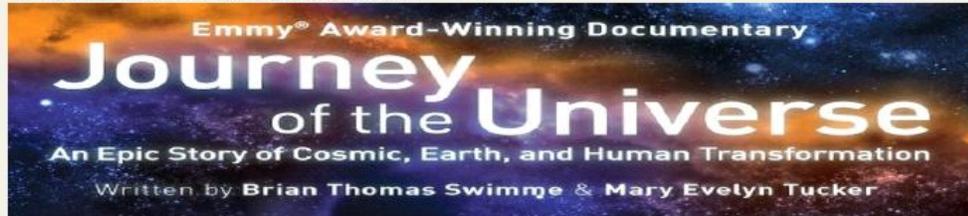
If you are looking for a deserving organization to support, please consider the Hogar de Ancianos in Atenas. There are many needs at the Hogar from daily assistance with laundry to a good seamstress, someone to organize group activities for the abuelos or plain old cash. Being involved in your newly adopted community is one of the rewarding ways to interact, integrate and become a “local”. If you need assistance, drop me a line. I am more than willing to help!



## *Journey of the Universe*

*by Jose Soto (ILE Director)*

On March 12<sup>th</sup>, professors of the English Academic Area of Sede Central and a good number of students filled the auditorium and enjoyed the documentary, *Journey of the Universe*, an EMMY® Award Winner. No one expected that this was going to be some of the best lessons we have ever had in our lives about our life on Earth. Another important guest in the audience was UTN Vice-Chancellor Katalina Perera, who understood the significance of this event and honored us with her presence.



It was five o'clock in the evening, and the feeling of accomplishment and anxiety got mixed up together with the visit of two important scholars from Yale University. It was Professor Gabriela Calvo and Jose Soto who arranged the logistics of the event and planned it out in order to have some of the best events of the first quarter of 2013. Undoubtedly, this has been one of the most prestigious visits. Mary Evelyn Tucker and her husband John Grim were early to their appointment, sitting down outside the auditorium watching students pass by, who obviously did not have an idea of who these two special guests were.

A quick search on the web reveals many different biographies of both Evelyn and John. Mary Evelyn Tucker, a Senior Lecturer and Senior Research Scholar at Yale University; where she has appointments at the School of Forestry & Environmental Studies as well as the Divinity School. She is a co-founder and co-director with John Grim of the Forum on Religion and Ecology.<sup>1, 2</sup>



Punctually at six thirty, Ms. Tucker addressed students and professors with an introduction to the film. She reminded everyone the importance of keeping cell phones off in order to make sure everyone understands the vital content of the film. She indicated to keep subtitles in Spanish, and this obviously was not understood by many, but the seriousness of Mary set the indication straight. She needed it everyone to get every word and message that Brian Swimme narrated in the *Journey of the Universe*.

Students and professors who watched the documentary by Brian Thomas Swimme & Mary Evelyn Tucker thought of it as magnificent, powerful, enlightening, and of course splendidly didactic. Using his skills as a masterful story teller, Swimme connects such big picture issues as the birth of the cosmos 14 billion years ago – to the invisible frontiers of the human genome – as well as to our current impact on Earth's evolutionary dynamics. Through his engaging and

thoughtful observations, audiences everywhere will discover the profound role we play in this intricate web of life.<sup>3</sup>

In the meantime, Mary and John stayed and watched it probably their 100th time. However, they could still be noticed as amazed by the piece of art and knowledge that we were all watching. Students' behavior was highly appraised for actually keeping their cell phones away in their bags or somewhere; abiding by the strong and passionate indication of Mary.

After the film, Mary and John started the post viewing commentary on the movie. Here on, the excitement of Mary and John's words captivated all the students and professors. Students asked questions and made comments as part of the feedback presenters expected. It was clear how the message of the documentary got through the audience as expected by Mary. The conversation took longer than maybe any other movie forum has ever taken before, but it kept a rich line of discussion in the topics of life, cosmic evolution, creativity, holism, the importance of accepting changes and other humanistic insights concerning the nature of the universe. The kindness in the words of John and Mary appealed to the mindset of everyone present.

