

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. 106

October 23, 2013



Photo Credit: Atenas Today Staff

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.

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DIRECTORY OF ENGLISH-SPEAKING PEOPLE IN THE ATENAS AREA

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

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

Publisher's Note



Last year, at this time, our family was immersed in the college application process for our daughter. The prospect of college had always been in the background, of course, but suddenly reality hit as I realized that our children no longer needed me in quite the same ways.

The process was interesting, if not always enjoyable. One year later finds our daughter thriving and experiencing all the challenges that college life entails. We are confident that she is meeting the tests successfully as her brothers have done before her. My husband and I are now getting 'back to the future' and making the necessary adjustments in our dated plans.

As November approaches, I look forward to gazing at the flowers of the sugarcane which comprise the vistas outside my kitchen window. The rains will subside. We will prepare for the holidays that we share with loved ones and friends. We will reflect on the past year and lament once again that time passes too quickly.

The days left in the calendar year will bring many celebrations to our little town. I hope you participate in as many as you are able to. I will do my best to keep you informed as soon as I can so that you can make your plans.

There are countless unknown factors when it comes to predicting whether Atenas is the right place for many expats. The turnout and the atmosphere of solidarity and fun at the celebration of Cultures on October 13th is evidence that most of us find it is a pretty good fit. Our life can be exceptional in Atenas, today and every day!



Fall Foliage in the U.S. (clipart)

Happy Reading!

Marietta Arce
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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

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 email:

Adrienne and Richard Baksa
2446-8509
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rbaksa@mac.com

MTB Y Caminata La Zopilota 2013

Puestos de hidratación,
Refrigerio, Carros escoba,

Almuerzo

Gracias a nuestros
Patrocinadores

Sorpresas!
Reto de Resistencia!



II Recreativa Mixta



24 de Noviembre

Rutas de: 12, 20 y 30 kms

En pro de la construcción de nuestro salón comunal!



When:
February 9th, 2014

Where:
Quinta Romavista, Barrio Mercedes, Atenas
2km off the old Alajuela to Orotina Hwy #3

What ime:
Open to public: 11:00am a 4:00pm

All proceeds go to support the Hogar de Vida home for abandoned, abused and orphaned children in Atenas

Whetting Your Appetite
The 2014 Atenas Charity Chili Cook Off
Is Coming to Town

www.atenaschilicookoff.com

MARK YOUR CALENDARS: Sunday, February 9, 2014

By Judy Timson, Committee Member
jteci@yahoo.com

Well, we are just a little over three months away from the *7th Annual Atenas Charity Chili Cook Off* and you can see our Committee hard at work. We absolutely promise this to be the *BEST and BIGGEST Cook Off yet!!!*



2014 Atenas Charity Chili Cook Off Committee

Here's What You Have to Look Forward to:

Now we really want to whet your appetite so that you'll definitely have this event on your radar screen come February. If you haven't seen our photo album from last year's event, here's your chance, just click our link: <http://www.atenaschilicookoff.com/gallery/2013/index.php>.

You can expect a fun-filled day, showcasing up to 22 *Chili Teams* vying for top honors with their BEST chili ever. We'll have judges on hand to determine key honors, but you, too, will be a judge in determining the "People's Favorite" honor!



This Chili Team Had a Great Time!

You can expect another great array of *raffle packages* that include trips, activities, services, meals, etc. And a 50/50 raffle drawing where the winning ticket will receive 50% of the proceeds collected. Our raffles were such a fantastic draw last year because we went over and above to create fabulous gift baskets that people are still talking about. Bring your good luck with you!



Wow, Great Raffle Baskets Await You!

You can expect another opportunity to visit our *Sponsor booths* and learn about their business here in Atenas or surrounding areas. Many came with great giveaways if you visited their booth. We couldn't do this event without their generous support in becoming a key sponsor for the Chili Cook Off.



Our Banner Proudly Displays Our Sponsors

You can expect to enjoy some of your *favorite foods* while listening to *music* and reconnecting with friends. Hamburgers, hot dogs, potato salad, desserts galore, popcorn, ice cream and let's not forget we have our famous *Beer Garden*, too. You won't leave hungry or thirsty – we'll satisfy those desires!



Yummmmm....We'll Be Waiting For You!!!!

You can expect this event to be *kid-friendly* – bring your kids. There will be *swimming* and *face painting* and more!



All Jump for Joy In Making a Difference for the children at Hogar de Vida!

And speaking of kids, you can expect to learn more about *Hogar de Vida*, the local orphanage here in Atenas. We have chosen this worthwhile organization to again be the recipient of the Chili Cook Off proceeds. They are making differences on a daily basis in these children's lives.



