

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. 129

September 23, 2015



Herpetotheres cachinnans
(AKA Laughing Falcon)

Photograph: Walter Wengrowich

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

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



DIRECTORY OF ENGLISH-SPEAKING PEOPLE IN THE ATENAS AREA

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

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

Publisher's Note



The summer is over in New York but here in Costa Rica, we are facing the heaviest months of rain before we welcome our dry (summer) season! I love the way summer is approached in the U.S. (maybe in Canada too). There is a very pronounced shift in everything from dress to attitude. The observance of Labor Day, though, brings barbecues but also a bit of sadness as parents prepare their minds and homes for the coming school year with its endless rush and homework battles!

If you've been reading this publication for a while, you might remember that September is my birthday month and that I usually think of the start of **my** new year as an opportunity to make new goals, etc. This year, I turned 60, a milestone that seemed very far away when I was in my 30's but seems to have come very quickly! While I don't believe that 60 is the new 40, I am eager to discover just exactly what I will bring to my 60's! I am very content to be enjoying good health, a loving family and a strong community to which I am connected.

Every month brings me a new chance to review articles and artwork sent in by our talented group of contributors.

Sometimes I am amazed (and always grateful) by the commitment each and every one of our writers and artists feels about making the deadlines and not disappointing their readers. This month is no exception and although several of our regulars have taken the month off, there is plenty of material for you to enjoy.

The world is changing and Atenas is no exception. After spending time in New York, I usually come back and take a closer look at our town with refreshed eyes from my time away, even if it has just been a couple of weeks. I have begun to notice that many of our new (or would be) residents are couples with young children. I admire their gumption. Although I was once a part of that world, I had the tremendous advantage of speaking the language and understanding the culture of Costa Rica.

The fresh air of autumn that I experienced during the last few days of my stay in New York were a welcome reminder that I have the option of spending the next few months enjoying a luscious green landscape right here at home!

Future issues Atenas Today will provide more detailed information on the many goods and services available to residents of our town. I make this commitment because I want all of us to know about and enjoy everything that is offered to us in Atenas today and every day

Happy Reading!

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.

September 22nd – Sunset Yom Kippur begins.

September 23 – September Equinox!

September 26th – Marching Band Parade in Palmares (see flyer) – Atenas band invited

September 26th – Celebration of “Children’s Day” in Farmers Market location (see flyer)

September 27th – World Tourism Day!

October 1st – International Day of the Older Person (Senior Citizens Day!_

October 7th – RECYCLING FROM 7 am to Noon at Municipal Lot next to School of Music

October 7th – 9th – Expo Vino in San Antonio de Belen (PEDREGAL). More info on this at

<http://www.expovinocr.com/> The Vamos Gourmet truck participate, so Vamos Gourmet will be in Atenas instead on Saturday October 10th from noon to 5 p.m at the Rio Grande Gas Station.

October 12th – Day of Cultures (Columbus Day)

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

October 17th – 2p.m. to 6 p.m. Garage Sale at the Los Angeles Public School (see flyer)

October 24th – United Nations Day

October 31st – Halloween!

REGULARLY SCHEDULED ACTIVITIES

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

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.

NOTE: No meetings from September 28th to October 19th at this location

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

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

Volunteers are needed and welcome.

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

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

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

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 !

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

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



ATENAS NEW COMMUNITY (associated with the Tico church, Iglesia Bíblica de Atenas)
facebook.com/groups/145046998883605

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

SERVICES: 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

FESTIVAL INTERNACIONAL DE
BANDAS LATINOAMERICANAS

PALMARES 2015

#lamusicanosune
#FestivalPalmares

SÁBADO 26 DE SETIEMBRE
9 AM

PLAZA DE TOROS PALMARES

Desfile previo por las calles de la comunidad

!PORQUE LA TRADICIÓN NO SE
PUEDE PERDER!



Admission Fee: 3,000 colones

The Atenas School of Music Marching Band will be participating!

TRADICIONAL FIESTA

N DE LA IÑEZ

8^o ANIVERSARIO

SABADO 26 DE SETIEMBRE
INSTALACIONES DE LA FERIA
DEL AGRICULTOR
HORA: 9:30 AM

INVITADO ESPECIAL

PRESBITERO: SERGIO VALVERDE.



Trabajamos para usted

TENDREMOS:
JUEGOS TRADICIONALES.
INFLABLES.
PAYASOS.
PREMIOS Y SORPRESAS.



¡Juntos a los niños les cuida la Iglesia!

