

REVUE

The background of the cover is a photograph of a young boy wearing a straw hat and a dark jacket, holding a large blue flag on a wooden pole. He is standing in front of a stone building with a classical column. In the upper right corner, there is a circular emblem featuring a quetzal bird and a shield, surrounded by a laurel wreath.

Guatemala's English-language Magazine
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September 2011
Year 20, No. 7

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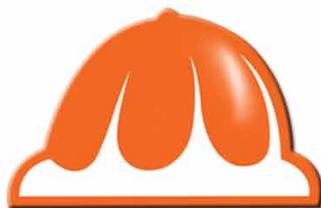
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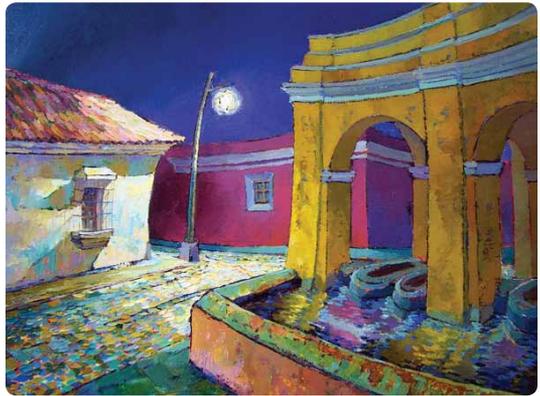
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From the Editor

September is always a festive month with Guatemala's Independence Day on the 15th. Expect lots of fireworks, parades, music and events as Guatemala celebrates 190 years of independence (page 15). And with presidential elections coming up on Sept. 11, this month will be especially significant (page 54).

Also in this issue: Unicorns in Guatemala? Conservationist / photographer Thor Janson reports on his successful quest to document the creature, which he photographed in the cloud forest in the upper reaches of the Atitlán Volcano. See his story and photographic proof starting on page 18.

Speaking of proof, Illegal Mezcal, a high-octane libation that pours forth from Café No Se in La Antigua Guatemala, is catching on globally. Brendan Byrne, highly experienced in alcoholic beverages, traces the genesis of this elixir (page 64).

From Guatemala City, Anna-Claire Bevan takes us on a tour of the Guatemala Children's Museum, a wonderland of hands-on, thought-provoking exhibits and activities for kids. And if you've ever wondered about the huge statue of a proud warrior near the airport, Anna-Claire explains it on page 36.

After writing last month about the ill-advised introduction of large-mouth bass into Lake Atitlán, Panajachel scribe Dwight Wayne Coop this month tells of another foreign invader making an impact on the lake.

Much more lies in the pages ahead. And check out DateBook for the art exhibits, concerts and special events coming up this month.

—Matt Bokor

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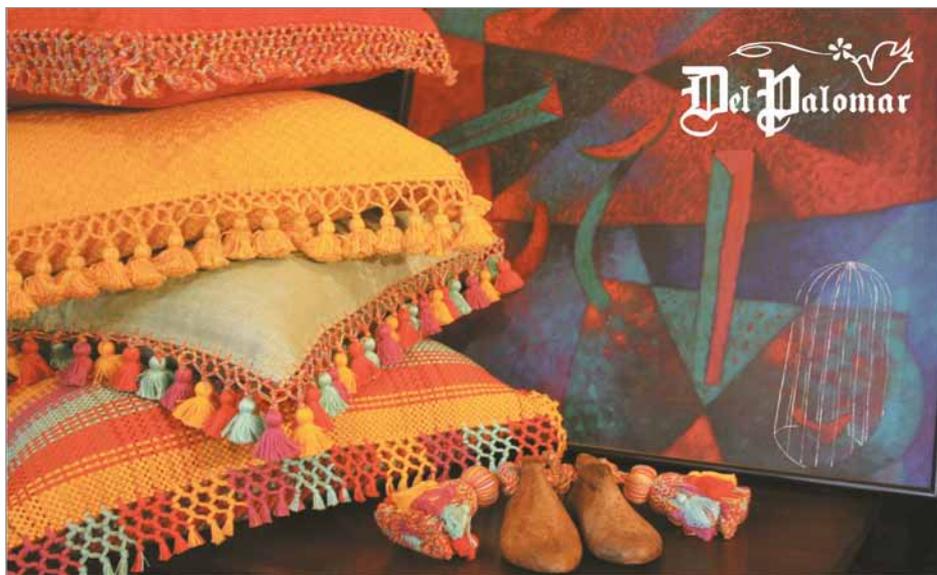
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United States names new Guatemala ambassador



(PHOTO COURTESY OF U.S. EMBASSY)

Arnold A. Chacón

U.S. President Barack Obama has named Arnold A. Chacón, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, as ambassador to Guatemala, succeeding Stephen G. McFarland, who held the post since 2008. Officially he remains a U.S. designee until his credentials are accepted by the Guatemalan government.

Chacón, whose nomination was confirmed last month by the U.S. Senate, had been deputy chief of mission at the U.S. Embassy in Madrid. Previously he served as director of Andean affairs in the Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs and deputy executive secretary in the department's executive secretariat.

Since beginning his diplomatic career in 1981, Chacón has served in a number of

posts in Ecuador, Peru, Italy, Chile, Mexico and Honduras.

He also served as deputy director of Central American Affairs, special assistant to the assistant secretary of state for Western Hemisphere Affairs, Italy desk officer, political advisor at the U.S. Mission to the United Nations, watch officer in the operations center and American Political Science Association Fellow.

Chacón received a B.A. in international affairs from the University of Colorado at Boulder.

Ambassador McFarland has been re-assigned to the U.S. Embassy in Afghanistan, where he will oversee security and justice. 



Brace for a double dose of patriotic fervor this month in Guatemala. In addition to the **Sept. 11** national elections (see page 54), Guatemala celebrates its 190th Independence Day on **Sept. 15** with ear-shattering fireworks, resounding drumbeats from marching bands, festive concerts and more.

Guatemala is hardly alone in its jubilation this day—also celebrating their independence are Honduras, El Salvador, Nicaragua and Costa Rica. On Sept. 15, 1821, representatives from all those regions formally accepted a plan drafted by Mexican Gen. Agustín de Iturbide that declared them free from the crumbling Kingdom of Spain. (Mexico celebrates its break from *la madre patria* a day later, Sept. 16.)

Guatemala, however, did not gain complete independence with the declaration in 1821. After Spain, further entanglements—with Mexico and El Salvador,

primarily—had to be undone before Guatemala was truly an independent republic two years later.

Nevertheless, Sept. 15 is the big day, and the celebrations get under way the day before when, in many communities, people carrying torches run through town to announce independence.

Fireworks and concerts commonly usher in the holiday the night of Sept. 14, followed noisily the next morning with predawn firecrackers and *bombas*. School bands take to the streets later, and town squares overflow as ceremonies continue into the night.

As Independence Day approaches, expect a proliferation of blue-and-white Guatemalan flags and bunting in windows, rooftops and balconies. Eager vendors will ensure there is no shortage of national colors. (Banks and other businesses close early, so plan accordingly.) 

Flaminia

“When I was 16 years old I entered my school choir as a piano accompanier and ended up singing,” says Guatemalan-born musician Flaminia.

A few years later the talented artist, who wrote her first song when she was 5 years old, won an international singing competition in Mexico, which landed her a record deal in Miami.

However, it appears that writing, singing, producing and playing her own instruments aren't enough; Flaminia also juggles being a doctor alongside her music career—something she admits hasn't always been easy.

“I did have to stop my music while I was

finishing med school, and then had to put med school on hold when I was in Miami. But I was able to promote the album this year because of a favorable work schedule, which allowed me to concentrate on music in the afternoons,” Flaminia explains.

After recording her first album in the U.S., Flaminia returned to Guatemala in 2006 and encountered various challenges. “I didn't have a huge budget to hire studios and producers to do whatever I wanted, so that set me back a lot—until I was able to do it on my own.”

In 2009 she collaborated with Guatemalan DJ Francis Davila on his debut album *Shine*, which propelled the duo onto the number one spot on local radio stations.

The singer-come-doctor, who lists Alanis Morissette and Nine Inch Nails among her musical inspirations, says she can't imagine her life without music.

“It's what I love doing and it helps me release what I'm feeling. I don't write songs thinking about commercial success, I write them because I'm going through something, or I like a melody in my head and want to extend it. I think the music industry's lost that. It's all become about how you look and how much you undress, instead of actually transmitting something and being a musician.”

Flaminia, whose single *Whisper* was number one on the music station 94.9 FM last month, has no desire to give up her job as a doctor in Guatemala City. Instead, she eventually wants to set up an organization to aid public hospitals in her homeland.

Flaminia's new single *Wanted (Never again)* is on sale now in music stores across the country. 





Guatemala & Population

Guatemala's 1950 population of 2.9 million has skyrocketed to nearly 14.5 million people, and at the current growth rate is expected to double within the next 30 years.

Last month's Revue included an important article, *Green Gospel* by Thor Janson, which highlighted the environmental damage traditional slash-and-burn farming is causing in Guatemala and elsewhere. He appropriately emphasized the need for community buy-in through education to halt this common practice. However, curbing population growth remains an equally crucial factor for saving our rainforests, which has pushed the population Janson mentions up to the Petén in the first place, and continues to force poor farmers to abandon their paltry, over-farmed plots in search of new land.

Guatemala's fertility rate, at 4.1, is one of the highest in Latin America and, among the poorest 20% of the population, that figure jumps to an average of six children. Guatemala's 1950 population of 2.9 million has skyrocketed to nearly 14.5 million people, almost a quintupling in the last 60 years. And, at the current annual growth rate of 2.5%, the population is expected to double within the next 30 years. The cause of this

rapid growth is not only that its citizens have many children but also that, thanks to the widespread availability of antibiotics, vaccinations and some minimal health care, more children are surviving. One of the few socio-economic indicators reflecting well on the Guatemalan government is the reduction of infant mortality, from a rate of 57 per 1,000 live births in 1990 to a rate of 33 per 1,000 live births in 2009. None of us wishes that infant mortality were higher. But, Guatemala MUST take immediate and vigorous action to reduce its population growth rate if it is going to be able to successfully address the basic responsibilities of a government: providing its population with health care, education, job creation, personal security, and safeguarding precious natural resources, including the country's vast rainforests.

We are now three generations after that golden population in 1950 of 2.9 million. With each small farming family having perhaps an average of three surviving sons and dividing up their plot ...continued page 94



Unicorn Hunting

A photographic quest to the upper cloud forest on Atilán Volcano's southern flank in search of the rare and elusive *Oreophasis derbianus*

I reached for my cell phone to turn off the alarm: 12:30 a.m., time to get started. I lit the stove and put some water on for coffee. A few minutes later there was a knock on my camper's back door announcing the arrival of Josue, my trusted Kaqchikel guide. Josue was looking chipper and chomping at the bit to get going. I wanted my strong cup of Tarrales coffee because I needed fortification for the long slog ahead.

To get to the upper cloud forests on Atilán Volcano's southern flank would be a climb in elevation of more than 2,000 meters. Our purpose was to locate the rare unicorns, which, according to local lore, still survived, secluded in the upper elevation valleys that provide the cool, misty microclimate that they prefer.

Unicorns! One of the main reasons I came to Guatemala decades ago was to search for these mythical beasts. I usually avoid talking about it because most people dismiss the idea even quicker than they do talk of UFOs. Unicorns exist only in fairy tales, they say—but not for me!

