

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. 123

March 23, 2015



Sunrise in Atenas March 14, 2015 After Turrialba Volcanic Eruptions
Photograph Courtesy of Mike Lockwood

ATENAS TODAY is a free English language newsletter for the residents and potential residents of Atenas, Costa Rica. It contains informative articles and creative compositions submitted by our readers, and is distributed via email approximately once a month to over 600 email addresses. To get on the distribution list or to submit material, please send an email to Marietta Arce at atenastoday@gmail.com.

Compositions from back issues are now archived on scomari.com / Atenas Today.



DIRECTORY OF ENGLISH-SPEAKING PEOPLE IN THE ATENAS AREA

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

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

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Publisher's Note



While putting together this month's issue, my attention is diverted regularly by the sound of the yellow breasted birds flying about outside. I have recently had my office painted (a bright yellow, coincidentally!) and since I have not had time to put up curtains, my office's windows are a constant source of (welcome) distraction.

I am energized by the bright yellow blossoms on the cortez amarillo (tabebuia) tree that catch the corner of my eye as I sit at my (now mostly-uncluttered) desk. I know the blooms will disappear before this publication reaches your inbox. The curtains will probably make me forget all about the outside world as I work, so I take a moment now to mindfully gaze upon its wonder and enjoy it

It is almost 4 years since I began to remodel Atenas Today. I was building on the strong foundation that Fred had put in place and I am very happy that growth in contributors and readers has been steady and mutually rewarding.

The strong winds that have tormented us for far too many months have abated, as has the ash traveling from the Turrialba Volcano. Pretty soon we will be transitioning to the rainy season and these hot, summer days will be a faint memory.

April is just around the corner. April is a month of celebration all over the world, and Atenas is no exception. First, we celebrate Easter on April 5th, then the Hogar de Ancianos will be hosting the Cattle Auction on April 12th and Traditional Fundraiser which includes lots of activities, foods and music from the 17th – 20th. After that, the Climate Fair and Oxcart Parade will follow and take us to the end of the month. Be sure to look around for flyers providing complete information so you don't miss a thing.

The streets of Atenas are scheduled to be properly marked as a joint project involving several organizations. It is my understanding (and hope) that it will be concluded before the end of May. Although it can be entertaining to try to figure out 'traditional' Costa Rican addresses, sometimes it is even more refreshing to know exactly where one is standing in Atenas today and every day.

Happy reading!

Marietta Arce
marietta.arce@gmail



My Cortez Amarillo!



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.

March 28th – 2nd Annual Wine & Chocolate Fundraiser at Poco Cielo for Animales

April 1st – April Fool's Day

April 2-4 Holy Thursday, Good Friday, Holy Saturday

April 3rd Passover begins in the evening, ends evening of April 11th

April 5th – Easter Sunday

April 11th – Juan Santamaria Day in Costa Rica

April 12th Cattle Auction Fundraiser at and for Hogar de Ancianos

April 16th – 19th – VII National Yoga Festival at CENAC San Jose

April 17th-20th Annual Fair at Hogar de Ancianos (see flyer this section)

April 22nd – International Earth Day

April 24th-26th Climate Fair

April 26th – Oxcart Parade around the streets and park of Atenas

REGULARLY SCHEDULED ACTIVITIES

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

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

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

Every Tuesday: Atenas Bridge Club meets at Don Yayo's Restaurant. 12:30 p.m. to 4 p.m. No partner required.

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

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

Second Wednesday of each month: The Costa Rica Writers Group meets at noon at Colinas del Sol Hotel in Boquerón. For more details contact Larry Rusin at crcaseyboy@gmail.com



Buddhist Book Discussion

Every Sunday
Meditation (optional) 1:30pm
Book Discussion 2:00pm
218 Roca Verde, Atenas

A gathering for those interested
in Buddhism and Buddhist writings.

ALL ARE WELCOME.

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

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



ATENAS NEW COMMUNITY (associated with the Tico church, Iglesia Bíblica de Atenas)

facebook.com/groups/145046998883605

DESCRIPTION: Atenas New Community is non-denominational with a diverse congregation - Messianic Jews, Presbyterians, Mennonites, Methodists, Catholics, Southern Baptists, etc. The focus is on Jesus Christ and the Bible, not on esoteric and divisive theological differences.

SERVICES:

Tuesday - 6pm - Bible study in English.

Wednesday - 6pm - English worship service

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

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

ENGLISH PASTOR: Steve Lucas - <https://facebook.com/steve.lucas> • 8764-8960

TICO PASTOR: Oldemar Artavia - <https://facebook.com/oldemar.artavia>

ADDITIONAL CONTACT: Judy Hickman • 2446-4791 • judy@proslink.com

DIRECTIONS: On Highway 3 at the blinking light

Atenas Yoga Center




Improve balance, strength and flexibility. Reduce physical and mental stress. Join our weekly classes at Atenas Yoga center and make yoga part of your healthy lifestyle.

Classes are for all levels. BEGINNERS are WELCOME at any class!!

Class Schedule

Mondays	9:00 AM – 10:15 AM	Hatha Yoga with Leah
Tuesdays	8:00 AM – 9:00 AM	Hatha/Vinyasa Flow with Anna
Tuesdays	9:30 AM – 10:45 AM	Therapeutic Yoga with Anna
Tuesdays	6:00 PM – 7:15 PM	Hatha/Vinyasa Flow with Clara*
Wednesday	9:00 AM – 10:15 AM	Hatha Yoga with Leah
Wednesday	4:00 AM – 5:15 AM	Men's Yoga with Leah
Thursday	8:00 AM – 9:00 AM	Hatha/Vinyasa Flow with Anna
Thursday	6:00 PM – 7:15 PM	Hatha/Vinyasa Flow with Clara*
Saturdays	8:00 AM – 9:15 AM	Hatha/Vinyasa Flow with Anna

Hotel Colinas Del Sol is located in Atenas centro, about 100 meters after the main entrance of the Roca Verde neighborhood, on the left. We are in the salón de eventos



* Class taught in Spanish.

