

December 2009

Manzanillo

Sun

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Manzanillo's Lifestyle E-Magazine

MANAGEMENT TEAM

www.manzanillosun.com



Ian Rumford

Chief Executive

manzanillosun.com

ian@manzanillosun.com

Over 30 years in travel, hospitality and tourism industry. Graduated from ITA course with honours. Won many awards for advertisements and design following

Architectural & Interior Design studies at Mount Royal College, Calgary, graduated with honours. Professional Pipe Drafting, graduated with honours.

Was voted College volley ball MVP in Alberta and was on the winning National Canadian College Championship men's volleyball team. Plays a mean game of snooker and has also been in the International 8-Ball Tournaments in Las Vegas several times.



Steve Jackson

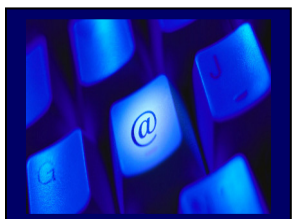
Accounts Manager/

Feature Writer

steve@manzanillosun.com

After studying for a degree in Graphic Design, went into the tourism industry. Spent nearly 20 years working for some of the biggest Tour Operators in the UK,

rising to Brochure Production Manager and Commercial Director. A keen footballer who played competitive league soccer for 28 years, many of those at senior amateur level. Has so far visited 26 different countries and hopes to see more. Now currently "surviving" in sunny Manzanillo.



We hope that you enjoy this Edition of
Manzanillo's Lifestyle E-Magazine.

Please contact us with your comments and suggestions for future editions at:

ian@manzanillosun.com

***Merry Christmas & Happy New Year
To All Our Manzanillosun.com Clients***

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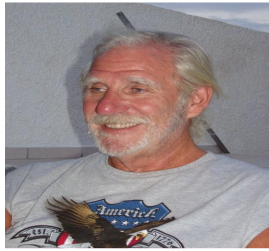


Our Contributors This Month



Tommy Clarkson
Feature Writer

An oft published writer, journalist and author since the 60's, Tommy Clarkson also loves to root in the dirt! Now semi-retired, he and his wife, Patty have, savored, explored and traveled throughout Mexico for several years, residing, full-time, in Manzanillo now for nearly three. Prior to this grand adventure, he has lived in Hawaii, Germany, the Marshall Islands, Viet Nam, Thailand and Iraq. He enthusiastically grows exotic palms, plants and flora in both the Puerto Vallarta and Manzanillo areas. For advice, information or a tour of his gardens, contact him at: olabrisa@gmail.com.



Jim Evans
Feature Writer

Jims first love is aviation, he began flying at the age of 16 and has flown for over 52 years, 30 years as a professional Aviator living and working in North America, Europe, Asia, Africa, the Middle East and Southeast Asia's. Over the years he has crossed paths with many characters, both scurrilous and heroic. With always with a tall tale to tell, he is currently working on a novel and several non-fiction pieces. He is a regular contributor to several publications, and currently resides in Manzanillo.



Mariana Llamas-Cendon
Co-editor/Feature Writer

Mariana Llamas-Cendon is a bilingual journalist, who lives and works in between California and Mexico. She worked as a Managing Editor for Mi Estrella, the bilingual publication of the Ventura County Star newspaper; as Entertainment Editor for Hoy Newspaper and Life and Style Editor for La Opinion, in Los Angeles, among others. Currently, she is for hire and contributes to various publications and websites in both English and Spanish, and spends a lot of time in Manzanillo, a place she loves.



Howard Platt
Feature Writer/Photographer

Howard Platt is a Canadian who has retired to the Manzanillo area and spends much of his time photographing birds.
www.flickr.com/photos/hplatt/



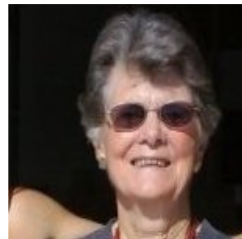
Freda Rumford
Co-editor/Feature Writer

Founding member of Manzamis. Previously columnist for Guadalajara Reporter. Editor/writer for Manzamis Messenger. Many years spent as regional representative for International cosmetic and perfume companies in Canada, responsible for training, advertising and promotions.



Terry Sovil
Feature Writer

Computer related work for many companies, including GE, Target, Honeywell, from 1973-2005. Acted as one of four field-based corporate trainers for Target's Loss Prevention team on the west captain's coast of the USA from 2005 to 2008. Currently a partner in the new PADI Resort Facility, Aquatic Sports & Adventures, dive shop in Manzanillo. PADI Master Instructor, USCG 50 ton master's license (license), Emergency First Response Instructor and a Specialty Instructor in 12 areas. Love sailing, diving, photography, music, movies and books.



Diana Stevens
Feature Writer

Originally from Scotland, Diana immigrated to Canada in 1957 to teach High School before returning to U.K. via New York in 1961. She then taught German, French and Art in various schools, mostly part-time, over the next 30 years besides being self-employed. She and her husband retired to S.W. France in 1996 and spent 10 wonderful years there. Their second retirement was to Mexico in 2006 to join their only son, his Mexican wife and their young family.

Teresa Quizoz **Recipe of the Month**

Hi! "T" is short for Teresa and she was born in Veracruz a few decades ago. She majored in Biology and Biochemistry obtaining her PHD, then worked in her own clinical analysis lab for many years. During this time she took after her mum, who was a superb cook, taking many courses in French, Thai, Chinese, Mexican and Mediterranean cuisine. Following Manny in many adventures throughout the world they have decided now to make Manzanillo home, where they have had a place for over 18 years. Aside from cooking "T" is a remarkable outdoors woman since she kayaks, sails, fishes and runs camps for kids. Her speciality is pampering all who go through the door at Schooners.



THE UNIQUENESS THAT IS MANZANILLO

First Christmas in Mexico

Terry Sovil

Too many questions, I always ask too many questions. Maybe it's the analyst in me, too many years of systems design. Last Christmas was strange. The first time I was away from my family near the big holiday. Lunch was at the only place open in Benecia, CA, a Chinese restaurant. This year will be my first Christmas in Manzanillo, Mexico. The analyst in me comes out as I need to learn more about what Christmas is here. I do know that being a Minnesota boy in a warm place is nice. Palm trees are just fine with me.

Some research tells me a whole lot about this big holiday. Right on the heels of Halloween and El Dia Los Muertos there seems so much to learn before the big day arrives. I do know that I much enjoyed the special bread prepared for The Day of the Dead and from what I read I can expect more of the same for the festive holiday season.

The tradition that seems to be listed first in most descriptions is *Las Posadas*. One is held nightly on the nine days between 16th Dec and Xmas Eve on 24th Dec. This is a re-enactment of Joseph and Mary seeking lodging for the night and giving birth to the baby Jesus. In times past a boy and girl were chosen to represent Joseph and Mary but now a group of people carry candles, visit several homes asking for lodging with a traditional question/response song. They are refused at the first two homes but at the third home they are invited inside. A religious prayer may be said but more often the event becomes a party.



This tradition is said to date back to the late 1500's when a man named Friar Diego de Soria got permission from Pope Sixtus V to celebrate "Aguinaldo" or Christmas gift masses from 16th to 24th Dec in New Spain. These masses were held in church atriums and included scenes relating to Christmas. To attract crowds they used piñatas, fireworks, sparklers and Christmas carols.

The *Piñata* is a game enjoyed by children and adults too.

Usually filled with fruits, nuts and candies it is a wonderful part of Mexican art and folk customs. It is important at *Posada* time. There are a couple of stories about the origin.



Many say it comes from the Italian "pignatta", which means "clay pot", that was filled with gifts and given during lent or carnival.

