

REVUE

Guatemala's English-language Magazine
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October 2008
Year 17, No. 8

FREE



- ▶ Messengers in the Wind
- ▶ The Ruins of San Jerónimo
- ▶ La Profecía Maya 2012



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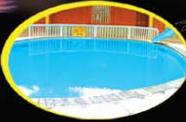
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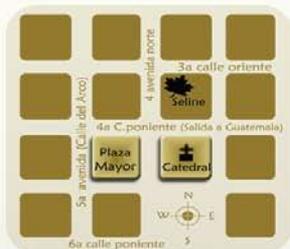


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Let it fly...
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FROM THE PUBLISHERS

Though the giant kites won't be flying until *El día de los difuntos* (Day of the Dead) on November 1, we'll be seeing much smaller versions for sale throughout the month; also, there will be kite-making classes and excursion opportunities (make your plans early) on the *Day of the Dead* to Santiago Sacatepéquez to watch the kites as they soar heavenward. Thank you to Iván Castro for his magnificent photo gracing this month's cover and his shots that accompany *Messengers in the Wind*, *The history of kite making in Santiago Sacatepéquez*.

Party with a Purpose celebrates the conclusion of the Panchoy 50's first phase: completing the formation and analysis of 10 volunteer committees that focused on an integral, 50-year development plan for the Panchoy Valley.

Humble Beginnings is the story of the Ruins of San Jerónimo. Once a school, a chapel, then in 1766 it was transformed into the Royal Customs House. The site was abandoned in 1773 when the town was destroyed (again) by a massive earthquake that ultimately resulted in moving the Spanish capital to what is now Guatemala City.

But before the Spanish, the Maya ruled the region. *Time, Imagination, and La Profecía Maya 2012* recaps a conference, attended by more than 1,200 people, that explored the link between the Mayan ball game, the creation myth found in the "Popo Vuh," carvings from a site at Izapa and the galactic alignment set to occur on December 21, 2012, ending the 5,125-year Mayan Long Count calendar.

Dr. Karmen brings us *The Art of Listening*, and in a new column, 'Lake Views', Dwight Wayne Coop has a lot to say about *Birthdays Parties*. As we're approaching the end of another year, it is time to think about *Avoiding vs Evading*, offering a few tips on U.S. taxpaying and IRA accounts.

El Salvador is gearing up its *Regional Cuisine* and some local photographers unveil a lovely El Salvador pictorial.

Enjoy your month. —JBT

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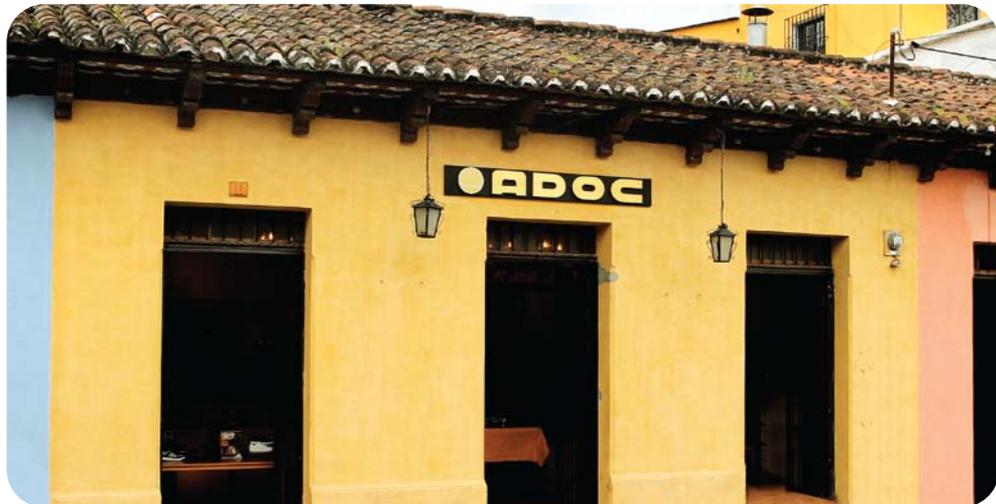
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LEFT: Scene from gala fundraiser dinner with keynote speaker President Colom (DEREK STEELE)
RIGHT: Capuchinas is one of the many landmarks that needs long-term protection (JACK HOUSTON)

Party with a Purpose

by Jack and Joy Houston

Panchoy 50 celebrated the conclusion of its first phase in September with a glitz-and-glamour gala at Hotel Casa Santo Domingo. The project, launched in February, completed formation and analyses of 10 volunteer committees working toward an integral, 50-year development plan for the Panchoy Valley. In the next phase the committees will set goals and objectives. The project will conclude in February 2009 with the compilation of a comprehensive document for presentation, hopefully, to a public/private development board of the central government. “We would set up that board as part of our last job, signed between the government and our foundation,” according to Antigüño spokesman Derek Steele.

Guatemala President Álvaro Colom addressed the roomful of 46 elegant tables of 10, commending the efforts of neighbors, business and municipal leaders pulling together and encouraging support of government ministers. “This was a big message,” says Steele. Besides noting the potential as a matter of national interest, Colom specifically recognized the importance of protecting the cultural heritage of La Antigua Guatemala as “a city clean and conserved”.

Panchoy 50 hopes to rescue what has been lost of that heritage, save what exists and avoid disordered development in the future. The idea is to rally networks of citizens of all sectors of La Antigua, the pulse of the

Panchoy Valley, and its surrounding villages. Obvious issues, beyond architectural conservation, include traffic, waste collection and disposal and antiquated drainage systems.

The scene of the September gala was set on the site of the colonial Dominican monastery founded in 1547, among the first of an eventual 16 in the town. La Antigua, then called Santiago de los Caballeros, was established as the seat of the Spanish government in 1542, after the earlier location, nearer to Volcano Agua, was destroyed tragically and traumatically by mudslides and storms. The heritage that Panchoy 50 aims to preserve and protect developed over the next 230 years, when the earthquake-weary capital moved to now Guatemala City. Massive evacuation by mandatory decree left the ruins safe from stage-by-stage modernization.

Serious rescue efforts began when La Antigua was declared a National Monument in 1944, furthered in 1969 with the formation of the National Council for the Protection of La Antigua Guatemala. In 1979 the town was added to UNESCO’s World Heritage Site List.

Panchoy 50, not itself a funder, hopes to attract interested implementing entities. Funds collected will support work of the Panchoy 50 committees to return the environment, as expressed by General Coordinator Susana Barrios Beltranena, “to the paradise once delivered to us.”

▶ *More information: www.visionpanchoy50.org*

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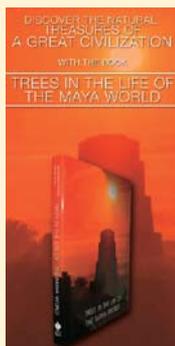
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TIME FURNITURE

Trees in the Life of the Maya World

Co-authored by Regina Aguirre de Riojas and Elfriede de Pöll

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The Asociación Becaria Guatemalteca/Colegio Americano have been working together for over 50 years to provide bilingual education scholarships to economically disadvantaged children. To date, the participating schools include, among others, the Colegio Americano, the Colegio Americano del Sur and the Centro Educativo Benito Juárez. Many of the scholarship students are the first in their family to attend school regularly, as well, a number of them have completed graduate studies and still others have the opportunity to study abroad.

The Asociación Becaria Guatemalteca/Colegio Americano are pleased to announce the publication of the newly-released book, *Trees in the Life of the Maya World*. Proceeds from sales support its ongoing scholarship and educational programs.

This book brings together the knowledge of the shaman and the scientist, the myths and arts of ancient civilizations and the practices of modern people, handling each section with wisdom and clarity of vision. This book inspires respect and care, not just for trees, but for the whole of our natural environment.

Books can be purchased at the **Lugar de Bosques**, Av. Reforma 13-70, z. 9, edificio Real Reforma, oficina 2-A, Guatemala City. For additional information, tel: 2420-5504, asociacion.becaria.guate@gmail.com and uwcguatemala@gmail.com; **Universidad del Valle de Guatemala**, 18 Av. 11-95, z.15, Vista Hermosa III, oficina A-203 II2-307; and

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There is ample parking, also food and concession stands and a separate VIP area. This is a limited venue. Tickets are on sale at ...cont. on page 37

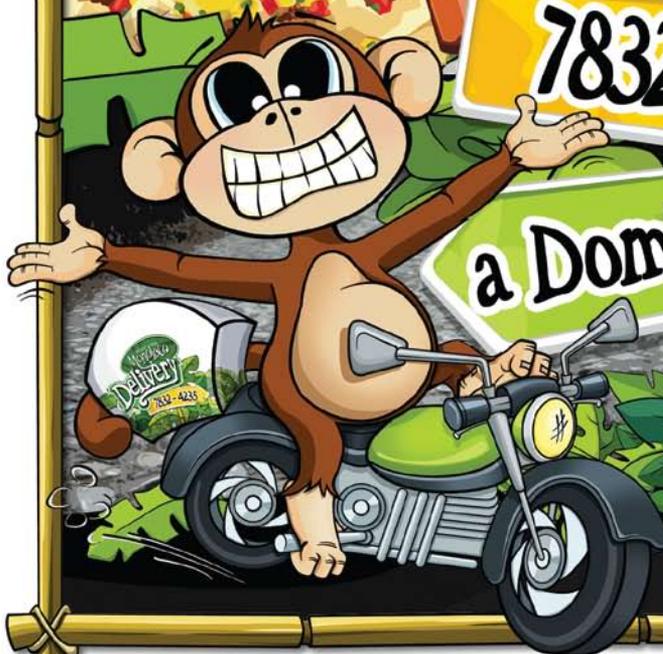
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Messengers in the Wind

The history of kite making in Santiago Sacatepéquez

by Ignacio Ochoa

photos: Iván Castro

www.ivancastroguatemala.com

On November 1 and 2, a powerful force stirs in all the towns of Guatemala. Traditional markets are filled with flowers of *sempa* (orange marigolds), chrysanthemums, wild daisies and the smell of copal—a pre-Columbian incense made from pine resin. People clean family graves and adorn them with cut-out tissue paper called *papel picado*, wreaths of fresh flowers and candles. They also honor the dead with festive foods such as candied fruits, tamales and *fambre* (a cold meat and vegetable dish prepared only at this time of year). These days mark the celebration of *El día de los difuntos* or the Day of the Dead, a very important festival throughout Guatemala, especially in the predominantly indigenous town of Santiago Sacatepéquez, where it is the occasion for a unique kite-flying ritual of the Kakchiquel people, integrating the Catholic feast of All Saints with pre-Columbian Mayan practices of remembering the dead. The kites are made as a way

to communicate with the dead, symbolically attracting the spirits to earth at this special time of the year, when family members, living and dead, are reunited.

In Santiago Sacatepéquez, there are six *cofradías* (religious brotherhoods) dating from the 17th century, each dedicated to a different saint. Catholic missionaries instituted these brotherhoods to involve the laity in the spiritual life of the church. Indigenous populations, struggling to maintain their cultural traditions and languages, blended traditional Mayan practices with Christian rituals in the *cofradías*. It is the *cofradías* that organize and carry out all public religious celebrations.

