



Manzanillo SUN

August 2017

coastal Mexico's lifestyle magazine

Pool party!
Twelve-year-old Fátima leaps into the pool
by Dane Russo



- Good Deeds
- Nature's Wonders
- Finance
- Mighty Nature
- Culture
- Manzanillo Living
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To send submissions for possible inclusion in the magazine, please send to the editor by 15th of each month. We are always looking for writers or ideas on what you would like us to see as topics for the magazine.

Article submissions:

- Preferred subjects are Manzanillo and Mexico
- All articles should be 1000 words or less or may be serialized or 500-750 words if accompanied by photos
- Pictures are welcome
- Comments, letters to the editor, articles, photos and advertisements are always welcome

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Summer Fun for Kids at Vida del Mar

story by John Chalmers, photos by Dane Russo



Determination shows on the faces of Kevin, 8, and Manuel, 9, as they prepare to jump in the pool.
(Dane Russo photo)

The Vida del Mar condo development near Manzanillo, right on the Pacific coast and four kilometers on a winding road from the town of El Naranjo, is busiest during the “high season” winter months from November to April. That’s when owners and renters from the United States, Canada and Mexico make the most use of the 199 condos in 13 buildings on 26 acres of beautifully landscaped property.

However, during the summer months, when the snowbirds are back at home, a special activity brings children from Casa Hogar Los Angelitos (CHLA) to a social event at the L’Recif pool, the largest of three pools at Vida del Mar. (L’Recif is short for *el arrecife*, Spanish for “the reef” which is near the shore at Vida del Mar.)

Started by Marge Tyler a dozen years ago, the annual pool party provides children from seven to 18 years old with the opportunity to enjoy the pool and facilities of L’Recif for an

opportunity to swim, socialize and enjoy the spectacular view of the Pacific Ocean, something not seen from their home at the CHLA facility in Salagua. This year’s party was held on July 1.

Support from management and staff at Vida del Mar makes possible the special activity always enjoyed by the kids who come to visit. Volunteers from Vida del Mar and the local area contributed to the success of the occasion. Turning 30 lively youngsters loose in the pool didn’t mean chaos! Elena Venegas, of Public Relations at CHLA was in charge of the rules: no running, no pushing, no holding someone under water, and no food or drink near the pool -- the usual regulations for good pool behavior!

But rules don’t mean a lack of enjoyment. The pool party, held from 11 am until 2 pm provided for a good time with fun and food, as lunch is provided for the young visitors. Marge

...Summer Fun for Kids at Vida del Mar

Tyler was joined by a team to help with financing and supervision, including Fred and Laurie Taylor, Nancy Bogue, Lauren Russo and her father, Dane Russo, who served as official photographer. His excellent photo on the cover of this issue of the *Manzanillo Sun* shows 12-year old Fátima leaping into the pool. Additional support came from some of the "moms" from CHLA. Pool toys such as an inflatable *delfín* were shared by the children.



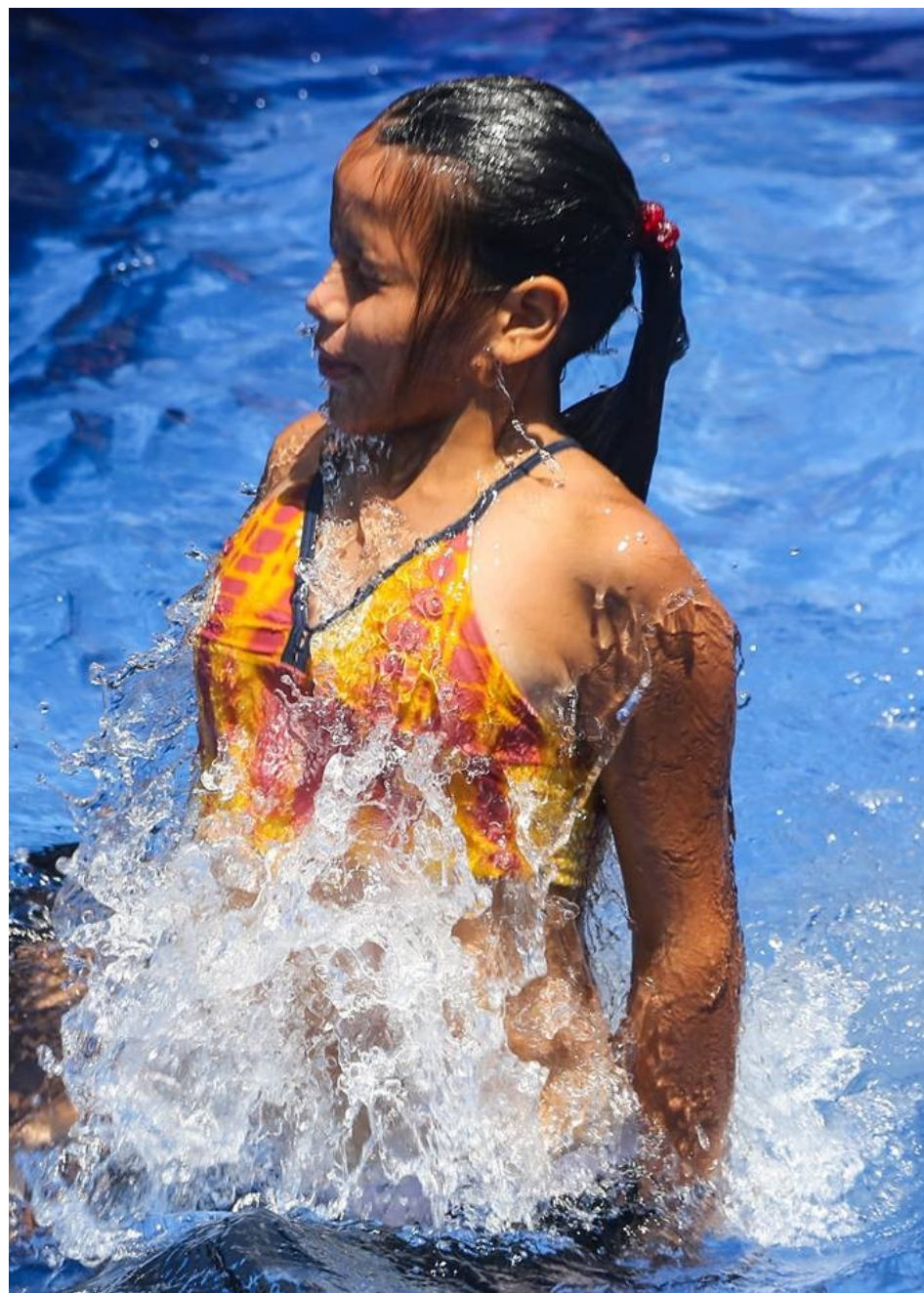
A *delfín* appears to leap out of the pool to meet Viridiana, 13, at right! (Dane Russo photo)

And the kids were well fed! César, the genial proprietor of Fratello's Pizza in Santiago provided pizza at two-for-one pricing and donated the *refrescos* at no charge. The pizza was accompanied by a fine salad provided by Nancy Bogue. A healthy dessert of fruit and yogurt followed, and there was enough pizza left over to take back for sharing with other children at Casa Hogar.



Shown at a pizza night for Vida del Mar folks during the high season, César was the "official supplier" of pizza from Fratello's for the pool party. (John Chalmers photo)

Fratello's, just off Boulevard de la Madrid near the Saturday market site, is popular with Vida del Mar regulars during the high season, when they come on Tuesdays to enjoy cold *cerveza* and two-for-one pizza nights at tables set up on the street.



El sol and *el agua* are perfect combination for 11-year old Lucero to enjoy *la piscina*. (Dane Russo photo)

During the high season, when Vida del Mar is well populated, owners and renters have been very supportive of fundraising activities such as the annual performance by dancers from Casa Hogar, the dinner and auction night of the Santiago Foundation, a rummage sale and a local ballet folklórico evening. However, by the end of April, most seasonal dwellers have departed.

"When all the Americans and Canadians go home, the activity level drops with few volunteers," said Marge Tyler, who lives in the area year round. "I was thinking of fun things to do with the kids in an opportunity they don't otherwise have, so I

...Summer Fun for Kids at Vida del Mar

started the pool party. With the help of a few others who stay here, it has been a real success. It provides an opportunity to see a beautiful area in México and the children are stunned by the view. The L'Recif pool is very conducive to a having a pool party and there is a covered area where the kids can eat."



The L'Recif pool with its great view of the ocean provided a perfect setting for Manuel, Santiago, Christian, Daniel and Keiven to enjoy the day. (Dane Russo photo)

As Casa Hogar Los Angelitos is a non-profit civil association under Mexican law, it is not officially supported by any religious or government organization. Its major funding comes from individuals, businesses and service clubs. The Children's Foundation based in Loveland, Colorado is the organization that raises funds and awareness for Casa Hogar. It is home for 80+ children as young as infants in a family-like setting. There they have emotional, mental and medical care; education; English classes and a very dynamic program of performing arts.

While financing is vital to maintaining operations of CHLA, the pool party for the appreciative youngsters is a pleasant departure from formal fund-raising activities. It is an opportunity for owners to let the children enjoy Vida del Mar -- and a chance for kids just to be kids!



Pizza, salad, dessert and drinks provided a fine lunch for the children. (Dane Russo photo)



Refrescos were part of the treat for Lupita, 8, in a party at the pool. (Dane Russo photo)

For more information, see: <https://tcfcare.org>. For information on how you can help with future pool parties, contact Marge Tyler at: maggiet19@earthlink.net.

More pictures follow...

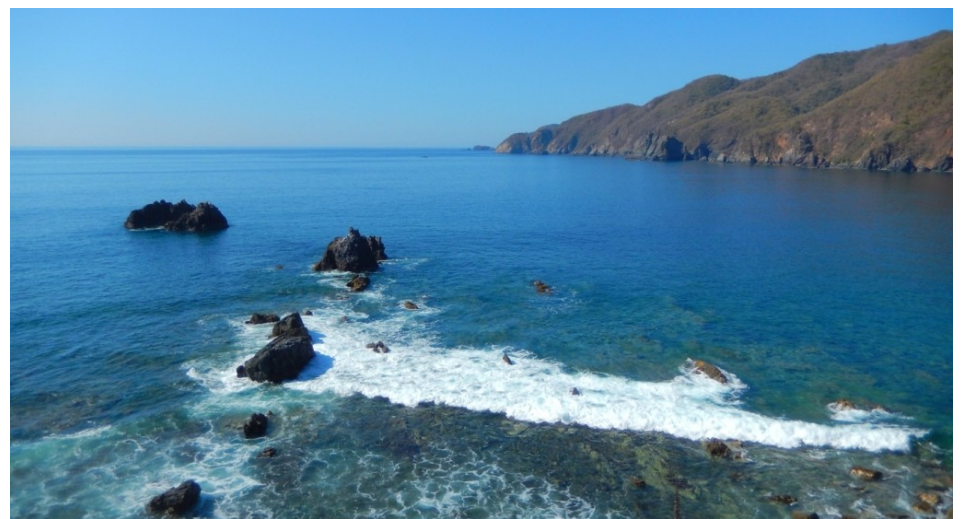
...Summer Fun for Kids at Vida del Mar



Lunch under the big *palapa* at L'Recif pool made good use of the facility.
(Dane Russo photo)