There was also a clay pot decorated and used in rites to Tlaloc, the Rain God. When it was broken it would shower food to the

ground much as rain brings crops and flowers. The missionaries at the time used the piñata as a teaching tool. It was said to represent the devil with a beautiful exterior, the blindfold was for blind faith to achieve good things, and striking the devil one was rewarded with good things to eat.

Pastorelas is another tool used by the missionaries to help convert the people of Mexico. This tradition comes from the theater. Similar to a passion play this form evolved to include the Devil and a story of good vs. evil but it has grown more vernacular. They started as simple stories of good against evil and ended with a triumph of good by the birth of Christ. They have become more playful and while still performed in church atriums, town squares and theaters they range from political satire to moral commentaries or even bawdy scenes to simple school plays.

Poinsettias are also a central symbol of Christmas with a plant that is native to Mexico. They were called "star flowers" long ago and in Spanish they are known as Noche Buena or Christmas Eve. The

English name of Poinsettia comes from a USA diplomat named Joel Poinsett who brought cuttings back to North Carolina after a stay in Mexico. They come in the most familiar bright red but can also be found in yellow and white. In pre-Hispanic times it was used for medicinal purposes with the red blossoms believed to stimulate heart circulation if placed on the chest. They were also crushed and used for skin infections.



First Christmas in Mexico (cont.)

Nacimientos or nativity scenes celebrate the birth of Jesus, nacimientos meaning births. It is a tradition that comes from Europe where it is still widespread. In Mexico it has become a source of handcrafts with nativity scenes done in wood, clay, metal, glass, straw and just about any material you can think of. It is a popular art form. According to custom the scene is set in advance but the baby Jesus is placed in the manger on Christmas Eve. One of the children is honored with placing the main figure in the manger scene.

Christmas and New Year are celebrated here with Christmas Eve itself as the main day for Christmas. Midnight masses and a late dinner are common. More modern customs have entered the culture with Christmas trees and Santa Claus along with other traditions. The New Year has parties and a custom is for each guest to eat a grape each time the church bell tolls at midnight to sweeten the 12 months to come.

Dia de Reyes is the festival celebrated on the Twelfth Day of Christmas, actually after Christmas, and is also called "Three Kings Day", "Twelfth Night", "Epiphany" and simply January 6th. The custom in Mexico has children leaving their shoes outside the door where they are filled with gifts from the Magi (the Three Kings). This day is the day the nativity scene is taken down.

Special breads are also a big part of the tradition. Sweet freaks unite! Good authority has it that any cookie or roll that is broken



suffers severe calorie leakage so party on! *Rosca de Reyes* is bread in the form of a crown or wreath made with dried fruits and a small plastic doll hidden inside. Each guest cuts their own piece and the person that finds the doll, representing the baby Jesus, gives a party on February 2nd, Candlemas, with traditional foods such as tamales etc. for everyone. The cultivation of wheat came from the Spaniards and Mexicans quickly acquired a taste for bread. They have combined Arabian, Jewish and Christian recipes used by the various conquerors with local ingredients to produce a variety of local breads. Convents provided a source of culinary development with the nuns baking bread to use with hot chocolate (cocoa is native to Mexico) as well as developing the famous bread for the dead and the *Rosca de Reyes*.

Hoping for a sweet Christmas and a festive, prosperous New Year for all!



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PROSPERO

Jim Evans

Last Sunday walking Olas Altas Beach in Manzanillo I noticed several surfers taking advantage of the summer waves that give our beach its name. The fact that surfers were in the water is not unusual, it happens most days now, but I was surprised that six of the fifteen riders were female.

My first day back in Manzanillo a couple of years ago, after a thirty year absence, a friend suggested we meet at Juanito's on the boulevard for breakfast. On the way to the restaurant the area reminded me of most Mexican cities I had visited over the last 50 or so years. Unfinished structures, laborers hauling cement in five gallon buckets up rickety ladders, Banda music and laughter everywhere. I had yet to realize the not so subtle revolution taking place in my adopted country.

Juanito's parking area was filled with late model cars and SUV's and my mind immediately concluded that the patrons must be mostly foreigners. The dress, demeanor and appearance of my fellow patrons reinforced my first impressions, but as I waited for my coffee and my amigo I noticed something, nobody was speaking English! Laughter filled the air, conversations were animated and

lively and everyone was smiling. The Mexican people have always been very sociable, open and gregarious, but something had changed, something magical had happened.

I was still trying to put a name to what I was observing as my friend slid into the seat across from me, we exchanged greetings and immediately began to reminisce of days gone by and adventures past.

We remembered days in far off places. The tireless days of our youth as we flew charter groups all over the world. The dangerous days of delivering the "Stars and Stripes", the U.S. military newspaper, by Boeing 727, into places all over Southeast Asia where somebody was always trying to kill somebody. The sad times of flying newly deployed U.S. Military personnel into Saigon. The nervous hour spent while our DC-8's were converted to cargo. The outright panic when informed by the airport controllers that those "flashing lights" at the end of the runway were the result of enemy fire, and that the "fire flies" raining down on them from the sky above were tracers fired in anger from our gun ships. We never forgot the gut wrenching nausea as we realized what our outbound cargo contained.

We finally settled on a wonderful time. While on furlough some thirty odd years ago, we spent six months with our families at Tres Islas motor home park which used to be located in what is now the "Golden Zone" of Mazatlan. There were daily deliveries by truck, bicycle and on foot of various staples, such as Tres Equis, Mescal, Prawns and of course Tequila. We made regular bus trips to the Central Mercado, with the obligatory stop at 33 Helados for Ice Cream (the contents best unknown). We chiseled oysters off the rocks in front of the Hilton, paddled out to the islands, and worked on our tans while sipping on ice cold cervezas.

At night we usually ended up at Tres Islas restaurant next door, for Turtle Steaks, Rum and telling of tall tales. My friend Pepe and I jointly owned a ponga, and many nights he and his family joined us, he spoke very little English and my Spanish was atrocious but it never prevented us from spending our evenings laughing and smiling till our faces hurt.

Tres Islas is gone, eating turtle meat is illegal, mescal is all but non-existent. You can no longer hire a taxi and driver for a week with a bag full of hard candy for his kids. The oysters have been picked clean from the rocks in front of the Hilton. The Golden Zone is filled with up scale restaurants, fast food joints and products from all over the world. A lot has changed. Then it hit me... the surfers, boys and girls, the huge smiles, the SUV's, and the ever present dance music that rattles the windows of my beachside condo, 'til 5 a.m. most weekends, music emanating from clubs filled with young Mexicano professionals on holiday, well dressed, well healed and prosperous !!!

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From T's GALLEY at SCHOONERS RESTAURANT

CHICKEN ENCHILADES RECIPE

This is a traditional chicken enchilada recipe but this recipe unlike many is not smothered in the familiar tomato based sauce like most enchilada recipes instead; it uses butter, broth, and sour cream to form the sauce for this dish.

Ingredients

- 12 corn tortillas
- 3 cooked chicken breast halves, no bones or skin, shredded
- ½ cup chopped green onions
- ½ cup chopped fresh cilantro
- 2 cups chicken broth
- 1 cup sour cream
- ¾ cup minced onion
- 12 oz shredded cheddar cheese
- 4 oz chopped green chilies
- ¼ cup butter
- ¼ cup all purpose flour
- Vegetable oil for frying

Preparation

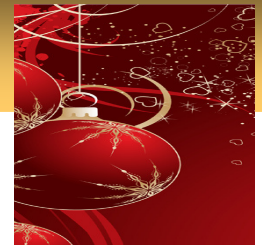
Preheat the oven to 375°F. Heat 2 tablespoons of oil in a large frying pan over a medium high heat, and then fry the tortillas on 5 seconds per side until they are pliable. Do them individually and add more oil as required. Drain the tortillas on paper towels and keep them warm.

