

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



Mamon Chino (Rambutan) in Season in October

In This Issue:

Marietta Arce --Publisher's Note	p. 3
Community Bulletin Board	p. 4
Rocio Ling - Bilingualism Matters	p. 7
Linda Ledbetter - Friendship Library News	p. 8
Animales Atenas - Dog and Cat of the Month	p. 9
Mary Martin Mason - Death & Dying in Costa Rica	p. 12
Shannon Farley - The Story of Grace	p. 16
Konrad Esquivel - Metanoia	p. 19
Tina Newton - The Angel Tree Story	p. 21
Mary Martin Mason - Animales Atenas visit Hogar	p. 23
Bonnie Fluke - Chili Cook-off (Fiesta) 2016	p. 26
BudBudJones - It's a dog's life, really!	p. 29
Art Gallery	p. 31
Listing of Blogs of Interest	p. 35
Classified Ads and Display Advertising	p. 36

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.

Advertising rates and policies p. 43



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



On October 1st, the 25th International Day of Older Persons was celebrated worldwide. Here in our little town, there have been many activities at our local Hogar de Ancianos (Senior Citizens Home) honoring this special population. It has been my privilege to participate in several events as a spectator and I am very happy that we can count on this wonderful institution in Atenas to provide these residents with an exceptional quality of life.

I admit that I have reached the milestone of “older person” without too many regrets because I have always understood that no matter how long a person lives, life goes by very quickly. I have rarely “frittered and wasted the hours” because my Mom always kept me too busy to have time to kill! I learned not to procrastinate on doing my chores because then I would not be able to devote myself to my pastimes.

It is hard to believe that just a few years ago, our family was busy with the college process for our children. My

husband and I were preparing to get back to a future that has been our reality for a couple of years. The worldwide phenomenon that finds the +60 crowd moving to urban areas in developing countries has thankfully not tempted us to move away from the quiet and tranquility we enjoy most of the time in our rural surroundings! We are content and look forward to welcoming whatever changes are in store for us in the coming years.

November approaches! I find myself gazing at the landscape and imagining the breathtaking vistas I will soon see. The rains will end and we will get ready to welcome our children back for the holidays. Our town will light up in anticipation for the New Year, a year that will bring an important change to our local government after we head to the polls in February to elect a new mayor!

Every season (and every issue) finds me greeting new or potential residents who request to be placed on our mailing list. I am always thrilled to participate in conversations that remind me of when we discovered this tiny place more than 20 years ago. A lot has changed since then, but it still feels wonderful to wake up in Atenas today and every day!

Happy Reading!

Marietta Arce
marietta.arce@gmail.com



COMMUNITY BULLETIN BOARD

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

October 16th – October 25th San Rafael Parish Celebrates Patron Saint Festival

October 23rd – Celebration of Atenas Patron Saint St. Rafael, banks closed

October 24th – United Nations Day

October 31st – Halloween!

November 1st – All Saints day (Daylight Savings time ends U.S.)

November 2nd – All Souls Day

November 11th - Veteran's Day (U.S.) / Remembrance Day (Canada)

November 22nd – Teacher's Day (Costa Rica)

November 26th - U.S. Thanksgiving

REGULARLY SCHEDULED ACTIVITIES

Every Sunday: Buddhist Book Discussion at Roca Verde (See Flyer)
Please note there will be NO Book Discussion on Sunday, November 8th.

Every Monday: Meditation #10 Roca Verde (Barb Moss), Gate opens at 8:30 a.m. closes at 9:00 a.m. Free and welcoming of men and women. Practice consists of a 20-minute silent meditation, followed by a dharma talk via You Tube by Tara Brach of the Insight Meditation Society in the States.

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

First Wednesday of each month: Recycling at Municipal Lot near the Escuela de Musica – from 7 a.m. until noon

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

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



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 !

Book we're currently reading is "The Noble Eightfold Path" by Bhikkhu Bodhi,
which is available at no charge. 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: Tuesdays - 6pm - Bible study in English. Wednesdays - 6pm - English worship
First Sunday of each month - An English translator is provided for the 9:00am Spanish worship services. (After the service many of the ex-pats gather at a designated home for a potluck lunch. Just ask any ex-pat before or after worship for the particulars.)

ENGLISH PASTOR: Steve Lucas - <https://facebook.com/steve.lucas> • 8764-8960
TICO PASTOR: Oldemar Artavia - <https://facebook.com/oldemar.artavia>
ADDITIONAL CONTACT: Judy Hickman • 2446-4791 • judy@proslink.com

DIRECTIONS: On Highway 3 at the blinking light

**If you are interested in attending Catholic prayer
and communion services *in English***

(Father Claudio has approved Mass with an English translator and English music). The first service took place Monday, October 19th 2015 at 4 p.m. at San Rafael in Atenas Centro

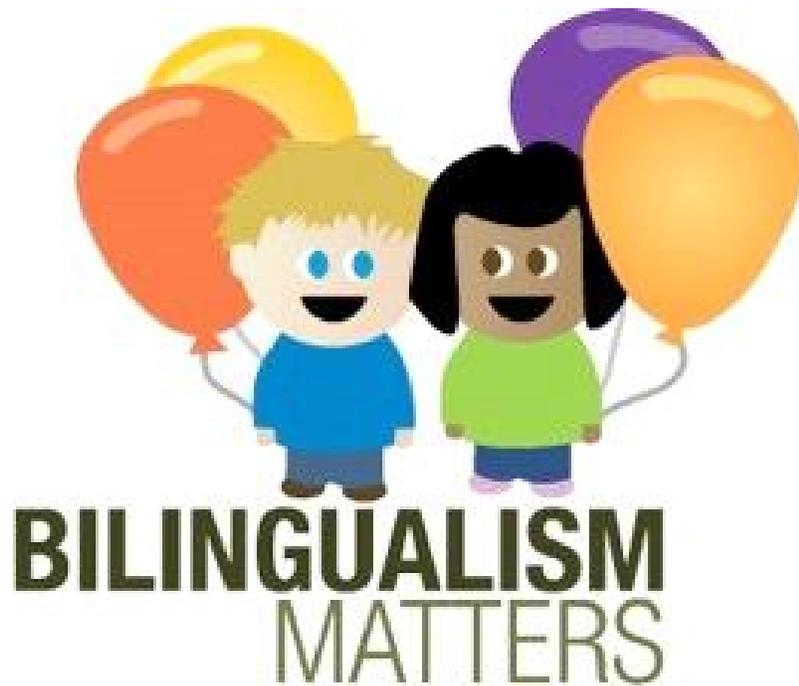
We would like to compile an email list.