Luz, 18, rides *el delfin* while friends hold it steady.
(Dane Russo photo)



The pool location provides a great view of the ocean,
adding to the charm of its location.
(John Chalmers photo)



The pizza line for lunch was a special treat for active youngsters .
Volunteers left to right are Fred Taylor, Lauren Russo, Marge Tyler, Nancy Bogue, Elena Venegas and Laurie Taylor.
(Dane Russo photo)

...Summer Fun for Kids at Vida del Mar



The panorama view from the pool is enjoyed by condo owners at Vida del Mar and by visitors alike, when passing ships from the Manzanillo port are seen regularly.
(John Chalmers photo)



Seven-year old Antonio obviously enjoys the water in the Vida del Mar pool.
(Dane Russo photo)



The smile on 15-year old Brenda's face is a reflection of her enjoyment in the pool.
(Dane Russo photo)



Bianca, 9; Fatima, 12, Lucero, 11; and Estrella, 10 hold their noses as they prepare to dunk themselves in the pool.
(Dane Russo photo)

...Summer Fun for Kids at Vida del Mar



A flotation device helps 10-year old Daniela enjoy the water.
(Dane Russo photo)



Manuel, 9, and Christian, 8, try to board the inflatable *delfin* for a ride.
(Dane Russo photo)

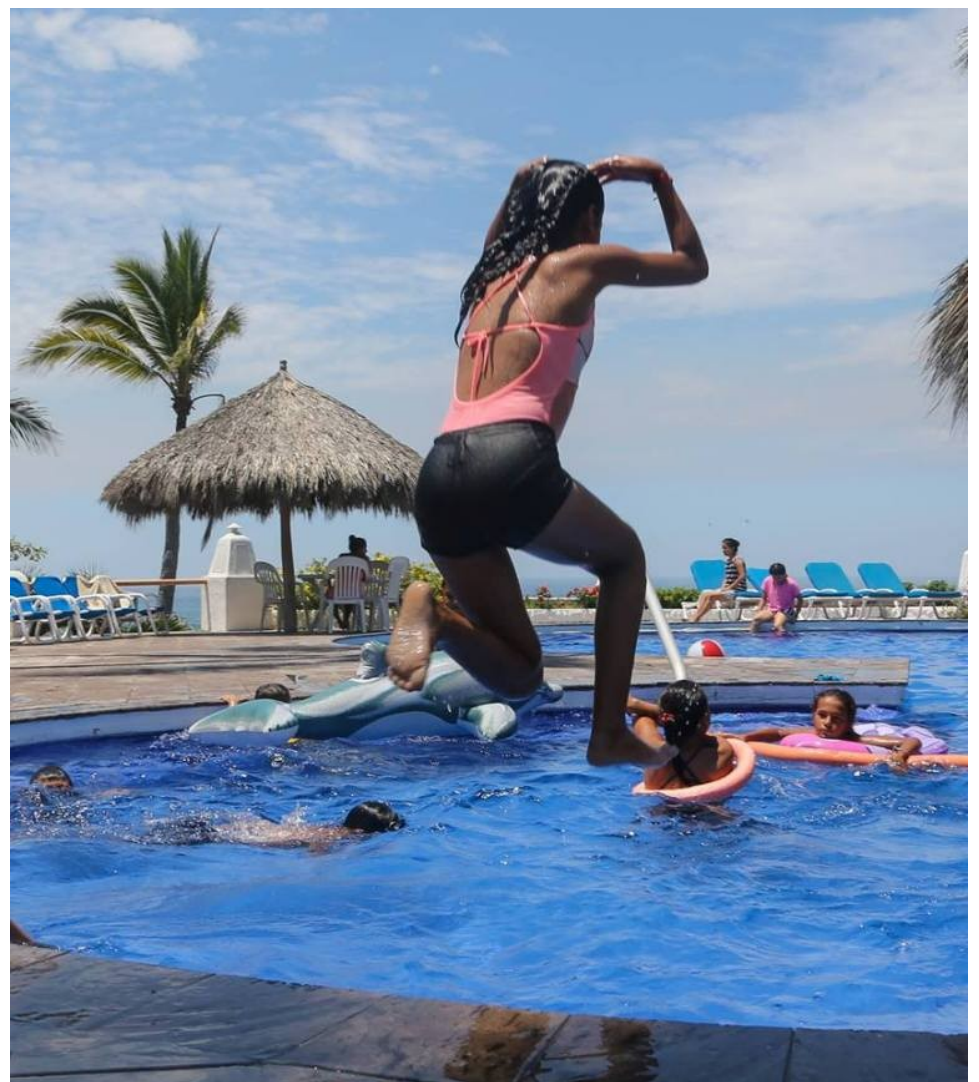
...Summer Fun for Kids at Vida del Mar



For 12-year old Joanna, floating in the pool was pure joy.
(Dane Russo photo)



A refresco at lunch was part of the treat for 11-year old Estrella.
(Dane Russo photo)



Twelve-year old Fatima leaps into the pool!
(Dane Russo photo)

...Summer Fun for Kids at Vida del Mar



The beautiful L'Recif pool at Vida del Mar is among the many charms of the development with its terraces and *las palapas* often the site for social events, and the water came alive when 30 children from Casa Hogar enjoyed the party there.
(John Chalmers photo)

The clifftop L'Recif pool with its big terrace and *palapa* structures provides a great venue for a pool party with a superb view of the ocean and passing ships.
(John Chalmers photo)



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Author note: John Chalmers, a resident of Edmonton, Alberta, escapes the Canadian winter by spending it at Vida del Mar with his wife, Linda.



by Tommy Clarkson

Umbrella Palm *Cyperus involucratus*

Family: *Cyperaceae*

Also known as: Umbrella Plant, Umbrella Sedge, Umbrella Papyrus, African Sedge, Dwarf Papyrus Grass, False Papyrus, Flat Sedge, Umbrella Flatsedge, Windmill Sedge or Galingale

Of the some 600 herbaceous, sedge species that comprise the *Cyperus* family, two are rather commonly known. The first is the *Cyperus papyrus* (from whence came the original parchment "paper" and out of which the tiny boat was made in which the infant Moses was purportedly placed and set adrift on the Nile). The second, with a bit less of a dramatic history, is the Umbrella Palm or, as many call it, the Umbrella Plant.

But, there is some (to coin a word) "muddlement" as this widely cultivated *Cyperus involucratus*, from Madagascar (Malagasy Republic), is often confused with and misidentified as the tropical *Cyperus alternifolius*. Yet others know it as the Dwarf Papyrus (*Cyperus alternifolius* 'Gracilis') while other botanical writers also call the Umbrella Plant (not palm) or the Drain Flat-Sedge (*Cyperus eragrostis*). (I get so confused!)

"Wait a minute. Slow down and back up, Tommy. Besides all of those "look-like" and "confused-with" plants, you just sort of slipped over that one thing. Just what exactly is a Sedge as mentioned in that first line?"

Well, I'm glad you asked because that's a bit simpler to answer! A sedge is "a grass-like plant distinguished from grass by having no joints in the stems, growing in clumps or tufts in marshes and swamps." The Umbrella Palm - not at all a palm - is certainly that! A sedge appreciates all manner of wet locales (beyond the two just mentioned) such as creeks, drainage channels, ditches and, simply, all kinds of wetlands!



One can see how its name, Umbrella Palm, came about.

For readily obvious reasons, the Umbrella Palm is appreciated for its attractive, umbrella-like foliage. These "umbrella frames" grow atop, anywhere from eight to twenty-five, triangular, leafless stems with - as W. Arthur Whistler so aptly describes in his book *Tropical Ornamentals* - "terminal, tightly spiraled, leaf-like bracts, and dense inflorescences of brown spikelets."

The true leaves are actually the long sheaths that cover the bases of the stems. However, the very large leafy inflorescences are actually bracts that are clustered below the seed-heads and are, by many, confused for leaves. The rigid, hairless, upright stems of .12 to .20 of an inch (3 - 5 mm) thick are triangular to almost cylindrical in cross-section.

Rising from woody rhizomes, the Umbrella Palm can grow up to six and a half feet (1.83 - 1.98 meters) tall. The inflorescence has a tight flat spiral of eight to twenty-five leaf-like rays of ten to twenty-four inches (25.40-80.96 cm) by one-quarter to three-quarters (.64 - 1.91 cm). It has six to thirty, year-round flower-

...Umbrella Palm

ing, spikelets - *isn't that as fun word?* - 1/8 to 3/8 inch (.32 - .95 cm) long displayed in large branching corymbs (short, flat-topped inflorescences) four to twelve inches (10.16 - 30.48 cm) across. The three-sided, *achenes* (that's Greek for seeds or nuts) are yellowish or brown and a bit oval-shaped. They are about .04" (1 mm) long and have a beaked apex (projection at the tip) of about (1 mm) long.

If the preceding paragraph is as confusing to you as it is to me, I think it's probably best if you simply look at the accompanying pictures!



This is the picture at which I suggested you look!

As might be expected, like its kin, the *Cyperus involucratus* prefers fertile, wet soil with lots of sunshine. If it's not growing directly in water, or very close to it on a bank, regularly water it - amply - so as to ensure its roots have a consistent amount to drink. Keep the soil mulched, working new material in as the old decomposes. It will also be most appreciative of spring, summer and fall fertilization of a general, all-purpose sort.

The Umbrella Palm clumps will slowly spread but will benefit from occasionally being cut back to ground level. Cut out dead stalks and, should you choose to do so, you can divide them in the spring with the emergence of new shoots.

But watch out. If allowed to "escape", it can become a nuisance.

Remember the array of wetlands in which they can easily proliferate? In numerous locales it's now considered an invasive plant!

Some folks like to plant these beneath large banana trees. Ours, here in *Ola Brisa Gardens*, are planted in the same bed with *Cyperus papyrus*, *Cyperus alternifolius* 'Gracilis' and a small cluster of Lipstick Palm (*Cyrtostachys renda*) that just can't quite decide whether it wishes to be there or not!



Quite attractive actually!

In simple synopsis, this might be nice for your garden!

Get your copy of *The Civilized Jungle: Tropical Plants Facts and Fun From Ola Brisa Gardens (Volume 1)* Paperback – December 2, 2016 on [Amazon!](https://www.amazon.com)

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you can reach Tommy Clarkson at tommy@manzanillosun.com

How to Find a Financial Advisor Who (Really) Meets Your Needs

by Yann Kostic and Tom Zachystal

Many, if not most, investors do not have the expertise to make all their own investment decisions, and therefore would want to consider talking to a reliable financial advisor. While nothing can guarantee a financial advisor's reliability, there are some things you can look for.

You can always

Investigate your advisor's background. While the website of the Financial Industry Regulatory Agency, www.finra.org, will tell you which states many advisors are registered in, along with exams passed, licenses held and employment history, not all information is accurate or up to date. Use this tool to verify whether an advisor is registered. You can also check the Security and Exchange Commission website: www.sec.gov/reportspubs/investor-publications/investor-brokershtm.html.

Try to evaluate the advisor's track record. While different clients will have different investment goals, you can ask how the advisor's other clients performed relative to their benchmarks. It is somewhat useful but remember that, in financial markets, history cannot be used to predict the future.

Learn how the advisor makes decisions. While performance is important, the decision-making process is even more so. Basically, you are looking for someone (or a team) who is consistent.