ORGANIZA:



**MUNI
ATENAS**
PROTOCOLARIOS

protocolarios@atenasmuni.go.cr
INFORMACIÓN: 2446-50-40. EXT. 103.
CON PATRICIA CASTRO



Trabajamos para usted

Help the Los Angeles School Build a Needed
Playground

CONTRIBUTE TO A GARAGE SALE!

The garage sale is October 17th , 2-6 PM at the school in Los Angeles Barrio of Atenas. We start receiving items for the garage sale on October 5th at either the school during school hours or at Su Espacio Community Center (9-4 Mon-Thu), co-sponsor of the sale.



NEEDED: Mostly good, clean, ready-to-wear clothing of all kinds, adult & children. We also accept most household items, furniture, workable electronics, books, toys, etc. A large selection of clothing and other items will make a great sale! We need your help!

Recycling as a positive path forward for Nicoya Peninsula communities

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

Over the past 20 years many parts of Costa Rica have undergone a dramatic transformation from fishing and farming economies to popular international tourism destinations. The shift has been rapid and mostly unplanned, resulting in strains on local infrastructure. One branch of public services most affected has been solid waste disposal. Waste management is a particularly serious issue in beach towns where trash makes its way to the sea. The most surprising aspect of this situation is that this solid waste management challenge erodes not only the environmental and human health of the area, it also discourages the surf and sand tourism that provide many local livelihoods. Creating a convenient recycling system has the potential to greatly reduce the amount of trash that enters the environment and relieve the dysfunctional municipal trash system.

In April, student researchers from the Center for Sustainable Development Studies, working in partnership with the local NGO Nicoya Peninsula Waterkeeper, surveyed residents and businesses in Santa Teresa and Malpaís about their current practices and opinions on the implementation of an improved recycling system. This site was chosen because increased tourism and foreign residency has increased the volume of waste significantly. However, the transitory nature of the population has inhibited the long-term implementation of an effective recycling program. Community members that are interested in addressing this issue often become discouraged because key players move and it is difficult to educate short-term residents on proper practices. The situation has only deteriorated since the closest recycling center has closed and the current dumpsite has been condemned, meaning all waste must now be transported to another town over an hour away.



For this study, 176 surveys on waste materials and willingness and motivation to recycle were gathered from various types of businesses and groups of residents. Interviews were also conducted to gather what motivates them to recycle and their opinions on the best recycling solutions. Of residents surveyed, 84% stated that recycling should be a community led project and 41% of local businesses stated that they would help with a community recycling program. Many people would like to make legal demands forcing the municipality to address waste issues but since that will necessitate concerted pressure, the community should first organize to implement a functioning system that meets its needs, then use that organization to demand more concrete solutions from the local government.

When asked if they would be willing to participate in recycling in the future, 71% of all residents said yes. However, opinions on what method would be best was almost evenly divided between truck pick up, a localized drop off center, and neighborhood recycling collection points, suggesting that a combination of these methods could work best.

Local businesses that stated a willingness to participate in recycling efforts could install and collect materials from recycling bins on front of their business. Business owners could also demand that distributors take all packing materials back with them, so that bottles and cardboard waste never enters the local system. An effort can also be made to improve the local garbage collector's recycling facilities so that he can process more materials and make collection more profitable.

The government's current inability to meet its waste management obligation indicates that recycling solutions need to be driven by the community. Creating a recycling program has the added benefit of reducing the amount of solid waste sent to landfills. Though there are many challenges, this study demonstrates that there is widespread willingness to participate in recycling and take on leadership roles in that process. Atenas and surrounding areas face a similar dilemma, with no local recycling center, let alone recycling pickup. The Pope has called on all of us to take serious action to care for this planet, especially since climate change will have a disproportionately negative effect on developing countries. He is talking about places like Costa Rica. We cannot wait for others to help us change. We must work together on serious steps to reduce our consumption and reuse our waste. We hope to meet that call by working with UTN and other groups in Atenas on practical solutions managing recyclable materials.

Note: This article, which appeared in the SFS Spring Issue of Cedrela is published here with permission.

The Municipality of Atenas has just restarted the recycling program on the first Wednesday of each month, location is close to the School of Music in Atenas (Coopetransatenas Bus Depot) from 7 a.m to noon. The next date will be October 7, 2015

Friendship Library News

September, 2015

by Linda Ledbetter

lindaledbetter@juno.com



Photograph by Eyleen Vargas *La Nación*

Greetings, Dear Readers. I am happy to report that the literary feast available to you continues to grow each day. Some days, I reflect on the notion that I once thought of myself as a "retired" librarian. I guess it is a good thing that I loved my work. Who could not love a job filled with surprises like this:

"If the third of 6 be 3, what must the fourth of twenty be?"