Students and professors left, and we had the chance to delight the guests with a delicious treat at the lobby of the Francisco Picado Soto library of Sede Central.

We thank Mary and John for their visit and at the same time, our desire is to have them around here sometime soon, not only for the English departments, but for the rest of the university in order to make everyone understand the importance of embrace, accept, and motivate change.

1. <http://environment.yale.edu/profile/tucker/>

2. <http://environment.yale.edu/profile/grim/>

3. [http://www.journeyoftheuniverse.org/storage//JOTU\\_FILM\\_SYNOPSIS\\_7.18.12.pdf](http://www.journeyoftheuniverse.org/storage//JOTU_FILM_SYNOPSIS_7.18.12.pdf)



## English as a Foreign Language Major – EFL

### Universidad Técnica Nacional

English as a Foreign Language major at UTN, Alajuela, is seeking for volunteers to become part of the English language major as guest conversational partners for students.

Live an enriching cultural and friendly experience with college students learning English as a major.

Please contact us at

[utnile@gmail.com](mailto:utnile@gmail.com)

2435 50 00 (ext 1248)

### Editor's Note:

This article appeared in the ILE Post #9 and is reprinted with permission. We feel that one of the greatest challenges faced by students of English as a Foreign Language Major is the lack of conversational opportunities. We urge you to contact the above if you are interested in participating in this on-going program and have some spare time you can commit.

## A cookie...



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

A few months ago, a good friend called me to ask if we could get together soon for a cup of coffee and some conversation. A quick comparison of both our agendas made it clear that a long, leisurely meeting would be impossible for several weeks; however, we realized that we both had an hour to spare that same day.

Sometimes, we agreed, impromptu meetings are the very best kind. My friend arrived on his motorcycle just as I was pulling into a parking spot right next to him. We sat down on a park bench and began to catch up quickly as we knew that time was not on our side that day.

When I was a child, I learned early on that adults engaged in their own kind of language whenever children with big ears were around. My mother and her sisters usually began to whisper as I approached but before long, I was able to “decipher the code”. I never let on that I knew the true identify of “Mrs. Fly” (doña Alicia who lived down the block and was always a source of juicy, harmless gossip); instead, I delighted in “hiding in plain sight” while eavesdropping on the adults.

That day in the park, my friend and I talked about things that were going on around town. We asked each other questions about our respective families and occupations, just like any other pair of friends would do when they haven’t seen each other for a while. Toward the end of our meeting, my friend leaned in and said: “Oh, I almost forgot, I have a cookie for you.”

Given my childhood background in espionage and intrigue, I looked around to make sure no one with big ears was sitting nearby. “Cookie” I had surmised was my friend’s code word for ‘gossip’.

My eagerness increased when he reached into his backpack for something. I thought he had written down the secret because experience had shown me that we are both easily distracted and forgetful.

Imagine my surprise when he proudly produced a plastic bag and asked: “Do you want the chocolate chip or the oatmeal?”

I opted for the chocolate chip that day and almost laughed as I took my first bite. Silently I thought: “Sometimes a cookie is just a cookie.”