All classes are 3000 colones or US\$6

Mats can be rented for 500 colones or US\$1 Please wear loose and comfortable clothing

We also offer private sessions. Contact Us: 8660-8921 • 2446-3150 • 8928-5497

classes@atenasyoga.com www.atenasyoga.com

Atenas Yoga Center

Leah MacLauchlan
Yoga Instructor

Contact Us: 2446 3170
nomosno21@gmail.com



Atenas Yoga Center

Anna Hunt | Yoga Instructor

Contact Us: 8338 9968
classes@atenasyoga.com





TOPE CABALGATA

FERIA HOGAR DE ANCIANOS

del 17 al 20 de abril

Viernes 17 de Abril

- 5 p.m. Exhibición de Caballos Trotadores
- 8 p.m. Festival de la Canción (Friend's Discomóvil)

Sábado 18 de Abril

- 1 p.m. Tope Cabalgata
(Salida del Redondel Sabana Larga 3 p.m. en punto)
- 8 p.m. Baile al Aire Libre (Grupo Mango Verde)

Domingo 19 de Abril

- 9 a.m. Santa Eucaristía
- 10 a.m. Grandiosa Mascarada y Cimarrona
- 11 a.m. Bingo grandes premios de artículos y efectivo
- 3 p.m. Concierto Gregory C. y Los Auténticos Gruperos
- 7 p.m. Baile con el Grupo La Kompañía

Lunes 20 de Abril

- 1 p.m. Carreras de Cintas con Fabulosos Premios
 - 7 p.m. Grandioso cierre Baile con el Grupo La Selección
- ## GRANDIOSO JUEGO DE POLVORA

MAS INFO AL TELEFONO HOGAR DE ANCIANOS 2446-5224
DELICIOSAS COMIDAS TÍPICAS ENTRETENIMIENTO PARA NIÑOS Y ADULTOS

DOMINGO 12 de Abril Subasta Ganadera (Única actividad para este día)



Reopening of The Mirador Del Cafetal Restaurant and Bar located on Highway 03 in Estanquillos (next to La Casita del Café).
Open Thursdays to Sundays from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.
Available for private events (up to 300 people), catering, souvenirs
For more information: Contact Lee Cortes at 8831-8086



Relocated from this corner to RomaCentro on the other side!





LÍNEA VITAL DE CR

Emergency Medical Service

Telfax: 2446-74-40

We appreciate your interest in Línea Vital and we hope you will consider joining us and becoming one of our members.

Membership Program:

- **Ambulance service:** An ambulance fully equipped with the advanced life support is available 24/7 for emergency response or ambulance transportation.
- **Regular Medical Consultations and Appointments:**
We are open from 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. – Monday through Friday, not including holidays.
- **Referral services:** As one of our affiliates, you'll benefit from our connections to medical specialists and other private health care providers.
- **Medical Chart:** We maintain accurate, up to date, and confidential medical records for all our members.

Membership fee:

The cost of the membership is \$60* per month/per family. The plan includes medical consultation services and ambulance service to transport patients to the hospital, with no additional charges.

Business Membership:

Businesses may purchase a membership to cover their customers and employees (during normal business hours). Rates vary depending on the business. Contact us for more information.

- * **Costs of medications (except in emergencies), physical exam for driver's license and EKGs, are extra.**

Join today! Call us at 8381-9595 or 8493-4655, or send an email to: operaciones@lineavitalcr.com

Friendship Library News March 2015

First, I would like to express my gratitude for the wonderful support we have received in the form of kind words, lots of borrowing and donations, and volunteer help. The large donation of books in German from a reader in Escazu is now properly classified, processed and ready for use. Those books are located on the lower level, where the puzzles were formerly kept.



The puzzles and most of the cookbooks have been re-located to the upper dining room on new shelves:



The donation of books in Spanish has been really exciting. Once again, Bruce has come to the rescue, building new shelving to accommodate them. Find them to the left, in the upper dining room.

DVDs, CDs, audio books, and games also now have a home. There is a shelf in the back, toward the bathrooms, for these items.



And now, news of new arrivals. First, a correction for last month's library update. The book Lamb, is by Christopher Moore, not Michael Moore.

Beautiful cookbooks continue to arrive, including Italy, the Beautiful Cookbook, The Complete Encyclopedia of Chinese Cooking, Spirit of the Earth: Native Cooking from Latin America, and Spain: Mediterranean Cuisine.

Other interesting additions include Hard Choices by Hillary Clinton, and a beautiful hardback edition of Black Orchid, a "comic book" format tale of superheroes, violence and redemption. Another new addition, for those with a philosophical bent, is Deepak Chopra's God: a story of revelation. In this book, the author explores divine revelation through the stories of ten prophets, saints, mystics and martyrs from Job, Socrates, and Paul through Rumi, Anne Hutchinson and Rabindranath Tagore.

Happy reading.

Linda Ledbetter,
Librarian, Biblioteca la Amistad,
Friendship Library of Atenas

CSDS initiates sustainable community partnerships

Mary Little, Resident Professor of Economics and Ethical Issues in Sustainable Development (mlittle@fieldstudies.org)

The Center for Sustainable Development Studies has more than 20 years located in the neighborhood of La Presa. We are redoubling our commitment to establish community partnerships to promote sustainability. Our first outreach of the semester involved an initiative to encourage all households to recycle. A local resident collects recyclable materials at his home near the *pulperia* then sells them to augment his income. Initially students painted and hung a sign identifying this recycling center. They then passed out flyers and informed people which materials are recyclable and where they can be taken. It is our hope that the project will have multiple positive outcomes of diverting waste from landfills and increasing one family's income. In addition we are planning to address management of local organic matter. At the Center we either compost or feed nearly all the organic waste to our pigs. We would like to share the knowledge about composting with others in the community. We have found an ideal partner for this and other future



Sign marking recycling center in La Presa



Greenhouse at Finca Agro Ecologica

projects at the newly opened Finca Agro Ecologica. Sylvia Martinez Sanchez recently established an organic farm here in La Presa where they use biological pest management and composting to replenish the soil. Since both our Center and the Farm are committed to reusing nutrients from waste, we will partner to hold a workshop on composting kitchen waste in April. Every household produces organic waste and it is our mission to demonstrate how it can easily be converted into rich soil. We would like to follow this workshop with another on small gardens, including innovative container gardens and information on medicinal plants.

