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September 2009
Year 18, No. 7

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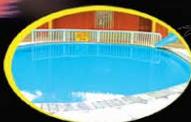
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El lugar que siempre soñó en Panajachel

A large background image showing a serene lake with mountains in the distance under a blue sky.

A small inset image showing a modern security guard post with a car parked in front.

A small inset image showing a group of people playing basketball on an outdoor court.

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FROM THE PUBLISHERS

Groups of school-aged drummers practicing daily in the streets alert us that Independence Day is soon upon us and a celebration is in order. Although September 15 is the specific holiday, throughout the month there will be parades, concerts, fireworks, torch-wielding marathon runners and general flag-waving fun.

September also brings the month-long FOTO►30 Festival. This series of over 30 exhibitions and workshops spotlights photography with events country-wide.

Datebook starts on page 24 and you can find information about these and many other celebrations, lectures, exhibitions, conferences and concerts happening in September.

Other topics in this issue include some destinations worth traveling to, the Tzantizotz Nature Reserve and Central America's tallest waterfall, Salto de Chilascó. We cross over to the culinary side with an introduction to the versatile Güisquil, including a tasty recipe. The state of the honey bee in Guatemala is also discussed in connection with the food we eat.

Dwight Wayne Coop reveals what his research reaped about the "real" Independence Day, and he brings us news from a highland hospital that reduced its paperwork while improving its water supply.

Laura McNamara's contributions this month include the funding problems a local rock climbing club is having, and how a film crew is working to keep Guatemala's fledgling film industry alive.

Panajachel's Patron Saint is celebrated in October and we've included a piece about what to expect with some photos of last year's *feria*.

We hope you enjoy and find useful the Revue this month. There is plenty to read and things to do on every printed page as well as our digitized pages online.

—John & Terry Kovick Biskovich

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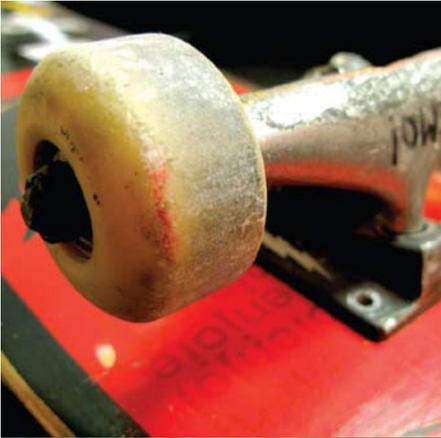
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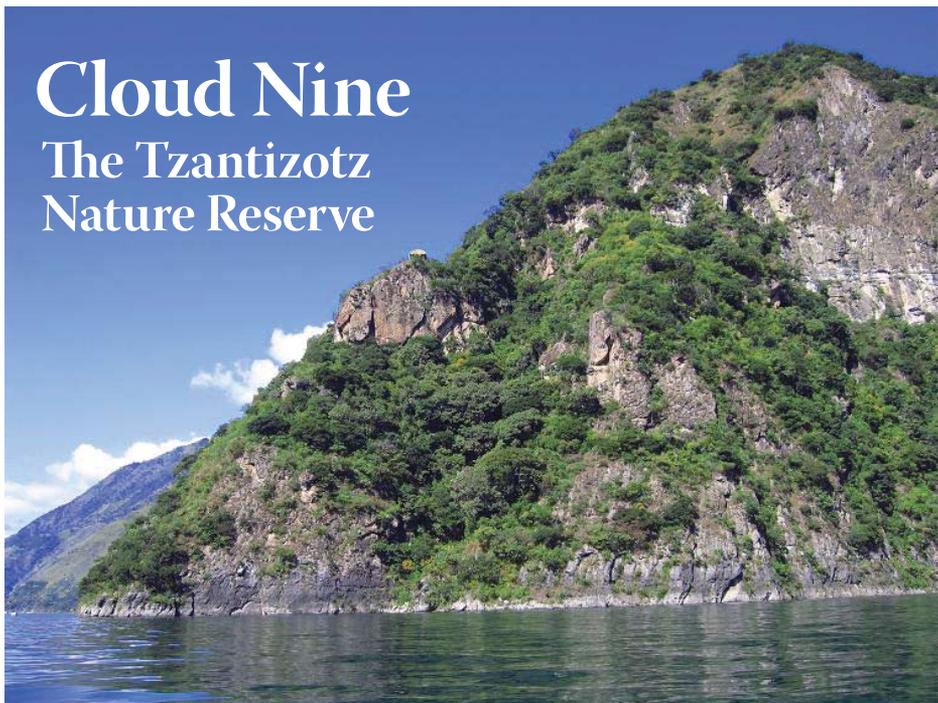
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Cloud Nine

The Tzantizotz Nature Reserve

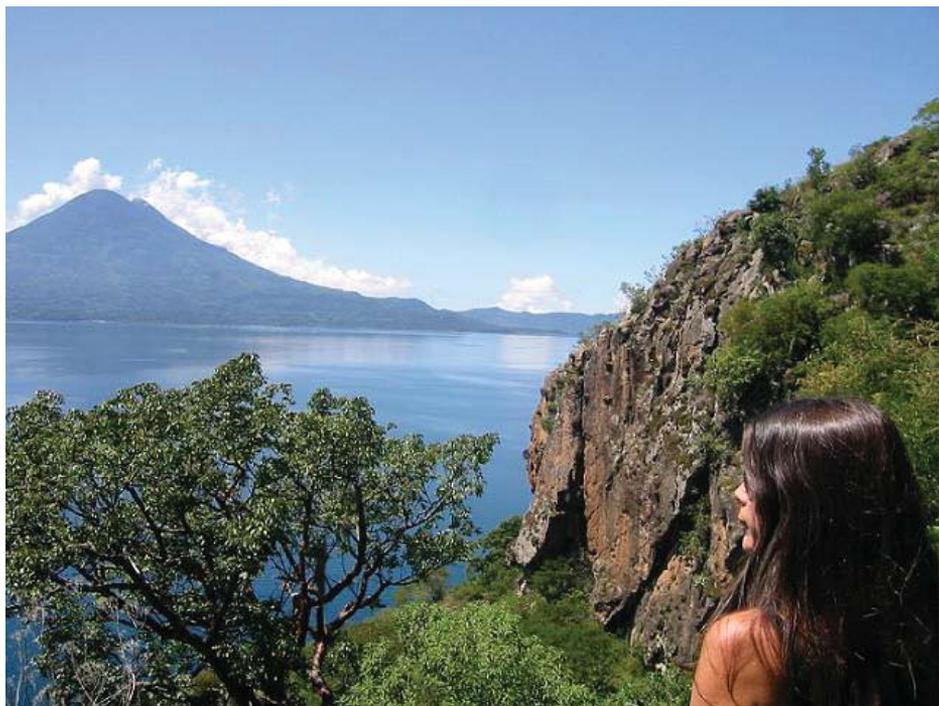


The swirling mist dusts Volcán San Pedro in a muted dove gray, catching dawn's sunrays and washing it in an ethereal glow. The steely-mirrored waters of Lake Atitlán are quiet, rippled only by the wake of a distant boat that slides across its surface. The air is still, cool and refreshing. This awe-inspiring view is the reason that Lake Atitlán is undisputedly one of the world's most beautiful lakes. It is here, in the moment and in the quiet that one can touch the magnificence of God's creation.

The ringside seat for this spectacle is the lofty mountain that holds Tzantizotz Nature Reserve. Rising 2,100 meters, Tzantizotz is a private, 100-acre reserve lovingly cared for by the owners of Laguna Lodge Eco-Boutique Resort. In the local Kaqchikel language tzantizotz means place of bats.

Stands of high-altitude, tropical dry forest clothe the mountain. Covering the apex of the reserve, enshrouded by clouds, is a pocket of virgin primary forest, some of the last stands in the Santa Cruz area. A series of trails winds through the reserve; some are ancient Mayan paths that lead to sacred ceremonial rocks. High in the rock cliffs, for the adventurous, are facilities for rappelling and cliff-jumping. On the lake, for those who enjoy more sedate activities, there is kayaking, swimming or snorkeling.

The reserve holds a diversity of flora, and many medicinal and useful plants grow within it. A guide is available to explain the use and preparation of the local plants. Of particular interest to bird lovers is the rich variety of birds that flock to the sanctuary and safety of Tzantizotz. There are a recorded 236 bird species, including the elusive belted fly-catcher, that visit the



area. Tzantizotz Nature Reserve is reached only by boat; there is no road access, leaving it virtually wild and undisturbed.

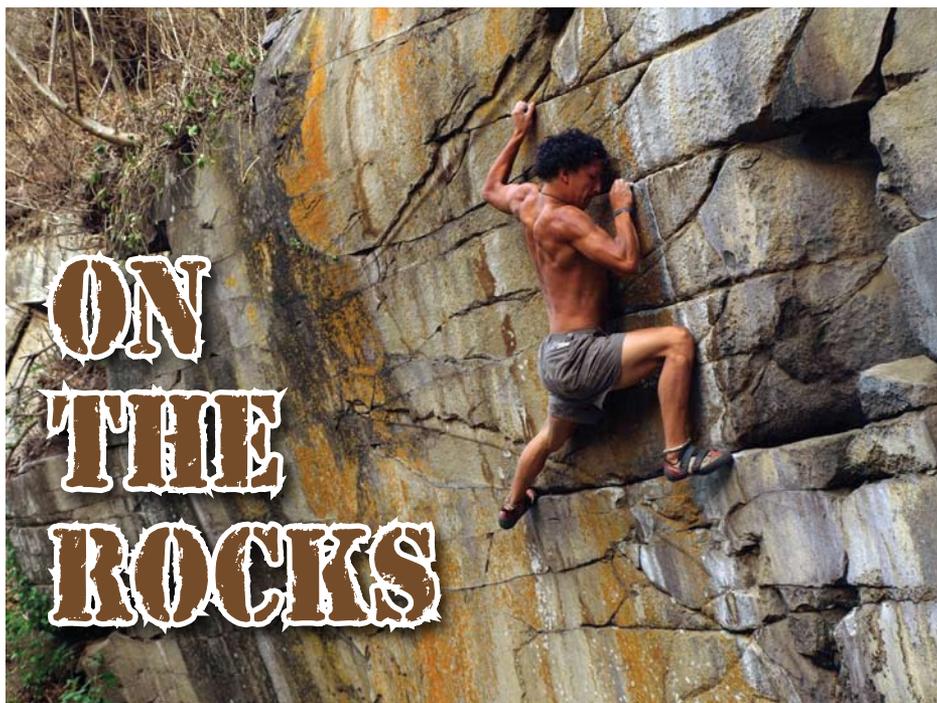
Proceeds from the minimal entrance fee into Tzantizotz Nature Reserve are funneled back into the preservation, protection, maintenance and reforestation of the reserve.

Tzantizotz Nature Reserve is a safe haven to hike and appreciate not only the wildlife and plants but also the spectacular views that the climb rewards you with. You are truly on cloud nine. 🍷



Tzantizotz Nature Reserve rolls down the mountain and in the sections where re-planting is being carried out organic coffee and fruit trees are grown for use in the internationally acclaimed Zotz restaurant. Zotz is part of Laguna Lodge and offers fine dining as spectacular as the views from its balcony restaurant. Organic local ingredients are blended into a symphony of tastes and textures to satisfy the palette of the most discerning connoisseur. Luxury accommodation is offered at Laguna Lodge, allowing you the time to explore the reserve and capture that special moment where your senses are embraced by the magnificence of nature's beauty.

