

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



"Everything's Coming Up Roses"
Photo: 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.

Compositions from back issues are archived on the Atenas Chamber of Tourism and Commerce website, www.atenascatuca.com. Click on the English version and then Atenas Today on the business page.



DIRECTORY OF ENGLISH-SPEAKING PEOPLE IN THE ATENAS AREA

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

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

Issue No. 102

June 23, 2013

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Publisher's Note



This month's issue is a few days late because I have spent most of June in New York. New York is always an amazing place but I find that summer in this magical city is something its inhabitants are fervently enthusiastic about.

The somber and respectful activities that took place on Memorial Day to honor the nation's fallen heroes segued to the official start of summer with the opening of beach houses, the wealth of free and worthy city diversions and of course: the barbecue!

As I made my way about our neighborhood, so many colorful roses and hydrangeas greeted me that it took my breath away. I am in awe of the contrast between these brightly colored specimens and the naked and rigid branches I observed during my last visit in frigid February. Nature's ability to restore itself season after season provides me with great inspiration in my own ability for restoration.

Although I have been away from home for many weeks, the Internet makes it possible to communicate constantly with everyone, something I do often. I was aware that the rainy season was in full force in Costa Rica and I knew that Nature's exuberance provided colors and sounds that kept everyone alert and active.

It is always delightful to have feedback from people who have visited Costa Rica. Their stories are consistently peppered with nostalgia and heartfelt affection for the people they encountered and the places they discovered.

Many visitors are equally reluctant to leave Atenas. They find that the community spirit and worthy pursuits rival its reputation for having the 'best climate' as the reasons so many of us have chosen to live in Atenas, today and every day.

Happy reading!

Marietta Arce
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Hydrangea thrives in Queens, NY!



COMMUNITY BULLETIN BOARD

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

June 30th - CANADA DAY CELEBRATION AT ROMA VISTA (see Press Release)

July 7th, 14th, 21st, 28th - Buddhist Book Discussion at Roca Verde (SEE FLYER)
(NO MEETING ON JUNE 30TH (CANADA DAY) OR JULY 7TH (GRECIA FERIA))

June 25th Atenas Bridge Club meets at Don Yayo's
July 2nd, 9th, 16th, 23rd, 30th Restaurant 25th 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. No partner
is required.

July 3rd and 17th - **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.

June 26th (Please confirm with Sara or Kay 2446-0664)
July 3rd, 10th, 17th, 24th, 31st

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

July 4th U.S. Independence Day Celebration at Cervecería - For more information visit www.americancolonycr.com or call 2288-4864.

July 7th - 10 to 4 p.m. Independence Day Celebration in Grecia. Visit Facebook page: Independence Day Fiesta for more information.

July 9th - 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.

July 10th - Writer's Club meets at Colinas del Sol, at Noon. Contact L. Michael Rusin @ crcaseyboy@gmail.com (2451-8063) for more information. Please confirm.

July 13th - DISCOVER YOUR INNER DIVA WORKSHOP (Flyer attached)

July 15th - PLEIN AIR - Contact Jan Yatsko at 2446-0970 or janyatsko@gmail.com to find out where the next activity will be held.

July 25-28th Yoga Retreat (see flyer for more information)



PRESS RELEASE

CANADIAN CLUB ANNOUNCES CANADA DAY PICNIC

June 10, 2013, San José – Canadians and Friends of Canada will celebrate the country's 146th birthday at picnic festivities to be held Sunday, June 30, from 10 am to 4 pm at Quinta Roma Vista, Barrio Mercedes, Atenas in the province of Alajuela. Members of the club, non-members, new and old friends are invited to come for a day of fun!



Canadian Ambassador Wendy Drukier will attend to officially open the event and cut the birthday cake.

Much anticipated picnic fare for purchase will include famed Canadian Bacon on a Bun, Tourtiere pies, Butter Tarts and Nanaimo Bars, as well as traditional hamburgers, hot dogs, chicken and a Cash Bar.

Activities include swimming, children's games, dancing, live music and a Tug-O-War featuring the Atenas Firefighters!