I actually met an old farmer many years ago who lived in the mountains above Tecpán, in the Department of Chimaltenango, who claimed to have trapped several unicorns for the infamous Dr. Estudio, a cryptozoologist and trafficker in rare species from Mexico City. In the '80s we spent many weeks searching all over the Sierra de Tecpán with no positive results.

It would seem the unicorns had become extinct ... if indeed they had ever existed there. We had no proof, and proof was what



A skillful climber, the margay prefers the rainforests

we were looking for. That is what brought me in the spring of 2011 to Atitlán Volcano, a 4,000-meter high cone rising at the edge of Lake Atitlán.

Finally, Andy arrived at my camper and we all sipped coffee and chomped down on some delicious buttery *champurada* cookies,



A beautifully striped skunk searches for dinner



An adult howler monkey giving a shout out

which his wife had baked for our trek. Andy, the owner of the Tarrales Coffee Plantation where I was camped, volunteered to be my Sherpa and carry my “heavy artillery”—the lenses and tripod I would need to photograph the elusive unicorn.

By 1:30 a.m. we were slowly making our



The tamandua is a nocturnal, arboreal anteater

way up a deeply rutted track in a ramshackle old pickup. The “road” wound up through the transitional forest known as the Boca Costa. This is a unique floristic region between the Pacific coastal tropical rain forest and the upper elevation cloud forests. The trees were all festooned with multitudinous lianas and epiphytes. The humming of insects resounded all around. Occasionally the moonlight would break through the dense canopy and shimmer down upon the exuberant foliage. An hour later we arrived at the little Mayan outpost of Albores, the highest inhabited place on the volcano.

On with our backpacks, walking sticks in our hands, headlamps blazing, we began our ascent. Hour after exhausting hour we continued up a narrow, muddy path. Finally, the warm glow of dawn began to welcome the new day; in the distance we could hear the roar of a troop of howler monkeys.

We couldn't have wanted a more beautiful morning. Cool, crisp, sunny and clear. Josue busied himself getting a little fire ready. Soon we were warming ourselves around the blaze, toasting our yellow corn cakes and dipping them into a pot of delicious black bean stew. The sustaining repast was washed down with sweet coffee along with our delicious, saucer-sized champuradas.

Thus fortified with the sun warming the forest, we began our final ascent up the steep, overgrown path, often chopping our way through with machetes. Along the way Josue again told us about his several encounters with *los cachudos*, the horned ones, as he called them.

Although I appraised Josue to be a very bright young man with exemplary bush knowledge, I had to consider his stories to be anecdotal and therefore somewhat suspect because he was neither a professional zoologist nor did he present any physical evidence to back up his claims. Nevertheless, his quite exact description of the coloration, size and behavior of his cachudos gave me considerable hope that he had indeed seen these mythical creatures.

For the next several hours we explored the cloud kingdom. These are the most ancient forests in the region. Less than one percent of all the forests in the American Hemisphere are cloud forests, but it is here where we find the highest concentrations of unique endemic species. We were following paths that appeared to have been made by tapir and white-tailed deer and we were excited to find large cat tracks—probably mountain lion but they also could have been made by the far-ranging jaguar. All these details indicated that we were beyond the reach of local hunters—no sign at all that man had ventured here.

Suddenly, Josue froze and put his finger to his lips to silence us. He cupped one ear and we all strained to hear what he was hearing. From the distance above came a weird echoing-booming sound, quite indescribable. Josue smiled and nodded. Adrenaline flooded my blood. We stalked forward slowly. I had my camera with a 500-millimeter lens mounted to a rifle stock at the ready as we crept through the underbrush. The boom-

ing became louder and seemed to be coming from all directions. An instant later we were gazing up into the branches of a huge, old mahogany and there, before our eyes, perched a real, live, flesh-and-blood unicorn! *Oreophasis derbianus*—the Horned Guan!

The strange, turkey-sized creature seemed to glare at us defiantly while making staccato clicking vocalizations. Then another big horned one appeared. They seemed quite fearless and I was able to shoot dozens of exposures. Then both of them began to make the weird booming noises again, but the strangest thing was that the vocalizations which we saw them making seemed to emanate from another tree!

It would seem that they had developed an ability to project their sounds similar to what a ventriloquist does, thus making it even more difficult to ...continued page 92



And there, before our eyes, perched a real, live, flesh-and-blood unicorn! *Oreophasis derbianus*—the Horned Guan!





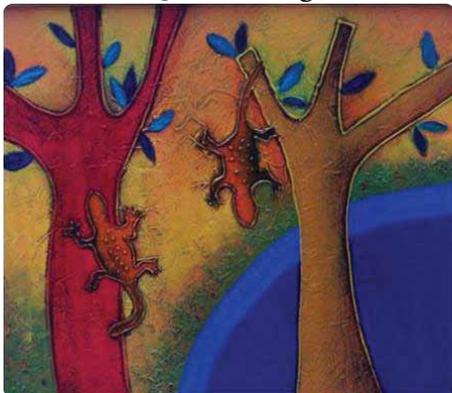
DATEBOOK

SEPTEMBER GUIDE TO CULTURE AND UPCOMING EVENTS COMPILED BY MERCEDES MEJICANOS

1 Thurs., through Fri., Oct. 7 — ART: Efraín Recinos, *Celebrando su Legado*. El Attico (tel: 2368-0853), 4a av. 15-45, z. 14, **Guatemala City**. ▼

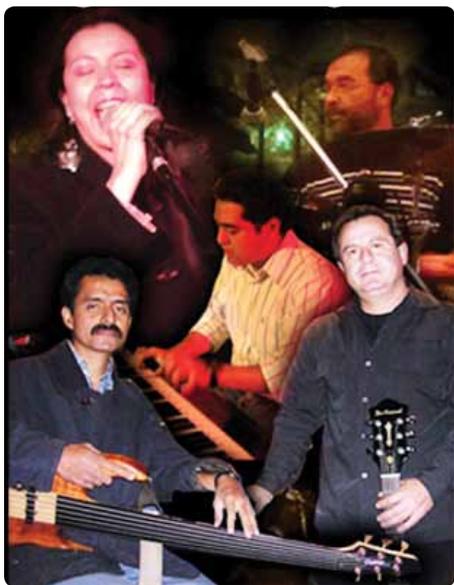


2 Fri., through Fri., 30 — ART: *Tres Puntos* by artists Ana Lucrecia Sunum, Rolando Sánchez and Mynor Cojulun. Vessica Galería de Arte (tel: 5381-4232), 3a av. 7-35, z. 1, **Quetzaltenango**. ▼



3 & 4 Sat., & Sun., 7am-5pm — GRAN BAZAAR benefit for AWARE: featuring motorcycle wear, various other articles and delicious food. Centro Commercial Villa Bella #18-A, km. 15, Carretera a Ciudad Vieja, **La Antigua**.

3 Sat., 8pm — MUSIC: *Blue Note*, by group 4or Jazz. Alejandra Flores (vocals), Byron Sosa (guitar), Rolando Gudiel (bass), Allan Urbizo (piano) and Leonel Franco (drums). Q50, includes 1 hour of parking. El Sitio (tel: 7832-3037), **La Antigua**. ▼



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3 Sat., 12-4:30pm — LABOR DAY PICNIC: Good food and drink. Donation Q50. Free parking. Presented by Democrats Abroad, contact John Chudy, mayadems@yahoo.com or 7832-4581. Casa Convento Concepción, Calle Concepción #1, **La Antigua**.

5, 6, 7 & 8th, 4pm — (English) LECTURE SERIES: Talks by archaeologist Mary Lou Ridinger. **5th:** *Jade and Chocolate: Ancient Mesoamerican Trade Routes*; **6th:** *Understanding 2012-Origins of the Maya Calendar*; **7th:** *Crocodiles in the Sky-Maya Astronomy*; **8th:** *The Hero Twins and Xibalba, the Popol Vuh*. Jade Maya, 4a Calle Oriente #34, **La Antigua**.

6 Tues., through Fri., 30 — ART: Exhibition of the best watercolors by students of Escuela Municipal de Arte. Free. Casa del Turista, INGUAT, 2a calle oriente #11, **La Antigua**.

6 Tues., 6:30pm — PHOTO: *Libertad Condicional*, photo exhibit by Freddy Murphy as part of the Festival Foto30. Galería Guatemala, Fundación G&T Continental, 6a av. 9-08, z. 9, Vestíbulo Banco G&T Continental, **Guatemala City**. ▼



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

Please submit your DATEBOOK entry for the OCT., 2011 edition of the REVUE by Monday, Sept. 12

8 Thurs., 4:15pm — (Spanish) CONFERENCIA: *Disfrutando a Beethoven*, El Fin Último de la Humanidad, La Novena Sinfonía, Opus 125, como parte del programa de conferencias de la Escuela Superior de Arte de la Universidad Galileo por William Orbaugh. Entrada libre, parqueo Q30. Museo Ixchel, 6a calle final z. 10, Centro Cultural UFM, **Guatemala City**.

10 Sat., 2-4:30pm — PHOTO WORKSHOP: *Lo Bueno Vrs. Lo Malo*, led by photographer Iván Castro. Participants should bring a camera, notebook and pencil. Free with registration before Sept. 7. El Sitio (tel: 7832-3037), **La Antigua**.

10 Sat., 7pm, through Nov. 8 — PHOTO: As part of the Foto30 festival, *A 2 Caras*, collective exposition by photographers Iván Castro and Mario Aparicio. Free. Cocktail. El Sitio (tel: 7832-3037), **La Antigua**. ▼



DATEBOOK

13 Tues., 5:30pm — TALK: Transitions is an organization that provides outreach, medical support and health education to disabled people throughout Guatemala. It operates a manufacturing and training facility for customized wheelchairs for rough terrain in rural areas, a clinic for prosthetics and orthotics, a graphic design and offset printing business and a special education program. Donation Q25. Rainbow Café (tel: 7832-1919), 7a av. sur #8, *La Antigua*.

14 Wed. — CELEBRATION: People carrying torches throughout their communities announcing Independence Day.

15 Thurs. — GUATEMALAN INDEPENDENCE DAY: Parades, firecrackers and celebrations throughout the country.



15 Thurs. — CELEBRATION: Diferent cultural and religious activities to celebrate Quetzaltenango's annual feria. *Quetzaltenango*.

17 Sat., 6pm — PHOTO FESTIVAL: Inauguration of *Transnacional[es]*, as part of the festival Foto30, showing works by numerous photographers. Cooperación Española (tel: 7932-3838), 6a av. norte between 3a & 4a calle poniente, *La Antigua*.

Please submit your DATEBOOK entry for the OCT, 2011 edition of the REVUE by Monday, Sept. 12

16 Fri., 8pm & 17 Sat., 7pm — DANCE: OXI-OXIB is a tribute to three traditional games played by many generations. Q50, includes 1 hour of parking. El Sitio (tel: 7832-3037), *La Antigua*. ▼



18 Sun., 10am-2pm — FAMILY DAY: The Antigua International School (AIS) is having a "Family Day" at the 1st year campus welcoming school families, their friends and other interested families and members of the public to meet the director, teachers and see the facilities. Activities for children are planned and food and drink will be served. Please RSVP at the school tel: 7832 0168 or email info@antiguais.org if you plan to attend. *La Antigua*.

20 Tues., 5:30pm — TALK: Los Patos: Forming Leaders for Guatemala helps young people in Jocotenango, Sacatepéquez. Donation Q25. Rainbow Café (tel: 7832-1919), 7a av. sur #8, *La Antigua*.