Divide the chicken, onion (not green onion) and 10 oz of the cheese between the tortillas. Roll them up and place in a greased baking pan, seam side down. Melt the butter in a pan over a medium heat. Add the flour and whisk until it begins to boil. Add the broth, stirring continuously.

Add the chilies and sour cream. Stir occasionally and do not let the mixture boil. Pour this mixture over the enchiladas when hot and thick. Bake the Mexican chicken enchiladas for 20 minutes then top with the rest of the cheese and bake for a further 5 minutes. Use the green onions and cilantro to garnish them. Serves 6.

T is very fond of her enchiladas and said that the filling can be variated from chicken to pork or beef and you can even filled them with vegetables and they always come out deliciously great.





FEAST OF THE VIRGIN OF GUADALUPE

1st to 12th of December

From Wikipedia.com



According to official Catholic accounts during a walk from his home village to Mexico City early on the morning of December 9th Juan Diego saw a vision of a young girl of fifteen to sixteen, surrounded by light. This event occurred on the slopes of the Hill of Tepeyac. Speaking in the local language of Nahuatl, the Lady asked for a church to be built at that site in her honor. From her words, Juan Diego recognised her as the Virgin Mary. When he told his story to the Spanish bishop, Fray Juan de Zumárraga, the bishop asked him to return and ask the lady for a miraculous sign to prove her claim. The Virgin then asked Juan Diego to gather some flowers from the top of Tepeyac Hill, even though it was winter when no flowers bloomed. There, he found Castilian roses (which were of the Bishop's native home, but not indigenous to Tepeyac). He gathered them, and the Virgin herself re-arranged them in his tilma, or peasant cloak. When Juan Diego presented the roses to Zumárraga, the image of the Virgin of Guadalupe miraculously appeared imprinted on the cloth of Diego's tilma.

Juan Diego was canonized in 2002 and is recognized as the first indigenous saint in the Catholic religion.

Each year from 1st to 12 the December, children carrying a branch covered with foil visit neighbor's homes each night and sing a short carol for pesos. This is given to the church as an offering for the Virgin of Guadalupe. The Virgin of Guadalupe is the only black representation of the virgin.

More on this subject can be found at: www.sancta.org/ and http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Our_Lady_of_Guadalupe

CHRISTMAS FESTIVITIES

Christmas dinner is eaten at about 10 p.m. on Christmas Eve following a local Church service. Gifts are not generally given then apart from a token gift for children. The major gift giving is saved for 6th January, Three Kings Day, when the Three Wise Men arrived to visit the baby Jesus at the stable manger leaving their gifts of Gold, Frankincense & Myrrh.

On this day a special circular cake is served which contains small babies inside. The lucky (?) recipient(s) is/are then required to provide a party for those people attending the Three Kings Day event where they found the babe, one month later, 6th February.



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THE ASILO DE LOS ANCIANOS

Glen Wilchek

Many of you have probably driven by the Asilo de los Ancianos (Old Folk's Home) without even realising where it is.

It was built in 1990 and is located near the auditorium in Valle de las Garzas. Basically, after you leave the Las Brisas cruzero and head towards the port, the auditorium is on your left. Just a little further along on the left, surrounded by trees, is the yellow-coloured Asilo de los Ancianos.

They usually have a sign on their fence asking for donations of cleaning and food products that they need for everyday living. Many of you have been very generous in the past and have purchased items that they need.

The Asilo has space for 46 residents, with somewhere between 3 and 5 people sharing each dorm room. About 70% of the residents have no family and rely on the Asilo to meet all their needs. The remaining 30% have some family, but for whatever circumstances exist, receive very little support. There is no question that all the residents have very few options in life, and would be destitute without the Asilo. Having said this, most of the residents seem happy and appear to be making the most of what they have.

The staff of 7 and the administrator do an amazing job providing quality care and cheerful surroundings to the residents, given the limited resources they have. Unfortunately, there is never enough money to provide a perfect environment, and they really survive on a shoe-string.

According to the Directora of the Asilo, Alma Arce de Martinez, the City of Manzanillo has recently cancelled its monthly contribution of \$7500 pesos due to budgetary constraints. There is a possibility that this may resume in April 2010, but no one knows for certain. The State of Colima contributes money to the Asilo as well, but has also reduced its monthly contribution by 17%. There is no indication when this will be reinstated, if ever.



Basically, the Asilo is in dire straits at the moment, and needs to raise at least \$40,000 pesos to make up the cuts to its funding and continue operating. Otherwise, staff will need to be let go, leaving the residents of the Asilo without adequate care.

The residents of the Asilo would really appreciate your support! You can make a contribution as follows:

All cheques payable to '**Asilo de Ancianos de Manzanillo**'.

You can write a cheque as follows:

- In Pesos, drawn on a Mexican chequing account.
- In Canadian Dollars, drawn on a Canadian chequing account.
- In US Dollars, drawn on a US chequing account.
- Really, any currency drawn anywhere may be accepted.

Cheques may be dropped off at the following locations:

The La Punta office
The Club Santiago office
The Condominio Palomar office
The Condominio El Faro office
Jaunito's Restaurant in Santiago

Cash or cheques may also be dropped off at the Asilo.

If you would like to deposit directly into the bank account of the Asilo, it is located at HSBC in Santiago. Bank account number 4013044086.

Please include your name and address (or email address), and the Asilo will happily send you a receipt for your donation.

Should you have any questions or suggestions, please feel free to contact me at glenwilchek@yahoo.ca. Also, for any of you that may be interested in participating, I am part of a group that contributes monthly to fund various projects at the Asilo (painting, renovations, purchases of items they need, etc).



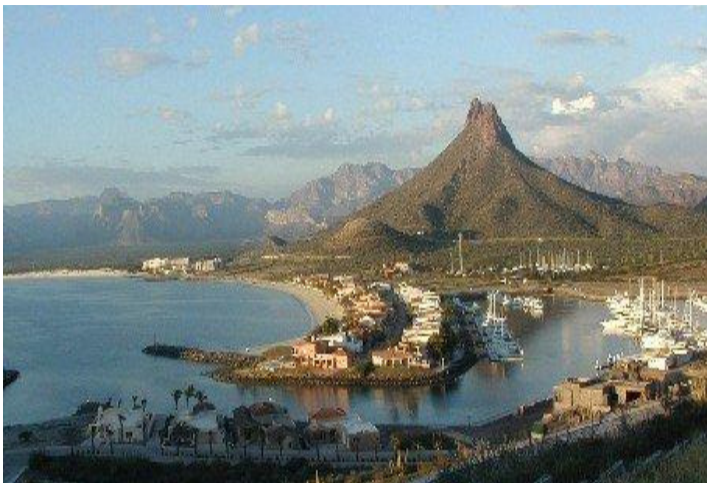
GOING SOUTH FOR CHRISTMAS

Freda Rumford

We crossed the Mexican border at Nogales after a night in Tucson and the morning hunting down the Sanborn Insurance Agency who didn't open until after 9. Having just bought an insurance policy for 6 months with cash and knowing that we needed more to pay for the car import, that extra little amount was considered briefly, then as we didn't really know what was expected we decided to go for it. As promised, we crossed quickly and easily, got the import sticker put on the car and set off for all points south having many adventures along the way which will be told in due course.

What we didn't know and were not told in any of our research over the past few months, was that the interior of Mexico spills out into the coastal towns for two weeks over Christmas leaving very little accommodation for north of the border tourists unless booked months ahead.