A Silent Auction, 50/50 Draw and Buy It Now table will all raise funds for the Asociación Caritativa Canadiense, the outreach arm of the Canadian Club that has for many years assisted schools and teaching programs in Costa Rica. Vendors & local artisans will feature their works.

Children Age 10 and Under are admitted FREE!

Advance Sales for Admission Tickets (¢1,500) or a Reserved Table for 8 (¢12,000) are available at the offices of ARCR (The Association of Residents of Costa Rica) 2233-8068 or 2221-2053 or info@arcr.net . Deadline for advance purchase is June 24th .

Admission Tickets at the Door of Quinta Roma Vista will be ¢2,000.

The Canadian Club of Costa Rica dates back to the 1970s as both a social club for the ex-pat community and a resource for charitable activities. More information can be found at www.canadianclubcr.com

Media Contact:
Joan Dewar
dewar@casadewar.com
2444-8796
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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

**PLEASE NOTE THERE WILL BE NO MEETING ON JUNE 30TH DUE TO CANADA DAY OR
JULY 7TH DUE TO CELEBRATION OF U.S. INDEPENDENCE IN GRECIA.**



“The soul never speaks without an image.” ~Aristotle

WORKSHOP: DISCOVER YOUR INNER DIVA

Saturday, July 13 from 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM

Atenas

You will be surprised how your Diva will appear to you!

Artist and creativity coach, Jan Yatsko will help you reveal your inner Diva through a series of playful exercises that include symbols, ancient diva stories, word games and collage. Your Diva will reveal your inner courage, strength, beauty, humor and desires through a visual image and support what you wish in your life. *Plus, your Diva doesn't care if you are not an artist!*

Saturday, July 13 is during the phase of the New Moon. This is a time to awaken your awareness of yourself. New moons energize wealth, abundance and growth and it is a time to state your intentions. Creating a visual Diva during this time is a powerful way to awaken yourself and realize your manifestations. Farmers and fishermen harness the powerful effects of the new moon and you can too!

This full day workshop includes six hours of instruction, materials, beverage and a “sweet ending”. Lunch will be pot luck. Workshop price: 25,000 colones

“Everything I need to know is revealed to me.
Everything I need comes to me. All is well in my life.”
~Louise Hay

Join other unique Divas on Saturday, July 13 for a day of fun and discovery!

To register:

Contact Jan Yatsko at 2446-0970 or janyatsko@gmail.com

Class size is limited and registration deadline is July 1.

Practice in Paradise and Free Your Spirit

July 25 – 28th 2013

Give your self a loving gift and join certified Yoga Teacher Leah MacLauchlan for this 3 night yoga Retreat at Villas Rio Mar. This Polynesian style resort is a perfect place for an unforgettable yoga experience. Situated on the banks of the Baru River, and only 950 meters from Dominical beach. Offering comfort and relaxation, surrounded by impressive tropical forests, the jungle resort Villas Rio Mar awaits you with traditional, friendly hospitality. Relax and enjoy the lush, tropical gardens from the open terrace or take the opportunity to plunge into the inviting pool. We begin with a guided meditation then start our day with an invigorating yoga routine to smooth your emotions and stave off stress. We will close our day with a gentle yin and restorative practice. Come and let go of all the doing that keeps us from seeing and being with our inner self. This retreat is offered for all levels of practice. Non yoga participants welcome.

THE RETREAT INCLUDES

- 3 nights accommodation in Junior Room with 2 queen beds A/C and WIFI
- Tea, coffee fruit and juice before the morning practice
- All deliciously prepared meals with menu choices
- 7 yoga classes

The Cost is \$279 per person based on double occupancy

Non Yoga participants \$249

For reservations or further information please contact

Leah nomosno21@gmail.com or 2 446 3150

*\$200 non refundable deposit required by July 1st *

Transportation not included, to be arranged at a later date

FACEBOOK TO THE RESCUE



Atenas Staff Writer

Garland M. Baker's recent article in *AM. Costa Rica* has come to our attention thanks to a savvy and attentive reader of *Atenas Today*. Baker understands all too well the difficulties encountered by expats as they try to navigate their way around Costa Rican institutions for answers to simple or complex questions. Baker's research into the matter uncovered that there are many institutions that have people dedicated to answering questions on the institutional website. We are indebted to Baker for the list of links which we share with you for your information and assistance.