The Laguna Lodge Eco-Boutique Resort is a member of the Association of Private Nature Reserves of Guatemala and is located in Santa Cruz La Laguna, Lake Atitlán. For more information visit www.fiveleafresort.com



Giving up is simply not an option for La Antigua Guatemala's Rock Climbing Club. Despite more than 18 months without receiving allotted funds, the club still climbs on. Before January 2008, the government largely supported the Climbing Association of Sacatepéquez (AANSAC). Now, club leader Felipe Álvarez says although the government's Climbing Foundation is still responsible for supporting climbing clubs, these clubs are not receiving any funding. "Unfortunately, we haven't competed at the national level since the beginning of 2008. We haven't competed for more than a year and a half because the Climbing Foundation is no longer providing funds. Neither is it organizing any activities."

Guatemala had developed an esteemed national selection of climbing talent. In

15 years, AANSAC members placed in 24 national competitions, in 22 of which they won First Place. AANSAC also placed First in three of 12 international competitions

Despite lack of funding and event support, the local culture for climbing can not be denied. The AANSAC possesses a strong, close-knit group of members who demonstrate that even if the national selection has officially disappeared, the local climbing culture has not.

"I really like to compete and I want to continue competing at an international level throughout Central and South America," AANSAC member David Galindo says. "Things are stagnant here in Guatemala in climbing, but we hope that everything can be fixed. But if not, we continue to climb for our own pleasure and we still



Rock climbing facility in Antigua

go to compete in other countries.” Galindo started climbing about 10 years ago and has participated in close to 60 competitions thus far in his career. He explains that all of his training and competitive opportunities are provided through AANSAC. The training has certainly served him well. The young 22-year-old Antigüeño can race up the club’s homemade climbing wall with impressive agility.

The very nature of the climbing is a critical part of why AANSAC members feel so compelled to help their club and their sport thrive. “From the first run I felt addicted to the sport,” 14-year-old member Gabriela Márquez Rodenas explains. “You feel excited and you climb up the wall and you want to just keep going and going. Then you come down and you want another go and another go and you don’t get tired.”

The commitment to helping amateurs

and seasoned competitors further develop their climbing skills is why Álvarez drives from Guatemala City three times a week to offer classes, despite lack of government funding. “We continue giving classes thanks to the support of all the members and all of the people that come. We buy materials when we can. Each rope costs about \$200 and through all of the students and all of the people that come we have bought four ropes.”

For Q20 a month, members and non-members can use the club’s wall and equipment, including climbing shoes, harnesses and chalk. This is how Álvarez says he helps preserve the local climbing culture. 

Climbing enthusiasts are welcome to practice at the gym located on the Calle de Manchén in La Antigua Guatemala on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 4:30 p.m. to 10 p.m. Q20/month. For more information visit www.aansac.com.

Chilascó's Hidden Treasure

At 133 meters, the majestic Salto de Chilascó is Central America's tallest waterfall

Guatemala is a country brimming with cultural diversity and natural beauty. It is proudly referred to as "The Soul of the Earth," and every year between one and two million tourists flock to this multicultural, remarkably topographic, fascinatingly biodiverse land to experience its magic and wonder. Tourism is one of the country's largest and fastest-growing industries with awe-inspiring attractions such as Lake Atitlán, the Mayan ruins of Tikal and the flowing lava of Volcán Pacaya. However, while these international attractions receive most of the attention, new opportunities have also arisen throughout the Guatemalan countryside for smaller, eco-friendly, community-tourism destinations. For those adventurers who like to travel off the beaten path, the village of Chilascó is host to one of these hidden touristic treasures.

An aldea of Salamá, Baja Verapaz, Chilascó can be found neatly tucked inside the picturesque rolling hills of Central America's largest cloud forest, La Biosfera de Sierra de Las Minas. Within the biosphere you can find a cornucopia of flora and fauna, 70 percent of Guatemala's biodiversity, and the national bird, the quetzal. But a special attraction is the majestic Salto de Chilascó, Central America's tallest waterfall. For generations the families here have survived off fertile soil, an irriguous climate and good, old-fashioned work ethic. But recently, empowered by the surge of tourism in Guatemala, they have begun to use the pristine

natural beauty of their surroundings to help in their struggle with poverty. This community may be small, but their hearts and dreams are anything but, and in 2005 the citizens formally formed The Association for the Sustainable Development of Chilascó (ADESOCHI).

ADESOCHI is a grassroots community organization that was founded on the principles of ecotourism. The association has three goals: conservation, education and income generation. The idea is to create new sources of income for the community, while protecting natural resources and fostering respect for the environment through education. ADESOCHI is constantly working to provide the citizens of Chilascó with opportunities to improve their standard of living. They hire and train local youths as guides, help local artisans sell their products, and put unemployed men to work performing trail maintenance. This dedicated group of elected community leaders, led by President Clementino García Pérez, shines as an example for similar projects throughout the region.

As you pull into Chilascó the first thing you will see is a thatched-roof hut that serves as the Tourist Information Center. Here you will be greeted by an enthusiastic member of ADESOCHI and receive a detailed explanation of the all the products and services that the community has to offer. The main attraction is a scenic hike that leads to the base of Central America's tallest waterfall (entrance: Q35/us\$4). To





Entrance to the park and waterfall adventure



The aldea of Chilascó sits high in the mountains



Some of the leaders of ADESOCH



A hike through the cloud forest will get you there

reach El Salto de Chilascó it is a three-kilometer hike through the cloud forest. A popular and highly advisable option is to hire a professionally trained local guide. He or she will point out the many endemic species of flora and fauna, help you spot some of the over 200 different types of birds that inhabit the area and share interesting stories from the community.

The first two kilometers of the trail are passable on horseback, and the local boys are always excited to provide this service. After this you will reach a rest area known as La Cumbrita, which marks the end of the biosphere's buffer zone and the beginning of the core zone, a denser area of the forest that remains unadulterated by human influence. The transition from one zone to the next is strikingly evident as the path narrows and you suddenly find yourself surrounded by jungle. The final kilometer is all downhill as you make your descent toward the base of the waterfall. On the way down, as you enjoy the refreshingly pure mountain air that holds the unmistakable scent of pine, your guide will first lead you to El Saltito. This smaller of the two waterfalls offers a great opportunity to take a dip in the water and cool down. After this you will pass the campground, where you can pitch your tent as the peaceful sound of the waterfall serenades you in the background.

Continuing from the campground you will pass two miradores that present stunning views and excellent photo-ops. Then, suddenly, the path opens up into a grand valley, a beautiful oasis, where towering overhead is a cascading waterfall that stands at an impressive 133 meters tall. The final mirador is a great place to relax and enjoy the cool spray of the mist. The more adventurous can actually climb the rocks right up to the base of the waterfall. Breathe the fresh air, listen to the ...continued on page 34

Growing the Industry

A Guatemalan film crew shares a universal story to highlight their country's unique virtues in filmmaking.

This is a movie crew with a vision: Cru Código wants to train the spotlight on Guatemala, demonstrating to the international community that the “Country of Contrasts” is both a desirable and capable location for high-quality, professional filmmaking. “We are demonstrating that not only do we have an industry that is operating in Guatemala, but we have an industry that is growing,” says Edgar Pinzón, director of photography on the movie set of *Sol*. It’s the brainchild of Director Rafael Tres—a popular DJ who recently began devoting more time to revitalizing the Guatemalan film industry—he explains about the film: it recounts the story of a young *chapi-na* who struggles with her parents and her culture to realize her dream of becoming a professional soccer player. For Tres, this film could be the chance to attract international interest and support for Guatemalan films. Recalling movies such as *Bend it like Beckham* and *She’s the Man*, this story is not a novel narrative, nor is it meant to be one. “We don’t want to change the world, nor do we want to suggest that we want to become millionaires,” Tres said. “We just want to say: ‘Look at what we did.’ ”

...continued on page 54



LIGHTS!



CAMERA!



ACTION!



Scenes from last year's fair

Panajachel Feria

Next month brings another great opportunity to experience Guatemalan culture and festivity in a way that is very easy on the visitor, especially with the spectacular backdrop of Lake Atitlán. Panajachel's *feria titular*—the Guatemalan version of a town fair—runs **Oct. 1** through 7. The main day is Oct. 4.

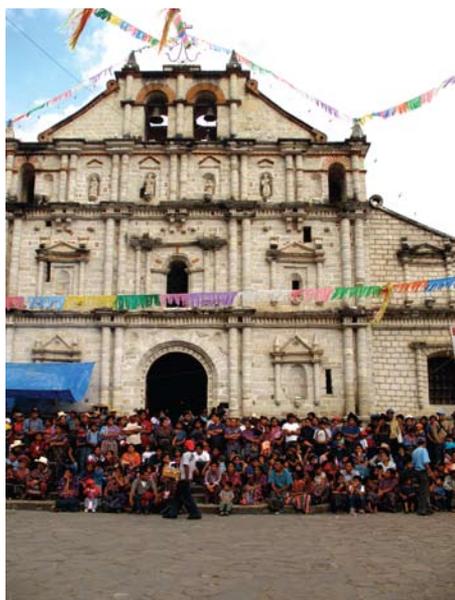
With its abundance of accommodations, good restaurants and the beauty of Lake Atitlán, Panajachel is a great place to visit for the *feria*. If the hub-bub of feria activity becomes too much, there's always somewhere else to go and something else to do—including just relaxing.

Actually, ferias are more of a combination of town fairs—with rides and vendors—and

Catholic and/or Mayan ceremonies: dances, pyrotechnics, parades and processions.

As part of the colonial system of converting the Maya to Catholicism was the re-naming of towns in honor of the patron saint that was chosen for them. Thus, Atitlán became Santiago de Atitlán, Chajul became San Gaspar de Chajul, etc. There were so many saint names to give away that now there are well over 300 sizable feria titulares throughout the country every year. The official (or colonial) name for Panajachel is San Francisco de Panajachel—St. Francis of Assisi is the patron saint of Pana.

Every feria in every town has its own distinct character, depending on such fac-



Crowd awaits the dancers in the church plaza



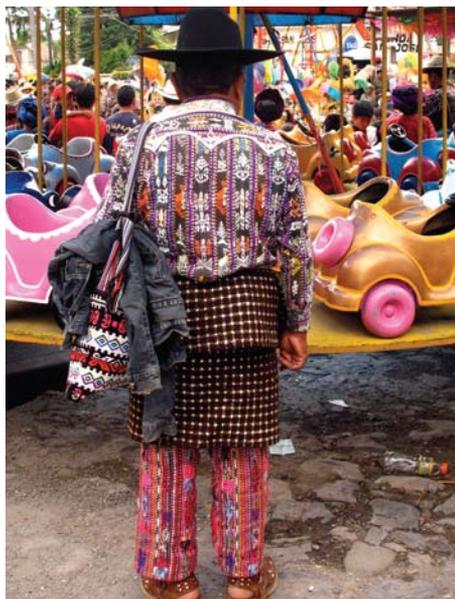
Dance of the Conquest

Panajachel's patron saint, St. Francis of Assisi, is honored in October with a combination of town fair, cultural dances, religious ceremonies, pyrotechnics and parades

tors as size, geography, accessibility, prosperity, the extent of cultural preservation, and, of course, how Catholic the town is. Panajachel is a largely evangelical town, but the Catholic contingent participates devotedly in the feria with a lot of hard work. The Cofradía de San Francisco de Asís, the Fraternidad Franciscana and the Asociación Maya Kaqchikel participate with the Catholic church and the very active *municipalidad* to bring about the many events and activities of Panajachel's feria.