Arriving in Guaymas, Sonora, in the first week of November, we decided to stay put for a while before we continued south. There had been many places we had read about that sounded good and gradually we worked our way down the coast visiting them all along the way. Guaymas and San Carlos were lovely, we enjoyed our time there and met some very nice people but the ocean was cooler than we liked.



It was now 29th November and the next stop Mazatlan. That town seemed awfully grubby and took forever to find the hotel that was recommended by Sanborns. It was right next to the "Shrimp Bucket" restaurant, which did sound very appealing. As it turned out, the restaurant was in the hotel and the meal they produced so-so but the hotel very comfortable. Not seeing anything else in our brief stop that seemed particularly appealing, we pushed on. San Blas had been recommended but we decided to continue our

journey and check out Rincon de Guayabitas instead. That was a pretty little town, it would be very nice to stay for a few months. But "Sorry – we can take you until 21st December then you have to move," was the continual response to our request for accommodations.

Bucerias, Puerto Vallarta, Melaque, Barra de Navidad all told the same story. Finally we arrived in Manzanillo mid afternoon feeling worn and travel weary plus a little anxious. We couldn't get into any of the small hotels while driving into Manzanillo as road repairs were in evidence along the roadside. Men were everywhere on their hands and knees putting cobblestones into the side roads and entrances by hand along the entire road which later we discovered was Boulevard de Miguel de la Madrid. Now we were in Las Brisas. It seemed awfully dusty but two of the recommended hotels came into view, side by side and we stopped to ask the question that we knew almost by rote now.



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BLVD MIGUEL DE LA MADRID km 8.5, MANANILLO COLIMA**

Going South for Christmas (cont.)

The first one "Bungalows Angelica" was well outside our price range, so we called next door to Suites New York. HEY PRESTO, they had one room available until the New Year at 1200 pesos for the month. The exchange rate at that time made the cost out to be about \$250 CAD. Heck of a deal! (We soon discovered that this was the room's true worth.) The room was a bit on the dingy side but it was OK for a few weeks and would give us time to check our surroundings. That night, we sat on the bed and wondered what we had done!! One electric bulb hung from a wire in the bedroom and there were only two hard chairs in the kitchen to sit on.

Next day, the sun shone brightly, the world looked cheerful and when we wandered onto the beach the ocean sparkled invitingly. After changing into our bathing suits we timidly tested the water temperature and discovered it to be delightfully warm. We were in almost without a second thought and enjoyed a relaxing swim for the first time since leaving Guaymas.

I parked myself on the beach in a deck chair most days whilst my husband went off exploring and meeting people along the beach. He made friends everywhere and eventually I too was persuaded to leave my chair for a while.

One evening we had a visit from some of our new friends who invited us to join them for dinner on Christmas Eve. They were Italian and having worked for a long time with an Italian gentleman I knew that dinner with them was going to be special so with no hesitation we accepted, offering to bring dessert.

Next morning, the assistant manageress of the New York suites dropped by while my husband was on his walk and invited us to Christmas dinner on Christmas Day. Wonderful, we had the holiday covered and our first Christmas ever away from our family would be in our new country with new friends. It boded well.

The party on Christmas Eve was as wonderful as expected with both the company and food incredibly good. The family had been cooking for days and a true Italian Christmas dinner was enjoyed by eleven of us. Small gifts were exchanged and there was even a surprise gift for us. What lovely warm hospitable people!



Next day supper time rolled around. It had been a glorious holiday with swimming in a warm ocean, starting our tans under an incredibly blue sky and meeting Mexican families at play on the beach. Eventually it was time to get gussied up for our next party.

Armed with gifts we knocked on the door of our hostess. No sign of anyone, peeking in through the window there was no sign of the table being set for dinner and even worse, no smell of the promised turkey cooking. Eventually after opening the door and calling, Ana, our Mexican lady friend appeared but looked far from welcoming. Her first words "Where were you and why didn't you come?" I was really taken aback and eventually realised that the invitation was for Christmas Eve! "But you said the dinner was for Christmas Day." I said apologetically. "Everyone knows that Christmas Day is on the 24th" she almost spat at me. "No, no," I said, feeling absolutely dreadful, "that is Christmas Eve. Christmas Day is the 25th."

Unfortunately though the damage was done and no matter how many times we went around it and we did, we were too late for dinner. She did offer to make us a cold plate but we were far too embarrassed to accept. So, with even more apologies, we left her with the small gifts we had bought and went back to our dismal room. What now? Ham and Cheese sandwiches were a far cry from the delicious turkey dinner we had been anticipating but the dinner the night before was still a great memory.

So much for Christmas in Mexico! We had learned much in the past few weeks and would learn more about Mexican Christmas customs in the years to come. Firstly, don't expect to get rooms anywhere and secondly ask about dates not days when accepting invitations.

PHOTO COMPETITION



Send us an original photo for one of our next editions of *Manzanillo's Lifestyle E-Magazine*

The winning selection will be used as the cover photograph on a future edition of our magazine

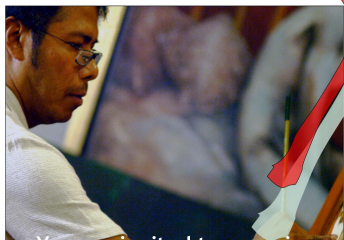
Prize: Breakfast for 2 with juice and coffee at Juanitos Restaurant

**Prize courtesy of John Corey
Juanitos Restaurant, Santiago**

(We reserve the right to use all submitted photos in ManzanilloSun.com SA de CV)



CONTEMPORARY ART



You are invited to experience two weeks of real Mexican contemporary art brought to you by two of its most renowned representatives: the sculptor **Jorge Diaz**, from the state of Michoacan and the painter **Luis Morales**, from the state of Oaxaca.

When: from December 1-15, 2009.

Where: Hotel Camino Real, Calle Paraíso 11, Col. Residencial Salagua, Manzanillo, Colima 28869.

Schedule: Tuesday thru Saturday 12-5 p.m.

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Our Prize winning cover photograph was submitted by Mapy Seidel of Mese House who wins a dinner for two at Schooners.. This picture shows a typical scene of Christmas in Mexico. A young girl representing the Virgin Mary waits for La Posada procession to commence.

La Posada

Posadas take place between 16th and 24th December and are small processions depicting the travels of Joseph and Mary to Bethlehem looking for a place to stay before the birth of baby Jesus.

Each night, the procession starts with persons playing the roles of Joseph and Mary seated on the back of a truck and with various other representative biblical characters, including the devil, accompanying them. As the procession which is led by a small band of trumpets and drums wends its way through the streets, more people attach themselves to the group until it finally arrive at the church or house which is the destination.

Following a short service, there is a party and the children are able to have fun with piñatas. Before arriving at the destination, children accompanying the travellers knock on doors asking for room and are refused twice before the stable and the manger are made available

LAS PALOMAS BLANCAS

Howard Platt

Birdwatchers will know that the rock pigeon, *Columba livia*, may have been the first animal domesticated by man, many thousands of years ago in the Middle East. Domestication, probably as a food source, was followed by breeding and the development of birds in many colours and fancy varieties. Today many people keep them as pets, or as homing or carrier pigeons. Perhaps the best known story of them as homing birds is in human mythology where the dove was the first animal to return to the ark, with an olive branch, signaling the end of the great flood.

Their natural resident range is western and southern Europe, North Africa and southern Asia. They are not natural to the Americas but were brought here about 400 years ago. Since then they have spread across the continents and are now common not only in the cities and urban parks but also the beach towns which the other “snowbirds” enjoy.