Here are the links to key Facebook pages

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|--|---|
| Banco de Costa Rica (BCR) | https://www.facebook.com/BancoBCR |
| Cuerpo de Bomberos de Costa Rica (Fire Department) | https://www.facebook.com/pages/Benemerito-Cuerpo-de-Bomberos-de-Costa-Rica/100524590030186 |
| Banco Nacional de Costa Rica (BNCR) | https://www.facebook.com/bnmascerca |
| Caja Costarricense de Seguro Social (Social Security Administration) | https://www.facebook.com/ccssdecostarica |
| Cruz Roja Costarricense (Red Cross) | https://www.facebook.com/cruzrojacostarricense |
| Dirección General de Migración y Extranjería Costa Rica (Immigration) | https://www.facebook.com/migracioncostarica |
| Instituto Nacional de Aprendizaje (INA) | https://www.facebook.com/pages/INSTITUTO-NACIONAL-DE-APRENDIZAJE-INA/374620729455 |
| Instituto Nacional de la Juventud (MIDES-INJU) | https://www.facebook.com/midesinju |
| Instituto Nacional de Seguros (National Insurance Administration) | https://www.facebook.com/InstitutoNacionaldeSeguros |
| Instituto Meteorológico Nacional Costa Rica (Weather Institute) | https://www.facebook.com/institutometeorologiconacional.prensa |
| Ministerio de Obras Públicas y Transportes (Transportation Ministry) | https://www.facebook.com/pages/Ministerio-de-Obras-Publicas-y-Transportes/141524109195178 |
| Ministerio de Trabajo y Seguridad Social (Labor Ministry) | https://www.facebook.com/TrabajoCR |
| Organismo de Investigación Judicial (OIJ) | https://www.facebook.com/pages/Organismo-de-Investigacion-Judicial/162025663834408 |
| Policia de Transito de Costa Rica (Traffic police) | https://www.facebook.com/pages/POLICIA-DE-TRANSITO-DE-COSTA-RICA/212892178758906 |
| Municipalidad de San José (San José Municipality) | https://www.facebook.com/MunicipalidadSJ |
| Patronato Nacional de la Infancia (PANI) | https://www.facebook.com/PatronatoNacionaldeInfancia |



A friend of women

Women, Violence, Guns & the Hoochie Coochie Factor

Paul Furlong

Truth will come to light; murder cannot be hid long
---Shakespeare, *Merchant of Venice*

In The Teachings of Don Juan,¹ Carlos Castaneda relates a scene in which he asks Don Juan the question; (paraphrased,) “If a man is in a tree over there and has a gun pointed at me, I’m in his crosshairs, and he pulls the trigger, how is leading the Spiritual life of a warrior going to help me?”

“This is easy Carlito, you just wouldn’t be there.”

And so it is. Can you picture the Dali Lama with an AK47 on his lap? Me either.



Some people just don’t need guns. Maybe needing a gun has to do with how clean you keep your karma; or how clean it was on your birthday. Great Generals rode into battle with backs straight, heads up and a serene calmness about them. They directed fire without a moment’s concern for the lead zipping past them from all directions. All possibility of

¹ *The Teachings of Don Juan: A Yaqui Way of Knowledge*

mishap removed, they knew their own life and death was out of their hands. Some of us still wonder.

The kind of protection a person chooses is quite personal, almost like a deodorant commercial. Those of us in the bilges may require something stronger. If the best of us weren't always limited by what the worst of us might do, maybe picking a gun would be as simple as choosing a deodorant. Unfortunately there's a growing hysteria about the word "gun" that ends conversations, causes women to look heavenward and men to stare at their feet until the moment passes. So this is me, having a stab at rationality. Yes, I know I'm about to get into trouble.

This essay comes in parts; later we'll try to assemble them like a Lego set. Speaking of Legos, let's start with the basic assumption that men and women were designed to stick together; we should be friends. Gaby asks God to accompany me when I leave on my motorcycle; I sit with my back to the wall facing the door when we eat at a restaurant. We don't discuss the roles we play; we just care and protect each other however we can. Simply put, *there is nothing one of us wouldn't do to protect the other*. Anyone reading this last sentence might want to pause right here. Here's the question: could we live with ourselves if we chose not to save a family member out of principle? Here's one for women: are you willing to let your husband take a beating and die for you because you won't let him keep a gun in the house? Sisters, we need to talk.