And last, but certainly not least, you can expect to enjoy your day by being served by a *great group of volunteers* dedicated to ensuring your day is fun-filled and that you walk away with great memories.

Koins for Kids

Don't forget about the new *Koins for Kids* promotion! Please start saving ALL your coins between now and the Chili Cook Off – preferably the bronze coins, but we'll take it all! We will have a fun way to acknowledge each and everyone's coins as they drop into the Koins for Kids bucket. Save, save, save!



SAVE Your Koins for Kids!

Interested in Supporting Us?

This is not a single day success or a success because of a single person or even a group of people. You know that saying, "it takes a village"? Well, indeed it does. It begins with the vision, a committee, sponsorship, donors, volunteers, chili teams, chili judges and many, many other components to have a great event. If you, or someone you know, are interested in joining us, please contact Committee Chair, Stephanie Bogatinoff, email stef@costaconcierges.com or call 8863-9964.

More to come.....can't wait to see you ALL on February 9th, 2014!!!

EDITOR'S NOTE: This article is reprinted with permission from the ILE Post September 2013 Issue. ILE Post is the monthly publication of the English as a Foreign Language Department of UTN (Technical National University) in Alajuela.

Giving and Receiving Feedback

By Aaron Torres (ILE Professor)



We all want to look “good” or act the best way possible to the world and in that interest of doing that, we may try to block the information that runs counter to the much-desired image. We fear information that might not be according to our “OKness.” This fear causes us to behave in ways that shut us off from feedback. There is another problem, too. Not only are many of us afraid of feedback, but we lack skills related to sending and receiving it. Few people have the chances to learn feedback skills. So, we more or less, do it the way it was done to us; and that way it was done to us is what might make us fear feedback in the first place.

One way to stop this cycle is to learn relevant feedback concepts. For instance, what makes effective and helpful feedback? For the purpose of this paper, feedback is defined as information that flows between people that has to do with their interaction in the “here and now.” Feedback does not assume that the giver is totally right and the receiver is wrong. On the other hand, it is an invitation to interaction and has some give-and-take to it.

Here are some suggestions that lead to a more effective feedback. First, pay attention to what you do in significant interactions. You can also find out by asking others if they can point out any criteria that you violate constantly. Share the list with them if that would help.

Second, do not expect miracles to happen. Disconfirming feedback almost always carries some friction no matter how skillfully given; and some people are more easily irritated than others during feedback. Third, if for one reason or another, you think you do not want to try to be more open and use more effective feedback behaviors, then do not.

Effective feedback comes as soon as appropriate after the behavior; immediately if possible; later if events make that necessary. Feedback must be direct from sender to receiver, and it includes the sender’s real feelings about the behavior; as they are relevant to the feedback. Remember to check for clarity, to ensure that the receiver fully understands what is being conveyed. And finally positive feedback is asked or desired by the receiver.

To sum up, take time to reflect on your feedback, ask yourself questions. Reflection also gives you time to understand the true nature of the impact the behaviors had on you. As you become more comfortable with the delivery of feedback, your feedback skills will become more and more effective. People you work with (learners, co-workers, managers) will benefit from the effort you put toward helping them develop. You in turn will benefit from developing a useful skill that raises the productivity of all people around you but also bolsters your personal leadership skills.

Cultural Diversity as a Bridge



by AT Staff

In 1992 Costa Rica celebrated Columbus Day as it had for many years. The early steps had already been taken, however, to make this tradition obsolete and replace it (by law) with the Day of Cultures. The first official celebration of Day of Cultures was in October 1994.

This new designation embraced and recognized the existing ethnic diversity in the country when Columbus arrived yet acknowledged the legacy from Spain and other European nations. The day's important meaning is based on tolerance as the foundation for the peace Costa Rica still enjoys on most streets daily.

On October 13th in the Central Park of Atenas, Day of Cultures was celebrated and enjoyed by a diverse group of expats and locals. A great time was had by everyone!



Early morning Set Up at Rincon de Nana's booth

Here are more of the special moments that served as cultural bridges transcending borders that day!



Still smiling after an intense Dancefit workout Pao Lara and her team of champions!



Marimba Sextet "Mi Leidy" offering traditional music



Tina and Pamela displaying their Country Dancing talents!



Lidia Pérez Pérez Guatemalan artisan



John Randall and his Bridge players demonstrating skills!



Perfect for that afternoon coffee!



Ana Lucia Fernández orchid expert & community leader



Atenas Mayor Dr. Querima Bermudez with artist Yoshii **



Lee Family Band Bluegrass & Gospel Music



Finale: Guillermo Gonzalez and his Band!