Understand how the advisor is paid. Different advisers are paid differently. Brokers receive a commission on the transaction: i.e. the securities they buy or sell, while advisers usually charge fees, either flat, hourly or based on a percentage of assets under management. Be sure you understand and are comfortable with the fee structure.

Understand fiduciary responsibility vs. suitability. All advisors are required to sell you "suitable" products, but advisors who also take an oath of fiduciary responsibility are legally bound to act in your best interest. Be sure you are comfortable with your choice. This is definitely the most important part. If you come out with only one point, make sure it is that your advisor has a fiduciary duty.

Make sure your advisor really understands your international situation. If you are an expat, or live across several countries, make sure your advisor specializes in this type of situation, which is inherently more complex. This point might be the second most important one but, alone, might save you a ton of money (hundreds, possibly thousands) in currency conversion alone.

Get it in writing. Ask for a formal written description of the services the advisor will provide for you and the fees you will pay.

Note: This material has been prepared for informational purposes only, and is not intended to provide financial advice for your particular situation.

Yann Kostic, MBA and Tom Zachystal, CFP, are Presidents of their respective Assets Management firms, both US-Registered Investment Advisors (RIA). Tom is the San Francisco Financial Planners' Association President. Tom and Yann cater to US expats in Mexico and worldwide. Comments, questions or to request his newsletter, "News you can use" contact him at yannk@atlantisgrp.com, in the US at (321) 574-1521 or in Mexico, (376) 106-1613.



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by Tommy Clarkson

Window Leaf *Monstera deliciosa*

Family: *Araceae*

Also known as: Swiss Cheese Plant, Split Leaf Philodendron, Mexican Bread Fruit, Hurricane Plant or Five Holes Plant

The genus *Monstera* was once glumped (a highly technical term I am sure) within the *Philodendron* species. They had not their own identity. (It was a tragically sad situation. But they picketed, demonstrated and conducted non-violent sit-ins in which they "planted" themselves in public venues singing songs like "Where have all the flowers gone?". In calling attention to their pathetic plight of non-recognition as a separate group, they ultimately prevailed! (Are you believing this?)

However, the change really did happen. *Monstera* plants are now recognized as a separate genus. On a petiole of similar length, with leathery, heart-shaped leaves ranging from twenty to forty-eight inches (50.80 - 121.92 cm), the highly attractive *Monstera deliciosa* may be the best known of this group. (Delicious monster, what a great name!) It's sometimes confused with the equally unique, smaller-leaved, *Monstera obliqua* whose leaves are between five and six inches (12.70 - 15.24 cm) long but get significantly larger on mature plants that are encouraged to climb. It is often called Swiss Cheese Vine or Swiss Cheese Plant - which some call this species! (Confusing, ain't it?)

So dissimilar in appearance from many other plants, visitors often inquire as to the function of their leaf holes. I've read, but cannot absolutely attest to it as being correct, that some botanists believe that these holes help the plant to stand up to high winds. Yet others assert that the holes function is to allow sunlight to pass through to its lower parts. While even others adamantly believe leaves cut like these better resist damage from drenching tropical downpours.



On petioles of similar length are its attractive, leathery, hole and slot-ridden, heart-shaped leaves ranging from twenty to forty-eight inches.

Young *Monstera deliciosa* will not have the distinctive leaf shapes that a more mature specimen develops. As a result, many confuse it with one species or another of the *Philodendron* genus. (For those who seek the more difficult to find, try to acquire the slower-growing, variegated cultivar called *M. deliciosa* variegate.)

While preferring the climbing mode, the Window Leaf also does well in a large pot with ample space around it. If situated in a place it likes, with room to go and grow, it can reach heights up to sixty-five feet (18.29 meters). Regardless of its location, it requires humidity, rich organic soil and indirect sun or partial shade - but it doesn't care for direct sunlight. It needs a lightly moist soil but, like the dauntless doughboys enmeshed in long periods of muck-mired, trench warfare of WWI in

...Window Leaf

Europe, sustained "wet feet" can cause major health problems!

Being a part of the Arum family, its flowers are - well - rather unremarkable. But there are two intriguing factoids in this regard: First, the fruits produced by your Window Leaf (which, by the way, is rare indoors) can be eaten once ripe - but make sure they are, as unripe fruits are not good for you. Their taste is purported to be a rather delectable, a cross between banana and pineapple mixed with tiny hints of other tropical fruits. (Sorry *Euell Gibbons* - *there's no taste of wild hickory nuts!*) Secondly, this species will produce a large flower guaranteed to elicit comments and conversation - though it's not all that attractive.



Often there is a beautiful symmetry to the holes in its large leaves.

Feeding is essential, be it monster or otherwise. So if you seek lush green growth, apply normal fertilizer, at the standard strength, no more than once a month during the periods of its active growth.

Trivia Time: Accordingly to the *Naturalist.org*, "The French Guiana Palikur mix the crushed leaves in rum, alone or combined with the crushed leaves of *Psidium guajava*, and make a plaster which produces a cicatrising action in treating leishmaniasis". (When I read that I thought, "Now if I only understood it, that might be interesting. So to my books I went!")

From them I learned that the "Palikur" are the indigenous peo-

ple who live along the rivers in the state of Amapá in French Guiana. (One down.) "*Psidium guajava*" is a tropical American, spreading-branched, tree, over thirty feet (9.14 meters) tall, that's easily recognizable by its thin, smooth, copper-colored bark which flakes off, displaying a greenish layer beneath.



It's sometime confused with the smaller-leaved, *Monstera obliqua* whose leaves are between five and six inches long.

(That's two.) "Cicatrising" means to "become healed by the formation of scar tissue". (Now, three complete.) And, as described by the *U.S. National Library of Medicine* - found in eighty-eight countries, "*leishmaniasis*" is "a parasitic disease spread by the bite of infected sand flies". (Bingo - Four for four!)

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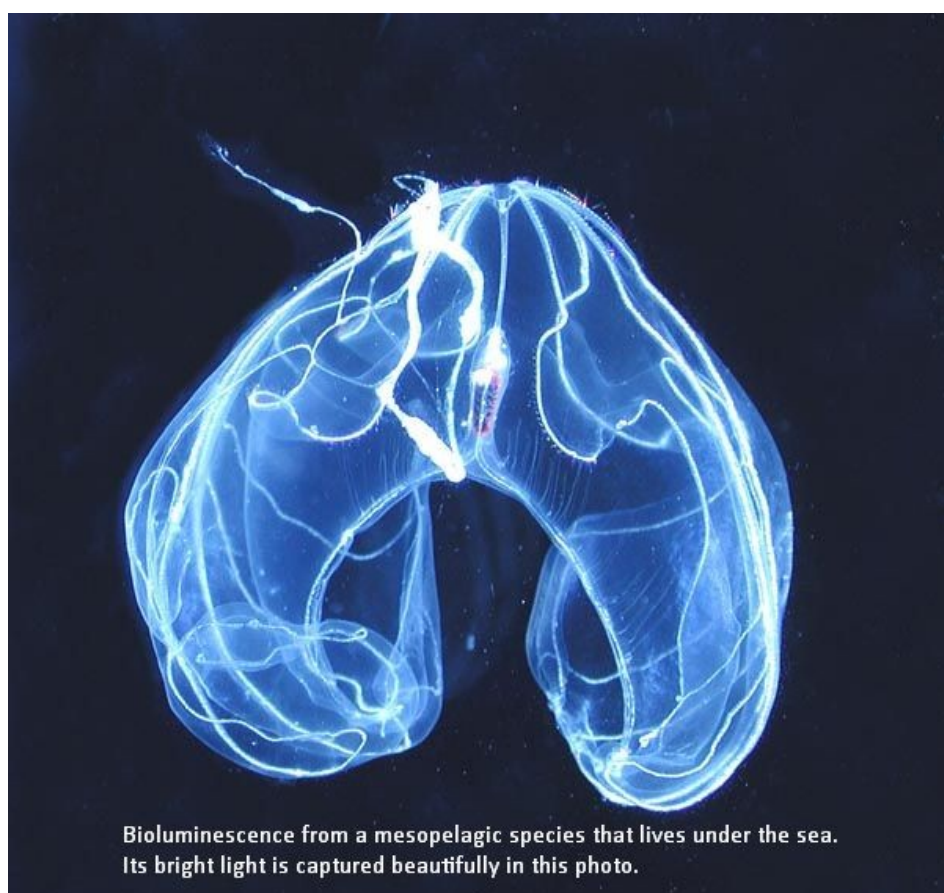
Bioluminescence

by Terry Sovil

What? Bioluminescence. I get confused thinking about it and think about "fluorescence" or "phosphorescence" or "luminous". Bioluminescence is the production, and emission of, light by a living organism. While I think of it mostly in terms of marine life, there are terrestrial invertebrates that can create light. Think of fireflies but also some fungi, bacteria, etc.

Many people have a "luminous" watch and sometimes luminous paint. This is really a phosphorescence similar to fluorescence: the process by which energy-saving lights produce light. In this case, it takes time to "charge" the paint and it will glow for a while in the dark. But it will eventually fade, since paint is not an organism and can't produce its own light. Bioluminescent organisms can glow in complete darkness!

Fluorescent materials will produce light instantly. Atoms inside them absorb energy and become "excited." When the atoms return to normal, in as little as a hundred thousandth of a second, they give out the energy that excited them as tiny particles of light called photons. Invisible ink is a fluorescent chemical. Turning a UV light on causes the atoms to become excited and they show light. Turn off the UV light and they go dark.



The U.S. Navy sought help from the science community to help develop products that can monitor bioluminescence. It seems

that having algae that glows when disturbed may endanger a military mission.

Bioluminescence is a fascinating spectacle. Fireflies, glow worms and deep sea animals can emit light that they produce. But also many plants, such as algae, can too. It is a light coming from a living organism. It is produced from a chemical reaction, just like a chemical glow stick that you snap to activate, which is what sets it apart from phosphorescence or fluorescence. It is found in bacteria, algae, jellyfish, worms, crustaceans, sea stars and fish.

There are two chemicals that must be present for an organism to luminesce, or glow. Luciferin and Luciferase. Luciferin produces the light and luciferase is the catalyst. In the sea, a chemical called coelenterazine is a type of luciferin and that combines the luciferase to create the light.

Sailors see the waves glowing in a ship's wake. Everyone can see the lights from waves washing up on the beach. These are dinoflagellates, a single-celled algae, which glows when it is startled.

Anglerfish use a long appendage that can be lit to attract prey. They may stun the prey or perhaps attract a mate. Sometimes, it is a defensive action to startle predators. Sperm whales, the deepest diver of all whales, depend on bioluminescence to locate food. The pulsing light of creatures deep in the ocean is perhaps the most common form of communication.