Is it some kind of style that's turned everyone so weak at heart? Frontier women worked as hard as their men. They were respected and honored, and when attacked, they fought savagely to protect their families. They used guns because guns made them equal. What's so hard to understand about this? With violent crime on the rise, can we trust psychiatrists¹ to fix all the nuts before they get to us? Suppose they weren't nuts? What if they just want *you* and your stuff for as long as they can get away with it? Could it be conscience, and not sanity, that separates us from these monsters?

A rape spree in Orlando back in the '70s got women up in arms. A quiet sort of Toontown, the rate of violent attack on women suddenly shot above the national average. Women began to buy guns in unprecedented numbers. Worried gun-store owners got together with police and put together a program to teach women to defend themselves. Suddenly men who'd forced their way into women's homes were getting shot. The rape rate then plummeted below the national average for years after that. When a woman successfully saves her life and her honor with a gun, she also stands up for other women in her community.

Many of my Defensive Pistol Class students are women. Most had to overcome their fear of guns and judgment by their peers. Why would they bother? A greater fear perhaps, of losing a loved one, a home invasion; or being beaten and raped. Some women arrive at my class really

¹ Psychiatrists: too often the people who issue the drugs that cause school shootings, Batman massacres' and suicides. Google it, do the research. An armed society is a polite society, when people are held accountable by their intended victims, pharmaceutical abuse will likely taper off.

angry. The stories they tell are terrible, the notes between the lines are horrific. It's not just the women; their men who couldn't save them...what about them?! I'm at a loss for words here, it seems self-serving to suggest people learn to defend themselves, after all, I teach that stuff, but the hysteria and phobic rush to make guns completely disappear leaves *only good* people without guns. What's wrong with a 98-pound woman being able to stop a 250-pound man with rape on his mind? Police don't stop crimes against women; women do, one at a time and word spreads fast. There's no support group in the room when he busts in, no mental health expert or pepper spray salesman with his guarantee still wet from the press. Women's organizations haven't stopped attacks from happening; guns have; women's groups seem to be *attacking the guns*, what's with *that*, sisters?

Having a gun with no training is not unlike a mail order bride; the propensity for trouble is high. I could surely be wrong about the bride but a gun in untrained hands is dangerous. The press makes a big deal of every sordid incident, but you can't get on the radio if you've successfully defended yourself. Just think of the millions of guns in the hands of civilians who haven't shot anyone today. In trained hands, a gun is martial art without all that silly jumping, kicking and grunting. A Pistolero should see beauty in everyday things, he'll be confident within himself and humble in his dealings. He's not looking for trouble; he merely recognizes the possibility.

The Hoochie Coochie Factor? Who knows how a pithy sweet & sour blend works behind closed doors? I was surprised that in roughly 40% of domestic violence cases, men were the victims. Remember when we were kids? We boys beat hell out of each other, but it was you girls who really hurt us; you know, a look, a laugh... As the snug blanket of civilization enveloped us, an unspoken deal was struck. It was this: I won't use my powers against you if you don't use yours against me. Love, peace and safety fly out the window when these lines are crossed. It just takes a look, an infidelity from either side; blood alcohol cocktails on long rainy nights or a vivid imagination to spark immature emotions. Somehow the knife, gun or bathtub edge gets blamed for the damage. Immaturity may be a curse like stupidity or bad teeth that randomly strike good and bad families alike. Are we to allow trailer court trash to shape the way we defend ourselves?

Whichever gender, if there's quarreling, guns should not be in the mix. Neither should clubs, knives, poisons, hammers, screwdrivers, cars, trucks, bleach, or restraining orders, (no surer way to make that headstrong man pay a visit). Long-term domestic violence is an implied agreement i.e.; some kind of sadomasochistic arrangement is in play, though not always voluntary. This is beyond our reach here, but certainly *there must be fifty ways to leave your lover*.

In the world of firearms, a handgun is something a soldier will use if his main weapon fails. One does not go sailing in his life preserver; he carries it in case the ship goes down. A pistol has the balance of power and control for the *average* man or woman to save their lives.