The participants and visitors had a great time and the Municipality and CATUCA hope more of you will share your culture with the town next year!

Photo credits: Municipality of Atenas with the exception of the ** for which credit is due to Hisano Bell.

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



Stories from Mr. BudBud, Primero Perro of Lighthouse Animal Rescue. They were written 9 years ago when he first came to Costa Rica for a house sitting job.

7/3/2004

Hola All!!!!!!

Well I have HAD IT!!!

I'm buying Mom a ticket and sending her home!

She scared the crap out of me today!!!!

The day started out really nice.

Enid came up and cleaned the floors. Mom made lunch for herself, Dad, Enid, and me.

After Enid left we all got in the car to go up to that house

WAY up on the mountain and look at the property again.

It went real well and I got to see some areas that I did not get to see yesterday.

The caretaker there fell in love with me and scooped me up in his arms. He took me upstairs to meet his wife. We left Mom and Dad downstairs looking around so I was not sure exactly what was happening!!!!

It turned out okay though. His wife and her friend just loved on me and then he took me back to Mom and Dad.

When we left there I heard Mom and Dad say we would just head back to our house so I sacked out in the back seat for a snooze.

All of a sudden Mom makes a FAST RIGHT turn and almost threw me out of the seat!!!

I heard her tell Dad, "We are stopping here for a while! I want to see these horses!"

Well, as it turned out, she had spotted a group of people at a bar with their horses. Mom is a sucker for a horse so NATURALLY she had to stop.

The horses were not like the horse who lives at our place. His name is Hotflash and he is pretty spoiled.

These horses were pretty fancy steppers. Mom says they are the Spanish Dancing Horses.

Mom got me out and put me in my buggy. She and Dad wheeled me down to where the people were standing, drinking, and talking.

Of course there were some pretty girls and kids there too and they wanted to pet me.

I was JUST FINE until one of the men got on his horse and made it step up on this flat thing made of plywood. Sort of like a stage but only about an inch or two high.

THEN he spoke to the horse and the horse started DANCING on that plywood thing!!!!!!!!!! You talk about LOUD!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!! I looked at Mom and said "LET'S GET OUT OF HERE!!!!!!!!!!" but she couldn't hear me.

The horse danced for a while and then the man rode it up and down in front of the bar for a few minutes to cool it down.

Mom was walking around taking pictures with the video camera and Dad and I were standing there talking to a tico/gringo who had walked over.

Okay...here comes the scary part!!!

I looked up from my stroller and here comes another horse!!! A WHITE one!!!! He was stepping REALLY high and doing his dance on the way to the "stage."

I looked around for Mom to tell her "Here comes the noise again. LET'S GO!!!"

Mom was not anywhere to be found!

I'm thinking "OH NO!!! MOM'S GOING TO GET TRAMPLED!!!!"

THEN....I looked UP....and there was Mom!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!..... ON TOP OF THE WHITE HORSE!!

I didn't have a clue how that happened. I figured the horse must have run into her and BOUNCED her over his head and onto his back.

Mom was holding on to some ropes that were connected to a leather thing on his face but she didn't look scared.

I figured she must be in shock and hadn't had time to get scared yet!!

I turned to Dad and started barking to "LOOK..LOOK..MOM'S IN TROUBLE...AGAIN!!!!....DO SOMETHING!!!!!"

He looked up and saw her and then HE looked scared!!!

Mom just smiled and rode on by. She makes me SOOOOOOO mad sometimes.

She told Dad to grab the video camera so he started taking video of her riding the dancing horse. Then he tried to take some with the other camera but it would not work for him. He figured the battery was dead so he just put it down and started taking video again.

Mom rode for a while and all the tico's were saying that she was a good rider. Funny... I never knew she could even DO that!!!!

After she got off the horse she explained to me that she was raised with horses and had been quite a rider when she was younger. She told me that the horse did not bounce her over his head. She got on him ON PURPOSE!!!!!! NOW she tells me!!!! For CRYING OUT LOUD Mom!!!!!! Why don't you explain those things FIRST????

Anyway, we were invited into the tico bar by the tico horse owners who were there. They all treated us like home folks!!!! It was great!!!

The men were telling Mom and Dad that the horses are very much like the Tennessee Walking Horses in America. They were saying that some Americans use shackles and other cruel devices to make the walking horses step so high. They were explaining that they never use anything like that with their horses and that gentle training and love are the best way. Of course Mom agreed!!!!!! One man told Mom that he owns four horses and that she is welcome to come ride them anytime. I told her that I might like to learn to ride too so she said she might teach me.