Please contact David Davis

By Phone: 8759 3433 and/or send an email

to: davenansi@gmail.com





The English Club at P.I.T (English for work) is interested in engaging guest speakers of English. We aim to help English-language learners who are currently working and studying and cannot afford private institutes. We do not charge for this service and our main goal is to help them become more competitive once they graduate. Our activity is simple, we meet and start talking about current events or work-related issues; on a recent Tuesday for example, we talked about *Compensation and Job Benefits*.

If anyone has extra time or can pass this message to someone who might, we meet on Tuesdays from 5 to 6 p.m. at UTN Central in Alajuela. The program and the students would profit greatly from the experience and you will surely feel good about it too.

Please contact Rocio at miling@utn.ac.cr for more details.

graphic courtesy Bing.com

Friendship Library* News
October, 2015



The treasures just keep pouring in. Everyday is Christmas at our house when Bruce brings the daily report from the library: the number of books returned, the books donated that day, the condition of the children's section (a bit of a mess usually means the books are being used), the number of books taken from the special displays. Even through the "slow" season, library activity has continued to keep us busy.

A couple of books deserve special mention. J.K. Rowling's new book Unexpected Vacancy (F Row) will be on the new arrivals cart after Nov. 1. Although she is most famous for her Harry Potter books, this one is definitely for adults.

The Thicket by Joe Lansdale (F Lan) will keep you turning pages no matter what else you should be doing. The author John Connolly called Lansdale "one of the dark kings of modern mystery fiction" and this book of turn-of-the century east Texas blood and redemption is all that a great mystery should be.

Another notable book that will be on the "new arrivals" cart after Nov. 1, is David and Goliath by Malcolm Gladwell. Did you ever put down a book and say "Darn (or some other expletive), now I must reconsider so many things I thought I knew"? This most recent title by Gladwell is at least as compelling as his previous books (Tipping Point, Blink, What the Dog Saw). I've read them all and enjoyed them all and I recommend them all, but this may be the best yet. Think smaller class sizes mean better education? "Three Strikes" laws lowered crime rates? The "best" college is always worth pursuing? That you understand the effect of dyslexia on a child? This book will at least make you consider alternative answers.

I never dreamed we would have so much demand for books for children. I am happy to report that a school district in Florida has donated approximately 200 books, mostly picture books for younger children, to the Friendship library. It has taken two trips with carry-on luggage to get them here but that is a small price if they find their way into the hands of young readers.

We continue to be grateful to all the folks who bring in their books to donate, who bring their recent magazines to share, who take and return books and share kind words.

Happy reading.

Linda Ledbetter / lindaledbetter@juno.com

*Located in Restaurante la Carreta, Atenas Central
Photo credit: Eyelin Vargas, La Nacion

SPECIAL DOG OF THE MONTH



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

Cira-PLEASE HELP ME LIVE



We are desperately, really desperate. Cira needs a new HOME NOW, her TIME is running out! If we cannot find her a solution immediately she has to be euthanized at the end of the month. As it is now, Cira and the other 30+ animals in her current foster home are under constant mental stress, this has been going on for almost a year.

We want to appeal again to people with a big heart and without other pets: please take Cira and give her a future. She is really pure kindness & love on four paws to every human, whether adult or child, she will be the ideal companion. She loves belly rubs and every kind word makes her tail wag.

It's only that she has never been socialized with other animals and particularly with food she reacts aggressively towards other dogs. This is absolutely not unusual (-we bet if she were a pure breed, she would have found a home long ago!-) and we are confident that with training and patience her misbehaviour can be corrected. But she needs a chance, and we cannot offer it to her. Please, please help her! My heart hurts, just to imagine that there might be no happy ending for her! PLEASE!! (If financial support is an option, we can talk about that!)



WHY DO DOGS EAT GRASS

Your beloved canine companion clearly is not a cow, so you might be confused when you see him eating grass. Is he hungry, bored dog, sick? You might be worried. Will eating grass hurt him?

Pica is the technical term for the disorder characterized by eating things that are not food. Sometimes pica is indicated as a nutritional deficiency, though it is often simply a sign of boredom, especially when practiced by puppies and young dogs.

Most vets consider it normal dog behaviour. There are a variety of reasons your dog might be grazing on your lawn.

Suggested reasons why your dog might be eating grass include improving digestion, treating intestinal worms, or fulfilling a nutritional need including fibre. There is also the possibility your dog simply likes the way grass tastes or feels.

Experts agree that grazing itself is not harmful; one thing to keep in mind is that herbicides and pesticides used on lawns can be toxic.

Check the ASPCA's Animal poison control for a list of toxic and non-toxic plants.

. WebMD

DORA TEL.8855-9822 PRESIDENT (ESPAÑOL)
doritrebol@yahoo.com
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

FOSTER PROGRAM

Animales Atenas needs foster homes for kittens, puppies and adult dogs. The program provides temporary housing for the many needy animals. Foster volunteers open their homes ad hearts to animals that require extra attention and care, including those who are too young for adoption requiring socialization and or need medical care. Animales Atenas provides vet care, food and litter free to foster parents. All foster parents are invited to showcase their animals at our weekly Friday Feria next to Pali Grocery store. Animales Atenas has no shelter for the many homeless and abandoned pets in the area.