The basic rock pigeon has a dark bluish-grey head and neck and pale gray wings with two black bars. The bill is black and has a very obvious white base (cere). Feathers around the neck can be fluffed up as a gorge, and when they catch the light they glitter in greens and reddish-purples. However the pigeons we see today have either escaped or been released from captivity. Reflecting centuries of breeding they appear in a wide range of colours from the basic to the all white.

One of the great puzzles about feral pigeons is why, generations after returning to the wild, they have not all reverted to the wild coloration. The persistence of the domesticated traits is very unusual among animals that become feral, and is the topic of a study by Cornell University.



You can learn more about the study, and even participate, here: <http://www.birds.cornell.edu/pigeonwatch>

If you are less energetic, perhaps you will just enjoy seeing them billing and cooing along the Manzanillo waterfront, as shown here and throw them a tiny part of your lunch from your favorite outdoor eating establishment.

These are turbulent times for birds as well as for us. Perhaps we can all learn to share a little better. In the words of the popular song, let us hope that ‘no one can take our freedom away’.

Peace, harmony, prosperity, faith, fidelity, everlasting tranquility and eternal love. These are some of the sentiments that have been attributed to white doves – palomas blancas. This one is enjoying a bath in a fountain on the Manzanillo waterfront but they are in the heart of every great city in the world and it would be nice to think that the sentiments are also alive in the hearts of those cities.





COWABUNGA SURF EXTRAVAGANA

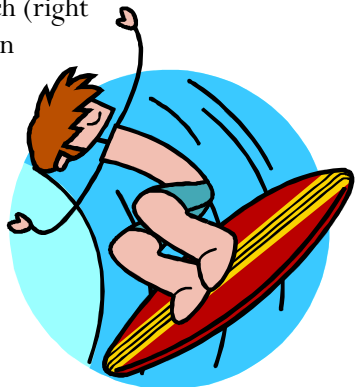
On October 31, 2009 Manzanillo hosted the Cowabunga Surf Extravaganza II Tournament. The event was by Secret Spot Surf Shop, Mi Paraiso Surf Shop, Juanitos and SOL. There were some free surf lessons, music, vendor stands by SOL, food, special event t-shirts, prizes and a lot of happy faces. It was held at Salvavides Beach (right behind the Open Air Market space in Santiago). The event started at 10am and ran until about 6pm with awards and prizes at the end.

The overall winner for the day was a young man, age 12, called Ban Ban who took the award for Best Trick. He is a fantastic surfer. Overall there were about 60 people that attended the event and 30 competitors over the course of the day. The waves were good for the event and non-competitive surfers and boogie boarders were present all day to enjoy the activities.

The day included various heats (competitions) in categories such as Best Costume, Best Wipeout etc. It was a great day for photos and a chance to watch Manzanillo's rising surfers show off their skills in the sun, surf and sand of Manzanillo.

There is a photo show of the event on Flickr at:

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/tsovil/sets/>



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FISH IN SEASON

November to February

Black Marlin, Blue Marlin, Dorado, Marlin Rallado, Medregal, Sailfish, Wahoo, Yellow Fin Tuna

March to May

Blue Marlin, Marlin Rallado, Swordfish, Yellow Fin Tuna

June to August

Bull Tuna, Marlin Rallado, Roosterfish, Swordfish, Yellow Fin Tuna

September to November

Sea Bass, Swordfish, Wahoo

All Year

Amberjack, Bonefish, Bonito, Damselfish, Dorado, Drum, Giant Manta Ray, Giant Needlefish, Grouper, Jack, Creville

Lookdown, Mojarra, Moray eel, Mullet, Parrotfish, Pompano, Portugese man-of-war, Rock Grouper, Sea Catfish, Sea Trout, Triggerfish

Costa Alegre Travel Guide

www.costalegre.calFishInSeason.htm

Club Deportivo de Pesca Manzanillo

Sports Fishing Association of Manzanillo

Office: San Pedrito, Manzanillo

Tel/Fax: 332-7399

Contact person: Silvia Jimenez

Presidente Club Deportivo Pesca

Jose Luis Gonzalez Magana

TOURNAMENTS

International Tournament

December Usually last weekend

Not announced - Check dates with Office

National Tournament

1st weekend February

Entry fee: 2000 pesos per fishing rod

Children's Tournament

Last Sunday in April (Children's day)

Open to Children 5-11 yrs. No charge

Torneo Fiestas Mayo

Check dates with office

Entry fee: 2000 pesos per fishing rod



MANZANILLO SUN'S PERSONALITY OF THE MONTH

A Christmas Present That Lasts The School Year

Diana Stevens

Mapy Seidel

The best Christmas presents last all year - and maybe longer. Mapy Seidel, the new President of M.E.S.E., knows the value and importance of keeping children off the streets and in school. In 1992 she and Sandra Martin del Campo, who has now retired to Guanajuato, founded M.E.S.E. Since then, they have been quietly soldiering away to give street children the best present they will ever receive. M.E.S.E. stands for Minors in Extraordinary Situations and the home circumstances of these children are horrific. One or other parent may be a drug addict or alcoholic leaving the other struggling to keep the family together, some parents don't or can't work, some are single mothers, many are so poor that one finds up to nine adults and teenagers living in one room although all are working and some parents are driven to abandon their offspring. Obviously these children are at risk - and not just of dropping out of school.

M.E.S.E. works in conjunction with D.I.F. the family social work agency, whose Director is the wife of the reigning mayor, or Presidente. We are now in an interregnum where there is little money and no one fully in charge until the changeover in the New Year. However Mapy has already been in contact with the new Director, who has previous experience of cooperation with M.E.S.E. so apart from a change of Coordinator on the spot the work can go ahead. The Municipality will continue to pay the rent on the M.E.S.E. House in the small town of Colomo and D.I.F. pays the salaries of the 3 psychologists and 2 social workers, while M.E.S.E. pays all the overheads on the house, the matron, three teachers and the cleaner.

Mapy's role has been general fundraiser and "mama" to hundreds of kids over the years and they are obviously thrilled whenever she appears.. At the moment there are 37 young people in the scheme but at times there have been as many as 60 so there is scope for expansion and the need is great. Every two months Mapy hands an envelope of money to the proud child himself in front of all of the others and the many family members.

Scholarship Day is a great occasion with soft drinks and a performance of Hawaiian dancing by the children. The "beca" is for the parents to cover all the necessities for school attendance in Mexico - neat and complete uniform and sports wear, shoes, and all exercise and text books plus pens and pencils without all of which they are not accepted. In return, the families agree to a contract whereby the sponsored child attends school regularly, obtains passing grades and does not earn money during the week. The latter is allowed at week-ends.

M.E.S.E. believes that it is very important for children to stay with their families and their representatives work closely with parents to overcome their many problems.



There are two aspects to Mapy's fundraising. The first is finding Sponsors (or "godparents") for all the needy children picked up roaming the streets or selling bread etc. "to help the family" - which can of course mean to help Dad buy his drink. It costs 2500 pesos to keep one child or young person off the street and in education for one year. This small sum can make all the difference to that child's life. Even two or three more years schooling open the way to a better job and a better future.

Mapy remembers well four pupils who have graduated from the local University enabling them to help their family more than they could ever have imagined and paving the way for the next generation.

The families are welcomed at the M.E.S.E. House. While the children are at school the teachers provide free workshops for the mothers in dressmaking, hairdressing and making piñatas - all ways in which they can augment the family income - and in beauty care for their own self-esteem. After school, the kids can come to the house to do their homework in reasonable surroundings and join the very popular Hawaiian dancing group. Special care is taken with sex education and trying to keep girls out of trouble until their education is finished and they are really ready to settle down. The enthusiasm and gratitude of the families needs to be seen to be believed. M.E.S.E. house is a thriving community.

A Christmas Present That Lasts The School Year (cont.)