20 Tues., 6:30 — ART: *Festival de Comalapa*, exposition of Naif art by Andrés Curruchich and other artists from Comalapa. Cocktail and sale. Free. Parking Q30. Museo Ixchel, 6a calle final z. 10, Centro Cultural UFM, *Guatemala City*.



For a DateBook daily event listing, check out "REVUE NEWS TWEETS" www.revuemag.com

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If you have the will to win, you have achieved half your success; if you don't, you have achieved half your failure. —David Ambrose

So often time it happens, we all live our life in chains, and we never even know we have the key. —The Eagles

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 by Elizabeth Bell 

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Either way, things are a lot better—either a lot better than they were or a lot better than they're going to be. —Robert Brault

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24 Sat., 7pm — (Spanish) **THEATER:** *Rafael Landívar*, el poeta de la añoranza, para clausurar el Festival Rafael Landívar y conmemorar el 50 aniversario de la Universidad Rafael Landívar. Entrada libre. El Sitio (tel: 7832-3037), **La Antigua.**



Live

La Cueva de Panza Verde

tel: 7832-2925 5a av. sur #19, La Antigua

Wednesdays — Jazz Duo
Grand Piano & Double Bass.

Thursdays — Latin Trio featuring Denis Medina on Cubano Tres and Coloso Gudierre on congas.

Fridays — Cuban Night: Buena Vista de Corazón featuring Ignacio Perez on congas and Aniet Gonzáles on flute.

Saturdays — Guest artist
Nightly cover: Q35

La Peña de Sol Latino

tel: 7882-4468 5a calle poniente #15-C, La Antigua

Mondays — 7-10pm: The magic guitar of Carlos Trujillo, Latin Jazz/Salsa, with Bill on congas. Free.

Tuesdays — 7-10pm: Ramiro plays Trova Cubana, with Bill on congas. Free.

Wednesdays thru Sundays — 7-10pm: Sol Latino plays Andean music (pan flutes). Free. ▼



Sundays — 12:30-3pm: Ramiro plays Trova Cubana, with Bill on Congas. Free.

Gaia Restaurante

tel: 7832-3670 Calle del Arco #35-A, La Antigua

Thursdays — 7pm: Live music.

Fridays and Saturdays — Belly dancing.

Como Como

tel: 7832-0478 6 calle poniente #6, La Antigua

Wednesdays — 8pm: Accordion music by Jorge Herrera.

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: Gustavo plays Latino classics, western tunes with some harmonica.

Wednesdays — 7:30pm: *Open Mike Night*: come along and show your skills. Free drink for anyone who performs!

Thursdays — 7:30pm: Kenny and Friends, some of Antigua's best loved local musicians will amaze you with some great music.

Fridays — 7:30pm: Segio, a talented local plays a great mix of music including lots of reggae!

Saturdays — 7:30pm: A variety of bands!

Sundays — 7:30pm: Kenny and Friends, some of Antigua's best loved local musicians will amaze you with some great music.



La Posada del Pintor—Circus Bar

tel: 7832-1033 4a calle oriente #10 (2nd level), La Antigua

Fridays, Saturdays, Sundays — 8pm:
Live music, featuring a variety of artists.

Las Palmas

tel: 7832-9734 6a av. norte #14, La Antigua

Wednesdays — 8pm:
Bossa, soft rock and blues.

Saturdays — 8pm:
American folk music.



CHECK DATEBOOK CALENDAR LISTINGS FOR MORE CONCERTS AND SPECIAL MUSICAL EVENTS

Music



Ocelot

tel: 5658-9028 4a avenida norte #3, La Antigua

Thursdays — 7-9pm: Mike MCarthy plays some mean blues.

9pm: Mike & Moriah, piano & vocals.

Fridays — 7-9pm: Ron Fortin saxophone.

9:30-11:30pm: Nelson Lunding, New Orleans piano.

Saturdays — 7-9pm: Malcolm Oakley sings and plays guitar.

9:30pm: Mercedes, guitar blues/rock/folk.



Pub Quiz hosted by Brendan Byrne; **Sundays** at 6:30pm

Fridas

tel: 7832-1296 Calle del Arco #29, La Antigua

Wednesdays — 7:30pm: Kenny, latin music.

Thursdays — Ishto Juevez, swing & Mexican.

La Casbah

5a av. norte #30, La Antigua

Tuesdays — Live music: cover band

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El Cadejo Tapas Bar

tel: 2337-4365 5a av. 16-49, z.10, Guatemala City

Wednesdays — 7pm: Entrevoz

Thursdays — 7pm: Acoustic jam

3rd, Sat. — 8pm: Grupo Penumbra

17th, Sat. — 8pm: Ensemble Rock

24th, Sat. — 8pm: Tijuana Love

Circus Bar

tel: 7762-2056 Avenida de los Árboles, Panajachel

Mondays — 7pm: Chris Jarnach, classic music, jazz and rock.

8pm: Marco Solo and friends, Pana's Carlos Santana. Rock, blues and jazz.

9pm: Norte, contemporary trova.

Tuesdays — 7pm: Chris Jarnach, classic music, jazz and rock.

8pm: Rockiris, alternative rock.

9pm: Latin ensemble.

Wednesdays — 7pm: Chris Jarnach, classic music, jazz and rock.

8pm: Latin ensemble.

9pm: Carlos Rangel and son, swing, Cuban and rock.

Thursdays — 7pm: Chris Jarnach, classic music, jazz and rock.

8pm: Latin ensemble.

9pm: Norte, contemporary trova.

Fridays — 7pm: Flamenco by Marco El Messina.

8pm: Latin ensemble.

9pm: Trova del Lago.

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

Sundays — Latin ensemble.

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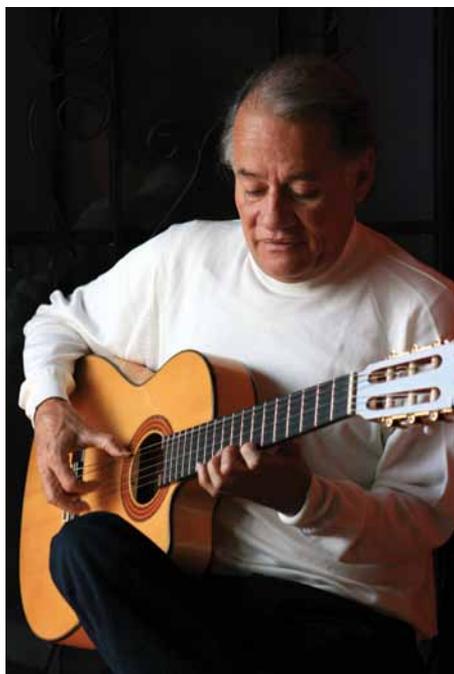
Wednesdays — 8:30pm: Victor Arriaza on piano, Alejandro Alvarez, bass and Julio García on drums.



21 Wed. — CELEBRATION: Different cultural and religious activities honoring San Mateo Apóstol. San Mateo, *Quetzaltenango*.

22 Thurs., 6:30pm — (Spanish) CONFERENCIA: *Arte Naif Guatemalteco y su Principal Exponente Andrés Curruchich*. Entrada libre, parqueo Q30. Museo Ixchel, 6a calle final z. 10, Centro Cultural UFM, *Guatemala City*.

23 Fri., 8pm — MUSIC: *Con Buena Letra*, by singer and guitarist Tito Santis. Q60, includes 1 hour of parking. El Sitio (tel: 7832-3037), *La Antigua*. ▼



29 Thurs. — CELEBRATION: Different cultural and religious activities honoring San Miguel Arcángel. San Miguel Sigüilá, *Quetzaltenango*.

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

23 Fri., 5pm — CONVERSATORY AND MUSIC: *Tejiendo Historias de Hormigo*, by Academia Comunitaria de Arte San Juan del Obispo, will talk about the history and evolution of the marimba, followed at **7pm** by a marimba concert by Brisa de Hunahpú, comprised of teenagers from San Juan del Obispo. Cooperación Española (tel: 7932-3838), 6a av. norte between 3a & 4a calle poniente, *La Antigua*.

24 Sat., 10am-12pm — (Spanish) TALLER PARA NIÑOS ARTE NAIF: Dirigido a niños de 6 años en adelante por la experta en docencia de arte para niños Raquel Ferrus. Cupo limitado, reserva tu espacio. Museo Ixchel, 6a calle final z. 10, Centro Cultural UFM, *Guatemala City*.

25 Sun., 11am & 4pm — MUSIC: As part of the Paiz Cultural Festival, 10 great marimbas assembly, directed by Master Guillermo de León Ruiz. Floor, Q100; balcony & side balcony, Q60; rear balcony Q30. Tickets on sale at todoticket.com Gran Sala Efraim Recinos, Centro Cultural Miguel Ángel Asturias, 24 calle 3-81, z. 1, *Guatemala City*. See page 9 for details.



La Loza de Doña Olga see page 32



"Girl from San Antonio Palopó" by William Kalwick Jr.

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28 Wed., through Sat., Oct 1 —
ORCHIDS EXHIBIT: Organized
 by Asociación Guatemalteca de Orquideología.
 INGUAT, 2a calle oriente #11, **La Antigua.**



29 Thurs., through Fri., 30th — SEM-
INAR: The Guatemalan Association
 of Interpreters and Translators, AGIT,
 will be celebrating its annual seminar,
 SEMAGIT 2011, at Porta Hotel Antigua.
 For details email [secretariaagitguatemala@
 gmail.com](mailto:secretariaagitguatemala@gmail.com) or visit www.agitguatemala.org.
La Antigua. See highlight page 58.

30 Fri., 7pm — **DANCE:** *Llena de
 Flores tu Boca*, by Cia Clave Mari-
 blanca, an award-winning performer who
 has participated in national and interna-
 tional festivals. Cooperación Española (tel:
 7932-3838), 6a av. norte between 3a & 4a
 calle poniente, **La Antigua.**

Throughout the Month



ART: Collected works. Mesón Panza Verde (tel: 7832-2925), 5a av. sur #19, *La Antigua*.

ART: Contemporary art by renowned Guatemalan artists Anibal Lopez and Alfredo Ceibal. By appointment, tel: 5297-5481. Calle de los Pasos 36 / Art Gallery, *La Antigua*.

BIRD WATCHING: Come and see over 200 egrets return to their home tree for the night. 5:15, SHARP! The birds are never late! La Peña de Sol Latino Restaurante, 5a calle poniente #15-C, *La Antigua*.

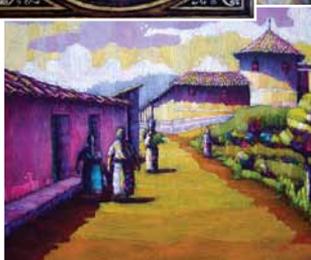
ART: Featuring the works of prominent Guatemalan and international artists, among them William Kalwick (U.S.); Sergio Valenzuela (Guatemala); Hugo González Ayala (Guatemala); Dan Davis (U.S.); Sergio Alvarado, (Guatemala); Patrick McGrath (Puerto Rico); and Doniel Espinoza (Guatemala). La Antigua Galeria de Arte (tel: 7832-2124), 4a calle oriente #15, *La Antigua*. ▼

Saturdays, 2-4pm — RUGBY CLUB: Workouts every week, come and join us. Q15. Visit <http://rugby.com.gt/antigua> for more information. Centro Los Luteros, la av. Norte final, *La Antigua*. ▼



Saturdays, 4pm (Spanish) CHILDREN'S MOVIES: Cine infantil. Cooperación Española (tel: 7932-3838), 6a av. norte between 3a & 4a calle poniente, *La Antigua*.