There was also a man there who had his two dogs with him. When he saw me in my stroller he came right over to love on me. Then he brought his dogs over to meet me. There was an English bulldog and a husky. Mom took video of them!! They were REALLY nice dogs and were very friendly!!

Mom went back outside and put new batteries in the other camera. Then she took some pics of the horses. One of the men came out and got on his brown horse and rode it onto the stage for Mom to take pictures.

BOY!!! Those things are LOUD!!!!

We went on into Grecia and had supper. Then we went for a walk through the park. It is so nice there. All the families come to town on Saturday night. The kids play and the adults sit around and talk and visit. It is REALLY nice!! Friendly, y'know?

All in all it was a pretty exciting day.

Buenos Noches Y'all!!!!
BudBud the perro who wants ear plugs



By Shannon Farley

Football Inspires World Peace

You don't need a well-manicured grass pitch. You don't even need all 22 players, or fancy uniforms ... or even shoes, for that matter. All you need is a ball and people willing to play.

The most popular sport in the world – football (known as soccer in the USA) – can be played anywhere by anyone. That's the simple beauty of a sport that traverses borders, has brought bitter enemies together, even stopped wars, and has been a unifying force across the planet.



“As a consequence of its simplicity and global popularity, a number of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have noted the suitability of football as a mechanism to help build peace and promote social development in post-conflict societies,” wrote Joel Rookwood and Clive Palmer of Liverpool Hope University, UK, in a 2011 study entitled “Soccer & Society.”

The United Nations Sport for Development and Peace Program takes the message further to include all sports: “Sport as a universal language can be a powerful tool to promote peace, tolerance and understanding by bringing people together across boundaries, cultures and religions.”

Football has played an important role in mending rifts between nations. History has us remember the famous Christmas Day 1914 truce during World War I in Flanders, Belgium, when German and British troops put down their guns for a day to play football (England won). Famous Brazilian football star Pelé's 1969 trip to Nigeria with his soccer club, Santos, caused a three-day cease-fire in the Biafran War, reports the “Play Soccer Make Peace!” project, initiated by the World Association of Non-Governmental Organizations (WANGO).



Football has become a vital instrument for hundreds of social development programs run by private and community-based organizations around the world. In the Middle East, two initiatives – Football 4 Peace and another by FIFA (The International Federation of Association Football) – are helping children of Israel and Palestine intermingle using football to promote peace. The Football for Peace organization, another NGO, stages goodwill international peace matches on different continents to promote cultural exchange and peace among children and adults.

Football allowed a poor boy from Brazil, Pelé, to become one of the greatest players of all time. And football lets even small nations be big for a time on the international front with the World Cup competition.

The race to qualify for the 2014 FIFA World Cup in Brazil will hit fever pitch over the next two months as teams fight for a place in the biggest single-event sporting competition in the world. Already on its world tour, the FIFA World Cup Trophy was on display in Costa Rica at the end of September. The world's most iconic symbol of football is flying around the globe, giving fans the chance to see it up close before the June 12 start to the World Cup.

FIFA and the World Cup Organizing Committee are using the World Cup 2014 to promote football as a means for social change. Thirty-two teams of boys and girls from grassroots organizations all over the planet will come to Rio de Janeiro during the last two weeks of the World Cup to celebrate their achievements and demonstrate the power of football for world peace in the Football for Hope Festival 2014.



Additionally, FIFA will call attention to world social issues through their official environmental program, Football for the Planet, and their anti-discrimination initiative.

Besides advancing world peace and other social issues, major sporting events such as the FIFA World Cup, the Olympic Games, etc. drive tourism sky-high for the hosting country, and those countries lucky enough to be spotlighted with winning teams or athletes. Sports tourism is big business. According to FIFA, football generates \$26 billion dollars annually, especially in Europe.

Football is one of Costa Rica's biggest passions. Costa Rica was the ninth country in the world to qualify for the 2014 World Cup, and has high hopes to do well in the world event. Currently ranked second in the CONCACAF (Confederation of North, Central American and Caribbean Association Football), Costa Rica has played in three World Cups so far – 2006 in Germany, 2002 in Korea/Japan, and 1990 in Italy.

“Go Sele!”



Costs of living in Costa Rica compared to Europe...



by Dennis Easters easters3@msn.com

Those who are closest to me know that my biggest passion in life is travel. It's a passion that started at the age of 13 when a family friend invited me to travel with her to England and Scotland to visit her daughter who was studying abroad.