A third project involves a collaboration with Johanthan Arguedas, who also works at Finca Agro Ecologica, on his project Biohuertas. The mission of Biohuertas is to spread knowledge about nutrition and our connection to the earth by creating small gardens at schools. Biohuertas has established such a garden at the local Tranquilino Viquez Elementary School in Los Angeles, Atenas. By planting vegetables and herbs, students learn about the life cycles of plants, the role of pests and helpful insects and become

acquainted with a variety of delicious vegetables. As the rainy season approaches, we will work with Biohuertas to prepare the beds and plant seedlings with the students. We see the potential to expand the impact of the gardens by having our students give biology and English classes related to what is being grown in the garden. As with the research we conduct with stakeholders, it is our goal to continue leading the effort for positive change. These new and renewed partnerships make it possible to extend sustainable solutions to all members of the community.



Student at Biohuertas school garden in Los Angeles.

Editor's Note: This article appeared in the March 2015 Issue of CEDRELA – the publication of the School of Field Studies (Center for Sustainable Development) located in Los Angeles, Atenas. It is reprinted here with permission.

DOG AND CAT OF THE MONTH



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

ATENAS de Alajuela - COSTA RICA

MIEL-A HONEY



A few weeks ago, Miel was found in the street in a disastrous health condition. She was more dead than alive. She was completely covered with fleas (the only thing that moved were fleas) and she could hardly keep herself on her feet. Her blood readings were catastrophically low and she had to have a blood transfusion.

Now she is recovering slowly. She is taking daily antibiotic pills against Ehrlichiosis (tick disease). Miel is a quiet, very grateful and affectionate girl of 6-7 years. She appears to be mostly Golden Retriever. Miel is a fast learner and incredibly obedient. Can we find the future dream family for our honey? Miel needs a family who will pet her, spoil her and make her forget her sad past...!

ELMO, THE CUDDLER



Elmo was accidentally discovered as a tiny tot of only a few weeks in a remote coffee field, in the mountains towards Palmares. Alone he would not have had any chance of survival. It is very likely that he was born wild to an abandoned or wild mother. Our little tomcat buddy is now about 7 weeks old and slowly getting used to being around humans and other animals. He needs a lot of attention to make him a trustworthy roommate and family member. Is someone here who wants to care for little Elmo? Give him your love and he will thank you for a lifetime - with cat style cuddles.

DOG/CAT HEAT CYCLES

Talk to a vet or Animales Atenas to have your female or male pet spay/neutered.

DOG HEAT CYCLE

Estrus, or heat, is the stage in a female dog's reproductive cycle during which she becomes receptive to mating with males.

When Does A Dog Experience Her First Estrus?

First estrus generally occurs between six and 25 months old. It tends to occur earlier for small breed dogs and later for large-breed dogs.

How Often Do Dogs Go Into Heat?

Although it varies, unsprayed female dogs go into heat twice yearly or every six months.

How Long Does a Dog Stay in Heat?

Males are attracted to female dogs for approximately 18 days. However, females are receptive to males only about half of this time.

How Can I Tell if My Dog is in Heat?

At first, vaginal discharge is blood-tinged and the vulva is swollen. When the female is receptive to males, vaginal discharge decreases in amount and is straw-coloured.

CAT HEAT CYCLE

When do Cats Go into Heat?

Queens vary in age to go into heat from 5 to 10 months. Cats are seasonally polyestrous this means they will have repeated heat cycles until they are bred. The mating season in cats is determined by a number of factors, including the length of daylight, environmental temperature, and the presence of other cats. Each queen establishes her own normal rhythm.

ASPCA

DORA TEL.8855-9822 PRESIDENT (ESPAÑOL)
SYLVIA TEL.8868-1386 SECRETARY(ES,EN,DEUTSCH)
ANIMALESATENASCR@AOL.COM
EDDIE TEL.8308-8485 VOLUNTEER (ES,EN)
EDOT13@GMAIL.COM

ANIMALES ATENAS PROGRAM

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

Sylvia Spix, Myrna Kastner

GET YOUR COPY OF

1. 'HOW TO KEEP YOUR PET SAFE, HEALTHY, HAPPY IN COSTA RICA (Pet Care)
2. 'HOW TO RECOGNIZE VENOMOUS SNAKES OF COSTA RICA' English and Spanish

By Gloria Dempsey-Microbiologist-Zoologist#

Part of the proceeds of this work help defray expenses of the costly care of orphaned and sick animals. It also helps to sponsor spay/ neuter clinics.

EMAIL kastnerm@hotmail.com for your copy.

SPECIAL NEED- FOSTERING FOR PUPPIES

Foster puppy volunteers open their homes and hearts to animals that are too young for adoption. Many of these are nursing mothers with their puppies as well as puppies abandoned by the owners.

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

Animales Atenas does not have a shelter for abandoned puppies.

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



Shhh, don't tell ... hidden paradise on Costa Rica's Central Pacific Coast

By Shannon Farley

I've been to a lot of **beaches in Costa Rica**. Most of them I like, some of them I don't. Then there are others that are so off the charts in fabulousness that I nearly don't want to tell anyone about them.

All right, I'll tell you. **I've discovered a hidden gem**. A place I had no idea it existed before a few weekends ago. But let's keep it between ourselves ... or at least among fellow like-minded people who will **keep this tropical paradise beach in the same pristine condition** it is today.

This **little-known beach on Costa Rica's Central Pacific Coast** has all of the **key ingredients** I need for a **beach to be fabulous**: shade, open sand to walk, good for swimming, and clean, uncrowded and beautiful. **All of this I found** in a lovely beach called *Playa Linda*.



This lovely hidden beach is a little over **20 miles (32 km) south of Quepos** and the highly-visited **Manuel Antonio National Park**, yet it is a **complete escape** from the typical tourist destination. Playa Linda follows another off-the-beaten-track beach called *Playa Matapalo*; there are signs for the turnoff to this beach on the Coastal Highway (*Costanera Sur*).