The leaders of the *cofradías* are called *mayordomos*. Villagers choose the lead or *primer mayordomo* for a one-year term during which he and his family must finance everything related to the feast day. The celebration of Day of the Dead takes a year to plan and involves not only religious ob-

ligations but also coordination with municipal services and local political leaders, bestowing on the *cofradía* a great deal of political and social clout. The more services the *cofradía* provides to the town, the more esteemed its leader. Over time, this practice creates a network of reciprocal obligations among town members. Different *cofradías* are in charge of organizing different religious celebrations.

Preparations for the celebration begin 40 days before November 1, when young people begin the construction of the kites, a tradition dating back at least 109 years. Customarily, young men did most of the work, but today young women join them in selecting themes for the intricately designed kites, which may be political, religious or cultural. There is now a female kite-making contingency in Sacatepéquez that competes in the annual kite-making competitions.

Before the kites can be made, the unmarried men of the village rise at 4 a.m.

to travel to the coast to hunt for bamboo for the frames. In the eyes of the town, this pre-dawn journey marks young males' passage from boys to men. The journey to the coast is difficult, and once the youths arrive, the work of cutting the thick bamboo is laborious. The youths return from the coast to find the townspeople waiting for them, eager to hear their stories of adventures on the coast. The bamboo is distributed to the kite-making groups to begin making frames, a process that continues every day until the Day of the Dead.

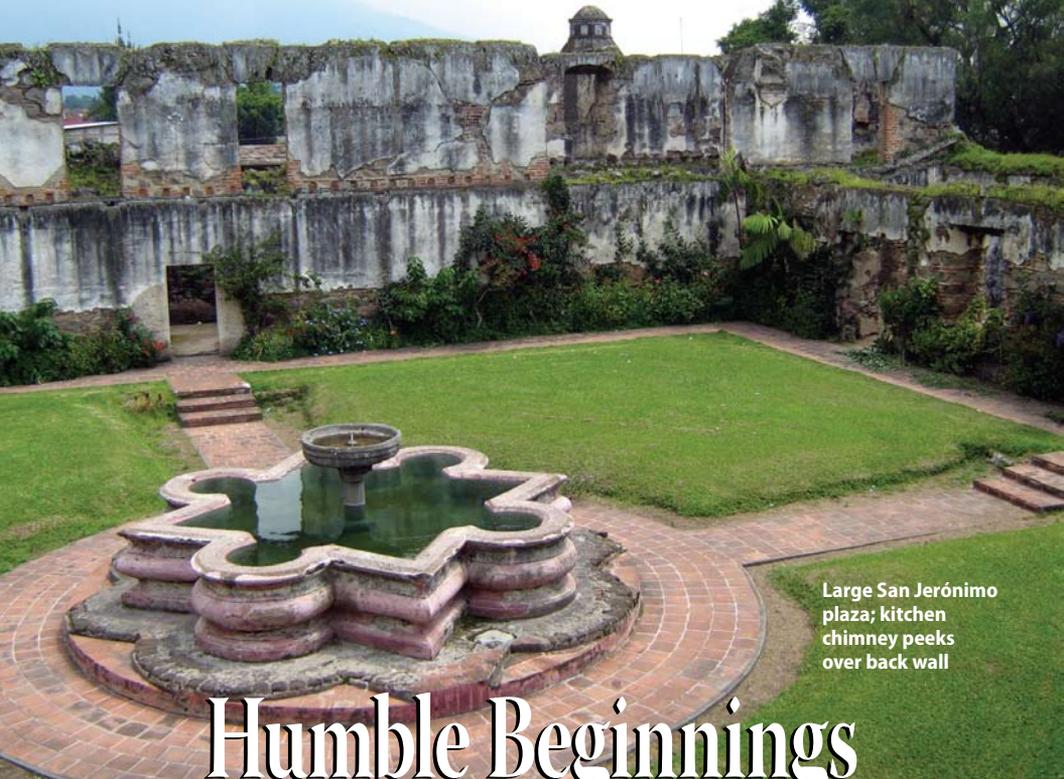
Women's role in the celebration has historically been less public than that of men, but crucial. They participate in the measurement, design and construction of the kites, preparing the ingredients and materials, as well as helping to decide on colors, designs and themes. Women also do the bulk of the festival food preparation, as well as the decorating of churches and public squares. ...continued on page 70



Orange marigolds and wild daisies adorn the family graves

Kites are built up to 15 meters in diameter with the entire community pitching in to help fly them





Large San Jerónimo plaza; kitchen chimney peeks over back wall

Humble Beginnings

The Story of the Ruins of San Jerónimo

by Joy Houston photos by Jack Houston

The spacious, bright and well-kept flowered lawn of the San Jerónimo ruins at the north end of Alameda Santa Lucía welcomes visitors to the site of a school that functioned barely four years and closed with five students. In *Colonial Architecture of Antigua*, Sidney Markman wrote, “Very little remains of the school building except for a short piece of wall on the north side.” Typical of colonial structures, the kitchen chimney off the south side also survives.

For the real story, follow that wall west along 1a calle. It’s a dusty, noisy bus route, and there’s no sidewalk. Just past the stylistic entrance, whose base rests about three feet underground, hangs a plaque identifying the chapel of the Jesús Nazareno de San Jerónimo, now known as the Jesús Naza-

reno de La Merced de La Antigua.

The first church home of the image, facing west out of town, can be seen from outside a barbed wire fence around the back of the ruins site. Garbage collects alongside the church nave, where caretakers also build fires and hang laundry. “Undoubtedly, San Jerónimo [church] is one of the most sober and simple, if not *the* most, remaining in La Antigua Guatemala,” say University of San Carlos researchers. According to La Antigua expert David Jickling, “Two small sculptures still intact in the façade are among the first built into the niches in Santiago.” Short and plain, the façade contrasts with the enormous La Recolección complex a long block west and the elegant La Merced two blocks east.

What happened here? For answers let’s

see what was going on some four centuries ago in the early days of Santiago de los Caballeros, now La Antigua Guatemala.

Although three religious orders, the Dominicans, Franciscans and Mercedarians, had issued statements abolishing slavery, the Spanish wanted to avoid mixing of the races; but mix they did, resulting in complicated caste definition. “The Spanish never constructed a physical wall that separated the Spanish center from the indigenous periphery but created spacial and ideological limits,” according to the *Propuesta al Valorización de la Ermita de San Jerónimo y su Plaza* (University of San Carlos, 2001). Early plans for the town of Santiago even included boulevards to mark the borders of the ‘ins’ and the ‘outs’. These were never completed, but the tree-lined Alameda Santa Lucía marked the western border.

Ten neighborhoods (*barrios*) developed

in the *extramuros*, i.e., outside the invisible walls, the *barrios* at the western edge of the city becoming the worst slums, according to historian Fuentes y Guzmán (*Historia General de Guatemala*). The fermented fruit drink *chicha*, made mostly in the poor *barrios*, was “...a very important clandestine industry for the urban economy.” The San Jerónimo barrio of craftsmen, shoemakers and tailors, at the northwest corner of Alameda Santa Lucía, was fraught with drunkenness and violence.

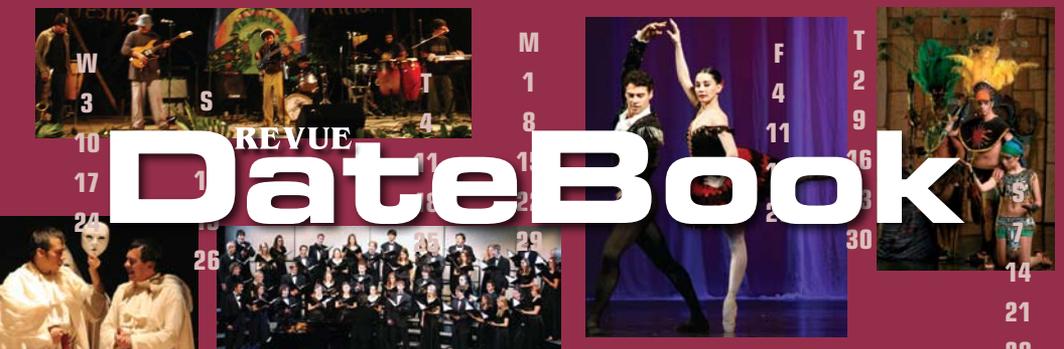
San Jerónimo was under Mercedarian care. It was off the nave of the humble church of that troublesome neighborhood that, in 1684, a chapel home was built for the image Jesús Nazareno de San Jerónimo, sculpted by Alonzo de la Paz in 1675.

In 1726, the Franciscans and the Dominicans already having schools, it seemed appropriate that the ...continued on page 60



West façade of San Jerónimo church. Insert: Sculpted image





OCTOBER Guide to culture & upcoming events Compiled by Mercedes Mejicanos

1 Wed. through Sat., 5th, 9am — **COS-TUME PARTY:** Star Wars theme with contests, souvenirs for sale; Sun., 6th — a fireworks display. Adults, Q20/youngsters, Q8. Museo Miraflores (tel: 2470-3415) 7a calle 21-55, z. 11, **Guatemala City.**

2 Thurs., through Tues., 28th — **ART: *Del arte al niño***, exhibition and sale of contemporary art featuring the work of over 100 national and international artists, proceeds benefit FUN-SILEC, a non-profit organization working to improve the quality of life for children afflicted with brain injuries. Hotel Real Intercontinental (tel: 7831-2488) 14 calle 2-51, z. 10, **Guatemala City.** See DateBook highlight on page 36. ▼



2 Thurs., 6pm — (Spanish) **THEATER: *Estas si son jodidas*** presented by graduate students from Colegio Mixto Santo Tomás; profits to benefit the children of San Miguel Dueñas. Q50. (tel: 4397-9094.) Convento de Capuchinas, corner of 2a av. norte & 2a calle oriente, **La Antigua.**

2 Thurs., 6pm — (Spanish) **FILM: *La niña de tus ojos***, directed by Fernando Trueba. Q15. Centro Cultural El Sitio (tel: 7832-3037), 5a calle poniente #15, **La Antigua.**

4 Sat., 10am-4pm — **PA-RADE, CELEBRATION and HEALTHY PETS FAIR:** In honor of *Día de la Mascota*, **AWARE** (Animal Welfare Assoc-Rescue/Education) and Hound Heights, a no-kill animal shelter in Sumpango, will be joined by Caja Lúdica, Mascotas Terapeutas, Purina and the Purina Dog, Bomberos Voluntarios and their station dog, plus friends of **AWARE** and their dogs ... *inviting you to bring your children and join in the parade* that begins at 1a av. norte & 4a calle oriente and ends at the Ruinas de San Jerónimo (see related article on page 16) where there will be all kinds of dog and cat-related activities plus the Nueva Acrópolis puppets, mimes, animal face painting, music and food. **La Antigua.**



Saturdays, 4th, 11th, 18th & 25th, 9am-4pm — **WORKSHOP: Kitemaking**, it takes 1-2 hours to make a kite; classes taught by members of the Cultural Commission of the Asociación Nahual and the Kaqchikel Youth Group. Q100 p/p incl. instruction and all materials. Asociación Nahual (7832-0165/0167 & 5985-4954), 2a av. norte #6-B, **La Antigua.** ▼



4 Sat., 11am — ART: Inauguration, *Textiles de Guatemala*, featuring pieces from a private collection belonging to Haruko Suzuki. Free. Colegio Mayor de Santo Tomás de Aquino, 1a av. norte #23, **La Antigua**. ▼



4 Sat., 8pm — CELEBRATION: *Octoberfest*, Q125 includes all the ice-cold Gallo you can drink. Estudio 35, Calle del Arco #35, **La Antigua**.