Hairy men with clubs will make much ado over their choice of pistols, but women are my best students and shoot better on average than the men in my classes. A gun is far easier to learn than driving a car and much less dangerous in qualified hands. A gun won't do anything stupid unless you tell it to; and it will end a fight without breaking a nail... or a neck, or a will or a heart.

Now look what we've done, our legos are stuck together like a fork in the road. If we believe in good over evil, read our history¹, and understand basic home economics; it's easy to see how a gun might be handy.

Mystics, however, tell us that good and evil are only illusions, they say there's only one power, only one prayer²; that is to be closer to Him, the Spirit, by whatever name, and to live, unarmed without fear, under God's good golden umbrella.

Each of these views is a personal choice; not a votes, not a criticism of other people's choices. This needs to be a discussion, not children sticking their tongues out at each other. Find me, talk to me. Reason comes in many flavors, we should sample as many as we can.

Paul 8898-9398

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<http://shootright.blogspot.com>

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¹ www.youtube.com/embed/vn7bkncf1_E

² Christians, Jews and Muslims who pray for the death of each other, need not apply.

6/27/2005

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.

Hola!!!! Everyone!

I didn't write yesterday because I was just too tired!!

Mom and Dad took me to San Jose. It is a BIG, NOISY place. I did NOT like it and Mom and Dad agree.

We are more the "small town" types. Nice, friendly, quiet, and easy to find your way around in.

Mom is going there again next week to get her Costa Rican drivers license but we are taking a friend so he can tell us how to get there and

can interpret for us!!! Our Spanish is not good enough yet to be able to understand people. But we are trying to learn!!!

Oh!!!! Yesterday we did learn one word!!

When we are walking around with me in my stroller, people walking past us would say "Que Lindo!!!"

I thought they just had me confused with some other adorable fuzzbutt named Lindo!!

Mom figured they were probably saying "crazy gringo."

But we found out that "Lindo" means CUTE!!!!!!!!!!

.....I should have known. (blush)

Today we went to San Ramon again. Mom and Dad really like that area because it is what they call "rolling hills" instead of being really steep hills.

We found a couple more pieces of property that we like so Mom and Dad are going to check on the prices. We have not decided yet, for sure, if we want to make a permanent move here. We all like our home in the states but they are planning on building real expensive houses ALL AROUND US and Mom says she "Ain't gonna be happy with a bunch of grumbly, old, high falutin' farts fussing about her fuzzi-butts." Sooooooo that is one of the reasons we are thinking of coming over here to live.

One of the pieces of property we found is 30 acres. We would not want the whole 30 acres so Mom and Dad were talking about maybe trying to get some other people to buy part of it. It is a really good price and is a REALLY pretty piece of land.

Other than that there is not a whole lot of news.

On another note, I used to think "Hey!! I'd like to be an only dog. You'd get ALL the loving, all the food, would not have to share your humans bed with 10 other dogs,"you know.....just be the ONLY one!!!! Well I have changed my mind. Mom REALLY has WAY too much time on her hands and she is taking it out on me!!!!

I keep waking up and finding my lips are NOT where I left them. Dang it!!!!!!!!!!!! Every time she catches me sleeping she moves 'em.

Will write again when there is more news!!!

BudBud the LINDO perro!!!



Costa Rica's "Little Amazon"

By Shannon Farley

Tortuguero is known in ecotourism circles as Costa Rica's "little Amazon." This untamed stretch of Caribbean Coast is a special and widely varied ecosystem of marshy islands, beaches, canals, lagoons, and dense tropical lowland rainforest that is a habitat for a multitude of animal and plant life. A trip through the serpentine maze of canals is likened to cruising on the Amazon, albeit on a much smaller scale.



Tortuguero National Park's beaches are recognized as the Western Hemisphere's most important nesting site for the endangered Green Sea Turtle, and a major nesting site for the critically endangered Hawksbill and Leatherback sea turtles. This time of year is prime turtle viewing season. The giant Leatherback Sea Turtles come ashore to nest from March to July, Hawksbill turtles nest from May to November, and the biggest draw of all are the Green Sea Turtles which arrive *en masse* by the thousands to nest from July to October.