[Answer at the end of the article]

This is from a recently donated book, Freaks of Figures by John Udy Lean, published in 1906. The subtitle is "A Unique Collection of Interesting Arithmetical Recreations and Amusing Mental Diversions, suitable for Parlor Entertainments, Social Gatherings and the Home Circle, for old and young."

I am also happy to report that the collection of donated high school texts in English has found a good home. In fact, a couple of good homes. I've recently met some newcomers to Atenas who brought with them high school level American History texts in English. Those books will be looking for a good home as well. I can put interested readers in touch with them.

continued next page

Looking For a Good Mystery?

I've noticed over the years that Agatha Christie has a following here. Stephen King, in an article in the New York Times, notes that she is one of those prolific writers (91 books, all still in print) who have made a deep impression on the public consciousness. He calls her "arguably the most popular writer of the 20th century". Her books don't aim to be literary classics, but the stories are well told and "strikingly" well written.

"Christie gave us two characters -- Miss Marple and Hercule Poirot -- who have achieved a kind of immortality. Add to this the stylistic and thematic unity of Christie's novels (the cozy warmth of the settings and the British stereotypes, placed within the context of her surprisingly cold appraisal of human nature)...."

If you are already a fan, or would like to sample her work, come on in. We have a lot of her books.

Cool Stuff, Kid Stuff

We have received another "estate" library from a very well-read individual. He read (and kept) an astonishing variety of books about subjects as diverse as plane geometry, mechanical engineering, Amateur Telescope Making, Grisham, Capote, Evanovich and how to make a will. We are working them in as space is available. [If you should die unexpectedly, what will your personal library say about you?]

A second suitcase full of books for children will come back with me from Florida next week. Families with children, and grandparents with visiting grandchildren, will have an ever-growing number of literary choices.

Answer to the math riddle: $7\frac{1}{2}$. Really. If 2, which is the third of 6, becomes 3, then 5, which is the fourth of 20, becomes $7\frac{1}{2}$.

(The Friendship Library/Biblioteca la Amistad, is located in Restaurante La Carreta.)

DOG AND CAT OF THE MONTH



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

CARAMELA



Caramela is friendly, a little shy then playful. A beauty, she is a great family member and needs to be with a loving family Good with other dogs and cats. She has been neutered and nearly a year old. A good Watch dog!

MAMA TABATHA



Tabatha and her kittens will provide a loving addition to a family. Lots of fun watching them play and will adapt easily to a forever home. Adoption available for one or three.

Do you want to give them a chance for a long happy life?

PETS IMPROVE YOUR HEALTH

Most pet owners do not need reminding, animals make people feel good. But we are talking about more than feeling glad they are around. Your favorite animal can make you healthy and help you stay that way. You may be surprised at just how many ways a pet can improve your health. It only takes a few minutes with a dog or cat or watching fish swim to feel less anxious and less stressed. Your body actually goes through physical changes in that time and makes a difference in your mood. The level of cortisol, a hormone associated with stress, is lowered and the production of serotonin, a chemical associated with well-being is increased. Reducing stress saves your body wear and tear. Studies show pet owners had lower blood pressure and heart rates than people who do not own a pet, as well as lower levels of cholesterol and triglycerides. Pet owners have a lower risk of dying from any cardiac disease. Pets are known to help with depression in people of all ages and illnesses. Many more scientific studies have been done resulting in the positive influence of being a pet owner. webMD

DORA TEL.8855-9822 PRESIDENT (ESPANOL)
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 and hearts to animals that require extra attention and care, including those who are too young for adoption requiring socialization and or need medical care. Animals 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.

Sunday in the Park with... yourself



by Mary Martin Mason
marymason1946@gmail.com

Like most Central American towns, Atenas boasts a *parque central*. The park is anchored by San Rafael's Church with a spire that dominates the landscape on the Eastern side. Store fronts, a bank, bars and municipal buildings flank the park, and a walkway extends around the perimeter and crisscrosses the park.