Gerardo with pasta and fruit in Siena, Italy

Every year around September/October, Gerardo and I make it a point to take a nice, month long vacation. We always choose the same time of year because it is the rainiest time in Costa Rica and the slowest time for our real estate business. We feel very fortunate each time and we look forward to packing up and traveling to far away destinations like Madrid, Paris,

Venice, and Rome with great anticipation.

Having had the privilege of living in Costa Rica for 8 years, I often think that living in paradise has become more expensive over time. In comparison to when we first started visiting Costa Rica about 10 years ago, I cannot deny that prices have increased. However, our vacation abroad this year was a real eye opener, making us realize that we live wonderful lives in this beautiful country and that we do so at a bargain price!



Gerardo and Dennis with Pinocchio in Rome!

On this year's itinerary we visited new destinations such as Tuscany, Venice, and Rome in Italy and Toledo in Spain. We also returned to Paris. The global economic downturn has hit parts of Europe hard, especially Spain. In Spain, the cost of living is very low in comparison with other European countries..

Honestly, the cost of living in Spain is on par with Costa Rica or even a bit lower, depending on where you live and what your spending habits tend to be. For example, we purchased groceries that provided 3-4 days of breakfasts and 3-4 nighttime meals for 3 adults totaling €56.00, which is approximately \$75.00 USD. Similar items in Costa Rica would have cost us about between \$80.00 and \$90.00 USD.

Eating out is another bargain in Spain. A nice 3 course meal (entree, main course, and dessert) with a bottle of house wine starts at around €15.00 (\$20.25 USD) per person. You would be hard pressed to find those prices in Costa Rica for the same quality meal. Having said that, the unemployment rate in Spain is hovering at around 28%, with the youth unemployment rate at a record high of 56.1%. Compare that to Costa Rica, which has an overall unemployment rate of 7.9%, and it's not hard to see which country has the stronger economy. In Spain, real estate is an even bigger bargain. In some beach areas of the country you can find two bedroom apartments starting at €60,000.00 or \$81,000.00 USD.

From Spain our next stop was Italy. I was particularly excited about our visit to Italy because I had never been to the country but had heard many wonderful stories. All the clichés you have ever read about or seen in the movies I found to be more or less accurate. It was

FANTASTIC. However, the prices and cost of living were not fantastic. In fact, we found Italy to be very expensive. The bargains we found eating out in Spain did not exist in Italy where the average main course started at around €20.00 (\$27.00 USD), not including wine. At the grocery store, the same items we had purchased in Spain for €56.00 (\$75.00 USD) jumped to around €125.00 (\$168.75 USD). We found this very interesting since locals said Italy was also hurting from the global crisis.



Interior of our Tuscan Villa!



Exterior of our Tuscan Villa!

While in Tuscany, I was particularly interested in real estate and wanted to see how far one could stretch their dollar. Tuscany is stunning with incredible vistas much like those here in Atenas. However, there is one big difference between real estate in Italy and Costa Rica:

PRICE! An average 2 bedroom, 2 bath farm house on 1-2 acres of land with swimming pool and nice views will set you back €580,000.00 (\$783,000.00 USD). Compare that to a similar home in Atenas, Costa Rica for around \$400,000.00 USD and you realize that Costa Rica is still a great value. Prices in Venice and Rome are even higher, with the price per square meter jumping to over €10,500 .00 (\$14,175.00 USD). Compare that to the average price per square meter in Atenas of \$1545.00 USD and you'll see that Costa Rica is dirt cheap!

Finally, we made our way to Paris. I have been to Paris many times over the years and the City of Lights has never disappointed me. It is everything you ever dreamed it would be and more! Contrary to popular belief, I have never found the French to be rude. However, the ugly side of Paris is the cost of living. For example, I went to the local grocery store and picked up coffee, salad mix, orange juice, 2 chicken breasts, a baguette, and fresh cream and spent a whopping €28.00 (\$37.80 USD). Your typical 375ml bottle of Coca Cola will set you back €4 (\$5.40 USD). I can buy the same Coke in Atenas for \$1.60 USD.

On the real estate front, Paris is one of the most expensive cities in the world. We stayed in a nice 70m² (749 s.f.) studio apartment in the Marais district. We were informed that the market value of our studio was €980,000.00 or \$1,323,000.00

USD. Ooh la la, tres chic! For the price of our studio apartment in Paris, you could purchase a large 5,000 to 7,000 s.f. estate style property in Costa Rica with at least 10 acres of land and stunning views.



T-Bone Steak in Florence, sold by the 100 grams!