4 Sat., 7pm — PHOTOGRAPHY: *El Tesoro del Vagabundo* by Guatemalan photographer Arturo Molina. Free. Centro Cultural El Sitio (tel: 7832-3037), **La Antigua**. ▼



7 Tues., 9am-1pm — RUMMAGE SALE: Incredible prices and hidden treasures; proceeds benefit social programs. Union Church (tel: 2361-2037) 12 calle 7-37, z. 9, **Guatemala City**.



7 Tues., 5:30pm — (English) LECTURE: *Los Patojos, Forming Leaders for Guatemala* with Director, Juan Pablo Romero, speaking about the difficulties that affect young people in Sacatepéquez and how this NGO helps them deal with and prevent future problems in their lives. Donation Q25. Rainbow Café (tel: 7832-1919) 7a av. sur #8, **La Antigua**.

Please submit your DATEBOOK entry for the Nov. 2008 edition of the REVUE by Friday, October 10

8 Wed., 5pm — ART AUCTION: Wine and cheese inauguration, *English for Everyone*, with a collective exhibition of work by Guatemalan artists to be auctioned by silent bids. If you miss the inauguration, you can visit the gallery and place your bid before the culmination of this auction on **Tues., 28th**. The proceeds assist children living at the zone 3 Guatemala City garbage dump who attend the Camino Seguro school in collaboration with Las Manos de Christine. Galería Panza Verde (tel: 7832-2925) 5a av. sur #19, **La Antigua**. See DateBook highlight on page 36. ▼



8 Wed., 6:30pm — ART: Exposition, Arte Montessori 2008. Museo Ixchel (tel: 2361-8081) 6a calle final, z. 10, **Guatemala City**.

8 Wed., & Thurs., 9th, 8pm — DANCE: *Se me fue el pájaro*, a contemporary dance choreographed by Andrea Siekavizza de la Fuente. Q50/Q25. Teatro Dick Smith IGA (tel: 2422-5555) ruta 1, 4-05, z. 4, **Guatemala City**.

9 Thurs., 6pm — (Spanish) FILM: *Alas tristes*, directed by Agustín Díaz Yanes. Q15. Centro Cultural El Sitio (tel: 7832-3037), 5a calle poniente #15, **La Antigua**.

10 Fri., 8pm — MUSIC: Accordion performance *Viajando, musicalmente por el mundo*, with Jorge Herrera de la Cerda and Lilia Tello. Q50. Centro Cultural El Sitio (tel: 7832-3037), **La Antigua**.



10 Fri., 10am-12:30/2:30-7pm — ART: Inauguration of *Realidad distorsionada* with the latest work by artist María Dolores Castellanos. Free. Galería Carlos Woods (tel: 2366-6883) 10 av. 5-49, z. 14, **Guatemala City**.



DateBook online: www.revuemag.com

11 Sat., 7pm — (Spanish) DANCE WORKSHOP: *La danza del vientre, un lenguaje oculto* with choreographer Munira Matthews. Q50. Centro Cultural El Sitio (tel: 7832-3037), 5a calle poniente #15, **La Antigua**.



Saturday 11th & 18th, 1:30 to 4:30pm — (Spanish) READING CLUB: Activities encouraging children to read; Q20, material included. Museo Miraflores (tel: 2470-3415) 7a calle 21-55, z. 11, **Guatemala City**.

13 Mon., 5pm — MAYAN CEREMONY: Presentation of an authentic Mayan ceremony. La Peña de Sol Latino (7882-4468) 5a calle poniente #15-C, **La Antigua**.

14 Tues., 4 to 7pm — (English/Spanish) NETWORKING: For NGOs and projects in the area; a place for people who have or are working on projects to present and share ideas. Everyone is welcome; tea, coffee and snacks. Stuardo's Place (tel: 7832-3160) Calle Chipilapa #9-A, **La Antigua**.

14 Tues., — ART: Inauguration of *Arte actual El Salvador*, with work by Ronald Morán, José Rodríguez, Carmen Elena Trigueros, Danny Zabaleta and Luis Cornejo. Galería El Attico (tel: 2368-0853) 4a av. 15-45, z. 14, **Guatemala City**.

14 Tues., 5:30pm — (English) TALK by members of AWARE (Animal Welfare Association-Rescue/Education), an NGO dedicated to rescue of injured, abandoned and homeless dogs and cats. Donation Q25. Rainbow Café (tel: 7832-1919) 7a av. sur #8, **La Antigua**.

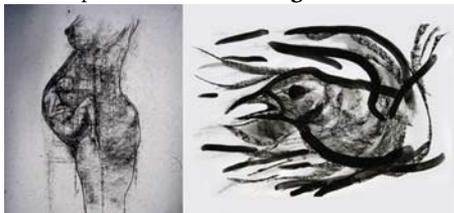


14 Tues., 5:30pm — FASHION SHOW: *Show de modas* benefiting the organization Intégrame; hosted by Comité de damas del Club Rotario Guatemala Sur. Museo Ixchel (tel: 2361-8081) 6a c. final, z. 10, **Guatemala City**.

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16 Thurs., 6pm — (Spanish) FILM: *El laberinto del fauno*, directed by Guillermo del Toro. Q15. Centro Cultural El Sitio (tel: 7832-3037), 5a calle poniente #15, **La Antigua**.

18 Sat., 7pm — ART: *En 4 trazos* by Guatemalan artists Sergio Valenzuela, Daniel Espinoza, Erick González and Alfonso Porres. Free. Centro Cultural El Sitio (tel: 7832-3037), 5a calle poniente #15, **La Antigua**. ▼



18 Sat., 11am — FILM: *La vida rota*, a documentary on the life of the Guatemalan writer José María López Valdizón. Free. Colegio Mayor de Santo Tomás de Aquino. 1a av. norte #23, **La Antigua**.

20 Mon., 11am to midnight — BENEFIT: *Personajes por un día* with this day's profits donated to the nursing home



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21 Tues., 5:30pm — (English) TALK: *Life in Guatemala: Brief history and current conditions* by Sue Patterson, a U.S. foreign service officer, former U.S. consul, founder and executive director of WINGS, a non-profit organization dedicated to reproductive health and family planning. Donation Q25. Rainbow Café (tel: 7832-1919) 7a av. sur #8, **La Antigua**.

21 Tues., 7pm — (English) BOOK CLUB: *Pride and Prejudice* by Jane Austine. Union Church (tel: 2361-2037) 12 calle 7-37, z. 9, **Guatemala City**.

22 Wed., 7pm — QUILT ART: Inauguration of *Unidos en un mundo de retazos* with work by members of the Asociación de Quilting de Guatemala. Museo Ixchel (tel: 2361-8081) 6a calle final, z.10, **Guatemala City**.



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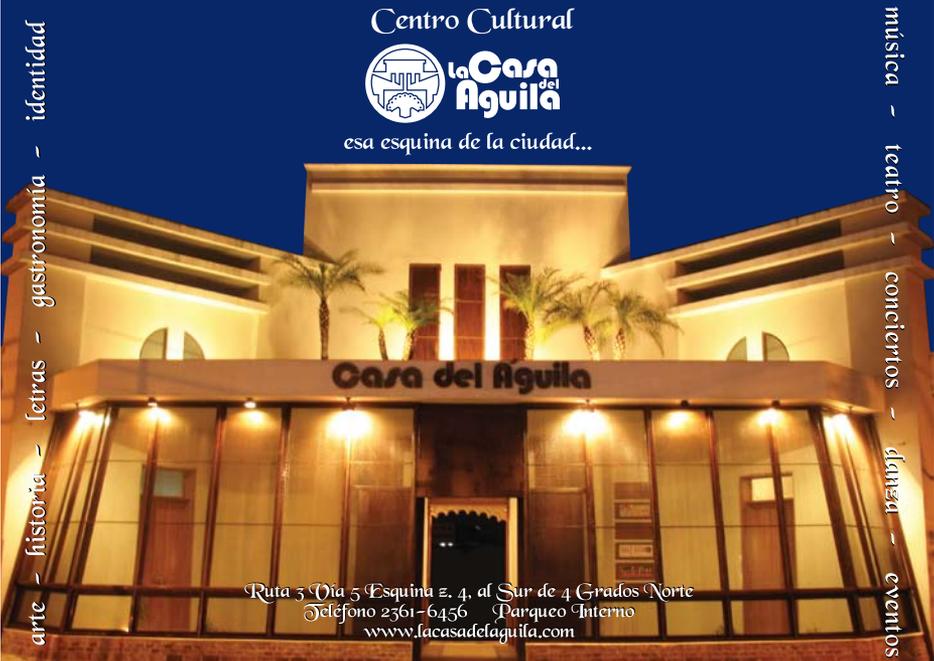


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VOTE!

22 Wed., 7:30pm — EXPOSITION HONORING the life and work of Dr. Alfredo MacKenney; music by the Marimba nacional de concierto, directed by maestro Lester Godínez. IGA, Lobby and El Centro Cultural, ruta 1, 4-05, z. 4, **Guatemala City**.

23 Thurs., 5pm — DOCUMENTARY: *From the Maya to the North Pole*, screening and discussion of Vida Amor de Paz's exploration of the ancient Mayan prophecy regarding changes in the environment that in modern terms we call global warming. Donation Q25. Rainbow Café (tel: 7832-1919) 7a av. sur #8, **La Antigua**.

23 Thurs., 6:30pm — (Spanish) CONFERENCE: *Río azul*, archaeological investigations by Liwy Gracioso. Q20/students, Q10. Note: parking Q12/hr. Museo Popol Vuh, second floor (tel: 2338-7896) 6a calle final, z. 10, **Guatemala City**.

24 Fri., 6pm — DANCE: *Juguetes y cascanueces* performed by students from the Danza Estudio school. Q50. Centro Cultural El Sitio (tel: 7832-3037), **La Antigua**.

25 Sat., 9am to 5pm — TRADE MARKET: Organized by "As Green As It Gets," with table set ups offering wonderful in-country products for sale including coffee, art, jade, textiles, jewelry, dried fruits and other delicacies, 100 percent of profits funded directly back to the producers. Stuardo's Place (tel: 7823-2160) Calle Chipilapa #9-A, **La Antigua**.

25 Sat., 11am — DVD-DANCE: An ensemble performance of *Tango Argentino* with music by the "orquesta típica" and the Orquesta Filarmónica de Buenos Aires, Argentina; directed by Daniel Barenboim and presented by Ingeniero José Ángel Lee. Free. Colegio Mayor de Santo Tomás de Aquino (tel: 7832-0231) 1a av. norte #23, **La Antigua**.

25 Sat., 5pm — MUSIC: Concert by guitarist Alessio Menoni. Centro de Formación de la Cooperación Española (tel: 7832-1276) 6a av. norte (between 3a y 4a calle poniente), **La Antigua**.

I am an old man and have known a great many troubles, but most of them never happened.

—Mark Twain



25 Sat., 4pm — PUPPET SHOW: *Las aventuras del Tío Conejo* with dialog based on short stories, directed by Ricardo Estrada and Carmen Lyra. Q30. Centro Cultural El Sitio (tel: 7832-3037), 5a calle poniente #15, **La Antigua**.