At first glance, the landmark has seen better days, the cement benches needing yet another coat of paint and in some cases replacing. Amateurish graffiti appears here and there, and teens neck on the benches. Intimacy among both young and old arises out of necessity in this public square. Packs of students gather, each sporting the shirt color that designates their year in school, bantering and consulting their cell phones. Young mothers with strollers, picnicking families, and newcomers consulting their guide books are common. As the pulse of the community, the park is a package requiring a slow unraveling ... never tear into it. This space has secrets awaiting those patient enough to sit and observe.

Time is marked by the clock in San Rafael's steeple, an audible reminder of the historical and traditional Catholic practice of the church being the highest edifice in a town. On sultry days, the church that was built in 1908, offers a cool respite with its doors open to both faithful congregants and curious visitors. Observe those passing by the statue of San Rafael, patron saint to the town, and imagine them inside, listening to nesting birds perched in the rafters whose song rivals the choir as it practices. You may spy a regular worshiper who brings his Chihuahua with him who patiently awaits his master's prayers. San Rafael, perhaps like the archangel for whom it is named, welcomes both four and two legged creatures.

Many Catholics when they get to the center of the park, make a sign of the cross. None, though, is as faithful as Carmelina, the town's eccentric icon who can be seen marching barefooted through the park and into the church. With her calloused bare feet and the ubiquitous brown dress that is the color of ashes, Carmelina is the subject of reverence rather than ridicule.

After Carmelina's mother's death in childbirth, her father raised her until his own death (when Carmelina was 11 or 12) after which she was entrusted into the care of a devout woman who in turn on her deathbed delegated Carmelina's care to her son. She can be seen in her daily trek

into town from her simple hut. Muttering to herself, Carmelina typically takes five steps and turns to look behind her before continuing the pattern. Some who pass her give her coins, knowing she in turn will donate the money to her beloved church. Carmelina, now 75 years old, supports the church and the townspeople in turn pay homage to her as a living symbol of the town.

Among the other regulars who populate the park is Carlos Vargas. Carlos spends hours with his gringo and Tico male companions in a daily ritual of prolonged conversations, saying, "We sit to enjoy the weather and see the beautiful women and talk politics and *futbol*. For most of us, since we live alone, the park provides a type of therapy." Carlos is aided by a cane, having lost sight in his left eye. His glaucoma was diagnosed when he lived in the United States and worked as an aircraft mechanic for twenty years. There he had a successful operation to repair one eye. After returning to Costa Rica, he delayed a medical follow up and lost sight in his other eye. He blames himself, accepting that "life will be a bit dark." His outlook, though, includes an appreciation of being an integral part of a community that has embraced him. He is privy to the latest news including that new street lights will be installed. But when? Twice workmen have come to mark the places to dig the posts. The workmen were displeased when Carlos pressed them for a timeline. During his ten years residing in Atenas, Carlos has observed that progress when it does occur, occurs at a trickle.

Take the well, for instance, that is being dug behind a green tarp barrier. An older well was so badly damaged during a cleaning of the pipes that it could not be repaired. The new well will be connected to a main system that will send water to the barrios of Los Angeles and Rio Grande, but the ever skeptical Carlos asks, "*Cuando?*"

Like Westminster Abbey, the park has its own Poet's Corner. Nailed to a number of trees are quotes from philosophers, some worn away by the elements and some still readable. The intent is to inspire youth and the town citizens with the wisdom of the ages.

Monday through Saturday, the park's groundskeeper Rolando Muñoz can be seen raking, removing palm fronds and repairing the disarray that reappears each morning. The park has a dark side, revealed late at night when patrons of the local bars and a few local prostitutes spill over to vandalize and break tables, discarding their bottles and drugs in the park. Rolando's heart remains in his finca in Rio Grande as he counts ten more years until he can retire. Even so, the pride he takes in the park is evident in the careful way he attends to the plants and removing the garbage as he has done for a decade.

Parks have been described as green gathering spaces. In Central Parque Atenas, both gringo and Tico characters abound beneath the chattering pericos atop the trees. Try this on. Fortify yourself for a few hours of careful observation, perhaps with a macaroon from Santa Clara Panadería, a non-alcoholic Piña Colada from POPS, or any of the many delightful desserts from Crema y Nata. Look for Carlos, Rolando and Carmelina. Be open to conversations with nuevos amigos. Or sit quietly and take in the tranquility born out of a centuries old tradition known as the town park.



10 Cool Things about Costa Rica's Southern Caribbean Coast

by Shannon Farley

The two coastlines of Costa Rica – Caribbean and Pacific – are about as opposite as you can get in landscape and lifestyle – kind of like New York and California. Most tourists to Costa Rica head west to the Pacific Coast beaches. It is the adventurer looking for the unique Costa Rica who chooses to explore the Costa Rica Caribbean Coast.