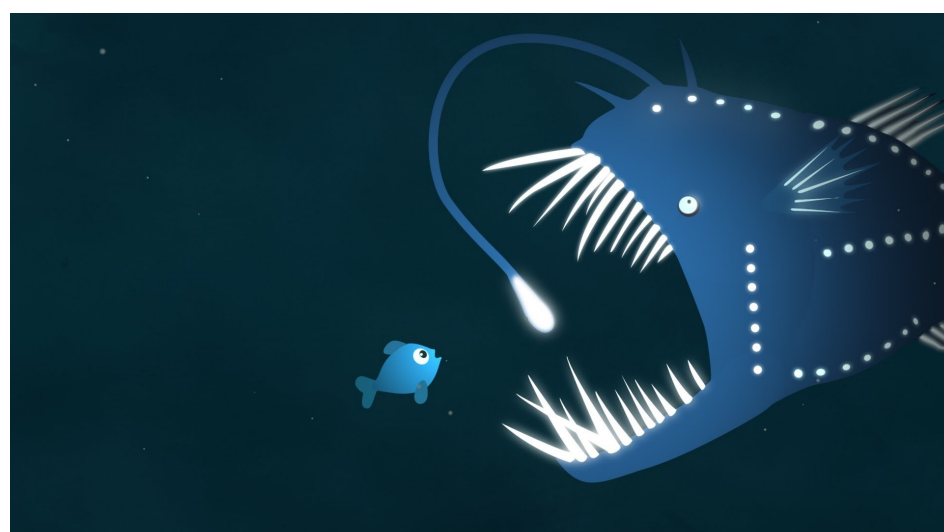


Illustration of an angler fish, live very deep, using their light to fish.

For some deep sea creatures, bioluminescence allows them to produce a red light that others cannot see. They can see their prey without making their presence known. Marine creatures

...Bioluminescence

produce light with a special organ called a photophore. This is where the two chemicals are “blended” to produce the light. Some creatures have the ability to charge and then exhale or expel many small particles. This will distract and confuse a potential predator.



Bioluminescence as the waves wash up on shore .

So, can I see it here, in Manzanillo? You may recall that our own Las Hadas, which translates to “The Fairies”, got its name from the bioluminescent plankton prevalent in the ocean that would glow and light up the water due to the wave action.

There are some areas where the bioluminescence is always there. A group in Florida offers night kayak tours. You can find them in Orlando at bkadventure.com. See one of their photos in the article.

Mexico does have some beaches that are known to pretty consistently produce bioluminescent glow for people to watch.

These are:

- Holbox, Quintana Roo
- Xpicob, Campeche
- Laguna de Manialtepec, Oaxaca
- Parque Nacional Lagunas de Chacahua, Oaxaca

Of course the glow is only visible at night. We have been diving at night at Club de Yates in Salagua on the peninsula and seen the bioluminescence from divers moving through the water. It is mesmerizing and can often get more attention than the critters swimming around. Each fin kick creates a glow of light that is incredible to witness. It is nearly impossible to photograph because it’s dark and a strobe is required to compensate. A quality camera can capture it from the surface.



A place in FL that regular kayak trips out into the bioluminescent waters.

You may sometimes observe a bright blue flash when snorkeling, scuba diving or swimming with goggles during the day. This isn’t a form of bioluminescence. It is a small copepod that flashes when it turns just right to reflect the sun. I’ve had divers out where we saw them everywhere as we all made entries and then grouped up for a descent.

National Geographic created a special “starlight camera” and for the first time ever was able to video the beauty of the creatures and people and bioluminescence.

<http://channel.nationalgeographic.com/videos/bioluminescence-on-camera/>

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The Ballet Folklórico Los Angelitos dancers are going to Canada!

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Maintenance

by Kirby Vickery

I am not enthralled with the installation and maintenance efforts of some groups of people that do that sort of thing here in Manzanillo. I understand that Mexico has standards for the building, utilities installation and maintenance. The problem I've run across is that the workmanship of individual workmen sometimes doesn't meet those standards. So, when I get into something and play "Do-It-Yourself" (DIY) Home Improvement Guru [HIG] mode, either in my own place or for a friend, I sometimes end up crying with what I find.

When I lived out on the Santiago Peninsula, I discovered one kitchen had a gas stove with an extra gas regulator installed in-line from the source. Apparently, whoever installed it wasn't aware that the gas company had already installed one closer to that source and didn't bother to check the operation after they completed theirs.

This was the reason that family did most of their cooking by electricity because you couldn't turn on any burner higher than 'barely' and it took forever to boil water. On the electrical side, they had to turn off the refrigerator any time they wanted to cook because all the outlets in that kitchen were wired through one 15Amp breaker. Someone called it "Reset Heaven." Since then, while helping out in different areas, I have found completely different sets of problems.

Here, I have discovered a new theory for up-keep. We can call it Accomplish by Rule of Convenience. 'ARC' for short. (I was going to call it 'AROC' until I discovered that acronym is really over used and I don't have to help it along.)

First of all, our condo, among others, sits four and five floors off the ocean, on the beach. It is concrete and there is something to be said for its stability and strength, although we do feel the pounding of the surf from time to time. I mean to tell you that Colima's active volcano can spit and spew, rock and

roll, quake and shake and we'll just be grabbing our surf boards thinking the surf's up. So, we're not worried about finding ourselves in a crumbled mess of broken building. However, the building was put up in 1990 and has gone through some upgrades and modernization, as have others in this particular area of Manzanillo.

I suppose the most visible thing is the view of some of these buildings from the outside. It is readily apparent that some of the people in charge of area beautification and upkeep have different opinions of 'standards' than the builders. But, when you talk to these building managers, it's all a case of financing or the lack of it.

Ewa has asked me not to mention that I found all the outlet covers stuck in a paper bag in the storage room because she forgot to enforce their replacement when she had the unit repainted a few years ago. So, I will make sure in this article that I won't.

In a friend's condo down the street, the breaker panel is wired for 110 and 220-volts into it. Normally there is 110 and 220 access to the utility room and kitchen should the occupant want to dry or cook with electricity. Originally, it was a gas kitchen requiring only 110-volts. When he had it revamped, he had an oven and microwave installed. This set was built for a 220-volt source.

The problem was the building wasn't wired for that voltage to the kitchen. No problem for our ARC guy. He rewired the kitchen by using the return wire as the second 110 source to make 220, then accessed earth ground for the return. I told my friend that he no longer had 220-volt power into his kitchen. Then I found where there was an electrical outlet in one of his bedrooms which was similarly miswired and had caught fire some time in the past. Thank goodness for concrete being the prime building medium here.

...Maintenance

The fire didn't go anywhere but had just fried the insulation on the wires for a few inches. I can't bring myself to ask if he or his wife had ever smelled anything wrong in that room. I had to tie everything back and now they have a dummy outlet which isn't wired at all.

I bought two new room air conditioners that were on sale at Home Depot, along with free installation. These are the kind where the fan, filter and controls are mounted in a wall while the compressor sits out of sight and hearing (ostensibly). The first one was installed by some local Home Depot contractor. Although they had to call in a third person to effect the install, they did an outstanding job and only charged me an additional two hundred and fifty pesos for some unexpected (expected) wiring they had to do.

The second unit was put in by a crew that had to be scheduled in from Guadalajara. This team was the standard example of a Master teaching an Apprentice. They also did a fantastic job. I found both teams to be a delight in courtesy, knowledge and professionalism. The only negative to the whole thing was that I had to hire the removal of the old units as they were just too heavy for me to carry down. But I just love that cold air in my 'office.'

I also changed out the old kitchen faucet from an install that Ewa had put in when she expanded our kitchen several years ago. Again, rather than take the time and modify the existing equipment properly to allow for the fit of the new faucet; whoever did the retrofit just slammed everything together causing the sink support to allow a slow leak at the mount which made it expand to the point where we were almost toppling over every time we tried to use it.

I applied perseverance and elbow grease on that one and, besides, I think everyone really likes the new style we got. You can just see the old faucet in Ewa's "After" picture.

These kitchen modifications seem popular all over the city as, I think, we imports like larger and more varied and modern kitchens and the establishment hasn't yet been able to keep up with us. I'm not saying that it's all like that.

Ian Rumford moved into a hall-like place when Freda and I went back to Canada. His place had a wonderful kitchen and the place next door was a dream.

My advice to newcomers, if you have the time, is to move into a starter unit somewhere until you get the lay of the land. Then, when you get to know the area and what to expect, go out and pick and choose. I mean, this is Mexico, the land of the laidback living.



you can reach Kirby Vickery at kirby@manzanillosun.com

Facebook privacy demystified (part six)

Papaya is better than Viagra

by Señor Tech

If you have been on Facebook for any length of time, you will eventually see a post that makes a claim that seems a bit absurd. If you click on the post, you will link to an article that will try to validate the author's stiff assertion in a few paragraphs.

I do not believe many of the claims made on Facebook and, until now, I was able to easily check whether the statements were true or false. I am a bit sad today as I just found out that Snopes.com is in financial trouble. I have used this site for close to 20 years to check outlandish claims on the internet.

Snopes had a group of fact-checkers that would research claims made in posts or email messages. The checkers would then post the results on their site. The results show whether the statements are false, true or a combination of true/false; and they would also provide supporting data. The site has been in operation since 1994.

The founding partners, a married couple, divorced in 2015. The wife sold her 50% to a corporation. As with all modern news outlets, profits rather than news authenticity seem to be the main priority of the corporation. There is a claim that the new partners have less interest in validation but are more interested in increasing the internet traffic to Snopes.com so their shares will become more valuable.

There are also allegations that the husband, who has 50% of the company, has misappropriated funds and now the site is on the verge of closure, due to insufficient cash flow.

The rumour also states that a legal battle is going on for control of Snopes.com. These are of course unsubstantiated claims.

I would usually go to Snopes.com to verify the story but, upon going to their website, there is a plea for crowd-sourced funding to keep the site up. So, I am unable to verify this claim; as the result may be biased.

I guess we will have to wait to see how this all shakes out. I suspect Facebook will now see a landslide of outrageous claims.

Another site, factcheck.org, checks posts to debunk US political statements. They claim to be non-partisan.

Alternatively, Snopes.com, checks all internet rumours for authenticity. It is a sad fact, but I don't think anyone should place much credence on Facebook posts making medical, diet, miraculous foods claims. In my opinion, Facebook should be used for entertainment and to connect with friends and family, not as a credible news source.

I conducted a Google search to try to find other reputable debunking sites online. I found a couple of sites, but they are hosting more advertising than debunked stories.

I will provide recommendations in a future article. In the meantime, be sceptical of claims on Facebook and any unsolicited emails.

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Querétaro - Cradle of Mexican Independence

by Dan and Lisa Goy, exclusive to Manzanillo Sun



Heading into Querétaro on Hwy 57, clearly lane lines are optional

March 15 and 16, 2016 (Days 69-70)

The gang left at 8:30 am from Teotihuacan, headed for Querétaro with Mike and Kelly in the lead. It's not a long drive, about 3 hours. Originally, we had planned to head for Zitácuaro, Michoacán to see the Monarch Butterflies, however we decided they were no longer there en masse.

Hwy 57 was a great toll road with little traffic. Along the way, Roland and Janice decided to bypass Querétaro and head directly to San Miguel. We did have a roadside stop and everyone said their goodbyes as three of our couples were now headed home to BC after our Querétaro stop. The rest of us would meet up with Roland and Janice in San Miguel de Allende.

Unfortunately, both Bruce and Marian and Rafael and Eileen had received some bad news about their mothers' health and decided to cut the tour short. Grant and Anita also headed back with them as the 3 couples traveled together from BC to start the trip.

Back on the road again, as we got closer to town, we were very impressed with all the international manufacturing plants and operations we passed on the outskirts of town. We know now that Querétaro has 556 plants, in 13 industrial parks that in-

clude Magna, Bombardier, Johnson Controls, Hitachi and GM. We entered the city from the east and our campground was just north, at the Juriquilla Motel and Trailer Park. We avoided rush hour and traffic was light, always a plus.