Both beaches, which actually run one into the other, are **immense, long, flat, black volcanic sand beaches framed by groves of mango and coconut palm trees**. You have plenty of **wide open space** for **walking, jogging, horseback riding, relaxing** and

watching magnificent sunsets. There were handfults of **surfers** when I was there enjoying **long rides on beautiful waves**, and **families playing in the water** close to shore. Playa Matapalo and Playa Linda are kept so clean that they earned the **Blue Ecological Flag** for environmental purity.



Playa Matapalo is a small beach community with residences, a few restaurants and food stores, and a couple of small hotels – all tucked back from the beach under the trees. **Playa Linda is blissfully empty.** On the day I was there, families came in cars on the narrow dirt road and parked under the palms to enjoy the day. Some brought picnic lunches, while others grilled on portable barbecues. What I did notice is that everyone carried away their trash. Playa Matapalo has the distinction of being a **nesting beach** for **three species of sea**



turtles in Costa Rica that visit the area from July to December. An **annual sea turtle festival** is held by the **Matapalo Sea Turtle Conservation Project** (<http://www.asvoc.org/english/matapalo/index.php>) to celebrate **hatching baby sea turtles** in **November**.

Where to stay:

Since there isn't anywhere to stay on Playa Linda and only a couple of small places on Playa Matapalo, the best place to stay is **Portasol Rainforest & Ocean View Living eco-community** (<http://portasol.cr/en/>). Tucked back in the rainforest along the Portalón River Valley a few minutes from Matapalo Beach, Portasol has comfortable and luxurious Costa Rica vacation rentals and Costa Rica property for sale. The unique Costa Rica sustainable community adheres to green development principles with a 200-acre private reserve and 65% of its 1,300 acres in conservation areas. See also: <https://www.facebook.com/portasol/>, or call 2787-5018 / 2787-5020.



Vacation rentals at Portasol Rainforest & Ocean View Living

How to get there:

Playa Matapalo is 20 miles (32 km) south of Quepos on the Southern Coastal Highway (*Costanera Sur*), a little past the Savegre River. There are two turnoffs, both with signs saying *Playa Matapalo*. Follow the signs to the beach.

Playa Linda is just south of Playa Matapalo. Continue driving the Coastal Highway south past both entrances to Playa Matapalo. When you pass a large cell phone tower next to the highway on your right, in just another couple of miles you will see two more cell phone towers on the right set farther back from the road. There is a small dirt road where you need to turn right, which leads past the towers. If you reach *Plantanillo* on the highway, you have gone too far. Drive the dirt road straight to Playa Linda; from there the road branches off to the left and parallels the beach. Park anywhere you find space under the trees.

Portasol is 18 miles south of Quepos on the Southern Coastal Highway. A few miles past the Savegre River, but before Playa Matapalo, you will see a sign for the village of Portalón to the left. Turn left to go to Portalón. The dirt road (5 minutes) dead-ends at Portasol.



Tryin' to make it real V

Paul Furlong

*President he's got his war
Folks don't know just what it's for
Nobody gives us rhyme or reason
Have one doubt they call it treason
We're chicken feathers
All without one nut goddamn it
Tryin' to make it real compared to what* Les Mccann

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i2zE9cot3jY> “

“.....we took Bonny and her bicycle up to the highway and let her go.

The moment she was out of sight, that old familiar mix of sorrow and relief settled over me like a deep midnight fog — and then I remembered how it goes — the thread that leads from the now back then, to the now right now — and how it lingers forever like a dangling participial in the stream of life.”

Kenny and I came to an agreement — I didn't have to work and he didn't have to pay me. After that, everything pretty much fell into place. I would be present, a distant witness, so to speak, who would be there in the morning, still in my bag as Kenny hewed his big old square logs for the cabin using plans for a “Bear Proof Hog Pen.” I didn't comment or bother to see

how he was doing, but he was aware of my presence and that I knew he was really working. That somehow made the job real, that makes the story real — which, if you string these kinds of stories together over seventy years or so, makes the person who led the life real, as opposed to say, a life behind a mirror, TV or tavern bar.

Anyway, I was his driver and sidekick, sort of like Pancho was for the Cisco Kid. In turn, Kenny paid for everything, including a horse and saddle for me to ride. The stage was set. I was in another adventure.

The day we bought my mare, I almost couldn't ride her. Kenny laughed as she tried to throw me off.

"Pablo," he called out to me, "I don't think she likes you!"

"That's all right," I yelled back, "I'm a famous racer; I'll get 'er!" He laughed at that, too. Humility comes hard to small stubborn Irishmen.

I don't remember that bitch horse's name, but sometime during the first week I changed it to "Coño" for her evil heart — I feared her and she knew it. Fortunately we kept her at a local ranch with Kenny's horse, Sergeant Pepper. The days passed into weeks as the cabin took shape and I eased my fear of Coño into a kind of dream in which we were friends — me, a noble cow humper and she a caring quarter horse.

On an average day, Kenny'd be tired around 11:00 or so and I'd drive him in his red pickup to a diner at the top of the canyon for coffee and apple pie. The waitress there was named Tits-to-Mohave. I hope that don't offend anyone but that's how it was. Anyway, there's not much to say about it except we fell into the habit of going up there for the pie and the mild flirtation that keeps some of us alive. It was all innocent and all part of the trip we were on, two freaks in cowboy country.

I slowly settled into camp life and built a roomy lean-to shelter with a level place for my bag and gear not far from our fire pit. My bicycle was covered and put away under there and my camp took on a rough kind of order that was easy to be comfortable in. We had one of those wooden ice cream parlor chairs with the wicker seat blown out. A man on a mission could take

his shovel and the chair to a place in the woods, read the Daily Republican in the wilderness and be one with nay-cha any time he wanted.

I reveled in my solitude and meditated amongst the trees and the space between them as being the same as the trees themselves; that existence and nonexistence are the very same thing in the dream that is really the real reality. Judy and I began our trip nearly a year ago as a spiritual quest, a conscious openness about everything. We were reading “The Teachings of Don Juan,” worked on Stephen Gaskins Farm in Tennessee, chanted, sang, spent a month or two in Austin with a country guru named Al, who built radio controlled gliders - but mostly we were into that elusive quality called Truth. Judy had spent two years in India with her mate Joel, where they learned Hinduism, who The Buddha was and that pharmacies would fix their heroin habit right there in the store.