The Christmas Party takes the form of a traditional Posada when Mary and Joseph knock on many doors seeking accommodation. Many family members, especially younger brothers and sisters, follow the donkey and sponsors or potential sponsors are very welcome to join the crowd. This great event will take place on Friday, 11 December 2009 leaving the M.E.S.E. House at 5.00 p.m. This year, for the first time, Mapy is selling beautiful Christmas cards. There will be a choice of five - all showing traditional Mexican Christmas scenes.

Mapy's fundraising efforts are also devoted to the organisation of the fabulous M.E.S.E. Breakfast which will take place on Saturday, 27th February 2010 at the Hotel Tesoro. Tickets cost 250 pesos and breakfast is preceded by a sale of beautiful embroidery, patchwork, knitting and other hand crafted items plus a Silent Auction. The event finishes with a performance by the children. The money from this, M.E.S.E.'s only fund raising event of the year, pays for the upkeep of the House and for the services of the teachers. Should anything be left over, it funds a rare outing for the children (and families) - a bus trip to the Zoo in Colima or the Aquarium in Guadalajara.

You can see Mapy's heart is in the right place. She loves the children she works for and turns to her many, many friends and all compassionate people to help change the future for as many children as possible.



The Town Cryer

The Guadalajara Reporter is one of the two Newspapers in English in Manzanillo and available at several locations. The Newspaper Shop in the Comercial Mexicana is one outlet, as is Mail Boxes Etc.

Unfortunately the availability is a little spasmodic, but even old copies are worth picking up as they could contain some very useful information on what is happening in regard to changes in laws, immigration or tourism. As we all know, things change so quickly and without warning but the Guadalajara Reporter is usually there first.

Darcy Reed will be writing for the reporter on occasions from now on, so make sure to get your copy and see what she has to say. Knowing Darcy, it could be very interesting.



doug'slistzlo

doug'slistzlo is offered to the Manzanillo community as a free and simple way to advertise items (For Sale and Wanted), services (Offered or Needed), and a place to post public announcements about events and meetings.

www.doug'slistzlo.com

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Compiled by Darcy Reed

MONTHLY THROUGHOUT THE YEAR

Mujeres Amigas Luncheons

When: First Wednesday of each month
Where: El Caribe Restaurant, Las Brisas
Time: 1.00 p.m.
Contact: Candy King 044-314-103-0406
candyk@coldwellbankerbienesraices.com

WEEKLY THROUGHOUT THE YEAR

Thirsty Thursdays – Manzamigos

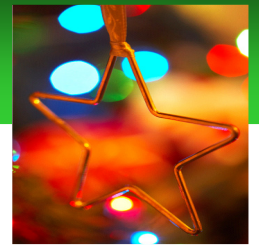
When: To be announced each week
When: 6.00 p.m.
Contact: Jack Akers manzamigos@gmail.com
To join Manzamigos: Linda Breun lbgringa@gmail.com

DECEMBER 2009 – JANUARY 2010

Dec. 1st to 12th Feast of the Virgin of Guadalupe
Dec. 1st to 15th Art Invasion on the Beach,
Camino Real Hotel [331-1740](tel:331-1740)
Dec. 4th Artists Reception – Edward Gillam
Galeria La Manzanillo 4pm-8pm
Dec. 11th - 13th ARA Christmas Bazaar & Bake Sale
Contact Debi Teter [334-3335](tel:334-3335)
Dec. 13th Mujeres Amigas Christmas Party
Contact Lydia Bevaart [334-0002](tel:334-0002)
Dec 13th "The Nutcracker" Russian Ballet of
Moscow, Marbella Event Salon. 5pm.
Contact Chantel Oleskin
chanteloleksin@yahoo.ca
Dec. 16th Third Annual Auction. Rotary Club
Contact Don Merriman
merriman.don@gmail.com
Dec. 24th Manzamigos - Children's Christmas Party
Contact Gerry Szakacs
gerry@mexicanbay.com

Jan. 8th Artists Reception – Efren Conzaes
Galeria La Manzanillo 4pm-8pm
Jan. 21st A Night of Improv – Spanglish Imposition
Manzanillo Country Club 6pm onwards
Call [334 7927](tel:334-7927) for tickets
Jan. 22nd Annual Casa Hogar Los Angelitos Benefit
Gran Pavilion Fair Ground, Valle de las
Garzas. Contact Marge Tyler
maggie19@earthlink.net





OUR TWISTED WAY OF SPEAKING

Tommy Clarkson

Though I have no Sancho Panza compadre faithfully galumphing by my side, today, with all the zeal, enthusiasm, focus and sense of Don Quixote, I strike out to fend English!

Variations of “deconfliction” seem the buzz word de jour. For example, a lead sentence in a recent feature story in the Kansas City Star read that “We have police trained to confront and deconflict.”

Beyond that, we can well anticipate a story or two in each day’s evening news about “destabilized” situations, countries and regimes - as reported on CNN but 12 hours prior to this writing, “The Colombian government is . . . destabilizing Venezuela.”

Semantic forensics reveals an innocent enough analysis of these words. My old and trusty College Edition of the American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language divulges that the prefix “de” means “1. Reversal or undoing; 2. Removal; 3. Degradation; or, 4. Disparagement”. Now that certainly seems simple enough.

So by these definitions, many of us must have experienced no few bacles before encountering a debacle, right? In turn, before something became debris it must have been bris. H’mmmmm, something’s not computing here!

Following that logic further, prior to one of Hollywood’s evil corrupt cinema individuals debauching a young innocent was he busily bauching. Further, if we were to debrief would we be making something lengthy? And, if – as so many claim – society is, today, in the sorry state of decadence, was it then once, in years of yore, marching along in blissful cadence?

This seems to beg the question, why is it that “to die” is to de cease, if cease means to “put an end to or discontinue.” By that rationale should not the former mean to not stop? In the words of Cher’s character grandfather in the movie classic “Moonstruck”, “I’m so confused!” But, in our quest to clarify, forward let us march.

Some of us who have previously lived in the island environs are aware that a cay is “a small, low islet composed largely of coral and sand” – waves gently lapping on a sun kissed isle comes to mind. To change thought of such must we then decay?

Might this word usage be misleading? Deceptive? And hence, then, by its very nature is our language deceitful? If so, should we purposefully strive to make it – or, in fact was it ever – ceitful? Mentally trudging forth, let’s see, the flowers in our entry no longer exude their sweet, fresh smell. So they must now be descended. . . which the dictionary says means “Way down, passage or ancestral extraction.”

Unable to decide what is going on with this “de” stuff, I admit that I must have been, up to this point, ciding in a wallowing vacuum of confusion.

I guess that I dare not declare my abject confusion with this all as to do so I would have to admit that I have, heretofore been claring!

With this in mind I close from whence I commenced. I simply will no longer defend my native tongue. Utterly confused – my natural state anyway – I’ll just fend with it!

Filling Tommy’s Tummy

A reminder about local cuisine - excellence in victuals requires no extravagant trappings of sterling services, bone china, starch shirted waiters nor a well stocked wine cellar.

Perhaps one of the best cases in point sits – or would that be, is parked - under a corner bamboo grove on the northeast corner across from the Santiago Saturday Market site (some call it Tianguis) located on Boulevard Miguel de la Madrid. Or in that wonderful way some folks south of the border have of explaining things, next to where the nursery used to be!

It is owned and operated by Guadalupe and Pepe: She, constantly moving, focused and intent on preparing taco delights; He, affable, talkative and a pure delight.

Offering but limited items, the camaron and pescado tacos are among the best we have ever encountered in all of Mexico. Filling fare – it takes but one to satisfy my wife and two seems almost more than my limit - the price of 12 pesos each is a bargain.