DATEBOOK continues on page 32



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It's so hard when I have to, and so easy when I want to. —Annie Gottlier

He has the wisdom of youth, and the energy of old age. —Unknown

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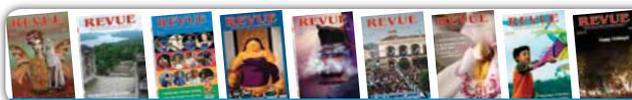
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If A is a success in life, then A equals X plus Y plus Z. Work is X; Y is play; and Z is keeping your mouth shut. —Albert Einstein

A psychiatrist is a fellow who asks you a lot of expensive questions your wife asks for nothing. —Joey Adams

Attitudes are contagious. Are yours worth catching? —Dennis and Wendy Mannering

There are exactly as many special occasions in life as we choose to celebrate. —Robert Brault



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Throughout the Month

Mon-Sat, 9am-6pm — ART: Installation in cabinet, *La Loza de Doña Olga*, glazed majolica from Arturo Maldonado Arriola, as part of the III Festival del Centro Histórico, presented by Callejón del Fino. Edificio El Centro, 2nd level, local 218, 7a. avenida y 9a. calle, z. 1, **Guatemala City.** ▼



Tuesdays, 6pm — (English) SLIDE SHOW: *Antigua Behind the Walls* with Elizabeth Bell. Q30 benefits educational programs. El Sitio (tel: 7832-3037), 5a calle poniente #15, **La Antigua.**

Wednesdays, 6pm (Spanish) FILMS: A different film every week. Cooperación Española (tel: 7932-3838), 6a av. norte between 3a & 4a calle poniente, **La Antigua.**

Wednesdays, 8pm — MUSIC: Entrevoz, acoustic band; Ladies Night 5-10pm. El Cadejo Tapas Bar (tel: 2337-4365), 5a av. 16-49, z.10, **Guatemala City.**



Thurs., 4-6pm — (English) SEMINARS that could change your life! **Oct. 1st:** *Protection from Negativity, Increase Personal Power*; **8th:** *Learn to Read Faces with 98% Accuracy*; **15th:** *Clear Stress in Less Time than it Takes to Find the Valium*; **22nd:** *Getting Well, Staying Well, Understanding Your Body*; **29th:** *Vanquish Fear & Silence the Negative Voices in your Head*. Q150 per event, Q100 per event in advance for them all. For more info: contact Joy, 4407-1221, www.Enlightenment-ThroughPleasure.com All classes are guaranteed. Lutheran Center, 1st av. norte #35, **La Antigua.**

PLAN AHEAD

Sat., October 1, 9am — (Spanish) TALLER DE ORQUÍDEAS: Aprenda todo sobre orquídeas y como sembrarlas y cultivarlas, impartido por Silvia de Palmieri. Convento Capuchinas, **La Antigua.**

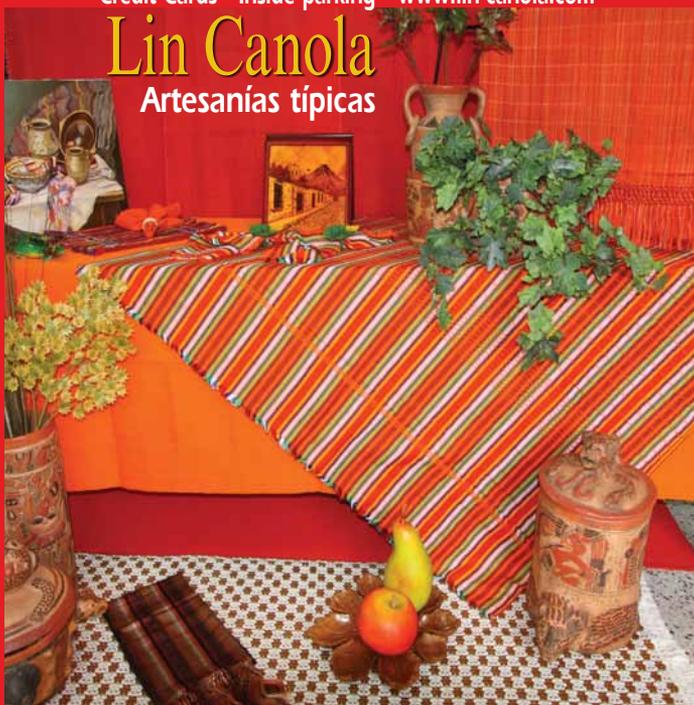
PHOTO CONTEST Photographers of all levels are invited to submit their work (color or B&W) with the theme *Fiestas Patronales de Guatemala* (Municipal Fairs of Guatemala). The best 12 photos will appear in Museo Ixchel's 2013 calendar. Deadline Oct. 3, 2011. For more information visit Museo Ixchel Galerías in Facebook. Museo Ixchel (tel: 2361-8081), 6a calle final, z. 10, Centro Cultural UFM, **Guatemala City.**



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The greatness of a nation and its moral progress can be judged by the way its animals are treated. I hold that, the more helpless a creature, the more entitled it is to protection by people from the cruelty of human kind. —Mahatma Gandhi



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If malice or envy were tangible and had a shape, it would be the shape of a boomerang.
—Charley Reese

Things turn out best for the people who make the best out of the way things turn out.
—Art Linkletter

I'm not a bad guy! I work hard, and I love my kids. So why should I spend half my Sunday hearing about how I'm going to hell? —Homer Simpson

Enjoy the little things, for one day you may look back and realize they were the big things.
—Robert Brault

If you put the federal government in charge of the Sahara Desert, in five years there would be a shortage of sand. —Milton Friedman



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A person will sometimes devote all his life to the development of one part of his body —the wishbone. —Robert Frost

If we shall take the good we find, asking no questions, we shall have heaping measures. —Ralph Waldo Emerson

Every thought is a seed. If you plant crab apples, don't count on harvesting Golden Delicious. —Bill Meyer

I've decided that the stuff falling through the cracks is confetti and I'm having a party! —Betsy Cañas Garmon

Tecún Umán Monument

Zone 13

Heralded as Guatemala's national hero, Tecún Umán is a symbol of indigenous resistance, a legendary figure of Kaqchikel history who led his people into battle against the Spanish conquest of the Guatemalan Highlands in 1524 and refused to surrender.

Remembered for his bravery and dignity—fighting to protect his land and encouraging his people to do the same—he was defeated by conquistador Don Pedro de Alvarado but left a legacy that permeates Guatemalan life today.

Although debate remains over his historical reality, Tecún Umán is among one of the most important figures in the country's history. Celebrated in literature, folktales and dances, and commemorated on the national currency, the Mayan king is also honored through prominent statues that guard both the entrance to Quetzaltenango and La Aurora International Airport in Guatemala City.

There are various versions of the 1524 battle between Alvarado and Tecún Umán. However, according to legend, the gallant Maya-Quiché captain, adorned with quetzal feathers and a jewelled crown, led his native army into battle accompanied by Gua-



temala's national bird, the quetzal.

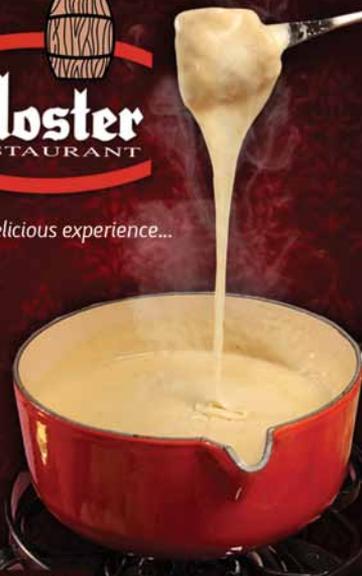
The warriors, from worlds apart, met face to face: Umán on foot and Alvarado on horseback. However, since Tecún Umán had never seen a horse before, he assumed the conquistador and his steed were one being. He killed the horse, thinking that its rider would be slain too, but of course Alvarado survived. The Spaniard speared his opponent in the chest and killed the Mayan king. Legend says, that strewn with grief Tecún Umán's faithful companion, the quetzal, landed on Umán's chest—staining his feathers red with the blood. From that day on, all male quetzals have borne a scarlet breast symbolizing the fallen warrior.

Even though he was defeated, Guatemalans revere Tecún Umán because of his honorable determination. Tecún Umán was declared Guatemala's official national hero on March 22, 1960. 📍



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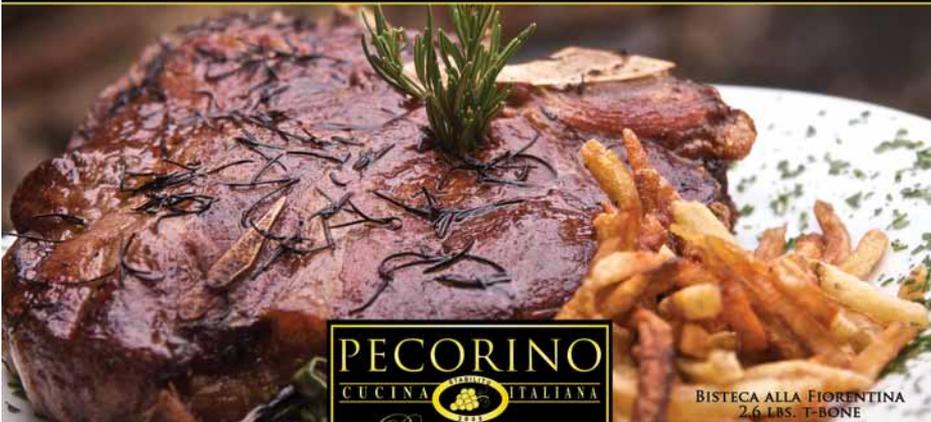
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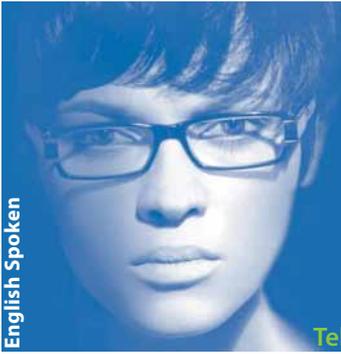
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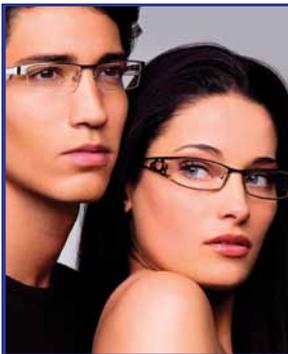
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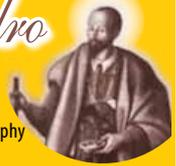
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The ideals which have lighted my way, and time after time have given me new courage to face life cheerfully, have been kindness, beauty, and truth. —Albert Einstein