I still have wood block prints I bought from them on my wall, easy to trip down memory lane — that old Triumph TT Special of Joe’s with loose fitting clip-on handlebars, riding into my service department from Princeton in the snow, slipping and sliding in his blissful loose lanky way, nose running long blond hair stuck to his face, I envied his apathy and the acceptance of everything that was, but I feared heroin, and stayed away. Meanwhile the days passed tranquil as the San Miguel River gurgled by like a childhood melody. I was alone at last.

“The average man is hooked to his fellow men, while the warrior is hooked only to infinity.”

? Carlos Castaneda

There were two guys who lived in a teepee upriver and intertwined with our lives in the canyon. There was Brother John, a man with sharp features, a dream and a piece of land where he planned to build *Another Roadside Attraction*. In his dream he arranged interesting junk, western memorabilia, antiques and anything that caught his eye to flesh out the vision he’d made for himself. He would move his teepee to this land and pontificate to the masses as they passed on their way to dreams of their own. However his constant reference of it belied his true motive of getting his juice from the telling, rather than the living of it.

“For me there is only the traveling on paths that have heart, on any path that may have heart, and the only worthwhile challenge is to traverse its full length--and there I travel looking, looking breathlessly.” ? Carlos Castaneda, *The Teachings of Don Juan: A Yaqui Way of Knowledge*

Brother Lamb Chop (don't ask) was different, with an unassuming nature that never missed the joke and I liked him immensely. He had long coarse hair that grew in huge swirls around his head like a wreath. Lamb Chop, okay ask but it won't make sense, was over one day with Kenny to do a river walk. (Lamb Chop had a lamb, and told a cowboy he was going to breed him. The cowboy then pointed out that it was a male — see I told you!) I had Coño with me and planned a ride along the river, too.

I was adjusting her saddle and put on her halter, Lamb Chop pulled a cellophane bag from his watch pocket and produced two hits of “Window Pane” — called that, I presume, because it bypasses ones perception through a constricted good sense valve where time, distance, projects or what people say seem to matter — to a multi-dimensional panoramic sensation packed window view of what *IS*, a different reality where one can see the transparency of life, of every molecule as atoms within blink into and out of existence for no particular reason.

Well, with this kind of acid there was always enough to go around, just a sliver of it was good for ten hours of participation. We cut it with a pocket knife and I took a half and went about my business loving my horse Coño. Yes, a leisurely ride along the banks of the San Miguel River — a man and his horse at peace with nature.

The guys had already headed up river; it was time to mount up. Coño began to get skittish as I approached her, so I spoke in the calming tones I'd practiced in my head, put my foot in the stirrup and swung aboard. She began to dance around and it took some effort to get her pointed downstream.

Now a good cutting horse may not be fast like a motorcycle, but they'll go from 0 to 30 in half a second. Suddenly we're racing down the canyon as fast as she'd go. About this time the acid kicked in... and suddenly we were **one**...in overdrive where peace love and nature flew out the same window it came in on — things became blurry from double vision; I had to duck as she tried to wipe me off from the outcroppings of rock that jutted out from the canyon walls.

Suddenly the canyon opened up and there was room to maneuver. That's when I learned another thing about quarter horses: they can turn on a dime at full speed. Those cartoons you see with the horse going one way — and the cowboy standing weightless above the saddle in limp stirrups — going in the other way, yeah, that was me.

At this point I took stock of the situation and stopped pulling on the reins and let her run, what the hell, she couldn't go any faster. Then I remembered something wife number one had told me about a runaway horse — I choked up close on the reins, put my mouth close to her ear and said, “Whoa” each time pulling hard in short tugs until she began to slow down. I patted her neck and spoke soothing words that I will not repeat here. When I got her walking, I gave her more rein and she began to run again, hell, this wasn't fun. I choked up again and brought her to a stop, got her turned and we danced and bucked our way back to camp. With my last fragment of control, I dismounted and tied her in the shade by the river and went to my lean-to and sat, a sore and shaken sodbuster.

And the river began to whisper its gurgly refrain and brought peace to the canyon again as the birds, drunk with nature, voiced their scarlet desires, and sang their family songs. Beams of sunlight struck through the trees and highlighted random bits of ground like scattered diamonds. Coño and I had found peace at last — she drinking from the San Juan and I...I resting my poor body in the shade. It was years before I understood the lesson I learned that day, I have to laugh at myself — “*Window-Pain...*”

I'd forgotten how much acid we did back then. One morning Kenny and I decided to drop some Orange Sunshine and drive to Telluride. I guess we stopped for gas up in Norwood and one of the local ranchers, Charley Hughes, supposedly Judge Roy Bean's grandson, asked if we'd take a horse up to Wilson Mesa, which was right outside of Telluride. We had a stock rack on the back, what the hell, Kenny's a nice guy—

“Sure, no problem,” he says in his offhand way, simultaneously forgetting he'd just taken a major hit of LSD. So we loaded the horse and headed for Telluride. Not long after that, the familiar acid rush came over us, muscles constricting, stretching and unlimbering as the universe opened up and tossed us over the rainbow. Soon we were laughing, this crazy ex-airline captain and washed-up motorcycle racer laughing about having Judge Roy Bean's horse in the back of the truck. Who knows what we said or didn't say; we just dug the beauty as I drove slowly down a cartoon road smiling so much my smile muscles ached.

So we stopped at the Sheraton bar, a questionable thing to do since on Friday nights back then, cowboys came off the mesa and got in fights with the firemen from town, and according to

Kenny, if there was a fight, we'd be in it. Anyway, we're in there and three cowboys come in stomping off the powder from outside and declaring loudly that someone had left their horse in a truck outside in the snow.

So we snuck out of the noisy bar into...into a perfect stillness. A stage had been set in high relief, like an Ansel Adams painting in black and white — in the snow and the night we stood, absorbing the splendor laid out before us — and this horse, I swear, snow piled high on him like a statue. Soon enough, laughter sounded from inside the bar and prompted us to be moving. I started the truck and got us out of *there*. Somehow Kenny found a local rancher outside of town and we left Judge Roy Bean's horse in a warm stall for the night.