ANNOUNCEMENT FUNDRAISER

Bingo-November 28
Barrio San Jose Sur

Death and Dying in Costa Rica



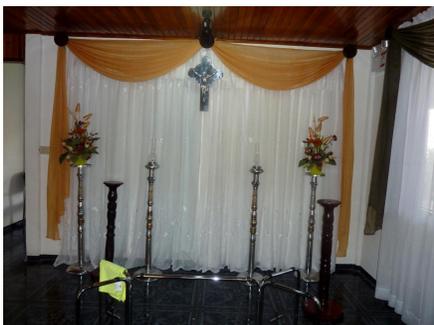
*by Mary Martin Mason
marymason1946@gmail.com*

A Brit at an American funeral was heard remarking about the lengths taken to remove the reality of death from the ceremony. "Yanks use euphemisms like mortician, loved one, or dearly departed. Then you embalm so that it is a compliment to hear, 'She looked so natural.' I ask you, who in death should appear natural?"

The British assessment of North American funeral practices is spot on in the sense that before embalming became common, families dressed the bodies and put them in the coolest room in the house, the parlor (hence, the funeral parlor.) In America's Civil War after Abraham Lincoln's embalmed body was viewed from a train and in newspapers, it is theorized that his body represented the many sons left in anonymous graves, hence giving rise to the practice of embalming in the United States.

Years ago, while living in Japan I discovered the Buddhist custom of the family picking the bones from the crematory ashes and using chopsticks, passing the remains from person to person. Passing anything from one chopstick to another is NEVER done in polite society except at funerals. Great attention is paid to the bones so that the deceased is right side up in the urn.

While funerals have become a huge enterprise in North America with the average funeral costing between \$7000 and \$10,000, a funeral at a local non-profit funeral home, Funeraria Atenas, costs around 470,000 colones (around \$1,000). Before rushing over to prepay funeral arrangements, realize that based on cultural expediency, there are profound differences between European / North American funerals and Costa Rican funerals.



Viewing Room at Funeraria Atenas



Transportation Included

A vela, something akin to a wake, is taking place in Funeraria Atenas for an elderly woman who died the night before at the Clínica CCSS that is across the street. (The location of the funeraria is sometimes handy and always ironic, given that the funeral home was built long before the clínica.) Family members and friends are viewing her body in a chair-filled room, lifting their small children in attendance to view her. The children gaze without fear into the face of the lady. As is traditional in this country, this woman has not been embalmed so that her burial must by necessity take place rapidly. Friends and family have learned of her death through word of mouth. If she had been a woman of means, the obituary would have been printed in *La Nación*. The news did appear on television as it does several times daily when Ticos stop everything and look up at the screen to see if someone they know has died. Her family has been at Funeraria Atenas all night, dressing and preparing her body, although this task could be done by the funeral home as well. Throughout the night her family has been singing songs, saying the rosary and novenas, and telling stories about her.

Funeraria Atenas is a non-profit association without an owner that operates under the control of a board of ten persons. It was built upon land donated by the municipality and has two paid employees, Denia Blanco, and driver, Mario Viquez. There is no need for a mortician since embalming is rarely performed, and in those cases a pathologist is engaged from Forensic Medicine in Heredia.



Denia in the Funeraria's Modest Showroom

Denia with caring precision has arranged the vela, assuring that the family's needs continue to be met as they have been throughout the night. She points out that there are showers and a full kitchen for the family to use as well as a comfortable salon.

For this funeral the cause of death was determined by attending doctors at the Clínica CCSS, so there was no need for an autopsy. In cases of accidents, suicides or if there is any question of cause, the police must be called and most probably an autopsy must be performed by a pathologist. According to Denia, even if someone elderly dies in the night of what appears to be natural causes and is found the following morning by family members, a doctor cannot pronounce the cause of death. Anyone dying outside a hospital must undergo an autopsy. The death certificate must be signed by someone in authority to provide the cause of death. The

death certificate that is registered in San Jose is necessary for burial and for ongoing legal purposes.

A back room of Funeraria Atenas holds a wide array of caskets with cards that list the price that includes flowers and transportation to the church and from the church to the cemetery. The prices are incredibly low, as much as three times less than at a for profit funeral home in town. Denia explains that the caskets are made narrow to fit into the graves at 25 inches wide (three inches shorter than the standard North American casket), but a casket can be made to accommodate a larger person.



Cost including flowers

If we were to follow our recently deceased, immediately after the vela her casket covered with the flowers will be taken in a hearse to the church for a mass. At the end of the mass the family will announce the time and place when the novena, nine days of prayers, will begin. Then the pallbearers will carry the closed coffin followed by those attending the funeral on a long somber walk from the church, blocks away to the Atenas cemetery. Townspeople not in attendance will purposely stay away from the town square to ease the traffic for the procession since police do not provide traffic assistance, and some businesses will close out of respect for the deceased.

In the Atenas Cemetery a white tiled vault or *boveda* purchased by the deceased's family awaits her burial, divided into four sections to accommodate family members who have died or will die. In English "to buy the farm" is a slang term for dying. Ticos refer to buying a funeral plot as "la compra de la finca." Not everyone can afford the 180,000 colones needed to purchase a lot or the 12,800 colones in annual taxes, or the estimated 800,000 colones needed to construct the *boveda*. The cemetery accommodates the indigent with a long row of rental graves, available for 2,800 colones a year. The municipality may pay the rental for paupers, and if a foreigner is unable to pay, the deceased's embassy will be contacted, but the municipality may also pay.

After five years these bodies will be removed to a space if it has been made available in a family vault. Or they may be interred in a common grave or *fosa común*.



A recent burial



"Nichos" for Rent

The reality of limited space in rented or owned graves has resulted in an ongoing removal of bodies to the *fosa común* after five years interment. This practice is overseen by Jorge Calderon Fonseca who over the years has overcome his initial aversion to working at the cemetery. He explains how the *bóvedas* are assembled with four *nichos* or spaces in order to accommodate other bodies. If another family member dies and more space is needed, the remains that are left after five years may be put into a bag and placed into one of the *nichos* or perhaps beside a spouse or loved one. By law, at least one family member must be present at the time the remains are removed. The human side of his job is revealed by Jorge who describes how family members may decide to take a wedding ring or a lock of hair but invariably decide that these need to be with the deceased and return them.

Friends have been known to offer a space in their grave to a family that has outgrown its space. Jorge's family *bóveda* contains the body of young French boy whose distraught father lacked a grave. Jorge's grandchild who lived only one day after he was born is in a rental grave for now. With all these spectral comings and goings, Jorge is entrusted with keeping a record of the placement of bodies. Jorge is an expert on the graves and can point out the oldest *bóveda* as well as two separate graves of foreigners who died in Atenas and made plans to be buried here. The cemetery does not accept crematory ashes.