Now, in September and October, is the **time for Costa Rica Caribbean Summer!** The Caribbean Coast of Costa Rica has a unique microclimate giving the region from Tortuguero to Manzanillo the best weather during these months. There is less rain and seas are calm, which means it's a good time for snorkeling and sea kayaking in the Cahuita National Park.



Here are **10 cool things that make the Costa Rica southern Caribbean Coast different from the Pacific Coast:**

The same weather. Costa Rica's Caribbean Coast experiences nearly complete opposite weather patterns. When the Pacific Coast is baking under a blazing sun, the Caribbean Coast is getting greener from tropical rain showers; and when the rest of the

country is drenched in “Rainy Season,” it is **Costa Rica Caribbean Summer** thanks to a unique microclimate.

Dust and desert-like landscapes. It’s not called the Costa Rica dry season for nothing. The Pacific Coast gets drier and browner as time marches from January to May with little to no rain. That terrible dust problem you find elsewhere in the country – you won’t find it in the Caribbean. Regular showers all year keep the Caribbean green and lush ... and cooler!

Huge mega resorts and hotel chains. When you're on the beach on the Caribbean Coast of Costa Rica all you see are sea, sky, sand and jungle. Hotels in Puerto Viejo are set back from the beach, are at the most two-stories high, and retain harmony with nature.



Resort prices. You can go to a hotel chain on the Pacific Coast if you want to pay \$16 for a casado.

Fast food chains. You won’t find McDonald’s here, or KFC or Pizza Hut. Only lots of real, authentic Caribbean cuisine and food from all over the world, thanks to Puerto Viejo’s cosmopolitan population.

Destruction of nature. On the Costa Rica southern Caribbean Coast, the jungle stretches right to the sea – thick, lush and full of



wildlife. It hasn't been bulldozed for those mega resorts or clear-cut for cattle.

Super highways. There is one main two-lane road from Limon to Puerto Viejo and Manzanillo, and the locals like it that way. The main mode of transportation around Puerto Viejo is beach cruiser bicycle. Time to relax and slow down.

Rush hour traffic. Other than maybe a group of people on bicycles heading to the beach or a party, you won't see traffic over here.

Stressed out, pushy, rude people. Unless you bring them – or are one yourself, there aren't many stressed out people on this coast. You'll find most people around Puerto Viejo are easygoing, friendly and happy.

Concrete jungle. It's only the real deal jungle here, with not much concrete in sight.



How to get to Puerto Viejo

You can drive Route 32 from San Jose, crossing Braulio Carrillo National Park, to Limon and then Cahuita, and finally Puerto Viejo. Drive takes about 4 hours from San Jose. Or you can fly 30 minutes on **Nature Air** or **Sansa Airlines from San Jose to Limon**. From Limon, it is less than an hour to Puerto Viejo.



How I went from being a Type A to a Type Z in one easy lesson!



by Dennis Easters easters3@msn.com

I often have long, deep philosophical conversations with our wonderful neighbors, John and Gay. Many times these conversations are over a drink or two and ideas for articles about our lives in Costa Rica are given life. One of our recent conversations was about Type A personalities and how those people with a strong Type A may have a more difficult transition into a Costa Rican lifestyle, the land of “pura vida” (pure life) and the “siempre mañana” (always tomorrow) attitude. You see, often, the traits about a place and culture that you most love are the ones that will make you crazy in the end. In the case of Costa Rica, it is often the laid back, carefree attitude about life of the Costa Rican people that gets under the skins of those Type As that believe they want to call Costa Rica home.

To help make the transition a little more pleasant, below are a few tips from Gay, or as we refer to her on the mountainside, “Mz. Boggs”, on how to go from a Type A to a Type Z in Costa Rica in one easy lesson.