Sea Turtles

The Tortuguero coast is a 22-mile-long, desolate, volcanic black sand beach littered with driftwood and tree logs tossed up on shore from wild ocean storms. It is a wild place – like the imaginary jungle coast in Maurice Sendak's *"Where the Wild Things Are."* There is nothing but beach and low, swampy jungle for miles and miles. You can't swim here because of rough surf, strong currents and sharks that will eat you – adding to the isolation.



That's just perfect for the Green, Leatherback and Hawksbill sea turtles that have been coming here since at least 1592, according to scientific records, to nest and hatch their young in Tortuguero's extreme solitude.

The name "Tortuguero" means "turtle catcher" in Spanish, and the turtle population came perilously close to extinction in the 1960s when nearly every female turtle arriving to lay its eggs was killed for turtle soup. The Caribbean Conservation Corporation, now known as the Sea Turtle Conservancy (<http://www.conserveturtles.org/>), put

a stop to that after renowned sea turtle expert and ecologist, Dr. Archie Carr, founded the organization in 1959 to study and protect the Caribbean sea turtles. The Tortuguero National Park was created in 1970 and preserves more than 46,900 acres (19,000 hectares), along with the 22 miles of nesting beach, making it one of the largest remaining lowland wet tropical forests in the country.



During the nesting months, thousands of female turtles arrive in Tortuguero to crawl their way up the beach, dig their nests, lay their soft, golf ball-size eggs, and return to the ocean. Only female turtles come ashore to nest, usually at night when it is cooler, mysteriously returning to the exact beach where they were born. In 2010, there were 180,310 Green Sea Turtle nests, the highest year on record, equating to a nesting population of 30,000 to 60,000 female turtles, according to the Florida-based Sea Turtle Conservancy.

Incubation takes about 60 days, and then thousands of tiny four-inch-long sea turtle babies hatch all together and race to the sea. Some nights, the beaches are swarming with sea turtles. It's an exciting time. They're like little windup toys with their little flippers paddling away to cross the sand out into the surf. Visitors are able to respectfully witness the "circle of life" on guided tours; no one is allowed on the beaches unaccompanied after 6:00 pm to prevent poaching.

Sea turtles grow slowly, taking about 15-50 years to reach maturity, depending on the species. It is theorized that some species can live over 100 years, though there is no way to determine the age of a sea turtle from its physical appearance. What scientists do know is that turtles have been swimming Earth's waters for a long time – the earliest known sea turtle fossils are about 150 million years old.



The Sea Turtle Conservancy reports that it is only in the past 200 or so years that the world's sea turtle population has dwindled so dramatically, as humans have killed them for their meat, eggs, skin and colorful shells. Destruction of areas where the turtles feed and nest, and pollution of the world's oceans, are all taking a serious toll on remaining sea turtle populations, notes the Sea Turtle Conservancy. Ecotourism has helped Tortuguero preserve its natural resources and culture by providing employment to former turtle hunters, who now guide tourists to the turtle nesting beaches.

Travel to Tortuguero

There are a dozen or so lodges in the Tortuguero area; most are all-inclusive with your meals, transportation to and from San Jose, and tours included. Here is a list of the top lodges:

- **Manatus Hotel** (<http://www.enchanting-hotels.cr/en/manatus-hotel.html>). The most luxurious of the lodges. They offer special discount packages.
- **Pachira Lodge** (<http://pachiralodge.com/>). This is one of the largest lodges.
- **Mawamba Lodge** (<http://www.grupomawamba.com/>). One of the more commercial lodges.
- **Laguna Lodge** (<http://www.lagunatortuguero.com/en/>). Very nice lodge.
- **Evergreen Lodge** (<http://www.costaricatravelguide.com/evergreen/tortuguero.htm>). A bit more rustic.

Here is a website with **general information about Tortuguero**: <http://tortuguerocostarica.cr/>.

Getting to Tortuguero: The only way to travel to Tortuguero is either by boat from one of the lodges, or by air to the small airstrip near Tortuguero Village. Only Nature Air (<http://www.natureair.com/>) flies to Tortuguero; flights this time of year from the Pavas Airport are on Mon, Wed, Fri, Sun.