Death is a natural progression of life to Costa Ricans, not to be obscured or avoided. As Catholics, they believe the soul leaves the body at the moment of death so the body needs to be left alone to decompose. The concern for the soul is embodied in the funeral and burial practices with careful attention to prayers and the lighting of candles to help the soul find its way. The practicality of this belief leads to a heightened concern about the soul over concerns about the mortal remains. In this way, *pura vida* at the point of death is transformed into *pura muerte*.

(Next month look for an article focusing on what foreigners should know about dying in Costa Rica.)
Thanks to Tammy Rodriguez for her translation services during interviews used for this story.



By Shannon Farley

The story of Grace

This is the story of my cat Grace. There are many more stories like hers, and far too many animals that are mistreated or abandoned or neglected. Thank goodness for kind-hearted people who rescue and save, take care of and heal, and give love to other living beings.

*“All things bright and beautiful,
All creatures great and small,
All things wise and wonderful,
The Lord God made them all.”*

- by Cecil Frances Alexander

Last December (2014), Pamela Hutchison and her husband, Steve, were new to Costa Rica and in the market to buy a used car. Having heard that Grecia was the place to buy used cars, one Friday in December, they traveled there from Atenas. At one establishment, while Steve was speaking with the shop owner, Pamela noticed two young children picking small fruit off a bush and throwing them at something around a corner. When Pamela looked, she saw a small kitten sitting passively while the children tried to get her to play.

“She tried to get up and was wobbling. Her eyes were all ‘goopy’ and she looked really sick,” Pamela remembered. “She couldn’t chase the fruit, and I thought, oh goodness that cat is really sick.”

Pamela said when she told the shop owner that his kitten was really sick and needed to be seen by a veterinarian, that he just shrugged his shoulders. At one point in the short conversation, the man told Pamela that he thought he had hit the cat with his car when backing up recently.

“We were on our way home, and I couldn’t get her off my mind,” said Pamela about the kitten.

For most people, the story would have ended right there. How many of us would have done anything more? I wonder myself if I would have.

Not Pamela. A former neonatal nurse, she knew what it meant to save young lives. On that same afternoon, she and her husband stopped by Veterinaria El Encanto in Atenas to speak with Dr. Natalia Leandro. Pamela told her the story. “(Dr. Natalia) said if I went and asked the owners for the cat that they would probably give her to me,” Pamela recalled.

They were not able to return immediately, and the weekend passed.

“I thought about her all weekend and we went all the way back on Monday morning just for the cat,” said Pamela. “The shop was closed but we knocked on the door of the house attached. I asked the woman who answered the door if I could take the cat and get her help at a vet and find her a new home. The woman gave me a cardboard box and put the kitten inside; she was covered in gentian violet and had diarrhea. Then the woman shut the door.”

Pamela recalls the kitten crying and crying all the way back to Atenas, where she immediately brought her to Dr. Natalia at El Encanto.

“She was really sick, emaciated; but from the first day, she showed a lot of spirit and wanted to live,” remembers Dr. Natalia.

They gave the kitten the “will to live” test -- if the kitten wants to live, she’ll eat. They opened a can of cat food, and the sick little kitten “dove in nose first,” said Pamela.

Dr. Natalia put the kitten on antibiotics and a special diet for a few weeks. She had to operate on the kitten (a 2-hour surgery!) for a severe hernia near her anus (possibly resulting from when the man “hit her” with his car). The surgery saved the kitten’s life, and luckily she began to put on weight and play.

The kitten was named “Grace” ... in part for the town of Grecia from where she came, and in part for the grace of God that she survived.

“She was well worth the efforts we had to put in to get her out of there,” said Pamela about rescuing Grace. “I don’t think the people were cruel to her, but they didn’t care so much if she lived. Just the fact that we got her out of there to have a chance at life, it was worth it.”

Grace spent about a month in recuperation between Veterinaria El Encanto and a foster home.

This is the part where I come in. It is now January 2015.

“You did what?!” I incredulously asked my husband, Rolando, thinking I had not heard correctly on the long distance phone call from California to Costa Rica. I was in California, my husband in Costa Rica, and he was telling me he had brought home a new kitten.

I didn’t want a new kitten (at the time). In fact, I had explicitly told my husband earlier that week that I didn’t want any new animals. The reason was not because we already have 5 dogs and, then, one 6-month-old kitten. Rather, it was because I had too many loved ones die in a short time and didn’t want to be responsible for another life.

My father died unexpectedly on Jan. 2, and I had flown back to California (after just spending Christmas there) early on Jan. 4. My precious 3-year-old cat Minnie, who I had raised from a baby, was killed two days later on Jan. 6 on the road in front of our house; my other precious 4-year-old cat Dulce had been killed in July. I couldn’t bear the thought of being responsible for another new life, and what if that life died too.

My husband, thankfully, thought otherwise. He was worried about our little kitten, Nera, being lonely. So, on a bright Saturday morning in Atenas in January, Rolando went to buy dog food at Veterinaria El Encanto and saw Grace. Her story and her spirit touched his heart, and Grace came to our home.



Grace at Veterinaria El Encanto



Grace in early January

The day was January 10. The same day as my father's funeral. One life leaves ... another life arrives. My father adored cats and dogs; he would be pleased.

I met Grace when I returned home to Atenas at the end of January, and I fell in love with her immediately. She and Nera are best of friends, and both cats are my constant companions. Thank you with full gratitude to Pamela Hutchison and her husband, to Dr. Natalia Leandro, to Tammy McNarland (who fostered Grace), and to my own husband Rolando for saving the incredible life who now happily shares our home – Gracie!



Grace in October 2015 in our garden.



Grace playing with Nera in our garden.

The nonprofit foundation Animales Atenas Costa Rica works tirelessly to rescue, save, heal, and care for abandoned and mistreated dogs and cats in our community. Volunteers offer foster homes and they work to find permanent homes for pets. The website for Animales Atenas Costa Rica, <http://www.animalesatenas.com/>, has information on who to contact and how, animals for adoption, how you can help, how you can donate money and time, etc. You can also follow Animales Atenas Costa Rica on Facebook.