“My son Jimmy never knew our bathroom mirror, never stopped to ask what he was for. Only I saw the scared warrior in him. God knows he had fun, but he never aspired to be anything, he just wasted his life away whittling and singing to himself – till that fateful night...” Mildred Flanagan

I'm not sure what we left the canyon for, just the doing of it I guess, because we drove the twenty-five miles back home under a blue moon. The snow had stopped and it was icy clear — home, not a place under roof, but still a place where I longed to be, and the longing left a country western low-level sadness almost like a whisper — almost like the road calling.

“I know I shoona' left Mildred and the boy, couldn't help it... I couldn't find me-self. If I've learn't anything, it's that desire to be someone kills the peace of not needing anything or anyone... an' that's when I began to believe...” Tim Flanagan

Back in camp, Kenny sleeping in his camper by his bear-proof hog pen, moon still up, I walked down to the river. Catching my reflection in an eddy notched by the side of the San Juan, maybe because it wasn't really still water — or no stillness in me, but while I could see my faltering reflection, there was no one looking back.

How you gonna keep 'em down on the farm after they've seen Paree?

fuzzlong@gmail.com

Comin' up — a trip through Indian Gulch to Texas and back; and one last trip on Coño. More, I suppose, in “Making it Real VI.” Book this year... I'm on it.

Costa Rica Is For Families Too!



by Dennis Easters easters3@msn.com

Every year it seems that Costa Rica attracts a younger and younger tourist crowd. Oftentimes people just think of Costa Rica as a tropical retirement haven, or the prime destination for the adventure seeker. While both are true, the diversity of this small country and the large variety of activities found within its Jurassic Park setting, are perfect as a family destination, having something for everyone. In addition, the Tico culture highly values family togetherness so it comes as no surprise that families are welcomed with a warm 'pura vida' and open arms.

Depending on the make-up of your family, most attractions can accommodate children of all ages. Fancy flying through the rain forest on a zip line? How about the mini-zoo, butterfly observatory, and stunning waterfalls at La Paz Waterfall Gardens? White water rafting or tubing down a rapids filled river? Watch turtles nesting or hatching at one of their Pacific or Atlantic coast beaches? Surf lessons or just relaxing on a pristine, tropical beach? If your family can dream it up, chances are Costa Rica can make it happen.

Journeys International recently announced its top 10 family destinations for 2015, and Costa Rica tops the list. Here are the countries in order:

- Costa Rica
- Peru
- Panama
- China
- Japan
- Thailand
- Tanzania
- South Africa
- Galapagos (Ecuador)
- Indonesia

Robin Weber Pollak, the President of Journeys International, said “Firsthand research, feedback from our clients, and the expert knowledge of our on-the-ground guides indicate that these 10 destinations offer the very best opportunities for family travelers in 2015. These countries provide unique, safe, hands-on culture and wildlife experiences that will engage explorers of any age.”

“This is not a new trend for us; Journeys for Families is the expert in family travel and has been for years,” said Sally Grimes-Chesak, Director of Marketing and Family Programs. “Our itineraries focus on providing activities that interest both kids and adults, while allowing the oh-so-important but oft-ignored downtime that is key to a good family trip. We aim for “home base” hotel stays that minimize moving and repacking during the trip. And, our hand-picked guides possess a unique energy and excitement that makes kids feel right at home.”

Journeys has designed three new trips that focus on adolescents; Costa Rica Adventure for Teens, Wild Indonesia for Families with Teens, and Incas & Amazon for Families with Teens. “Most companies have family trips that focus on the younger kids, but rarely plan specifically for teenagers,” Grimes-Chesak said. “We understand that different ages of kids require different itineraries, and we built these three trips specifically around the interests and needs of older kids.”

During our 8 years of doing business here in Atenas, Costa Rica, Gerardo and I have seen a marked change in the clientele that make their way to our office. Not only is Atenas still at the top of the list for retiring expats, every day, more and more families make their way to Costa Rica for fun and adventurous vacations. Many of those young families fall ‘head over heels’ in love and end up moving here full time. You are never too young or old to live your dreams.

I was sitting down, feeling ready to write to you all, when I started to hear the following story inside of me.

I pass it on to you to enjoy as much as I did when I saw the visions rolling and the lesson unfolding.



The "bad" Guru and the little boy

The heart of meditation

In the middle of a meditation session, a Guru stands up and says, "If it doesn't touch you deeply, then it is not the real thing!"

DEAR GOD! THAT SOUNDS DEEP!

But I'm up a tree, and I have no idea what he is talking about. What is supposed to touch me? And what in the world is the real thing?

Questions are running through and out of me. Why do they insist saying this is simple?!? Meditation is so darn difficult.

I've tried meditation groups before, and it was frustrating. And here comes this person glowing spirituality, who says, "just shut your mind."

I'm lost! You want my mind to tell my mind to shut up? Where is the on/off button?

Another famous quote I heard was, "just focus on your breathing and let your mind go blank."

I can breathe, but my mind goes on and on about being focused.

But the one that takes the prize nowadays is, "be present".

Great! Now my mind is saying, "don't go anywhere, be here, be here, be present, be present."

Maybe meditation is not for me.

It was a hot day, and my rounds around the city took me to a place and an experience I will never forget. It was noon, and I needed some shade, so a group of trees in the park were a perfect choice. Right in the middle of that park was a fountain, and right in the middle of that fountain was the little boy, fully focused on the experience and imbibing every second of it! WATER! By the time his dad saw what was going on, it was too late! The kid and all were head and heels into the freshness, and a delightful squeal and contagious laughter was all I remember. It was feeding my soul to see the child so very happy and free.

It all finished quite fast as his dad took over, and the fun we all felt was by now an experience that kept feeding me. I felt freedom, joy and freshness in my spirit. I smiled really big and let the experience fill every cell in my body. Freedom and joy were all of me, and when my mind realized what I was experiencing, I understood. The freedom and freshness I was feeling inside was unattached from the mind and, as many say, "a vibration."

That was the day I really started meditating. I have understood the heart of it because that freedom, that joy left in me with a sensation of stillness and peace. I just sit down to enjoy the stillness and the feeling of freedom, and usually the activity of the mind melts away, allowing me to be fully present like the boy just seconds before he dove in.