The town itself was very modern and clean and our first look at the famous aqueduct was impressive. It did not take long and we were setting up. Unfortunately, I fell while jumping over a short wall and landed on my shoulder. I thought for sure I had broken something. Luckily, I did not, but it took over a week for the soreness and pain to dissipate. I must say I felt much better the next day. I am sure the extra strength Ibuprofen helped.

The next day we all headed into town to see what Queretaro had to offer. We jumped into the van and onto the 4 lane freeway which flowed well for the first 15 minutes, not so well for the following 45 minutes. We did make a beeline for the Historic Centro. At first parking was very elusive however we prevailed and set out on foot. Most jumped on a tourist trolley bus. Lisa and I decided for the walking about option. Lots to see in the Historic District and we did, probably put on a few miles. On the way out, we stopped at a local Mercado. We also wanted to stroll the big park nearby but, unfortunately, it was closed.

...Querétaro



Heading into Querétaro downtown on Hwy 57

The group showed up as scheduled at the rendezvous location and we were on our way, which only took 35 minutes to get back to the RVs. We had a final dinner with our larger group at a nearby restaurant and reminisced about our travels to date. Next morning we said our collective goodbyes very early to Bruce and Marian, Rafael and Eileen and Grant and Anita. They were headed north, with their first stop being Roca Azul near Guadalajara. Lisa and I and Mike and Kelly left at 9am and headed for San Miguel de Allende where we met up with Ro-

land and Janice at the Campground.

Santiago de Querétaro is the capital and largest city of the state of Querétaro.

In 1996, the historic center of Querétaro was declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO. Querétaro has repeatedly been recognized as the metro area with the best quality of life and as the safest city in Mexico and also as the most dynamic in Latin America. It is a strong business and economic centre and a vigorous service city that is experiencing an ongoing social and economic revitalization.

Querétaro has seen an outstanding industrial and economic development since the mid 1990s. Querétaro metropolitan area has the 2nd highest GDP per capita among Mexico's metropolitan areas with 20,000 USD after Monterrey. The city is the fastest-growing in the country, basing its economy on IT and data centers, logistics services, aircraft manufacturing and maintenance, call centers and a manufacturing center for automotive and machinery industry, chemicals and food products.

The region of Querétaro has a rapidly growing vineyards agri-

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...Querétaro

culture and it hosts the famous wine producer from Spain: Freixenet. The wine production in Querétaro is now the second largest in Mexico after the Baja California region. This has caused the city and the metropolitan area to attract many migrants from other parts of Mexico.



Cathedral in Querétaro

History of the word Querétaro

In the Otomi language, it is referred to as "Maxei" or "Ndamaxei", which means ball game and the grand ball game respectively. In the P'urhépecha language it is referred to as "Créttaro", meaning place of crags, referring to the rocky hills of La Cañada. In the Mendocino Codex the town is called Tlaschco or Tlaxco, from the Nahuatl for ball game. However, Querétaro most likely comes from k'eri ireta rho, meaning place of the great people, especially since during Aztec times when about 15,000 people lived here. Querétaro has an Aztec glyph to represent it as it was a tributary province. In 1655, it received a coat of arms from the Spanish Crown. The word Querétaro was voted by 33,000 participants as "the most beautiful word in the Spanish language", before being approved by the Instituto Cervantes. In Pre-Columbian terminology, Querétaro literally means "the island of the blue salamanders." Nevertheless, other scholars suggest that it can mean "place of the reptiles" or "place of the giant rocks."

History of Queretaro - Pre-Hispanic period

The area was settled around 200 A.D. by Mesoamerican groups moving north, and archeological sites here show Teotihuacan influences. From the Classic Period, there were two population centers in this area called Toluquilla and Ranas. The mountain, now known as El Cerrito, was a ceremonial center, but was later abandoned for unknown reasons. In the later pre-Hispanic period, the area was populated by the Otomi, who had become sedentary urban dwellers with sophisticated politics by the time of the Aztec Empire, who referred to them as the Tlacetilli Otomi or "Otomi Nation/State". This area was under control of the Otomi dominion of Xilotepeque in the 1440s, which in turn was subject to the Aztec Empire of Mexihco-Tenochtitlan. Under the reign of Ahuizotl in the late 15th century, the Aztecs administered the area directly, considering it a bulwark against the Chichimeca lands to the north. The Otomi were the most populous ethnicity in Xilotepec although there were other groups, primarily Chichimeca as well. These two groups are still found here today. During the pre-Hispanic and colonial times, the Otomi were organized into familial clan like groups with defined territories, living in stone, wood or adobe dwellings. They were sedentary farmers, who fought, but unlike the Aztecs, did not make warfare large part of their culture.

Spanish Occupation

The origins of the Spanish city of Santiago de Querétaro is pegged to 25 July 1531 when Spaniard Hernán Pérez Bocanegra y Córdoba arrived with the allied Otomi leader Conín (later named Fernando de Tapia) who was the administrative head of the Otomi peoples living in Aztec controlled territory. The Spanish and their Nahuatl allies battled the local insurgent Otomi and Chichimecas at a hill now known as Sangremal called Ynlotepeque and considered sacred in pre-Hispanic times. It was written by Friar Isidro Félix de Espinoza that the Chichimeca were at the point of winning when a total eclipse of the sun occurred. This frightened the Chichimeca and the Spanish claimed to have seen an image of Saint James (the patron saint of Spain) riding a white horse carrying a rose-colored cross. This event caused the Chichimeca to surrender and is why the city is called Santiago (Saint James) de Querétaro, with James as patron saint. This stone cross has been replicated and erected on the hill, which later was accompanied by a church and monastery.

Spanish dominion, however, grew gradually, and was definitively not won through just a single battle. In the 1520s, the Otomis and many Chichimecas of what is now southern



Gang at the restaurant next to the campground in Querétaro

Querétaro and northern Mexico State allied with Hernán Cortés under the control of the lord of Xilotepeque, who still maintained a certain amount of control of the old dominion. The first Spanish arrived between 1526 and 1529, headed by Hernán Pérez de Bocanegra. Bocanegra at first tried non-violent means of subduing the area and founding a Spanish city. However, the initial attempts to establish the city of Querétaro were repelled by the locals, forcing Bocanegra south and establishing the cities of Huimilpan and Acámbaro.

Bocanegra continued negotiating with the lord of Xilotepeque, Conín. The lord's cooperation was gained, for which he was eventually credited for bringing an end to the Spanish-Chichime/Otomi conflict and was made the Spanish governor of the area. However, most of Querétaro's early colonial history was marked by skirmishes between the remaining Chichimeca insurgency and the Spanish authorities, with one of the first being over the establishment of encomiendas. Conín separated the indigenous and Spanish residents of the new city, with the indigenous on and around Sangremal hill and the Spanish around the current historic center. The Spanish part of the city was laid out by D. Juan Sanchez de Alaniz, and the indigenous section was laid out in the traditional Otomi manner. The first city council convened in 1535, and settlement was named a Pueblo de Indios (Indian Village) in 1537, ending the encomiendas. During this time, the Franciscans arrived for missionary work, who were later joined by the Jesuits, the Augustinians and other who built monasteries such as the Monastery of San Francisco, Lima and the Monastery of Santa Cruz.

Colonial Queretaro

When the settlement was declared a town in 1606 and by 1655, only Spaniards were living in the city proper. In 1656, it was de-

creed as the "Muy Noble y Leal Ciudad de Santiago de Querétaro" (Very Noble and Loyal City of Santiago de Querétaro). This honor was solicited by Viceroy Luís de Velasco, in recognition of Querétaro's growth, agricultural production, industry and educational institutions. By the 18th century, it was informally known as the "Pearl of the Bajío" and "The Third City of the Viceroyalty". By the 17th century, the Franciscans had been joined by the Dieguinos, who built the monastery of San Antonio, the Jesuits, who built the Colleges of San Ignacio and San Francisco Javier as well as the Dominicans, the Carmelites and the Royal Convent of Santa Clara de Asís, which was one of the largest and most opulent in New Spain. Querétaro was also the site for the training of many of missionaries that went north as far as Texas and California. Most of these were educated at the Colegio de Propagación de la Fe (College for the Propagation of the Faith), which was established at the monastery of Santa Cruz in 1683. Some of its graduates even went as far as South America. Few of the buildings from the 16th century have remained intact, due to the violence during the city's initial development, which reached its peak in the 17th century. As a result, most of the city's oldest structures are of Baroque style.



General Don Vicente Guerrero statue

Independence and capital status

Querétaro is considered to be one of the "cradles" of Mexican Independence and much of the credit is given to Josefa Ortiz de Domínguez. She was the wife of the city's mayor, called a corregidor, at the beginning of the 19th century. She used her prominent position to gather intelligence for the nascent insurgency. Literary circles called tertulias were a popular pastime for the upper Creole classes, as they also served as a relatively safe place to discuss politics. One such occurred regularly at the house of José María Sánchez, with the name of the Asociación de Apatistas, which became a group dedicated to independence and winning supporters to the cause. Members included licenciados Lorenzo de la Parra, Juan Nepomuceno Mier y Altamirano, Manuel Ramírez de Arellano y Mario Lazo de la Vega José María Sánchez, Fray José Lozano, Antonio Tellez, don Emeterio y Epigmenio González, José Ignacio de Villaseñor Cervantes y Aldama, Dr. Manuel Marciano Iturriaga, Pedro Antonio de Septién Montero y Austri, Luis Mendoza, Juan José García Rebollo, Francisco Lojero, Ignacio Gutiérrez, Mariano Hidalgo, Mariano Lozada, José María Buenrostro, Manuel Delgado, Francisco Araujo, Felipe Coria, Francisco Lanzagorta, Ignacio Villaseñor and José María Sotelo. The group was visited on occasion by Ignacio Allende, Juan Aldama, Josefa Ortiz de Domínguez, Miguel Domínguez and Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla. This asociación was important for the early organisation of those seeking independence for Mexico.

However the most famous of the tertulias was hosted by Josefa Ortiz de Domínguez herself at what is now the Palace of the Corregidora. Originally, they were open to both creoles and Spanish-born but after an altercation between Ignacio Allende and the Spaniard Crisóstomo López y Valdez, only creoles attended. The tertulias of Josefa Ortiz de Domínguez culminated



Historic downtown in Querétaro



Funky church in Querétaro

in the Conspiracy of 1810, which was discovered before they had planned to act.

On 13 September 1810, Epigmenio Gonzalez was arrested for having stockpiled weapons for the insurgency and the next day Mayor Miguel Domínguez and his wife Josefa Ortiz de Domínguez were arrested for their roles in the Conspiracy of 1810. With the conspiracy discovered, she still managed to get a warning to Miguel Hidalgo. He eluded capture and rushed to Dolores, where he gave his famous grito (the cry for independence). For her actions, La Corregidora was imprisoned several times between 1810 and 1817. She died impoverished and forgotten, but was later remembered when she became the first woman to appear on a Mexican coin. Once the armed battle began, the city was taken by the royalist army and was the last major city to be taken by the insurgents.