25 Sat., 5pm — PERFORMANCE: Talented kids from the school performing arts will highlight singing, acting and dancing. Q15. Museo Miraflores (tel: 2470-3415) 7a calle 21-55 z.11, **Guatemala City**.

26 Sun., 4pm — MUSICAL: *Lázaro*, presented by Teatro Fusión Artística, directed by Gerardo García. Free. Centro Cultural El Sitio (tel: 7832-3037), **La Antigua**.

28 Tues., 5:30pm — TALK: CasaSito and Mujb'ab'l Yol - Projects and plans, learn more about the many good-works projects. Also, see a short documentary about community radio stations. Donation Q25. Rainbow Café (tel: 7832-1919) 7a av. sur #8, **La Antigua**.

28 Tues., 6:30 to 8:30pm, continuing in Nov., 4th, 11th, & 18th — (Spanish) COURSE: *Mas allá del Centro Histórico* by Miguel Álvarez Arévalo. Note: parking Q12/hr. Museo Popol Vuh, salón CS103, first floor (tel: 2338-7896) 6a calle final, z. 10, **Guatemala City**.

31 Fri., 8pm — MUSIC: South American and Russian music, *Dos continentes, un sentimiento*, performed by Svetlana Sizoff. Q50. Centro Cultural El Sitio (tel: 7832-3037), 5a calle poniente #15, **La Antigua**.



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BENEFIT EVENT - ART AUCTION
in collaboration with Las Manos de Christine

Inauguration: Wed., October 8th, 5 p.m. ~ 5ª av. sur #19, La Antigua Guatemala

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31 7:30pm — Featuring live music with La Casa de Kello, a FREE Creepy cocktail, bonfire & marshmallows, prize for the best costume and much more! No cover. Rainbow Café (tel: 7832-1919) 7a av. sur #8, *La Antigua*.



31 8pm — A great prize for the best costume! Q50 includes a drink. Estudio 35, Calle del Arco #35, *La Antigua*.

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DATEBOOK continues on page 28

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I'm writing a book. I've got the page numbers done.
—Steven Wright



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My one regret in life is that I am not someone else. —Woody Allen

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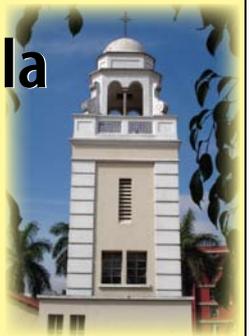
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WEEKLY EVENTS IN OCTOBER

Mondays, 7pm — DHARMA FLICKS: **6th** — *Why People Don't Heal & How They Can*, part I, with Caroline Myss; **13th** — *Why People Don't Heal & How They Can* part II, with Caroline Myss; **20th** — *Eckhart Tolle's Findhorn Retreat*; **27th** — Art Mind: The Healing Power of Sacred Art. Free. Mesón Panza Verde (tel: 7832-2925) 5a av. sur #19, **La Antigua**.

Mondays, 7:30pm — MUSIC: Kenny Molina hosts *Open Mike*. Free. La Peña de Sol Latino (tel: 7882-4468) 5a calle poniente #15-C, **La Antigua**.

Mondays-7:30pm — MUSIC: Don Ramiro will serenade you with some beautiful Latin folk music. Free. Rainbow Café (tel: 7832-1919) 7a av. sur #8, **La Antigua**.

Mondays, 8-10pm — LIVE MUSIC: *Sounds of the Blues*. La Cueva Panza Verde (tel: 7832-2925) 5a av. sur #19, **La Antigua**.

Tuesdays, 6pm — (English) BENEFIT SLIDE SHOW: *Antigua: Behind the Walls* with a one-hour slide show by Elizabeth Bell. Q30, benefits educational program. Fusión (tel: 4144-0171) 1a calle poniente #9), **La Antigua**.

Tuesdays, 7:30pm — MUSIC: Ramiro plays trova Cubana. Free. La Peña de Sol Latino (tel: 7882-4468) 5a calle poniente #15-C, **La Antigua**.

Tuesdays, 7:30pm — MUSIC: *Malcolm* will blow you away with some classics and his infamous tequila song. Free. Rainbow Café (tel: 7832-1919) 7a av. sur #8, **La Antigua**.

Wednesdays, 7:30pm — MUSIC: *Open Mike Night* hosted by Juan-Jo and friends. A complimentary drink for all performers. Free. Rainbow Café (tel: 7832-1919) 7a av. sur #8, **La Antigua**.

Wednesdays-Sundays, 7:30pm — MUSIC: Sol Latino plays Andean music (pan flutes). Free. La Peña de Sol Latino (tel: 7882-4468) 5a calle poniente #15-C, **La Antigua**.



WEEKLY EVENTS IN OCTOBER

Wednesdays, 8-10pm — MUSIC: Latino Jazz Trio. Q25. La Cueva de Panza Verde (tel: 7832-2925) 5a av. sur #19, **La Antigua**.

Wed. through Fri., 7:30pm — MUSIC: Swing de Negro with great salsa and Caribbean rhythms. Free. Estudio 35, Calle del Arco #35, **La Antigua**.

Thursdays, 7:30pm — MUSIC: Cuban maestro Wilfredo will charm you with his beautiful piano playing and improvisation. Free. Rainbow Café (tel: 7832-1919) 7a av. sur #8, **La Antigua**.

Thursdays and Fridays, 8 to 10pm — MUSIC: Cuban jazz performed by Buena Vista de Corazón. Q35. La Cueva de Panza Verde (tel: 7832-2925) 5a av. sur #19, **La Antigua**.



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Sundays, 7:30pm — MUSIC: La Raiz-Luis, Juan-Jo & Choko, great improvised classics. Free. Rainbow Café (tel: 7832-1919) 7a av. sur #8, **La Antigua**.

Sundays, 6:30pm (English) — SUNDAY ART FLICKS: **5th** — *Andy Goldsworthy's Rivers and Tides*; **12th** — *Great Women Artists: Georgia O'Keefe*; **19th** — *Great Women Artists: Mary Cassatt*; **26th** — Mirò. Q15. Mesón Panza Verde (tel: 7832-2925) 5a av. sur #19, **La Antigua**.

ART: Presenting the latest works by North American renowned artist William Kalwick. La Antigua Galería de Arte (tel: 7832-2866) 4a calle oriente #15, **La Antigua**.

DATEBOOK continues on page 36

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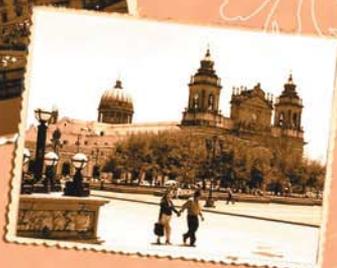


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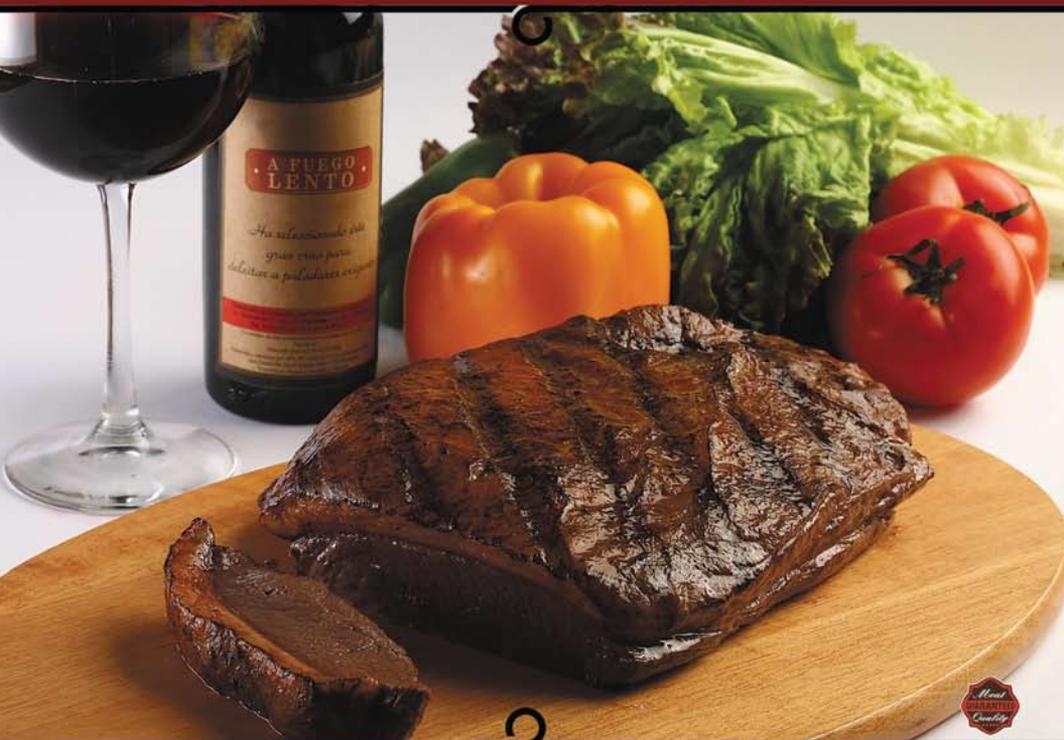
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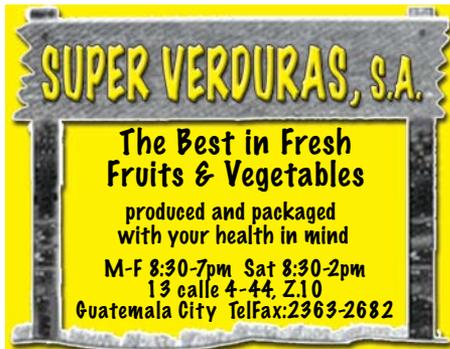
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—W. C. Fields



GREEN Mango *Another Fabulous Fruit*

Scholars believe Buddhist monks took mangoes on voyages from Asia to Persia in the Fourth and Fifth centuries B.C., and that the Persians subsequently took them to Africa in the 10th century. From there the Portuguese introduced them to Brazil during its 16th century colonization of the New World. And from Brazil the mango spread to Central America. Although there are strains of mango that are green when fully ripe — including the cambodiana, saigon, cecil and jacquelin — the green mango sold in the Guatemalan markets is a normal mango picked before ripeness. At this stage it has an extremely tart taste and less fibrous texture than a mature specimen. Interestingly, of all the mangoes made available for import, nearly 80 percent go to England and France.





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—Mark Twain

My dog is worried about the economy because Alpo is up to 99 cents a can. That's almost \$7.00 in dog money.
—Joe Weinstein



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**Las Manos de Christine
The Power of Education**
Art Auction at the Mesón Panza Verde,
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Featuring well-known and up-and-coming artists from Central America, the second annual Las Manos de Christine art auction will be held at Mesón Panza Verde Restaurant and Gallery in La Antigua at the gallery's monthly art opening. The event begins at 5 p.m. on Wed., **Oct. 8**, featuring complimentary wine and cheese, and also a raffle for a painting by one of the featured artists. All the artwork on display will be available to purchase on a silent bid basis, culminating on Oct. 28. Las Manos de Christine will also be seeking direct donations and individual child sponsorships.

Believing in the power of education to improve the lives of impoverished children, Las Manos de Christine provides English programs, resources, and trained teachers to nonprofits and other groups that educate underprivileged children.