Presented with a delicious array of culinary accompaniments including salsa rojo and verde as well as onion pieces with chilis, chopped cucumbers and cole slaw, your meal is as attractive as it is yummy!

They’ve also chairs and a table on which to sit in shade. So go down, join the locals and savor some of our fair city’s secret eating delights!

TOMMY GUNS

**I wear upon my wrist
a watch bound by a band.
How utterly misleading.
It's the clock that binds the man.**

**My camera takes a moment
and makes it hold its breath.
While we continue posing
'til all our scenes have left.**

**In the words of Henny Youngman - "I've millions of
'em!"**



THE SPANGLISH IMPOSITION

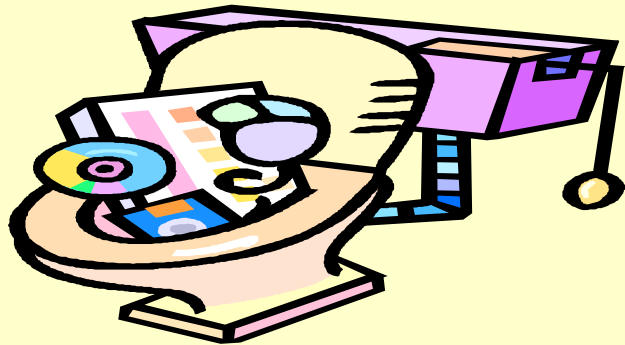
**COMING TO MANZANILLO
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For more information and tickets

Tips for a Happier Home

Terry 'The Deep' Sovil

Ladies in the house? Avoid arguments about the toilet seat by using the sink.



Avoid cutting yourself when slicing vegetables by getting someone else to hold the vegetables while you slice.

High Blood Pressure? Simply cut yourself and bleed for a few minutes, thus reducing the pressure on your veins. Remember to use a timer.

Place a mouse trap on top of your alarm clock and you will never just roll over and go back to sleep after hitting the snooze button.

Bad cough and a cold? Take a large dose of laxatives. You'll be afraid to cough or sneeze.

You need only two tools in life: WD-40 and Duct Tape. If it doesn't move and should, use the WD-40. If it shouldn't move and does, use the duct tape.

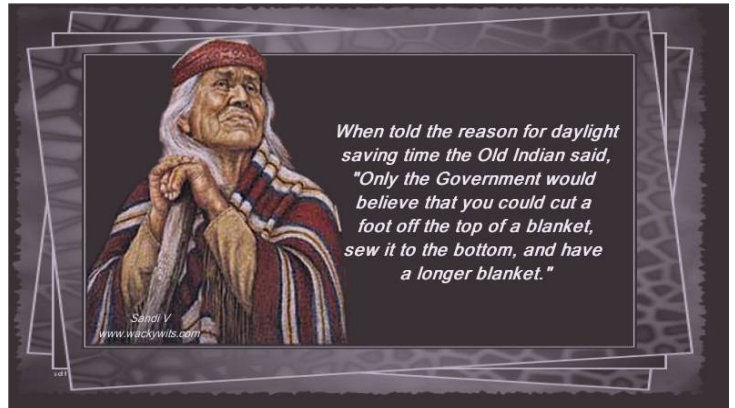
If you can't fix it with a hammer, you've got an electrical problem.

Birthday this month?

Forget about the past because you can't change it.

Forget about the future because you can't control what is going to happen.

Forget about the present because I didn't get you one.



Carlos Mendoza

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LORENZO'S CORNER

.....to be continued.....

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DEVELOPMENT OF JULIPAN LAGOON

Freda Rumford

Much information has been travelling my way about the proposed development of the lagoon behind La Boquita in Club Santiago. Talks about this area have been going on for years and most people have come to believe that this is "not in our lifetime." From the reading matter now circulating, it seems to be a little more in earnest than in the past and monies for this development have supposedly been set aside by the government or already given for the fun to begin.

What is in the plans? A mini township, with yacht basin, marina, hotels, shopping centres, major condominium towers with adequate parking and full facilities that will attract the most discerning buyer.

The booklets and paraphernalia are very descriptive and more information on all of these plans can be read directly by going to <http://www.puertosantiagomexico.com/>.

It seems that although the plans are more organized than previous attempts to get this project underway, there are major concerns that need to be addressed. Biologists, marine biologists, ecologists and geologists are still making extensive studies in order to attempt the halt of development in this very sensitive area. The flora and fauna in the land around the lagoon are, for the most part, very rare and the aforementioned experts and interest groups feel that any development could possibly be deadly to entire species. Another of the principal areas of concern is the stability of land in that area. Will it be safe to build anything of major substance, or in the event of earthquake or high waves could the entire terrain become victim to the shivering sand syndrome (quicksand).

There are more questions than answers arising around the project as it comes towards making final and definite decisions. Regardless, it will pay for persons interested in buying in this area to have proper and reliable land studies done by independent and knowledgeable experts before plunking down large sums of cash to have the dream home built which could rapidly turn into a nightmare..

That the area is ripe for development of some kind is not in doubt but what is under debate by all interested groups is the grand scale which is currently being proposed. That local residents are concerned goes without question as always change is not generally desired or wanted. The status quo and current way of living is comfortable and desirable and nothing should "rock the boat" so to speak. It has been heard that the restaurants of La Boquita, which have long been the subject of many studies & much criticism, have been given notice and dates by which they must vacate the land. Some are refusing to move unless alternate and totally acceptable arrangements are made for proper relocation. This is an area where Mexican families come to play and it is feared by both restaurants and local populace that loss of this area will take yet another access to the beach away from local people.



CURP Card

This Government card is required as a pre-requisite for a Mexican Drivers License or a Senior Citizens Card and is similar to our Social Security card. For this you need copy of FM3 and copy of Telmex bill. There is no charge for this card. A convenient office to get this card is situated at the north entrance to Soriana.

The Security Card

This card, which will give discounts on long distance buses, some stores, house taxes, movies and other items, is available to those 60 years and over who have an FM3 minimum and a permanent address in Mexico. To get this card you must first get the CURP card which is listed above.

It is no longer possible to apply through DIF in Manzanillo but we have a Colima address where you can make application. All that is needed is the CURP card and FM3/2. Do look for the waiting number as at Immigration. There is a form to fill out that is in Spanish but someone will probably be able to help.

Pictures will be taken right there and put onto a computer created card. Once received, the card does not need renewal.

The name on the building is Secretaria de Desarrollo Social SESESOL (Secretaria de Desarrollo Social) and it's just off Camino Real No.120 and the corner of Con Fco. Hernandez Esinoza
Tel. 01-312-313-9500.

(It is not actually on the corner but about 1 lot in on the left so you don't see it until you turn onto Hernandez Espinoza.)

MANZANILLO SKIM FIESTA



Manzanillo hosted a National Tournament event on Saturday – Sunday, 11/14-15/2009, on Playa del Carmen in Salahuá. There was some radio and TV coverage of the event along with participation of National Brand Names in equipment such as Squalo and Victoria Skim boards. This event promotes surf and skim boarding activities among high school students with competition at the Beginner, Intermediate and Advanced levels.

There were about 200 observers over the two day event with about 30 competitors. Winner's names were not available at the time of this writing but first and third places went to participants from Melaque and 2nd place went to a Manzanillo resident.

Skim boarding is an event where the participants need a long, wide beach and waves that break close to shore. Their board is flat with no fins and is shorter than a traditional surf board. They hold their board and wait for the right wave then run down the beach, throw down the board on the wet sand, jump on and ride out to meet the wave. When the wave breaks they do a quick turn and ride it in as the surfers do. It takes a lot of practice and skill and falls can be tough since you are in shallow water. A lot of talent was displayed by the participants in this event.