After the end of the war, the Santiago de Querétaro became the capital of the state of Querétaro in 1823, with the first state congress convening at the Auditorium of the Instituto de Bellas Artes de la Universidad Autónoma de Querétaro in the city. The state's first constitution was promulgated in the city in 1825, with the city as head of one of the state's six districts. From 1869 to 1879, the districts were subdivided into municipalities, which the city of Querétaro as seat of both the municipality of Querétaro and the district of Querétaro. In the 20th century, the original municipality of Querétaro divided into three: Querétaro, El Marqués and Corregidora. The district system as a political entity was abolished after the Mexican Revolution, with the municipality as the base of local government. The first municipal president was Alfonso Camacho who took office in 1917.

In 1847, it was declared the capital of Mexico when U.S. forces invaded the country. One year later, the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo was signed in this city, ceding almost half of Mexico's territory and ending the war. In 1854, another treaty signed here led to the Gadsden Purchase.



Highway 57 drive to Querétaro

In 1867, Maximilian I of Mexico was defeated at the Battle of the Cerro de las Campanas, where the liberals took him prisoner along with Generals Miguel Miramón and Tomás Mejía. In May 1867, the emperor was sentenced to death along with Mejía and Miramón in the Cerro de las Campanas. No major battles were fought here during the Mexican Revolution but various factions passed through here given the state's location between the northern states and Mexico City.

World Heritage Site by UNESCO

In 1996, the historic center of Querétaro was declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO. According to UNESCO's website, the "old colonial town of Querétaro is unusual in having retained the geometric street plan of the Spanish conquerors side by side with the twisting alleys of the Otomi quarters. The Otomi, the Tarasco, the Chichimeca and the Spanish lived together peacefully in the town with similar standards of living, a rare occurrence at a time when the Indigenous and Hispanic were usually separated by a large income gap and at odds with one another in other parts of the nation.

This peace and similarity of social integration is largely attributed to the fact that the local Indigenous ethnicities and Spanish reached peace early after contact and both functioned concurrently with the Indigenous retaining their own economic and social systems while the Criollos operated in a separate but integrated society within the city. The city is notable for the many ornate civil and religious Baroque monuments from its golden

age in the 17th and 18th centuries." In 2008, National Geographic listed Querétaro as one of the top 15 historic destinations of the world.

Notable sites in Queretaro

The most prominent feature of the city is its enormous aqueduct, consisting of seventy five arches, each twenty meters wide with a total extension of 1,280 meters and an average height of twenty three meters. It was built by the Marquis Juan Antonio de la Urrutia y Arana between 1726 and 1738 at the request of the nuns of the Santa Clara Convent to bring water to the residents of the city from La Cañada.

Most of the rest of Querétaro's notable sites are located in the historic center, which is pedestrian-friendly and filled with colonial architecture. The local government maintains this area well, with cleaning crews to keep the streets clean and regulating vendors so that they do not block streets and sidewalks. In the evening, the area fills with people strolling the plazas and walkways and frequenting the area's restaurants, cafes and food stands. One way to see this part of town is the Noche de Leyendas (Night of Legends), which is a hybrid between interactive theater and a recounting of history. A group of actors guide visitors through the streets of the city narrating stories about what has happened in these places. This event begins at the main plaza, the **Plaza de Armas** in the center of the city with a re-enactment of the legend of Carambada. Then the show wanders the street all the while telling tales related to

bandits, loves and myths. These tales demand audience participation providing lines and provoking debate.



Historic Hotel Hidalgo

In the center of downtown is the **Church of San Francisco**, finished at the beginning of the 18th century and from then on the most important in town, serving as the cathedral until the 20th century. It and the attached cloister is all that is left of a large complex that included several chapels and an orchard that extended for blocks to the east and south. On the facade, there is a depicting of Saint James fighting the Moors, cutting the head off of one. The main altar is Neoclassic, and replaced what reputedly was a masterpiece of Baroque design. This has happened frequently in the city; those Baroque altars not plundered over the course of Mexican history were replaced by newer designs. Older Baroque side altarpieces are still here, and are covered in gold leaf. Other notable pieces here include a large Baroque music stand and the seating of the choir section both done by architect Francisco Eduardo Tresguerras of Celaya in the 18th century. There are also sculptures done by Mariano Montenegro and Mariano Arce.

The church's cloister is now the **Museo Regional (Regional Museum)**. Built between 1660 and 1698, (elcima) the monastery it houses was the first in the city, built by Franciscans to evangelize the native populations here. The architecture is representative of Franciscan style, with simple lines and decoration. The museum exhibits artifacts from the pre-Hispanic, colonial and post-Independence eras of this region's history. The Plaza de la Constitución and Jardín Zenea plaza (named after liberal governor Benito Zenea) were part of the atrium of the church and monastery. This area is crowded every night and all day on Sunday, when the municipal band plays dance music from the 1940s to the 1960s.

The Plaza de Independencia or Plaza de Armas is the oldest part of the city, and is filled with Indian laurel trees, surrounded by outdoor restaurants and colonial mansions. Streets here are made of cobblestone and have names such as La Calle de Bimbo and the Callejón del Ciego. In the middle of this plaza is a fountain that honors Juan Antonio de Urrutia y Arana, who built that large aqueduct to bring water to the city. Around the plaza is the Galería Libertad (Libertad Gallery) and the Casa de Ecala (Ecala House), which is a baronial mansion from the 18th century with large balconies and wrought ironwork. However, the best-known structure on this plaza is the Palacio de la Corregidora.

The Palacio de la Corregidora was originally called the Casas Reales y Cárceles (Royal Houses and Jails). Today it houses the government of the state of Querétaro. Its name comes from its most famous occupant, Josefa Ortiz de Domínguez, who was the wife of the mayor or Corregidor of the city. Ortiz de Domínguez is a heroine of the Mexican War of Independence and the Conspiracy of 1810 that led to the start of the War. Her final resting place is the Mausoleum of the Corregidora.



Historic Centro Hidalgo

The Church and ex-monastery of San Felipe Neri was built between 1786 and 1805. It was opened and blessed by Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla, who also officiated the first Mass. In 1921, this church was declared the Cathedral of Querétaro by Pope Benedict XV. The church is constructed of tezontle and has altarpieces of cantera stone. The facade shows the transition between Baroque and Neoclassical architecture, and is considered to be the last Baroque facade in the city. Inside the nave is sober, austere and completely neoclassical. The old monastery complex now houses the Ministry of Urban Development and Public Works and is commonly referred to as the Palace of Conín.



Aqueduct art

The Church and ex-convent of Santa Rosa de Viterbo is attributed to Alarife Ignacio Maraiano de las Casas and financed by José Velasquez de Lorea, finished in 1752. The church has twin entrances, which was common with convent churches. The two arches are decorated with mocking faces put there by Casas to those who did not think he could manage the building of the institution. The outside is flanked by scroll-shaped flying buttresses, which only serve as decoration and are unique to Querétaro. The tower has a unique shape and is topped with a pyramid-shaped crest. There is an inner doorway decorated in Churrigueresque style and an image of Saint Rose. Inside, the most outstanding feature is the pulpit inlaid with ivory, nacre, turtle shell and silver, and its altarpieces are gold covered in Querétaro Baroque style. The entrance to the sacristy contains paintings of José Velazquez de Lore and Sor Ana María de San Francisco y Neve. The convent complex was later amplified by Juan Caballero y Osio. The nuns dedicated themselves to primary education and by 1727 it became the Royal College of Santa Rosa. The convent was closed in 1861 due to the Reform Laws and was subsequently used as a hospital for about 100 years. Today the convent portion is home to the Centro de Estudios de Diseño y Artes Graficas Mexico-Italiano.

The church and monastery of La Santa Cruz, located on Sangremal Hill, where the appearance of Saint James is said to have occurred. Both the church and the monastery are Franciscan, and in one of the few monasteries to be in operation in

Mexico. This was also the site of the Colegio de la Propagación de la Fe, the first missionary school established in the Americas. From here, missionaries such as Junípero Serra set out on foot, as required by the Order, to establish missions as far away as Texas and California. During the early War of Independence, Miguel Domínguez, Querétaro's mayor and part of the 1810 Conspiracy was imprisoned here. The church has been completely restored and its main attraction is the pink stone cross that was placed on this hill in the 16th century. Its altarpieces are also of pink stone and are a mix of Baroque and Neoclassical. Tours are available and feature how the aqueduct brought water here to cisterns, from which the residents of the city would fill their buckets. There is also a thorn tree said to have grown from the walking stick of Friar Antonio Margil de Jesús, and is considered miraculous as the thorns grow in the shape of a cross.



Querétaro aqueduct

The Museo de Arte (Museum of Art) is located in the former monastery of San Agustín. The building is considered one of the major Baroque works of art in Mexico, built in the 18th century and is attributed to Ignacio Mariano de la Casa. It has a facade of cantera stone in which an image of a crucified Christ is surrounded by grapevines. The niches around the main portal contain images of Saint Joseph, Our Lady of Sorrows, Saint Monica and others. Its cupola contains life-sized images of angels, but its bell tower was never finished. The monastery was



Day of the Dead dolls

occupied by Augustine friars starting in 1743 and is considered to be one of the finest Baroque monasteries in the Americas. Its fame as such comes from the decoration of the arches and columns that surround the inner courtyard. On the ground floor, there are faces with fierce expressions, while those on the upper floor have more serene expressions. Surrounding both sets of faces are chains linking the images. The museum contains one of the most important collections of colonial-era art and is organized by painting style. Some European works are here but the focus is on the painters of New Spain, including some of the most famous. The museum also sponsors temporary exhibits, theatrical works, as well as literary, photography and musical events.

The Museo de la Ciudad (City Museum) is located in the former Royal Convent of Santa Clara. In the 18th century, sisters of the Capuchin order moved from Mexico City to Querétaro to occupy this complex, which was built by the city for them. This was done to show the city's economic strength as well as secure its social position in New Spain. After the Reform Laws, this building had a number of uses, as a prison with Maximilian I as its most famous prisoner, a military barracks and offices. Today it is home to a cultural center. In 1997, the Museo de la Ciudad (Museum of the City), which belongs to the Instituto Queretano de la Cultura y las Artes (Querétaro Institute of Cul-

ture and the Arts) was moved to this building, and is mostly dedicated to contemporary art. In addition to the permanent collection, the museum sponsors temporary exhibitions of drawings, photographs, sculptures, etc. as well as recitals in dance, music and other arts. The museum has exchange programs with Sweden and has established the Children's Library of the Museum of the City. Its goal is to interest children in the arts through books, workshops and other activities. The Church of Santa Clara maintains its religious function. Inside are six Baroque altarpieces and a choir loft, all of which are covered in gold leaf. On the altarpieces sculptures and paintings of saints appear, as well as the faces of angels among the thickly textured ornamentation covering the altarpieces.

The Teatro de la Republica (Theatre of the Republic) was built between 1845 and 1852 and originally called Teatro Iturbide. In 1867, the court martial of Maximiliano I and his generals, Miguel Miramón and Tomás Mejía sentenced the three to death. The Constitution of 1917 was publicized here. In 1922, the governor of Querétaro state changed the name to its current one in honor of the 1917 event. The theatre is primarily used for acts and ceremonies on the state, national and international levels, such as the swearing in of the state's governor.