## **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.



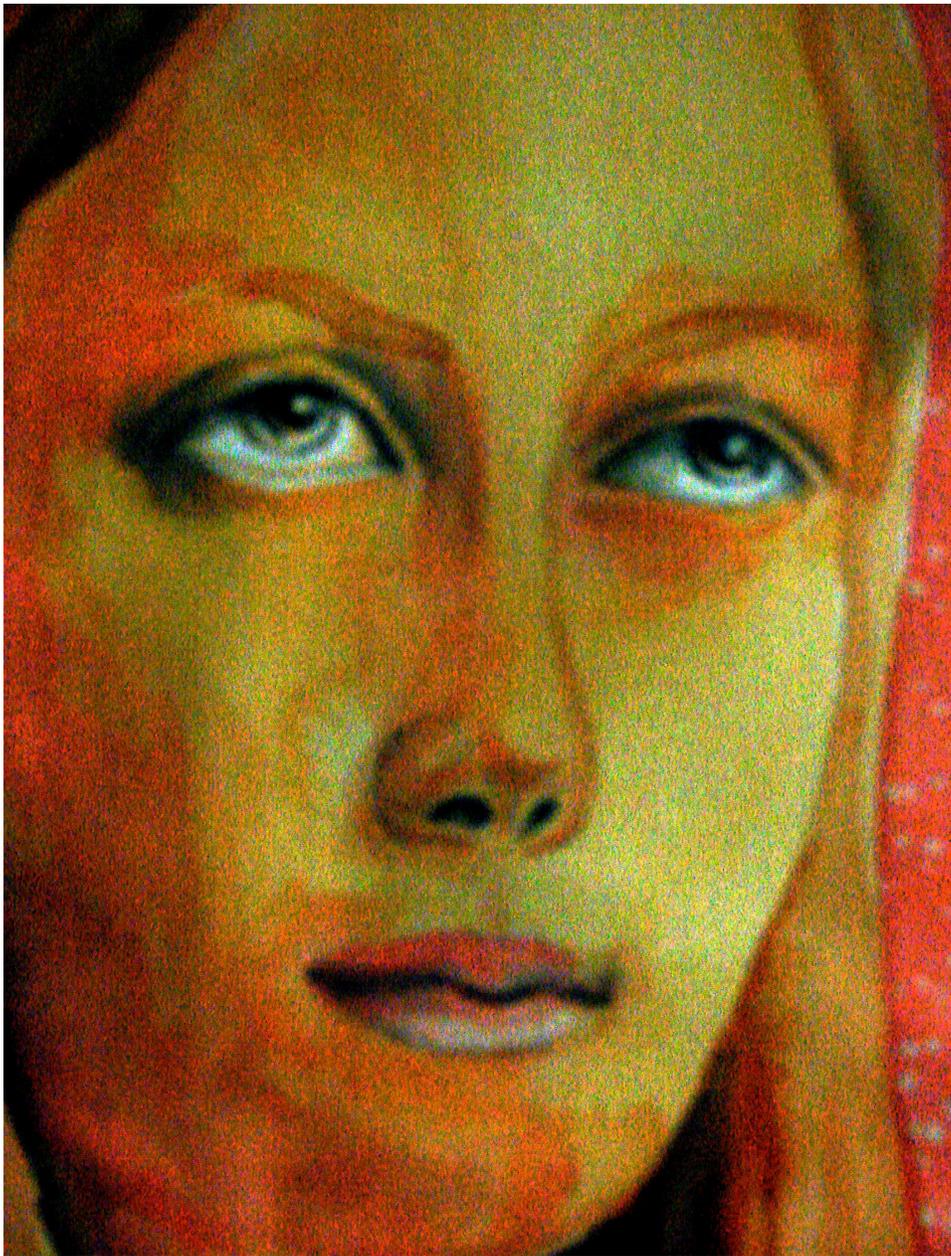
**Sunset**  
**16.5" x 21"**  
**Oil on Linen**

Al Alexander  
*jeanandal@gmail.com*



**Palmares Caballo**  
**Acrylic on Canvas Board**

Dragonfly Animal Portraits  
[www.dianamiskell.com](http://www.dianamiskell.com)  
<http://dianascostaricablog.blogspot.com>



**Untitled**  
**Watercolor**

**Gerardo Avalos**  
**[gavalos@fieldstudies.org](mailto:gavalos@fieldstudies.org)**

## For the bloggers...



We are providing a list of *blogs* that might be of interest to our to our readers. By providing this information, we are not endorsing or accepting responsibility for any content found therein. Please contact us if you have any other blogs of interest that you would like to share. These are alphabetized for your easy reference.