Proceeds from the Panza Verde art fundraiser will go toward the expansion and development of the program for the children of Camino Seguro (Safe Passage) School, an NGO that works with children and families living in the Guatemala City dump. Camino Seguro provides education, food aid and housing for these poor families.

Panza Verde Gallery (tel: 7832-2925) 5a av. sur #19, La Antigua. For more information about this event, tel: 5527-8450 (Bryan) or e-mail: lasmanosdc@gmail.com ---



Please submit your DATEBOOK entry for the Nov. 2008 edition of the REVUE by Friday, October 10

FUNSILEC

**Fundación para la Superación Integral
de Menores con Lesión Cerebral**

The Fundación para la Superación Integral de Menores con Lesión Cerebral was founded in July 2001 as a non-profit organization by a group of parents, teachers and others with the goal to assist in the intellectual and psychological growth and enhancement of social skills for children and adults who suffer the debilitating effects of brain injuries. Over the past seven years FUNSILEC has worked diligently to create an environment and programs filled with activities that promote well-being, increased sensory stimulation and a sense of belonging. The organization also makes a great effort to coordinate neurological rehabilitation. The good news is there are many people who are afflicted with brain injuries that now have the opportunity to live under controlled independence and the chance to integrate within society at large. An auxiliary function of FUNSILEC is to inform the public how to prevent brain injury accidents. Fundraising activities include bazaars, raffles, dinner events and art expos.

This month the foundation features *Del arte al niño*, an exposition and sale of contemporary art by more than 100 national and international artists. The inauguration, at the Hotel Real Intercontinental in Guatemala City, is Tuesday **Oct. 2. The show will run through **Tues., Oct. 28**.**

Individuals and businesses also have the opportunity to sponsor economically disadvantaged children and teenagers so that they may participate in various rehabilitation programs and educational activities. For more information, tel: 7831-2488 or email: Funsilecentral@yahoo.es ---

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Monty Roberts Tour cont. from page 12

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Humane Society International Grant to Support Wildlife Habitat Protection Work in Central America

WASHINGTON (Sept. 17, 2008) - Humane Society International (HSI) signed a grant with the U.S. Department of State last week for \$396,000 to continue work on wildlife habitat protection in Central America.

The grant will support the production of sustainable cacao, which is grown on small farms that also provide valuable wildlife habitat for animals such as woodpeckers, sloths, and pumas. Cacao beans are used to make chocolate.

HSI will be working in Costa Rica, Guatemala, and Nicaragua with three cooperatives. The goal of the program is for the cooperatives to meet environmentally-friendly certification requirements, thereby enhancing their marketing efforts and the biodiversity in the cooperatives and surrounding areas. HSI's program trains the cooperative members to conduct wildlife inventories. The cooperatives have already cataloged at least 43 mammal, 40 bird and 120 plant species living within and around the cacao farms.

Uses of the new grant money include:

- ▶ Training producers on certification requirements for different sets of environmentally-friendly certification standards.
- ▶ Technical support to improve productivity and quality of cacao (such as trainings and manuals on pruning, organic fertilizers, etc.).
- ▶ Planting genetically superior trees on the cacao farms, and offering training on micrografting (combining a superior tree to an existing tree to improve the quality of the inferior tree).

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"This program is beneficial to people, animals and the environment. The producers benefit from receiving increased income from their high quality cacao, and animals and the environment benefit from the protection provided for them by the producers as part of their environmentally-friendly certification. It is truly a win-win situation," said Marta Prado, executive director of International Trade and Development for HSI.

This grant is both a continuation and expansion upon the work HSI has been doing in the region since 2003. HSI also received a grant from the State Department to work on habitat protection through the production of sustainable cacao in 2007.

*Media contact: Kristen Everett,
301-721-6440, keverett@humanesociety.org*

The Humane Society of the United States is the nation's largest animal protection organization — backed by 10.5 million Americans, or one of every 30. For more than a half-century, the HSUS has been fighting for the protection of all animals through advocacy, education, and hands-on programs. Celebrating animals and confronting cruelty — On the web at humanesociety.org

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If you don't mind, it doesn't matter.
—Mark Twain

A lot of people are afraid of heights.
Not me, I'm afraid of widths.
—Steven Wright



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Be careful about reading health books.

You may die of a misprint.

—Mark Twain

I took a speed-reading course and read War and Peace in twenty minutes. It involves Russia.

—Woody Allen

It doesn't make a difference what temperature a room is, it's always room temperature.

—Steven Wright

Laws control the lesser man...

Right conduct controls the greater one.

—Mark Twain

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the annoyance of a good example.*
—Mark Twain

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Answer: Healthy puppies should be plump and firm with pink mucous membranes. The heart rate is usually more than 200 beats per minute until 2 weeks of age. Respiration rate ranges from 15 to 35 times per minute. And the rectal temperature of the newborn is 96 to 97 degrees Fahrenheit, gradually increasing to 100 degrees at 7 days of age.

Puppies are unable to regulate body temperature for the first two weeks of life. Optimal temperature for a newborn less than 7 days old is 85 to 90 degrees Fahrenheit, decreasing to 80 degrees for 1-4 weeks of age.

Babies that separate from littermates may get too warm and should be checked

for panting, red gums and red skin. A dry, lackluster, roughened hair coat is another sign of illness and maternal neglect. Decreased muscle tone is a very bad sign. Any puppy (or kitten) which cries for more than 20 minutes should be checked to see if it is cold, hungry, neglected or ill.

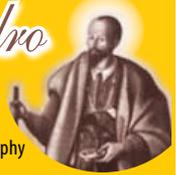
If the puppy is cold, he is unable to digest the mother's milk because his enzymes have become inactivated. Therefore, give him a sugar solution (two parts sugar or honey to one part water) which can be absorbed directly into the bloodstream without the need for digestion. Warm him gently with a towel-wrapped hot water bottle or electric pad. Mother's milk can be reinstated when he is no longer cold. If you have to bottle feed the puppies, feeding should be every six hours to encourage adequate time for stomach emptying and rest.

Giant Kite (PHOTO BY IVÁN CASTRO/WWW.IVANCASTROGUATEMALA.COM) see story on page 14



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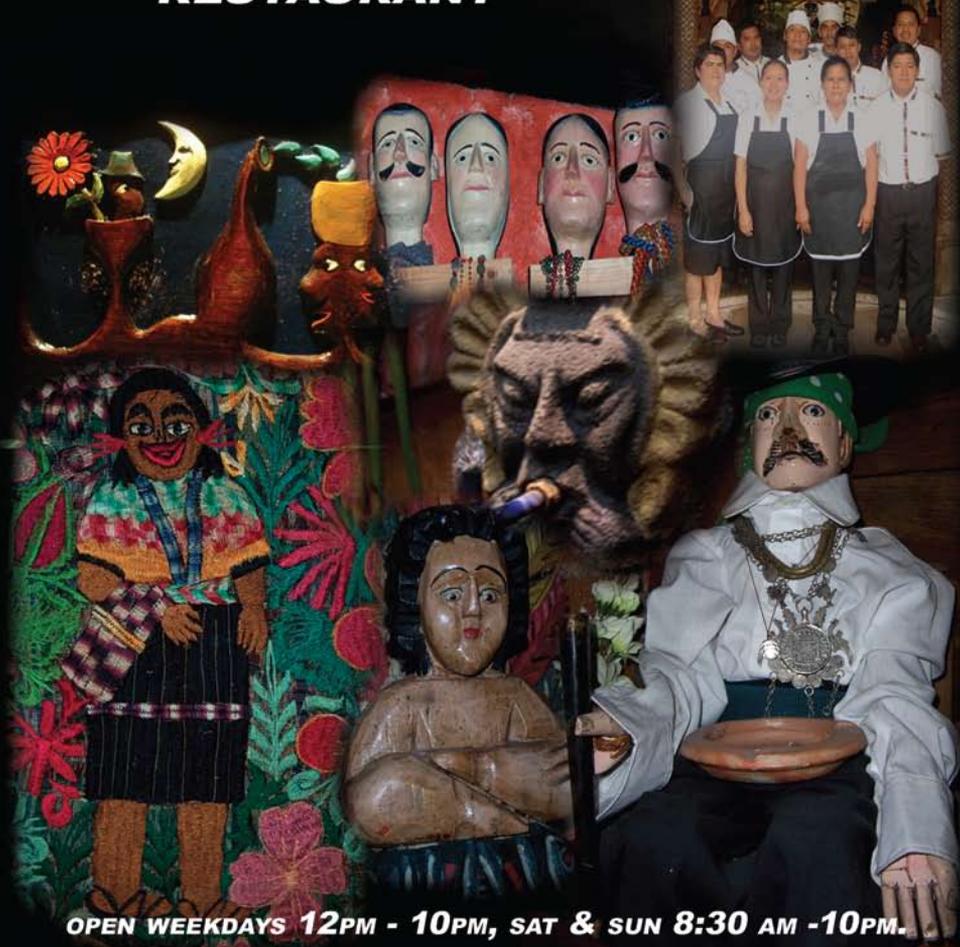


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LA TARIFA MAS ECONOMICA DE GUATEMALA

Time, Imagination, and *La Profecía Maya 2012*



Ballet Folklórico dancers perform a dance of symbolic rebirth

by Elizabeth Hart photos: Georgeann Johnson

It may be difficult to find friends and family outside of Guatemala who know much about the Mayan calendar. But here, the calendar—and especially the significance of its end date in 2012—are regular topics of conversation, as Guatemala’s ancient history was likely a part of the original intrigue for many of us. So strong is the interest in the Mayan calendar that more than 1,200 people—including international ambassadors and consuls, 52 Maya spiritual guides and representatives from over a dozen museums and universities of Guatemala—converged at Casa Santo Domingo on Aug. 23 for the conference *La Profecía Maya 2012*. Far from the fringe, conference participants represented a cross-section of people from a global movement for change based on indigenous wisdom.

The conference’s aim, underscored by archaeologist Mary Lou Ridinger, was to explore the link between the Mayan ball game, the creation myth found in the *Popol Vuh*, carvings from the site of Izapa and the galactic alignment set to occur on December 21st, 2012, the end of the 5,125-year Mayan Long Count calendar.

Author John Major Jenkins, who head-

lined the list of speakers, is part of a community with an emerging interest in the Mayan’s cyclical, holistic method of keeping time—a method that illuminates the pairing of life on earth and life in the cosmos.

The sophisticated Mayan Long Count calendar not only tracks days and groups of days, but also “Great Cycles”—large cycles of time that recognize the stages of humanity’s collective growth. According to the Mayan Long Count calendar, the year 2012 marks the end of one of these great cycles of time and the birth of a new World Age.

Today, our everyday perceptions are based on our use of the inherited Gregorian calendar, and so placing ourselves within the scope of Mayan time requires a dose of radical thinking—the same kind of radical thinking that allowed the ancient populations of Mesoamerica to undergo a paradigm shift that would come to define an entire civilization.

In fact, it took hundreds of years for the pre-Maya at Izapa to shift their beliefs about the cosmos and to gather astronomical calculations that would culminate in the creation of the Long Count calendar.

Twenty years of research ...cont. on next page

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Don Rigoberto prepares an offering for conference participants

La Profecía Maya cont. from previous page

has led Jenkins to find that ancient Mayan astronomy, mythology, symbolism, prophecy and spirituality evolved side by side to form a profound vision of the future. That future is our present, the end of the Long Count calendar. This time, our time, was codified within the very creation myth of the Maya at Izapa, says Jenkins.