The city still contains a number of mansions from the colonial

...Querétaro



Querétaro Municipal Palace

era, most of which have been converted into a number of uses. One of these is the **La Casa de la Zacatecana (The Zacatecana House)** on Independencia 51, which has been restored as a museum to show what many of these mansions were like. Associated with this house as well as others are stories about love, murder and retribution. Another of these houses is the **La Casa de la Marquesa (Marquesa House)**, which was an opulent residence that now serves as a hotel. The courtyard is in the Mudéjar or Spanish Moorish style, with Moorish arches and pattered walls. This area serves as the hotel's lobby.

Festival of Santiago de Querétaro

The Festival of Santiago de Querétaro is an annual arts and cultural event that takes place in the city for eight days during Holy Week. It is sponsored by the city of Querétaro along with CONACULTA and the Secretary of Tourism for the state of Querétaro. Each year the event has a theme, which was being "Arte in Todos los Sentidos" (Art in All Senses) in 2009. The events are held in various locations, such as City Museum, the Guerrero Garden, the Zenea Garden and the Rosalio Solano Theatre as well as the various plazas around the city center. The

festival is held during Holy Week holiday to attract Mexican and international visitors to the city. The event starts with an inaugural parade through the streets of the historic center, starting from Corregidora Street to Constituyentes, Angela Peralta, Juárez, Madera and Guerrero streets. The parade ends at the site where public officials open the event.

Over the eight days, both Mexican and international artists perform and exhibit their work. Events include music, painting, dance, photography, literature, special workshops and a children's pavilion. One final day, there is a culinary event where visitors can sample regional cuisine from restaurants of the city.

As you can see there is **lots to see and do in Queretaro!**

Submitted by **Dan and Lisa Goy**
Owners of Baja Amigos RV Caravan Tours
Experiences from our 90-day Mexico RV Tour: January 7-April 5, 2016
www.BajaAmigos.net

you can reach Dan and Lisa Goy at thegoys@manzanillosun.com

more images follow...

...Querétaro



Querétaro suburbs



Querétaro zócalo

...Querétaro



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Juriquilla campground



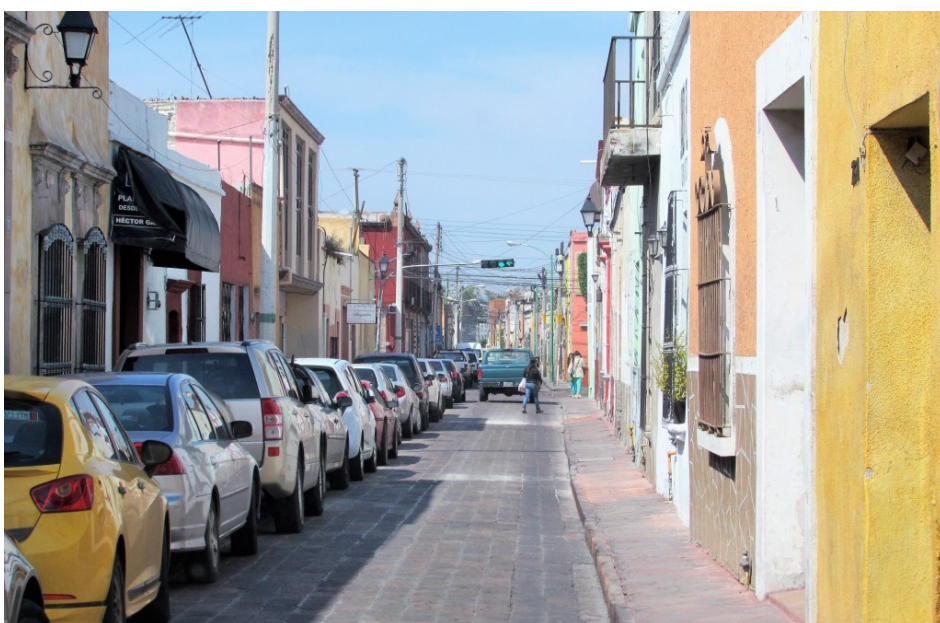
Hwy 57 to Querétaro - great road from Mexico City



Hearse pickup truck is practical



Day 71 - we say good buy to our amigos



Historic Querétaro - no RVs here!



Hwy 57 through Querétaro

...Querétaro



Querétaro market



Statue of Otomi king, Conín de Xilotepeque, founder of Querétaro



Stained glass feature in the cathedral of Querétaro

...Querétaro



Casa de la Marquesa, hosted the Foreign Secretary when Querétaro was the Mexican capital



Templo y exconvento de San Francisco de Asís de Querétaro



Toll Highways can be empty (Hwy 57)



What a dress!

Surf in Manzanillo

by Sarah Vafaei and the Santiago Local Surf and SUP School team



One of Manzanillo's best kept secrets is the amazing surfing locations along with the surfing community that surrounds the city. The local surfers are very friendly and outgoing therefore everyone knows one another and visitors are always made to feel welcome and part of the surf family. Almost every year, Manzanillo offers year-round surfing choices for all skill levels (from those just learning to the most skilled surfers) in a variety of surfing locations.

Santiago Bay offers multiple surfing spots for all levels of surfing. The most popular surf points in the bay area are located at Playa Olas Altas and Playa de Oro. Both of these locations offer year-round waves for surfers to enjoy good quality surf sessions. These beaches are classified as beach breaks (where the waves break parallel to the beach) and are most commonly surfed by the local surfers and ideal for progressing to advanced levels. Playa La Boquita is an exceptional point break (where the waves break against a point meeting the beach) that can be enjoyed by surfers of all levels and is great for learning. Playa La Boquita is the best during the summer season when big Southern Swells enter the Santiago Bay. The

Southern Swell carries the best-formed waves as there are usually small to no waves at Playa La Boquita.



The next two locations are secret locations that only local surfers have known about, until recently. These locations are La Dos and Tepalcates. Both locations are located in the northern part of the Bay of Manzanillo. To date, they have been secret surfing points enjoyed exclusively by locals, but a growing surfing industry allows visitors to join locals by taking Surf Tours and Lessons at these locations. Similar to Playa La Boquita, both of these spots are at their best during the summer swells.



For surfers that are more advanced and daring, there are great suggestions such as: Boca de Pascuales in Tecomán (1.5 hour drive from Manzanillo) and Playa El Paraíso in Armería (1 hour drive from Manzanillo). Boca de Pascuales is internationally known for its world-class waves that offer more experienced surfers the opportunity to ride some of the best tubes in mainland Mexico. It is also known as one of the top places to surf in the world, due to the exposure it has received over the years from all the International Surfing Association events.

Playa El Paraíso is not only known for their Seafood Restaurants, but they also offer some of Colima's best wave action during the strong summer swells for Surfers, along with Body Boarders. Both of these locations offer visitors a great surfing experience, whether it's catching the best tube (when the wave forms a barrel around you as you surf through the tunnel) of your life or just relaxing on the beach while enjoying some beverages and watching the best surfing the local surfers and experienced surfers have to offer. The state of Colima just



wrapped up their National Body Boarding competition in Playa El Paraíso that has determined Mexico's top athletes to compete in the World Cup of Surfing 2018.

One of Manzanillo's biggest obstacles, when it comes to surfing, is dealing with the strong water currents that occur. Once the basics of surfing have been achieved, you learn that the strong water current can work in your favor and help carry you to the next wave faster than paddling. Nonetheless, it is said by local surfers and local instructors that if you master surfing in Manzanillo you can surf anywhere. That has been the motto that gets anyone motivated enough to paddle out and conquer the waves.



Summertime conditions extend from the month of July through October. This time is perfect for the more capable surfer to really experience the best waves Manzanillo has to offer. With the big southern swells come perfect waves that can offer anyone the opportunity to experience the best surfing session of their life. It is during this time that all locals dust off their boards and give any bystanders the best surf show; all while the most amazing summer sunsets paint the skies orange hues.



you can reach the team at santiagosurf@manzanillosun.com

Manzanillo Shopping

by Kirby Vickery

I know from experience that shopping for anything in the States usually comes down to you having to pay the asking price or, according to the seller, "You can get it somewhere else!" Oh sure you can ask for a bargain here and there if you're out in the middle of someone's lawn or garage sale. Or, when you're looking in some half empty bins of corn in the far reaches of heart land where they hardly speak the same English. But, overall, most of the prices you find are set in stone. It's the same way in Canada from what I understand. I read someplace that the sales clerks in England actually become insulted should you question anything about the marked price. Now in Mexico, it is a whole different story.

Mexico has gone through some radical shopping changes over the past twenty to thirty years. I can remember my father dickering with a waiter over how much the restaurant was going to charge us for our meal. I grew up dickering over prices for things in Mexico. The last thing that I bought across the border from Texas was a hand-tooled holster for a pistol.

I can remember looking around for a leather goods shop and happened to hear a shop owner selling some lady really hard over a horse blanket. She never batted an eye at his pricing and dug down deep into her strapped on purse to dig out the money. As soon as they were through with their transaction and her blanket was all wrapped up, I sauntered over and asked the guy the pricing for a blanket just like hers. He promptly gave me the same price and I just looked at him and offered to buy it for about half his price. He was still making a lot of money for the blanket and accepted it. It was half wrapped when I started to walk away and the faces fell off this lady and her friend.

Shopping in Mexico today can be just as fun. I say 'can be' because if you wander into any of the larger department stores like Ley or some of the imports like Home Depot, WalMart, or even Radio Shack, you will find their marked prices as rock hard as any in the States. I wouldn't try changing any prices in any restaurant either for another item on sale. It doesn't matter if you're dealing with a street vendor or a five-star eatery.

The one place that actually depends on your bargaining power is the traveling market or "Tianguis". It is 'Old Style' and moves every day of the week to a new location. What happens is these folks set up a few tables with tent coverings and lay all

their wares out on them. Some are priced with little tags but most aren't. They have everything for sale, and I mean everything. I've purchased most of the gifts I bring back from Mexico for my friends and family in these markets. Ewa likes to stock up on her veggies and spices in them. Do we dicker about the price? Sometimes we do and it's fun. I've had some shop keepers come up to me from one week to the next and ask how I'm doing while greeting me like a long-lost brother. The caution here is that you get what you pay for and all sales are final.

This type of goods selling is 'old world.' I can remember market day in Glyfada, Greece (a suburb of Athens) where you had better eat the bread you purchased almost as soon as you got home because that afternoon you can use the loafs as bats for baseball practice. And they also had the 'Plaka' which has narrow streets and shops spilling out almost to the middle of those streets. Damascus, Beirut, Alexander and Cairo were all the same.

I have found, along the border, you are a chunk of meat to be smiled at as they are sizing up the size of your wallet. These markets in the interior are just as friendly, if not more, and treat you quite well, actually. This especially goes with the produce vendors. I know they don't know me from Adam but several knew Freda and I've seen them come around the table to greet Ewa. I like that kind of thing.

From the other side of things, there is another technique used down here that comes from what we consider a necessity. It is



...Manzanillo Shopping



the technique of completely buying a vendor out of something you've been looking for. The reason you do this is because the law of supply and demand kinda skates along its own border. I do this with my insulin and will always wonder if I have to and I've seen Ewa do it too, although getting her to admit to it is something else again.