Activities include parades of floats, allegorical parades and at least four processions of the statues (*imágenes*) of St. Francis and some of his helper saints to the church and

to their *cofradía* houses. Sports competitions such as soccer matches are usually on the schedule as well. And for the very Catholic among us there are innumerable Masses and sermons. Panajachel is also very big on its beauty queens, who are extolled not only for their beauty, but also for their knowledge of Guatemalan culture, including traditional indigenous culture. The Panajachel feria includes several dances, concerts and parties in honor of the five representatives of *La Belleza Panajachelense*. The plaza in front of the Catholic church is usually the site of many concerts and folkloric performances throughout the week. And without a doubt, any and all of these activities are punctuated by fireworks.



A father watches his child enjoy the ride



A torito waits his turn to join the dance

On any given day Panajachel is quite a cultural crossroads. Because of its natural beauty and culture, Guatemalans and visitors alike routinely come to Pana to enjoy Lake Atitlán, and many indigenous Guatemalans come to sell their goods. And during the feria, this is multiplied considerably. Since a feria is naturally the time to dress your best, people of many

regions wear their finest, making the partrons as interesting as the performances.

While the fun aspects of the feria can seem like what it's all about, it's important to remember that many of the local people attend for solemn religious activities. Visitors should be aware of whether ceremonies are taking place nearby and should always be respectful, including wearing clothes that cover you from neck to knees.



Although the actual number of events is not confirmed until a week or so before Oct. 1, schedules are indeed printed and should be available at the Panajachel municipalidad and other locations by fair time. 

Musicians warm up on the church steps



Would the Real Independence Day Please Stand Up?

Guatemala, El Salvador and their sisters did not win independence on Sept. 15

At our house in Panajachel, July 4 is Independence Day for two reasons. As citizens of the United States, my sons and I observe it in some fashion. But July 4 is also the day that my youngest, Aaron Donald Coop, marks his birthday. This was not wholly by accident; for his cesarean delivery, we had a window of 10 days to choose from. One was July 4, so we went with that. If he's ever Stateside on that day, I'll tell him that the fireworks are in his honor.

His birth was, in its way, a manifestation of independence. With the cutting of the umbilical, he became independent of the placenta. To be sure, babies remain dependent in other ways, and true independency comes in stages. I see three independence rites marking the passage to childhood autonomy. The first is birth; the second is the day of weaning; and the third is that first day he or she can be left for a play date at a friend's house, confident that Mom, Dad, siblings and home all continue to exist, even if they are not in sight.

Where we live, the holiday marking national independence is Sept. 15. This day is celebrated not only in Guatemala but everywhere between Shammu's house in San Diego to the doorstep of South America (the Costa Rica-Panama border); only Belize is excepted. It is the day we associate

with national independence, but in fact it recalls only the first of three separations that wrought the nation states we see today. Guatemala did not experience independence overnight; she had to be born, weaned and separated from her siblings. Independence was not gained once, but thrice: in succession from Spain, Mexico, and El Salvador.

The hubbub of September commemorates the first separation, which, for Guatemala and her neighbors to the east, was painless. The wars of liberation against Spain were waged elsewhere; Chile, Argentina, Mexico and the Andean republics all fought hard to sever the umbilical. What is now Central America was not even a theater of conflict. And so, there is irony in the martial flavor of the independence processions that traipse, tromp and even goosestep through Tegucigalpa, Managua and other capitals on Sept. 15.

The year of birth was 1821. Guatemala (then called Ciudad Real) was free of Spain, but not of Imperial Mexico, which had, at the moment of her own independence, inherited most of the Viceroyalty of New Spain, which also encompassed California, the Great Basin, Texas, Cuba, modern Central America and oodles of islands.

The weaning came in 1823, ...cont. on page 36

Requisition-less Water

Highland hospital slakes its thirst and reduces its paperwork—a need, discovered by accident, is met

General Jack Ripper, the villain in Dr. Strangelove, uttered a single true statement during his long paranoid rant. To Group Captain Lionel Mandrake, his hapless audience, Ripper rhetorically asked, “Did you know that 70 percent of you is water, Mandrake?”

Consequently, the “purity of our precious bodily fluids” (to use Ripper’s words) depends on the purity of the water that indeed makes up most of the human body. And the purity of that water, in turn, depends on the purity of the water we drink.

Until recently, guarding the purity of this water at Sololá’s thirsty public hospital was a bureaucratic proposition for the people who worked there and an expensive proposition for those who visited. Hospital personnel, and patients and their families, all longed for relief. The old system had broken down a year earlier.

One thing had not changed. The water drunk by patients still arrived through a



(l-r) Nutritionist, María Esmeralda Arriaga; Atitlán Rotary President, Fredy Lara; medical chief, Dr. Irene Quiejú; administrator, Víctor García

sink in the cramped lunchroom used by the pharmacy, stockroom and kitchen employees. From there it was fed to an old purification unit. This forlorn machine gave up the ghost in 2008 from overuse but still sat in a lunchroom corner.

To replace it, Patricia Armas, the clerk in charge of that part of the hospital, acquired a ramshackle old heating pad and borrowed a 22-liter pot from the kitchen. This was certainly better than nothing; *microbios* could be eliminated. But there was still no filtration for dirt, organic debris, toxic metals and other contaminants.

But even before the machine broke down, there had been other problems. Drinking water had to be ordered from Armas’ section. Whenever a ward needed more, a requisition had to be written, then signed both by a physician and the shift nurse. Then a nursing assistant had to fetch the water, which was not always ready.

Hospital nutritionist María Esmeralda Arriaga was at wit’s end over the matter.

“Sick people need more water than healthy people,” she says, “and *purier* water. Without it, they take longer to heal. We’re supposed to make people well here. But we can’t even give them proper hydration.”

In desperation, patients had come to depend on visitors to buy them water. This demand created a land-office business for several small *tiendas* on the edge of, or within, the hospital premises. ...continued on page 44

Quick Sketch: seven questions for Orestes Ricardo Sánchez

Briefly describe your art.

My art is to represent everything as much as I can in high texture.

What is your favorite art medium?

Clay. Then once I fire it, it becomes ceramic.

When did you learn how to work with clay and ceramic?

I was going to take a class in English literature, but the class was canceled. Then I saw a classroom where students were working with clay. The teacher asked me, “Do you want to join this class?” And that’s how I started (laughs). It was an accident.

What was your first piece of artwork?

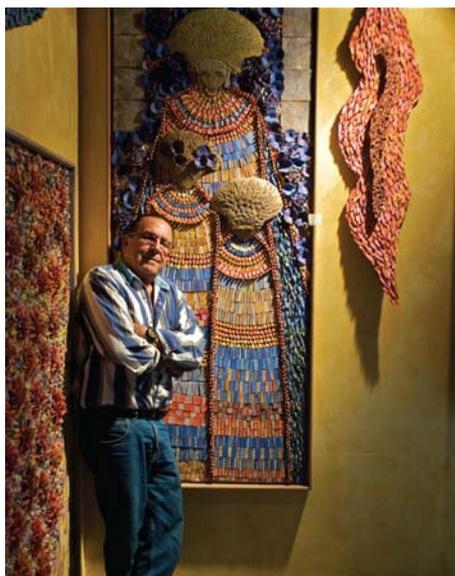
It was a 28-by-30 slab cut into irregular pieces in the design of a bird. I finished that piece with a form of firing called *raku*, and it came out spectacularly because of the different sizes and the different colors. It was exhibited in the Miami Art Center, and immediately I had a buyer. But I didn’t sell it. Later on, I sold it to a woman that was so in love with this piece—finally, I thought, I’ve found the right person for it.

When did you first realize you were an artist?

I don’t feel as if I’m an artist. I feel like I do what I like to do, and I enjoy doing it.

Who mentored you as you developed your artistic style?

Juanita May. She was an authority on clay in the United States, a teacher and the director of the art school at the University of Miami. I took a class with her, and she asked me to enroll in the second one. But money was sort of scarce at that time. She said: “Don’t worry, I’ll make you my assistant.”



The artist with some of his recent creations



What gives you the inspiration to create something?

That’s a very common question I get, and it’s hard to answer. I get the feeling that when I am creating my work, the inspiration isn’t coming from my mind. I feel like there is something else that is directing my everything. You feel more like a vehicle. It’s some inspiration that is not really in your control. 



SEPTEMBER Guide to culture & upcoming events Compiled by Mercedes Mejicanos

Through **Fri., 11th** — ART: *Divas*, a collection of 13 drawings by well-known artist Magda Eunice Sánchez. Galería El Túnel (tel: 2367-3266) Plaza Obelisco, 16 calle 1-01, z.10, **Guatemala City**.



1 **Tues., 5:30pm** — (English) TALK: Guatemalans generating their own opportunities through modern community libraries. The Riecken Foundation's mission is to promote democracy and prosperity in Central America through modern community libraries that spark a spirit of discovery and foster social participation. Donation Q25. Rainbow Café (tel: 7832-1919), 7a av. sur #8, **La Antigua**.

2 **Wed., 5-7pm** — SOCIAL: AnEcho celebrates *Open House* the first Wednesday of each month. Share a glass of wine or soda with friends, old and new. Free. Casa Convento Concepción (tel: 7882-4600) 4a calle oriente # 41, **La Antigua**.

2 **Wed., Wed., 9th & Wed., 16th, 6:30-8:30pm** — (Spanish) WORKSHOP: *La Independencia de Guatemala* by Ramiro Ordóñez. Parking Q14/hour. Museo Popol Vuh (tel: 2338-7896) 6a calle final z. 10, **Guatemala City**.

4 **Fri., & Fri., 11th, 8pm** — (Spanish) MONOLOGUE: *Defendiendo al Cavernicola* presented by Juan Diego Rodríguez (www.defendiendoalcavernicola.com) Tickets, Q85, before the event; Q100, day of the event. El Sitio (tel: 7832-3037) 5a calle poniente #15, **La Antigua**.

5 **Sat., 12pm-4:30pm** — LABOR DAY PICNIC: Good food and drink. Lively conversation and music by Grupo Sol Latino plus an unusual raffle. Donation Q50. For more info., John Chudy, tel: 7832-4581. Casa Convento Concepción, Calle Concepción #41, **La Antigua**.

5 **Sat., 9pm** — MUSIC: Listen and dance to Cuban music with a mixture of Colombian rhythms, salsa, mambo, timba, son, plena, hip hop, reggae and reggaeton. Espacio Cultural El Gran Hotel (tel: 4559-3030) 9a calle 7-64, z. 1, **Guatemala City**.

8 **Tues., 5:30pm** — (English) TALK: *Los Patos: Forming Leaders for Guatemala* with Juan Pablo Romero, director of this dynamic project. Donation Q25. Rainbow Café (tel: 7832-1919), 7a av. sur #8, **La Antigua**.

DateBook online: www.revuemag.com

9 Wed., 5pm — PHOTOGRAPHY: *Jerarquías de Intimidad* (La Anunciación) by photographer Luis González Palma. Galería Panza Verde (tel: 7832-2925) 5a av. sur #19, **La Antigua**.