- The most important thing to do is move to Costa Rica. Live your dreams now and don't wait for tomorrow. Post haste. Tout de suite. Vaya con Dios. If you don't like it, what is the worse case scenario? You move back to where you came from, plain and simple. Remember, you create your own destiny in life.
- In Costa Rica remember “less is more”. Think about your lifestyle expectations and then have a date with reality. Costa Rica may or may not be for you. If you expect things in Costa Rica to be like they are back home, wherever home may be, then think again. Having said that, if you give it a chance and change your perspective, Costa Rica will transform you and remind you just how life is supposed to be lived. There is a natural rhythm to life here unlike anywhere else in the world that I have ever experienced.
- One of the most valuable lessons to learn is that it doesn't have to get done today, tomorrow, this week, or even this year. After years of living in Costa Rica, I am used

to delays and getting the answer of “mañana” (tomorrow). Typically, things are done in a timely manner in Costa Rica. But, when things are delayed, just relax, think about it and ask yourself if what you are waiting on is life threatening. If the answer is NO, then that is just part of the “pura vida” or pure life mentality that Costa Rica is famous for. Mz. Boggs and I have learned this together with our cabinet maker, a.k.a. Carlos, who says he will always show up on Wednesday. Interestingly enough, he never says which Wednesday, but when he finally shows up (and he always shows up) it is on a Wednesday.

- There is always a second chance to make a first impression in Costa Rica. Ticos are very forgiving and understanding. They are also very welcoming of foreigners and are often as curious and eager to learn about us as we are to learn about them. There will always be cultural differences, but Costa Ricans will often overlook our indiscretions or politely explain our mistakes in a way so that we understand where we went wrong. These types of things often happen when you are first learning the language and mistakenly use a word or term that means something completely different than what you thought it meant!
- If you don't get it right the first time then try again and again, and yet again. In Costa Rica, time is on your side. There is always tomorrow, “siempre mañana”. For example, banks are famous for giving you a list of requirements for opening an account. However, if everything is not perfectly worded and in order, with all the i's dotted and all the t's crossed, expect to be sent away until things are just right. It's just the way things are done down here.
- As long as you are polite and respectful no one cares how you screw up. Ticos actually want you to succeed. Costa Ricans are very helpful and will often go out of their way to assist you in any way they can. I can't tell you how many times I have heard the phrase “no te preocupes” (don't worry) for one thing or another that I had done wrong. I have learned that no matter how frustrated I may get at someone or at a situation, a little sweet talk and brown nosing will get you everywhere in Costa Rica. Also, bribery with pastries goes a long way!
- You are trusted and trustworthy until you prove you're not - not the other way around like we are used to in the good old U.S.A. More often than not, the honor system still applies in Costa Rica. When we first moved to Atenas, we had two family medical emergencies at once. In my haste to leave the house, I forgot my wallet. I realized this when I went to pay two different doctors and the ambulance service. When I explained the situation, I was told to leave and to simply come back and pay when I could. I could tell you countless other stories of things that have happened here in Costa Rica that have had the same ending. Your word and a handshake still have value in Costa Rica. How refreshing!
- There is no such thing as a bad day in Costa Rica. When bad stuff happens, good stuff follows that will make you smile and laugh. It's just the law of nature in Costa

Rica. It seems that Costa Ricans are naturally tuned in to the Law of Attraction. When you wake up in the morning to stunning views, vibrant nature, and happy, smiling people, how could you have a bad day?

If you are like many of us who move to Costa Rica with a Type A personality, think about WHY you are wanting to move here. Take a deep breath, realize that this is an awesome adventure and thank goodness that it is not going to be like it is “back home”. Remember in life that you can’t get it wrong and you will never get it all done. There will always be something else and hey, at least in Costa Rica, there is the belief in “siempre mañana” - always tomorrow. If you can relax into the rhythms of life in Costa Rica, I can assure you that you will soon learn the real meaning of “pura vida”. So, no te preocupes!



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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!!!

Funny thing!!! When I got to the computer tonight I found strange, white hairs in the keyboard. Hmmmmmm.....you don't think Mom is letting some other perro use her computer do ya?

It wasn't Demon Dog Delilah cause her hair is reddish brown! Anyway, if it had been her she would have left "devil dust" (that is what Mom calls it) all over everything. She collects it in the yard and then brings it in and scatters it everywhere. Sticks, twigs, dirt, leaves, rocks, and anything else she can find in the yard. Mom is always fussing at her but then she just picks her up and kisses her so I guess "fussin" don't mean much when Mom does it.

I'll have to keep a closer eye on the computer to try to figure out just which perro is sneaking in here and using it.

Everything here in Costa Rica is just BUSTIN' OUT in color!!! Those yellow trees and orange trees we wrote about before just get brighter and brighter!! Mom and Dad went to San Ramon to get groceries and Mom took some more pics of the trees. They sure are BRIGHT!!! The winds here have really been BLOWING and it has knocked a lot of the trees down! I'm glad it didn't knock those bright ones down though. The woods are just full of bright orange and bright yellow. The wind did knock down a GREAT BIG tree at the restaurant where Mom and Dad were eating yesterday!