Frances Jones heroically runs **Lighthouse Animal Rescue in Atenas**, also taking in and caring for sick and abandoned dogs and cats, and finding them good homes. You can follow their work at <http://www.mrbudbud.blogspot.com/>, where you can also see adoptable pets, help with donations, or see how to contact Frances and her family.



metanoia

Konrad Esquivel

Hello again, I'm back after a short break and I have some "trivial" questions for you. I believe that these questions could quickly and easily be answered, yet if you address them in a transparent and very honest way, they hold some strange force that makes your heart feel different, maybe even change your life forever. A blessed and awaited metanoia.

When we are in the self-inquiry mood, these are the usual ways we would ask these questions to ourselves:

Am I free to love as my heart desires?

Do I hold some unresolved issues that I need to work out before I die or some other person dies?

Have I any dreams that are in the closet, hidden from my attention, because I'm afraid to try?

Will I ever be completely and absolutely happy?

These are interesting questions, but the problem is not the content of the inquiry, but rather the way we ask defeated questions.

I will come from a different perspective just for fun. Let me rephrase the content.

Dear beloved human brothers and sisters, we are more than what we believe to be. We have tremendous ability for deep love and care. We can forgive deep wounds and release those weights carried and stored for years. We are so powerful that we can love with divine love. We have that amazing ability to see the world with God's eyes, giving us the upper hand in healing ourselves and others. That is a treasure and secret of the spiritually mature. Once we have learned to open our hearts and to live from there and understand from there, then love is limitless. We can love freely and openly without it being attached to issues, objects and outcome. Nothing can take our peace forever, maybe momentarily while we work on it, but peace resides at our very core. We can do better than what we have done up to now, because we have the opportunity to keep on growing and maturing. Love is an amazing experience, and it goes as deep as you are courageous to venture.

My beloved friends, we are free to love as our heart desires. I want to live to love as much as I love to live. Let us expand our minds and relax our limitations. For those who understand this calling, I say, this is your best time to love as you dream love to be. Your present moment is your best work scenario. In fact, the only one so don't be afraid to let the inner you come out to play and shine that love that was thought to be reserved for angels.

I refuse to believe the lies, because the path of self-discovery has shown me new deep unattached love for all and all. It's called Oneness, and nothing and no one is excluded. But there is a difference in the way each of us, feeling separate, experiences the path to that realization. That deep love and Oneness is our toolkit for spiritual maturity. We are so powerful that we can resolve long life issues through forgiveness and gratitude. I have done it, and it is wonderful, so liberating. I invite you to be brave and free yourself from those chains. Beloved, we are free to love, and that enables us to enjoy life in the moment in an attitude of celebration. Not because things are going your way, but because we are

powerful enough to adapt ourselves to live life full-color. We can grieve and cry and eventually feel free to fly higher than before. We can forgive and let Karma do its work. So many of us have learned that our happiness is not going to be dependent upon conditions. That's why we call it unconditional love which enables us to keep getting up every time we fall and to be there when others fall. It's unconditional, because it is not guided by fear thus giving us the upper hand to try to live our dreams.

You have to find out what works for you personally and this is where your own path kicks in. Some people do journaling and write down all about their issues and their distress enabling them to enter in relative calmness where they can start to see things with more clarity in the search of peace. Other people meditate to take the stress out and have developed the ability to detach from the nagging of their inner story giving them the feeling of freedom and a way to peace. Whatever it is that works for you, do it. Just do it!

Open your heart and let the healing power of humble, simple, magical and divine love enrich your experience. Live to love deeply and you will love to live fully.

I would like to finish with a powerful quote from dear Dr. Wayne Dyer: "Don't die with your music still in you."

Much love,
Konrad

PD next issue: the love relationship of Oneness

Angel Tree 2015 by Tina Newton



On December 5th at 9 a.m., the children will come filing in to the Atenas Catholic Church salon with expectations of Santa and a gift from their guardian angels. Smiling faces, shining eyes, and joy will be in abundance. Su Espacio, under the new direction of David and Corinna, are continuing the tradition with the Angel Tree in its 11th year. The names of children in need have been collected and interviews were conducted to determine the 300 lucky children who would make the tree this year. Each angel placed on the tree will have information on the age, sex, likes, and sizes of each child, but no names, as all is done anonymously. The tree should be up by the end of October for the community to go and select their angels.

The Angel party itself will provide food, entertainment, and distribute the gifts to these 300 children and of course, requires funds to cover these costs. The Angel Tree committee has been busy thinking of ways to raise money for the Angel Tree party and how to assist David and Corinna in their new endeavor.



Kay's Gringo Postres is also joining in the support of the Angel Tree. Lisa and Harold are allowing the Angel Tree committee to use their Halloween party as a fundraising event in which there will be a 50/50

raffle, a donation for anyone who would like a Sangria drink, and stars will be offered on the tree this year (in silver and gold) for those who prefer to donate to the Angel Tree party rather than buy a gift. The Halloween party will be on Saturday, October 31st starting at 6 p.m. and is 10,000 colones which includes dinner and music. Please reserve in advance to save your spot and don't forget to pick out your costume.

Volunteers are always needed for the day of the event to serve food, give out gifts, work the door, and bake cookies. And let's not forget the gifts...go by Su Espacio or Kay's to select your little angels and buy a gift that will light up the eyes of a little one.



Volunteers December 2014



Volunteers December 2014

The Angel Tree activity is something that requires the support of the whole town and the community of Atenas has proudly supported this project for 10 years. The 11th year promises to bring more smiles to the lives of these children who would not be likely to receive any other gift at this wonderful time of the year. It is an emotional project that not only creates a smile but also warms the heart of the giver. Wouldn't it be nice if more things in life were able to give such happiness?



Angel Tree

Be a guardian angel and pick an
angel in need to give a gift to for
Christmas.



Pets Raise Spirits of Senior Citizens at Hogar de Ancianos



*by Mary Martin Mason
marymason1946@gmail.com*

October, designated as Senior Citizens Month, offered Animales Atenas volunteers the opportunity to visit the residents of Hogar de Ancianos, the local senior citizens' home in Atenas.