There is a fear in all expats that you won't have some little item you really want because you're probably one of six or seven people looking for it. After you find it, you want it. So,

why not stock up on it. What do you care if no one else can get it? I mean, that's their hard luck, isn't it? "Hey Señor, how much of a deal can you offer me if I buy all of these?" And then, a couple of days later, while playing cards, you mention sorta off hand, "Gee, Marge, I wish I had known you were looking for those things. Señor Ramos had some in the other day. Have you tried him? Don't worry about it if he's out. I can spare a couple for you." Although I abhor the term "Gringo," sometimes we all wear it oh-so-well.

There is one other aspect of shopping in Mexico that I find particularly inviting and it works very well for any home improvement or other mechanical item you can't find. That's when Señor Ramos sympathizes with you about not having something nor being able to get it for you. Then he pops up and offers to make it for you. From places in the North like Toronto, Boston, and Anchorage, people say the people in tropical countries are supposed to be kinda lazy. In Mexico, I have found them to be very industrious, inventive and very skilled with their hands. If you are honored enough to get something made for you, please know that it will be the best of the best.

you can reach Kirby Vickery at kirby@manzanillosun.com



CLERICOT

With orange liqueur, apples, melon and more, this sweet cocktail is ridiculously fruity.

Ingredients

- ½ orange, sliced
- ½ red apple, sliced
- ½ green apple, sliced
- 1 kiwi, chopped
- ½ cup grapes
- ½ cup strawberries, chopped
- ½ cup orange liqueur
- 2 cups melon, diced
- Water
- Ice
- 1 bottle dry white wine

Instructions

Place orange slices, red apples, green apples, kiwi, grapes and strawberries in a pitcher.

Add orange liqueur and stir with a spoon. Chill in refrigerator for 30 minutes.

In a blender, combine the melon and water. Pour over fruit, along with ice and wine. Mix and serve.

Source: Tastemade.com



While there are many variations of Clericot, you may wonder how it differs from Sangría. Typically, Sangría doesn't have fruit while Clericot does and Sangría is typically made with red wine while Clericot often uses white wine and something fizzy or bubbly to add some pizzazz.

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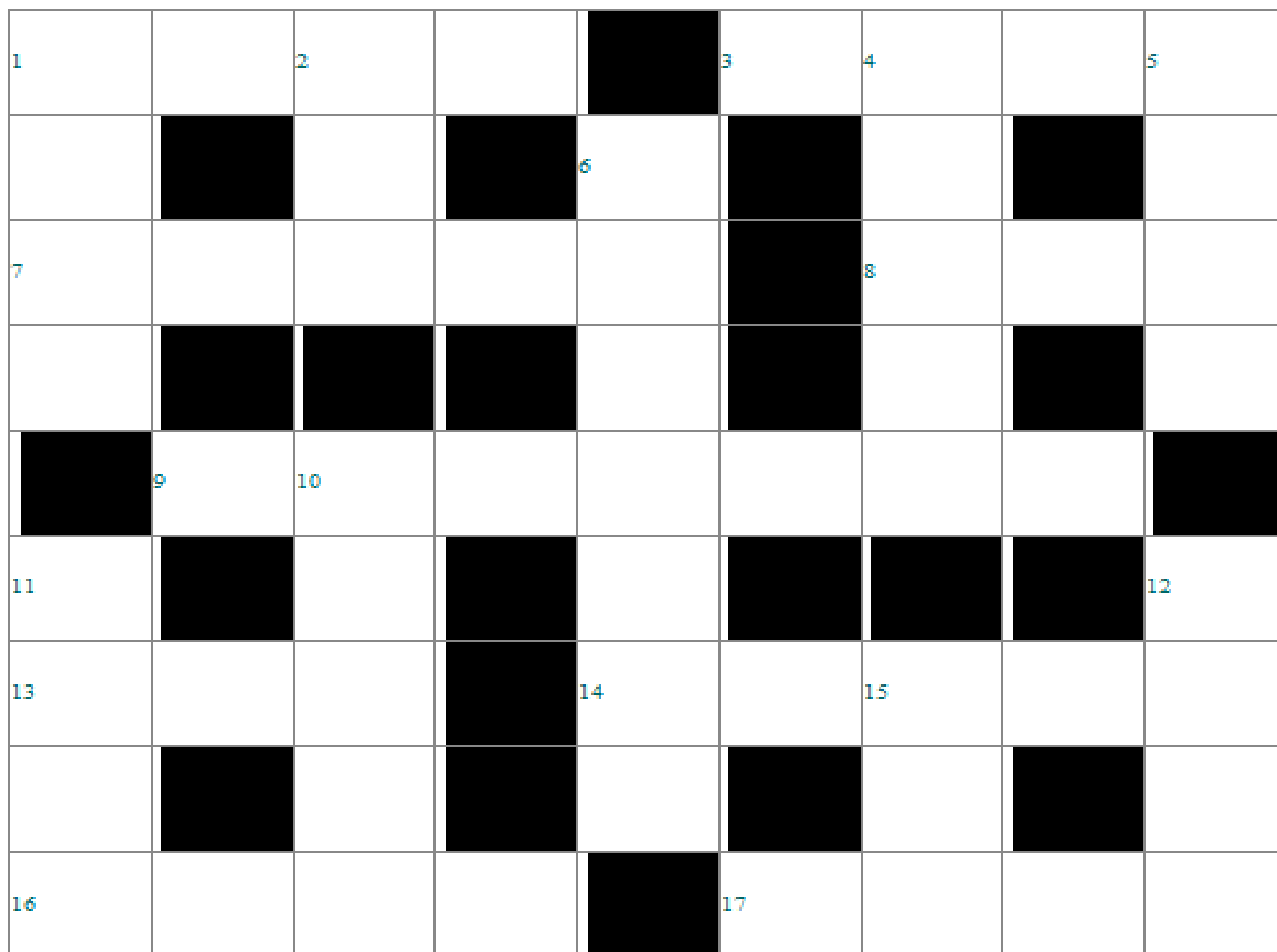
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Crossword

solution posted in next month's edition



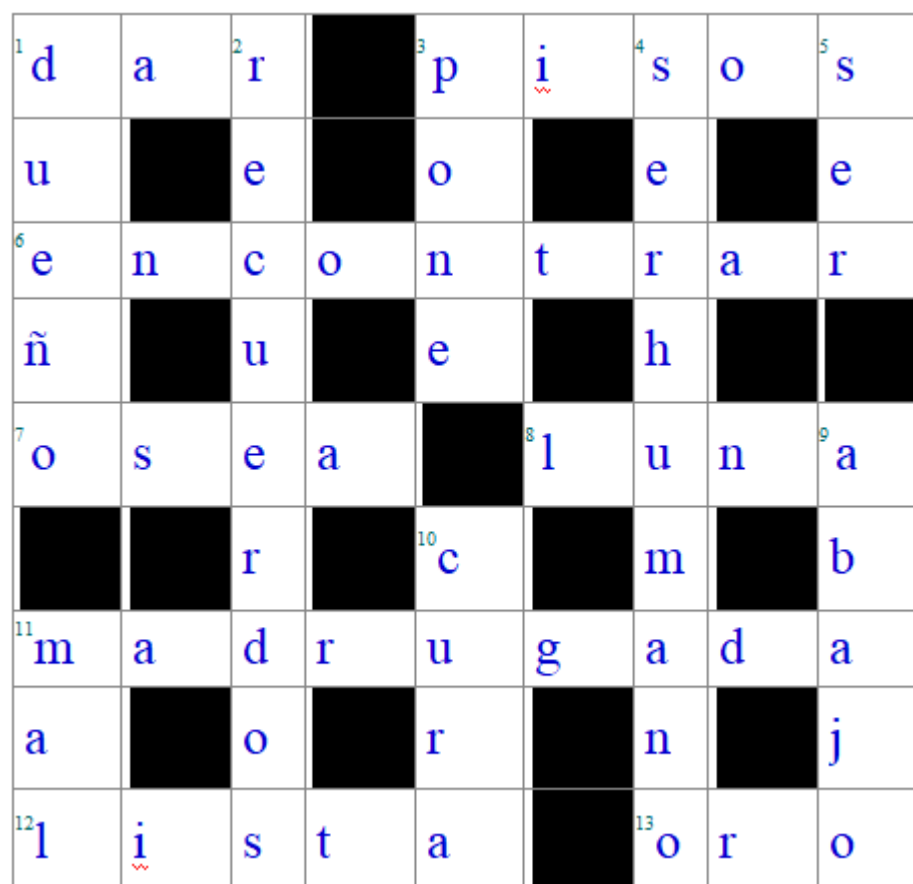
Across

- 1 (he, she) had, possessed, (you/usted) had, possessed
- 3 (I) said
- 7 behind, ago
- 8 (you/usted) used to be, (I) used to be
- 9 immense
- 13 sea
- 14 by chance, perhaps, perchance
- 16 race, ethnicity
- 17 hour, time

Down

- 1 aunts
- 2 to see
- 4 ideas
- 5 age
- 6 to hope
- 10 nose
- 11 love
- 12 note
- 15 (I) love, master

Last month's crossword solution:



lexisrex.com

La Noche Triste

from the Path to Citizenship series

La Noche Triste ("The Night of Sorrows", literally "The Sad Night") on June 30, 1520, was an important event during the Spanish conquest of Mexico, wherein Hernán Cortés and his invading army of Spanish conquistadors and native allies were driven out of the Mexican capital at Tenochtitlan following the death of the Aztec king Moctezuma II, who had been held hostage by the Spaniards.



Cortés' expedition arrived at Tenochtitlan, the Mexica capital, on November 8, 1519, taking up residence in a specially designated compound in the city. Soon thereafter, suspecting treachery on the part of their hosts, the Spaniards took Moctezuma II, the king or Hueyi Tlatoani of the Mexica, hostage. Though Moctezuma followed Cortés' instructions in continually assuring his subjects that he had been ordered by the gods to move in with the Spaniards and that he had done so willingly,



the Aztecs suspected otherwise. During the following 98 days, Cortés and his native allies, the Tlaxcaltecas, were increasingly unwelcome guests in the capital.

Cortés heads off Spanish punitive expedition

In June 1520, news from the Gulf coast reached Cortés that a much larger party of Spaniards had been sent by Governor Velázquez of Cuba to arrest Cortés for insubordination. Leaving Tenochtitlan in the care of his trusted lieutenant, Pedro de Alvarado, Cortés marched to the coast, where he defeated the Cuban expedition led by Pánfilo de Narváez sent to capture him. When Cortés told the defeated soldiers about the riches of Tenochtitlan, they agreed to join him. Reinforced by Narvaez's men, Cortés headed back to Tenochtitlan.

Loss of control in Tenochtitlan

During Cortés' absence, Pedro de Alvarado in Tenochtitlan obtained information that the Aztecs were about to attack him. In response, de Alvarado ordered a preemptive slaughter of Aztec nobles and priests celebrating a festival in the city's main temple. In retaliation, the Aztecs laid siege to the Spanish compound, in which Moctezuma was still being held captive. By the time Cortés returned to Tenochtitlan in late June, the Aztecs had elected a new Hueyi Tlatoani named Cuitláhuac.

Cortés ordered Moctezuma to address his people from a terrace in order to persuade them to stop fighting and to allow the Spaniards to leave the city in peace. The Aztecs, however, jeered at Moctezuma, and pelted him with stones and darts. By Spanish accounts, he was killed in this assault by the Mexica people, though they claim he had been killed instead by the Spanish.

Source: Wikipedia

To see more about this article series, visit us at [Path to Citizenship \(P2C\) online](#)



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