While they were in San Ramon they stopped at one of the stores that sells hammocks and sling chairs. A friend of Mom's had asked Mom to get her one of each so Mom wanted to shop for her. They also went into a furniture store while they were there and Mom got a REALLY pretty new bedspread. She put it on her bed when she got home and that quick little Juliette beat me to it!

I'm usually the first one to try out the new stuff cause I'm the boss y'know.

That Juliette sure is gettin' pushy!!

She even thinks I should call her "LADY Juliette!"

FAT CHANCE!!!!

Mom's bedspread is pretty!! It is a bedspread AND it has a matching duvet cover, (whatever a duvet is) and pillow shams to match! Mom really likes the way it looks

on the bed.

Us perros like it too because Mom put her down comforter in the duvet cover thingy and it is SOOOOO SOFT!!!

Bunny calls it the "cloud bed" and she dances all over it in circles! She barks while she is dancing too! We let her get away with it because she is "special" you know.

The chest that Mom and Dad had ordered for the foot of the bed was ready today so Mom and Dad picked it up while they were out. It is really nice and has a padded top. That prissy Princess Joy has been hoggin' it all day and is still there. She thinks Mom bought it just for her!

Mom says she is glad she told them to leave the padded top loose so she can make different covers for it. She better make one pretty soon cause it sure doesn't match the new bedspread she bought!! Even I can see that!!! LOL!!!!

But the chest is really pretty and is REAL handy for helping us get up on the bed. Especially Krystal and Andre'.

On the way back home Mom saw one of the wagons that hauls "caña azucar." That's Spanish for sugar cane! It's pronounced cahn-yah ah-zoo-car.

That little curly thing over the N means you are supposed to say it like it had a Y after it. Spanish sure is funny huh?

Anyway, the wagon was loaded with sugar cane and Mom grabbed a quick picture of it turning to go into Coope Victoria. That is the big co-op that processes all the sugar cane and makes sugar out of it.

Then she saw one of the wagons that hauls the coffee beans when the pickers pick them. It was empty though except for a man and two little kids. The kids played "pop-up out of the wagon" when they saw Mom was taking pictures!! They were laughing and giggling like crazy.

OH!!!! Dario has been staying at his grandmothers for a couple of weeks so we had to celebrate his birthday LATE. He is a big soccer fan and his favorite team is Saprissa so Mom and Dad got him a Saprissa shirt. It is too small though so they are going to take it back for a larger one.

Custer is wearing his jacket that Mom gave him! Well he comes over here to visit ALL the time and he comes in under the fence. When he does he always snags his jacket or sweater and loses it there at the fence. Mom tried to keep him out because he pee's on the furniture.

Y'see, he wants to live HERE and he thinks if he "marks" it it will be his territory!! LOL!!! NO WAY!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!! This is MY territory.

I think he has a crush on Princess Joy!! LOL!!!

Well.....I gotta go check and make sure my pack is okay. I have to keep an eye on them all. I am their "protector!!

Tailwags til next time!!!!

BudBud the boss perro

ILE Students Mingled With Expats At Kay's Gringo Postres In Atenas

By Carlos González (ILE Lab Assistant)

For a long time, I've been hearing of a place in Atenas where ESL students have a priceless opportunity to interact with foreigners, and besides the intercultural experience, develop their language skills. However, due to different circumstances as not knowing the exact location and lack of time, I could never give it a try.



Recently, ILE Department has created special committees to enhance specific areas within the major. In my case, I'm a member of the External Relations Committee (Comité de Vinculación Externa), which is also integrated by Jose Soto (ILE Director), Charles McDermott (ILE Volunteer), and Andrés Bejarano (ILE Teacher). This commission is responsible for the creation of real-life intercultural experiences as well as internships and job

opportunities for our students. Being part of this committee made me look for real-life breaks for our students, and that's how I came up with Kay's Gringo Postres, the place I heard of for so long. After suggesting the project, the Committee gave me the green light to start conversations with the people in charge of the place. Soon enough, I contacted Harold Beasley (co-owner along with his wife) who from the very first moment was quite enthusiastic about the event. Therefore, I made my first visit to the Cafeteria and felt truly delighted by the captivating atmosphere, charming attention, and tasty menu. Then, I had a few words with Harold and his attentive wife Lisa to settle the foundations for our first activity together. Next day I spread the word among Clare's class, and everyone was eager to participate. Teacher Clare was quite open as well to make an effort and take her class to Kay's Gringo Postres. Afterward, the event was officially arranged for the following week. In less than 40 minutes we arrived, and a few expats as well as Harold and Lisa were there in advance to warmly



welcome us. The intercultural experience got started! ILE students introduced themselves, asked expats about some idioms, shared personal experiences, and had a terrific time. Based on laughter and gestures of gratitude, we could tell expats had a great time too. After two enriching hours, we thanked Mr. and Mrs. Beasley, their friendly expats and said goodbye. Students showed their satisfaction and appreciation expecting to get a second chance to come over again. Hopefully, this is just the first of many more jointly coordinated activities by UTN and Kay's Gringo Postres.