Animales Atenas assists the dogs and cats of Atenas through education and hands-on efforts in locating families, rescuing endangered animals, and offering spaying and neutering to reduce the population and thus improve the lives of the animals.

The volunteers brought dogs, most of whom had been adopted through Animales Atenas, to meet and greet the seniors. Research and practice shows that dogs and cats can help calm and soothe individuals, especially those living in nursing home facilities who welcome but rarely have the opportunity to enjoy the company of pets. On October 12 and October 15, it was obvious that the spirits of the residents were lifted as they experienced a mutual affection with the dogs. Those living at Hogar de Ancianos including some that were immobile were seen stroking the dogs and interacting, their smiles as evidence of their appreciation of the unconditional acceptance that pets offer humans.



Dora addressing residents



Dora and Clara addressing residents

Hogar de Ancianos' oldest resident, Romelia, who was born in 1914, attributes her 101 years to working hard which she says keeps her young. Clara Luz, 89, likes poetry and was once a lecturer. Both Romelia and Clara Lux were thrilled to tell about their lives and to hear the stories of the visiting dogs that were shared by the volunteers.



Dora and 101 year old Romelia share a laugh!



Dora and Tatoo greet resident

Longtime volunteer for Animales Atenas, Dora Castro, solicited the stories of the seniors, some who sang or recited poetry. Volunteers then shared the individual stories of the dogs. Dora's dog, Tattoo, was born without a front leg due to a genetic abnormality. Dixie, an American Eskimo dog, owned by Dina and Tom Duffy, lost a hind leg in an accident. JoAnn Pelligrini's Dama is a Jack Russell terrier who shares a household with five other dogs whose owners saw the need to adopt abandoned dogs. Eddie and Clara Otera's Mia was found in a box without food, and their other dog, Cita, was rescued through Animales Atenas after been found tied to a tree in the old farmers' market. Jodie Cook's dog, Dutch, was recently adopted after spending most of his life at Dogland, a shelter near San Ramon that rescues dogs. Five year old Leo recently joined the family of Harriet and Bob Cates who adore their newest family member. Joni Lockwood's Pumpkin is 8 years old who with his blind sibling came to her 4 years ago after spending his first four years in a rescue shelter.



Mary, Dina and JoAnn with Dixie and Dama



Clara and Mia greet resident

Those who give of their time to Animales Atenas do so out of love for animals and to assure their care. What was evident at Hogar de Ancianos is that the love that pets offers unconditionally is appreciated by the elderly. Among the many human smiles and the animal counterpart of wagging tails, it was difficult to determine who was most benefited, the seniors, the volunteers, or the dogs.



Dixie makes a new friend



Harriet and Leo say hello



Dutch and Jodie with animal lover resident!



Joni and Pumpkin greeting the residents

Picture credit (except Mary Mason's picture!): Tom Duffy (tom@duffyportraits.com). We could not include all the wonderful pictures Tom took. They are available on his Facebook page (Tom Duffy). Thank you Tom, for your generosity.

ATENAS CHILI FIESTA
By Bonnie Fluke bfluke@yahoo.com



Atenas Chili Cook Off 2016

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HOGAR DE VIDA

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www.atenaschilicookoff.org



Over the past month or so, a loose association of gringos and ticos have begun to come together, a little bit like salmon returning to swim upstream, to plan the 2016 Atenas Chili Fiesta. The Chili Fiesta is an entirely volunteer-run event which raises money for Hogar de Vida. Some of the *gente* have been volunteering for a number of years, some people are volunteering for the first time and some, like me, are coming back for the second or third time. It is compelling enough that each year some people volunteer while on vacation, or while doing due diligence in our area towards moving here. The Chili Fiesta is important to Hogar de Vida, and it is an important event for the communities of Atenas.

For those of us who have lived here a while, it's also been a rite of passage as well as a way to meet most everybody in town. That's why I volunteered my first year, just for the day of the event. And last year I was one of the over 120 volunteers who worked the event, attended by over 2,000 people. On January 31, 2016 the Atenas community will host the 9th annual Chili Fiesta at Sabana Larga. You might want to volunteer this year!

We volunteer for *Hogar de Vida*, a children's home in Atenas which has been helping at-risk children for 20 years. Hogar shelters up to 35 children, age birth to six years, and gives love, protection and spiritual guidance to them all. Hogar meets the children's daily needs by giving them each a stable home, good nutrition, clothing, education, and trustworthy authority figures. *Hogar* does all this on a *finca* in Barrio Fatima de Atenas made up of three homes for kids and their Tia's, a community kitchen, several *ranchos*, two swimming pools, ample outdoor play areas and a freestanding pre-school. Staff includes Tias, pre-school teachers, psychologists, and a nurse as well as support staff who cook and care for the grounds. The entire *finca* is sheltered and protected by a tall cement fence with a large electronic gate built with contributions from past Chili Cook-Offs. I encourage

you to go see for yourself *Hogar's* facility and hear about their work with the kids. Contact Steve Hoover at kabooka66@gmail.com to take part in a tour in English or Spanish.



Volunteers preparing everything February 2015

Tamela Hedstrom is a wonderful story! She and her band performed the night of last year's Chili Fiesta, and like most of us who have been there she fell for the kids at *Hogar de Vida*. So when fate presented her with the opportunity to compete for a cash prize donated to the charity of her choice, she named Hogar de Vida her chosen recipient. Then she went on TV and won! So on June 26th, she came to donate 3,000,000 colones, and stayed to push the swings.



Tamela and children

As in past years, the Chili Cook-Off and tasting will occur in the morning and we will have entertainment and dancing in the afternoon, with food and crafts all day. 2016 holds new excitement for Chili Fiesta attendees. We are changing up our raffle and have many different home-oriented prizes including kitchen appliances. We will be giving away lots more prizes for bingo, which will occur in the Salon after the Chili Cook-Off ends. And we will present Bull Riding from 4-6 p.m. in the bullring for a separate admission fee. Another thing I can promise to Parents – cold juice available where you buy sodas! Easy! Most of last year's vendors are returning, and the beer garden will be full of live music. So please come to judge the best chili in Costa Rica on January 31, 2016. And in the meantime, think about volunteering, either to help plan the event or the day of the fiesta. You can contact the volunteer coordinator, Julie Voyer-Taylor, at volunteers@atenaschilicookoff.org. And you can friend us on Facebook at the Atenas Chili Cookoff!