Ever since, and with time, it has all become easier and more pleasant. That precious state of meditation has also become sacred moments of clarity.

So here are my thoughts about the heart of meditation:

- We are vibration, and we can indeed be free within.
- Stop trying to be present. LET'S WAKE UP! WE ARE PRESENCE!
- Why would our hearts keep hoping for a better world and a higher consciousness, someday and somehow, when we are completely equipped to start today a better world and enjoy the state of a higher consciousness?
- Real Love liberates us and melts away all fear.

And, if everything comes to a standstill and you can choose to write on your clean slate, what would you choose?

I choose to be deeply touched, I want the real thing.

Written by Konrad Esquivel

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



Stories from Mr. BudBud, Primero Perro of Lighthouse Animal Rescue. They were written 10 years ago when he first came to Costa Rica for a house sitting job.

BB newsletter 1/1/2005

**Buenos noches y'all!! (that means good evening!)
And Feliz Año (pronounced fayleez anyo) that means happy year!!**

This will be a long story because I have a lot to tell you since the last time I wrote!!!

Well, Christmas is over, the new year is here, and Mom and Dad have finally finished unpacking and putting our things away. BOY!!! Has it been hectic around here!!! All our stuff from the states arrived on the 23rd. Three crates 6 feet tall and 4 feet wide and deep. Mom and Dad had to really hustle to get the tree out of the crate it was packed in and get it up and decorated. Of course it was behind a ton of other stuff in the crate so that meant they had all this stuff to HIDE somewhere before the big Christmas dinner on Christmas day!

They hid it all in the guest room. Us fuzzbutts figured out pretty quick that we needed to keep a LOW profile and STAY OUT OF THE GUEST ROOM!!! There was so much happening so fast that chances were good we might get packed into the guest room too!!! Spanky DID get locked in the linen closet...silly cat.

Anyway.....Mom and Dad got all ready for the Christmas dinner. They had only invited about 15 people...but word got out and people started calling Mom and Dad and inviting themselves!!!! EVERYBODY wanted to be at the Christmas party at our house. (I think it was the free food) There ended up being about 40 people here.

Mom, who HATES to cook, cooked two HUGE turkeys, a ham, dressing, mashed potato's, potato salad, deviled eggs, a cake, and a broccoli/cheese/rice casserole!!! She was in the kitchen working for two days!!! All the guests were told to bring a dish!! There was TONS of food!!!!!!

Dad decided us fuzzi-butts needed to be outside in the back yard during the party because so many people were going to be here. He said maybe some of the people would not like dogs staring at them while they ate and maybe some people would be allergic to dogs.

Of course, you know Mom. If you don't want a dog staring at you, go somewhere else!!! And Mom has a REAL problem with anyone who CLAIMS to be allergic. She says she is sure there actually ARE people who are allergic but she has dealt with too many who use it for an excuse to dump their furbabies. But.....she reluctantly agreed to Dad's suggestion. Y'see, Mom knows that most of us can fit through the gate that would shut us outside. She just let Dad THINK that he was locking us in the backyard and kept on cooking.

When the people started arriving I was the first to breach the gate. I sneaked in, real quiet like, and laid down under the bar stools at the kitchen bar. Mom saw me, but she didn't rat on me. She just gave me a wink and told me to play it cool.

Well...then poor, old, crabby ShaSha, the ancient chihuahua, decided she was NOT staying out there. "By crackie!!!! I'm too dang old to be locked outside!! hmph....snort.....the nerve of these people!! Who do they think they are anyway?" So in she came.

I was afraid Dad would notice me when he saw ShaSha but he just scooped her up and took her into his bedroom. She really is old and it was dangerous for her to be underfoot with so many humans in the house. She barked her butt off too!! She sure can be a crabby old gal.

By the time Dad noticed me...someone was putting their dinner plate on the floor for me to eat the leftovers so he just shrugged and went about his business.

Well....I had instructed all the others to be patient and wait until they saw that the coast was clear before making their move. They did real good too!! We all got in except Krystal and that demon Delilah!!! Krystal is a little too big to fit through the bars and Delilah kept peeping through but could never figure out how to slip one shoulder through at a time. She goes at everything FULL BOAR and HEAD ON!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!! It would never occur to her to SNEAK!!!!

I gotta tell you folks, Delilah, ("Demon Dog" for short) is either going to keep me young or run me to death!!! She absolutely INSISTS that I play with her and she won't take NO for an answer!! I play with her until I am worn to a frazzle and then I try to walk away. The little heathen runs up and bites me!!!! ON THE BUTT!!!!!! No matter how many times I tell her to STOP IT she still does it! Man!!! What a little DEVIL!!! Soooooo....I just keep playing with her until SHE gets tired or finds another victim. !!!!!

Tailwags!!!

BudBud the gate crasher (editor's note: Second part of this story in April 2015)

Fun after Fifty



By Carole Connolly
caroleconnolly@gmail.com

Whether you think you can, or you think you can't, you're right! Quote by Henry Ford

I have always wanted to (fill in the blank). I have heard it from so many so often – usually followed by “but ...” No more buts! Just do it.

Sometimes all it takes is a gentle suggestion, or maybe a little push to get you started. I was well past fifty when I woke up one day and decided my real estate career was over. I was good at it, worked hard, and made good money. I had been a real estate agent for over twenty years and was licensed in both California and Florida. I was just done.

I went on vacation and never went home. Okay, that's not the entire truth but I always wanted to say that – as many of us have! I was working as a real estate agent in Miami and went to visit some friends who were running sailboat charters out of St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands. After watching my friend, Cara, crew the catamaran, cook the meals in the galley and follow the Captain's orders. I decided I could do that job.

I remember the day in 2006 when Cap'n Scott chided me, “Ay, so ya want to be a boat wench, do ya?”

“Yeah, that's it, boat wench! That's the life for me. Know any captains in need of a first mate?” I answered and was only half serious.

Two days later, Captain Mike turned up at the local watering hole in St. John looking for a new cook for his charter catamaran! I faked my way through the interview which was pretty much just showing up in a bikini. I flew home to South Beach, closed down my apartment and real estate agent position, and moved to the Caribbean. It was here that I took up writing.