9 Mon., 5pm — MAYAN CEREMONY: Presentation of an authentic Mayan ceremony. Free. La Peña de Sol Latino (tel: 7882-4468), **La Antigua**.

10 Thurs., 8pm — (Spanish) FILM: Presentation of Guatemalan film *Pan Dulce*, directed by Alan García, actors: Ana Lemus, Pepe Orozco, Willy Monsanto, Jorge H. Vielman, Evelyn Torres and Flora Méndez. Espacio Cultural El Gran Hotel (tel: 4559-3030) 9a calle 7-64, z. 1, **Guatemala City**.

12 Sat., 7pm — MUSIC: MaF, Costa Rican

singer-songwriter presents *La Isla de Las Fantasías*, featuring a variety of music: ethnic, bossa nova, reggae, funk and rock ballads. Reservations, tel: 7832-3037. Q60, includes an acoustic CD and a song book. El Sitio, 5a calle poniente #15, **La Antigua**.



13 Sun., 3-5pm — ANECHO DISCUSSION SERIES: *Comparing Personalities & Issues of the Middle Ages to the 20th Century*, facilitated by Dorotea. AnEcho is excited to begin a two-month study program of workshops, discussion groups and events targeting the Middle Ages. Free. Casa Convento Concepción (tel: 7882-4600) 4a calle oriente #41, **La Antigua**.



15 Tues., — INDEPENDENCE DAY: Guatemala declared independence from Spain in 1821. School parades and bands, fireworks, concerts & marathons carrying torches are characteristic of this holiday that is celebrated throughout the country. Banks and many businesses are closed. See related articles on pages 21 and 128. (PHOTOS: RUDY GIRÓN)



15 Tues., 5:30pm — (English) TALK: Transitions provides outreach, medical support and health education to disabled people throughout Guatemala. It also operates a manufacturing and training facility for customized wheelchairs, a clinic for prosthetics and orthotics, a graphic design and offset printing business and a special education program. Transition members will be sharing some of the personal stories of Guatemalans with disabilities, and the challenges and successes of the organization. Donation Q25. Rainbow Café (tel: 7832-1919), 7a av. sur #8, **La Antigua**.

Revue is not responsible for event cancellations or date/time changes.

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18 Fri., 8pm — MUSIC: *La Magia en la Selva*, playing flutes, guitars & drums mixed with sounds from nature performed by Pablo Collado, Astreberto Fion, Gabriel Burrión and Alfredo Dávila. Reservations, tel: 7832-3037. Q60; Q45 students w/ carnet. El Sitio, 5a calle poniente #15, **La Antigua**.

19 Sat., 10am-2pm — SPIRITUAL SPA FOR WOMEN: Set aside this time for yourself, and join us for spiritual and physical refreshment and a time of fellowship. Limited space available. More info., contact: unionchurchguatemala@gmail.com or call 2361-2027. Union Church, 12 calle 7-37, z. 9, **Guatemala City**.

19 Sat., 11am-1pm — PHOTOGRAPHY: Child photographers exhibition as part of the Foto30 series. Fotokids Center, 15 av. 24-03, z.13 **Guatemala City**.

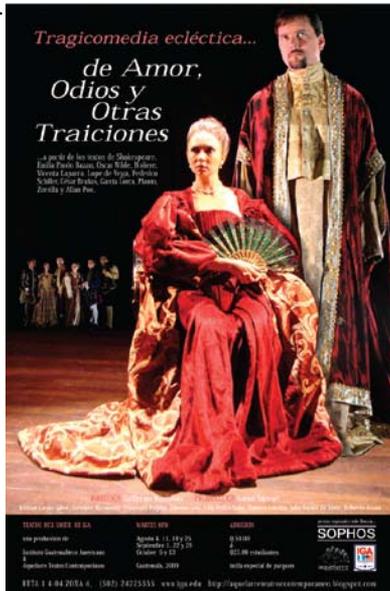
19 Sat., 1pm — FOLK DANCES: Los Niños de Bendición from San Antonio Aguas Calientes present traditional folk dances. Free, though donations gratefully accepted, helping to pay school expenses. La Peña de Sol Latino (tel: 7882-4468), **La Antigua**.

19 Sat., 7pm — PHOTOGRAPHY: *Post Industrial* by well-known photographer Iván Castro. Cocktail. Free. El Sitio (tel: 7832-3037) 5a calle poniente #15, **La Antigua**.



22 Tues., 5:30pm — (English) TALK: *Microloans, Myths and Management* with Franklin Voorhes, As Green As It Gets, a non-profit organization supporting coffee farmers, artisans and other small producers from disadvantaged communities in Guatemala. Donation Q25. Rainbow Café (tel: 7832-1919), 7a av. sur #8, **La Antigua**.

22 & 29 Tuesdays, 8pm — (Spanish) THEATER: *De Amor, Odios y Otras Traiciones*, directed by Guillermo Monsanto, produced by Lorna Stewart. Q50; Q25 students w/ carnet. Teatro Dick Smith de IGA (tel: 2422-5555) Ruta 1, 4-05, z. 4, **Guatemala City**.





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We need a type of patriotism that recognizes the virtues of those who are opposed to us.
—Francis John McConnell

Patriotism is supporting your country all the time, and your government when it deserves it.
—Mark Twain



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MUSIC

MUSIC

THROUGHOUT THE MONTH

La Cueva de Panza Verde (tel: 7832-2925)5a av. sur #19, *La Antigua***Mondays, 8 to 10pm:** Blues Night. Q35.**Wednesdays, 8-10pm**

— Jazz Trio. entrance: Q35.

Thursdays and Fridays,**8 to 10pm** — Cuban

jazz performed by Buena Vista de Corazón.

entrance Q35. ▶

Fridays, 8 to 10pm

—Estasis, Trio, Salón Latino & Tango. Q35.

**La Peña de Sol Latino** (tel: 7882-4468)5a calle poniente #15-C, *La Antigua*.**Mondays, 7:30pm** — Kenny Molina hosts *Open Mike*. Free.**Tuesdays, 7:30pm** — Ramiro plays trova Cubana. Free.**Wednesdays-Saturdays, 7:30pm-Sundays, 7pm** — Sol Latino plays Andean music (pan flutes). Free. ▼**Sundays, 1pm** — Ramiro plays Trova Cubana during the Sunday Buffet. No cover.

If your bar or restaurant has live music on a regular schedule, send info to: publicidad@revuemag.com

Rainbow Café (tel: 7832-1919)7a av. sur #8, *La Antigua***Mondays, 7:30pm** — Don Ramiro will serenade you with some beautiful Latin folk music. Free.**Tuesdays, 7:30pm** — Nicaraguan musician Heber performs a mixture of western and Latino tunes. Free.**Wednesdays, 7:30pm** — *Open Mike Night* hosted by Juan-Jo and friends. A complimentary drink for all performers. Free.**Thursdays, 7:30pm** — Güicho will astound you with his guitar skills and improvisation of Latino and pop classics.**Fridays, 7:30pm** — Get in the groove with Sergio playing great Reggae tracks.**Sundays, 7:30pm** — La Raiz: Luis, Juan-Jo & Choko, great improvised classics. Free.**La Casbah Discoteca** (tel: 7832-2640)5a av norte #30, *La Antigua***Wednesdays 9pm-1am** — PARTY: Dance to the music of the 80s at the hottest discotheque in town. No cover.**La Esquina** (tel: 7882-4761)6a calle poniente #7, *La Antigua***Saturdays 5 and 12, 7pm** — Éstasis, Cuban music by Daniel Rodríguez's band.**Friday 11, 7pm** — La Remolacha Beats, playing Soul, Cumbia, Reggae, Folk, Funk.**Saturday 19, 7pm** — La Tortilla All Starz, presentation of their CD, plus live music

Revue is not responsible for event cancellations or date/time changes.

CHECK DATEBOOK CALENDAR LISTINGS FOR MORE CONCERTS AND SPECIAL MUSICAL EVENTS

MUSIC

THROUGHOUT THE MONTH

Circus Bar (tel: 7762-2056)
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Wednesdays — Nayno, Latin Ensemble

Thursdays — Nayno, Trova del lago

Fridays — Los Vagabundos, hot rhythms in a fusion of rumba flamenco and Guatemalan traditional elements

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2 Wed., 8pm — INAUGURATION OF FOTO>30 2009: Energía, by Yann Arthus-Bertrand Alianza Francesa, 5a calle 10-55, z. 13 (Finca La Aurora), *Guatemala City*.

8 Tues., 7pm — PHOTOGRAPHY: Inauguration of Nuestro Paisaje, by photographers Enrique Campang, Manuel Chavajay, Lourdes de La Riva, Diana de Solares, Grupo La Torana, Luis Fernando Ponce, Alberto Rodríguez, Gabriel Rodríguez, David Sánchez, Mario Santizo, Rodolfo Walsh and curator Rosina Cazali. Centro Cultural Metropolitano, 7a av. 11-67, z. 1, *Guatemala City*.

12 Sat., 8pm — PHOTOGRAPHY: Inauguration of Memorias de Patria Chica, by photographers Andrea Aragón and José Domingo Barrios and curators Anabella Acevedo and Rosina Cazali. Casa Noj, Parque Central, *Quetzaltenango*.

26 Sat., 5pm — PHOTOGRAPHY: Inauguration of Laberinto de Miradas III, by collective of Iberoamerican photographers. Espacioce! Proyectos culturales del Centro de Formación de la Cooperación Española en Antigua, Antigua Colegio de la Compañía de Jesús, 6a av. norte, *La Antigua*.

27 Sun., 8:30-12:30pm —
PHOTOGRAPHY WORKSHOP:
Imágenes de un País by photographer Iván
Castro for teenagers, 15 and older and
adults: bring a camera, notebook and pen.
Q350 includes coffee break and diploma.
El Sitio (tel: 7832-3037) 5a calle poniente
#15, **La Antigua**.



24 Thurs., 6:30pm — (Spanish) CON-
FERENCE: *La Arqueología del Lago de
Atitlán* by Sonia Medrano. Q20; Q10 students
w/carnet. Parking Q14/hour. Museo Popol Vuh
(tel: 2338-7896) 6a calle final z. 10, **Guatemala
City**.

25 Fri., 7pm — (Spanish) CONFER-
ENCE: *Tropósfera* by photographer Iván
Castro, the objective is to capture unexplored
places in Guatemala and contrast them with
other countries in Latin America. Free. El Sitio
(tel: 7832-3037) **La Antigua**. ▼



*I'll be truthful. The weekly paycheck is the
most important thing to me. —Bela Lugosi*

26 Sat., 2pm-6pm — PHOTOGRAPHY
WORKSHOP: *Imágenes de un País* by
photographer Iván Castro for children, 8 to 14
years old: bring a camera, notebook and pen.
Q200 incl. beverage break and diploma. El Si-
tio (tel: 7832-3037) **La Antigua**.

26 Sat., 7pm — MUSIC: *Dos Continen-
tes, Un Sentimiento*, South American
and Russian music presented by Sveltana Si-
zoff. Q60; Q45 students w/carnet. El Sitio (tel:
7832-3037) 5a calle poniente #15, **La Antigua**.

29 Tues., 5:30pm — (English) TALK:
Educ-Arte, a Guatemalan NGO work-
ing in Ciudad Vieja, helps families with limited
resources via programs that include education,
nutrition, hygiene and the arts. Approximately
70 children attend the EducArte school. Dona-
tion Q25. Rainbow Café (tel: 7832-1919), 7a av.
sur #8, **La Antigua**.