The Mamones Chinos February 2015

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.

Hola Y'all!!!

We have been pretty busy around here. Juliette and I had to go to town with Mom and dad several times to help pay bills and stuff.

One day Mom took the camera along and took a bunch of pictures of our "routine." We went to the video store first and rented some videos. Then we went to pay some bills and have some keys made. Humans have to have keys so they can "jingle" them when they come home to let us perros know they are here!!

After getting the keys made we went to a coffee shop and had iced cappuccino. (Cappuccino frio) Mom let us have some of hers. It was okay but it's not as good as chocolate milk shake. Mom laughed at us when we finished ours because we both had some on our bottom lip. Sort of like the "Got milk" commercial but upside down!! LOL!!!

After we got done with all our errands in town we went out to dinner. Juliette and I were pretty tired. We had not had our normal 23 hours of naps and so we dozed off while we waited for the food to arrive. But we woke right up when the waiter arrived with the goodies!! Mom shared her chicken (pollo) with us.

Of course, when we got home all the other perros had to sniff us all over to see where all we had been and what we had eaten. Mom always saves some of hers to bring home for everybody.....unless she spots a street dog who needs it. If that happens then she comes home and hugs us all and gives us special treats to make up for the food she gave to the strays. It works out pretty good that way. We ALL profit from it!!

Then, in February, we had visitors!!!!!! Uncle Lance and Aunt Joan came over for a few weeks and brought along a couple of friends. We all had a GREAT time!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Aunt Joan is a REALLY good cook!!! We had all kinds of goodies. And she SHARES!!!! While she is cooking she will give us little bites to make sure it is good. We perros were the official taste testers!!!

We got four times more lovin' too!!! Man!!! They almost tired us OUT from so much lovin'!!! But we always rallied and were able to accept a few more chin scratches and belly rubs. We would not want to disappoint our humans!!

They decided to take a short trip to see some of Costa Rica so Mom got Enid to stay with us while they were gone. We had a pretty good time but we would rather have been with them. Mom says they saw lots of neat things.

Mom says they saw lots of dogs while they were on their trip. She found one little stray at a restaurant in Dominical and pulled lots of ticks off of him. He fell in love with Mom and thanked her by giving her kisses on her hand. Mom says there was also a pair of little Maltese dogs at the hotel they stayed at. Mom showed me pictures. They belonged to the owner of the hotel.

They also saw Howler Monkeys once when they stopped for a picnic on the side of the road!!! There was a whole family of them in a tree nearby!! Then they saw a sloth in the top of a tree!! It was laying on its back on a limb and was eating some kind of fruit!!

**The day after our company left Mom had to go back to the states. One of her cousins is getting ready to go through the Rainbow Bridge to Heaven and Mom had to go make the funeral arrangements. Mom says Flossie (her cousin) is 92 years old!
WOW!!!!!!!!!!!!!! That's 644 in dog years!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!**

Mom says Flossie will get knocked down at "the bridge" because she is a REAL animal lover and always took in strays. Mom says Flossie won't mind the fur crowd there! She will just be happy to be back with her best friends!

Gotta go but I'll tell you more next time!

Tailwags from Costa Rica, BudBud the taste testing perro

The Atenas Today Art Gallery

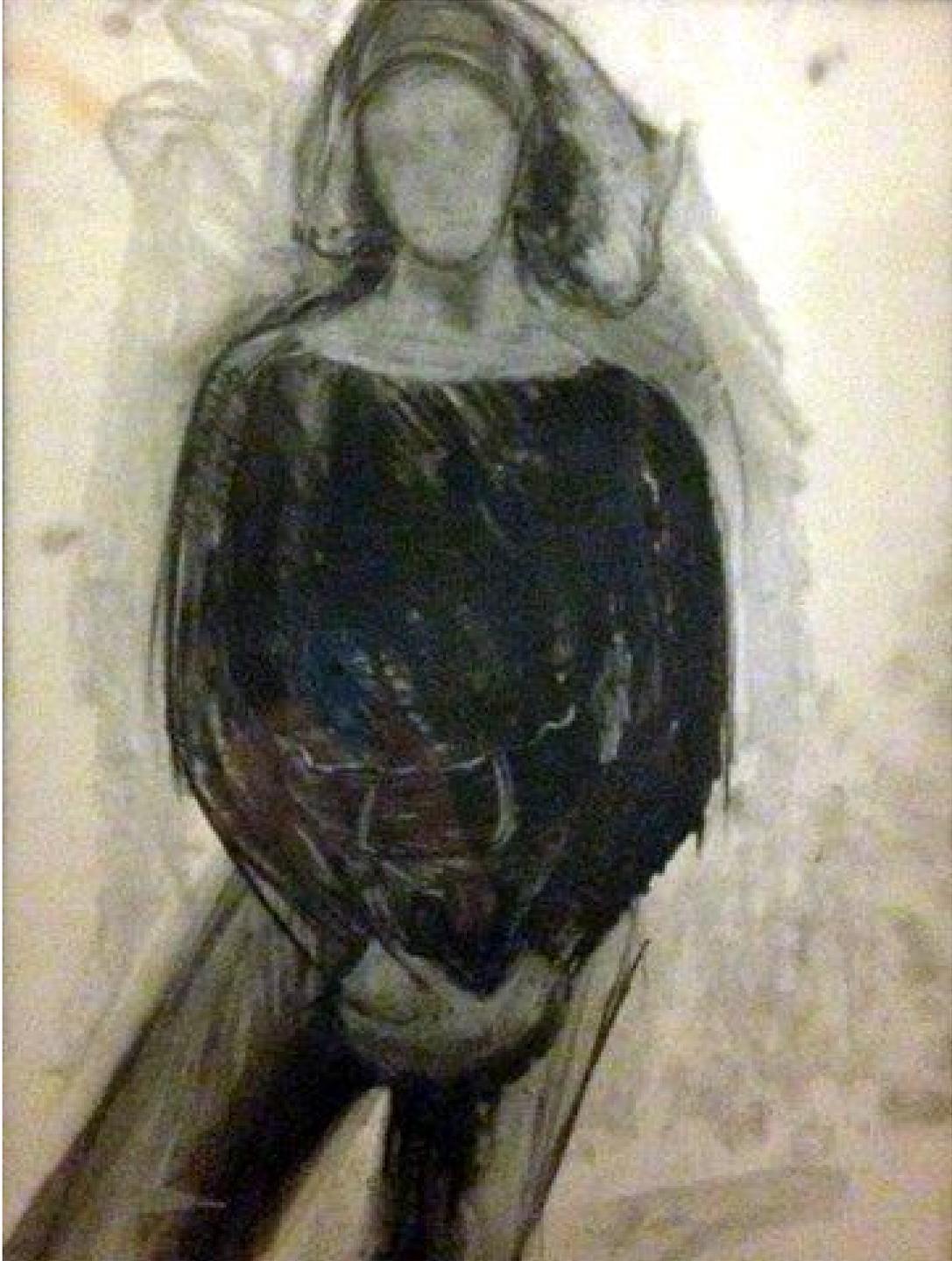
The Art Gallery is a regular feature of Atenas Today. Local artists are encouraged to submit photographs of their works to be included in the gallery, and to send a new picture each month. The artists may be contacted via the email addresses shown.