Izapa is a small ceremonial site in southwestern Chiapas, Mexico, where Jenkins has spent years studying the well-intact thrones, stelae and ball court. Here, dedicated sky watchers and shaman-astronomers collected data, based on observation, that led to the discovery of the precession of the equinoxes—the phenomenon of our planet's wobble on its axis. The ancient Izapans predicted a precessional cycle to be 25,626 years, and modern astronomers, using advanced computer technology, agree.

The discovery of the Earth's wobble, and its observable result in the sky, caused ancient astronomers to completely rethink their relationship to the cosmos, which previously revolved around a Polar God, represented by the Pole star. The new paradigm recognized the center of the universe to be a dark rift in the center of the Milky Way galaxy.

To shift their belief regarding who or what was the very center of the universe required an unparalleled degree of open-mindedness. But once the Izapans had made their case, it wasn't long until word spread throughout the Mayan world, and the new calendar, based on a future astronomical event became the center of Maya life and spirituality. The event was set to take place on the day we call December 21, 2012.

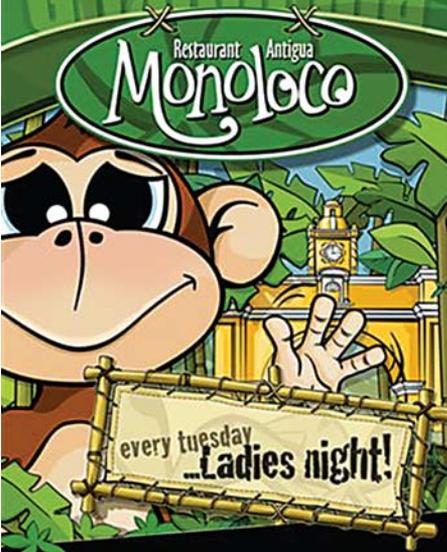
To further explain the significance of the calendar end-date, the conference welcomed independent researcher Georgeann Johnson. Johnson offered a profound look at the Mayan ball game as a symbol for the astronomical alignment of 2012. According to Ms. Johnson, the Mayan ball court, such as the one found at Izapa, is a structural representation of the Milky Way. The game is played with a rubber or stone ball, and when this ball (symbolic of the sun) passes through the goal ring, the game is won.

The game, an integral part of Maya life, referred to none other than the events of December 21, 2012 when the solstice sun will rise, and pass through the Milky Way's central dark rift.

Ms. Johnson went on to note that the game itself is also a metaphor ...cont. on page 114



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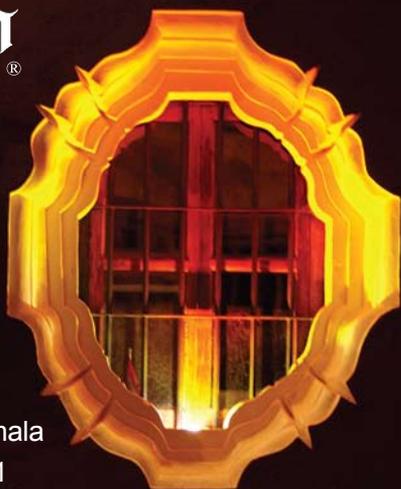
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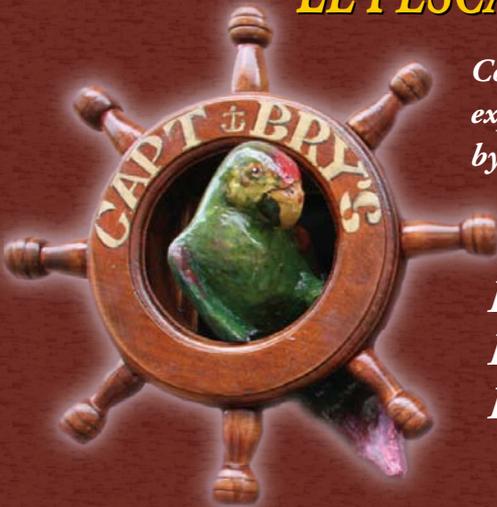
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—W. C. Fields

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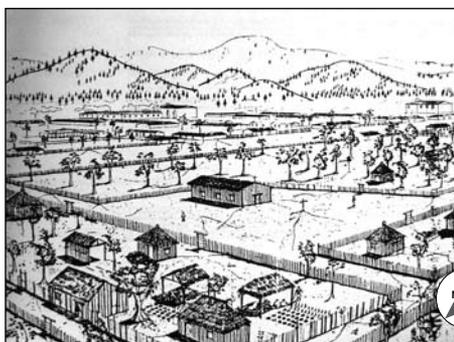


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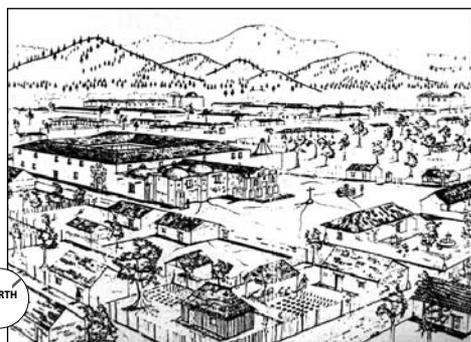


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San Jerónimo barrio as it appeared in the 16th century, with 1a calle in foreground (USAC)



San Jerónimo barrio in 1773, with school built around plaza behind church (USAC)

San Jerónimo cont. from page 17

Mercedarians have one too. Funds were available in 1739, and construction began on donated property behind their little San Jerónimo church. It took almost 20 years to build the school; and just about the time it was finished, in 1757 the church passed from the administration of the Mercedarians to the parish of San Sebastián, leaving the Jesús Nazareno alone in the chapel.

At that time there were rivalries between the religious communities and, as if the road wasn't bumpy enough, the matter of the school, established without a royal license, was brought to the attention of Spanish King Charles III in 1761. Tired of the impetuous, impertinent behavior of subjects in the New World, the Crown assumed its ...cont. next page

San José el Viejo church façade



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authority and ordered the school not only closed but demolished. It may have been a blessing in disguise for the struggling school of the Mercedarians.

Nonetheless, the property was considered too new and strong to be destroyed, and local authorities managed to continue the matter for a few years. In 1766 it was resolved that the site could serve as the Royal Customs House, incidentally relieving La Merced's unpaid debt for wine and oil, and also that the worrisome barrio of San Jerónimo might benefit with the presence of military barracks. Modifications to adapt the facility included a stable for 150 horses along the south and east sides. This was all abandoned a few years later, when the earthquake of 1773 forced moving the Spanish seat to now Guatemala City. Then pillage took its toll.

The chapel continued in use until some

time after 1804, when the Jesús Nazareno was moved to the church of San Sebastián and then to La Merced in 1883. As a point of clarification, an earlier Jesús Nazareno de La Merced image, sculpted by Mateo de Zúñiga, had led the last of the stragglers from Santiago to the new capital in 1778, where it remains today.

Restoration work at San Jerónimo in 1975 and 1998 by the Council for the Protection of La Antigua saved the all-but-forgotten chapel. Little is left of the scant decoration inside; the outside was even less decorated. As for the fine plaza and fountain, floods as well as use as a garbage dump had raised the level over three feet.

Now at home in a chapel of honor in La Merced, the much-venerated Jesús Nazareno "whose look penetrates to the soul" (*Escultura Colonial en Guatemala*) is carried in grand procession to the awe of thousands every Good Friday.

The school of San Jerónimo was not the only construction ordered torn down. Similarly, in 1740 the people of barrio El Tortuguero, at the south end of town, collected alms and began construction of a chapel for their image of Saint Joseph (San José), another work of Alonzo de la Paz. Historians say it was probably due to lack of understanding by the simple barrio folk that they went ahead without license from King Philip V. The Town Council had authorized the work; but, instead of approval when inauguration was requested in 1742, "the authorities in Spain took a dim view of the procedure and ordered the hermitage closed and the building torn down." (Markman) Further, His Majesty fined the town treasurer for not opposing the project.

The work stopped, but, again like San Jerónimo, the building was not torn down. In 1759 the neighbors' appeal ...cont. next page



ABOVE: Entrance of church from inside nave
BELOW: Inside of chapel of Jesús Nazareno de San Jerónimo





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San Jerónimo continued from previous page

for a place for religious service was granted. Construction restarted; and the building, made bigger and more beautiful after 20 years of delays, was inaugurated in 1762.

But the end came for San José with the earthquake of 1773, despite its preservation by smart, short and wide construction. After serving briefly as a temporary convent for the Carmelite nuns of Santa Teresa, the church, like much of the city, was abandoned when the capital was moved to what is now Guatemala City. The space eventually was used as a tannery until the 1930s, when it was declared a national monument. Its name was changed to San José el Viejo when the parish church of San José was founded within the cathedral in the early 1800s. The ornate façade near the center of

La Antigua, on 5a avenida and 8a calle, no longer at the edge of society, is enjoyed by townspeople and tourists alike. The church is often the site of musical events.

One such event was a concert in 2008 by the Bach Ensemble of Leipzig, Germany. Having experienced its own isolation inside East Germany, the group presented a concert together with the Mayan AJ musical group of Chimaltenango to a diverse crowd in the Church of San José el Viejo and expressed hope that “our concert contribute to the annulling of prejudices in society.” It was a positive evening of culture mix on the very site of an ostracized group 250 years ago.

*San Jerónimo is open daily 9-5; Q30;
foreign students, Q15; locals, Q2.*

School entrance on north wall, with base about three feet below current 1a calle level



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The guide, sensing a teaching opportunity, replied, "No, señor, 'la mosca'... es femenina."

The Englishman looked at him, then back at the fly, and then said, "Good heavens... you must have incredibly good eyesight."



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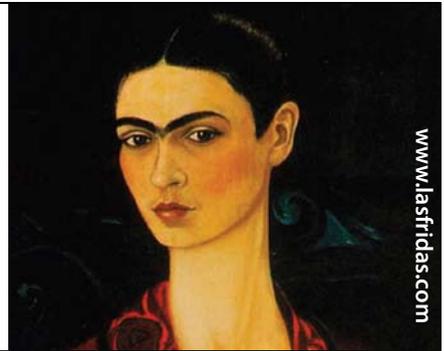
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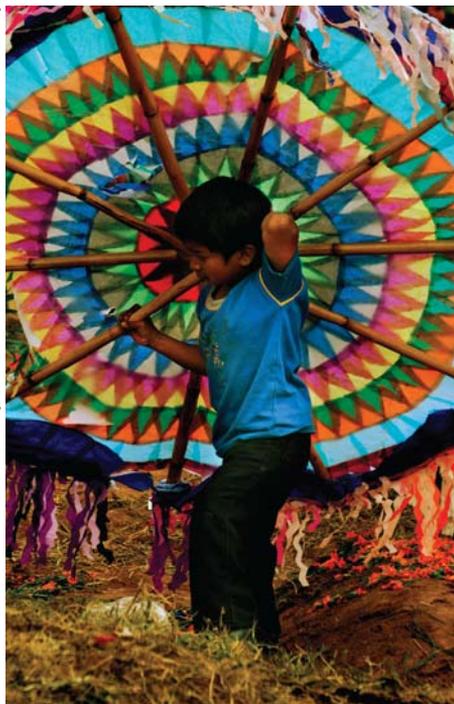
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 —Mark Twain

If I had to live my life over, I'd live over a saloon.
 —W. C. Fields

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four bamboo stalks. **“Diamond”** kites range from a half to 10 meters in diameter and have a diamond-shaped frame, long tails and fly on strings of fishing line. **“Moon”** kites are large circles of bamboo framing with a circular paper center and range from 10 to 15 meters in diameter. On the last Sunday in October, the people of Santiago choose their favorite kite, usually showing the greatest appreciation for intricately detailed kites with themes from ancestral Maya culture.