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*Machines take me by surprise with
great frequency. —Alan Turing*



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Comedy is simply a funny way of being serious.
—Peter Ustinov



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I think I'm maintaining the quality, but internally I'm paying for it. —Gary Larson



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THROUGHOUT THE MONTH

ART: *The Secret of the Matter* is the latest collection in high-relief terracotta created by Guatemalan artist Emanuel Paniagua. This 13-piece collection will be on display throughout the month. La Antigua Galería de Arte (tel: 7832-2124) 4a calle oriente #15, **La Antigua**.



Through Thurs., 17th — ART: *Gigantes de la Plástica Guatemalteca*, 20 works by well-known artists Miguel Ángel Ríos (1914-1991) and Jaime Armany (1908-1995). Unpublished and never for sale before. Die Augen Galería de Arte (tel: 2381-7349) 6a av. 4-61, z.10, 4to nivel, **Guatemala City**. ▼



Mondays, 3pm — STAR SCRABBLE CLUB: Meets in different locations. See <http://www.starscrabble.com/> for locations and how to join. **La Antigua**.

Tuesdays, 3-5pm — AL-ANON MEETINGS: A bilingual support group of friends and family in a co-dependent relationship with loved ones suffering from compulsive disorders. AnEcho, Casa Convento Concepción (tel: 7882-4600) 4a calle oriente #41, **La Antigua**.

Tuesdays, 6pm — (English) SLIDE SHOW *Antigua: Behind the Walls* by Elizabeth Bell. Q30 benefits educational programs. El Sitio, 5a calle poniente #15, **La Antigua**.

Tuesdays 9am-12pm — (Spanish) SCULPTURE WORKSHOP: Using clay & terracotta techniques, taught by Carlos González. Parking Q14/hour. Museo Popol Vuh (tel: 2338-7896) 6a calle final z. 10, **Guatemala City**.

Wednesdays & Fridays, 9-10am — TAI-CHI: Great exercise in a beautiful colonial garden setting. Q50 per class. AnEcho, Casa Convento Concepción (tel: 7882-4600) 4a calle oriente #41, **La Antigua**.

Thursdays, 5pm — TANGO CLASSES: for beginners, the ballet of Latin dance. Q50 per class. AnEcho, Casa Convento Concepción (tel: 7882-4600) 4a calle oriente #41, **La Antigua**.

Fridays, 2-4pm — BEGINNER'S BRIDGE CLASSES: We're still learning, join us! Free. AnEcho, Casa Convento Concepción (tel: 7882-4600) 4a calle oriente #41, **La Antigua**.

Every Sunday, 9:45am — (English) FOUNDATIONS OF FAITH: Topics like *Who is God*, & *The Holy Trinity and Jesus*. Learn about the bible, sacraments, ordinances, differences and similarities in the views about salvation and how Union Church is organized and governed. Union Church (tel: 2361-2027) 12 calle 7-37, z. 9, **Guatemala City**.

DAILY — INTERACTIVE EXPOSITION: *¿Por Qué Estamos Como Estamos?* A not-to-miss exposition of a tour through history and current life in Guatemala, presented through photography, videos and interactive games. Bodega #1 Centro Cultural Museo de Ferrocarril (tel: 2254-8727) 9a av. A, 18-95, z. 1, **Guatemala City**. ▼



PLAN AHEAD

Thurs., October 8, 5:30-7pm — (English) DEMOCRATS ABROAD CONFERENCE: *Economic Stimulus: Road to Recovery or Road to Perdition* presented by John Chudy. See www.democratsabroad.org. Galería Mesón Panza Verde (tel: 7832-45819) 5a av. sur #19, **La Antigua**.

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Chilascó Waterfall cont. from page 16

water as it splashes on the rocks, watch the birds soaring overhead, feel the tranquility of the environment, and soak up the memory of what is truly one of Guatemala's greatest natural wonders. Then head back to town for a typical Guatemalan meal prepared by Doña Petrona at the local comedor.

Before leaving don't forget to check out the handmade products of the local artisans. The women of Chilascó make a wide variety of high-quality baskets, hats, vases and more out of pine needles and other plants from the region. They are currently working on a line of Christmas tree ornaments that will be available in Casa de los Gigantes in Antigua.

Getting to Chilascó is easy. From Guatemala City, follow the CA-14, known as the road to Cobán, to kilometer 142 where you will see a large sign for the turn-off to your right. From the thruway it is a 12-kilometer drive on a well-maintained dirt road that winds its way through the mountain range. Those traveling by bus should head to the Monja Blanca station in the capital. Take that to the Chilascó junction, and from there you will find microbus transportation to the Tourist Information Center. It's about a three-hour trip from Guatemala City. Come visit! 

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*With me a change of trouble is as good
as a vacation. —David Lloyd George*

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Independence Day cont. from page 21

when the six “sisters” of the former Kingdom of Coathemala—Ciudad Real, San Salvador, Comayagua (Honduras), León (Nicaragua), Costa Rica and Chiapas—declared independence from Mexico as the United Provinces. Emperor Agustín sought to keep them but succeeded only in retaining Chiapas. Agustín not only failed to retain his empire, but his life; in three years he faced a firing squad of Mexican republicans. Four decades later, another emperor, Maximilian, met the same fate. (Moral: If you are ever offered the Mexican throne, the prudent thing is to decline.)

Though not wholly bloodless, as had been the separation from Spain, this second separation was hardly a struggle by the standards of warfare. But the third and final separation was so sanguinary that Guatemalans rightly claim that their independence was purchased with blood.

Since my sons and I are also Guatemalans, we also observe Guatemalan independence. My boys are told that they must be equally proud of both *patrias*, and study the history of both. Living in Panajachel is helpful for this, since from our house we can look up at a mountain where an engagement in Guatemala’s independence struggle played out. The battlefield in San Andrés Semetabaj is today a semi-developed gated community overlooking Lake Atitlán. I have friends there, so I can always visit. There are no historical markers, much less a bronze monument. In fairness, though Guatemalan and Salvadoran forces slugged it out here, it was not the decisive battle. That occurred where Guatemala City’s San Juan de Dios Hospital now stands. But I’ve never found a marker there, either (although there might be one somewhere.)

By this time, 1837, Comayagua, León and Costa Rica had all broken away from the Federation, as the United Provinces had also been called. The rivalry between the two linchpin provinces, Ciudad Real and San Salvador, provided their opportunity. These three successions did not happen anywhere near Sept. 15 of any year; nonetheless, the date remains the national holiday for those three countries.

The president of the crumbling Federation was Francisco Morazán, an enlightened politician who has departments in Honduras and El Salvador named for him. His opponent, Gen. Rafael Carrera, is portrayed by artists with a bushy mustache and other ladino features. In fact, he was a skinny, illiterate 24-year-old Maya. Most of the money was on Morazán to win, but Carrera vanquished the Federals. His military genius is unrivaled in Central American annals.

Independence was costly for both men. Carrera became the first ruler of the Guatemalan nation state but was assassinated at 42. Morazán survived but died in ignominy; he renounced his Honduran nativity and considered himself Salvadoran, as only San Salvador remained loyal to the Federation until its reduction. Even today, El Salvador, a de facto nation state, is officially the “Republic of El Salvador in Central America.” This name is the surviving vestige of the Federation, the last entity Guatemalans fought to achieve independence.

The original Independence Day, in 1821, was like any other day back then. Sheep grazed, shamans chanted, looms were threaded, maize was shucked, and the eternal Xocomil rippled the glassy face of Atitlán. No convention was held, no parchment signed, no speeches given. It took weeks for the news just to arrive from Mexico. And when it did, it inspired shrugs, not parades. ❧

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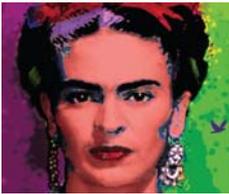
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(above) *Libre al viento* —El Davilosky

(below) *Parque central* —Josué Morales Araos





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Don't get up from the feast of life without paying for your share of it. —Dean Inge

I am here for a purpose and that purpose is to grow into a mountain, not to shrink to a grain of sand. Henceforth will I apply ALL my efforts to become the highest mountain of all and I will strain my potential until it cries for mercy.
—Og Mandino

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Moving On

by Dr. Karmen Guevara
HOLISTIC PSYCHOTHERAPIST

Movement is intrinsic to the cosmos. Every point in the entire universe is in motion.

The Earth and planets continually revolve around each other, and the galaxy's stars are constantly circling its center. We can see the rhythm of movement everywhere. Seasons pass into each other, seedlings sprout through soil, days turn into nights and beginnings flow into endings. Nothing stands still.

We, however, like to believe we're an exception! We only move through time (dragging our heels) because there isn't a choice. Concepts like change, impermanence and not knowing create havoc with the ego! It clings to security and digs a trench around a comfort zone. Whether we like it or not, we are part of the stream of Tao. A moving door hinge never corrodes. Flowing water never grows stagnant. Our journey in life consists of taking steps forward along a

path. If instead we stand still, we can easily find ourselves stuck in Timbuktu!

Every now and then stop to consider whether you're moving forward or have been lulled into a comfortable stagnation. What is holding you back? Be still and listen to the calling of your spirit. Feel the nudges it gives you to move on. It will point the way. It could be a relationship, a job, unresolved issues or a life situation you've created.

Moving on is never easy and without a cost. It always entails leaving something or someone behind. As a wise person once said, "How would anything have value if you could always leave it with no cost to yourself?"

Dismantle the chains of your reclining chair and remember that baby steps can be just as significant as quantum leaps. Take to heart Einstein's words, "Life is like riding a bicycle. To keep your balance you must keep moving." 



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A new e-mail scam is being directed at extranjeros

One of my clients, living in La Antigua Guatemala, received the following e-mail, supposedly from the IRS.

Sir/Madam,

Our records indicate that you are a non-resident alien. As a result, you are exempted from United States of America Tax reporting and withholdings on interest paid you on your account and other financial dealings to protect your exemption from Tax on your account and other financial benefit in rectifying your exemption status.

Therefore, you are to authenticate the following by completing form W-4100B2 and return to us as soon as possible through the fax number: + 1-913-273-8441

If you are a US Citizen and resident, please complete form W-4100B2 and fax to us. Please indicate "US Citizen/Resident" on the form.

When completing form W-4100B2 please follow steps below:

1. We need you to provide your permanent address if different from the current mailing address on your Form W-4100B2. You must indicate if a non-US resident, your country of origin to support your non-resident status (if your bank account or other financial dealing has a US address for mailing purpose)

2. If any joint account holder are now US residents of Citizens, or in any way subject to US tax reporting laws. Please check the box in this section.

3. Please complete 1 through 19 and have

all account holders sign and date the form separately and fax it to the above-mentioned number.

Please complete Form W-4100B2 "attached" and return to us within 1 (one) week from the receipt of this letter by fax to enable us to update your records immediately. If your account or any other financial benefits are not rectified in a timely manner, it will be subject to US tax reporting and back up withholding. (If back up withholding applies, we are required to withhold 30% of the interest paid to you.)

*We appreciate your cooperation in helping us protect your exempt status and also update our records. Sincerely, **Marlie Parks** - IRS. Public Relations*

There is no such IRS form W-4100B2; it is, of course, an elaborate phishing exercise and the information requested on the form would be used to drain your bank accounts.