Biolley Buzz	<a href="http://bcrcoffee.com">bcrcoffee.com</a>
Claudia Leon	<a href="http://photoleraclaudinha.smugmug.com/">http://photoleraclaudinha.smugmug.com/</a> <a href="http://straightline-cmkl.blogspot.com/">http://straightline-cmkl.blogspot.com/</a>
Costa Rica: Sisters in Transition (Judy & Roxi)	<a href="http://costaricasistersintransition.blogspot.com">http://costaricasistersintransition.blogspot.com</a>
De La Pura Vida Costa Rica Diane Miskell Dovile Vaigauskaite	<a href="http://delapuravida.com">delapuravida.com</a> <a href="http://dianascostaricablog.blogspot.com">http://dianascostaricablog.blogspot.com</a> <a href="http://www.powerofindividual.org">www.powerofindividual.org</a>
Fabulista De Costa Rica Fred Ball	<a href="http://fabulista DECR.blogspot.com">fabulista DECR.blogspot.com</a> <a href="http://natureboy70.blogspot.com/">http://natureboy70.blogspot.com/</a>
G. Martin Lively Going Like Sixty	<a href="http://fishinginandaroundcostarica.blogspot.com">fishinginandaroundcostarica.blogspot.com</a> <a href="http://goinglikesixty.com">goinglikesixty.com</a>
Julie and Rick in Costa Rica	<a href="http://julieandrickincostarica.blogspot.com/">http://julieandrickincostarica.blogspot.com/</a>
Lois and Jim Craft	<a href="http://adventurecraft.blogspot.com">adventurecraft.blogspot.com</a>
Marietta Arce Mi Chunche	<a href="http://marisundays.wordpress.com">http://marisundays.wordpress.com</a> <a href="http://michunche.com">michunche.com</a>
Nadine Hays Pisani New Life in Costa Rica	<a href="http://happierthanabillionaire.com">happierthanabillionaire.com</a> <a href="http://www.anewlifeincostarica.com/nuevo_vida/">http://www.anewlifeincostarica.com/nuevo_vida/</a>
Paul Furlong Paul Furlong motorcycle blog	<a href="http://shootright.blogspot.com/">http://shootright.blogspot.com/</a> <a href="http://eyeneo.com/">http://eyeneo.com/</a>
Pura Vida Mommy	<a href="http://puravidamommy.blogspot.com">puravidamommy.blogspot.com</a>
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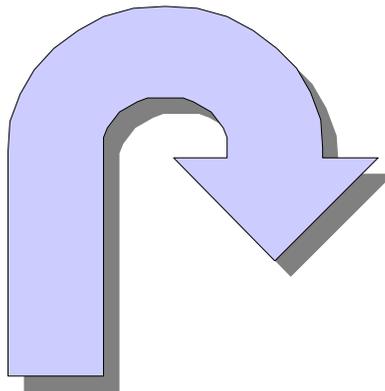
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**Listing Status:** Active  
**Price (US\$):** \$159,900  
**Geographic Area:** Atenas and Alajuela areas  
**Property City:** Atenas  
**Neighborhood:** San Isidro  
**Meters Squared or Hectares:** 1276.19meters  
**Lot Size (sq. Ft.) - Farm Acreage:** 1/4 acre+  
**Year Built:** 2008  
**Construction (sq. ft.):** 1,800  
**Bedrooms:** 2  
**Full Baths:** 2

**Phone Lines:** 1

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Atenas Today is sent out monthly to over 500 email addresses of people who live or vacation in the Atenas area. Display ads up to half a page in size cost \$20 per insertion; full page ads are \$35 per insertion. Ads in the Atenas Today Yellow Pages cost \$5 per month for one column by one inch, and \$10 per month for one column by two inches.

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