On November 1, people begin to fill the cemetery at 4 a.m. While cleaning, repainting and decorating their family tombs, neighbors fondly reminisce about the deceased and catch up on the latest news. Community bonds are renewed and strengthened as people work side by side, sharing paint, tools and brushes to refurbish tombs, while they water flowers, pray and picnic together.

Giant Kites cont. from page 15

All kite materials are natural. The glue is made from yucca flour mixed with pieces of lemon peel and water. Ropes used for kite strings are made from maguey, the plant from which tequila is extracted. Kite tails are made from woven cloth (to which people often attach hand-written messages to guide the spirits in their journey from heaven to earth). Woven stalks of *castilla*, a plant similar to wheat, form the frames of smaller kites, while the largest frames are made from the bamboo gathered on the coast.

The kites display three main styles, each with a characteristic design and size, and are made of tissue paper, seemingly too thin to withstand the rough winds of the sky. **“Crown”** kites measure from three to five meters in diameter and have a circular frame around an empty center, like a donut. The inner and outer circles are connected with

The young people await a strong wind to raise their giant kites to the skies. The kites brighten the skies and signal the traveling spirits until 4 p.m., when they are lowered and the townspeople return home to await the arrival of the souls. Families may set up home shrines or altars in honor of deceased family members, and extended family and neighbors visit each other to pay their respects. Visitors are offered boiled *güisquiles* (a vegetable which looks like an avocado and tastes like a potato), sweet corn, *chilacayote* (sweet squash) and *jocotes* (like a sweet olive), along with *chicha*, a hot fermented corn beverage that is indigenous to Mesoamerica.

Eventually, the *cofradía* of St. Michael the Archangel leads a procession through the streets carrying an *anda*, or life-sized wooden statue of St. Michael. ...continued on next page

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Giant Kites cont. from previous page

(Because this particular cofradía is in charge of organizing the town's Day of the Dead celebration, they get to showcase their patron saint.) Members of the procession play the harp and accordion to the delight of the public. The townspeople travel with the procession from house to house throughout the night, sharing traditional foods and alcohol along the way.

At 4 a.m. on November 2, everyone moves toward the cemetery with candles so the spirits can return to their celestial home. The townspeople raise the giant kites one final time to guide the spirits back to heaven. Later that evening, the kites that were torn by the winds are burned inside the cemetery, the smoke showing the way back to heaven for any vagabond spirits. The surviving kites are exhibited in the local Catholic Church during a novena for

the deceased, after that they are burned, and the ashes are buried in the cemetery, completing the annual ritual for the Day of the Dead in Santiago Sacatepéquez. 

Ignacio Ochoa, M.A., is the Academic Advisor for the Study Abroad Program at the Center for Latin American Studies of the Nahuatl Institute for Global Studies in San Diego, California. He holds MA degrees in Latin American Studies and Philosophy and has worked in indigenous, rural, and refugee communities in Panama, Colombia, Ecuador, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Mexico and Guatemala. Mr. Ochoa has taught at San Diego State University, the Harvard University School of Business, Northeastern University, and the Schools of Medicine and Public Health at San Carlos University in Guatemala. He was one of the judges for the Santiago Sacatepéquez kite competition from 2005-2007.

Editors note: See DateBook for more information about the Fundación Nahuatl's October calendar that includes a kite exhibit, a kite-making workshop and several cultural excursions.

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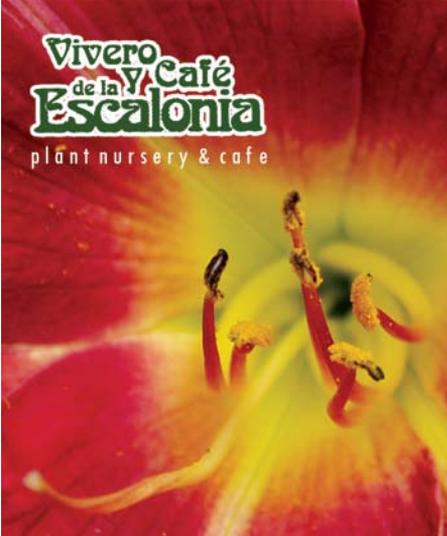
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The Art of Listening

by Dr. Karmen Guevara
HOLISTIC PSYCHOTHERAPIST

For the most part listening is an art many of us have not yet mastered. A testimony of this lies in the volumes of books that have been written on how to develop listening skills. There are even courses on the topic! It's truly a mystery that something so simple can be so elusive!

In our everyday lives we encounter different types of listeners. There's the type that simply likes the sound of their voice and doesn't listen at all. Then there are those who, instead of listening, are busy preparing the next thing they want to say. Another type runs an internal dialogue evaluating what's being said. Finally, there's the silent listener who's lost in his/her own thoughts. So, it's a unique experience whenever we're in the presence of someone who has the rare skill of truly listening. We can certainly feel the difference!

It's not just in casual conversations with strangers or acquaintances where listening is absent. Unfortunately, it happens with those who are dear to us. Often, parents don't really listen to what their children are saying; partners skip over a lot of what the other is saying; and friends frequently get carried away with telling their stories that they forget to listen. Wisdom lies in listening and not in speaking!

We all have an innate longing to be heard and understood. When we know that we are truly being listened to our spirit expands. The greatest gift we can give to each other is to be fully present and to listen with an open heart. **Far more important than the words that are being listened to, is the act of listening itself. It's the space of presence and stillness you offer another that is so precious.** So listen with more than just your ears and know that deep listening is a gift for both the listener and the speaker. Remember the words of the Greek philosopher Epictetus, "We have two ears and one mouth so that we can listen twice as much as we speak." 

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Hound Heights, AWARE'S no-kill animal refuge, is currently sheltering 220 dogs and 80 cats. Many puppies and kittens were adopted this year, some older dogs and cats were lucky enough to be placed in loving homes too, but the number of adult animals not suitable for adoption continues to rise. It's easy to rescue an animal ... next comes the hard part. These dogs and cats need medical attention, they need to be housed and comforted, fed and walked, brushed ... many will live out their lives at Hound Heights, cared for by human kindness. They deserve no less.

If you would like to adopt a pet, Hound Heights is open to the public every Sunday from 10am to 3pm. You may not be able to adopt a cat or dog --- but why not sponsor one?

Q150 per month will provide general medical care, flea control and food.

A one-time donation is also very much appreciated. AWARE is a registered non-profit organization in Guatemala, and a 501 (c) 3 not-for-profit corporation in the U.S. Donations in the U.S. are 100% tax deductible.

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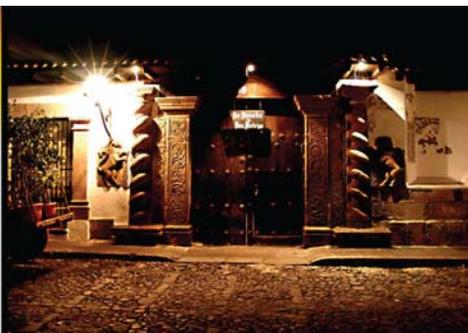
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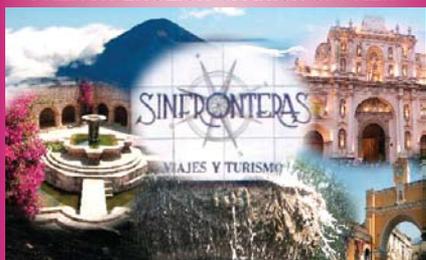
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Birthday Parties



My sons are still in their cavity-prone years, so I attended 19 birthday parties last year—three for my boys and 16 for their playmates. Each had its odd turn or twist.

To avoid the charge of ethnocentrism, I'll admit here that Central Americans do no worse a job of honoring their birthday boys and girls than do parents in the United States. So the observations that follow are offered in a spirit of fascination, not contempt.

One defense of Central American birthday parties is that the *piñata* industry would wither without them. Provincial Panajachel has three full-time piñata wrights, and Guatemala City has entire neighborhoods of them. The industry is also recession-proof, since kids keep having birthdays and because, to date, China hasn't found a way to undersell local piñata makers. Whereas Guatemalan piñatas succumb after about 40 or so blows, the theoretical Chinese version crumbles with the one-percent increase of barometric pressure it experiences when pulled from the shopping bag.

So with all this going for local, handmade piñatas, who are we to, um, knock them? In fact, with the diaspora of Central Americans into the United States, parents there are finding they can substitute piñatas for balloon-sculpting clowns, which cost more and tend to complain if little Joey kicks them because he didn't get a Buzz Lightyear.

Now although piñatas have migrated abroad, their handmaiden, the *sorpresa* (surprise), has not. Here is how sorpresas work: bigger, faster kids do better in the piñata scramble, so afterwards everybody gets a little goodie bag. The piñata itself is stuffed with cheapo

candy and, sometimes, peanuts. Sorpresas, contrarily, are doles of little toys and the kind of candy you want on the coffee table when your fiancee's parents visit. Sorpresas, then, are the great equalizer at birthday parties.

There is also an equalizing principle in the area of gifts. Unlike in the United States, the birthday child normally waits until everyone leaves before opening the presents, which lack a "To Pepito from ..." tag. This protects the anonymity of guests who spent little on the gift, which is nice for those of limited means. However, it seems understood that if you are conspicuously affluent, relative to the other guests, then your gift *must* be accordingly conspicuous.

The climax of the party seems to be the *rostrazo* that precedes rounds of *Happy boor-day to joo!* and *Ya queremos pastel!* Just after Little Pepito blows out the candles, which is not always done, somebody nudges Pepito's face into the cake. This rite is always attempted if the child is under about 7 or otherwise unwary of the ritual. Perhaps he forgot last year's indignity.

For those of you new to Central America, I am not making this up. Anyone who has attended birthday parties in these cold tropics can confirm this. The surprise is not the inevitability of the action, but the victim's reaction or, if he is wise to it, his resistance. No two occurrences are exactly alike.

Now, reader, one has to wonder. Are exemptions made whenever the kid has visible symptoms of, say, a head cold? I mean, really! If not, then can you imagine yourself angling for a slice remote from the crash site? If it took place at the top right corner of Sponge Bob's head, then perhaps the lower left corner of the "square pants" is potentially more appetizing.

As far as candles are concerned, Central




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Americans do us one better and make up for the graceless rostrazo. Instead of several little candles, a wax numeral is often all that is there. Many times I have seen the child remove this and extinguish it with a sanitary whiff. This beats the lung wringing that accompanies the gusting of a handful of candles straggling all over Sponge Bob. I remember how, at the age of 10, I made a birthday cake for my 4-year-old sister. She wound up spitting more than blowing. Hmm. Maybe I will take my chance with a caked marred by a rostrazo.

Sponge Bob's presence as a cake motif is also revealing. Go to enough parties and, sooner or later, you encounter Dora the Explorer, Homer Simpson and "Espaiderman." The observation? That globalism has penetrated even the waifish recess of birthday celebration. But outsiders advance globalism by their presence; every party with non-natives present is an affirmation that uniformity breeds expectation.