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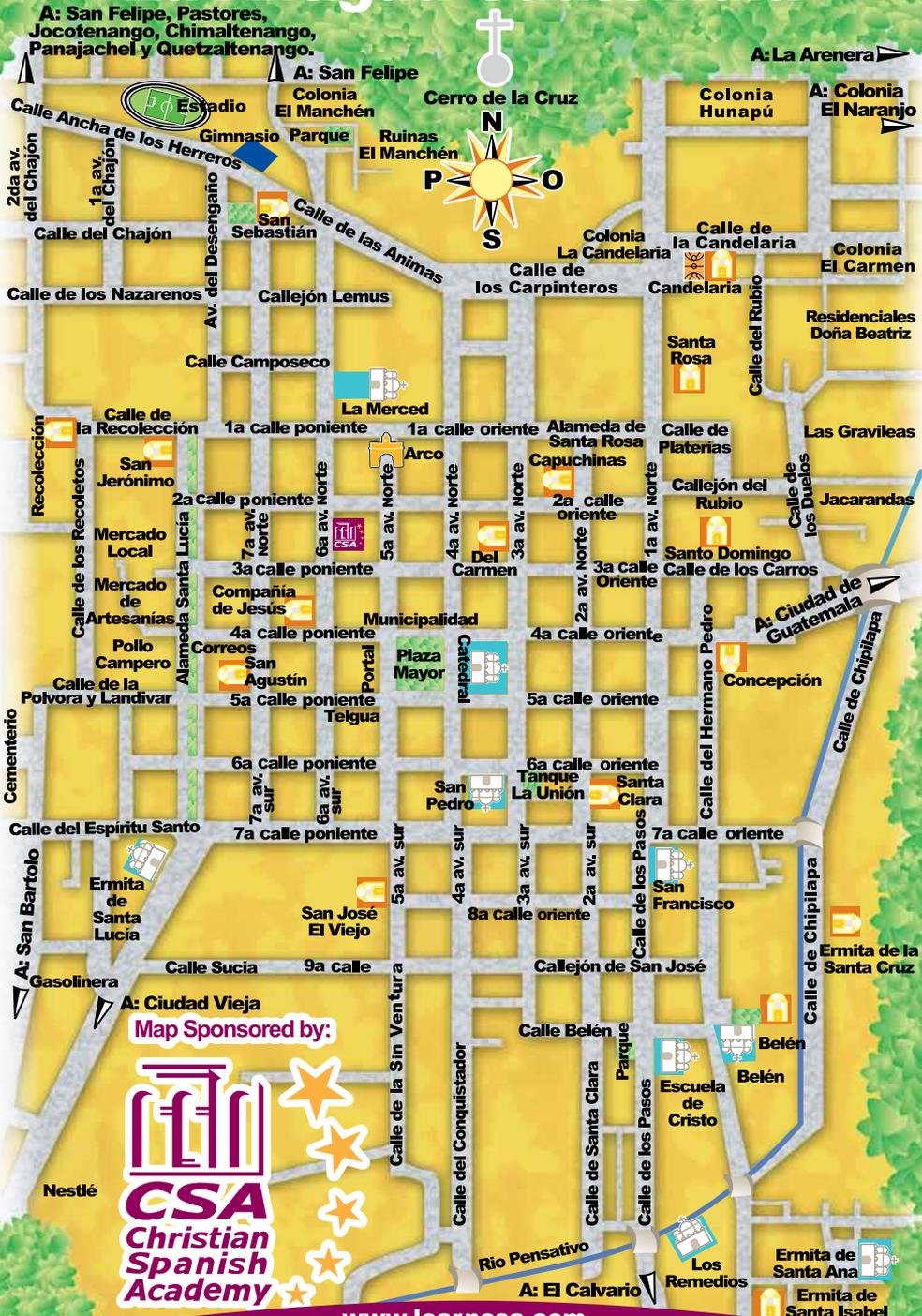
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get ahead during the time that others waste.
—Henry Ford



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PET Q's & A's
by Cynthia Burski, DVM



Question: I have a 5-year-old schnauzer named Mikey. His veterinarian said that he would need surgery to repair a hernia. I am concerned about the risk of surgery and wonder if the hernia will go away on its own or not cause any problems. It doesn't seem to hurt him.

You don't mention which type of hernia Mikey has. In general, a hernia occurs whenever a hole in the body allows tissue to slip through.

A diaphragmatic hernia can be a birth defect or the result of a traumatic injury. It is a hole in the diaphragm muscle, which separates the chest and the abdomen. It may allow contents of the abdomen (such as the stomach or intestines) to slip into the chest, making it difficult for the dog to breathe.

An umbilical hernia occurs shortly after birth when the hole through which the umbilical cord leaves the body fails to close. The skin over the hole heals, but fat and intestinal loops can slip through the hole, making a lump under the skin. If a loop of intestine becomes trapped in an umbilical hernia, the flow of material through the digestive system is halted, causing an emergency condition.

A perineal hernia allows fatty tissue or a portion of the colon to bulge under the skin near the dog's anus. Perineal hernias occur most often in male dogs older than 5 years, and experts suspect many causes, including chronic constipation or hormone imbalance. Surgery repairs the condition so that he can defecate without assistance.

An inguinal hernia occurs when intestines or other contents of the abdomen slip through the muscles and under the skin where his rear legs meet the belly (the inguinal, or groin, area).

Whether Mikey's hernia needs repair depends on its type, size and what is protruding through it. Some hernias permanently scar in place and do not require repair if they are causing no problems, but most others can cause serious illness and should be surgically repaired. Please follow your veterinarian's advice.

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All the mistakes I make arise from forsaking my own station and trying to see the object from another person's point of view.

—Ralph Waldo Emerson

There is always some specific moment when we become aware that our youth is gone; but, years after, we know it was much later.

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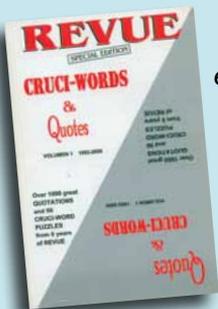
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ASK ELIZABETH

by Elizabeth Bell
AUTHOR/HISTORIAN

What are the Guatemalan elections for this month?

Guatemala holds national elections on Sept. 11 with ballots for president / vice president, 158 departmental Congress members (diputados) and 333 mayors (alcaldes)—each with a four-year term—plus a ballot for 20 members for the Central American Parliament (PARLACEN) with a five-year term. The 1986 Constitution limits the presidency to one term. Congress members and mayors may run for re-election.

Guatemala has 7,374,453 registered voters among a population of 14.4 million people. More than 50% of the registered voters are women and more than 1 million voters are between the ages of 18-25.

With elections held only every four years, it will be particularly interesting to see where the country's emerging democracy is heading. With presidential candidates from 28 political parties, runoff elections with the top two presidential / vice presidential tickets are expected.

Voter statistics include literate and illiterate voters, but ballots are easily read with party symbols to mark an “X.”

La Antigua's population is estimated at 58,000 with 70% living in one of 23 villages (aldeas) incorporated in the city limits, and 93% of the 30,000+ voters are registered as literate. In addition to the presidential race, Antigua's ballot includes three diputados for the Department of Sacatepéquez and one mayor, along with candidates for PARLACEN.

The winner of the mayor's race will also serve as president of the National Council for the Protection of Antigua (the governmental agency in charge of the restoration of the city) as established in the 1969 Protective Law for the City of Antigua.

In recent years, newspapers indicate who is ahead in the polls and more than 77% of the population considers itself “nationalist,” which could be interpreted as patriotic. Updates are posted daily on www.tse.org.gt

On Sept. 12, we should know about the presidential runoff and who the winning political parties and civic committees in Antigua will appoint for the seven City Council seats.

Many believe it is a time for change and we may see this during the next four years with an emerging democracy, increasing literacy and improving economy. The new government takes office on Jan. 15.

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If you are on a gluten free life-style diet, look no further than Organica for everything you need to make your meals fun and tasty! They have shelf after shelf of gluten free products including pasta, cereal, brownie mix, snack bars, pancake mix, crackers and even beer. Yes, that's right—*beer*. Who knew they made gluten free beer?

Located at 5a calle poniente #6, Organica is just a stone's throw from Central Park. The store is open every day from 8 a.m. till 6 p.m. All major credit cards are accepted. 📍



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DateBook Highlight

Bridging Cultures

The Guatemalan Association of Interpreters and Translators (AGIT) will be celebrating its annual seminar, SEMAGIT 2011, **Sept. 29-30** at Porta Hotel Antigua. This non-profit organization, established in 1972, represents the professional, legal and academic interests of multilingual specialists working and studying in Guatemala.

Every year, on the feast of St. Jerome, its patron saint and translator of the Bible, AGIT gathers together its members, as well as anyone with an interest in languages, to participate in workshops and conferences.

This year's theme is "Bridging Cultures," for which there will be varied topics covered by experts in their respective fields. Are you interested in locution or simultaneous interpretation? Perhaps you would like to know how the European Union manages its multilingual challenges, or how Spain's Real Academia de la Lengua has innovated its regulations to encompass all variations of the Spanish-speaking world with a New Spelling Dictionary.

Better still, have you read the latest Quiché-Spanish translation of the *Popol Vuh*, written by Guatemala's outstanding linguist Dr. Sam Colop, or thought about the opportunities for translators and interpreters in the publishing world? How about becoming a professional interviewer for a newspaper or radio station?

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The advertisement features a large background image of an outdoor terrace with blue tables and chairs, overlooking a view of Antigua. Three inset images show: a salad with a martini glass, dumplings with a red flower garnish, and skewers of grilled meat and vegetables.



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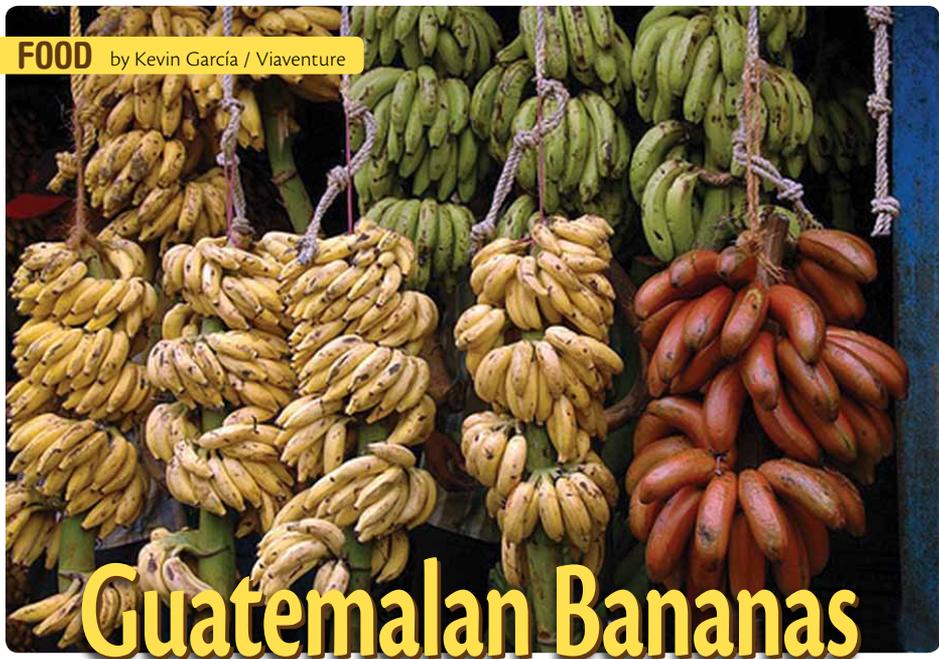
The advertisement includes an image of two large cooked shrimp on the left and a display of various wine and liquor bottles on the right.



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The advertisement features a dynamic image of a person in a red jacket and blue pants kayaking through white-water rapids. The logo for La Canoa is prominently displayed in the foreground.



Guatemalan Bananas

There are many varieties of bananas in Guatemala. Bananas are very tasty, complete fruits; they are easy to digest and have many nutrients, such as vitamins A, B, C, E, calcium, magnesium, silicon, phosphorus, sulfur, iron and sodium. They are particularly rich in vitamin B6, folic acid and potassium.

The bananas most commonly found in Guatemala are Cavendish bananas, the baby banana, the pink banana and the plantain.

The Cavendish is the most-consumed banana worldwide. It is usually picked while the skin is green, and it turns yellow as it matures. While the banana matures, it produces natural sugars and aromas. The easiest way to speed the ripening process is to place the bananas in a plastic bag and put them in a warm place.