I Never Promised You a Rose Garden, Did I?



by Dennis Easters easters3@msn.com

For centuries, the human race has been fascinated, almost bewitched by the rose. Artists like Monet, Cezanne, Renoir, Redoute and Henri Fantin-Latour have romantically painted them into our imaginations. We have sayings, quotes and poems dedicated to the rose, such as “stop and smell the roses,” “roses are red, violets are blue,” and “everything’s coming up roses.” Writers such as Shakespeare have left us with unforgettable words, such as “What’s in a name? That which we call a rose by any other name would smell as sweet.” For major holidays, the rose is the most popular flower to be given as a gift. For Valentine’s Day 2013, an estimated 196 million roses were sent to loved ones in the United States alone. We have even assigned significance to each color: red for love, yellow for friendship, white for purity, pink for appreciation, and orange for desire.



My personal love of roses was handed down to me by my mother. For as long as I can remember, my mother had a huge rose garden and collection that at its peak included over 100 plants. It was a daily task to care for the roses in the manner in which they deserved. It truly is a labor of love. Most people think that you can just plant a rose bush and have beautiful flowers year-round. I am here to tell you it is much more complicated than that. Quality, grafted roses take hours of care that include constant pruning, bug and disease control, and fertilizing, as well as a kind, loving and gentle conversation.



Having had several years' break from growing roses, we realize it is a hobby and passion that we have missed. There is a special sense of accomplishment to look out your window and see

look out your window and see something so beautiful flourish. Because all roses are not created equal, I began the search to seek out high quality, grafted roses here in Costa Rica. A quick search on the internet and I found Solo Roses in Llano Grande de Cartago. This past Sunday, we got together with a group of friends and took a day trip to see if what I found on the internet was a reality.



Indeed, Solo Rosas was everything I had imagined. As we entered the nursery, a floodgate of memories was opened coming from the sweetly perfumed air, subtle to vibrant colors and varieties from tea rose to floribundas and climbers. Solo Rosas is ideally set up for tours and also to purchase rose plants and cut roses. As you enter the reception area, you are greeted by an abundance of cut roses on display, all of different colors and varieties. Many of these can also be purchased either in plant form or as cut flowers.

Continuing on to the gardens and growing area, you are met with beautifully lined pathways of roses in every color imaginable. The pathways are nicely laid out, perfect for “frolicking”, offering benches along the way for resting. With rose varieties such as Julio Iglesias, Lolita Limpika, Paris d’Yves St. Laurent, La Sevillana, Queen Elizabeth, Visa and Revolution Frances, you feel as if you are surrounded by

superstars, high fashion, royalty and luxury at its best. In the background, the sounds of classical music delight the ear. The colors and aromas that are swirling around you, combined with the music, create a surreal and extremely romantic atmosphere. There was a young couple we met who were visiting Solo Rosas for the first time. They were so giddy and in love that they could not keep their hands off of one another. It is amazing that something as simple as a flower can evoke emotions such as happiness, joy, passion, excitement and love.

After you have hit sensory overload, you now have the overwhelming task of deciding which roses you want to take home. Before we made the journey, we had an idea of what we wanted. For plants such as roses, we feel it is best to plant in groupings of 3-4 plants of the same color. This will give you an abundance of blooms which are great for fresh bouquets. In the end, we chose 4 different varieties: the Lolita Limpika, which is a fragrant, reddish, hot pink; the McCartney Rose, a fragrant medium pink; the Julio Iglesias, a fragrant red and white multicolored; and a non-fragrant, true white that we think is a John F. Kennedy. The truth is, you leave wanting to take home one of every color.



As we left the charming pueblo of Llano Grande, we spotted another rose

nursery and just had to stop. Europlants is another small family-owned rose grower that offers a wide variety of high quality grafted roses to choose from. Unfortunately, we did not have much room left in our car, but we managed to find room for 3 Baron Rothschild climbing roses! David at Europlants was eager to assist, and was very knowledgeable about every aspect of his products. Without question, we will be returning to Europlants in the near future to add to our new rose collection.