My friends Grant and Sue, from Australia and Austria, respectively, recently invited us to celebrate their daughter's fourth birthday. Among the guests, I counted people from no less than 13 countries and five continents. And I did what I have found is the best thing you can do, if you don't want to spend money on toys that self-destruct within 48 hours, and if you want to relieve the harried parents. It is this: Be available, cash in hand, for last-minute errands to buy more hot dog buns or punch, then sweep up the piñata detritus. Reader, you should try this; the parents, after all, do most of the remembering.

And indeed, these parties are more for parents than parents may want to admit. I know two Guatemalan families that had multiple miscarriages before they had a live baby. Both spared no expense on that first birthday party. I imagine that parents in other countries, even mine, would do the same. And I imagine 1-year-old Pepito crying while it plays out and then taking a long nap after the fuss ends. 



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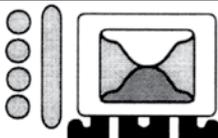
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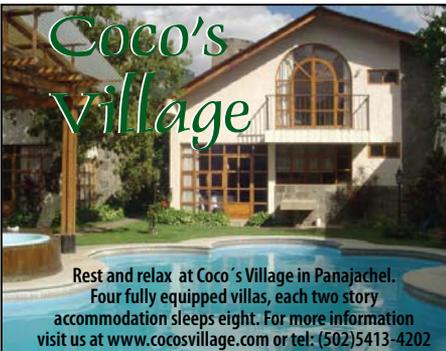
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Avoiding vs Evading

A few tips on U.S. taxpaying and IRA accounts

by Steven Pittser hvginc@yahoo.com

“I haven’t filed taxes for six years—ever since I’ve been down here.” That was the comment from my co-expat from the States, who had just bought me a drink at my favorite bar in La Antigua Guatemala. “I have had income every one of those years, so I guess I should file, right?” he continued.

He was confiding this to me because I am a retired tax specialist from the States currently residing in Guatemala. My specialty is showing retirees and/or small business owners how to legally reduce and avoid U.S. taxes. I stress the words “legally” and “avoid.” The difference between tax avoidance and tax evasion is five years (in federal prison).

U.S. citizens are required to file a tax return, no matter where they live in the world, if there has been any taxable income during that year. That does not necessarily mean that there will be any taxes to pay.

I believe that the worst, and most common, tax problem for retired individuals are “Qualified Plan Accounts.” These include IRAs, 401(k)s, 403(b)s and SEPs. Every dollar removed from any of these plans is taxable and in many cases, causes tax on Social Security. The amount withdrawn can also place an individual in a higher tax bracket.

In 1998 a “qualified plan” called the Roth IRA (sponsored by Sen. William V. Roth Jr.) became available. If you contribute to a Roth IRA, you receive no tax deduction, but the account grows tax free, and you can take the money out TAX-FREE. Allow me to emphasize this point: You don’t pay taxes on withdrawals from a Roth account, and it does not create tax on other income (i.e., Social Security). A Roth account also

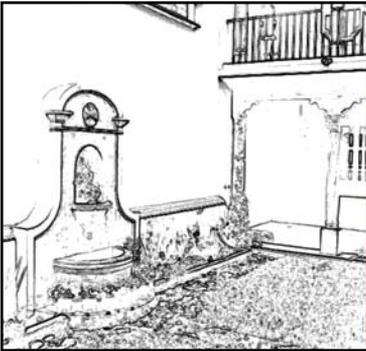
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The second thing the government said was, in addition to being able to contribute to a Roth (from earned income), we could also “convert” any of our IRA money (or any “qualified plan” money that had first been transferred to an IRA account) in any amount to a Roth account. We would have to pay taxes, of course, on the amount we converted. They also told us that the taxes owed on any amount converted in the year 1998 could be paid over the next four years in four equal installments.

There were many people who converted their entire IRA to a Roth account in 1998. That was a big mistake on their part (but it created a huge windfall of tax revenue for the government).

The mistake was not in converting IRA to Roth, it was how it was converted from IRA to Roth. By mistakenly converting the entire amount in one year, they not only paid (or owed over the next four years) the highest tax bracket amount (assuming a typical IRA account is over \$150,000), but they also put themselves in the highest tax bracket possible on their other taxable income that year.

Most people don’t know that the IRS code allows us to split up an IRA account into as many separate IRA accounts. For example, a \$200,000 IRA in 1998 could have been split into four \$50,000 IRAs, and one could have been converted each year for the next four years. The total tax paid would be much less than the tax created with the single \$200,000 “conversion”—because of a much lower tax bracket. 



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La Profecía Maya cont. from page 54

for the transformation of human consciousness that begins with the next World Age. “The story of the Maya ball game is a story of being on a team,” she said. “Each of us has a responsibility to show up at the global round table of the common good.”

Maya spiritual guide Aq’ab’al (Aurelio Sajvin) shared with participants his knowledge of the Mayan concept of time. He reminded us that the essence of understanding Mayan time is a spiritual wellness on an individual level. He pointed out that in today’s world, we frequently find ourselves “bumping into each other, looking for a flat road to where we are going” and that in order to truly understand Mayan time, we must first become “energetically well.”

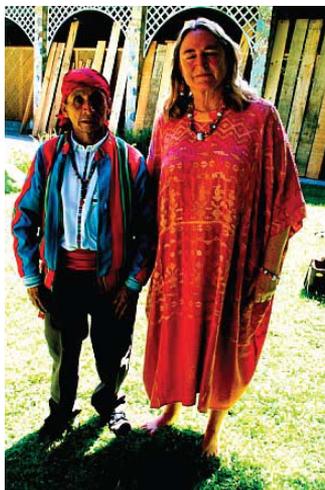
The implication that the collective energy is somehow unwell or diseased is a widespread concern of those involved in the movement to reclaim indigenous wisdom. Perhaps, too, the wisdom encoded in the Maya calendar is threatened by time itself,

by what Aq’ab’al called the “flat road,” or linear time’s tendency to have us look at life on Earth as a series of events, some destructive and others triumphant, that simply unfold before us indefinitely. This straight road to the future strips us of our imaginative power.

I don’t believe that our brains have devolved or that a way of life informed by indigenous wisdom is out of reach. I do think that, like the Izapans, we have the ability to shatter long-held belief systems in order to make room for new ones. It’s equally important to remember that the ancient Maya, who lacked artificial technologies to collect and interpret the natural world, were armed with a type of human intuition that is extremely difficult for us to imagine. And during these few short years approaching 2012, we will find out if this lack of imagination will lead us away from the wisdom left by the Maya—that every possibility of human experience is a story that has already been told in by the cosmos. 



CLOCKWISE: Conference participant tends altar flame; Spiritual Guide Rigoberto Itzep Chanchavac with Mary Lou Ridinger; John Major Jenkins poses with staff members of Jades, S.A.





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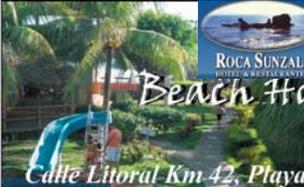
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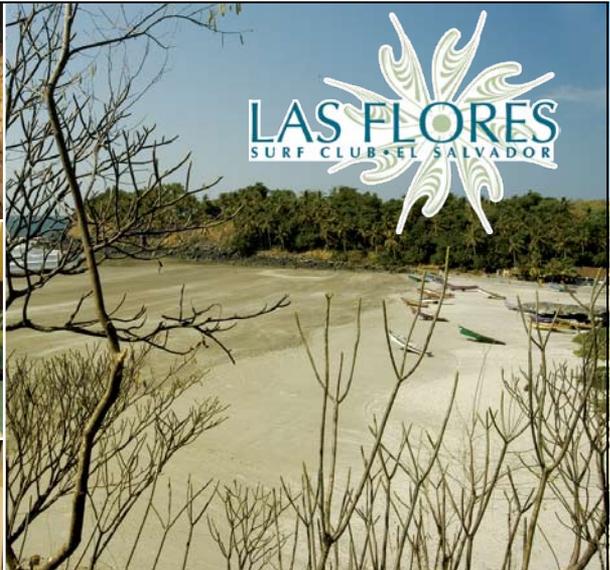
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Kindness is the language which the deaf can hear and the blind can see.

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by Lena Johannessen

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The Hospitality Academy recognizes the competition in the tourism sector as well as the fast evolution and segmentation of the market, so it has developed integral courses in hotel administration and food and beverage administration. Students learn such topics as control of expenses, strategic management of a hotel, administration of human resources for hotels, hostels, restaurants, coffee shops and others. Tourism businesses are invited to participate in these courses and learn more about gastronomy and tourism. 

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Salvadoran Coffee Excels at Roasters Guild Retreat

Café de El Salvador participated for the second year in a row as a sponsor at the Roasters Guild Retreat's eighth annual edition August 14-17th in Grand Rapids, Minnesota.

Roasters Guild is an association of roasters supported by the Specialty Coffee Association of America, which each year gathers roasters from all over the world for three days of activities focusing on education, interchange, debate and camaraderie around the art of coffee roasting.

One important aspect that characterizes this event is the absence of the "buy-sell factor," making it a non-commercial activity with a more relaxed atmosphere. The Roastmaster Challenge Cup consisted

of roasting the coffee in three machines assigned by the organizers and later were cupped by a panel of experts.

Four individual awards were given, as well as one for the winning team. The coffee used in the competition was a Salvadoran coffee of Bourbon variety from Finca Matalapa located in the Bálamo-Quezaltepec range. The president of Roasters Guild, Tim Chapdelaine, said that using coffee from El Salvador exemplified its excellent potential.

This event is an excellent showcase of coffees for the industry, so the success and popularity among roasters for the Salvadoran golden grain is an asset to the Salvadoran coffee industry in general.

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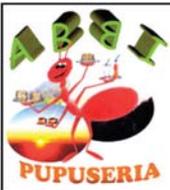
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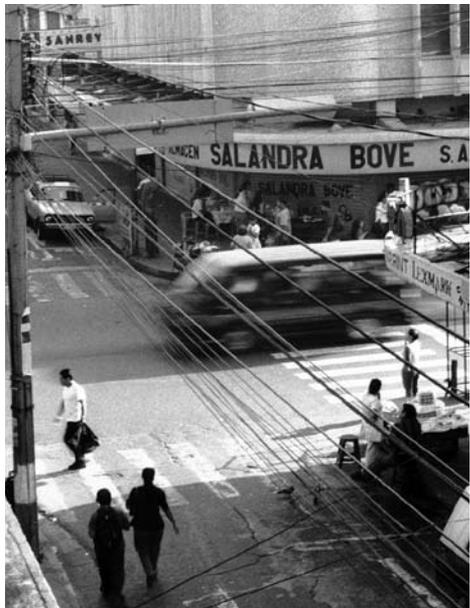
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is ignorance and
confidence, and
then success is sure.
—Mark Twain*

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fragrance that the violent
sheds on the heel
that has crushed it.
—Mark Twain*

*Be careless in your
dress if you will,
but keep a tidy soul.
—Mark Twain*



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*Grief can take care of itself,
but to get the full value
of a joy you must have
somebody to divide it with.*

—Mark Twain

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good books and a
sleepy conscience:
this is the ideal life.*

—Mark Twain

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