In addition to not being written in American English (we don't refer to "United States of America tax" – we call it "Federal tax"), we are not considered to be "non-resident aliens" by the IRS. We are "U.S. citizens living abroad." Still, many ex-pats could be taken in by this scheme. It could also dupe a true non-resident alien (a non-U.S. citizen not living in the States) who has financial accounts in the U.S.

Be aware that the IRS does not request detailed personal information through e-mail. 

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The key to success is to focus our conscious mind on things we desire not things we fear.

—Brian Tracy

He who is not everyday conquering some fear has not learned the secret of life.

—Ralph Waldo Emerson

Requisition-less Water cont. from page 22

But each 1.5-liter bottle cost Q7, which was burdensome for patients and their visitors, almost all of whom are people of limited means. In June, an officer of the Lake Atitlán Rotary Club (CLRA) noticed all this while visiting a friend. Within a week, CLRA had acquired through Maya Familias (a Panajachel charity) 10 donated filters that require no electricity and are gravity-driven. The filters, donated by the Florence Rotary Club of Oregon, have no moving parts. Their elements must be renewed every 18 months.

Hospital administrator Victor García and medical chief Dr. Irene Quiejú were thrilled to learn that relief was on the way. Three Rotarians and a Maya Families representative came to the hospital conference room to assemble the filters and give an orientation in an atmosphere described as “spontaneously ceremonial.”

The CRLA officer returned a week later to monitor the application of the gift. He

found that the hospital’s water worries had ended in a single fell swoop. The emergency room, the surgery chamber, the out-clinic and all of the wards—men, women, pediatrics, maternity, quarantine and IGSS—each had its own filter. Not only did they now have clean water on tap, but they no longer had to requisition or, in the words of one nurse, “beg and wait.”

If anyone is as happy with the change as nutritionist Arriaga, it is Patricia Armas. The 10th filter sits in her lunchroom. Now employees, too, can drink their fill of pure water.

“I’m free of this ridiculous paperwork,” she says, “and running back and forth, refilling and heating that old pot. And the patients don’t have to wait any more for water that wasn’t that good, anyway.”

The Atitlán Rotarians have taken on the Sololá hospital as a project. For additional facts and pictures associated with this story, see their website at www.atitlanrotary.org

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A good man is hard to find

A woman was walking along the shores of the beach when she stumbled upon an old looking lamp bottle. The woman picked up the bottle, rubbed some of the sand off it and out of the blue a genie appeared!

The stunned woman asked the genie if this meant that she got three wishes.

“Three wishes is only a fable,” responded the genie. “You only get one wish. So what do you wish for?”

The woman did not hesitate.

“I want peace in the Middle East,” she responded. “See this map? I want these countries to stop fighting with each other and I want all the Arabs to love the Jews and Americans and vice-versa. It will bring about world peace and harmony.”

The genie looked at the map and exclaimed, “Lady, be reasonable. These countries have been at war for thousands of years. I’m out of shape after being in a bottle for five hundred years. I’m good but not that good! I don’t think it can be done. Make another wish and please be reasonable.”

The woman thought for a minute.

“Well, I’ve never been able to find the right man,” she said. “You know, one that’s considerate and fun, likes to cook and help with the house cleaning, loves kids and is romantic, gets along with my family, doesn’t watch sports all the time, and is faithful. That is what I wish for ... a good man.”

The genie let out a deep sigh and said, “Let me see that friggin’ map again...”



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—Earl Wilson

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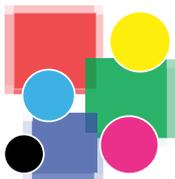
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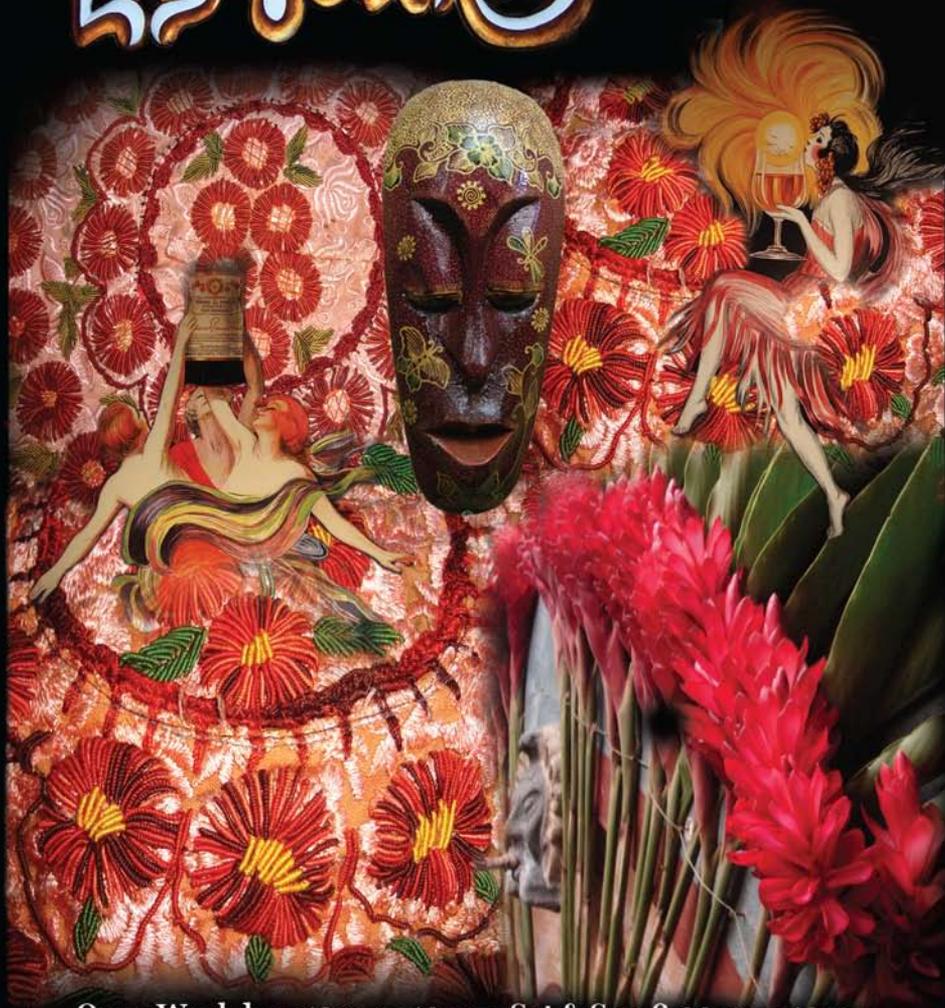
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Setting up the next shot for the film

Growing the Industry cont. from page 17

Tres found that the best way to demonstrate that message was to produce a film with a universal plot and theme that connect with people from myriad backgrounds to prove Guatemala's virtue in filmmaking. "It's about how to tell the story and learning how to support the story," Pinzón said. "We want to make a film that possesses a visual quality equal to that of films made at the highest level. We are filming in high-definition, thus the look of the film is a more professional look ... We want the people to see the film and feel that this film, which was made here in Guatemala, could have been made anywhere in the world ... so that the people can experience a Guatemalan film at a truly professional level."

Codigo began filming in June, and Tres is aiming for an official release by 2010.

The film—portions of which were shot in La Antigua Guatemala—is also meant to showcase the benefits of filming in Guatemala. "The locations are very accessible; it's easy to obtain permissions to film at most locations," Pinzón said. "It's not difficult like filming in other places. Furthermore, one can easily change environments here. It takes just minutes of driving to go from a hot, tropical seascape to the chilly atmosphere of mountain Highlands." 

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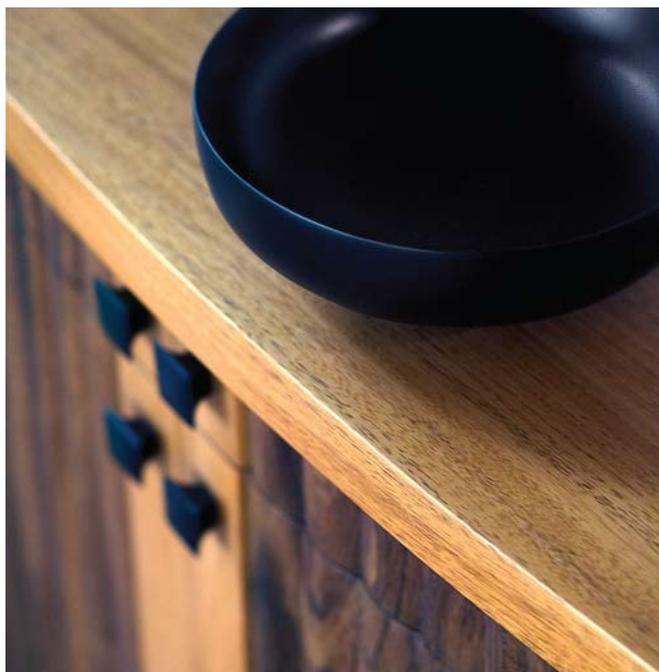








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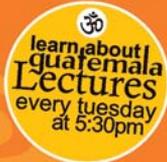
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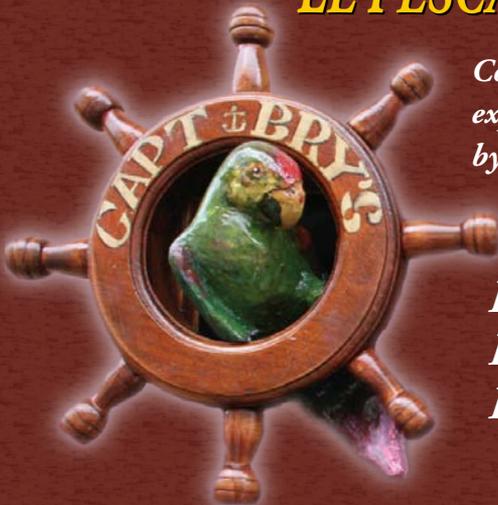
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What looks like an avocado, grows on a vine, and tastes like a potato?

Güisquil

Güisquil (pronounced “weeskeel”) is one of the most common vegetables throughout Mexico, Central America and parts of South America. It has been famously described as a vegetable that looks like an avocado and tastes like a potato.

The plant originated in Mexico, where it was known to the Aztecs as chayolt. It is a perennial climbing plant with large leaves resembling grape leaves and a vine that can grow up to 15 meters in length. Its scientific name is *Sechium edule*, and it belongs to the gourd family Cucurbitaceae along with melons, cucumbers and squash.

As abundantly as güisquil grows, it also has an abundance of names. Depending on the country or region of that country, güisquil is also known as chayote, chayotli, cayota, tayota, cidra, guatila, papa de pobre, papa del aire, vegetable pear, pataste, calabacilla, chilacayote, chiverre, machiche, xuxú, chuchú, cho-cho, christophene and mirlitón.

The most common variety of güisquil is indeed about the size and shape of an avocado, but there the similarity ends. Varieties twice that size and half that size are also found. The skin ranges from light to dark

green and is firm, smooth, shiny and a bit furrowed. Another common variety is covered with thorny spines. Two other varieties, though quite different in appearance, are both known by the names güisquil and “perulero.” One of these has a softer, thinner skin, which is so pale as to be almost white. The other, dark green, is much smaller—about the size of a plum, and very tender. And yes, it is used in many of the same ways that the potato is, though it is more tender and juicy and has a mild and slightly nutty flavor. In fact, one of güisquil’s many names is “papa de pobre” (poor man’s potato).