Even though I never promised you a rose garden, that does not mean you can't have one. Costa Rica is a country that abounds with natural beauty and almost everything you plant will be coming up "roses." If you want to start a new hobby that will add a lot of color and joy to your life, consider starting a rose garden. Start small with quality roses and soon you will be rewarded with amazing beauty. Let us all be grateful for the beauty that surrounds us, the abundance that exists in our lives, and never be so busy that we can't just stop and smell the roses!

Solo Rosas is located in Llano Grande de Cartago, 600 meters east and 300 meters north of the church of Llano Grande. Admission is 2,000 Colones for nationals and residents, or 3,000

Colones for foreigners. They offer beautiful rose gardens, rose plants for sale, areas for events, cut flowers and floral arrangements. Rose bushes start at 4,000 Colones and go up to 6,000 Colones. Solo Rosas is open Monday-Sunday 9 a.m. until 3 p.m. You can contact them on Facebook at Solo Rosas or by phone at 2530-2020.



Europlants is also located in Llano Grande de Cartago, 25 meters east of the central school (on the road to Solo Rosas, left hand side). They have beautiful rose plants on display with many varieties to choose from. Rose bushes start at 4,000 Colones and go up from there. Europlants offers a nice brochure on caring for your new plants, starting with planting, fertilizing and disease control. You can reach Europlants in Facebook under the same name, or call them at 2530-0687.



Saying “NO!” and Moving on...



by Marietta Arce
marietta.arce@gmail.com

I was brought up in the kind of family that required each of its members to contribute in some way to whatever community we lived in. If we had musical talents and there was a fundraising activity that involved music, there was no question that we would ‘volunteer’ to participate. As I got older, I began to question this expectation and slowly extricated myself from groups that required more than my presence or an occasional monetary donation. I was very happy with this arrangement for many years, especially in my mid to late 20’s when I was working and attending college at night.

When we first moved to Atenas, I was filled with energy and optimism. It was not long before I found myself totally immersed in projects and organizations; becoming an integral part of whatever ‘team’ I was on. New arrivals in Atenas (and long-term residents) found it hard to understand why I ‘donated’ so much of my time. I always explained that things needed to change, and that I was capable and happy to participate as this was in my nature and my upbringing. The truth is, sadly, that I never really learned how to say “No” to anyone who asked for my help.

After our children were born, I became a full-time homemaker. I instantly found myself involved in all aspects of anything my children participated in, especially their schools. When the schools no longer met our requirements, we made the bold move to educate them at home, right here in Atenas. It was a life-altering decision which has had its many rewards for me.

Our children have successfully ended their ‘home-school’ careers and are attending college in the States. My recent trip to New York was a reminder of how quickly time passes: when we left 14 years ago, our children were just entering school! There was no better ‘bell’ for me than an awakening of this kind when I was away from Atenas.

I realized as I perused a gardening magazine last week that my energy and optimism upon arriving in Atenas were due to my passion for nature and beauty, something I expected to enjoy leisurely when we moved here. I can acknowledge now that I have spent the better part of the last decade working on projects that were not of my choosing or interest because I couldn’t say “No!” It has been liberating to recognize this fact and in many ways I feel that it is not only my daughter who has recently graduated.

I am once again filled with energy and optimism as I remove myself from those things that chip away at my time. *Atenas Today* is a project of my choosing and interest and I hope to share with you many more narratives on varied topics in the future.



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.



Paris Evening
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Al Alexander
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Larry Felder

"Santamaria"

60" x 48" oil on canvas, 2013

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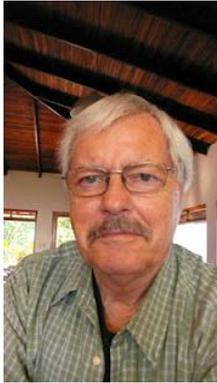
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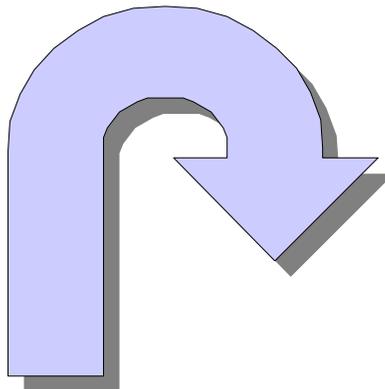
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