It started with email. As my list of friends who wanted updates on my life grew, several people encouraged me to write. I was not trained as a writer and had no goal to become a “writer” per se

– I just liked to share colorful stories of my life. I wrote stories of funny things that happened at sea, and submitted them to a local sailing publication, and became a regular columnist for “Crew Life” magazine. When they started paying me for my stories, I started thinking of myself as a writer.

Fake it ‘til you make it.

Now, I’m on the verge of publishing “Flying High with Carole Jean,” a memoir about my flying days in the 1970s. Okay, you caught me in the act of shameless self-promotion! But really, if I can do this, you can do it. Whatever “it” may be for you. For some, it may be writing down family recipes to pass on to your children. If you accompany the recipes with fun family stories, it will be cherished by your loved ones.

Maybe it’s painting for you. There are lots of talented artists right here in Atenas, who can help you with that. Nan Gorman gives beginning art lessons at her studio at 15D, Roca Verde, every Tuesday morning – painting is from 9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m., guided drawing starts at 10:00 a.m.

Maybe you always wanted to learn to sail, surf, or kayak. There are opportunities an hour away in Jacó.

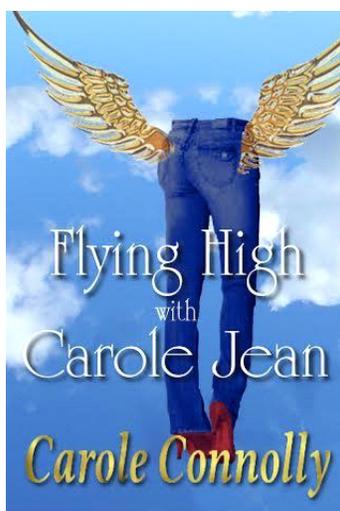
There is a Bridge Club in Atenas, as well. Surely they would welcome new players.

I hear some expat retired folks complain about boredom. Seize this time to pursue the things you have always wanted to do, but didn’t have the time. You have the time now. It’s fun!

Some of my favorite “never” phrases are:

Never give up! You’re never too old. Never say die. Never say never. You never know!

You might discover you are good at something you never knew you could do. I never dreamed I would become a writer – especially after the age of fifty. And now I have a book almost ready to go to press. I have surprised myself! I encourage you fun people over fifty to surprise yourself, and continue to have fun – at any age. Enjoy!



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.



Clouds Over Atenas

Oil on Linen

34"x 42"

Al Alexander

jeanandal@gmail.com

Artist's Statement: I tried to capture the majestic feeling of the billowing clouds dwarfing the mountains surrounding Atenas.



Mardi Gras Birds

Jocelyn Farquhar

jocelyn@squibblesdesigns.com



Legs and Hooves
Graphite and Watercolor Sketch

Artist's Statement: Quick sketches are a good way to keep drawing skills up. For me, it helps with animal anatomy.

Diana F. Miskell
Horse and Cattle Art: www.dianamiskell.com
Costa Rica Blog: <http://dianacostaricablog.blogspot.com>

For the bloggers...



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Biolley Buzz
Bunky Bartlett

bcrcoffee.com
<http://www.bestofcostarica.org>

Carole Connolly
Claudia Leon

<http://carolejeanscostaricacapers.com>
<http://photoleraclaudinha.smugmug.com/>
<http://straightline-cmkl.blogspot.com/>

De La Pura Vida Costa Rica
Dennis Easters/Pure Life Development
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delapuravida.com
<http://www.atenasrealestate.cr/index.php/blog>
<http://dianascostaricablog.blogspot.com>

Fred Ball

<http://natureboy70.blogspot.com/>

Going Like Sixty

<http://goinglikesixty.com>

Julie and Rick in Costa Rica

<http://julieandrickincostarica.blogspot.com/>

Marietta Arce
Mi Chunche

<http://marisundays.wordpress.com>
michunche.com

Nadine Hays Pisani
New Life in Costa Rica

happierthanabillionaire.com
http://www.anewlifeincostarica.com/nuevo_vida/

Paul Furlong motorcycle blog

<http://eyeneo.com/>

Pura Vida Mommy

puravidamommy.blogspot.com

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Shannon Farley
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<http://enchanting-costarica.com/>
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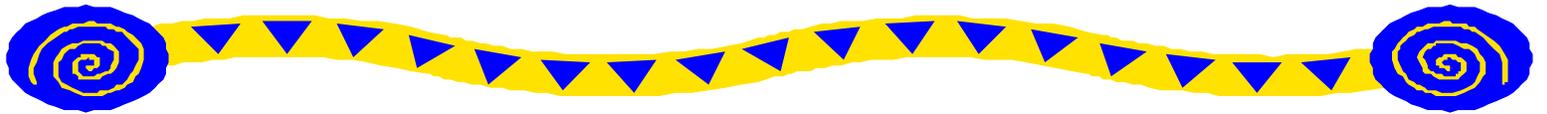


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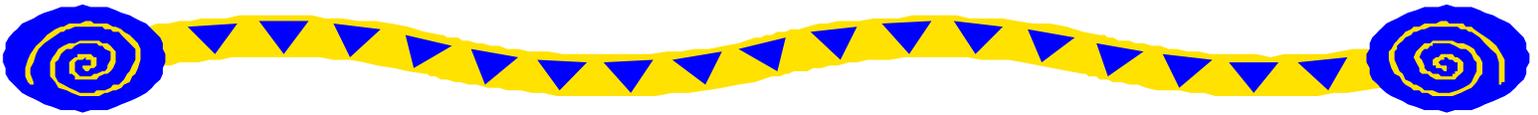
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Atenas Today Advertising Rates and Policies

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.

Advertisers should send the copy via email to atenastoday@gmail.com, with pictures attached as separate files. We will compose the ad and send back a proof for approval. The deadline for material for that month's issue is the 15th of the month.

Payment can be made in any of the following ways:

- 1) deposit to BCR Account No. 962-0003149-6 Marietta Arce Valverde
- 2) cash in envelope in PO Box 65 (Marietta Arce Valverde) in Atenas.

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