Güisquil is one of the vegetables most used in all of Central America in soups and stews. It’s a pretty sure bet that if you’ve ever eaten a soup or stew in Guatemala, you’ve eaten güisquil. Like the potato, güisquil is a great addition to soups and stews because it serves as a thickening agent. It is even used in industrial food production to thicken fruit juices and baby food. Güisquil can be prepared in any way suitable for summer squash and can also be halved, stuffed and baked like acorn squash.

In certain markets, such as that of Santiago Atitlán or the bigger ...continued next page



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A few of the several varieties of güisquil; used in many of the same ways that the potato is, though it is more tender and has a slightly nutty flavor.

weekend markets elsewhere, one can be lucky enough to find cooked güisquil. Sold hot and simmered to perfection, this can make a perfect prepared food from the market to bring home. There's something about having been simmered over a fire in a cauldron with dozens of other güisquils that gives this an especially rich flavor and creamy consistency.

Not only is güisquil easy to grow, abundant and easy to transport, it's also valued for its protein content and is purported to have anti-inflammatory and cell-regenerative properties. It is also a good source of niacin, vitamin B6, pantothenic acid, magnesium and potassium, amino acids and a very good source of dietary fiber, vitamin C, vitamin K, folate, zinc, copper and manganese.

While the "fruit" of the güisquil is the part most commonly eaten, you can be sure that the ladies in the kitchen who made that stew have also been savoring the seed, which is flat and cream colored and a delicious delicacy when cooked. In Guatemalan households these are special treats saved for children. The fruit can also be eaten raw; though this is uncommon in Guatemala, in some countries it is used in salads. Even the starchy tuberous parts of the root are also edible, but are more often fed to livestock.

The tender and delicately spiraled tips of the vine are also harvested to be added to



The tender and delicately spiraled tips of the vine are also harvested to be added to soups and stews. Here they are known as "punta de güisquil."

soups and stews; they are a delicious addition to sautéed vegetable dishes. Here they are known as "punta de güisquil" and can be found in local markets only in the seasons when güisquil is in its early growth spurts. 🍷

One of my favorite güisquil dishes is the Mayan omelette because of its similarity to a Spanish omelette, using güisquil in place of potatoes.

Mayan Omelette

(one serving—multiply per serving)

1 medium-size güisquil

1-2 eggs

1-2 tablespoons flour

1-2 tablespoons chopped onions

Pinch of salt & pepper to taste

Optional: 1-2 teaspoons. parsley or other chopped greens, 1-2 teaspoons. grated cheese

Parboil the güisquil until it can be easily pierced with a fork, 10-15 min. cooking time.

Let cool, peel and cut into cubes, discarding the fiber and membrane around the seed. Scramble the eggs, add cubed güisquil, sprinkling in flour to thicken, and salt, pepper, parsley or other greens and/or cheese to taste. Now you're ready to cook the omelette, covered, in an oiled pan on a medium flame, turning both sides until done.

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— Julia Louis-Dreyfus

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A Honey of a Business

An expert's view on how honey and bees are faring in Guatemala

by Judith Cohen

Alejandro Nicol is an expert in the honey business. After studying beekeeping for two years at Ohio State University, he now advises the Ministerio de Agricultura, Ganadería y Alimentación (MAGA) on the care, feeding, export, import and preservation of bees. I met him at the scenic and beautiful Vivero La Escalonia, a plant nursery and café, about two blocks south of the Mesón Panza Verde Hotel & Restaurant in La Antigua Guatemala. Nicol explained he no longer owns any hives himself, but supplies honey to stores in Antigua through his contacts. I asked him to fill me in on how honey and bees are faring in Guatemala.

But first, some background: not only is honey an ingredient sometimes used in desserts or to coat the kids' cornflakes, bees and honey contribute \$15 billion worldwide in added crop value. Without bees to pollinate flowering plants and trees, we wouldn't have almonds, tomatoes, cherries, apples, nuts of all kinds and many, many other fruits and vegetables. Nicol said re-

search shows that one out of three mouthfuls we eat has something to do with the pollination of plants by bees.

In the United States and Europe bees have recently been hit by a disease known as colony collapse disorder. The disorder causes worker bees and drones to abandon their hives, leaving the queen, honey and young larvae behind. As yet, the exact cause is unknown. Through studies on the few bodies found, experts can't trace their disappearance and death to any specific cause but rather a variety of possibilities, including bad water, crop fields that didn't provide enough nourishment, chemicals, parasites and stress.

Last year, the United States managed to pollinate numerous orchards and fields by shipping bees cross-country and renting them to farmers who were victims of colony collapse. Another bad season for the bees could wipe out billions of dollars in unpollinated crops.

So where does this leave us in Guatemala? Besides the larger ...continued on following page



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Research shows that one out of three mouthfuls we eat has something to do with the pollination of plants by bees.



Honey Business continued from previous page

producers, this is a land of small subsistence farmers, who make a marginal living growing coffee. The price of coffee fluctuates so that some years, the farmers can't support their families. Nicol explained that beekeeping is a natural sideline for such farmers. It takes very little land for the hives, and startup costs are relatively low. The bees fly in a three-mile radius from the hive, pollinating flowers and crops. This is a plus for everyone. However, many farmers start with too few hives and can't break even.

Nicol also noted that at least half the population in Guatemala is under 21. He said older farmers cling to their often-outdated ways while younger people are more receptive to learning new methods to raise bees more efficiently.

In Honduras, a large NGO, Heifer International (www.heifer.org) which in conjunction with Cooperativa Apícola Pionera de Honduras Limitada (COAPIHI), a local cooperative, trains the local population in beekeeping. Participants say the program is quite successful. **B**

Editor note: Stay tuned in future issues for more about honey and a first-ever in La Antigua, a Fiesta de la Miel.



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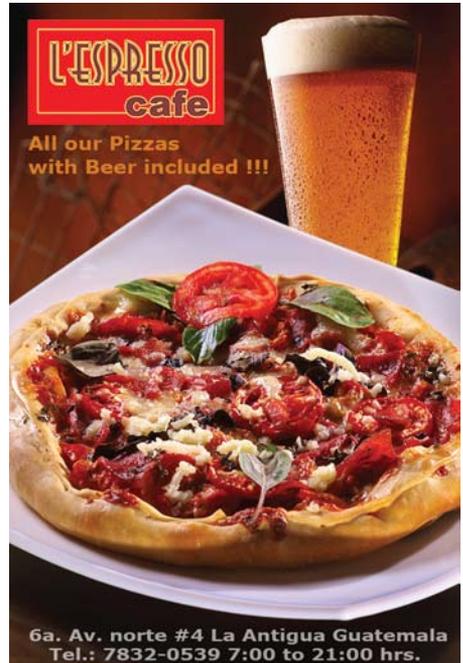
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First place team: (l-r) Hugo Cerezo, John Chudy, Diego Cerezo, Nathan Liskey

Last month included the first annual Antigua Invitational Golf Tournament. Played at the spectacular Mayan Golf Club overlooking Lake Amatitlán, the format was “scramble” with four-person teams. The competition was fierce but the lunch gathering afterwards was amiable with prizes for longest drives, closest to the pin, and of course for the lowest scoring team who posted a 65.

If you are looking for a great golf course in Guatemala you can contact the Mayan Golf Club at 6685-5800 or go to www.mayangolfclub.com.

Next year’s event is already shaping up to be a grudge match. 🇸🇻



Second place team: (l-r) Bill Harriss, Carl Bloomfield, John Biskovich, Brian Wilson



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 —Fred Hiebert, archaeologist and National Geographic Fellow

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 —Bertrand Russell

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The Lienzo de Quauhquechollan is considered to be the first map of Guatemala. It is also the only firsthand indigenous account of the conquest of Guatemala and one of the few sources to record the military campaigns of Jorge de Alvarado in 1527–1530. The Lienzo was a forgotten relic that had not yet been deciphered when Dutch archaeologist Florine Asselbergs began research for her doctoral thesis. She determined that it did not refer to the conquest of central Mexico, as many people assumed, but to the conquest of Guatemala. Her findings were published in the book *Conquered Conquistadors* in 2004. The original Lienzo de Quauhquechollan is in the Museo de Alfeñique in Puebla, Mexico. The Lienzo was digitally restored in 2007 by Universidad Francisco Marroquín under the guidance of experts from different fields, a project co-sponsored by Banco G&T Continental. Source: <http://www.ufm.edu>

This video, which explains the dynamic web map on the Lienzo de Quauhquechollan website, won first place in the category of Best Virtual Map Presentation at the 2009 ESRI Users Conference in San Diego, California. The Lienzo de Quauhquechollan is an indigenous pictographic map dating from the time of the Spanish conquest of the Americas. It was created by the Quauhquecholteca to record their history, migrations, conquests, legends, and traditions. The dynamic web map was developed to allow users to relate the historical events documented in the Lienzo with geographic locations on a modern map. As modern-day storytellers, web maps can help to revive the stories of a people like the Quauhquecholteca, providing a space where we can approach geography like they did—as living geography. **Universidad Francisco Marroquín Teléfono (+502) 2338-7876**



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Thomas Griffin

1934 - 2009



Tom Griffin, Lake Atitlán's resident Elvis impersonator and yodeler, has died. The long-time resident of Santa Cruz la Laguna was 76.

He was born in Oklahoma and raised in Texas. Lake Atitlán expats called him "Mississippi Tom" to distinguish him from another Texan, also named Tom, and because he settled in Mississippi in the sixties after stints in harvesting wheat, being a grocer, and trapping king crabs off of Alaska. In Meridan, Mississippi, he ran a janitorial business, and restored several old cars to mint condition.

To his Guatemalan neighbors in Santa Cruz la Laguna, he was not Mississippi but Tomacito. He became a salient personality there, popular for his kindness, charm and generosity, but also for his recall of fellow crooner Presley's lyrics, which he enjoyed singing a capella. He also entertained the curious with his yodeling, an art form rarely seen in highland Guatemala.

Griffin had come to Santa Cruz in 1992 looking for somewhere to even-

tually retire, drawn by the lake's beauty. While there, he built a house in the town for himself and his wife, Linda, and then a second house. At about this time, Tom gave up marathon running, which he had done for decades, but increased his fishing for crappie and lake bass. He kept only what he could eat, and gave the rest to neighbors.

In 2007, Tom moved to Panajachel, where, among other things, he joined the Panajachel Players, a group of local thespians made up of expats and Guatemalans. One memorable performance was in April, at a Vaudeville directed by Barbara Ramey. In Tom's rendition of Presley's *I'm All Shook Up*, he sang and shimmied opposite Players star Thilda Horn, a Santa Cruz neighbor. Their act earned more laughs and cheers during the run of the Vaudeville than did any other gig.

Surviving Tom is his daughter, Kathy Wright, also of Panajachel, two granddaughters and three great grandchildren in Lubbock, Texas. "He was a good man," Kathy says. "Everyone will miss him."