T



**The Window Shopper
17" x 22"
Oil on Canvas**

**Al Alexander
jeanandal@gmail.com**



Camden
32" x 20"
Charcoal on Paper

Harriet Sheppard
hweyman@gmail.com



Pair of Oxen
Acrylic on gallery wrapped canvas

Artists Statement: This pair were in the annual Atenas oxcart parade

Diana F. Miskell
Horse and Cattle Art: www.dianamiskell.com
Costa Rica Blog: www.dianascostaricablog.blogspot.com



Harvest Bird with Pumpkin Tree

Jocelyn Farquhar
Jocelyn@squibblesdesigns.com

For the bloggers...



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

Biolley Buzz	bcrcoffee.com
Bunky Bartlett	http://www.bestofcostarica.org
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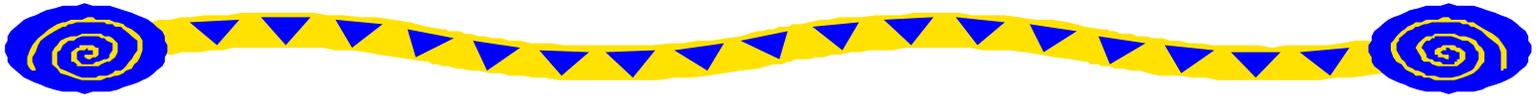


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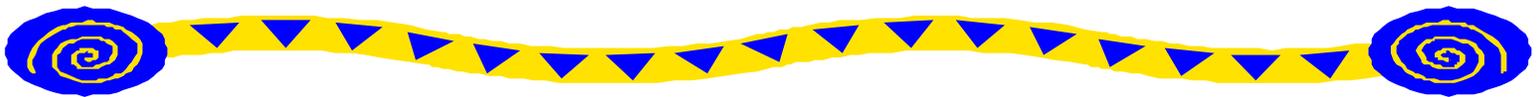
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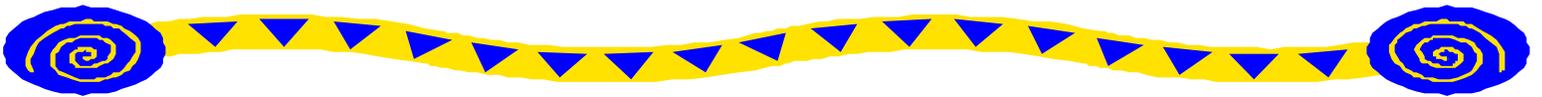
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WANTED-ANIMALES ATENAS

A LOCATION FOR OUR PERMANENT HAVEN FOR ABANDONED PETS

Animales Atenas in the very short time since its inception has become extremely successful in rehabilitating abused and neglected animals and finding them new homes. However, this success has created new challenges as we are now becoming the refuge of even larger numbers of animals than previously and our limited facilities can no longer cope with the influx of abandoned cats and dogs and the problems that they bring with them. As an example, we have in the last month rescued, treated and adopted a dog that had been hit by a vehicle necessitating the amputation of one leg and the repairing of another fractured leg; fostered Boris, an elderly black Pekinese which needed the extraction of 15 teeth that had rotted through neglect and also the surgical removal of part of his tongue that had been bitten by another dog and become infected leaving him unable to eat properly. Veterinary care for animals following surgery is a very high proportion of the monthly outgoings of the society as is the cost of special dietary needs and care for animals that have been starved to the point where their body organs (kidneys, liver and heart) have been seriously affected and have started to fail. All animals such as these need quiet, calm facilities to recuperate and it is becoming increasingly difficult to provide this. For this reason, we wish to establish an abandoned animal haven where animals under stress can recuperate and be rehabilitated.

We are looking to establish this haven as soon as possible and are seeking assistance to find a suitable location. This should be close to Atenas so that it can be accessed easily by volunteers who will provide the on-going care that the animals need. A vacant lot, with or without a building, or perhaps the rear of lot being used for commercial purposes such as a mechanics shop or truck park would be ideal. We are prepared to fence the lot and if there is no suitable building install, for instance, a large container that would be converted to part hospital/store/rehabilitation centre. A property that can provide a site for an extended period is preferred and we are prepared to discuss a rental agreement if necessary.

There are many readers of *Atenas Today* who have lived in the district for a number of years and who may know of potential sites for our animal shelter that we are unaware of. We would appreciate advice from readers about any possible site that may meet our needs. We can conduct negotiations directly with the landowner if that is preferred but would welcome the involvement of anyone interested in seeing this vision for the future welfare of the animals of our town come to fruition.

Please contact Eddie Otero with your thoughts as follows:

edot13@gmail.com 8308-8485 English or Spanish



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