This event in the past has drawn observers and participants from Cabo, Puerto Vallarta, Mexico City, Oaxaca, Melaque, Acapulco and Guadalajara so it's an event that will be of interest to all Manzanillo residents. Manzanillo Real Estate Professionals are one of the many sponsors of this event in addition to helping support two local surfers and a skim boarder.

There is a photo show of the event on Flickr at: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/tsovil/sets/>

Q. What is the safest way to remove fingerprints from photographs?

Anne Faraci, Iowa City, Iowa

A. You couldn't wait to get your hands on your digital pictures in tangible form and you have a slew of fingerprints to prove it.

Fortunately for you, fingerprints can be wiped clean. If you're dealing with a heavy residue (say, you were eating greasy pizza before touching your prints), opt for a moist towelette used for plastic and glass lenses and computer screens. "The cleaning solvent lifts grease off the photo without leaving behind remains or scratch marks," says Russ Muzzolini, an engineer on the Shutterstock.com research and development team. Just wipe the fingerprints away and set the photo aside so it can air-dry. Don't have a towelette on hand? If the marks appear to be minor, grab a dry, 100 percent cotton cloth or T shirt and softly polish the picture. And in the future, try to keep your paws off.

Lindsay Funston



'NUTCRACKER' BALLET IN MANZANILLO

Russian State Ballet Company

We are very excited to announce that the Nutcracker Ballet is coming to Manzanillo just in time for Christmas!

Bellas Artes del Pacífico has managed to secure the distinguished and world renowned Russian State Ballet of Moscow to perform the famous Nutcracker Ballet here in Manzanillo! This ballet company will be performing here for a one night exclusive performance. This will be a great opportunity to come out, dress up and celebrate the holiday season with your loved ones for this very special holiday tradition.

The lead dancers, Natalia Krapivina and George Smilensky, are considered some of the top ballerinas in the world and have won international awards for their performances. The ballet company will be performing in 4 cities in all of Mexico (Torreon, Cuernavaca, San Luis Potosi and Manzanillo). Manzanillo is the only city where they will be performing on the pacific side so get your tickets before they sell out!

When: December 13, 2009

Time: 5:00pm *

Where: Marbella Salon

Tickets: \$700 pesos each. Children 12 and under \$350 pesos each

Tickets are available for purchase at Juanito's Restaurant, Marbella Salon or by contacting Chantel directly at chanteloleksin@yahoo.ca

*The 12pm performance listed in Mexican Pacific was a misprint.



PHOTO COMPETITION WINNER



The Winner of the front cover photo competition for this edition of *Manzanillo's Lifestyle E-Magazine*. is:

Mapy Seidel

She wins a dinner for 2 at Schooners Restaurant, courtesy of Manny and Teresa.

CONGRATULATIONS

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314-333-3886 some English spoken

Av Lazaro Cardenas 1214, Local C
(in front of Best Western Brisas del Mar)



MAIL BOXES ETCETERA

Freda Rumford

As most patrons of MBE know, a few months ago there was a change in ownership of the local Manzanillo Branch. Since that time there have been numerous problems with both the arrival of packages and mail into the MBE office, which have been extremely annoying in some cases and very worrying in others as sensitive mail can be involved.

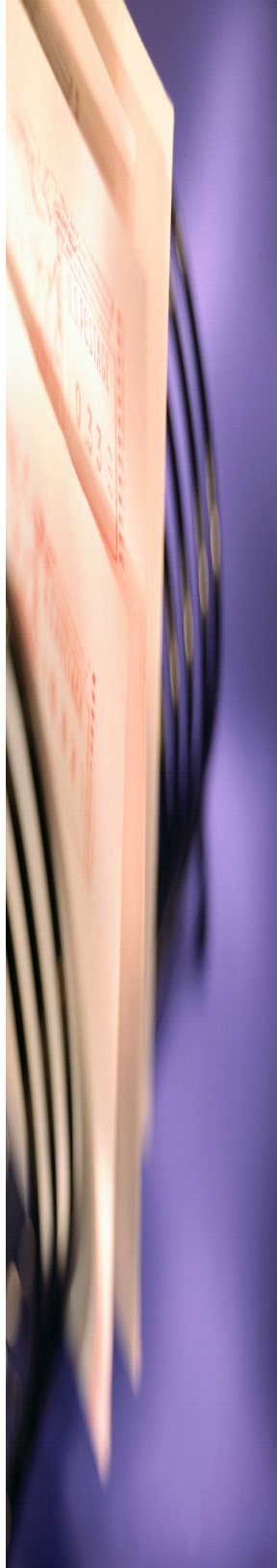
Since October, instead of a twice weekly service it has dwindled to one every two or three weeks with important mail taking in excess of two weeks to arrive in Manzanillo after delivery has been received in Laredo.

This week, we met with the new owners of Manzanillo MBE, Sergio A. Cuevas and Moises S. Zetune, to discuss the problem and they agreed whole heartedly that this is unacceptable and that they have been unaware of the severity of our local problems. We stated firmly that this had nothing to do with the local staff who were always pleasant and as helpful as was possible but a real problem had occurred in Laredo which must be corrected immediately. We advised them that several other clients were already looking to make alternative arrangements.

We were told that our complaints would be looked into immediately and complete corrections would be made. A person who has been with Mail Boxes for several years has already been moved into place at the new Laredo depot, which is partially owned by MBE and serves only Mexico MBE.

Mail will now leave Laredo each Tuesday & Friday arriving in Manzanillo next day unless there are adverse road or other unexpected conditions. Sergio and Moises assured us that they have 100% commitment to the service provided to their clients and would be available for discussions should any problems arise in the future.

Several other questions were addressed at our meeting pertaining to importing goods, customs duties and junk mail. It seems that almost anything may be brought into Mexico but are inspected by Customs officers and relevant duty assessed. This can vary considerably according to product. Generally the assessment would be an average of 15% of value on lading bill but vitamins and prescriptions will be considerably more, probably 35%. Clothing importation costs vary according to



country of origin and can be extremely expensive 57% (not advisable). We will try to get an up to date list of these charges before the next magazine. Some limited information in English may be found at:-

http://www.aduanas.gob.mx/aduana_mexico/2007/A_Body_Pasajeros.htm

MBE pay the custom fees at the border and request that packages be retrieved and paid for as quickly as possible upon arrival in Manzanillo.

Prohibited: narcotics, weapons and ammunition, live or dead animals, exotic leather.

Special Permit required for:

- Used clothing, shoes used hardware
- Perfume cosmetics personal hygiene products
- Vitamins and medicine (including natural)
- Any and every kind of food, coffee
- Seeds, plants, flowers
- Gold & silver jewellery
- Pornography
- Liquids, aerosol products
- Insecticides, Herbicides, Chemicals & detergents
- Alcohol & Tobacco products
- Any Petroleum Products

Books and CD's may be subject to taxes dependent on subject matter - possibly 10%.

If goods or special permit items are inspected by customs officers, there will, naturally, be a delay in shipping from Laredo.

Junk mail cannot be sorted out from client's mail and is still to be included in the weight allowance as MBE have to pay for all shipments, nor can it be returned to sender free of charge for same reason. MBE do not wish to be responsible for deciding which items clients receive. At some time in the future perhaps it can be filtered but not in the foreseeable future.

We did not discuss MBE rates and new rates. Hopefully these will be reasonable.

We left MBE feeling more hopeful that we had for a while, now it just remains to be seen if things change for the better in a reasonable length of time.

Any further information can be had by calling: Tel: (314)335-3258 Fax: (314) 333-2394 or email: mx0003@mx.mbelatam.com