Editor's Note: This article appeared in the August Issue of ILE and is reprinted here with permission.

My Adventure as a Radio Host



*by Marietta Arce
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Last year, right around this time, I began to take stock of my year and my life. It is a routine activity that I engage in every year as a result of celebrating my birthday which occurs right before the official start of autumn in the United States and Canada.

As I reviewed what my year had been up to that point, I realized that my 60th birthday was but a year away and that I had (publicly) announced on my 55th birthday that I would become the host of a television or radio show AND deliver a TED-like speech before I reached my 60's!

I am almost certain that seeing a flattering picture of myself surrounded by friends and family, which looked like it had been taken in a television studio set was what prompted these ambitious predictions. I have never been camera or microphone shy (as many of you know); especially if I am asked to talk about a subject I have some expertise in and I was disappointed that the years had passed so quickly and I was nowhere near my goal!

When September rolled around and I assessed my situation objectively, I decided I would have to give myself another 5 years to make those projects come to fruition. I turned my attention to the activities taking place in Atenas and recall that I was invited to be part of the audience at an activity held at the Central School of Atenas.

I enjoyed myself immensely that day because my friend, Salo Ponchner of MultiFrio had been invited to deliver a motivational talk to the High School seniors of the public and private schools in town. I can't say what effect his talk had on the students but it energized me (his talks always do) and made me hopeful and optimistic about what the future of these young people can be.

During the activity, I was introduced to a young man, Carlos Sequeira Cortes, who was the official photographer that day and also shared with me that he was a journalist and had just begun a (much needed) radio station in our town. I was impressed by this information and months later I found myself investigating the possibility of hosting, not one, but two weekly one-hour radio shows! After all, I reasoned, how hard can it be? I have so much to say and so many people I can interview!

I give myself a pat on the back for producing both of these shows for six months. My gratitude to Carlos for his input, patience and generosity in sharing his knowledge cannot be measured. I don't know where I got the idea that it would be easy to book guests, write a script, choose music, etc. and also keep up with the other, equally important, commitments I had.

The day I had to come to terms with the fact that I could not continue to work at that crazy pace without sacrificing quality was a very sad one. Carlos was very understanding. I remain a loyal supporter of Radio Atenas and it pleases me very much to see how much the station has grown in the last year. I am equally elated that I did get to host a show before my 60th birthday and that I was asked to give a TED-like talk to UTN students which I did in April this year! They were goals worth having.

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.



**Title: Phalaenopsis Orchid
13.5" x 12"
Oil on Canvas**

**Al Alexander
jeanandal@gmail.com**



**Title: Abstract
30" x 24"
Collage and House Paint on Canvas**

**Harriet Sheppard
hweyman@gmail.com**

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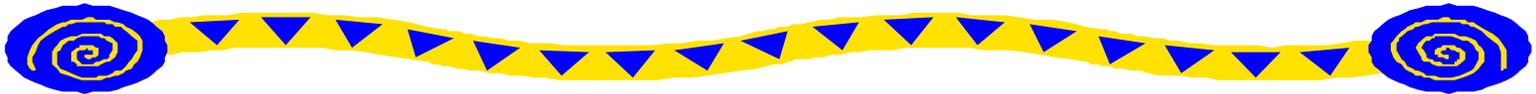


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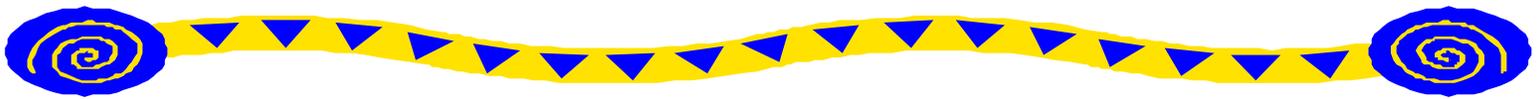
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