—*Dwight Wayne Coop*



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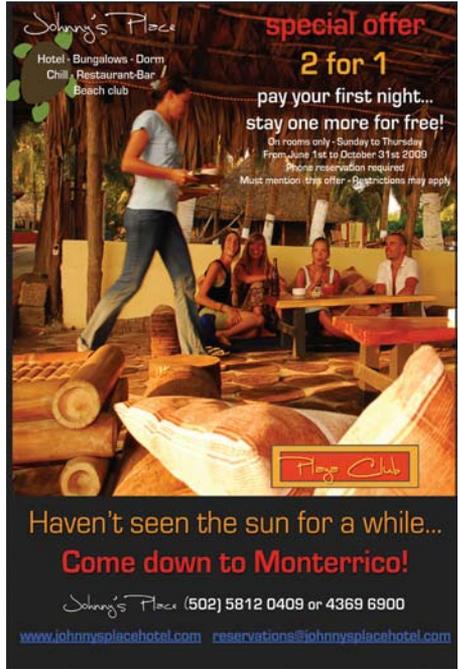
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There was a girl knocking on my hotel room door all night! Finally, I let her out.
—Henny Youngman

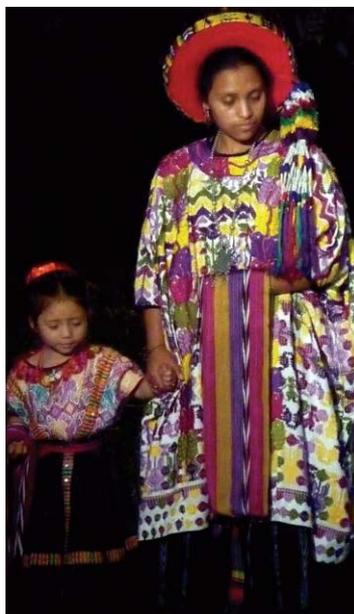
To put someone in jail for using drugs in the privacy of his hotel room is just barbaric.
—Danny Sugerman

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—Fran Lebowitz

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Cobán's Rabin Ajau Pageant

text and photos by Gary Kaney

Women from more than 90 communities competed last month in the single-most impressive festival of indigenous tradition in Guatemala: the **Folkloric Festival of the Rabin Ajau** in Cobán and the election of the Princess Tesulutlán. Contestants wore their colorful native finest, including the colorful *hüipil*, head dress and jewelry unique to their village—but it was more than a beauty contest.

The women represented were outstanding in their accomplishments of education and service to their communities.

The event was scheduled to start at 7:30 p.m. but did not commence until 8:30 with the first 90 minutes taken up by marimba bands and thank-you speeches to the sponsors. At 10 p.m. the first contestant made her way slowly onto the stage. She bowed profusely to each corner of the incense-filled auditorium and slowly walked down the runway before the judges. At 12:30 a.m. there was a “half time” (40 of the 90 contestants had graced the stage at that point), and we left the contest to await the results in the morning paper.

Miss Sololá was crowned Princess Tesulutlán, and we saw her the next morning parading in front of our hotel, La Posada. It was great fun, and I took too many pictures (even though I only photographed half the contestants) but enjoyed the color and costumes. 





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 —Mark Twain

I'm so fast that last night I turned off the light switch in my hotel room and was in bed before the room was dark. —Muhammad Ali

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CLUB ROTARIO: Meets every Wednesday 7pm at Porta Hotel Antigua. (Last Wed. of the month, please call Alma). Tel: 7832-7600.

THE LIGHT OF GOD IS IN EVERYONE: Join us for silent meeting in the manner of Friends (Quakers) on the first Sundays of the month. Contacts: 7832-5653, 7849-5970 mardugan@earthlink.net, progresar@hughes.net

PANAJACHEL CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP: Lake Atitlán's English-language church meets Sundays, 9am at member households. Visitors welcome! More info. 7762-1581 (Wayne)

ST. MARKS ECUMENICAL CHURCH SERVICE IN ENGLISH. Sundays 11:30am. Chapel of Obras Sociales del Hermano Pedro, corner 6a calle & 3a av., La Antigua. Tel: 5293-1076, 5492-5707.

US Citizen in Guatemala? Your vote counts! Be a registered voter in your state and receive an absentee ballot to vote in the November 10, 2010 mid-term election, www.votefromabroad.org. Participate in local events with Democrats Abroad Guatemala. For questions contact John Chudy 7832--4581 or democratsabroad_guate@yahoo.com.

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—Theodore Roethke



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—Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

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*A bore is a man who deprives you of solitude
without providing you with company.*

—Gian Vincenzo Gravina



Question: We just lost our treasured Bruno, an 8-year-old Rottweiler, to *hemangiosarcoma*. If I had noticed the tumor sooner might the veterinarian have been able to save him?

No, there was nothing you could have done. Even though chemotherapy (not easily available in Guatemala) may prolong life for a while, it will not cure this type of cancer. Surgical removal of the tumor is often possible, but the cancer has generally already spread.

Hemangiosarcoma is an aggressive cancer that rarely gives any warning and quickly advances in the dog's body. The cancer arises from the cells that line the

heart's cavities and the blood vessels. Since there are blood vessels in nearly all of the body's tissues, hemangiosarcoma can occur just about anywhere. The spleen, heart and liver are the most common sites.

Most dogs who develop hemangiosarcoma are middle-aged or older, although younger dogs may be victims. Many dogs show no symptoms until the tumors are quite large. These tumors spread quickly through the bloodstream to other organs.

Symptoms include labored breathing, sudden weakness, nosebleeds, pale gums, enlarged abdomen and general depression. Some dogs die suddenly when a large tumor ruptures and death in six to eight weeks is common. ---

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A market where chief executive officers make 262 times that of the average worker and 821 times that of the minimum-wage worker is not a market that is working well. And it is surely not working well enough to build a solid middle class.
—Marcy Kaptur

The components of anxiety, stress, fear, and anger do not exist independently of you in the world. They simply do not exist in the physical world, even though we talk about them as if they do. —Wayne Dyer

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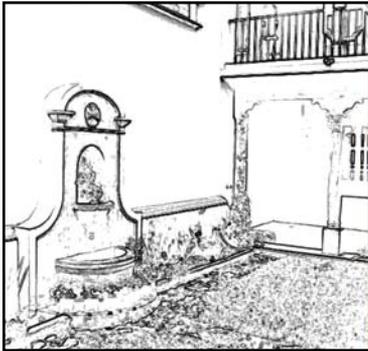


CEIBA PENTRANDA - Guatemala's national tree

photo by Ana Cristina Guirola Cartas guirocris@hotmail.com

The giant limbs of the Ceiba provide diverse needs for many species of animals. Birds feed and nest in the high perches, mammals use the limbs as aerial highways, and groups of insects make their homes from the roots to the top leaves.

The ancient Maya believed that a great Ceiba tree stood at the center of the earth, connecting the terrestrial world to the spirit-world above.



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Playground in the Sea

text/photo by Melba Milak

Not so long ago, on a warm and sunny afternoon, I came across a parade of porpoises in the Pacific Ocean. They raced by our fishing boat in a display of grace and speed. They leaped over one another in their version of leapfrog; they jumped straight up into the air and spun in circles—three, four, five times—like Olympic divers. One of them, an acrobat and clown, smacked back down into the waves, making huge splashes, like a bratty little brother doing cannonballs in the swimming pool.

It was a magnificent sight, a mile or so of twisting, turning, “Aren’t we having fun?” “Aren’t we happy?” “Isn’t it a glorious day?” Spinner dolphins in the wild; swimming in their natural habitat; playing in the waters 30 miles offshore from Puerto Quetzal, Guatemala.

A hundred yards away, a sailfish jumped in a series of arcs—freewheelin’, the local boat

captains call it—a silvery flash meeting its own reflection on the mirrored surface of the sea. Such joy, such exuberance, a spectacular show of muscle and might and splendor.

It was a beautiful blue-sky day; the waves rocked the Olive Ridley sea turtles to sleep and carried them across the miles. Only the noise of the boat motor awakened the *tor-tugas*; many of them raised their heads in a lazy, silent “Hello!” before drowsing again.

Seabirds sometimes alit on the turtles’ leathery backs—maybe to rest for just a little while, maybe for a moment of companionship in this big, big ocean or maybe to tap out a secret message before flying on endless journeys over the water.

And I felt so privileged to be here—in the peace, in the quiet, in these awe-inspiring moments—to share in the magic of this playground in the sea. 

PHOTO OP: APANECA

by Lena Johannessen

LOCATION: HOTEL ALICANTE MONTAÑA



Coffee Forest: El Salvador explores a compensation plan for environmental services

El Salvador's coffee sector has begun implementing an initiative called "Coffee and Environment" in an effort to conserve the El Salvador coffee forest and the environmental and social-economic benefits that it generates. The plan includes a compensation plan for environmental services, particularly from carbon-dioxide reduction.

At a social and economic level, the conservation of coffee forest provides the country with a source of employment, improving the quality of life of those who depend directly and indirectly on coffee activity.

Coffee forests provide numerous environmental benefits, including oxygen pro-

duction, capture of greenhouse gases, water capture, prevention of soil erosion, habitat for flora and fauna, conservation of biodiversity and scenic beauty. The initiative will be based on deforestation that is avoided and envisions consolidation of coffee plantations belonging to producers with specific financial debts, through a commitment to maintain and preserve the plantation in exchange for financial compensation.

The avoided-deforestation rate will be offered as "VER's" (Verified Emission Reduction) on the voluntary carbon market, generated by countries and companies seeking to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

More information at www.cafeyambiente.org

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I don't have no fear of death. My only fear is coming back reincarnated. —Tupac Shakur

In time we hate that which we often fear. —William Shakespeare

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Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our Light, not our Darkness, that most frightens us.

—Marianne Williamson

Be master of your petty annoyances and conserve your energies for the big, worthwhile things. It isn't the mountain ahead that wears you out—it's the grain of sand in your shoe.

—Robert Service



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SENSUOUS GUATEMALA

by Ken Veronda
photo: Rudy Girón

Blue and White

Free into the wind, your beautiful flag marks a happy month of national celebration just as Guatemala's national anthem proclaims. Blue and White are the colors of the flag, with fresh flags and blue-and-white bunting on display all over "Guatemala Feliz," happy Guatemala, as we near mid-month and Independence Day.

The new flags are indeed a beautifully clear blue and clean white, as are the Guatemalan skies most hours each day. But just as the skies can cloud over quickly with darker clouds, or turn velvet-black quickly when the sun sets with very little twilight time, the national flag's blue fades and the white softens. Your observant artist's eye in September should be counting how many blues, and what different whites, can be found around Guatemala this month of independence celebration.

Start counting the blues. Some home-made buntings and flags are dyed a rich indigo, while the store-bought decorations can differ from darker to lighter shades. Then the bright Central American sun does its job in a hurry: blues fade steadily lighter, until they're almost gone after a few months of flying time. How

many blues can you count? — I came up with at least a dozen shades to mix on your palette, if you're going to paint in oils the flags over our buildings.

Then come the different whites. Yes, I know; white is the absence of color and all that, and if it's not pure white it's not white. But c'mon, the white of the national colors around town can be a light or even a rich cream, an egg white or an antique white, a light grey or even darker shade if the flag has picked up dust or soot. Kids kicking soccer balls add a bit of dust in the air to make a flag nearby turn to a light-brown-white. Diesels add spottier-black-white. There are at least a couple of dozen whites on display around our block this month, from new flags to older ones.

Just like in the Guatemalan sky. September celebrates with cumulus white clouds, or soft strings of white caught around the volcano and streaming out, or dark thunder-clouds building to a storm, or maybe just a couple little lost clouds floating by. Against the different sky-blues, it's all part of the national decorations, this happy month and all year. Enjoy the beautiful flags of whatever shades, free in the wind, Guatemala Feliz. 🇬🇲

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