The baby banana is the smallest and sweetest of the banana family. It is also known

as the *banano orito*. Although small, these bananas are also loaded with a variety of healthy nutrients.

The pink banana is the most exotic variety of the banana family. It is slightly smaller than the Cavendish. Its main distinction is its coloring: Its skin has a pink tone, which sometimes looks almost light purple. This type of banana has a sweet and creamy flavor, and a lovely smell. It is best consumed when the fruit is soft.

Plantains are very similar in appearance to the Cavendish bananas. The difference is that the plantain has a high level of starch and a softer flavor.

Plantains are generally cooked; however, a mature plantain can also be eaten raw. This type of banana starts off green, turns yellow, lastly turning black. Plantains can be eaten even when the skin is black and will have a very sweet flavor.

You can find bananas in markets all over Guatemala. Buy some to taste for yourself! 🍌



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ILEGAL MEZCAL

POTENT SPIRIT OPENS NEW CHAPTER FOR ANTIGUA OUTPOST

Not unlike its original customers, or more honestly its booze-filled reprobates turned employees, Café No Sé in La Antigua Guatemala has truly grown up over the last years. This change is fourfold. Firstly and ironically, some of the infantile antics and genuine boyish bonhomie that epitomized this legendary watering hole's "anything goes" attitude died with the 82 years of life and bartending bravado that was Bo Wilcox in 2006. Others moved on, or unlike a J.M. Barry title character, grew up. Closing at the appointed hour of 1 a.m. rather than when no one could drink another drop certainly helped Café No Sé enter into its more mature years as well.

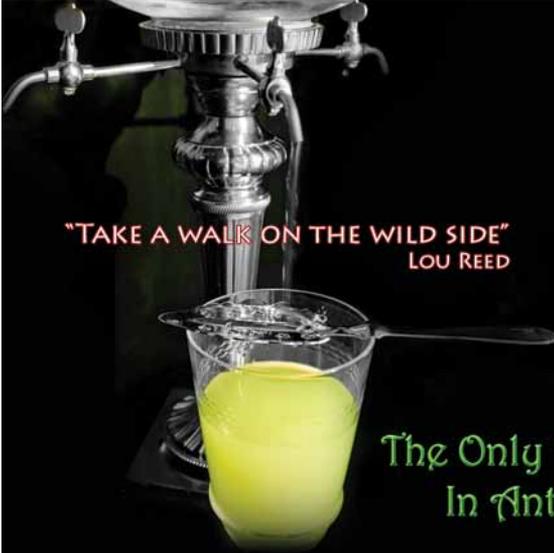
For my money the real reason Café No Sé has turned the corner into its newest chapter is its owner, John Rexer, and his love of the culture that is mezcal. Illegal Mezcal.

"Mezcal is not a product, it is a culture. It is as nuanced as the lines in the hands that make it. It is the opposite of industrial. It is familial, communal and ceremonial.



(PHOTO BY GUSTAVO ESTRADA)

...continued on following page



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It is new each year and the same as it was 500 years ago,” says Rexer in the café between globe-trotting trips on his mission to introduce and share with the world his sweetheart of 30 years.

The name of his brand, *Ilegal*, is a nod to the days when he opened his tequila bar (now The Mezcal Bar) only to find that he was unable to supply it through normal channels. This lack of supply made for some “interesting” border crossings to furnish his insatiable and curious customers, friends and employees with both the tequila and mezcal he felt they deserved. From these early days, Rexer and former bar manager and partner Stephen Myers are now supplying their bottled respect for these small producers on three continents. At present you can enjoy their *joven*, *reposado* and *añejo* offerings not only throughout Guatemala but on a sidewalk table in Paris, a beach in Australia or in the capable hands of a famous New York City mixologist.

“Traditional, artisanal mezcal—vintage, small batch and handmade—is a part of Oaxaca that links the individual and the community to the land and sun and time. By working with these small producers

throughout Oaxaca we hope to help preserve both the tradition and the spirit,” Rexer says.

While there is no denying mezcal’s roots and heart in Oaxaca, there is something undeniably Guatemalan, thanks to Rexer, about it as well: a mysteriousness and danger rooted in the same spirit and traditions that brings hundreds of thousands to its mountains, coasts and jungles each year.

Watch your head as you enter Café No Sé’s rabbit hole (through a refrigerator door that predates Nixon’s introduction of this Maytag technology to the Chinese) and you are swept into a world that predates us all. A time of artisan, village-produced spirits that shame the industrial production of tequila.

Mezcal is not held to the big-money standards of regulation that governs the whole of Jalisco state and tequila, but rather, allows smaller producers to harness the traditions and “recipes” of their ancestors and, Sun God willing, it is coming to a city near you when you leave Antigua and return home. 

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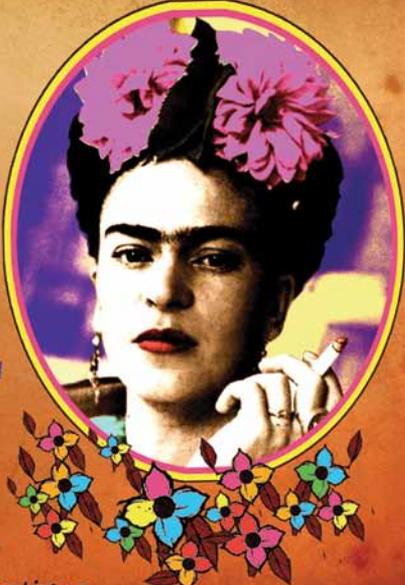
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Monstera deliciosa

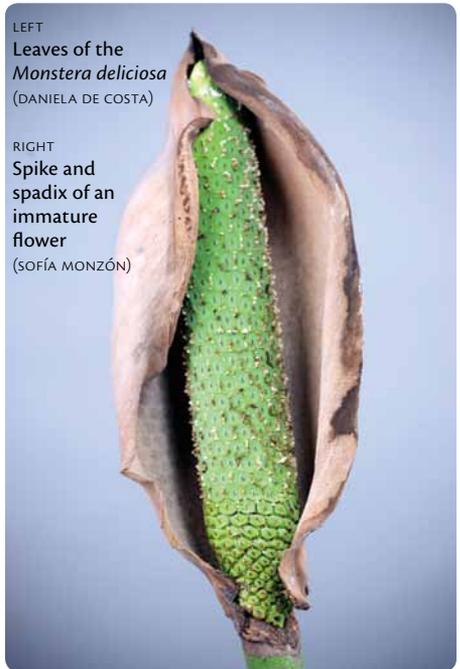
Split-leaf philodendron is a common beauty in Guatemala

Monstera deliciosa is a common houseplant and a common garden plant throughout Guatemala. Most of my articles in the REVUE magazine have been about sacred plants and flowers that appear in Mayan myths and in ancient art of Guatemala. But this month I am writing about a plant that is not pictured in murals or in hieroglyphic inscriptions. I selected the split-leaf philodendron plant, which you see in pictures because it is so photogenic, and only this year did I learn

that one part of the plant was edible.

Split-leaf philodendron is one informal name for *Monstera deliciosa*. I myself have never heard the name *ceriman*, which is evidently the name favored by Julia Morton, since that is the source of the web pages of the Purdue University horticultural web site. The biology student who works with FLAAR in Guatemala, Daniela de Costa, indicated she knows this plant by the name *mano de león*.

...continued on following page



LEFT
Leaves of the
Monstera deliciosa
(DANIELA DE COSTA)

RIGHT
Spike and
spadix of an
immature
flower
(SOFÍA MONZÓN)

Dándole sabor a las tradiciones antiguas



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Monstera deliciosa cont. from page 68

You can eat a philodendron?

The erect spike is what you can eventually eat, after it has ripened. Since the spike has unpleasant chemicals in it when unripe, and since the plant in my own garden has never bloomed (even in four years), I have never tasted this plant.

The photographs were taken at a hotel in Coban. It has been vigorously blooming all June, July and in August. I have stayed at this hotel about once a year for five years. I have photographed this plant before but never saw the flowers blooming as they were this year in the first week of June. In the botanical garden, CECON, in Guatemala City, the same species was blooming in late July.



Enchilada

Enchilada is queen of the tostadas, which is the common name for toasted tortillas. Enchiladas include a tostada as a base, a romaine lettuce leaf, a mixture of pickled beets and vegetables, minced green beans, carrots, and meat, tomato sauce, chili sauce, sprinkle dried Guatemalan cheese, and you top the whole thing with sliced onions and hard-boiled egg slices.



Roots of the split-leaf philodendron can be used to make rope

Many of the vines which grow on trees have roots that can be used for rope or other common uses. You generally peel off the bark and make your cordage from a single piece. *Monstera deliciosa* is one of many vines you can utilize to make rope-like material. If you wish to see Mayan basket making (using many different plant parts), we recommend visiting Chilascó, in Baja Verapaz.

Gardening

My split-leaf philodendron has never bloomed and grows slowly (but surely). Nonetheless this is one of my favorite plants. My plant is in the soil; not in a pot.

I am at 1,500 meters elevation and my *Monstera deliciosa* is very healthy and happy. Unfortunately, it's deep in the shade and has not bloomed during the four years that it has been growing. So to get the photographs that we include here, I had to go to Coban, Alta Verapaz. However, this plant is so common in all altitudes of Guatemala it is just a matter of happenstance whether you can find someone who has the same species out in the sun. 🍷

Dr. Nicholas M. Hellmuth is director of FLAAR Reports (Foundation for Latin American Anthropological Research).

To view the list of sacred animals visit www.maya-archaeology.org or contact Dr. Hellmuth at frontdesk@flaar.org



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—George Bernard Shaw

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—Alfred E. Newman



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The word aerobics came about when the gym instructors got together and said, "If we're going to charge \$20 an hour, we can't call it jumping up and down." —Rita Rudner

Bart, a woman is like a beer. They look good, they smell good, and you'd step over your own mother just to get one! —Homer Simpson

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Walter White Jr.

1930 — 2011



Walter White Jr.—humorist, socialite and inventor—died in January this year, aged 80. Walter was the life and soul of the original anglophone ex-patriate community in La Antigua Guatemala, and his passing is felt as both the loss of a friend and as the loss of a symbol and unifying force.

For almost 30 years (“I came down for one week, 28 years ago,” he told his wife, Karen) Walter charmed and entertained all those with whom he came in contact. Walter in society was low-key. He was both amusing and incisive. And you had to be intellectually nimble and alert to innuendo to keep up your end of the conversation.

Walter had some great jokes, the skill to tell them, and an astounding memory that never failed, even in the most testing circumstances. No one will ever tell the “Archibald Hasselbroke’s First Day at School” joke like Walter.

Walter was a gentleman who could be curmudgeonly; never the reverse. As a self-professed animal hater he once carried an injured dog in his arms through the streets of Antigua to the vet clinic. On another occasion he had the temerity to ask a policeman in Mexico, who had just robbed him and his companion at gunpoint, for directions.

Walter cut an imposing, avuncular figure—a friend’s little girl called him “Walter Columpio.” Because of a certain girth, or perhaps because of his patrician bearing, he could seem much taller than his 5’ 10”. Opponents on the high school football field must have found Walter the wide receiver more than im-

posing, as he powered past for another touchdown, taking his team into the St. George’s School (Rhode Island) Hall of Fame for completing 100 years without defeat.

Walter White Jr. was born in 1930 into a solidly respectable, well-to-do New York family. Raised according to traditional principles, Walter learned the impeccable manners and courteous behavior with which he was to conquer Antigua.