To say the least, our vacation was everything that we needed and wanted - a change of pace, scenery, and culture. The amazing thing about traveling is that it enables you to see the majestic beauty of the world and experience the wonderful cultural differences that make each destination special. Traveling also allows you to appreciate how special your family and home truly are. This year's travels reminded me of the many reasons I chose to move to Costa Rica. We could never live the same lifestyle in Paris, Rome, London, or even my hometown of Tampa, Florida with the same budget that we enjoy here in Atenas, Costa Rica. When our journey ended and we were driving back to Atenas from the airport, I rolled down my window, took a deep breath of the fresh mountain air, and soaked in all the lush greenery that surrounded me once again. I knew that I was home and reminded that I am blessed beyond words.

CLOSURE



*by Marietta Arce
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It has been my great privilege to be one of the organizers of the annual Climate Fair for the past eight years. In order to achieve the success we have had, the members of the organizing committee expend a lot of time, energy and resources. Many things happen behind the scenes, which are not (and should not be) of concern to those who come to participate in and enjoy this wonderful family-oriented festival.

We have guidelines and deadlines for participation in this annual event. Our vendors cheerfully sponsor the event by contributing a part of their proceeds to the production budget. We also rely on our members' dues, contributions from the community and institutions in our county to pay the millions of colones it costs to produce this wonderful cultural celebration. Our mission and vision for the Climate Fair have always been very clear to me.

As the most visible and vocal member of the committee, I am also the first person most people have contact with when

they have a product or idea they would like to promote during the Fair. I am routinely placed in the unenviable position of making an immediate and perhaps unpopular decision. I take my responsibility seriously. If and when a product or idea is declined, it is not because I am an old fuddy-duddy bent on curbing someone's enthusiasm for a new venture. Many factors are considered and many people are consulted before a final decision is made. When final decisions are made and communicated, however, we do expect that they will be respected.

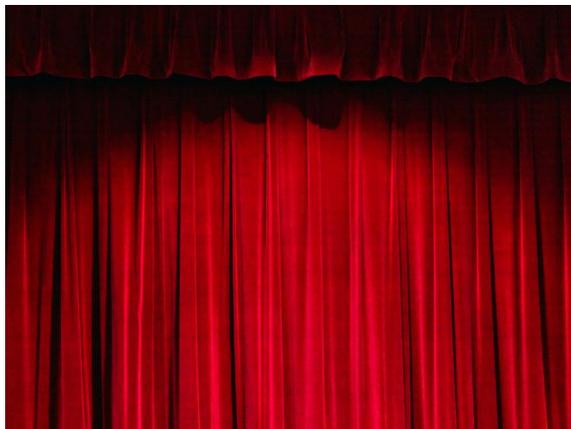
It is customary for me to spend many hours dealing with the details that come up during the three or four days of continuous activities. Sometimes there are simple difficulties (a missing light socket, a non-working microphone, no garbage bags) that are easily resolved. Sometimes I have to deal with unauthorized street vendors who become belligerent and I need to look to the local authorities for assistance. I accept that these things come with the territory and move on without feeling too much stress.

This past April, I attended the wedding of a dear friend for a couple of hours while the Climate Fair was going on. When I returned I noticed several flyers on the ground. I picked one up and was surprised to find that it was an invitation to an upcoming event for which no permission to distribute flyers had been granted. As a general rule, we do not allow flyers to be distributed because they become paper airplanes, doodling canvases or balled-up debris that need to be properly disposed of by us early the next morning.

I went in search of the source and found a man handing them out. I introduced myself and asked him to stop, explaining that the venue was not appropriate for his flyers. I informed him that I had previously suggested other places this particular event might be better advertised. I had, in fact, already done a good share of advertising for it on their behalf. An exchange of points of view followed and ended when he looked at me sternly and declared: "You're selfish!"

A few seconds of contentious silence engulfed us as I digested this verdict. I found my voice and told him that he was entitled to his opinion but that he would still have to stop. He left. He returned shortly thereafter and found a front-row seat to enjoy the rest of the evening. I saw him at the following day's activities as well. I confess I felt envious of his nonchalance. I wanted for just an instant to glimpse inside his mind so I could see for myself what made him believe he was an expert on me.

It has taken me almost six months to process this most unpleasant scene. Writing about it in a way that satisfies my need to journal events used up a few hours over several days. I have revised this essay a number of times. The catharsis has been liberating. Publishing it here and now is providing closure. It has been my experience that closure often brings me transcendence.



THE END!

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.