In 1948, at the age of 18, Walter headed north and spent the first of many memorable summers working in the Alaskan fishing industry—formative years that provided not only lifelong memories that drew him back 50 years later for an idyllic holiday with Karen, but also with his foundation in cookery.

Back in New York, Walter became a banker, cutting his digital teeth on those monsters of engineering that were the first mainframe computers, famously participating in the group that developed the machine-readable strip that led to credit cards.

And in November 1982, “between wives and between jobs,” at the invitation of his old school friend Bud Johnson and at the height of the Guatemalan civil war, Walter arrived in Antigua. Now a gourmet cook, an accomplished raconteur, a redoubtable backgammon player, and an aficionado of loud trousers, Walter won hearts and found a home and a wife.

Walter White Jr. was a gardener, a caterer, an architect, a hedonist, a raconteur, an observer, a DJ, a lover and a cuddler. He is sadly missed. 🍷




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If you don't think every day is a good day,
just try missing one. —Cavett Robert

You only live once, but if you do it right,
once is enough. —Mae West

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There are several good protections against temptations, but the surest is cowardice.
—Mark Twain



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Cute creatures with bad habits

To the uninitiated, the roar of howler monkeys (see page 19) in the wild has caused many a traveler to shiver with trepidation. However, the only danger these hairy tree dwellers pose to hikers is the fact that, in many regions, they have inherited some very bad habits.

One of their favorite sports is to wait silently for people to walk directly beneath them and then shower them with branches, fruits and sometimes even urine and feces. I am up to their tricks and so I always make a wide detour around the troops.

This causes the males to howl furiously. “How dare you spoil our fun!” they seem to shout. I howl back that they are “bad animals with bad habits!”

This only makes the males howl louder. Fun in the jungle, as I would say.

“Stop harassing those animals!” the tree-huggers scold. “You should be ashamed of yourself!”

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—Thor Janson / www.bushmanollie.com



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I am not one of those who in expressing opinions
confine themselves to facts. —Mark Twain

A bit of fragrance clings to the hand
that gives flowers. —Chinese proverb

Map of Online Revue Readers: August 22, 2011



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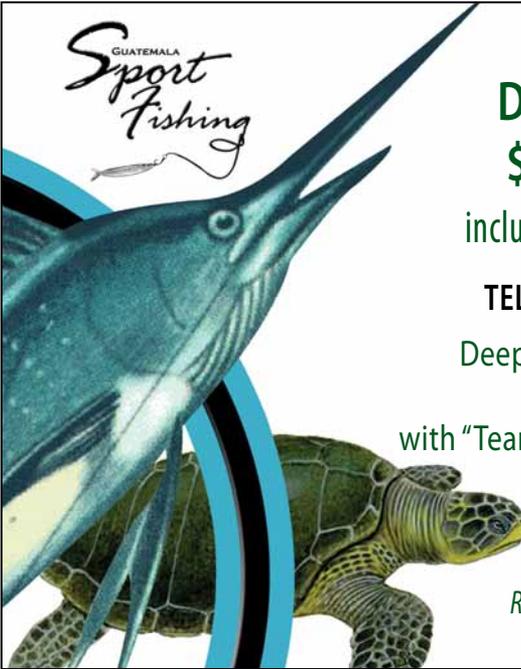
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Panoramic vista of Finca Filadelfia in Antigua Guatemala (RUDY GIRÓN)



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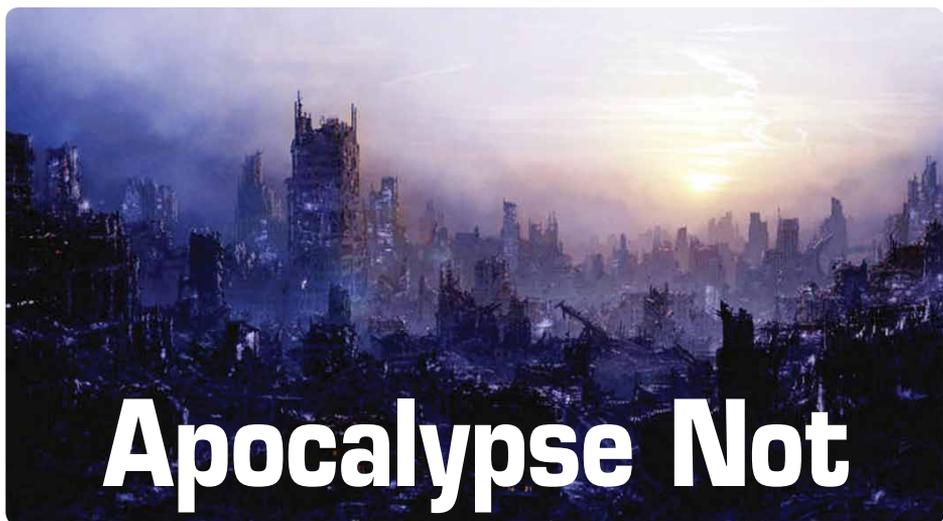
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Apocalypse Not

The 2012 phenomenon

On December 21st, 2012 the ancient Mayan Long Count Calendar will complete a 5,125-year cycle. A New Age interpretation of this transition posits that during this time Earth and its inhabitants may undergo a positive physical or spiritual transformation, and that 2012 may mark the beginning of a new era.

Others suggest that the 2012 date marks the end of the world or a similar catastrophe. Doomsday scenarios include the Earth's collision with a passing planet or black hole, or the arrival of the next solar maximum.

Scholars from various disciplines have dismissed the idea of a catastrophe, stating that predictions of impending doom are not found in any of the existing classic Mayan accounts.

Mainstream Maya and Mayan scholars contend it misrepresents Mayan history to suggest that the Long Count Calendar “ends” in 2012.

The modern Maya, on the whole, have not attached much significance to the date, and the classical sources on the subject are scarce and contradictory, suggesting that there was little, if any, universal agreement among them about what, if anything, the date might mean.

Regardless of which theory any of us may subscribe to, we can be certain that the onset of 2012 will mark a heightened awareness of the ancient Mayan civilization and modern Mayan culture. An air of mystery will continue to build around the Maya, as is already evident in the ever-increasing attention the calendar event is generating worldwide. **R**

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 on the south tip of El Salvador
 BY LENA JOHANNESSEN



Creepy Carp Haunt the Lake

As if the ingress of bully bass to Lake Atitlán were not bad enough (see *Revue* August 2011, *Lake Views*, page 88), another alien may be even more harmful. At least since 2002, carp of the genus *Cyprinus* have been appearing in fishermen's trawling nets. No one knows when they got there, nor what to do about them.

"They have absolutely no natural enemies," says diver Roberto Samayoa, curator of Panajachel's Lacustre Museum. "The bass at least limit themselves through cannibalism. But they don't eat carp."

Bass and carp occupy different zones, with the carp being strictly bottom feeders. And when a bass does encounter a carp small enough to eat, the bass shuns it because of the carp's long dorsal and pectoral spines. These make swallowing a painful, if at all possible, proposition.

As a food fish, the carp is a bust. Unlike the bass, whose skeleton is easily separated from the filet, the carp's skeleton is complex and enmeshed like a network of weed roots in the flesh. That flesh is edible but only marginally palatable. ...cont. on following page

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Carp cont. from page 88

Trawlers have found some uses for them. They can be boiled to make a poor man's *caldo* (soup broth), used for fertilizer, or dried and milled, then added to chicken mash. An unconfirmed report has them being used at Mayan altars.

The carp infesting the lake are not descendants of ornamental koi. They are the wrong shape and tend to be army-greenish.

The carp are prolific breeders that outlive most other fish. And unlike the large-mouthed bass, the carp have small tapering mouths for concentrated, vacuum-like suction on the bottom, where they ingest the shoots of littoral plants, tiny invertebrates and the eggs of crabs and snails. All these factors make them a pest of the first order.

According to Atitlán fishermen, specimens of up to about 90 centimeters have been taken. It is possible that all of them came from one pair of introduced carp or even a single gravid female.

Samayoa is seeking novel ideas for the reduction of the carp population and for their commercial use.

“Whoever did this caused untold harm to the lake and to the economy of the Atitlán Basin,” Samayoa says. “It amounts to sabotage.”

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Unicorn Hunting cont. from page 21

locate them. I had never seen or heard anything like this before. Simply incredible!

A moment later they both glided silently into the green sea beyond and they were gone. Try as we may during the next several hours we never got another glimpse of this rarest of creatures, but the expedition had been a resounding success. Exhausted and elated, we started back down to civilization.

The horned guan is without question one of the rarest and most unusual birds on Earth. Found only in isolated, wind-swept tropical cloud forests in Guatemala and Chiapas, Mexico, the horned guan is the Holy Grail for any serious birder. Compared to the horned guan, the resplendent quetzal is rather common.

A century ago these birds were already very rare and extremely difficult to find. They have suffered greatly from forest destruction and, being a turkey-like bird, from human depredation, many times ending up in a villager's stew pot.

More than any other habitat on Earth, the cloud forests are in urgent need of better protection. And with the idea of contributing to cloud forest conservation we are organizing a new group called Defenders of the Cloud Forest (Defensores de la Nublisilva) whose purpose is to stimulate grass-roots support and participation in the defense of Mother Earth and especially her most unusual, most endangered places. 📍



Guide Josue (left) and author Janson stop for a photo op beside some beautiful waterfalls



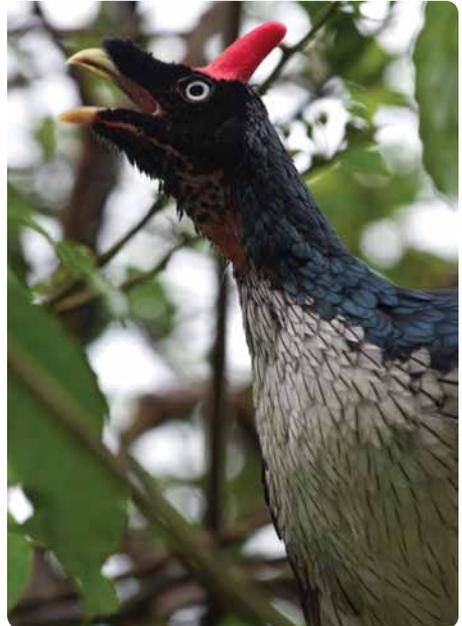
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Spider monkey and the rare horned guan at Los Tarrales photos by Thor Janson www.bushmanollie.com

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Population cont. from page 17

of land into three pieces, the average son now has only 1/9th the extension of land his grandfather had. This fact of life has contributed enormously to the push of people into the Petén with their slash-and-burn techniques, but also created a wave of illegal immigration to the U.S., where an estimated 1.5 million Guatemalans now live.

Yet no Guatemalan government in the past 50 years, since the birth control pill became available, has mounted a full-scale effort to educate the populace about modern contraceptive methods, nor to make them widely available. Had it done so, as did the governments of Malaysia, Singapore, South Korea, Brazil and even Iran, it would not be struggling to avoid becoming a failed state.

And with the continued “machista” culture, widespread poverty, influence of the church, cultural and geographic isolation, any government in the near future is unlikely to undertake the massive public education campaign that is necessary. In fact, in a recent forum of 12 presidential candidates,

not one endorsed family planning. Not one stated the importance of government involvement in educating young people about family planning. Not one wished to make family planning methods widely available and affordable to even the poorest Guatemalans. All this despite the fact that in 2005 Congress passed a law guaranteeing access to scientifically based sex education in schools and the provision of free family planning methods through government-funded clinics and health posts.