Untitled
15.5" x 14"
Oil on Canvas

Al Alexander
jeanandal@gmail.com

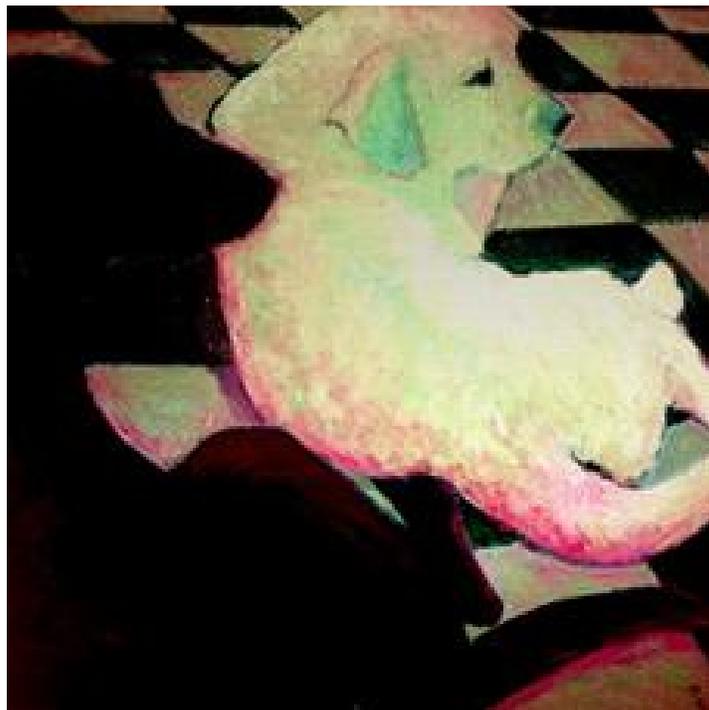


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Diana F. Miskell

Horse and Cattle Art: www.dianamiskell.com

Costa Rica Blog: <http://dianascostaricablog.blogspot.com>



Julie's Dogs

Oil on Canvas

36 in X 36 in

Harriet Sheppard

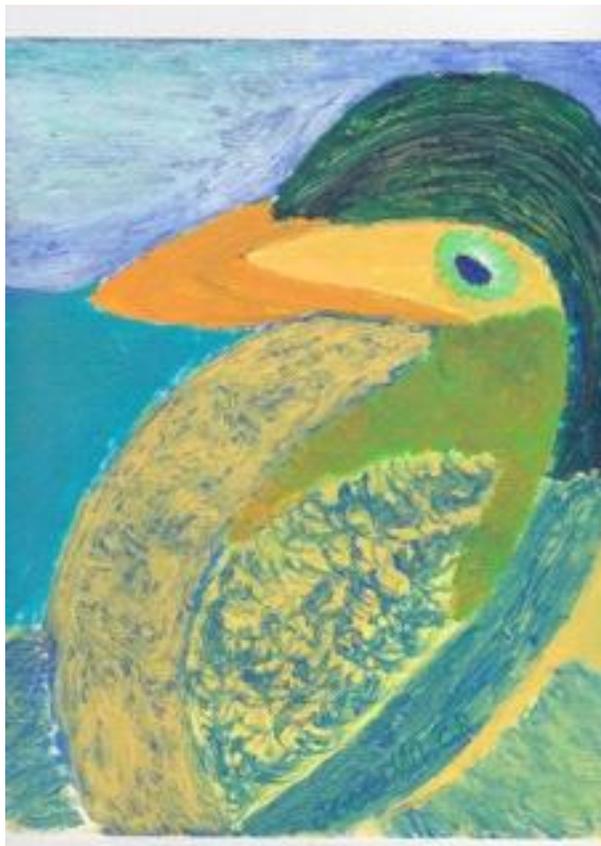
hweyman@hotmail.com



Larry Felder

"Roseate Spoonbill at the Aransas Lighthouse"
48" x 60" oil on canvas, 2013

Email: larry@feldergallery.com
Portfolio: www.larryfelder.weebly.com
Gallery: www.feldergallery.com



Baby Bird
Jocelyn Farquhar
Jocelyn@squibblesdesigns.com

For the bloggers...