Simply put, unless Guatemalans commit to slowing the rapid population growth, the rainforest that Thor Janson and so many others love will vanish within our lifetimes. 

Sue Patterson is the founder of WINGS, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that creates opportunities for Guatemalans to improve their lives by providing them with family planning education and access to reproductive health services. To learn more about WINGS' work in Guatemala, visit www.wingsguate.org or contact WINGS at info@wingsguate.org or at +502 7832-5130.



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The U.S. Navy hospital ship Comfort (photo) recently departed Puerto Quetzal after providing 10 days of medical, dental and veterinary care, engineering support and informational exchanges.

Comfort's crew staffed three medical and two engineering sites in the Puerto San Jose area, with biomedical engineers and doctors visiting Centro Médico Militar hospital in Guatemala City.

...continued on following page



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Hospital Ship cont. from page 96

“Optometry has made a big impact on this mission because we get to see a lot of patients,” said Hospital Corpsman 3rd Class Ricardo Ramirez, whose department saw an average of 150 patients a day and distributed 2,500 pairs of glasses in Guatemala. “We are happy that we are doing something for this community.”

Comfort is deployed as part of Continuing Promise 2011, a five-month humanitarian assistance mission to the Caribbean, Central and South America. While in Guatemala, Continuing Promise personnel triaged 8,110 patients and performed 115 surgeries.

Comfort’s crew also welcomed a number of distinguished visitors, including Guatemalan President Alvaro Colóm, U.S. Ambassador Stephen McFarland, British Ambassador Julie Chappell and Dutch Ambassador Johan Jacob van de Velde. The final stop in the Continuing Promise 2011 mission is earthquake-ravaged Haiti. 

Sometimes I think it should be a rule of war that you have to see somebody up close and get to know him before you can shoot him.
 —Colonel Potter, M*A*S*H

I gave 'em a sword. And they stuck it in, and they twisted it with relish. And I guess if I had been in their position, I'd have done the same thing.
 —Richard M. Nixon

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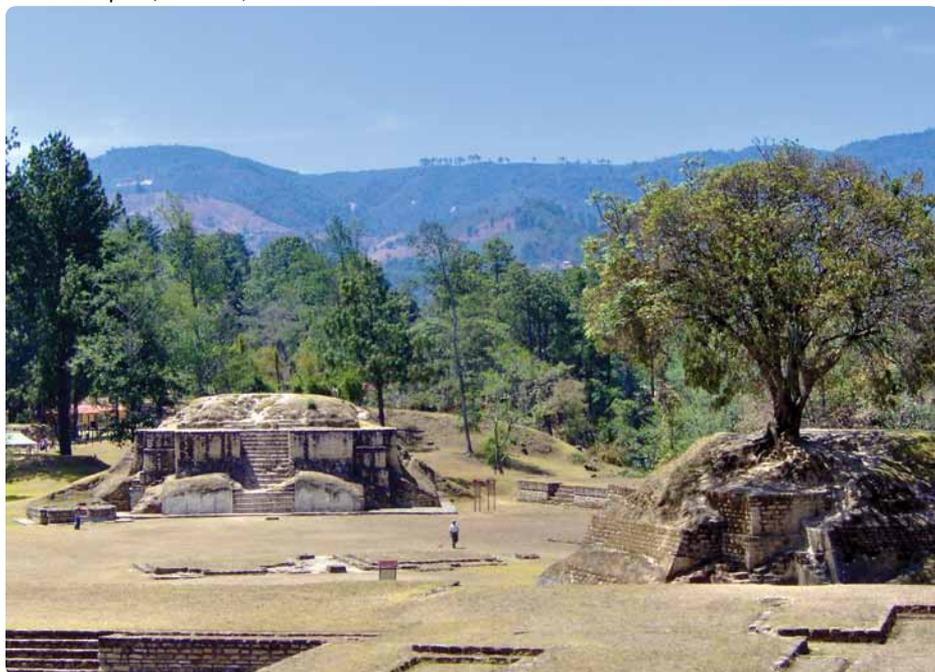
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If you don't get everything you want, think of
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 —Oscar Wilde

Most human beings have an almost infinite
 capacity for taking things for granted.
 —Aldous Huxley

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text/photos by Thor Janson
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RABIN AJAU UPDATE

A Princess is Crowned

Sara Dalila Mux Mux,
Rabin Ajau 2010-2011,
lovingly places her
crown on the new
Daughter of the King,
Rosa Lidia Auaré Castro



Selected from a field of some 80 young Maya women, Rosa Lidia Auaré Castro, from Santa Lucía La Reforma, Totonicapán, is the new *Rabin Ajau* (Daughter of the King) for 2011-2012.

The highlight of the annual National Folkloric Festival in Cobán, the magical pageant was conducted July 30 at the sports stadium field house. In addition to heartfelt presentations by the contestants, the day-long event included special cultural presentations, spectacular pyrotechnic shows and speeches by dignitaries (see feature story in *Revue*, July 2011).

The young women, dressed in traditional ceremonial costumes, were judged on criteria including oratory, knowledge of history and culture, grace, charm, sincerity and in-

telligence. Nearly all the candidates focused their verbal presentations on ecological issues, which often included strong criticism of foreign mining operations.

The panel of judges selected 14 semifinalists and later pared the list to four. The final moment came at 1:30 a.m. when, amid uproarious cheers of unfettered elation, Rosa was declared the winner.

After bursting into tears of joy, Rosa took a few moments to regain composure. A minute later she took on the regal bearing of a true princess as she spoke words of great wisdom to one and all.

Upon receiving her crown, she told the crowd that we must all embrace the “golden rule” and come together in the spirit of love and unity. 

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We cannot direct the wind but we can adjust the sails. —Henri Frédéric

The world is full of cactus, but we don't have to sit on it. —Will Foley

Some days there won't be a song in your heart. Sing anyway. —Emory Austin

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The winner is announced and the joyful new Rabin Ajau, Rosa Lidia Auaré Castro receives a congratulatory hug from another contestant. (THOR JANSON)

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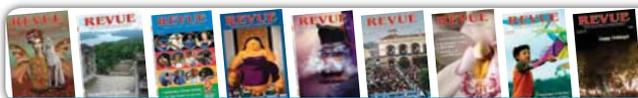
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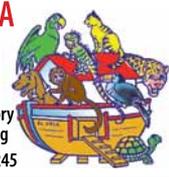
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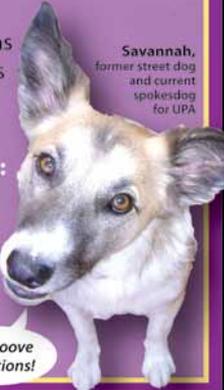
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—Henry Ford

Property Conversion Chart

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1 Caballería = 64 manzanas	1 Manzana = 6,988 mt ²
1 Hectare = 10,000 mt ²	1 Manzana = 1.7 acres
1 Hectare = 2.471 acres	1 mt ² = 10.764 ft ²
1 Hectare = 1.43 manzanas	1 mt ² = 1.431 vr ²
1 Acre = 43,560 ft ²	1 Vara = 32.9 inches
1 Acre = .4047 hectare	1 Yard = 36 inches (3ft)
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Note: the precise size of a vara depends on which source you use!





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—Robert Brault

As I grow older I pay less attention to what men say. I just watch what they do.
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A Museum for Kids

El Museo de los Niños, Zone 13, Guatemala City

If the motto of most museums seems to be: “Look but don’t touch,” el Museo de los Niños in Guatemala City is the other extreme.

Located in Zone 13, the center opened in February 2000 and has since welcomed more than 1.5 million schoolchildren from all over Guatemala. Through an assortment of dynamic games and interactive puzzles, the museum teaches kids a variety of academic subjects while informing them about their country’s culture and how to be a good citizen.

Want to teach a 4-year-old about the fragility of the Earth’s ozone layer or the importance of collecting rain water? El Museo de los Niños has all the answers and takes you on a journey through space, the human body and a coffee plantation to find them.

From a life-size version of the popular board game Operation, to a giant aerial photo of the city where children race to see who can locate famous monuments first, everything is educational and designed to make learning fun. Even the outside climb-



(EMMY POWELL)



(EMMY POWELL)

ing wall depicts several of the country's volcanoes so that as children climb the rope they "ascend" Pacaya, Fuego and Acatenango and discover which has the highest peak.

The enthusiastic guides believe that if you can teach core values and environmental responsibilities at an early age, you will secure a better future for Guatemala. Eco-friendly messages are reinforced throughout, with paper-making activities and material-separating stations to show that recycling can be fun.

Among recent visitors were more than 100 children from Niños de Guatemala, an NGO which provides access to education for the poorest children of Ciudad Vieja.

"I was completely blown away," said Emmy Powell, volunteer coordinator with NDG who accompanied the children. "The building itself is bright and welcoming. The staffers are knowledgeable, enthusiastic and well-organized. The topics covered by the museum's

activities are interesting and diverse. Our kids had an absolute blast while learning!"

As well as containing more than 45 exhibits for children aged 8 months to 12 years, el Museo de los Niños also boasts a ball pit, a mini-football pitch and a theater, which is available to rent for birthday parties and family reunions.

They keep technology to a minimum—demonstrating that children don't just learn through computers but also by using their imagination, exploring and interacting with objects around them.

"Chiquitenango," the museum's very own micro city, gives children the opportunity to "drive" around its streets, navigate traffic lights and greet pretend firefighters, gas station workers and pedestrians playing in the park. It really opens their eyes to the world around them and teaches them to respect others and abide by the highway code.

The museum collaborates with businesses and institutions to raise money so that orphans and children from public schools and NGOs can visit free of charge rather than pay the usual price of Q35 per person.

Open from 8:30 a.m.-noon and 1-4 p.m. Tuesday through Friday, and 9:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. and 2:30-6 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday, el Museo de los Niños is a giant game for children of any age that proves learning is fun.

Since the museum is near the zoo, why not make a day of it and visit both attractions? Just don't forget to bring your inner child—as well as your real ones, too. 

(JOHANNES BLUDENSTEIN)



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—Jonathan Swift

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from you that counts. It's what you do with
what you have left. —Hubert Humphrey



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Loud, proud bass drumbeats in school parades; sad, slow beats of mourning in funeral processions; rapid, staccato snare drum ruffles accompanying glockenspiel chimes: Drums are part of human culture worldwide, but Guatemalan drumbeating is especially vigorous, more than ever in this month of patriotic celebrations.

Archaeologists have uncovered many pieces of unadorned drums in digs into the oldest of Mayan lower-class housing sites. More elegantly decorated drums are depicted on many pre-Classic Maya pots and murals. Simple *tambor* beats continue millennia later in traditional Mayan ceremonies. Drumming is within our souls, the infant beating with his spoon, the executive drumming fingers on the desk at boring meetings. However, those beats in the school parades are drums you really *feel*, waves of sound from dozens of big bass drums marching

down the town's narrow streets and echoing off the stucco walls.

Most schools throughout the country have drum-and-bugle corps—well, really they're drum-and-glockenspiel marchers, maybe with one or two wind instruments. The metallic notes from vigorous student glockenspiel players are a steel version of the wooden tones from the country's traditional marimbas. Watch the school troops practice along the streets, then watch them march proudly in independence celebrations. The shortest, smallest glockenspiel player-pounder seems to get the loudest sound out, though never enough to overpower the rows of enthusiastic snare drummers and bass beaters.

Enjoy the sound—and the *feel*—of all the drums of Guatemala, through schoolhouse windows in practice sessions, sweeping past you in parades, thumping in village ceremonies. Every day is drum time around here. 🇬🇲

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