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

Biolley Buzz	bcrcoffee.com
Carole Connolly	http://carolejeancostaricacapers.com
Claudia Leon	http://photoleraclaudinha.smugmug.com/ http://straightline-cmkl.blogspot.com/
Costa Rica: Sisters in Transition (Judy & Roxi)	http://costaricasistersintransition.blogspot.com
De La Pura Vida Costa Rica Diane Miskell	delapuravida.com http://dianascostaricablog.blogspot.com
Fabulista De Costa Rica Fred Ball	fabulista DECR.blogspot.com http://natureboy70.blogspot.com/
G. Martin Lively Going Like Sixty	fishinginandaroundcostarica.blogspot.com goinglikesixty.com
Julie and Rick in Costa Rica	http://julieandrickincostarica.blogspot.com/
Lois and Jim Craft	adventurecraft.blogspot.com
Marietta Arce Mi Chunchu	http://marisundays.wordpress.com michunche.com
Nadine Hays Pisani New Life in Costa Rica	happierthanabillionaire.com http://www.anewlifeincostarica.com/nuevo_vida/
Paul Furlong Paul Furlong motorcycle blog	http://shootright.blogspot.com/ http://eyeneo.com/
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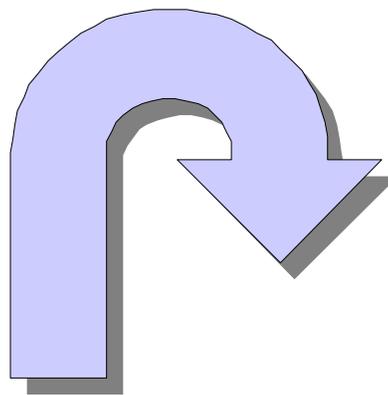


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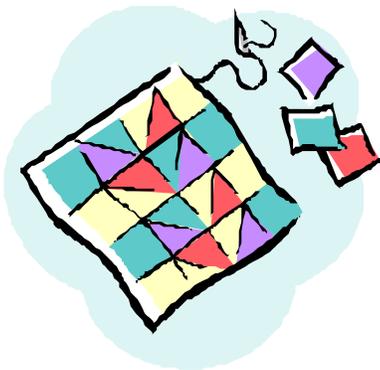
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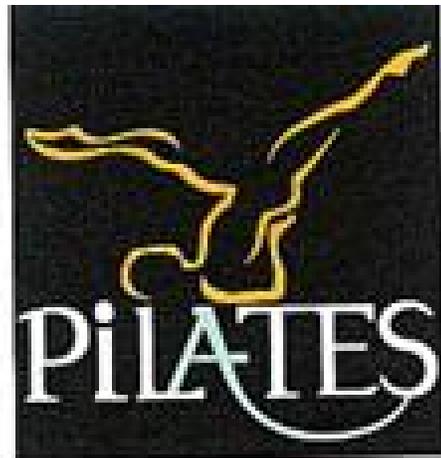
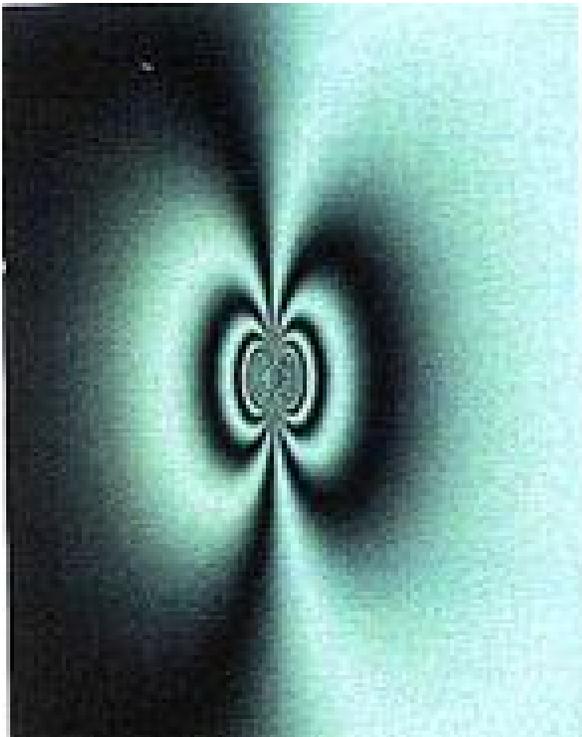
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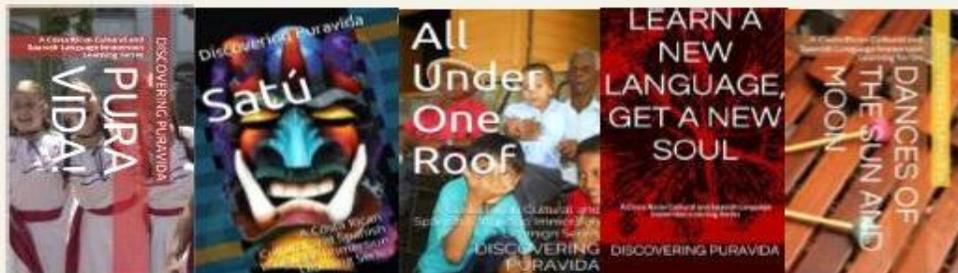
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